Stancetaking in late modern English scientific writing

Evidence from the *Coruña Corpus*. Essays in honour of Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo

Editor
Francisco Alonso-Almeida

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Summary

Este volumen contiene aportaciones sobre la expresión del punto de vista (stance) en el Corpus of English History Texts, que es un subcorpus del The Coruña Corpus of Early Scientific Writing (CC) (1700-1900). Las contribuciones que se incluyen presentan un enfoque semántico-pragmático en tanto que interpretan el uso de la lengua para fines específicos en los siglos XVIII y XIX, complementando de esta manera estudios previos en lengua inglesa de especialidad de siglos anteriores.

Proemio

Como editora de la colección *Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada* de la Editorial de la Universitat Politècnica de València ha sido un honor recibir la propuesta de la publicación de un volumen en honor al catedrático Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo, académico de reconodico prestigio. Sus aportaciones a los estudios relacionados con el inglés antiguo y la literatura inglesa son conocidos internacionalmente y de ello son prueba los numerosos proyectos que ha liderado y en los que ha participado.

Así mismo, los numerosos libros que ha escrito o editado, nos muestran su valía como investigador, avanzando en el conocimeinto constantemente y colaborando en el avance de las investigaciones sobre la lengua inglesa. El interés de su investigación se ha visto más que probado por sus numerosas publicaciones en revistas; los evaluadores han sabido apreciar a un investigador conciezudo y crítico.

Si al hecho que sea un volumen honorífico añadimos la valía de las contribuciones que se han incluido así como la de sus autores, nos percatamos que nos encontramos ante un libro excepcional que le da un gran valor a esta publicación. Este volumen nace también para la difusión de los resultados de los proyectos del Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (MINECO), FFI2013-42215-P y FFI2016-75599-P, aspecto que se ha de resaltar puesto que es fruto del trabajo de varios investigadores involucrados en esta investigación.

Quiero destacar que esta colección de trabajos ha sido evaluada por un Comité Científico que ha revisado cada uno de sus capítulos con mucho detalle. Por ello, agradezco su valiosa labor para la publicación de este segundo libro de la colección *Estudios de Lingüística Aplicada*.

Finalmente, deseo agradecer la labor del editor de este volumen, Francisco Alonso-Almeida, por su entusiasmo y trabajo conciezudo. Sin él, investigador incansable, este volumen no hubiera sido posible.

Foreword

When the editors of this book instructed me to write a sketch of Professor Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo, I felt overwhelmed and fearful, but also eager to extol the figure of a prestigious scholar and eminent education adviser and manager. Let me start by providing some keynotes on his academic profile.

Since completing his Degree and Master of Arts (English Philology) in 1981 and his PhD in Comparative Linguistics in 1987 at the University of Oviedo, Professor Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo has served as Director of Campus El Milán (Arts area) at the University of Oviedo, holding both the position of Academic Secretary and Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts at this University from 1988–1994.

He obtained the position of tenured lecturer at the University of Oviedo in 1989 and the Professorship in his early thirties in 1994 serving in the beginning as chair of English Language and Linguistics at the University of A Coruña from 1994 to1996, where he also served as first Dean of the Faculty of Philology. Since 1996 he holds a chair of English Philology at the University of Oviedo.

Professor Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo has taught a large number of graduate and postgraduate courses and seminars as Visiting Scholar in several Spanish Universities (León, A Coruña, Santiago de Compostela, La Laguna, Almería, Sevilla, Valladolid, País Vasco, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Vigo, Barcelona, Jaume I, Zaragoza, Jaén, etc.) and BA courses in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures, Whitman College, Washington. He promoted, conducted and directed many postgraduate courses at the Universities of Oviedo and A Coruña. He has also encouraged and directed teaching innovation projects as well as providing methodological support for other teaching programmes.

As a renowned speaker and recognized expert, he was guest lecturer and a plenary speaker in a number international conferences. He has read a large number of papers and has participated in round tables discussions in scientific meetings and conferences on the fields of linguistics, medieval studies, historical linguistics and English literature.

He has obtained various visiting scholarships to do research in British and American academic institutions, namely the British Library (in The Manuscripts Collections, section of Western Manuscripts) in 1989, the University of Oxford (Bodleian Library and University Humanities Computing Centre) from 1990 to 1992 or St. Catharine's College at the University of Cambridge in 1995. He also got visiting fellowships from the Centre for Humanities Computing at the University of Oxford in 1992 and 1998. He was also visiting fellow in the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Toronto in 2000 and at Whitman College, Washington in 2002.

Professor Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo has had a remarkable activity as general editor of prestigious academic journals: Atlantis (1997 and 1998) and SEDERI (1995-2007) as well as co-editor of SELIM from 1991 to 2011. He has also been in charge of the edition "Medieval and Renaissance Literature excluding Drama" (sections 301-303) in Annotated Bibliography of English Studies (Spanish Studies in English) from 1996 to 1998.

He chaired the Spanish Society for Medieval English Language and Literature from 1999 to 2004 and has been member of many academic societies and of countless boards and committees of academic journals (SELIM, Atlantis, The Grove, AESLA, SELL, Cuadernos del Cemyr, Cuadernos de Investigación Filológica, International Journal of English Studies, Journal of English Studies, Culture, Language and Representation, Philologia Hispalense, etc.).

His research covers many different fields (Textual Edition and Philology, Medieval Studies, Historical Linguistics, Romantic Poetry, etc.). He has published books, book chapters and articles in scientific journals. He edited an Anthology of Middle English Texts for the Oxford University Text Archive already in 1990, just to give one example. He has lead relevant research projects with financial support from the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science and the Autonomic Governments of Galicia and the Principality of Asturias and has also been a member of other research projects. He has conducted the investigation of many doctorate students when writing their doctoral dissertation. He was also chairman and member of Evaluation and Assessment Committees (Avaliaçao Investigadora do Instituto de Estudos Anglísticos da Universidade de Lisboa; Agencia Nacional de Evaluación y Prospectiva; Comissió Valenciana d'Acreditació i Evaluació de la Qualitat; Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación; Agencia Andaluza de Evaluación de la Calidad, etc.).

Appointed by the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science (Subdirección General de Cooperación Internacional & Ministerio de Asuntos Exteriores), he developed an outstanding career as Consul of Education at the Consulate General of Spain in Miami in 2004 and 2005, with jurisdiction over Alabama, Arkansas, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Georgia, Luisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. Then, he also served for five years as Counsellor for Education at the Spanish Embassies in Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines. As Consul of Education, he was responsible for Spanish educational programs and educational cooperation with local authorities. From this diplomatic, advisory and managerial position, he also collaborated with the Instituto Cervantes, and participated as member of the examining boards of DELE.

Let me finish by highlighting the main traits of his personality. Professor Santiago González y Fernández-Corugedo has showed impressive adaptability and an innate ability to juggle complex tasks while starting a new position in a new institution, in a new university system, immediately fitting in with his colleagues and enjoying his work. But, above all, he is well-liked by staff, students and colleagues alike, and unanimously appreciated and respected by his peers.

For all this, this volume is dedicated to him.

Luis Iglesias Rábade

Acknowledgments

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This volume could not have been possible without the contributors. I am really honoured that they have attended my call and accepted to participate in this project. I would like to thank the anonymous readers for their suggestions and feedback to individual chapters for improvements.

I also owe my gratitude to the Series General Editor, María Luisa Carrió Pastor, for her help and support at every stage of the process. Thanks are also due to the The Polythecnic University Valencia and her Editorial Services for economic support and for the edition of this monograph.

Finally, many thanks to all those who have contributed in any way to this book.

Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, 21 April 2017

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Introduction. Stancetaking in late Modern English scientific writing

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1. Introduction

Stancetaking has received extraordinary scholarship attention over the last decades. Research focusing on present day languages is evidence of this interest. See, for instance, Iwasaki and Yap's monograph (2015) on stancemarking and stancetaking in Asian languages (Japanese, Korean and Mandarin); Briz (2012) and Albeda-Marco (2016) on Spanish; and Bassiouney (2015) on Egyptian Arabic, just to mention a few. The analysis of stancetaking in discourse offers valid insight to explain processes of variation and change, and this makes its study in earlier stages of languages a substantial contribution to assess the way in which evaluation, perspectivization, affect, and commitment, for instance, have had an effect on linguistic innovations (Cf. Moskowich and Crespo 2014). In this volume, contributors study certain devices, e.g. pronouns and conditional structures, which evince authorial stance on a corpus of scientific texts excerpted from *The Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*. The methodology of analysis is particular to each one of the papers included in this monograph, as the study of stance devices may be addressed at from different perspectives. The term *stance* indeed refers to different phenomena in language, and so it is generally the umbrella term for notions, such as *epistemic stance* (Biber and Finegan 1989), *commitment* (Caffi 1999 and 2007; Del Lungo Camiccioti 2008), *mitigation* (Martín Martín 2008; Alonso-Almeida 2015), *reinforcement* or *strengthening* (Brown 2011), *intensification* (Gonzalez 2015), *authority*, *involvement* and *hedging* (Hyland 1998 and 2005), *assessment* (Goodwin 2006), *modality* and *evidentiality* (Chafe 1986, Palmer 2001, Fairclough 2003, Goodwin 2006, Marín Arrese 2009, Carrió Pastor 2012, Pic and Furmaniak 2012), *affect* (Martin 2000, Martin and White 2005), and *vagueness* in language (Cutting 2007).

For Hyland (2005: 176), stance "can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions, and commitments. It is the ways that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement". The evaluative dimension of *stance* is patent in this definition. Evaluation is still an inclusive term that makes reference to several other concepts, as pointed out in Hunston and Thompson (2000: 5): "evaluation is the broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about. That attitude may relate to certainty or obligation or desirability or any of a number of other sets of values. When appropriate, we refer specifically to modality as a sub-category of evaluation". Within the spectrum of evaluation, Du Bois (2007: 163) considers the social and cultural dimension of *stance* in his definition: "a public act by social actor, achieved dialogically through overt communicative means of simultaneously evaluating

objects, positioning subjects (self an others), and aligning with other subjects, with respet to any salient dimension of the sociocultural field". In sum, the core of all the perspectives to *stance* mentioned here is its pragmatic nature, and thus *stance* covers the study of (inter)subjective meanings and commitment/involvement vs. detachment, for instance, which are often potential for linguistic variation, particularly in specialized discourse, as shown in the studies in this volume on the texts of the *Coruña Corpus*.

2. The Coruña Corpus

The Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing (CC) started at the University of A Coruña in 2003. As explained in Crespo and de la Cruz Cabanillas (2016: 63), the interest of their compilers was the evolution and vernacularization of scientific writing in the medieval period and later written by male and female authors, and this interest included aspects related to the macrolevel to cover the study of scientific genres. The CC contains texts from the eighteenth to the end of the nineteenth century (1700-1900), and these were selected for compilation according to different sociological, linguistic and disciplinary criteria, as also described in Crespo and de la Cruz Cabanillas (2016: 63). The texts have been chosen from different English-speaking geographical areas, other than England, namely: North America, Ireland and Scotland.

The internal organization of the corpus has been partially guided by the UNESCO classification of science, and thus each subsection of this corpus represents a sphere of science. This results in the following configuration of CC: (1) Natural and Exact Natural Sciences, this parameter includes the domain of Astronomy: *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy* (*CETA*); Life Sciences: *Corpus of English Life Sciences Texts* (*CELiST*); Physics: *Corpus of English Texts on Physics* (*CETePh*); and Chemistry: *Corpus of English Chemistry Texts* (*CECheT*); (2) Humanities, this parameter to include the domain of Philosophy: *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* (*CEPhiT*); Linguistics, *Corpus of English Texts on Linguistics* (*CETeL*); and History: *Corpus of English History Texts* (*CHET*). The compilers decided not to include the domain of medicine, as this is well represented in the *Corpus of Early Medical Writing* compiled by members of the VARIENG group (Crespo and de la Cruz Cabanillas, 2016). The *Coruña Corpus* is not yet completed, and *CETA* (Moskowich and Crespo 2012; Moskowich et al. 2012), *CEPhiT* (Moskowich et al. 2016), and *CHET* (Moskowich et al. 2012) are the only ones available at present; *CECheT* is soon to appear.

Each of the mentioned subcorpora contains ca. 400,000 words, half for each century, taken principally from first editions. The reason is that two texts of ca. 10,000 words are taken per decade after transcribing the author's own texts, excluding additional material, such as quotations, graphs, figures, etc. not representing the author's idiolect. Each of the texts owns two files. One of this is the text encoded in XML language. The other is metadata information concerning the author and the text. The presence of this information is certainly fundamental in evaluating stancetaking in texts. The consultation of these databases is performed thanks to the use of the *Coruña Corpus Tool* (*CCT*), described in Lareo (2010). The available *CC* texts can be interrogated in full, or any of its subcorpus, for a given unit or string of language. Statistics as to occurrences (tokens and variants) per text are given in the *results summary* window, also presenting concordances. Each concordance line shows the text where the word appears by clicking on it.

Research carried out on texts in the *Coruña Corpus* proves its validity for the study of the language of science from a historical perspective, and for the study of language variation and change. In general, research conducted using *CC* includes material on (a) the compilation of the corpus itself or descriptions of the databases (Moskowich and Crespo 2007; Moskowich and Parapar 2008; Crespo and Moskowich 2010 and 2015; Moskowich 2016); (b) morphological and/or syntactic descriptions (Puente Castelo and Mónaco 2013; Puente Castelo 2015); (c) pragmatics (Alonso Almeida 2012; Crespo 2011; Crespo and Moskowich 2015a); and (d) cultural and social concerns in relation to language and language variation (Moskowich 2012; Crespo and Moskowich 2015b; Dossena 2016), among other aspects. All this work is only an indication of the corpus' potential for further research. Its configuration in subcorpora according to register allows for contrastive analyses dealing with disciplinary variation. This is not the only way in which this material allows comparison, as language use can also be assessed with a focus on genre, for example. From a diachronic perspective, *CC* could be used in conjunction with other historical corpora of (pseudo)scientific texts to study diastratic variation and the evolution of scientific styles.

3. The contributions

The volume contains seven studies on several aspects of eighteenth and nineteenth century scientific English writing, as portrayed in *CC*. Each of the chapters includes a description of the subcorpus or subcorpora used in order to provide precise indications of the material analyzed. In the first chapter, **Margarita Sánchez-Cuervo** explores *appraisal* in modern English historical discourse written by male and female authors following Martin and White's model (2005) for the study of the language of evaluation. The interpretative nature of history, Sánchez-Cuervo claims, seems to suggest the use of evaluative language in order to reflect and accommodate the authors' point of view. The devices found to convey authorial position in the texts analyzed include strategic use of the pronoun "we", epistemic and deontic modals, hearsay, mindsay and perception verbs. The author closes her text by suggesting further research, which would include the analysis of dialogic contraction options.

The following chapter written by **Marina Dossena** also reports on aspects of stancetaking in late Modern English historiography. The author analyzes the ways in which (un)certainty and evaluation strategies are used in order to convey perspectivization of knowledge. Dossena's analyses involve both the texts in the *CHET* subcorpus and their titlepages, which represent the authors' first contact with their audience. These titlepages contains some language elements that indicate what the authors' position would be in their texts. A valuable contribution of this paper is the way in which the author highlights similarities and differences between *CHET* and *CEPhiT* concerning the expression of evaluation.

Persuasion strategies are the focus of the next chapter, where **Begoña Crespo** explores discourse strategies deployed to designate third person actor with a legitimizing function in *CHET*. For this, she concentrates on the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic aspects of the verb *demand*, which she exemplifies with excerpts from the corpus to demonstrate that the persuasive function of this verb needs to consider contextual factors, the function of the intervening material, its original legal meaning, its presence in set phrases and its occurrence in passive structures.

Margarita Mele-Marrero studies self-mention as seen in the use of the pronouns *I* and *we* in the eighteenth-century section of *CETA* and *CHET*, thus reporting on their use in the so-called hard- and soft-sciences. Mele-Marrero proves that self-mention is an important strategy to convey stance and engagement in her selection of texts. She concludes her paper with a set of interesting findings concerning the presence of self-mentioning pronouns in the texts, one of which reports in the patent occurrence of self-mention pronouns in astronomy texts in relation to history ones. The following chapter by **Isabel Moskowich** also describes pronouns as stance features in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century *CETA, CEPhiT* and *CHET*, also with a focus on first person pronouns as involvement devices. The author considers the register variables of subject-matter and gender in order to analyze the use of these proforms in the selected subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus*. Her study reveals that these involvement features are used as dictated by the discourse requirements of the discipline. The variable of sex seems, however, less influencing.

Francisco J. Álvarez-Gil offers an analysis of the stance adverbials *apparently*, *fairly* and *possibly* in *CHET* to show how these forms are used either to indicate elaboration of meaning and/or to indicate appraisal of propositional content. This paper discusses central theoretical aspects to the notion of evidentiality and its relation to epistemic modality in order to contextualize his analyses of the adverbials chosen. In his study, the author concludes that the syntactic position of adverbials may also indicate different pragmatic functions of these forms.

The potential of conditional constructions as hedging devices is described by **Luis Puente-Castelo**. In his study, Puente-Castelo examines three type of conditionals in three subcorpora of the *CC* in order to show their use to convey authorial uncertainty. The author applies socio-historical and formal parameters in his account of these structures as stance features. The last contribution written by **Elena Quintana-Toledo** is an account of vague expressions in *CHET* following Zhang's model (2015). She classifies her findings into *approximate stretchers*, *general stretchers*, *scalar stretchers* and *epistemic stretchers.* These devices have several pragmatic functions. They could be used to mitigate a claim, to indicate degrees of specificity, reliability, accountability, or affectivity. These expressions may have a persuasive function.

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A study of appraisal in male and female voices of historical texts

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Abstract: This paper examines a corpus of male and female historical texts from the perspective of Appraisal. The historical discourse has been long regarded an instance of objective and immobile truths. However, recent theories have defended an interpretive role of historical language that allows a multiplicity of readings and significances. The theory of Appraisal can be applied to the study of the historical discourse in that it provides an analysis of meanings in context and of the rhetorical effects that it may produce (Martin and White, 2005). In particular, I focus on the category of engagement, which is intent on the recognition of dialogical alternatives that relate to certain meanings, and the consequences derived from the choice of one meaning rather than another. Through a mainly quantitative methodology, I will classify and compare the resources of engagement in male and female historical texts, and will try to point out how the authors assess the past and in what way they address their audience.

Keywords: Appraisal, engagement, heteroglossic, dialogic expansion, entertain, attribute, historical discourse

1. Introduction

This chapter seeks to analyse a selection of male and female texts of the *Coruña Corpus* from the perspective of Appraisal, following Martin and White's (2005) model for evaluating language. Although the historical discourse has, until late in the twentieth century, been considered an illustration of objective truth and factual record of the past, there have recently emerged theories in favour of the interpretative role of historical language (Coffin, 2002: 504). Coffin (2006: 8-9), whose main field of research is on the study of historical discourse in educational contexts, argues that history cannot be assessed as a neutral discipline that is based on indisputable facts; on the contrary, it is established upon many competing interpretations. This author (Coffin, 2006: 8) quotes the postmodernist historian Keith Jenkins (2003: 30) to declare that it is the historian's task to "figure out" our meaning of the past, not only its content but also its form. Coffin employs the framework of systemic functional linguistics first devised by Halliday (1978; 2004) since it describes the use of language in social contexts. She also incorporates the Appraisal framework by Martin and White (2005) that derives from Halliday's (1984, 2004) influential work on the grammar of mood and modality, and his subsequent analysis of turn-taking in dialogue together with the work of authors like Martin (1992) and Eggins & Slade (1997).

In the same line, Oteíza and Pinto (2008: 3) sustain that the writing of history entails "an interpretative enterprise whose selection of events and silences represents an evaluation of the past." They argue that the relations of causality are an important reason for establishing coherence and for generating an ideological justification of the historical episodes. This causality makes the writers of historical discourse interpret and select evidences but, correspondingly, omit certain actors and events. For Oteíza herself (2009: 221-222), the linguistic mechanisms perform a key role in the construction of historical texts, not only because these texts can persuade explicitly but also because their authors can become the authority that interprets certain positions of the past and thus creates accommodating readers. As a result, the linguistic resources used possess a dialogical functionality. She also justifies the use of the appraisal theory to study how historical discourses are evaluated through language. This system allows a more detailed approach to the recovery of interpersonal meanings in discourse, and the identification of lexical and grammatical resources that authors utilise to subjectivise their voices and establish an ideological solidarity with their readers.

In the sections that follow, I will first refer to Martin and White's appraisal system and focus on the category of engagement, which explores the various rhetorical effects associated with the writers' position towards the text and the readers who they address. This category results especially useful in its approach to the interpersonal meanings that are present in the historical texts that I am analysing. I will then describe the texts selected for this study and the methodology that has been employed. Next I will offer the analysis of male and female texts. Finally, a discussion of findings and a conclusion are provided.

2. The Appraisal model

In the introduction to Martin and White's (2005: 1) book *The Language of Evaluation. Appraisal in English*, they argue that it is concerned with the interpersonal in language, with the subjective presence of writers in their texts, and how they adopt stances towards their writings and their recipients. The authors (Martin and White, 2005: 34-35; Hood, 2010) refer to appraisal as one of the three major discourse semantic resources that construct interpersonal meaning, alongside involvement and negotiation. Appraisal itself contains three interacting domains: the first is attitude, concerned with our feelings, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things. The second is engagement, which is related to sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse. The third is graduation, which has to do with grading phenomena in which feelings are amplified and categories blurred.

1. The system of attitude contains three semantic areas:

a) Affect, which is concerned with the register of positive and negative feelings. This area also includes emotional reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluation of things.

b) Judgement, which refers to attitudes that we have towards behaviours that we can either admire or criticise, praise or condemn. Judgements are usually divided into those regarding 'social esteem' and 'social sanction'. Whereas judgements of esteem are related with normality, capacity and tenacity, judgements of sanction pertain to veracity and propriety.

c) Appreciation has to do with the evaluation of semiotic and natural phenomena in relation to the different ways in which they are valued or not in a given field.

2. The system of engagement is aimed at identifying the dialogistic positions that are associated with given meanings, and at describing the consequences when we choose one meaning rather than another. Martin and White (2005: 99-100) make a distinction that regards the dialogistic status of bare assertions. Generally speaking, they classify utterances as monoglossic when they do not make any references to other voices or points of view, and as heteroglossic when they invoke or take into account dialogistic alternatives.

Heteroglossic devices, in turn, are divided into two categories that involve a different type of analysis: dialogic expansion allows "dialogically alternative positions and voices", whereas dialogic contraction restrains the scope of these ones (Martin and White, 2005: 102).

(1) Dialogic expansion refers to meanings that expand the dialogic space between writer and reader. They are intent on invoking dialogic alternatives. These expanding meanings are also classified into two categories: entertain and attribute:

(a) Entertain explicitly presents the author's individual subjectivity whereby the authorial voice represents the proposition as one among a variety of possible options.

(b) Attribute explicitly presents the proposition as grounded in the subjectivity of an external voice through which the textual voice also represents the proposition as one among a variety of possible positions.

(2) Dialogic contraction covers meanings that try to contract the dialogic space between writer and reader. They aim at excluding dialogic alternatives or at constraining said alternatives in a communicative exchange. These contracting meanings are divided into two categories: disclaim and proclaim:

(a) Disclaim occurs when the textual voice is in disagreement or rejects some contrary position. Some disclaim structures include negation and concession.

(b) Proclaim takes place when some formulations restrict the scope of dialogic alternatives. It includes three categories: concur, where the writer seems to agree with his/her dialogic partner; endorsement, where the authorial voice takes responsibility for the cited source; and pronounce, which introduces emphasis or overt intervention of the authorial voice.

3. The system of graduation is interested in up-scaling and down-scaling meanings, that is to say, the values of attitudes can be raised or lowered (Oteíza and Pinuer, 2013: 48). Graduation offers two types of scalability:

(1) Force, which grades according to intensity or amount. The evaluation of degree of this intensity is called intensification, which is divided into two lexico-grammatical classes: isolating and infusing:

(a) Isolating meanings are realized by an individual item that determines the level of intensity,

(b) In infusing, the up/down scaling is fused by means of a meaning that provides another semantic function.

The semantics of amount is called quantification. It involves scaling linked with amount like size, weight, strength and number; linked with extent, which includes extent covering scope in time and space (how widely distributed or how long lasting), and proximity in time and space (how near, how recent).

(2) Focus, which grades according to prototypicality and the preciseness that establishes limits to a category. It usually applies to categories that are not scalable when they are considered from an experiential point of view. For example, it can up-scale or sharpen a value, or to down-scale or soften the value. The sharpening meanings have also been studied as intensifiers, boosters, and amplifiers. In contrast, softening meanings have been studied under the heading of hedges and vague language (Hyland, 2000).

The historical discourse that I am analysing can be considered as dialogic as far as the authors reveal data that can affect actual, potential or imagined readers (Martin & White 2005: 92). Bearing in mind the interpersonal orientation that can be found in the corpus, I will focus on the heteroglossic devices within the engagement category. In particular, I assess the dialogic expansion formulations in which the entertain and attribute categories are paramount. I will offer some examples belonging to each one of these meanings, and try to relate their use with men's and women's positions. The other categories of attitude, engagement and graduation are not within the scope of this study.

3. Corpus and methodology

The sources used for this study are comprised of 16 texts that range from 1739 to 1893. Only 8 female-authored manuscripts are found in this section of The Coruña Corpus, so I have paired this number with 8 male texts that were similar in theme and chronology. Women's texts amount to 98,585 words and men's ones to 92,180. The table below presents the year when the manuscripts were recorded, the title, the author, and the abbreviation that has been used to identify the source for each example in the analysis of appraisal.

The occurrences for the study of the different categories of dialogic expansion have been established by means of AntConc, a freeware corpus analysis device useful for concordancing and text analysis. I have searched the elements belonging to each possible expression of entertain and attribute and have generated wordlists in the female and male corpus. Then I have made a manual examination in order to ascertain the contextual validity of each expression. The examples of the next section have been chosen as illustration for my analysis.

Table 1. First Sources

Year	Title	Author	Abbreviation
1739	A Voyage to Russia: describing the Laws, Manners, and Customs of that great Empire, as govern'd, at this present, by that excellent Princess, the Czarina. Shewing the Beauty of her Palace, the Grandeur of her Courtiers, the Forms of Building at Petersburgh, and other Places: with several entertaining Adventures, that happened in the Passage by Sea, and Land.	Elizabeth Justice	VTR
1740	The history of the life and reign of the czar Peter the Great, emperor of all Russia, and father of his country.	John Bancks	HLR
1762	The History of Mecklenburgh, from the First Settlement of the Vandals in that Country, to the Present Time; including a Period of about Three Thousand Years.	Sara Scott	HOM
1775	The History of France. From the Commencement of the Reign of Henry III. and the Rise of the Catholic League; to the Peace of Vervins, and the Establishment of the famous Edict of Nantes, in the Reign of Henry IV. Together with the most interesting Events in the History of Europe, during that period.	Walter Anderson	HOF
1788	The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire. Volume the tenth.	Edward Gibbon	HDF
1800	A Narrative of what Passed at Killalla, in the Country of Mayo, and the Parts Adjacent, during the French Invasion in the Summer of 1798	Joseph Stock	NWP
1805	History of the rise, progress, and termination of the American revolution. Interspersed with biographical, political, and moral observations. In three volumes.	Mary Otis Warren	HOR
1810	The History of Spain, from the Earliest Period to the Close of the Year 1809. In two volumes.	John Bigland	HOS
1828	A Short History of Spain. In two volumes.	Maria Callcott	SHS
1833	Memoirs of the Court of King Charles the First. In two volumes.	Lucy Aikin	MOC

1844	The History of Drogheda, with its environs; and an Introductory Memoir of the Dublin and Drogheda Railway. In two volumes.	John D'Alton	HOD
1857	A First History of Greece.	Elizabeth Missing Sewell	FHG
1860	History of the Reign of King Henry IV. King of France and Navarre. In two volumes.	Martha Walker Freer	HRK
1862	The History of Bandon.	George Bennett	HOB
1884	The Early History of Illinois, from its Discovery by the French, in 1673, until its Cession to Great Britain in 1763. Including the Narrative of Marquette's Discovery of the Mississippi.	Sidney Breese	EHI
1893	The Settlement of the Cistercians in England.	Alice M. Cooke	SCE

4. Analysis of texts: dialogic expansion

As said above, the formulations that I examine in this category allow for the male and female authors' inclusion of alternative positions and voices that are represented by means of two main values: entertain and attribute.

4.1. Entertain

The entertain category is usually identified with epistemic modality. Apart from modal auxiliaries such as "may", "could", and "might", Martin and White (2005: 104-105) also include modal adjuncts like "perhaps" and "probably"; modal attributes like "it's possible that" or "it's likely that", and mental verb/attribute projections such "I suspect that", "I think", "I believe", etc. These authors state that the reader interprets these modal occurrences as a gesture that reflects the writer's subjectivity, and that his/her message is one among others that are available in the communicative context. With regards to modality, scholars usually establish a difference between two large semantic domains: deontic or root modality, which is related to obligation, permission and volition; and epistemic modality, which is concerned with possibility, necessity and prediction (Lyons (1977), Palmer (2001), Coates (1995)). In this chapter I follow Marín-Arrese's classification (2009: 30) of modals. This author makes a distinction between effective stance, where she includes the writer's attitude "towards an event, judgements of desirability, intentionality or necessity of the event occurring"; and epistemic stance, where Marín-Arrese (2009: 34) includes the writer's expression of "knowledge about the event or some forms of assessment regarding its potential realization". The most numerous effective stance strategies contain the use of deontic modality and participant-external possibility, whereas epistemic modality is examined within epistemic stance:

4.1.1. Deontic modality

Deontic modality has to do with necessity as obligation ("must") or possibility that occurs as enablement ("may"). Weaker forms of deonticity that indicate advice are "should" and "ought to" (Marín-Arrese, 2009: 30). In this study, only "must" is worth analysing, appearing 25 times in men's texts and 42 times in women's texts:

(1) But to repress insults like these, a few cruisers would have amply sufficed, and it is in the political intrigues of the monarch that we *must* seek adequate causes for the equipment of a fleet (MOC).

4.1.2. Participant-internal and participant-external possibility

Participant-internal possibility refers to the writer's ability to perform the event designated, whereas participant external-possibility regards those circumstances that are external to the writer (Marín-Arrese, 2009: 31). The corpus only presents four cases of participant-internal possibility in men's texts that belong to the same author, and just one in the case of women, which I show below as well:

(2) His coadjutor, Sir Francis Slingsby, seems to have been one of the drones of the session; for we *can* only find mention of him on two occasions (…) (HOB).

(3) But, as to my part, having only view'd those of Peterhuff, so I *can* only say they are so fine, as they are beyond my capacity to give a description of (VTR).

In contrast, the use of participant-external possibility is more numerous especially in women's texts, in which I encounter 20 examples and only one in men's texts. In the following example, a female author wonders about what can befall a man who has asked for help but is not aided. Apart from the modal "can", the expression "it appears" underlines how the author has acquired the information. Although this structure is examined in the section of epistemic stance below, women's usage of this verbal construction is scarce:

(4) *It appears* that Waldemar conceived no great hopes of effectual assistance from these Princes, since he applied to other powers; and indeed what service *can* a man who abandons himself, reasonably expect from others (HOM).

4.1.3 Epistemic modality

This type of modality refers to the writer's assessment of the uttered proposition in terms of different degrees of certainty that consider its validity. This certainty is usually typified as high certainty or necessity, with modals like "must" and "cannot"; medium certainty or probability, with modals such as "will", "would" and "should"; and low certainty or possibility, with modals such as "may", "might" and "could" (Marín-Arrese, 2009: 34). In the texts selected, it is noteworthy a greater use of epistemic modals on women's part as regards to the inclusion of medium and low certainty or possibility. Medium modality is mainly represented by means of "will", which occurs 16 times in the male texts and 42 times in the female ones:

(5) A detail of the sufferings of one family *will* evince the wretched situation of all in that province who had the courage to complain of the measures of administration, or indulged a favourable opinion of the exertions of the other colonies (HOR).

Low certainty or possibility is depicted by means of three main modal auxiliary verbs: "may", "might" and "could". "May" appears 42 times in men's texts and 55 times in women's texts. Epistemic "may" can refer to present and future oriented uses, and underlines the view that the writer is not certain about the reality or non-reality of some situations (Marín-Arrese, 2009: 35):

(6) We *may* reasonably attribute this proceeding, rather to their dislike to Margaret, than to their attachment to Albert, since it was the only proof they gave of their regard for him, for they made no effort to procure him his liberty (HOM).

With respect to "might", it occurs 75 times in men's texts and 97 in women's ones. This modal involves a more tentative meaning than "may". The example below shows a modal perfect structure wherein "might" highlights the writer's supposition about the general he speaks about:

(7) Curbed in his ambitious views, circumscribed in his appointments, as a general, bereft of half the glory he *might* have acquired in the field, his haughty spirit fell, from indignation, into chagrin and melancholy (…) (HOF)

The last epistemic modal to be considered is "could", which is found 94 times in men's texts and 126 in women's ones. As it happens with "might" above, "could" transmits an uncertain meaning that reveals the author's subjective view:

(8) In his distress the king was reasonably relieved by the Margrave's brother, who hastened to his assistance with what troops he *could* raise (HOM).

It is also worth commenting the use of epistemic adverbs like "perhaps", which appears 16 times in men's texts and 12 times in women's texts; and "probably", which occurs 19 times in men's manuscripts and 14 times in women's ones. In the example below, the adverb "probably" is employed alongside the medium certainty or probability modal "would", which supports the author's hesitant view on the Athenians' character.

(9) He concluded, and *perhaps* rightly, that the Strelitzes were at his devotion to a Man; some out of gratitude for his having indulged them in plundering the City; and Others in hope of making their Fortunes by a Revolution (HLR).

(10) The Spartans, being a slow-moving, cautious people, did not follow up their success as quickly as the Athenians *probably* would have done under the same circumstances (FHG).

4.1.4. Evidential expressions

Martin and White (2005: 110) include evidentials within the grammar of entertain. They refer to these strategies as those propositions that are "construed as contingent and subjectively based as a consequence of being derived via a process of deduction or surmise on the part of the speaker/writer". They further explain that this deducing process makes the proposition in question be part of a group of alternatives that are available to said speaker/writer.

Other definitions regard evidentials as procedures that speakers/writers use to mark the source and reliability of their knowledge (Chafe, 1986: 264), or to express the type of evidence that people have for making factual claims (Anderson, 1986: 273). Willett (1988: 405-406) clarifies that evidentials are built upon a triple system by means of which information can be attested, reported and inferred. Attested information is acquired through the senses and entails a direct way of presenting information, whereas the last two systems represent indirect ways: information is reported when obtained from hearsay or folklore, and inferential information can be marked as relating to observable evidence or mental constructs (logic, intuition, or dreams). Bednarek (2006: 640-644) categorises three main bases of the writer's knowledge, by means of which he/she reports on the record that someone else has said: (1) Hearsay verbs, in which the reported information is conveyed by a 'Sayer' who is different from the writer. (2) Mindsay verbs, which transmit information that is thought, felt or experienced by a 'Senser', who is also different from the writer. (3) Perception verbs like "look", "seem", "appear", which reveal information that is perceived by an 'Experiencer'.

Marín-Arrese (2007: 86-88, 2009) offers a classification of semantic subdomains of evidentiality that makes a distinction between: (1) Perceptual domain, which comprises markers that underline the perceptual aspect of the acquisition of information and state that the writer has direct access to the evidence. Some verbs include "discover", "find", "hear", "observe", "see", "watch",... (2) Cognitive domain, wherein markers emphasise the cognitive basis of the information given by the writer. This domain comprises predicates of belief and/or general knowledge like "believe", "bet", "consider", "doubt", "know", "think",… (3) Communicative domain, which contains performative uses of verbs of communication and involves changes of meaning from the domain of verbal communication to the domain of cognitive processes. Expressions like "that implies" or "that suggests" and verbs like "say" and "tell" can be encountered.

Martin and White (2005: 105) refer to evidence/appearance-based postulations like "it seems", "it appears", "apparently", "the research suggests", and rhetorical or expository questions. The authors also make reference to mental verb/attribute projections like "I think". They quote Halliday (2004) and Palmer (2001) to endorse their opinions about the epistemic character of these structures.

Marín-Arrese (2009: 37-38) inserts these constructions within the epistemic domain but she classifies utterances such as "I think" like cognitive evidentials, which are related with the use of mental state predicates; and structures such as "it seems" and "it appears", which I illustrate below, like experiential evidentials, which stress the perceptual aspect of the acquisition of information. However, none of these constructions is particularly significant in the corpus. For example, "it appears" is encountered in the present form 6 times in men's manuscripts and 5 times in women's ones. The past form "it appeared" occurs twice in men's texts and 4 in women's, and there is 1 with the tentative form "it would appear" in men's case. Likewise, the structure "it seems" appears only 4 times both in men's women's texts. Both types of utterance are regarded indirect perceptual markers that underscore the inferential process, based on observable results, of the author's acquisition of information (Marín-Arrese, 2009: 37):

> (11) *It appear*s from Prynn's narrative of the proceedings against him on account of the Histriomastix, that Noy exhibited considerable reluctance to prosecute (…) (MOC).

(12) Yet *it seems* no story was generally current, and to Marquette is ascribed the glory of and renown of communicating the fact to the world, thus adding another to the many trophies acquired by members of his order in all parts of the globe (EHI).

Another marker that is based on observable evidence is the verb "see", only found in women's texts with 18 occurrences: 6 in the present tense and 12 in the past. The examples in the past all belong to Elizabeth Justice's source. In the instance below, the verbal form "observed" further emphasises the author's description of several prospective brides:

(13) I was not at one of their Weddings; but I *saw* Two or Three that were going to be married: And I *observed* that they were very finely dress'd, their Cloaths very rich, with Ribbons and Flowers in their Hair (…) (VTR).

There are numerous examples of evidential expressions in my corpus that are concerned with hearsay, mindsay and perception verbs. However, they will be examined in the attribute category below since the study of evidentials entails an essential part of the grammar of reported speech and thought that is comprised under that heading.

4.1.5. Enallage of person

The space for dialogic alternatives within the entertain category encompass the employ of some figures of communion or verbal techniques like the enallage of person, aimed at increasing the communion between writer and reader; the erotema or rhetorical question, which does not expect a real response on the reader's part; and the ecphonesis or exclamation, which expresses some type of emotion on the writer's part (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1969: 177-178; Graff and Winn, 2006: 57). Although the authors in this corpus are not keen on questioning, they do make use of the enallage from "I" to "we" as an invitation to unite writer and reader in an inclusive "we" (Fahnestock, 2011: 285-286). It involves the most common pronoun choice in our corpus, occurring 80 times in men's examples and 120 in women's ones:

(14) *We* have seen before that Cyrus had been connected with the affairs of Greece, especially with those of the Spartans, of whose bravery and talent he had in consequence formed a high opinion (FHG).

The use of the first personal pronoun is used 149 times only in the text by Elizabeth Justice, who tells the audience about her journey to Russia. The main feature of this pronoun is to mark personal testimony, since the writer transmits information from her own experience (Fahnestock, 2011: 280).

(15) As *I* had received but a mean and despicable Notion of the Sea, and of all Things that were to be had there, in Respect to Cleanliness; *I* think my Self obliged to relate how agreeably *I* was disappointed (VTR).

In male manuscripts, however, I encounter 20 instances of "I" personal pronouns that belong to different authors. Unlike Justice's employ of this pronoun to indicate personal testimony, men use it to direct their readers through the text. This methodological first person is reinforced with speech act verbs like "I observe", "I question", "I assume", or "I describe":

(16) *I* have already described the fine and curious manufactures of Peloponesus, of linen, silk, and woollen; but the most acceptable of her presents consisted in three hundred beautiful youths, of whom one hundred were eunuchs (HDF).

The other uses of this pronoun correspond to quoted instances of direct speech. Finally, in the enallage from "I" to "you", the writer introduces a direct address when acknowledging the existence of readers. It can be considered an indicator of moral or colloquial language as opposed to the generic "you" that tries to replace the reader for a fictional interlocutor that participates in a particular scenario (Fahnestock, 2011: 281-282). The "you" as direct address is not relevant in our corpus, appearing 7 times in men's texts and 16 times only in Elizabeth Justice's report:

(17) A deputation from the native sons of the soil upon the one hand, bearing their rude offerings to the humble black-gowned missionary of peace and religion on the other. and then imagine *you* hear him stipulating with them as to the terms upon which he would stay with them or go away (…) (EHI).

4.2. Attribute

This category examines those utterances that do not belong to the internal authorial voice of the text but are attributed to an external source. Martin and White (2005: 111-113) add that there are two subcategories within attribution, which they call acknowledge and distancing. In acknowledge, there is not an explicit indication of the position of the authorial voice with respect to the attributed material; in distancing, in contrast, there is an explicit distance of the authorial voice with respect to the attributed material. In our corpus, acknowledgments are predominant. They transmit a dialogic meaning since they relate the uttered proposition with other voices that are external to the writer's own voice but that interact with his/hers. Martin and White (2005: 111) explain that these constructions are usually accomplished through the grammar of direct and indirect reported speech and thought. In the historical discourse that I am considering, both uses of direct and indirect speech entail one possible use among other dialogic choices so as to reflect the authors' points of view. Both males and female writers usually explicit the source of information of the event reported, as in the example below:

(18) Lord Wentworth *seems* to have taken a marked interest in the welfare of Ireland at this time (HOB).

In considering those utterances that are attributed to a person or entity that is relevant for the writer's interpretation, I will distinguish between averral and attribution as two concepts that the reader finds useful to confer more or less credibility to the pieces of information. According to Hunston (2000: 178), "[i]f a piece of language […] is attributed, it is presented as deriving from someone other than the writer. If a piece of language is averred, the writer him/herself speaks". All the examples provided below appear attributed to a specific source, but each author is sole responsible for the whole utterance, that is to say, he/she avers the whole utterance in which the attributed proposition belonging to another source is embedded.

The most significant model of analysis of speech and thought presentation is that devised by Leech and Short (1981), who developed a systematic description of this narrative technique mainly for the

literary discourse. Alongside the inclusion of direct and indirect speech and thought presentation, the authors of this corpus employ the narrator's report of speech and thought. This practice represents a less faithful to the original version than the direct speech, and involves an intrusion of the narratorial voice that is clearly interpreting the historical account. Other times, the narrator's report can be construed as free indirect discourse in that it is sometimes difficult to decide whether it is the writer's voice or the original speaker's one (Jeffries, 2010: 132-133; Jeffries and McIntyre, 2010: 88-89).

The most frequent reporting verbs fall into three large groups. Bearing in mind Bednarek's classification above, I find hearsay verbs like "said" and "declared", mindsay verbs like "thought", and perception verbs like "seemed". The past form is more numerous than the present form in all texts. As to the verb "says", it includes 12 forms of direct speech in women's texts and 9 forms of indirect speech, whereas in men's texts there are 12 occurrences of both direct and indirect speech forms.

> (19) A Jewish traveller, who visited the East in the twelfth century, is lost in his admiration of the Byzantine riches. "It is here,", *says* Benjamin of Tudela, "in the queen of cities, that the tributes of the Greek empire are annually deposited, and the lofty towers are filled with precious magazines of silk, purple and gold (…)" (HDF).

The past tense "said" presents a higher amount of direct speech examples, in an attempt perhaps to be as faithful to the original source as possible. Direct speech forms appear 19 times in female texts and 15 in male ones; in contrast, I find 9 indirect speech forms in female texts and 11 in male ones:

> (20) The elders counselled the latter, when they looked on the pale and famished faces of the women and children. Still Muza *said* it was time enough to yield when all was gone when all was gone (…) (SHS).

The verb "declared" is mostly encountered in indirect speech forms that are also combined with the narrator's report of speech. It appears 6 times in male texts and 10 in female texts:

> (21) Both Stephen and Matilda *declared* themselves to have given and confirmed the endowment of the latter (SCE).

As regards to the mindsay verb "thought", only indirect forms of presentation are found. Indeed, it would be strange to find a verbatim transcription of someone's thoughts in a non-fiction discourse like this one. "Thought" is attributed 10 times in men's texts and 21 times in women's ones. As it happens with hearsay verbs, the authors also make use of the narrator's report of thought so as to summarise or interpret the manuscript:

> (22) This Prince, who had lived at continual variance with his subjects, was sensible that he had not power to resist an invader, and therefore *thought* it most advisable to save something out of the destruction with which he was threatened (HOM).

Finally, the perception verb "seemed" occurs 21 times in men's texts and 27 in women's. This verb is inserted within the mental perception or inference category (Bednarek, 2006: 640):

> (23) His death, therefore, on the day of Killalla, was the only one at the news of which the whole town *seemed* to concur in rejoicing; nor was the manner of it dissimilar from his life (NWP).

In this attribute section, Martin and White (2005: 111) also analyse the adverbial adjunct "according to" that ascribes the information to something or someone different from the author. Their use is very similar in male and female texts, with 11 and 12 occurrences respectively:

> (24) The Roman Catholic faith was the established religion of the country, yet the Canadians were in all respects governed *according to* the laws of England, until the Quebec bill, the subject of much political disunion in England, passed into an act, in one thousand seven hundred and seventy four (HOR).

Despite a major prevalence of attribute acknowledgement instances, some distancing formulations can be also examined. Unlike acknowledgements, the authorial voice of distancing structures does not take responsibility for the proposition, thus maximising the space for dialogic options (Martin and White, 2005: 114). Here I underscore the passive constructions "be said" and "be thought", which have a similar frequency in both female and male texts. In this respect, in the male corpus I distinguish 9 occurrences of "it is said", 5 in the past with "it was said" and 1 form with the modal "it could not be said"; in the female corpus I identify 6 examples of "it is said", 7 cases of "it was said", and 3 forms with "it has been said". In the passage below, the construction is reinforced by the direct speech presentation inserted between quotations, which further distances the author's position from the attributed proposition:

> (25) By the wits, *it was said*, "that the Cardinal's behaviour and appearance resembled that of an old trained camel, that stoops down to receive the arbitrary load of his driver, though more than sufficient to fix him to the ground" (HOF).

As to the examples with the mindsay "be thought", in the male texts there is 1 incidence of "it is thought" and 5 five cases of "it was thought"; in the female texts there are 2 instances with "it is thought", 5 using "it was thought" and 1 with "it might be thought". This last construction with the modal "might" strengthens the author's tentativeness in her explanation of the clergy's interests as opposed to those of London's citizens:

> (26) More cogent arguments, *it might be thought*, could not readily be found for the separation of two offices, than those which are here suggested for their union! (MOC).

The distancing manoeuvre is here combined with the writer's final exclamation that suggests the establishment of some communion with the audience. Since the whole sentence and not just a word is punctuated, the female author's lamentation seems provoked by a sense of impotence before the events reported rather than a single outcry of emotion (Fahnestock, 2011: 267).

5. Discussion of results

After the analysis of engagement category that has focused on the dialogic expansive options of entertain and attribute, I can draw attention to some differences in interpersonal orientation between male and female texts as regards to how their authors interpret the past and how they address their audience.

In the entertain category, for example, women exhibit a major occurrence of the expressions examined. Within the effective stance, deontic modality is more significant in women's texts in the case of "must", which suggests a higher need of expressing obligation than men's. The same happens with the use of participant-external possibility, which is also more numerous in females and which may obey to a more cautious view of the facts and events exposed during their evaluation. With respect to epistemic stance, women also make a more abundant use of medium and low certainty or possibility modal verbs like "will", "may", "might" and "could". In this respect, they show a more dubious disposition in their interpretation of their historical version and it corresponds to readers to determine the veracity of the content. Regarding the use of evidential expressions like the experiential evidentials "it seems" and "it appears", it is not important in any of the female and male sources. However, the enallage of person from "I" to "we" is worth commenting as to the establishment of communion between the authors and their audience. The use of the first personal pronoun so as to keep the readers' attention is more frequent in men's sources, whereas the inclusion of "we" as the most repeated pronoun in both genders also presents a greater incidence in women's texts.

In the entertain category, related to the grammar of speech and thought presentation, no major differences are found between men and women. There is a preponderance of acknowledgement values wherein the writer's voice is not overtly positioned next to the attributed proposition. However, the writer avers the whole utterance where said propositions are inserted. Three main groups of verbs are highlighted both in male and female sources: hearsay, mindsay and perception verbs. The practice of direct and indirect discourse presentation is fused with the narrator's report of speech and thought and, on occasions, this report can be read as free indirect discourse illustrations. Furthermore, this form of recounting the historical events portrays the writer as interpreter rather than mere recorder, and it becomes a procedure aligned with the dialogic expansion that is evaluated in this study. The past tense of hearsay verbs like "said" and "declared" is more common than their present form counterparts. In addition, "declared" is mostly found in indirect forms of speech. The mindsay verb "thought" in the past is only found with indirect ways of presentation. Women's examples containing this verb double men's ones, thus endorsing females' role as commentators and even critics of the historical accounts. Some distancing expressions within the attribute category which include passive verbal structures like "is/was said" and "is/was/might thought" have a similar representation in male and female sources. These expressions that separate the author's voice from the attributed propositions are scarce as compared with the acknowledgment examples.

6. Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to examine 16 female and male historical manuscripts belonging to The Coruña Corpus. The analysis has been made from the perspective of Appraisal, a theory of evaluation of language that is concerned with the interpersonal in language and how authors position themselves with respect to their texts and the readers who they address. The historical discourse is a suitable discipline for the study of appraisal because it is built upon diverse interpretations. In light of this, the appraisal model can provide the necessary tools for the study of those linguistic strategies employed to report the narratives of the past and evaluate their authors' attitude within the historical context.

The analysis has mainly attended to the engagement category, which is concerned with the identification of dialogic positions which are open to specific assessments. These positions follow a monoglossic or heteroglossic orientation according to which writers recognise or not the existence of dialogistic alternatives. Once established the heteroglossic value of the texts under study, I have then focused on the dialogic expansion that allows for the use of diverse positions and voices. Two meanings have been examined: 'entertain' and 'attribute'.

Within entertain expressions, female texts show a higher use of dialogic options than male ones. Women include, for example, more epistemic, possibility and deontic modal verbs in their reports, which suggests a more subjective trait in their versions of history. Similarly, they employ the personal pronoun "we" on more occasions in an attempt to create a sense of communion with her audience. Within attribute expressions, in contrast, more similar results can be observed. Both men and women employ acknowledgement utterances that convey attributed propositions of external voices. They provide numerous instances of speech and thought presentation of hearsay, mindsay and perception verbs. The intrusion of the narrator's voice and the plausible interpretation of many utterances as indirect forms of speech support writers' voices as interpreters that try to recognise and express an array of points of view, attitudes and beliefs in solidarity with their audience.

Further research can consider the analysis of dialogic contraction options within the engagement category. Likewise, the systems of attitude and graduation can be also attempted in the study of appraisal of historical discourse.

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A matter of opinion:

Stancetaking in Late Modern English historiography

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Abstract: This contribution is a preliminary study in historical pragmatics, aiming to discuss the main strategies employed in CHET for the expression of stance in relation to events and people. In particular, the focus is on methodological issues concerning the analysis of greater or lesser personalization and of expressions of (un)certainty and evaluation, understood as essential strategies to convey point of view in acceptable ways within the cultural framework in which individual works were published. After a brief overview of significant caveats in studies of historiography in a linguistic perspective, my analysis will consider the samples in CHET as instances of Late Modern English academic writing; where applicable, comparisons will be made with similar data in CEPhiT.

Keywords: stance-taking, modality, pragmatics, Late Modern English, historiography.

1. Introduction

Any discussion of essays, treatises, articles or indeed textbooks on history has to consider that such texts are seldom neutral, no matter how objective they purport to be: not only are they a more or less direct expression of their authors' views and experiences, but they are also a function of what concepts of historiography were viable in the cultural framework of the times in which they appeared.

This does not mean that they unreliable, but simply that they ought to be studied paying great attention to issues that might appear to be marginal for linguistic analysis, though in fact they are not; for instance, it is important to be aware of the author's own biography and of the time depth of the text: if the author is an eye-witness, this may result in a kind of 'proprietor' attitude which turns personal experience of the events into the only valid source of information and may skew the evaluative perspective; on the other hand, more or less distant commentators may be more or less militant or indeed revisionist, which may again bias interpretation. It is therefore crucial to understand the context in which the texts were written, what readers they addressed, how authors presented themselves, and what social, political, and cultural background they actually had.

Such issues are not unfamiliar even to non-experts, among whom clichés may circulate like 'it is the winners who write history', but in actual fact it cannot be denied that historical events, developments, and indeed protagonists, have been given greater or lesser prominence by different authors at different points in time. If we think of the twentieth century and consider what representations have been offered of the Civil Rights movement in the US, of the history of Native Americans, or even of Women's Liberation movements, we see that many voices have actually been "hidden from history"

(Rowbotham 1973): it was only with the advent of new approaches to social history in the late 1960s and 1970s that a different perspective began to be taken into consideration, in an attempt to finally shed light on people and events beyond what had been canonical until then.[1]

Narrations centred on long lists of kings and generals, wars and conquests certainly catered for patriotic audiences. However, this approach to historiography became the object of satire in a small book published in 1930, Walter Carruthers Sellar and Robert Julian Yeatman's *1066 and All That*, a parody of history texts of the Late Modern period presenting a (predictably) very Anglo-centric, top-down view of British history through brief annotations, which in many cases had first appeared in the well-known satirical magazine *Punch* (see Dossena, in preparation). After one world war and almost on the brink of another, the recounting of incessant pomp and circumstance was beginning to look threadbare.

Against this background, a study of historiography in Late Modern times, such as the one enabled by CHET (see Alonso-Almeida, this volume) thus becomes all the more important for an analysis of the ways in which linguistic strategies are employed to convey evaluations, express arguments, and – as a result – to attempt persuasion, at a point in time when historical narration could still be less than objective and thus function as a powerful tool of political propaganda.

In this study I will present an overview of what main strategies appear to be at work in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts for the expression of stance,[2] by focussing mainly on reporting verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. Space constraints do not permit further elements to be taken into consideration here; nonetheless, these items may provide useful starting points for more in-depth linguistic reflection, on account of their relative transparency.

After an overview of title pages, in which stance concerning the texts themselves is conveyed, I will examine the samples in CHET, identifying possible links with other (supposedly) purely informative textbooks, and more decidedly argumentative texts, such as pamphlets; as for the texts themselves, special attention will be paid to the comparisons that may be made with similar data in CEPhiT (Dossena 2016a).

2. Studying stance in CHET: some initial considerations

It is first of all important to mention that in CHET different text types are included: in the 18th-century section there are mostly treatises (14), but also essays (3), a biography, a travelogue and a 'narrative'; in the 19th-century section, instead, there are again mostly treatises (14), but also teaching materials: two lectures and two textbooks, to which are added a biographical catalogue and a journal article. This greater attention to secondary genres, i.e. genres addressing 'future' experts, i.e. students of the discipline, or even lay audiences, rather than other scholars, may prove important when

[1] On this point see also Cartosio (2016), who discusses 19th-century histories of the American West in relation to the intersection of historical narrations from different points of view and artistic representation.

[2] In this study my understanding of 'stance' as the writers' ideological and epistemological positioning in relation to readers and topics relies essentially on the discussion in Hunston and Thompson (2000); see also Hyland (1998).

analyzing strategies that convey persuasiveness, as peers may need to be convinced of the validity of an argument in more complex ways than novices or indeed general readers.

In the 19th-century section there is also greater variety both in terms of authors (six women as opposed to two in the 18th-century section) and in terms of place of publication. While in the 18th-century section, out of twenty texts making up the sample, only two were published in the US, two in Ireland, and two in Scotland, whereas the majority were published in England, in the 19th-century section three texts were published in the US, two in Canada, four in Ireland, and one in Scotland, leaving 50% of the sample for texts published in England.

Numbers are clearly too small to attempt generalizations, but this may suggest a potentially fruitful line of further investigation when larger corpora become available. In what follows I will restrict my analysis to the samples in CHET and, for reasons of comparability, quantitative data will only be provided for CHET and CEPhiT, while bearing in mind that, in any case, we are looking at different corpora, in which text types, albeit similar, addressed different issues and, as a result, also different audiences. The first part of my study concerns titlepages, in which stance is conveyed even before readers do access the actual texts; stance in the presentation of contents will feature in the next subsection.

2.1. Titlepages

An analysis of stance may take titlepages as its starting point, as they are the first textual element designed to draw the attention of potential readers and ideally elicit their sympathetic understanding of the contents under discussion. The keywords employed in titlepages may therefore be crucial in this respect, since they set the tone for what readers may assume to find in the text itself.

As regards some of the most interesting evaluative keywords in titles, we see that they feature much more prominently in the 18th-century section, where we come across distinctly argumentative expressions, such as the following:

(1) *An historical essay, […]. Wherein the gross mistakes of a late book, […] are exposed*. (Anderson 1705)

(2) *A Genealogical Hiſtory of the Royal and Illuſtrious Family of the Stewarts, […]: Containing the Deſcent, Original Creations, and moſt Remarkable Actions of their reſpective Anceſtors* (Crawfurd 1710)

(3) *A concise, historical view of the perils, hardships, difficulties and discouragements which have attended the planting and progressive improvements of New-England; with a particular account of its long and destructive wars, expensive expeditions, &c.* (Adams 1770)

These titles are distinctly reminiscent of the often vociferous tone of political and religious pamphlets (see Brownlees 2006 and 2009; Dossena 2003 and 2006), in which the discursive strategy of animadversion was outlined in title pages that summarized the main point of view presented by the (often anonymous) authors – see the examples below, all dating from the turn of Late Modern times:

- *A Defence of the Scots Settlement at Darien*. With an Answer to the Spanish Memorial against it. (1699).
- *The Defence of the Scots Settlement at Darien, Answered, Paragraph by Paragraph* (1699)
- *A Defence of the Scots Abdicating Darien*: *Including an Answer to the Defence of the Scots Settlement there*. (1700)

- *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Miscarriage of the Scots Colony at Darien. Or an Answer to a Libel entituled A Defence of the Scots Abdicating Darien.* (1700)
- *A Short Vindication of Phil. Scot's Defence of the Scots Abdicating Darien*: *Being in Answer to the Challenge of the Author of the Defence of that Settlement, […]. With a Prefatory Reply, to the False and Scurrillous Aspersions, of the New Author of, The Just and Modest Vindication, &c.* (1700)

It may seem surprising, at least for twenty-first century readers, to see that controversy could be presented so directly in purportedly academic texts. However, CHET may be providing us with a fruitful instance of language change in progress, as nineteenth-century title pages present contents in much less marked ways, thus beginning to approximate the apparent neutrality and objectivity of present-day supposedly 'faceless' academic discourse (Biber and Finegan 1988: 3-5) – see the following examples of treatise titles:

(4) *A Short history of Spain* (Callcott 1828)

(5) *Confederation; or, The Political and Parliamentary History of Canada, from the Conference at Quebec, in October, 1864, to the Admission of British Columbia, in July, 1871* (Gray 1872)

(6) *The History of the Foreign Policy of Great Britain* (Burrows 1895)

On the other hand, title pages included more attention-seeking devices when their persuasive and promotional quality was more important to ensure the success of the book. In a recent study (Dossena 2016b), the title pages of books targeting prospective emigrants to Canada and the US have been shown to construe their credibility relying on skilful uses of qualifiers meant to emphasize the authors' direct experience and their friendly, supportive attitude to often specific groups of readers, such as in the following instances:

- Rolph, Thomas, 1820?-1883. *The emigrant's manual: particularly addressed to the industrious classes [...]*. London: Cunningham & Mortimer, [1843?].
- Delano, Alonzo. *Life on the plains and among the diggings; being scenes and adventures of an overland journey to California: with particular incidents of the route, mistakes and sufferings of the emigrants, the Indian tribes, the present and future of the great West.* New York: Miller, Orton & co., 1857.

Textbooks, instead, a genre which does not feature in the 18th-century section of CHET, appear to have a fairly neutral, purely descriptive structure, such as

(7) *Medieval history* (Masson 1855)
(8) *A first history of Greece* (Sewell 1857)

This descriptive outline of contents is actually found in other instances of 19th-century textbooks, such as those digitized in the Nietz Collection of 19th-century schoolbooks:

- *A history of the United States of America: on a plan adapted to the capacity of youth, and designed to aid the memory by systematick arrangement and interesting associations: illustrated by engravings* (Goodrich 1822)
- *A brief history of ancient, mediaeval, and modern peoples, with some account of their monuments, institutions, arts, manners, and customs* (Steele 1883)

Their promotional quality, if any, relies on indications of accessibility – i.e., that the text is of a suitable level for its envisaged readers – completeness, conciseness, and possibly the integration of

illustrations, generally in the form of engravings, such as we find in one instance in CHET, a biographical catalogue concerning Salisbury Cathedral:

(9) The history and antiquities of the cathedral church of Salisbury; illustrated with a series of engravings, of views, elevations, plans, and details of that edifice: also etchings of the ancient monuments and sculpture: including biographical anecdotes of the bishops, and other eminent persons connected with the church. (Britton 1814)

Texts like the one from which (9) is taken, however, would also need qualification before they can be compared with history books in the present-day sense, as the antiquarian fashion that was so pervasive in Late Modern times often presented buildings and even scenery of historical relevance in a somewhat romanticized way, highlighting what was 'sublime' or 'picturesque', i.e., suited to the readers' taste for idealized antiquity (Dossena 2015) – see the following examples from CHET texts published in the first half of the 19th century:

(10) Salisbury Cathedral is popularly regarded as the finest church in England; […]. It is customary for visitors to approach it from the east; and having reached the north-east angle of the enclosed cemetery, where the whole edifice is commanded at a single glance, the effect is pleasingly sublime. PLATE II. shows it from this station, where it constitutes at once a beautiful and picturesque mass. (Britton 1814)

(11) It is not necessary to the subject of this memoir to enter upon any minute investigation of the truth of historical traditions referring to times so remote: they are adduced here solely as evidences of the extreme antiquity assigned by the Bards to Tara as a regal residence; (Petrie 1839)

Whether the books were of actual historical interest or witnesses of a more romanticized attitude to the past is therefore something to be gleaned from a closer reading of the text. In what follows, both these and other samples in CHET will be analysed from this perspective.

2.2. Text samples

As I mentioned above, when actual texts are taken into consideration, it may be fruitful to compare findings with those in CEPhiT (Dossena 2016a), as the two corpora were compiled following the same methodological principles, as they are part of a much larger project for the creation of corpora designed for the diachronic study of specialized discourse.

Within the cultural framework of Late Modern times the texts at hand seem to have been of varying relevance: the *English Short Title Catalogue* lists more than 3000 texts published between 1700 and 1899 with the element 'philosoph*' (i.e., 'philosophy' or 'philosophical') in the title: 271 in Scotland and 3025 in England (92% of the total, 230 of which occur in *Philosophical Transactions*). As for 'scien*' (i.e., 'science', 'sciences' or 'scientific'), there are 3,512 entries for England (94% of the total) and 230 for Scotland; while the total number increases, owing to a slight increase in the number of texts of scientific interest published in England, percentages are similar.

Within the same two centuries, the *English Short Title Catalogue* lists more than 19,000 texts published in English with the element 'histor*' (i.e., 'history' or 'historical') in the title: 1,362 in Scotland, 1,814 in Ireland, ca. 15,000 in England (nearly 80% of the total), and 1,220 in the US, though surprisingly none in Canada, despite what is actually found in CHET.

These figures, however, include instances in which the word 'history' is used in the full title of literary texts, such as in Samuel Richardson's *The pleasing history of Pamela, or Virtue rewarded.* (1773-75?), while filtering results using the tag 'literature' in the field labelled 'genre' may still yield historical works, such as *An abridgement of English history, from the Conquest to the present reign.[...]. For the juvenile; or, child's library* (1800?).

Generalizations based on such findings would therefore need much closer investigation. In the analyses presented below only results based on samples in CHET and CEPhiT will be discussed in terms of normalized figures per 10,000 words, bearing in mind that there are, in any case, significant differences between the two corpora; for instance, in CEPhiT authors appear to take responsibility for their arguments more directly, although authorial presence is seen to decrease in Late Modern scientific discourse (Lewis 2012: 906), whereas CHET includes more instances of quoted or reported speech; as a result, the expression of stance is more mediated in the latter corpus, where propositions may be distanced by the fact that they are in fact a third party's statements and considerations, not the author's.

This important difference between CEPhiT and CHET is seen in the following overview of quantitative findings concerning reporting verbs – see Table 1 below:

Table 1. Frequency of reporting verbs in CEPhiT and CHET

Reporting verbs	**CEPhiT**		**CHET**	
Item	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**
Affirm	89	*2.23*	16	*0.39*
Answer (v.+n.)	87	*2.18*	145	*3.49*
Argue	48	*1.20*	9	*0.22*
Ask	50	*1.25*	47	*1.13*
Assume	83	*2.08*	54	*1.30*
Claim (v.+n.)	37	*0.93*	98	*2.36*
Conclude	79	*1.98*	81	*1.95*
Define	45	*1.13*	10	*0.24*
Demonstrate	18	*0.45*	7	*0.17*
Deny	91	*2.28*	27	*0.65*
Prove	166	*4.15*	119	*2.87*
Refute	9	*0.23*	3	*0.07*
Reply	20	*0.50*	61	*1.47*
Say	287	*7.18*	653	*15.74*
Show	83	*2.08*	37	*0.89*

As seen in Table 1, in CEPhiT verbs like *prove*, *affirm* and *conclude*, i.e. verbs underpinning scientific argumentation, are much more frequent than in CHET, where verbs introducing dialogue, such as *say*, *answer* and *reply*, illustrate the kind of interaction on the basis of which historical events may unfold, or present the reported opinions of sources – see the following examples:

(12) he hath heard John Pykas, and Henry Raylond ſay, […], in this Deponent's Houſe, and in Preſence aforeſaid, that we ſhould pray only to God, and to no Saints. (Strype 1721)

(13) Regulus, in the progreſs of his conqueſts, encamping on the banks of the Bagrada, […], is ſaid by many authors to have met there with a monſtrous ſerpent of 120 foot long, (Hooke 1745)

This attention to speeches, claims and answers also makes a study of personal pronoun usage hardly viable, as frequencies would not indicate greater or lesser (de)personalization on the part of the authors, since instances of <I> or <we> would not necessarily refer to the writer, but may feature in quoted speech: in order to conduct this kind of analysis, the text would need to be tagged in ways that are not available yet.

Interestingly, if we focus on the semantic value and polarity of items, in CEPhiT *refute* and *deny* appear to be more frequent than *affirm*, which may be indicative of the argumentative nature of the texts. Indeed, argument implies the challenge of views which are held to be *erroneous* or *incorrect* – very important qualifiers which, however, occur less frequently than *absurd*, *inconsistent* and *unreasonable*. In CHET, instead, greater attention appears to be paid to the value of lands or other objects and the importance of events and acts, hence the higher frequency of *remarkable* and *valuable* (see Table 2).

Table 2. Frequency of adjectives in CEPhiT and CHET[3]

Adjectives	**CEPhiT**		**CHET**	
Item	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**
Absurd	80	*2.00*	6	*0.14*
Actual	41	*1.03*	9	*0.22*
Apparent	71	*1.78*	16	*0.39*
Authoritative	3	*0.08*	2	*0.05*
Certain	448	*11.20*	140	*3.37*
Clear	81	*2.03*	30	*0.72*
Consistent	18	*0.45*	10	*0.24*
Contradictory	6	*0.15*	2	*0.05*
Correct (adj+v)	25	*0.63*	25	*0.60*
Definite	39	*0.98*	5	*0.12*
Deliberate	10	*0.25*	3	*0.07*
Enlightened	17	*0.43*	6	*0.14*
Erroneous	23	*0.58*	6	*0.14*
Evident	114	*2.85*	36	*0.87*
Experimental	11	*0.28*	1	*0.02*
False	25	*0.63*	28	*0.67*
Hypothetical	8	*0.20*	0	*0.00*
Inconceivable	20	*0.50*	0	*0.00*
Inconsiderable	7	*0.18*	11	*0.27*
Inconsistent	46	*1.15*	10	*0.24*
Incontestable	1	*0.03*	1	*0.02*
Incontrovertible	0	*0.00*	0	*0.00*
Incorrect	1	*0.03*	1	*0.02*
Inductive	29	*0.73*	0	*0.00*
Informed (adj+v)	7	*0.18*	33	*0.80*
Intelligible	23	*0.58*	5	*0.12*
Obscure	16	*0.40*	13	*0.31*
Plain	67	*1.68*	40	*0.96*
Preposterous	1	*0.03*	0	*0.00*
Proper	137	*3.43*	67	*1.61*

[3] Comparative and superlative forms are counted together with zero forms.

Reasonable	13	*0.33*	13	*0.31*
Remarkable	30	*0.75*	81	*1.95*
Speculative	22	*0.55*	0	*0.00*
True	374	*9.35*	99	*2.39*
Unconditional	0	*0.00*	0	*0.00*
Unconditioned	27	*0.68*	0	*0.00*
Undeniable	6	*0.15*	0	*0.00*
Unintelligible	8	*0.20*	1	*0.02*
Unquestionable	3	*0.08*	2	*0.05*
Unreasonable	26	*0.65*	5	*0.12*
Unrivalled	3	*0.08*	2	*0.05*
Unthinkable	3	*0.08*	0	*0.00*
Valuable	27	*0.68*	45	*1.08*
Wrong	61	*1.53*	15	*0.36*

In both corpora, however, what is *true*, *false*, *certain* or *evident* plays a very important role in the (re)presentation of contents. While it could be easy to classify such qualifiers also on account of their epistemic value, it should be remembered that this is not always so straightforward as their surface value might lead readers to conclude: as Silver (2003) has shown, the interpretation of an adjective like *evident* may require a very close reading of the text, in order to assess its actual value as a hedge or a booster. The examples that follow present occurrences in which both apparently objective and more subjective evaluations are offered, using the same adjective – see (14a, 15a, and 16a) and (14b, 15b, and 16b) respectively (added emphasis):

(14a) His personal appearance was striking, and he was **remarkable** for his strength and powers of endurance. (Kingsford 1887)

(14b) It is **remarkable** that he should have achieved such a measure of success at a time when his basis of operations, […], was by no means in the condition which was required in order that he might use those weapons with their full power. (Burrows 1895)

(15a) The work called the Teagasc Riogh has been ascribed to Cormac by the Irish universally from a very remote period, and whether it be his or not, it is certainly one of the most ancient and **valuable** documents preserved in the language. (Petrie 1839)

(15b) Some years before, in 1846, by the Oregon Treaty, large portions of this **valuable** country had been given away by the British Government, in utter ignorance of its value, […], sacrificing the national character of great tracts for a mere temporary convenience, and producing no lasting accord with the country to which the concession was made. (Gray 1872)

(16a) Such being the state of this literary warfare, it is **evident** that much must have been left undetermined, and that a good deal still remains to be atchieved [sic] and many cool dispassionate efforts made, before criticism can have that "secure anchorage" so much to be wished for; (Hardiman 1820)

(16b) It is **evident** to my mind that Champlain dated the de Maisonneuve whom he met from the place whence he sailed. (Kingsford 1887)

Indeed, the subjectivity of *evident* in (16b) is stressed by the authorial comment *to my mind*, which stresses the personal approach to discourse and points to the significance of adverbials co-occurring in the text (see Dossena 2001a and 2001b). In these cases meaning is generally reinforced: for instance, in CEPhiT appeals to reason and logic can be emphasized by adverbs like *unquestionably*, *certainly*, and *unavoidably*. CHET, instead, appears to pay greater attention to the possibility or probability of an event – see Table 3:

Table 3. Frequency of adverbs in CEPhiT and CHET

Adverbs	**CEPhiT**		**CHET**	
Item	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**	**Number**	**Normalized (per 10,000 words)**
Absolutely	18	*0.45*	20	*0.48*
Actually	29	*0.73*	16	*0.39*
Admirably	4	*0.10*	1	*0.02*
Apparently	31	*0.78*	17	*0.41*
Assuredly	2	*0.05*	0	*0.00*
Certainly	83	*2.08*	42	*1.01*
Clearly	64	*1.60*	13	*0.31*
Constantly	18	*0.45*	25	*0.60*
Deliberately	4	*0.10*	2	*0.05*
Demonstrably	1	*0.03*	0	*0.00*
Demonstratively	1	*0.03*	1	*0.02*
Duly	14	*0.35*	11	*0.27*
Entirely	87	*2.18*	53	*1.28*
Evidently	43	*1.08*	14	*0.34*
Exactly	53	*1.33*	19	*0.46*
Hardly	48	*1.20*	19	*0.46*
Incontrovertibly	0	*0.00*	1	*0.02*
Indeed	276	*6.90*	105	*2.53*
Infallibly	5	*0.12*	1	*0.02*
Invariably	28	*0.70*	5	*0.12*
Justly	56	*1.40*	29	*0.70*
Lawfully	1	*0.02*	1	*0.02*
Legally	0	*0.00*	1	*0.02*
Necessarily	179	*4.46*	13	*0.31*
Perhaps	212	*5.30*	81	*1.95*
Plainly	34	*0.85*	16	*0.39*
Possibly	13	*0.33*	19	*0.46*
Precisely	29	*0.73*	4	*0.10*
Probably	64	*1.60*	88	*2.12*
Properly	70	*1.75*	22	*0.53*
Purely	43	*1.08*	7	*0.17*
Quite	81	*2.03*	42	*1.01*
Reasonably	17	*0.43*	14	*0.34*
Seemingly	4	*0.10*	3	*0.07*
Simply	70	*1.75*	11	*0.27*
Speculatively	3	*0.08*	0	*0.00*
Strictly	29	*0.73*	15	*0.36*
Surely	58	*1.45*	9	*0.22*
Totally	29	*0.73*	20	*0.48*
Truly	71	*1.78*	17	*0.41*

Unavoidably	9	*0.23*	1	*0.02*
Undoubtedly	22	*0.55*	18	*0.43*
Unquestionably	13	*0.33*	1	*0.02*
Verily	1	*0.02*	1	*0.02*
Visibly	2	*0.05*	1	*0.02*
Voluntarily	4	*0.10*	3	*0.07*
Wholly	68	*1.70*	29	*0.70*
Wilfully	0	*0.00*	1	*0.02*
Willingly	6	*0.15*	8	*0.19*
Wittingly	0	*0.00*	0	*0.00*
Zealously	1	*0.03*	6	*0.14*

In general, however, adverbials seem to play a lesser role in CHET than in CEPhiT, as shown by their lower frequencies; when they do occur more frequently, it is either to evaluate constancy, zeal and volition, positive qualities in the assessment of historical events and characters, or to express epistemic possibility, whereas necessity features more prominently in scientific discourse – see the examples below:

(17) This prelate was highly esteemed by King Henry VII., whose title and interest he constantly defended against Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck. (Bennett 1862)

(18) the citizens of Lincoln, being zealouſly attached to the king's party, ſent him word, that the caſtle was ſo negligently guarded, that he might eaſily obtain poſſeſſion of it. (Gifford 1790)

(19) he would moſt willingly perform what was in his power, by daily praying to God to give ſucceſs to his Majeſty's government (Birch 1760)

Like in CEPhiT, also in CHET views can be corrected using *in truth, in fact, actually* or *properly*; in such cases, authors present what is alleged to be a better assessment or description of the phenomena at hand – see the following quotations:

(20) Such in fact was the excessive expense thus incurred by many of the Scottish nobles, […], as to bring upon them embarrassments the chagrin of which has been suggested as one of the motives of that disaffection to their prince […]: But in truth the general causes of this altered state of feeling lay far deeper. (Aikin 1833)

(21) In the mean time, without collecting all the matter relating to the history of Tara, which would in fact be nothing less than a history of Ireland, it will be necessary, for the satisfaction of the reader, and the completeness of this memoir, to bring forward the notices of the more remarkable events in connexion with its early state, whether apparently authentic or apocryphal, without minutely canvassing their claims to credibility. (Petrie 1839)

(22) Their opinion was so unfavourable, that Isabella's patronage, if not actually withdrawn, was indefinitely deferred; (Callcott 1828)

(23) God was pleaſed to lend them ſeveral children. It may properly be ſaid lend, for but one of them lived to man's eſtate, who was named Giles. (Cornish 1780)

Another similarity with CEPhiT is the fact that a virtual dialogue with the reader is established, often in fairly direct ways: in CHET *reader(s)* are mentioned 47 times, often with qualifiers meant to enhance their positive face and/or pre-empt potential criticism by means of modesty moves, as in the instances below, which remind us that writing is seldom, if ever, solipsistic:

(24) I do not in the leaſt doubt but that they will be agreeable and entertaining to my candid Readers.(Justice 1739)

(25) In these notices there is nothing likely to be untrue; but […] the modern historians […] have collected so much minute historical details as must excite considerable doubts in the minds of unprejudiced readers (Petrie 1839)

(26) becauſe ſome may have the Curioſity to know ſomewhat concerning the Templars, I ſhall furniſh my Reader with the Hiſtory of them, hoping he'll pardon the Digreſſion. (Crawfurd 1710)

3. Concluding remarks

This preliminary study, meant to identify the potentialities of CHET in relation to studies of Late Modern academic discourse from the perspective of historical pragmatics, has enabled us to highlight some important research questions that ought to be addressed before any quantitative investigation is conducted. Among these, we have seen that some basic concepts ought to be problematized, not least a supposedly uniformitarian principle concerning genres, as even within a rather limited time span significant differences may be observed in the ways in which contents are presented, despite a superficial similarity of text types. This is the case, for instance, of title pages, where explicit evaluation tends to decrease over time.

As for textual elements, of course conclusions can only be tentative at this stage: however, this overview of some linguistic strategies employed in the presentation, discussion and validation or challenge of contents in CEPhiT and CHET has highlighted a few interesting traits. As shown in an earlier study, in CEPhiT sources are seldom presented without further qualification, which sets the tone for the interpretation of the proposition. CHET, instead, appears to give more attention to the evaluation of events, people and their actions, which is evidently consistent with the authors' agenda: their aim is to present historical contents, not argue for or against a certain scientific theory. In both corpora, however, different textual elements are used in a pragmatically effective way: the semantic prosody of verbs, especially reporting ones, adjectives, adverbs, hedges and boosters helps readers to gain a consistent picture, while their consensus is elicited both by means of direct appeals and by laying emphasis on the quality of the materials on which the text is based. Nor do authors forget the importance of modest hesitation in the presentation of subjective assessments – in CHET the relatively higher frequency of adverbials indicating epistemic possibility and probability, rather than necessity, seems to point in this direction.

Late Modern science, whether in the context of what would later be called 'hard sciences', as exemplified in CEPhiT, or in the so-called 'soft sciences', as shown in CHET, was of course quite different from what it is today: looking for similarities in the texts that illustrated them would be naïve and would lead to probably predictable results suggesting the contrary. However, it is only by looking at these very texts that we may gain insights into the time-depth of present-day phenomena and assess how variation and change have occurred, though of course a much broader range of samples will be required.

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Creating an identity of persuasion in history texts

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Abstract: When writing science authors tend to manifest themselves as authorities in the topic or field they are dealing with. In the case of history texts and considering that these represent a segmental accumulation of knowledge, authors use different discursive strategies to create the identities of the subjects they are referring to. One of these strategies consists in using a particular type of verbs, suasive verbs in this case, so as to elaborate an atmosphere of power and persuasion around these third-person subjects. Writers of science, acting as holders of knowledge and covertly expressing their viewpoints, project an image of these actors which exerts an influence on the readership.

By way of illustration, this chapter focuses on the specific use of the verb demand and analyses how semantic, syntactic and pragmatic aspects must be considered together for a complete description of identities of persuasion.

Keywords: persuasive strategies, identity, scientific discourse, history texts.

1. Introduction

Language users experience and express emotions which are shaped by cultural forces and linguistic mechanisms. When a writer wants to convince a reader to think in a certain way, or to persuade that reader to act in a specific manner, she/he must consider several factors which play important roles in the communication process: these include sentence structure, tone of writing, particular use of words or expressions, and the organization of information in a linear and logical order.

From a strictly linguistic point of view, scholars tend to agree that when you write to persuade, it is important to choose first the verb you are going to use in a sentence (Walqui et al. 2012). The verb is the action-marker and consequently the core of the persuasive power of the sentence. The writer controls the shaping of a persuasive identity through the use of particular verbs, especially of suasive verbs. By the incorporation of suasive verbs into the discourse, the author can identity who is being referred to in the third person, be it singular or plural. In history texts, past events are typically presented in a manner in which there is little overt authorial appraisal as to the object of narration. Nevertheless, the author's opinion, beliefs and attitudes are present in the creation of third person identities.

The aim of this paper is to consider some of the discursive strategies used in pursuing this kind of persuasive identity with which authors designate linguistically third person actors. To this end, the study will be organized as follows: following the introduction, section 1 will deal with third-person

identities, persuasion and discourse legitimization. Section 2 presents the corpus of analysis and methodology, with the discussion of findings in section 3. Finally, some final remarks will be offered in section 4.

2. Discursive practices in shaping an identity of persuasion

Persuasion pervades the very definition of communication when it is interpreted as "the passing of information, the exchange of ideas, or the process of establishing a commonness or oneness of thought between a sender and a receiver" (Belch & Belch, 2007: 137). In this line, texts communicate propositions that appeal not only logically, but also to an ethical sense.

Persuasion is the art of engaging emotionally and affectively. When persuading, the author invites the reader to feel in a certain way about certain things. It is a way of seeking to shape our emotional and intellectual responses to an issue, to influence the way we think and what we believe in. It is precisely our individual experiences and the expression of emotions which are influenced by cultural forces (Jensen 2013).

In 1999 Basil Bernstein published the paper "Vertical and Horizontal Discourse: An essay ". In this work he presented a sociolinguistic theory of language code to understand the ways in which disciplines use language differently. He distinguished two kinds of discourses: horizontal and vertical. The former involves discourse at a local, community level. It is a domestic discourse in which knowledge is created by linear or segmental accumulation. By contrast, the latter is a principled, coherent, systematic and structured discourse in which knowledge is constructed out of every day and common sense understandings. It implies knowledge accumulation in a hierarchical order.

History texts fall within the broad field of the Humanities, and authors of these create knowledge through horizontal structures, that is to say, by the horizontal and segmental accumulation of information. In this process there is a social dimension to knowledge, in which "social power and knowledge are intertwined […] knowledge comprises both sociological and epistemological forms of power" (Maton, 2000: 149).

According to Cook (1988), the historian resorts to evidence that he thinks is relevant and produces an account that he believes to be accurate and illuminating concerning past actions, events or other phenomena. Any explanation of the past supported either by rationalist or relativist theoretical frameworks conceives of history as a record of human activity in all its manifestations: art, learning, science, manners, custom, food, technology, amusements, and daily life. This record takes on the form of a narration in which authors participate as the holders of both knowledge and points of view, incorporating their own beliefs and assumptions through the language used in the presentation of horizontal structures carrying such information.

Authors generating knowledge are also sources of power with strong voices, asserting their authority and positioning themselves as privileged holders of knowledge who can intervene in the way in which events, facts are transmitted. In this sense they can use linguistic structures which exert some sort of persuasion on readers, interacting with them and compelling them to envisage a specific outline of the actors involved in the process. Hence there is no negotiation of meaning in the author-reader

partnership, but rather an imposition of the author's standpoint, one which exerts the social power with which knowledge endows him. In this way the reader is the target of the persuasive mechanism that the writer constructs. Using suasive verbs to depict a third person's ideas, behaviours, thoughts or beliefs, the author builds up a projected image of a subject that may be a single person or a group, a specific referent, or an abstract entity. It could be said this is an indirect way of determining how the reader is intended to consider someone or what to think about them. This process is schematically represented as follows:

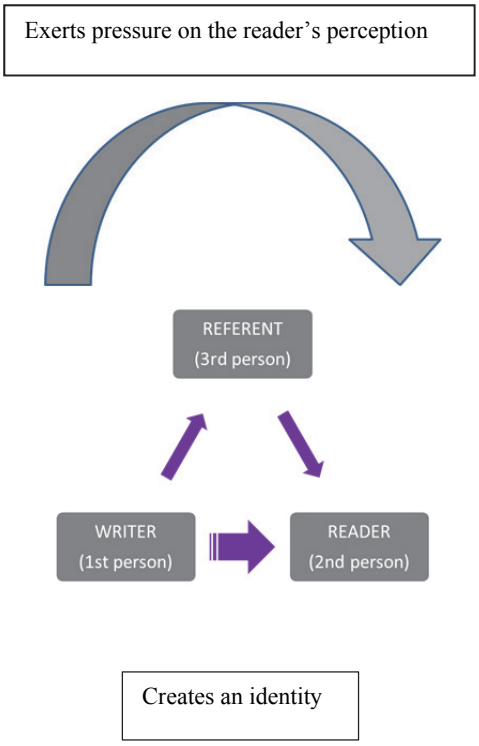

Figure 1. Creating persuasión: the process

This is how a third person identity of persuasion is created and how unconsciously it exerts an influence on the addressee's perspective.

Creating an image of authority for a third person referent unleashes the persuasive force of the author, embracing the knowledge of power that results in the reader forming some kind of opinion or guiding them towards a particular interpretation.

Persuasion manifests itself through the addresser's expression of his/her own point of view, with argumentative styles intended to persuade the addressee. In the creation of identities of persuasion, it seeks to influence this addressee indirectly under the false impression that readers are constructing their own identities. This is so in that "Persuasion takes communicative practice along the continuum from argument –which includes the use of logical evidence- to ethics and emotion, through the

appeals of ethos and pathos" (Aida Walqui, Nanette Koelsch, and Mary Schmida, 2012: 3). It seeks to inform, engage, and interest readers and viewers emotionally, and then to persuade them to take some form of action.

3. Material and methodology

CHET, the *Corpus of History English Texts*, is a sub-corpus of the Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing (CC, henceforth), and consequently it follows the compilation principles of the CC as a whole. The structure and mark-up conventions used in the corpus have meant that it has been extremely useful as a research tool, in that the sampling methods avoid authorial idiosyncrasies and any sort of interference caused by translation. We have tried to compile two 10,000 words text files per decade, so that each of the centuries represented contains approximately 200,000 words.

Bearing in mind the principles of representativeness and balance seen as essential by most specialists in corpus linguistics (McEnery and Wilson 1996; Biber et al. 1998: 251–253), in compiling this corpus we have included only printed, published prose texts. As with the other sub-corpora (CETA, CEPhiT; CeCHET), first editions have been used whenever available. Otherwise, and assuming that language change is normally said to be observable within a time frame of three decades (Kytö et al. 2000: 92), texts published within a thirty-year span from first publication date were selected.

We have collected extracts from different points in the works sampled, so that introductions, central chapters and conclusions are more or less equally represented. In this way a complete representation of stylistic and pragmatic devices could be achieved.

A more detailed explanation of the general CC compilation principles can be found in Moskowich and Crespo 2007; Moskowich and Parapar 2008; Crespo and Moskowich 2010; and Moskowich 2012; 2016.

Table 1 below illustrates the number of words per century compiled in CHET:

Table 1. Words in CHET

Century	Words
18th c.	201,938 words
19th c.	202,486 words
Total	404.424 words

The analysis of how an identity of persuasion can be forged will be conducted here through a micro-word level examination of a particular verb that is generally accepted to convey a meaning of persuasion. From the whole list of suasive verbs presented by Quirk et al. (1985) and Biber (1988), I have selected the verb demand. According to the OED, this verb has different meaning possibilities, which have been reproduced here, with one example per sense:

1. trans. To ask for (a thing) with legal right or authority; to claim as something one is legally or rightfully entitled to.

1894 St. G. Mivart in Eclectic Mag. Jan. 10 To all men a doctrine was preached, and assent to its teaching was categorically demanded.

2. spec. in Law. To make formal claim to (real property) as the rightful owner. Cf. demand n.1 3 and demandant n. 1.

1485 Act 1 Hen. VII c. 1 That the demandant in euery such case haue his action against the Pernour or Pernours of the profits of the lands or tenements demanded.

3. To ask for (a thing) peremptorily, imperiously, urgently, or in such a way as to command attention. †But formerly often weakened into a simple equivalent of 'to ask' (esp. in transl. from French, etc.). Const. of or from a person.

1600 E. Blount tr. G. F. di Conestaggio Hist. Uniting Portugall to Castill 273 By his letter, hee had demaunded pardon of the Catholique King.

†4. To make a demand for (a thing) to (a person). [= French demander à.] Obs.

1484 Caxton tr. G. de la Tour-Landry Bk. Knight of Tower (1971) xliiii. 67 Of whiche god shalle aske and demaunde to them acompte the daye of his grete Iugement.

5. To ask for (a person) to come or be produced; to ask to see; to require to appear; to summon.

1650 T. Fuller Pisgah-sight of Palestine ii. xii. 257 And first in a fair way the offenders are demanded to justice.

1847 C. Brontë Jane Eyre III. viii. 190 While the driver and Hannah brought in the boxes, they demanded St. John.

a. To call for of right or justice; to require.

1779 W. Cowper Let. 2 Oct. (1979) I. 305, 2 pair of soals with Shrimps which arrived last Night, demand my Acknowledgments.

b. To call for or require as necessary; to have need of.

1748 Acct. Voy. for Discov. North-west Passage I. 145 Keep the Water..from going down faster, than the [Beaver] Dams which are below the House demand it.

7. To ask (a person) authoritatively, peremptorily, urgently, etc. for (a thing); to require (a person) to do a thing. Obs.

1726 Swift Gulliver I. i. iii. 59 After they were read, I was demanded to swear to the Performance of them.

8. To make a demand; to ask for or after; to call urgently for. Obs.

a1533 Ld. Berners tr. Bk. Duke Huon of Burdeux (1882–7) lx. 208 Huon approchyd to the shyppe and demaundyd for the patrone and for the mayster of them that were in the shyppe.

a. To ask to know, authoritatively or formally; to request to be told.

1859 Tennyson Enid in Idylls of King 11 And Guinevere,..desired his name, and sent Her maiden to demand it of the dwarf.

10. To ask (a question, etc.). Obs.

1605 Bacon Of Aduancem. Learning ii. sig. Bb3, It asketh some knowledge to demaund a question, not impertinent.

11. To ask (a person) authoritatively or formally to inform one (of, how, etc.). Obs.

1632 W. Lithgow Totall Disc. Trav. i. 38, I demanded our dependant, what was to pay?

Some of the senses are obsolete, yet taking them together they represent the broad idea of asking, requiring, or calling for someone to do something. This implies that there is a social relation of power between the actors in the process, or rather that there is an atmosphere of persuasion within the message. The actors in the writer-reader communicative process do not bear a univocal relation, but one of dominance: the author writes and creates; the reader receives and assumes the content in the terms presented. As a consequence, the reader is persuaded to feel, think or act accordingly.

The meaning "To ask for (a thing) peremptorily, imperiously, urgently, or in such a way as to command attention" with a more or less perlocutionary force has been maintained from the initial adoption of the verb through Latin and reinforced by its legal use in Anglo-Norman.

As for the etymological origin of *demand* in the OED, we can attest that it is a word of ultimately Latin origin which was introduced into English via French, the Latin etymon denoting the basic meaning of "give in charge". The added connotation of "obligatorily fulfilling one's duty" was already carried in the meaning of the French borrowing when adopted into English. The sense of authority, order and command was introduced through French as a mirror of what was happening in the socio-external context of its adoption.

Etymology: < French *demander* (= Provençal demandar , Spanish demandar , Portuguese demandar , Italian dimandare) < Latin dēmandāre to give in charge, entrust, commit (< de- prefix 1c + mandāre to commission, order), in medieval Latin = poscere to demand, request.

The transition from the Latin sense 'give in charge, entrust, commit, commend' to the Romance sense of 'request, ask' was probably made through the notion of entrusting or committing a duty to be performed to someone, of charging a servant or officer with the performance of something, of requiring its performance of him, or authoritatively requesting him to do it; hence the notion of asking in a way that commands obedience or compliance, which the word retains in English, and of simple asking, as in French. An indirect personal object (repr. the Latin dative) would thus be a necessary part of the original construction, but it had ceased to be so before the word was adopted in England, where the earliest use, both in Anglo-Norman and English, is simply to demand a thing. The verb probably passed into the vernacular from its legal use in Anglo-Norman.

Synonyms such as call for, ask for, and require are more or less formal equivalents used in the definitions of demand. These definitions are completed by making reference to other semantic

features implicit in the tone of the verb: authoritatively, urgently, peremptorily, imperiously. This sheds light on the preliminary componential analysis of the verb here. In general, the sense "To ask for (a thing) peremptorily, imperiously, urgently, or in such a way as to command attention" embraces the core meaning of the verb.

In this analysis I have searched for all forms of the verb *demand* (*demand, demands, demanded, demanding*), excluding those cases corresponding to the noun 'demand', both singular and plural, as well as to the adjectival form 'demanding'. From the original 77 forms found, a total of 41 were suitable for the purpose of the present paper.

4. Discussion

Previous studies on the use of linguistic structures generally admitted to convey persuasion have shown that from a general standpoint, in eighteenth century Philosophy texts, for instance, the predominant persuasive or argumentative strategies are predictive and necessity modals (Crespo 2011; Crespo and Moskowich 2015). This suggests that modality dominates this kind of scientific discourse pertaining to the field of humanities. Less frequently used are conditional subordination devices and, even less, suasive forms.

In this respect, and in contrast to what might generally be expected, suasive verbs are the least represented linguistic feature, which may corroborate the assumption that persuasion or argumentation, if any, is not as overtly represented as we might anticipate. This could lead us to think that the tendency is to present any kind of persuasive mechanism in a more subtle and covert manner.

But persuasion is not limited to direct addresses to the reader through constructions of this type, the addressee can also be emotionally engaged provided that the author creates appropriate third identities.

In this particular paper, in order to study how third person identities are shaped, I will analyse the verb *demand* from a syntactic point of view first, before turning to consider its semantic and pragmatic components.

Syntactically, *demand* can function as a transitive verb followed by a direct object in the form of noun phrase, to-infinitive or that-clause, as in examples 1 to 4 below:

(1) He *demanded* an audience of the king, but was refuſed on the ground of an eſtabliſhed etiquette, which forbids the appearance at court of perſons under his circumſtances. (Adolphus 1802: 82)

(2) Meantime the queen protesting her innocence, and that of Hamet Abencerrage, who was among the first slain, *demanded* to clear herself by her knights in a fair field against her accusers; (Callcott 1828: 222)

(3) A Colonel with 300 Men immediately marched to the Palace at Moscow, and there loudly *demanded* that Thekelavitau should be delivered to him. The Princess made some Resistance at first; but seeing the Colonel resolute, she delivered up the Traitor and his Adherents; (Bancs 1740: 22)

(4) whoſe deputies, on their introduction on the ſecond day of the council, declared that they came not for the purpoſe of debate, but to inſiſt on the delivery of their ſovereign from confinement, which they were inſtructed to *demand* in the name of the whole community of London: but they were referred by the legate to the decrees of the preceding day, and ordered to report them to their conſtituents as the final determination of the ſynod, from which no earthly conſiderations could induce them to depart. (Gifford 1790: 187)

According to the ideational component of language, in Hallydayan terms, the use of this verb just represents the expression of content in which actors and goals participate. It is through this function that "the speaker or writer embodies in language his experience of the phenomena of the real world; and this includes his experience of the internal world of his own consciousness: his reactions, cognitions, and perceptions, and also his linguistic acts of speaking and understanding" (Halliday 2002: 91). The objects of the action implied by *demand*, however, do not convey any overtone of persuasion by themselves but are just the recipients of it. The expression of persuasion , notwithstanding, can be found in the manifestation of the author's attitudes, evaluations and the relationship between author and reader, especially in what concerns the communication role the author adopts (Halliday 2002). This communication role can be perceived in the use of particular structures, such as the use of the verb *demand*, and the careful selection of appropriate subjects by means of which the author outlines the identity of persuasion.

To analyse the creation of such an identity of persuasion it is necessary to view the kind of third person subjects that authors use in combination with the verb. In the case of the samples contained in CHET I have found the following:

Table 2. . The subjects of *demand*

demand	Col. Thaxter, Col. Dudley, Mr. Atkinson > the Commissioners
	He
	All those who had served appointed by the laws
	Edward Randolph
	The Londoners
	The abbot of Aberbrothwick
	The abbot of New Minster and Welbeck
	The bishop
	This monarch
	Ambassadors from Norway
	Mr Grenville joined with Fox
	This was an uncivil mode of demanding a tax of cattle
	The prelate□a sharp letter…
	Justice
	Lord Rothes
	The governor
	The queen

He
General Burgoyne
Edward
Regulus (Carthaginians)
The Carthaginians
A colonel with 300 men
The commissioners
The earl
The deputy
Lord lieutenant
The king
The Spanish ambassador
Undoubted rights and liberties of the people of England
The same rights and liberties
He
The procuration demanded from her
King Henry's subjects
The masons
Those Old Irish habits
The emergencies
Its magnitude
Richard

The subjects found here with the several forms of the verb demand belong to two main categories, from a semantic point of view: most are concrete referents, mainly people identified by their social rank or the post they occupy in society. There are also some personal names which represent social positions but which are probably referred to in a more intimate tone due to the demands of narrative techniques, using proper nouns (The bishop, This monarch, Ambassadors from Norway, Richard, for example).

A few also embody abstract concepts or ideas, intangible referents which represent a collectivity (Undoubted rights and liberties of the people of England, the emergencies).

The identity of persuasion is built on the actions and attitudes associated with those personal referents that rank high on the social scale. They are considered authorities in the extralinguistic world and this is linguistically ratified by the author, who employs the authority of their roles in the persuasive nature of such as subjects. As a result, an atmosphere of persuasion is created in the text through the accumulation of several individual identities with persuasive attributes. The author's implicit expression of his/her own point of view through argumentative styles, in terms of the degree of persuasion that can be conferred on to a third-person identity, is intended to persuade the addressee.

It is interesting to note that in the discourse of eighteenth and nineteenth-century history texts the majority of the voices in a position to demand something from someone are representative of the social power of the period. From a social perspective, they represent the oligarchy which can exert

any kind of influence it wishes on the majority of the population, and this, once again, is manifested linguistically by the authorial voice through the use of verbs such as demand.

Here an identity between persuasion and emotionally invested interaction between reader and writer can be perceived. The writer is telling the reader who is/was in power and the role of everyone else relation to this.

The purpose of creating this identity of persuasion, tinged with appeals to emotions, is probably not to prompt an immediate and explicit action or response but to raise awareness of social issues such as the existence of social pyramids and how conscious we should be of the role of each group in such a social reality, be it in the remote past or in more recent history.

Nevertheless, the evolution of socio-political paradigms is also attested in these persuasive identities, especially in terms of abstract referents (The emergencies, Undoubted rights and liberties of the people of England, the same rights and liberties, an uncivil mode, justice, its magnitude, those Old Irish habits) which seem to ignore individual issues in favour of more general concerns for people. These referents have been found mainly in nineteenth-century texts, which seem to point to the process of a changing focus of persuasion identities, from the power of a few to the power of the many.

A detailed analysis of the cases of demand found in the history texts in CHET reveals that the interpretation of this verb can only be complete if certain other factors are examined: the importance of context, the function of the intervening material, the original legal meaning of the term, its occurrence in set phrases, and its use in the passive voice.

4.1. The importance of context

The expository writing in which demand is used sets the tone for the interpretation of this verb and reinforces its persuasive meaning. Example (5) below illustrates the value of context as a background reference that allows the writer to mould the feeling of persuasion:

(5) The adverſary and enemy; the grand accuſer of the Colony, was Edward Randolph, [note] Randolph made eight voyages to England in nine years; was appointed collector and ſurveyor of his Majeſty's cuſtoms; was one of Sir Edmund Androſs's council, and was the perſon that boaſted [quotation] [endnote] a man of moſt arbitrary principles, and indefatigable in his endeavours to diſtreſs the Colony, and ſet up arbitrary government. He was at laſt the "meſſenger of death," and arrived in 1683, with powers to *demand* an abſolute reſignation of all the liberties of the Colony into the royal hands. But before any new form of government could take place, king Charles II. died, and it was not till 1686, that a commiſſion arrived for ſetting up a new and arbitrary government, under which the houſe of Deputies was laid aſide, and conſequently the people were totally deprived of all power in the adminiſtration. (Adams 1769: 24)

The items underlined items in (5) (my underlining) help create the necessary environment in which to guide the desired interpretation of the verb demand. Most of them convey negative implications (adversary, accuser, enemy, deprived of…) but also an idea of hierarchy and power (arbitrary principles, arbitrary government, absolute resignation, laid aside). The subject ‘he’ in the line six is Edward Randolph, previously described in the text in pejorative terms. When the reader comes to the

verb demand an image of the subject has already been established, but the identity of persuasion finally flourishes in the action that demand expresses.

(6) and this the prelate quickly transmitted to the attorney-general with a sharp letter *demanding* the institution of further proceedings against the writer. (Aikin 1833: 358)

The Attorney General also has an identity of persuasion for the reader thanks to the combination of this subject with the verb demand, although the action is performed indirectly by 'a sharp letter'.

Example (7) illustrates a case of anaphoric deixis with the use of the third person singular pronoun 'he' which combines with several verbs, demand being one of them. In the characterization of this subject, the idea of representing an identity of persuasion is viewed after the horizontal accumulation of actions which eventually consolidates in '*demanding* the possession of the gates and the keys of all the public stores' and is further reinforced by the use of the verb order, a quasi-synonym for demand:

(7) He pledged his honor for their peaceable poſſeſſion of their property, and the free exerciſe of their religion: he expreſſed in liberal terms, his diſpoſition to protect the inhabitants on the ſame footing with the other American colonies. He then *demanded* the poſſeſſion of the gates, and the keys of all the public ſtores, and ordered them to be delivered by nine o'clock the enſuing morning. (Warren 1805: 259)

Demand is usually followed by the prepositions of or from. Thus it can function as a prepositional verb: to demand of someone, from someone. The example below presents another common use of this verb, with the subject 'the king' deictically referred to as 'he', the subject of demand. The context also plays a part here, although the very image of a king itself transmits the idea of power and persuasion. In this case the author does not need to create any sort of environment, in that it is already implied.

(8) By all which Proceedings, it appears, that notwithſtanding all the Secret Intrigues of the Anti-Court Party, the King had now ſo well ſatisfied the greater part of the Nobility, and had ſo over-awed the Houſe of Commons, that they wholy ſubmitted themſelves to His good Will and Pleaſure, and granted Him whatever He *demanded* of them. But all this did not ſatisfie the King's Occaſions; for upon certain idle Reports ſpread abroad on purpoſe, that He either was now, or elſe very ſhortly to be choſen Emperor, He thereupon began to take upon Him greater State, and a higher way of Living than ever before; to maintain which, He Fleec'd his Subjects, and Borrow'd almoſt of every body great Sums of Money; ſo that there was no Prelate, Man of Quality, or Citizen of any Eſtate in the whole Kingdom, (Tyrrell 1704: 958).

4.2. Intervening material

On occasions linguistic items intervene between the subject and the verb form. This is the case in (7) below:

(7) The only laymen ſummoned to this ſynod, which was meant to decide on the fate of the crown, were the Londoners; whoſe deputies, on their introduction on the ſecond day of the council, declared that they came not for the purpoſe of debate, but to inſiſt on the delivery of their ſovereign from

confinement, which they were inſtructed to *demand* in the name of the whole community of London: (Gifford 1790: 187)

Here *demand* is the main verb of an embedded infinitive clause dependant on the passive construction with another main verb indicating persuasion: instruct. This double use of suasive verbs within the same construction, although at different hierarchical levels, reinforces the author's intention to transmit the position of power at which "the Londoners" were placed despite the fact that they were following someone else's orders.

4.3. Set phrases

Set phrases have specialized meanings in relation to identities of persuasion. The general sense "to claim as something one is legally or rightfully entitled to" is narrowed down to refer to correcting wrong deeds which the author/speaker has experienced, usually by means of a pistol duel. Such a meaning is attested in (8):

(8) Baliol, inſtead of appearing in perſon, ſent the abbot of Aberbrothwick, with ſome other noblemen of his party, not only to give his reaſons why he did not appear, but to *demand* ſatisfaction for the inſults and injuries he and his ſubjects had received from thoſe of Edward. (Adams 1795: 89)

This use can also be interpreted as an opportunity to defend one's honour in a duel.

The occurrence of demand in set phrases or fixed expressions does not affect its core sense, but is more a matter of being in relation to the fossilization of unique reference to co-occurring lexical items.

4.4. Legal use

The verb *demand* has its specialized use in the field of law, with a meaning of either "to claim as something one is legally or rightfully entitled to" or "to make formal claim to (real property) as the rightful owner".

This legal meaning is present in the history texts compiled in CHET, as examples (9) to (12) below illustrates:

(9) The company roſe, and the gentlemen accompanied the commandant to the ſcene of diſturbance, [Mr]. MORRISON'S houſe, the biſhop himſelf thinking the occaſion of that nature as to *demand* ſome riſk of his own perſon. At the door, where a great crowd had aſſembled, they found FLANAGAN on horſeback, drunk and very noiſy. (Stock 1800: 78)

(10) No ſooner had the commiſſioners made their deciſions on thoſe points, than Edward ordered Baliol and Bruce to be called before him; and he *demanded* whether they had any thing farther to offer in ſupport of their claims. Bruce urged the indiviſibility of the crown of Scotland, and that it was not ſubject to the common law of inheritance eſtabliſhed in England. (Adams, 1795: 82)

Another formal claim is offered in (11):

(11) The Balk which the Lord Lieutenant met with in this Matter, gave Encouragement to Sheridan to revive his old Project, and endeavor the Ruin of the Deputy. He therefore again *demanded* Leave to go for England, under Pretence of a Law-Suit: But not being able to obtain Permiſſion, he put his Wife upon Solliciting Father Petre to procure it for him. (Oldmixon 1716: 71)

(12) The Spanish ambassador thereupon waited upon the duke, and insolently *demanded* the demission of Belin; a request repeated in a meeting of the ultra-democrats of Paris at the Hôtel de Ville. (Freer 1860: 300)

In the final example here, in order to depict the Spanish ambassador the author resorts to the main verb in her narration, demand (as a formal claim), and the manner adverb that precedes it, insolently. The ambassador's image of persuasion is enhanced by the way he performs his actions, but to a certain extent this strong image is diminished with the use of what we could call "a light synonym", request.

4.5. Passive voice

The passive voice, so common in scientific writing, is also present in the context of demand in history writing:

(13) King Henry had now fulfilled all the conditions which could be *demanded* by his subjects before they tendered their full recognition of his kingly rights. (Freer 1860: 325)

In this case it is "his subjects" that the author is trying to depict as authoritative, not King Henry. However, it is also true that the by-phrase in final position introducing the subject decreases the compelling force of the whole utterance. Similarly, the use of modality in the verb phrase also acts as a mitigating mechanism of that force. The original projected image of persuasion which the author intends to draw remains a mere outline in terms of the effect that this language may provoke in the reader's mind. The alteration of the common word order by resorting to a passive construction counteracts the identity of persuasion, working instead as a mitigating strategy that diminishes the original persuasive strength of the same verb in an active construction.

Thus five features have been found to play a part in the development of images impregnated with persuasion features here, these employed by authors with the ultimate intention of provoking some kind of reaction on the part of the reader. Some of these can be considered positive, in the sense of supporting and highlighting persuasion; others have the opposite effect, reducing any possible persuasive effect.

5. Final remarks

The micro-word level of analysis described in the present paper has been an attempt to show how authorial presence and authors' involvement in their writing is not a simple matter, as might initially seem to be the case. In exploring the issues at play, the analyst must go beyond the surface structure of the language used and look carefully at syntactic, semantic and pragmatic elements in a text.

The verb form demand as an example of an overt expression of persuasion can be said to endow other entities with the persuasive force it conveys. Therefore, if we look at it in connection with third person subjects, what we see is that its function in determining persuasion is more covert or indirect, in that it contributes to the construction of subtle identities of persuasion which seek to create in the readers' mind the desired cognitive paradigms and hence particular views or opinions. Investigating in detail the verb demand is also useful as a means of corroborating the fact that different levels of analysis (syntactic, semantic and pragmatic) need to be addressed, and all of these, taken together, provide a more accurate picture of what the content of the verb communicates and how it betrays the relationship between the two actors in the process: writer and reader.

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The evolution of self-mentioning in 18thc. CETA and CHET *Coruña Corpus*

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Abstract: The present article explores self-mentioning through the use of the pronouns *I* and *we*. Although authorial voice has been the object of several studies diachronically and in present day academic writing, it has not been so deeply analyzed by contrasting disciplines in earlier "learned" scientific works. Groundwork for this study are Hyland's (2001, 2002, 2005, 2012) present-day findings with respect to a higher use of first personal pronouns in "hard" sciences as compared to "soft" ones, and the decrease of these pronouns use during the 18th C claimed by authors like Harmon & Reidy (2002) or Aitkinson (1996) and Gunnarsson (2011). CETA and CHET from the *Coruña Corpus* provide the necessary data with texts than run parallel to hard sciences and humanities. This will be the basis to elucidate if the modern perception of more authorial presence in the latter discipline was also the same in the 18th C and if there are factors that may contribute to differences or similarities.

Keywords: Historical Pragmatics, stance, self-mention, *I*, *we*, 18th C., CETA, CHET, *Coruña Corpus*.

1. Introduction

Self-mention is a type of stance marker manifested through the use of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives (Hyland 2005, p.181), these allow for a more direct presence of the writer in his or her own discourse. Analysis of authorship expression have been recurrent in different forms through the last decades. On the one hand, it has been discussed to what extent the use of *I/we* is adequate for academic writings that intend to be "objective". On the other, as a form of author presence, Historical Pragmatics has focused on this stance marker especially in research articles, trying to measure how visible writers have made themselves along the history of "hard" sciences and humanities.

Recent manuals, university websites on academic writing style advocate for a change in the assumed prohibition for the use of first person pronouns and defend a more "personal" choice when writing (Joshi (2014), MacAdoo (2009), Turabian (2013 revised ed.), Bailey (2006)). Certainly, it is not the same giving advice to novice writers, when some caveats are included, as avoiding unfunded subjectivity, than considering authors publishing in scientific journals. Some manuals even rely on the past to be more permissive with the first person pronouns pointing that its use was common among relevant scientists a few centuries ago (Alley 1996, p.107).

Author's visibility in terms of the use of personal pronouns has also been the concern, in different degrees, of specialized works such as Gross, Harmon & Reidy (2002), Hyland (2001, 2002, 2005), Hyland & Bondi (2012), Hyland & Sancho-Guinda (2012), Diani (2008), Martín-Martín & León Pérez (2009), Gunnarsson (2011), Mele-Marrero & Alonso-Almeida (2011) among others.

Gross, Harmon & Reidy (2002) analyze the development of scientific writing in three languages, namely, French, German and English. Amid other aspects, they observe that the use of personal pronouns has diminished in scientific articles. While during the 18th century the fluctuations they register are minimal, they state that the "use of pronouns and proper names has decreased substantially (and the passive voice increased) over the last four centuries [17th-20th] because the objects and processes of the natural world, the methods and materials of the laboratory, and abstract nouns have increasingly occupied the subject position"; in their specific English sample from the 19th to the 20th century the use would have decreased a 50% (Gross, Harmon & Reidy, 2002, p. 166).

Gunnarsson (2011, p.329), also concludes that in the 18th C Swedish scientific texts she analyzed the pronoun *I* as an expression of the author is more frequently used than in the 19th century ones; she also points out that Aitkinson (1992) mentions the same findings for English. It was Atkinson (1996, p. 338) who in a research about the Philosophical Transactions (PT) of the Royal Society of London between 1675 and 1975 had stated that:

> Generally speaking, the place of the author is seen to change greatly across time in the PT, from one in which s/he occupies a central position in the text, to one in which the author is largely "effaced" or "distanced." This phenomenon can be related in turn to the crucial role played by a strong "authorial persona" in the rhetoric of early modern scientific writing (cf. Shapin 1984, Dear 1985), and the gradual displacement of that rhetoric with one emphasizing an impersonal or "object-centered" orientation.

Hyland's prolific work on the authorial voice in academic discourse has mainly been centered in the 20th C, his recent publications (Hyland & Sancho-Guinda 2012, p. 224) insist on how differences appear across disciplines rather than across languages. Already in 2001 (p. 213) Hyland concluded from a study of 240 articles from 8 different disciplines "that some 69% of all cases of self-mention occurred in the humanities and social science papers, with an average of 38 per article, compared with only 17 in science and engineering. This difference was largely due to the much greater use of first person pronouns in the soft disciplines". Nevertheless, he argues that the presence of an authorial voice in general has to do with the necessity of showing personal value as an innovative contributor to the field as well as forming part of the scientific community (p. 209). Somehow this final idea is that portrayed some years later by (Harwood, 2005, p. 1226):

> While this study has taken a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach, I have shown that the pronouns *I* and *We* which help to promote authors and their work are found in both the hard and soft disciplines. Such promotional devices can market the research from the start, underscoring novelty and newsworthiness in the introduction as they help create a research space. They can also help repeat claims and findings at the close, to show that the work deserves to be taken seriously, and that, by extension, the author deserves to be seen as a player in the discourse community.

> However, it must be said that Sword (2012, p. 18) findings seem to diverge from Hyland's (op.cit):
>
> Another surprising finding was the predominance of first person pronouns in the sciences. The high percentages in medicine, evolutionary biology, and computer science (92, 100, and 82 percent, respectively) confound the commonly held assumption that scientists shun the pronouns I and we in their research writing. By contrast, only 54 percent of the higher education researchers in my data sample and only 40 percent of the historians use first-person pronouns

My purpose here is to contrast the use of the first person in the eighteenth century academic discourse with previous findings, as well as to establish if the difference portrayed by Hyland between "hard sciences", such as astronomy, and "humanistic" ones, history in our case, was already present or if, on the contrary, the results coincide more with Sword's, or even if no difference can be proven. The following sections include a description of the data to be analyzed, the results obtained and their discussion and finally main conclusions reached.

2. Sources and method

The Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy (CETA) and the Corpus of Historical English Texts (CHET) this in its Beta form,[4] from La *Coruña Corpus* will be the main sources for this study. The subcorpus selected is constituted by 18 texts on astronomy (177,865 tokens) and 15 texts on history (151,566 tokens) since, for both, CETA and CHET, the search was restricted to 18thC male British authors. In the case of CETA a dictionary and a dialogue which did not seem adequate for our objective were dismissed. All the selected texts have in common an academic quality and being signed by a single author.

Metadata on the authors (information regarding their position, profession and production) already included in CETA were consulted when required. The Coruña Corpus Tool (CCT) was used to delimit the subcorpus and elicit the raw numbers, total percentages and contextualized uses of the pronouns *we* and *I*. Further analysis is carried through careful reading of the examples obtained and their classification in main subtypes according to their functions. These in turn were based on an elaboration of Hyland's (2002, 2005) categories that will be described in section 3.

The following tables 1 and 2 present the authors and texts studied with the year of publication. All examples provided maintain original spelling, only the grapheme for long *s* has been normalized to <s>.

[4] I want to thank Prof. Moskowich for providing access to this beta version of La Coruña corpus.

Table 1. CETA authors

YEAR	AUTHOR	TITLE
1702	Curson, Henry	The theory of sciences illustrated
1702	Morden, Robert	An Introduction to astronomy
1715	Whiston, William	Astronomical Lectures
1726	Gordon, George	An introduction to geography, astronomy, and dialing
1726	Watts, Isaac	The knowledge of the heavens and the earth made easy
1732	Fuller, Samuel	Practical astronomy, in the description and use of both globes...
1735	Charlton, Jasper	The Ladies Astronomy and Chronology
1742	Long, Roger	Astronomy, in five Books
1749	Hodgson, James	The theory of Jupiter's satellites
1756	Ferguson, James	Astronomy explained upon Isaac Newton's
1761	Stewart, Matthew	Tracts, physical and mathematical: containing, an explication...
1767	Costard, George	The history of astronomy
1773	Wilson, Alexander	"Observation of the Solar Spots"
1777	Adams, George	A Treatise describing the construction and explaining the use...
1779	Lacy, John	The universal system: or mechanical cause of all the appeara...
1782	Nicholson, William	An introduction to natural philosophy
1786	Bonnycastle, John	An introduction to Astronomy in a Series of Letters
1790	Vince, Samuel	A treatise on practical astronomy

Table 2. CHET authors

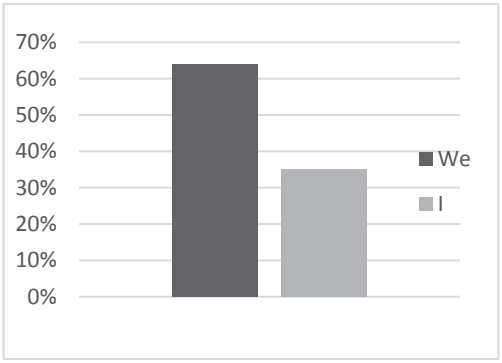
YEAR	AUTHOR	TITLE
1704	Tyrrell, James	The General History of England.
1705	Anderson, James	An Historical Essay, shewing that the Crown and Kingdom of Sc..
1710	Crawfurd, George	A History of the Shire of Renfrew.
1716	Oldmixon, John	Memoirs of Ireland, during the Four Last Reigns.
1721	Strype, John	Ecclesiastical Memorials
1732	Horsley, John	Britannia Romana. Book the First.
1740	Bancks, Thomas	The history of Peter The Great, Czar of Muscovy. The first book.
1745	Hooke, Nathaniel	The Roman History, from the building of Rome to the Ruin of the Commowealth.
1750	Chapman, Thomas	An Essay on the Roman Senate.
1760	Birch, Thomas	The life of Henry Prince of Wales.
1775	Anderson, Walter	The History of France.
1780	Cornish, Joseph	The Life of Mr. Thomas Firmin.
1788	Gibbon, Edward	The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.
1790	Gifford, John	The History of England
1795	Adams, John	A View of Universal History, from the Creation to the Present Time.

3. Results

In academic discourse, personal pronouns represent mainly the author and the reader. Whereas *I* is basically an exclusive form of self-mention which may have different purposes, *we* can represent the author himself in the form of an exclusive (Brown & Levinson, 1987, p. 120) "majestatic plural",

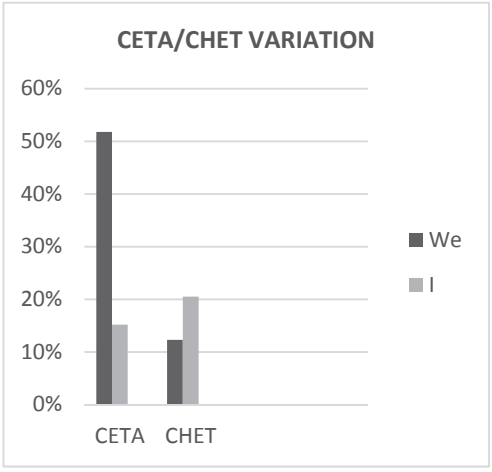
with the same functions of *I*, or have a "real" inclusive dimension involving either author and general reader or author and his professional/scholar group, that is, in terms of Barton (2007, p.75) his discourse community.

The total amount of first person subject pronouns constitutes a 2.2 % of all the tokens in our corpus. Considering only these pronouns (raw numbers: 1100 in CETA plus CHET), figures for first person plural forms, *we*, are higher, constituting a 64.2% versus a 35.8% of singular forms, *I,* as seen in Graph 1 below.



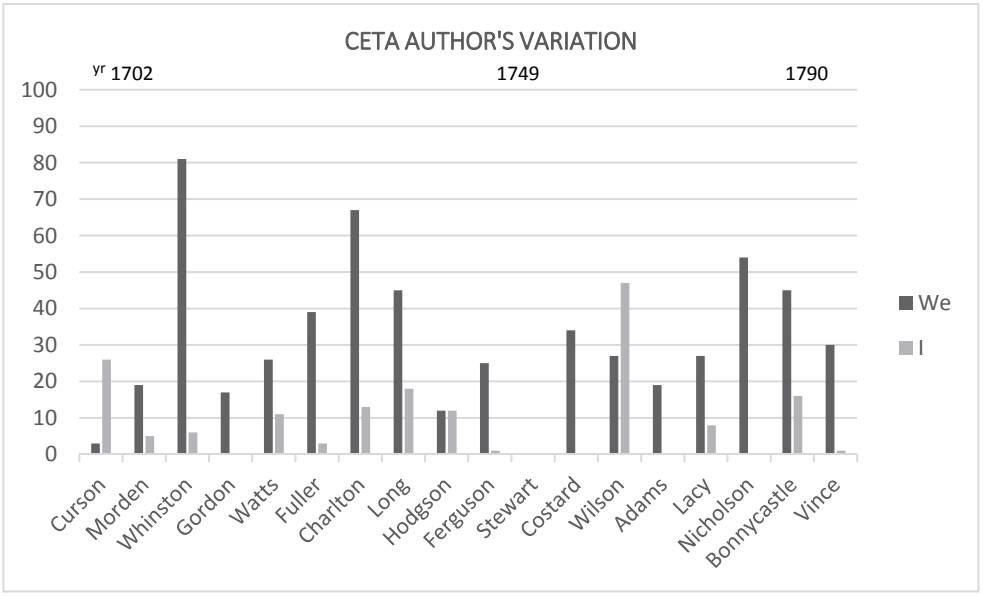
Graph 1. Totals of 1st ps.pr. sg/pl in the corpus

Regarding each of the subcorpus it would seem that *we* is more frequent in CETA texts, whereas *I* would be higher in CHET texts, showing, apparently, a considerable difference in the authors' preference depending on each scientific field. See Graph 2.



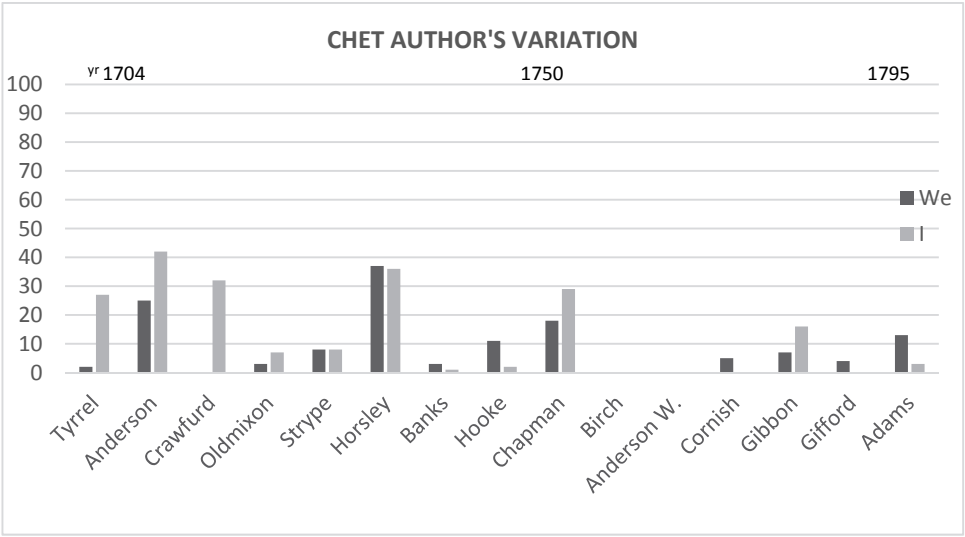
Graph 2. *I/we* percentages in each subcorpus

Nevertheless, if we contemplate raw numbers per each author the situation presents more variables. Though *we* prevails in CETA, this is not the case in each author. Curson, at the beginning of the century, and Wilson, during the second half seem to prefer *I.* Whinston, in the first half of the period considered, surpasses all the other authors in his use of *we*, while Stewart, in 1761 does not seem to make use of any of the first person subject pronouns. At the end of the century, *we* is still present while *I* seems to decline



Graph 3: I/We numbers per author

In the case of CHET (see graph 4), *I*, certainly prevails but, with the exception of Gibbon (1788) it also seems to lose ground at the end of the century. Also notice that while in the first half of the century the use of *I* is higher, it is not so in Hooke (1745), and as it happens in CETA whereas one author excels in the use of first person pronouns for others, namely Birch and Anderson W., it does not seem to be significant. Therefore, further classification and analysis of their practice seems necessary before determining who made themselves more evident in their writing.



Graph 4. I/We numbers per author

a. Classification

Our findings can be further classified attending to their in-context purpose. Hyland (2002, 2005) distinguishes between pronouns that are part of stance as *self-mention*, and those that form part of the engagement and he calls *reader pronouns*, of these:

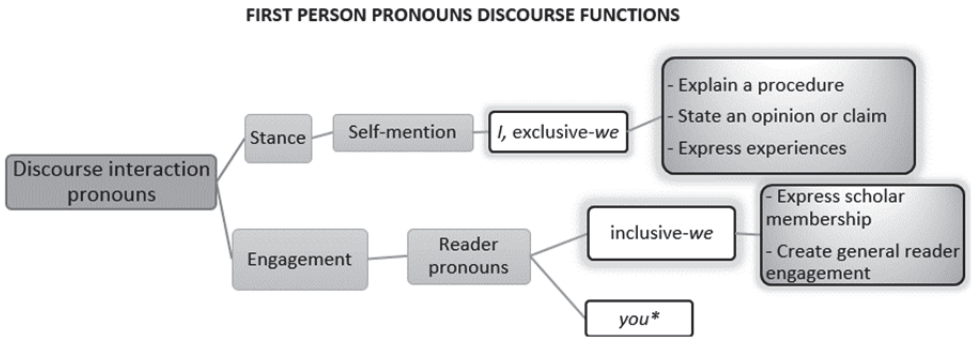
> You and your are actually the clearest way a writer can acknowledge the reader's presence, but these forms are rare outside of philosophy, probably because they imply a lack of involvement between participants. Instead, there is enormous emphasis on binding writer and reader together through inclusive we, which is the most frequent engagement device in academic writing (Hyland 2005, p.182)

For the first person pronouns, Hyland (2002, p.1100) used the following discourse functions for their classification in RAs: explaining a procedure, stating results or claims, elaborating an argument, stating a goal/purpose and expressing self-benefits.

Nevertheless, it must be taken into account that we are not dealing with texts that follow a pattern expected (not always found) in modern research articles. This is made clear by Moskowich and Crespo in the Astronomy texts introduction to CETA (2012, p.21):

> All the different categories we have gathered seem to reflect the social reality of a world in which knowledge was not exclusive of Universities or other institutions (where the taxonomies for lecture, treatise and textbook/handbook would perfectly fit), but was also wanted outside such institutions as was mentioned earlier in sections 1 and 2. The vernacularisation of science and technology brought about its popularisation too and new ways of communication had to be used. Letters, dialogues and other forms were also found though, obviously, not all disciplines were so prone to be spread just because they were not equally popular.

Given the difference between scientific texts from the 18th century and present day ones, we adapted our classification from the proposals in Hyland (2002) and Brown & Levinson (1987) taking into account the basic forms found in the corpus. Thus, we will consider that *I* is a form of self-mention which the author employs for three main purposes: explain a procedure, state an opinion or claim, and express his experiences. With some caveats, *we*, when used as an exclusive form, a majestatic plural, would participate of this same type and purposes. In its inclusive version, *we,* is a form of engagement with two main purposes: involve a specific scholar group in the discourse (mainly for opinions or claims) or involve the general reader so that he/she takes part in the written discourse.



Graph 5: CETA & CHET *I, we* discourse functions

The following are examples of these functions in the two subcorpus (each example is referenced with function subcorpus-author: page):

A. Explain a procedure:

A main part of the first person singular pronouns in our corpus are used to describe the author's decisions in the structuring of their text or the way they will explain their findings. Therefore, this *I*, nearly always appears accompanied by simple present or simple future tenses to denote his procedure, see 1-2. A form of exclusive *we* may also perform the same functions as seen in 3 and 4.

1) [B]efore **I** explain the Ptolemaic and Copernican systems **I** will first in a short and familiar way explain (proc. CETA-Charlton:13)
2) [H]aving given you all that is considerable concerning this parliament **I** shall now add some other matters (proc. CHET-Tyrrel: 958)
3) [**W**]**e** have omitted any unnecessary description of them (proc. CETA-Wilson: 12)
4) [H]is Son Alexis Michaelowitz, Father to the Prince whose Life **we** now give the Publick. (proc. CHET-Banks: 6)

B. State an opinion or claim:

This function appears when the author vindicates a scientific finding, quotes, or even makes personal commentaries or criticisms about previous works. It is the most assertive function and the one that would express a higher consciousness of the self as a committed scientist. Thus, 5-8:

5) On December 11th **I** again discovered it on the other side of the disc (claim CETA-Wilson: 9)
6) The first of whom **I** found any memorable mention is Allanus de Bryasbane filius Willielmi (claim CHET-Crawfurd: 82)
7) **I** cannot think Agricola entered Scotland this summer unless (claim CHET-Horsley: 42)
8) **We** must therefore be compelled to reject the opinion of [Dr]. Henry, and attempt to account for this extraordinary transaction in a manner which to us appears more confident with reason and probability. (claim CHET-Gifford: 184)

C. Express experiences:

The authors use the first person (most often singular) to manifest feelings or an occurrence happened during the process of their scientific research.

9) **I** went to Durham, and stayed some few days, where **I** was favoured with very obliging Civilties and Courtesies from […] did with great cheerfulness, lay open to me the great ftore of Scots Charters and Writings in their custody. (exp. CHET-J. Anderson: 52)
10) [B]eing a little cloudy, **I** myself observed, as near as possible, that the Moon began to be eclipsed (exp. CETA-Hodgson: 108)
11) **I** remember to have communicated that afternoon to my son (exp. CETA-Wilson: 9)

D. Express scholar membership:

Through the first person plural the author not only refers to himself but also to others in his close scientific group, that is, astronomers or historians. Nevertheless, this function is not always easy to discern, owing to the difficulty in separating the two types of readers, the scholarly and the general "public".

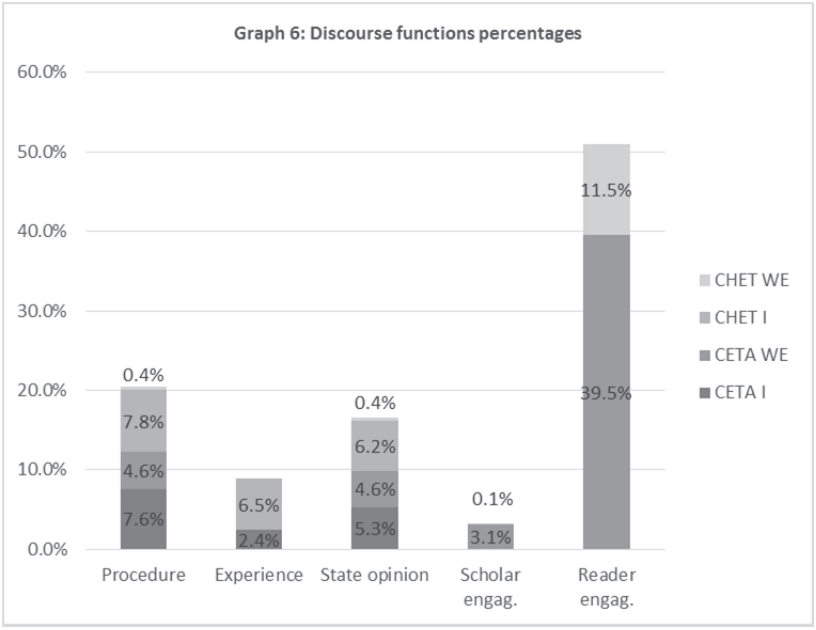
12) So that when **we** speak of a Degree, we mean the 360 part of a Circle great or Small (schol. CETA-Morden: 10)
13) Whereof **we** know no other Originals extant: And further, here and here only, so far as is yet known. (schol. CHET- J. Anderson: 58)
14) For tho' with all astronomers **we** assert in the general that our earth is a sphere nevertheless **we** mean not thereby a perfect or geometrical sphere (schol. CETA-Whiston: 2)

E. General reader engagement:
The author seems concerned with sharing his knowledge and experience with the reader engaging him/her in the discoveries related. We is the form preferred to make the reader participant of the written discourse.

15) **We** are told by the english historians (eng. CHET- Adams: 81)
16) [W]hensoever **we** move to the east or west **we** change our meridian (eng. CETA-Watts: 7)
17) [I]f **we** were to go round the earth upon the ecuator (eng. CETA-Long: 73)

b. Discussion of findings

Considering reading pronouns and stance pronouns functions in each subcorpus helps elucidating to what extent self-mentioning is relevant in them. Graph 6 presents the percentages obtained when deeming the function of each pronoun *I/we* in each subcorpus with respect to the total number of first person subject pronouns found.



Graph 6 shows that the most important function performed by these first person pronouns is that of engagement. This is more obvious in CETA where the use of *We* to involve the reader in the written discourse reaches a 39.5%, whereas in CHET it amounts to an 11.5%. This result agrees with the fact that 8 out of 18 texts in CETA are classified as textbooks. On the other hand, as mentioned before, sometimes it is difficult to distinguish if the author is referring to a general reader or his specific scholar group, as exemplified in 18; here we do not know for certain if the intention of Nicholson is

to continue in the line of guiding the reader in his explanations or if he is making a parenthesis to show previous knowledge shared by specialists:

18) [G]ive a short explanation of that for which **we** are indebted to the great [Dr] Halley (CETA-Nicholson:122)

There are also a few cases in which *I*, seems closer to a reader engagement *you* or an indefinite *one* than a self-mentioning, see example 19 where the substitution of *I* for *you* or *one* is plausible, nevertheless if the author's choice was the first person it appears that he is stressing the process he, himself, has followed and therefore these cases are counted as such function, procedure:

19) [T]hus if **I** imagin the place of the floor upon which **I** stand (CETA-Long: 63)

A clear scholar engagement is not very high in the corpus, as we find it only in CETA, being the only example in CHET the one mentioned in 13. Authors do not reflect, in terms of pronouns at least, their need to ascertain a belonging to a specific scholar group. As the metadata provided by the corpus and author's biographies suggest not all of them were exclusively devoted to the scientific field they were writing about.

In totals the pronouns employed to express stance are less than those employed for engagement, if we consider the three stance functions together: procedure, statement or opinion claim and the expression of an experience, they amount to a 45.8% in the whole corpus while engagement functions reach a 54.2%. Within the stance functions, procedures and statements are higher, in both subcorpus the authors are self-evident in the explaining process and guiding the reader so that each section becomes clearly delimited. The use of majestatic plurals is noticeable in CETA, to example 3 we could add 20 and 21:

20) [A]fter which **we** shall come to survey the intermediate heavens and the system of the Sun (CETA-Whiston: 13)
21) [B]efore **we** proceed farther to let the learner see a representation of all the foregoing circles and Points on the Globe (CETA-Watts: 18)

We is also used for statements in CETA with a 4.6% but is not so relevant in CHET. In those cases it appears more as a form of hedging, avoiding an excessively self-centered opinion rather than a scholar commitment, see 22 and 23; it should also be added that these examples occur more often in authors who prefer *we* to *I*:

22) But then **we** say, that Tacquet not only mistakes, when he denies all manner of Parallax to the Fixed Stars, for that they have an annual Parallax **we** shall shew in the following Solution (CETA-Whiston: 22)
23) **We** proceed now to enquire into the true Mechanical Cause of the Sun's central Rotation round his Axis. And this **I** conceive is performed by that fluid Matter, which is dispersed through the Universe, as **we** shall prove hereafter. And that there is such a fluid Matter, Sir Isaac Newton suspected (CETA-Lacy: 27)

Example 23 shows the stance functions of procedure and state an opinion or claim, the first performed through *we* (*we proceed*) and the second by both *I* (*I conceive*) and *we* (*we shall prove*).

Experience is expressed in both subcorpus through the first person singular (see 24-25). This function is higher in CHET than in CETA as it seems authors in their role of historians are more prone to narrate how they achieved the records they used for their books. In CETA, Wilson's text on the "Observation of the Solar Spots" contains nearly all the examples of experience expression; the author describes the succession of astronomical observations which allowed him to formulate a theory about Solar spots and granted him recognition as a scientist.

24) but next day at 10 o'clock **I** had another observation and discovered changes (CETA-Wilson: 7)
25) I have seen a charter granted by Mathew Earl of Lenox (CHET-Crawfurd: 76)

In the whole corpus, three authors rendered no results with CCT search for *I* and *we*, one in CETA, Stewart (1761), and two in CHET, Anderson (1775) and Birch (1760) (see graphs 3 and 4). Stewart, a reputed mathematician, combines in his text geometry with astronomy trying to calculate the distance between the Sun and the Earth. This is a case which seems to show an "object-centered" type of writing. When examining the whole text it can be appreciated the preference of passive constructions and sentences with no-human subject. Even in the preface the author establishes certain distance through a third person to refer to himself:

> They were intended to explain several things in the lunar theory which **the author** had in view, but which, as the book has swelled to a greater size than was at first expected, **he** was obliged to defer at present (Stewart 1761, vi)[5]

The history books follow the same line and although in their case human subjects are frequent, the absence of the authors seems justified to favor their historical characters. Therefore, first person pronouns do appear but only in quotations which the corpus does not count, were it not so it would have been misleading for a study on authorial voice. Consulting the whole works, Birch's text is a biography "The life of Henry Prince of Wales", but so is Cornish's (1780), "The Life of Mr Thomas Firmin", who uses a few, five, *we* pronouns. Although Birch signs his dedication and preface, he does include the pronoun *I* in these prefatory parts. Anderson only uses *we* in the preface as a form of engagement (just twice) and, he as well as Stewart, does not include his name at the end of these parts. From the years of publication it can be seen that theirs is a personal choice, other authors, before and after used first person pronouns.

When compared with other research findings the results obtained here show that there is a considerable variation among authors and their preferences for self-mentioning. Therefore, we could agree only to a certain extent with Gross, Harmon & Reidy (2002, p. 81) in finding a shift from "the scientist to his science, and from subjective to objective prose […] supported by the rise in suppressed-person passives and the decrease in personal pronouns". In fact, we see this earlier in the century in the three authors mentioned above but for example Bonnycastle (1786) in CETA and Gibbon (1788) in CHET (see Graphs 3 and 4) would be exceptions to this trend at the end of the century.

[5] The Preface is not part of the text compiled in CETA, it was accessed through XXX , but not adding any contradictory information it comes to corroborate the validity of the Coruña Corpus.

The same type of evolution marked by Gross, Harmon & Reidy (2002) had been sustained by Atkinson (1996, p. 338-340) for the Philosophical Transactions she studied but again including several exceptions.

In absolute terms, the use of the first person plural is higher than that of the singular. The fact that its main function in the texts analyzed, written by a single author, is that of engagement points to a minor degree of self-mentioning attributable to *we*. The 45.8% of first person stance markers does not reach the 54.2% of engagement but it is still a considerable percentage.

In what concerns the differences between hard and soft sciences, full figures would indicate that CHET texts present more cases of first person singular self-mentioning than CETA's. Nevertheless, when considering specific functions of the interaction pronouns that would include *I* and *we*, stance cases are superior in 3.3 points in CETA, that is, a 24.5% corresponds to CETA and a 21.3% to CHET. This could account for the differences in present-day English found by Hyland (2001, & Sancho-Guinda 2012), who finds self-mention to be generally higher in humanities, versus Sword (2012) who asserts there is a predominance of first person in hard sciences.

Although all forms of stance reveal the authors voice, in academic writing the most revealing would be the function related to stating an opinion or claim. It is with this function that the author asserts his findings and his persona as a scientist. Thus, even if CHET shows a high use of first person singular for this function, CETA's combination of *I* and *we* is higher. Moreover, the fact that by author Wilson (1773) presents the highest number is quite illuminating, showing the perception of a scholar who has discovered something new, only attributable to himself.

Function, therefore, seems to be as important as text and discipline. A difficulty lies in analyzing academic writing of diverse types, even ascribing them to a "genre", a factor inherent to the 18th century texts of the corpus as its compilers declare (Moskowich, 2012, p. p. 39-40). The different readers these authors may have had in mind could change their approach, as mentioned above for textbooks. No less important is the degree of professionality of the writers who usually had other occupations to earn their living. Far from preventing them from being less anxious than present-day researchers, they seem quite concerned about their public, hence the amount of engagement pronouns which may have contributed to that apparent "sheer confidence" that Hargraves (2003, p. 30) finds in 18th century historians:

> Through the penetrative insight of the historian and the power of his language to illuminate the hitherto "insensible," the intention and result was to make plainly visible the previously hidden or obscure. The precise characterization of every event and actor at every point in the narrative was thereby ensured. What is striking is the sheer confidence of this omniscient exposition of the internal operations of the human mind and the omnipresent monitoring of the constituents and inflections of character.

4. Conclusions

From the analysis of CETA and CHET 18th century authors on self-mentioning several conclusions can be reached:

1. The *Coruña Corpus* appears to be an adequate source for research on authorial voice, given its capacity to offer representative data preventing the deviation that quotations could produce.
2. Self-mentioning is relevant in the texts selected both for stance and engagement.
3. Considerable variation among authors does not allow to assert there is a clear descent in the use of personal pronouns within academic writing at this stage
4. In absolute terms CHET presents a higher percentage of first singular person pronouns than CETA, but considering functions separately, CETA offers more cases of stance than CHET.
5. The combination of *I* and *we* in CETA for expressing an opinion or claim, shows little difference pointing to personal preference and degree of "originality" in what has to be said.
6. In 18th C texts self-mention appears to be superior in hard sciences (astronomy texts) than in soft ones (historical texts).
7. The informative character of most of the texts in their different formats is made clear by the high number of general reader engagement and procedure functions that pronouns perform in both subcorpus.

These findings do not seem to differ in a great extent to modern researchers practices; divergences appear from author to author depending on their purpose. The main difference may lie in the importance English was gaining as a scientific language and how authors could reach through it a more general public. I finish borrowing Wilson's (1773, p.30) own conclusion that would serve any present-day article and most certainly this one:

> To conclude, as what hath now been said may open a new field of inquiry into this subject, so a discussion of these curious points may, some time or another, fall to the share of abler men whose love of philosophy may induce them to pursue so noble an investigation.

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Pronouns as stance markers in the *Coruña Corpus*: An analysis of the CETA, CEPhiT and CHET[6]

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Abstract: It is now widely accepted that knowledge is negotiated and negotiation implies involvement on the part of both readers and writers. Since there seems to be some connection between involvement and stancetaking (Freeman et al. 2014: 1), it seems reasonable to argue that both of them have some relationship with knowledge negotiation. This paper aims at exploring how authorial presence is manifested in late Modern English scientific writing in the use of first person pronouns as involvement and, therefore, stance makers. The influence of variables such as subject-matter and sex will be analysed in order to ascertain to what extent they make that such linguistic feature is more or less frequently used by authors. In order to ascertain how different disciplinary discourse communities behave, texts from three different scientific fields written both by men and women will be scrutinised. The samples are the ones contained in the *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy* (CETA), the *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* (CEPhiT), and the *Corpus of History English Texts* (CHET), all of them subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*.

Keywords: max. stance, involvement, personal pronouns, disciplinary discourse community, *Coruña Corpus*, late Modern English, scientific discourse.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, collaborative work has been much in vogue: schoolchildren are asked to use online collaborative tools (Stahl, 2003), university students often write joint projects, and researchers seem to be drawn to the "publish-together or perish" model. But collaboration requires negotiation, which in turn implies involvement on the part of both readers and writers. The relationship between stance taking and negotiation has been discussed widely (Hyland, 2005) and there seems to be a connection of some kind between high involvement and strong stances (Freeman et al. 2014: 1).

Stance, in the form of authorial presence as a possible expression of involvement, can be seen at work in many linguistic features, these having been enumerated in works on academic prose (see Chafe 1985, Biber 1988, Hyland 1996 and Atkinson 1999); and stance is perhaps best observed in the use of first person pronouns, which have been classified as "central" pronouns (Quirk et al, 1985; Chamonikolasová, 1991). At the moment, university guidelines for academic writing still tend to

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recommend never to give personal opinions or to use the pronoun I when writing essays, although many do recognise that the rules here are changing (UNC, 2016).

The idea, still pervasive, that scientific writing is highly impersonal (Hyland, 1998a) will be challenged again here, in that the aim of the present chapter is to look at how writers of science in late Modern English revealed themselves in their prose. I will also address the issue of whether there are any external constraints (such as subject-matter) or internal ones (such as sex) at play here. To this end, Section 2 will offer an brief overview of the theoretical tenets and practical applications of the study of involvement as part of stance taking. Following that, Section 3 will present the data used for the current study, these being samples of scientific writing of different kinds published between 1700 and 1900, a period in which science was beginning to be standardised in its mode of expression. Section 4 will present findings, followed by some concluding remarks in the final section.

2. Stance, involvement and pronouns in late Modern English scientific writing

Alonso-Almeida and González-Cruz (2012: 324) refer to stance as an "umbrella term", since it has been used to refer to a wide range of authorial attitudes, these expressed through a range of different linguistic features including adverbial, adjectival, verbal and modal markers, plus others. The concept of stance in linguistics is closely related to the expression of sentiment or subjectivity, an internal mental or emotional state which itself corresponds to what Quirk et al (1985: 202) call expressions of a "private state". Thus, stance is generally considered to be the way in which speakers (or writers and readers) interact. This interaction may take different forms (Kokelman, 2004; Jaffe, 2009), such as evaluation, intentionality, epistemology or social relations. We can see, then, that the concept of stance has been used differently by different authors; it might be to describe pragmatic-related functions such as irony or role-playing, or the way the communicative goals of individual participants shape particular communicative interactions. There is yet another possible approach, one derived from Daniel Dennett's (1987) concept of intentional stance, that is, the way humans tend to assume certain intentions and mental states in their interlocutors. The influence of Bertrand Russell in the first half of the 20th century, and in particular his coining of the term "propositional verbs" (1956: 227), led to propositional attitude becoming one of the best-known notions of stance, with authorial stance understood as the position speakers or authors adopt regarding their own propositions (texts). The original philosophical treatment of stance as a manifestation of human thought has also been taken up in various fields of linguistics, both as it is manifested nowadays (Chafe 1986; Hunston 1994; Hyland 1996, Precht, 2000) and from a diachronic point of viewMeurman-Solin, 1993; Fitzmaurice 2002: Alonso-Almeida and Mele-Marrero, 2014). Also, following the publication of foundational papers such as Pang et al (2002) and Wiebe at al (2005), different corpus-based and corpus-driven studies have been published on sentiment and subjectivity, and these have even extended to the analysis of prosodic elements in a transcribed corpus of present day language use (Freeman et al, 2014).

Although some authors have noted differences between engagement and stance, others have tried to form a broad understanding of the issues here, especially as regards academic writing (Hyland, 2005: 173). Since elaborate negotiation may include citing personal knowledge or experience, personal pronouns are considered good indicators of stance taking for the purpose of such

research. The current paper argues that involvement may be seen as a manifestation of stance which, in turn, is linguistically expressed through features such as pronouns, especially those directly referring to the speaker/writer (I), the audience/readership (you) or both (we)[7]. According to Herriman and Aronsson (2009: 103) "the clauses with the first person singular pronoun subjects attribute the attitude they express explicitly to the speaker/writer and are thus subjective interpersonal metaphors". In this sense, we can establish a relation between pronouns, stance and involvement.

In previous work on involvement in late Modern English scientific writing by women (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015), the idea was posited that there is some kind of power asymmetry, in Lakoff's (1990) terms, together with the one which a priori assigns a more involved or less informational style to female writers than to male ones. In other words, women are less detached than men (Argamon et al. 2003). Involvement has also been claimed to be the consequence of real interaction between speaker and listener (Biber, 1988: 43, Besnier, 1994: 280), that is, more typical of oral registers as opposed to no direct interaction in the written medium (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015: 77). Accordingly, scientific discourse should be the informational mode par excellence, even when written by women. However, other studies on present-day English (Argamon et al., 2003) seem to contradict this idea, in that they show that women writers tend to include in their written discourse features expressing involvement. My working hypothesis is that such claims for present-day academic prose (Biber, 1988) can also be applied to late Modern English scientific writing, and first person pronouns can undoubtedly be used as elements here, having the writer and/or the listener as extralinguistic referents.

Contrary to some general assumptions, I argue that academic writing is not just about conveying ideas, content or knowledge: it also in some way represents the writer and his/her place within a particular epistemic community. As suggested by Hyland in more recent work (2002: 1091), academic prose is not completely impersonal. On the contrary, writers gain credibility by projecting an identity invested with individual authority, displaying confidence in their evaluations and a commitment to their ideas. Academic authors can no longer hide behind scientific discourse, and there are quite a few linguistic features (Chafe, 1985; Biber, 1988; Hyland, 1996; Atkinson, 1999) through which their identity can be detected. Many of these linguistic features may be used more or less unconsciously, but this does not seem to be the case with first person pronouns.

There is general agreement that the use of first person pronouns expresses the presence of the writer. Zohar (2015), in line with Martín-Martín (2005), considers the use of the singular form a mark of confrontation in the dialogue (interaction) established in academic prose. However, other researchers have different approaches. Thus, Hyland (2001: 217) considers that the first person helps authors to set their own work apart from that of others. Myers (1992) argues that in present-day English writing the first-person pronoun is often used to help the reader identify an author's main claims. A similar viewpoint is that of Harwood (2005) who argues that authors resort to the first person to add a sense of novelty to their work, thus providing it with extra value in the field. Also, in a later work Hyland

[7] In linguistics, then, authors such as Biber and Finnegan (1989: 93) have considered stance as "the lexical and grammatical expression of attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message", and no doubt pronouns are one of these grammatical expressions.

claims that "over the past decade or so, academic writing has gradually lost its traditional tag as an objective, faceless and impersonal form of discourse and come to be seen as a persuasive endeavour involving interaction between writers and readers." (Hyland, 2005: 173). The plural forms of the pronoun have also been analysed in two opposing ways. First, they have been considered to minimise the presence of the author (Myers 1989: 14) and in this sense they seem to be used to express exactly the opposite stance, that is, modesty, although this does not completely explain their use in academic prose (Hyland, 2001); second, they have been seen as a claim of authority and communality (Pennycook (1994: 176). However, such functions and uses may not be so new to the language.

For the period under survey here, some other factors deserve consideration. With the Scientific Revolution of the 17th century, the scientific method was generally adopted. Objectivity was one of its main aims, and indeed scientists tended to describe everything in terms of facts and data, so that "experiments" could be repeated under the same conditions to confirm that the same results could be obtained (Moskowich, 2015). It seems that from the second half of the 18th century there is a reaction to this object-centred tendency, one which would culminate in the Romantic movement. Also, some authors (Harris, 1751; Beattie, 1793) began to address the idea of their own use of language. There were certain linguistic habits typically associated with science, but certain other features have also been detected in scientific writings from this period involving an interaction or dialogue between the reader and writer (Crespo, 2011; Alonso-Almeida, 2012). Language as a system may not have varied much in terms of syntax or morphology, but the concern of speakers for its correct use as a tool for social advancement was undoubted. And such concerns were also present in scientific writing, perhaps as a response to Boyle's early claims about the language of science, now free of the tyranny of the object-centred perspective.

As noted in Moskowich and Crespo (2014: 101), both cultural and academic life were strongly influenced by Positivism and Romanticism. Whereas the former was the natural heir of Empiricism, with experimentation, observation and data as central elements, the latter focused on the individual and his or her expression of ideas and opinions. In that study, we argued that "One of the ways of manifesting such personal opinions is the incorporation of stance adverbs into one's discourse." (Moskowich and Crespo, 2014: 101), and I will argue here that the role of personal pronouns in this respect is no less notable. "The use of first and second person pronouns is undoubtedly one of the devices used by authors either to involve the reader, or to show their own involvement with and proximity to both the message conveyed and the readership" (Crespo and Moskowich (2015: 78). In what follows I will aim to establish a relationship between the use of pronouns, the sex of the author, and the field of knowledge of texts, in order to see the extent to which these two factors play a role in language modelling.

3. Corpus material and methodology

Although personal pronouns have been said to become "a carrier of some irretrievable information (contrast, selection, emotiveness) and acquire a high degree of CD (communicative dynamism)[8] "

[8] My parenthesis.

(Chamonikolasová, 1991: 60), the data I will be using are drawn from texts written during the late modern English period contained in the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* (henceforth CC). The CC is complied in such a way that each subcorpus is formed by text samples representing the same scientific discipline. In this sense, they are valid for the survey of the use of first person pronouns as regards subject-matter, the first variable under consideration here. Although this may imply some difficulties in reconciling the prototypical characterisation of disciplines and the compilation principles that govern the CC (Puente-Castelo and Monaco, forthcoming), such an organisation has proved useful for comparative studies.

Three of the subcorpora of the CC have been used here: the *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy* (CETA), the *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* (CEPhiT) and the *Corpus of History English Texts* (CHET). The texts compiled therein were published between 1700 and 1900 and written directly in English by English-speaking authors.9 Since all samples in the CC contain around 10,000 words, with 20 samples from each century, this means each discipline is more or less equally represented by a total of ca. 400,000 words. Thus, a total of 1,211,749 words has been used for the study of the use of pronouns. Word counts are as shown below:

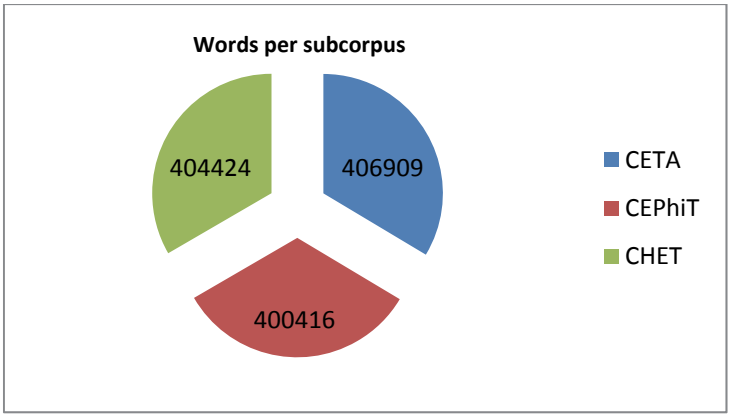

Figure 1. Word count in the three corpora (per discipline)

Since the second variable we will consider here is that of the sex of the author, it should be noted that, as expected, not many female writers are included in the data, since they are also significantly few in the CC. As a small-scale representative sample of scientific language as used in late Modern English society, the corpus contains relatively few texts written by women (as well as fulfilling the other criteria set by the compilers (Moskowich, 2012)) and their number varies depending on the discipline and century. Thus, there are only two samples written by women in Astronomy, none at all during the 19th century for Philosophy (although several for the previous century), and yet a greater abundance in texts of history or historiography, with eight samples.

[9] For a detailed account of the compilation principles governing the Coruña Corpus, see Moskowich, 2012, 2016.

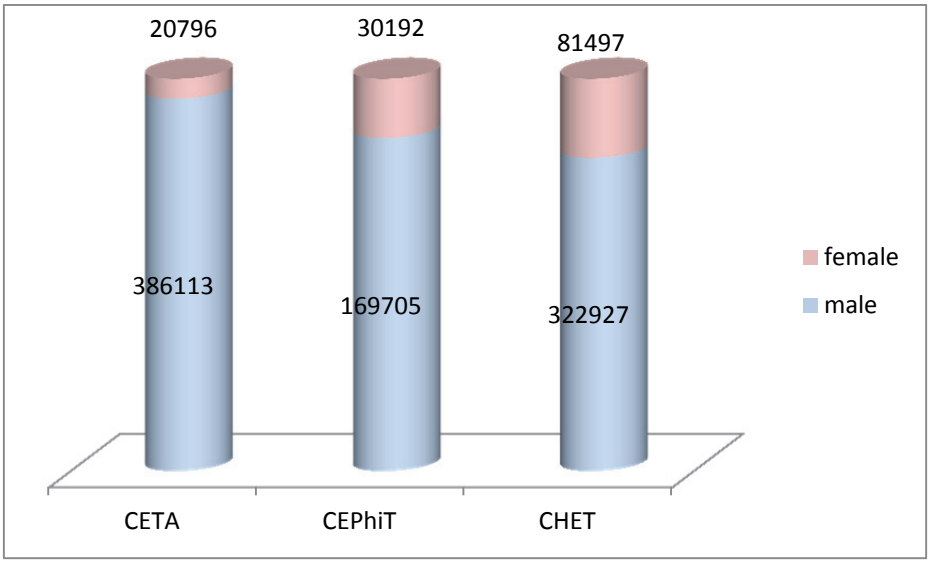

Figure 2. Word count per sex of author

The eleven different forms that were searched for in the material are those corresponding to the first person pronoun, both singular and plural, as these might have different uses and functions. The complete list is set out in Table 1, in alphabetical order:

Table 1. List of forms searched[10]

Singular	**Plural**
I	Our
I´m	Ourselves
I´ll	Us
I´d	we
Me	We'll
My	We'd
Myself	We're

As we will see below, not all these types occur in the data.

[10] The forms here included represent all variants of pronouns in the corpus. We, thus, register subject pronouns, obliques and contracted forms.

4. Analysis of data

The Coruña Corpus Tool was used to conduct the searches, and, as noted above, not all the forms in Table 1 were found. For example, data from CHET contained none of the contracted forms, which is surprising since they were much in use in the written register during the eighteenth century, although nowadays they are considered typical of everyday speech and informal writing EGT, 2016).

Of the total of 1,211,749 words, that is, taking male and female texts together, only 12,621 (1.04%) are forms of the first person pronoun. This may not seem very high. However, it can be accounted for by the fact that the dissemination of scientific knowledge is primarily concerned with the transmission of ideas, concepts or the communication of inventions, in which nouns and noun phrases play a dominant role, this being one of the largest and most important lexical categories in scientific terminology (Nevalainen, 1999). However, personal pronouns appear to be more common when, as in the current study, authors from both sexes are considered together; Crespo and Moskowich (2015), for example, reported the use of these pronouns in women to be just 0.74%.

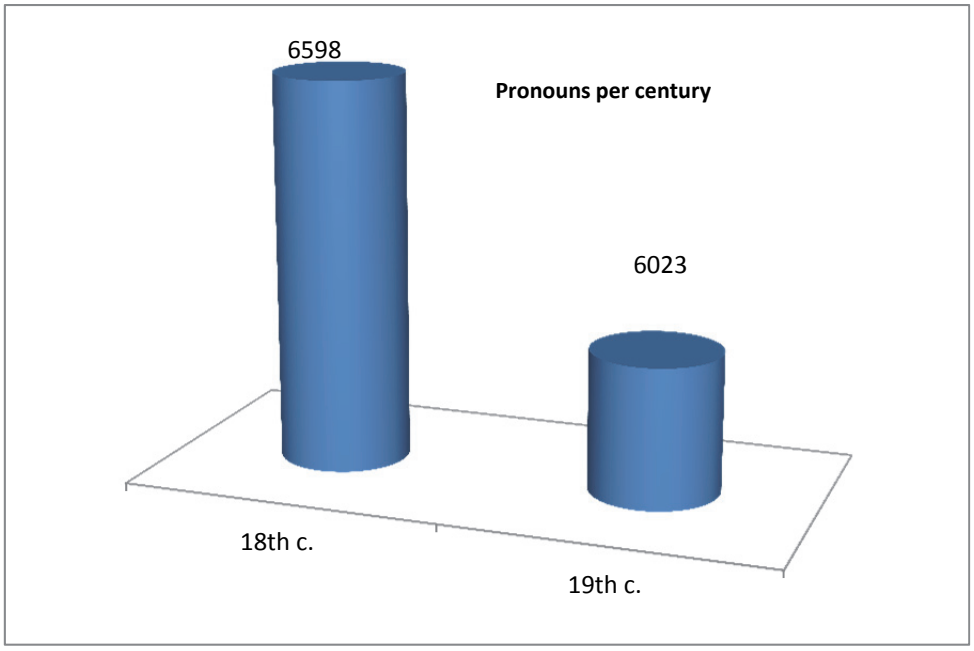

Figure 3. First person pronouns per century

We observe an important decrease in the use of first person pronouns in the 19th century, despite the fact that the Romantic movement was flourishing at the time. However, the importance of Rationalism, as well as the development of national academies of science, may have had a greater impact on writing standards, in particular on the avoidance of personal references in favour of objective observation.

4.1. Subject-matter

Subject-matter, discipline, field and domain are terms often used synonymously to refer to the set of concepts, ideas and conventions that are considered typical of an area of knowledge. Although lines between such fields were fuzzy in the past, they are becoming more and more clear, if not for knowledge itself (in that interdisciplinarity is currently seen as indispensible for the advancement of humanity) then very much so for the ways in which knowledge is conveyed. The Writing Centre at the University of North Carolina, for instance, recognises different kinds of language use for different fields of knowledge. Specifically for the use of personal pronouns in the Social Sciences, it states:

> Ask your instructor whether you should use "I." The purpose of writing in the humanities is generally to offer your own analysis of language, ideas, or a work of art. Writers in these fields tend to value assertiveness and to emphasize agency (who's doing what), so the first person is often—but not always—appropriate. Sometimes writers use the first person in a less effective way, preceding an assertion with "I think," "I feel," or "I believe" as if such a phrase could replace a real defense of an argument. While your audience is generally interested in your perspective in the humanities fields, readers do expect you to fully argue, support, and illustrate your assertions. Personal belief or opinion is generally not sufficient in itself; you will need evidence of some kind to convince your reader.

If this is so, it is because each discipline shares mechanisms of intercommunication among its members, especially in professional journals and scientific conferences. The community's members have an in-depth familiarity with the types of texts that are unique to that community (Swales 1990: 24-25).

My counts for the three subcorpora (each of which represents a different discipline) seem to confirm this. Raw numbers rather than normalised frequencies are used here, since all samples are ca 10,000 words, with the same number of texts for each discipline and century. As Figure 4 shows, there are notable differences in the number of first person pronouns used in each case.

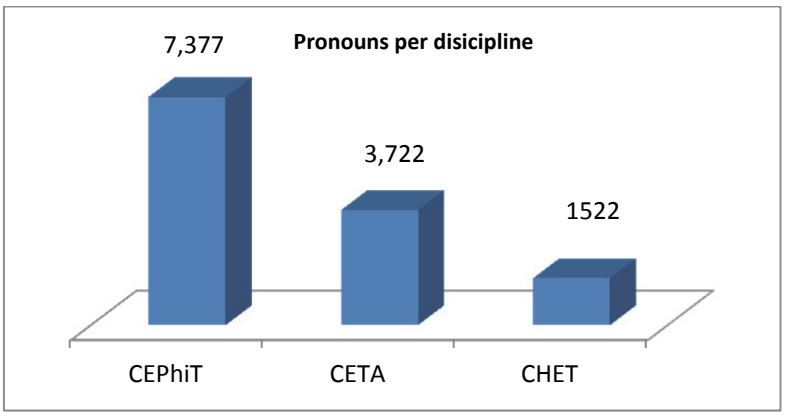

Figure 4. Use of first person pronouns per discipline

There are 7,377 such forms in the Philosophy texts, followed by 3,722 in Astronomy and only 1,522 in the texts on History (even though there are some samples here written in the first person, such as the travelogue by Elisabeth Justice11). Disciplinary variability can be observed, in that some disciplines seem to require a higher proportion of pronouns than others, this no doubt depending on the discourse patterns negotiated by the discourse (disciplinary) community. At the same time, the idea cited above from the University of North Carolina's Writing Centre is not borne out, even for this period; indeed, this was shown in a previous study (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015) where we found very significant differences in the use of pronouns in Life Sciences, Astronomy and History; Life Sciences was the discipline with by far the highest frequency of use of first and second pronominal forms, followed at a considerable distance by Astronomy and History, where first and second person pronouns were almost absent. It was thought in that study that the low level of technicality in some of the Life Sciences samples (they are basic, introductory texts) might have provoked this difference; authors seeking to instruct were sympathetic to those readers who wanted learn, and this, we argued, was the reason for their frequent use of first and second person pronouns. Also in that study, History texts had a more detached style than the other samples. In the present study too, History is the discipline exhibiting the lowest numbers, and this perhaps leads us to consider it as the result of some sort of over-reaction. That is, disciplines that had a long and respected tradition such as Philosophy, or others, like Astronomy, which had been accepted as good examples of the observational sciences, did not have to prove their validity or that of their discourse. History or historiography, on the other hand, was heavily influenced by the Positivist ideas of Auguste Comte (1798-1857) throughout the 19th century, and the objective description of facts tended to be the primary concern of writers. Perhaps in order to be respected by other discourse communities, authors of history had to adopt the supposedly objective perspective that had been so successful in other fields.

However, this difference may be also due to the evolution of discursive patterns over time, and for this reason I will analyse each discipline in the two centuries separately. As Figure 5 shows, the frequency with which authors use first person pronominal forms decreases in Astronomy texts (in CETA, 1,951 instances for the 18th and 1,771 for the 19th century) and in History texts (in CHET, 1,184 for the 18th and only 338 for the 19th century). Those authors who write about Philosophy, however, exhibit a different approach, and their use of first person pronouns does not decrease, but rather increases slightly (from 3,463 to 3,915 uses in CEPhiT). This may be due to the influence of the discipline itself and its contents. The late Modern period was heavily influenced by Berkeley, who defended the idea that objects only existed in as much as the self could perceive them, and by Kant, whose transcendental idealism also reinforced the notion of the self and the way in which the mind directly knows only ideas. The Romantic movement may also have had some influence on the writing style of many of these authors, who were not so thoroughly subject to the standards of the observational sciences.

[11] Elisabth Justice. 1739. A Voyage to Ruſſia: describing the Laws, Manners, and Cuſtoms, of that great Empire, as govern'd, at this preſent, by that excellent Princeſs, the Czarina. Shewing the Beauty of her. York: printed by Thomas Gent.

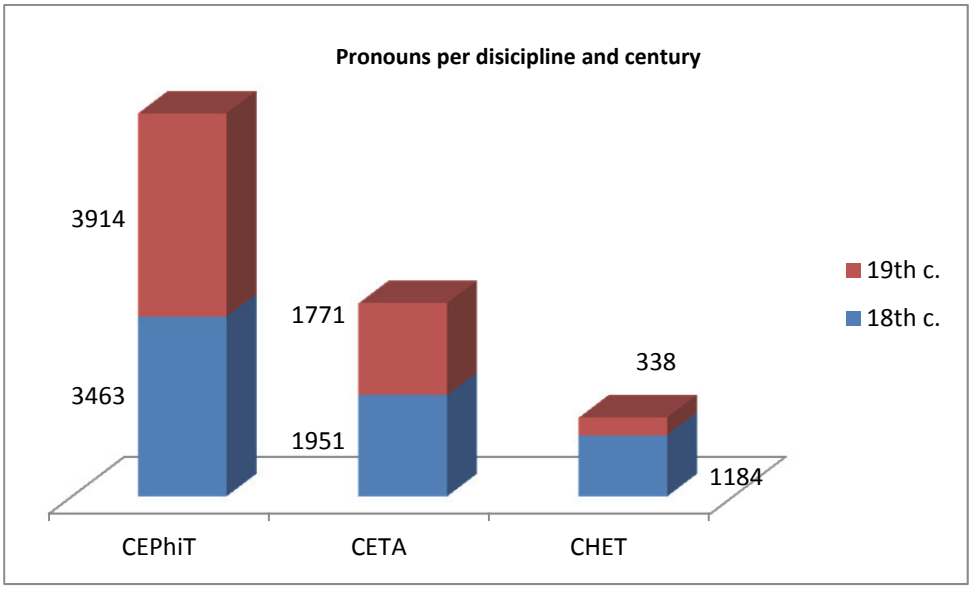

Figure 5. Use of pronouns per discipline and century

But not all forms of the pronoun are used with the same frequency in the data, as shown in Figure 6.

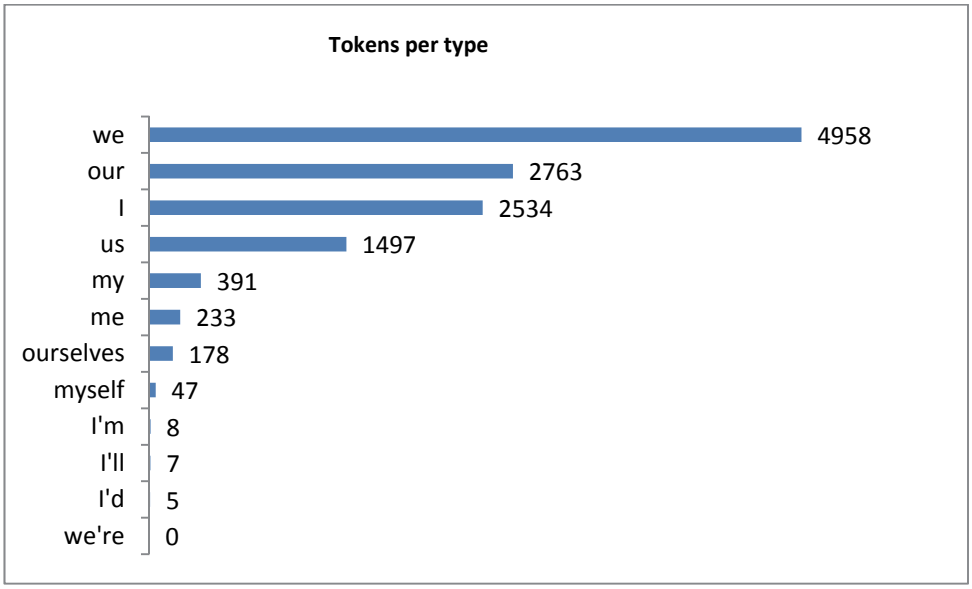

Figure 6. Frequency of occurrence for each type

The first thing we observe here is that there is one type that is not been recorded at all in the data, the contracted form we're, even though all sorts of contraction can be found in English 18th-century writing generally. The most abundant type is we with 4,958 tokens, followed by our with 2,763; contracted and reflexive forms, by contrast, appear at far lower frequencies. Meanwhile, the plural ourselves, with 178 instances, surpasses notably the singular myself (47). The explanation for this large difference in use can be better understood if we turn to the distribution of these forms according to specific variables, with notable differences in terms of both discipline (as reflected in each subcorpus) and century. Table 2 sets out the data for this more detailed analysis:

Table 2. Pronominal forms per discipline and century

Corpus	**CHET**		**CETA**		**CEPhiT**	
Century	**18th**	**19th**	**18th**	**19th**	**18th**	**19th**
I	400	28	486	160	818	400
I'm	2	0	4	0	2	2
I'd	0	0	0	0	5	0
I'll	0	0	3	0	4	0
me	45	5	51	7	73	45
my	58	3	59	18	160	58
myself	5	1	5	7	10	5
our	287	85	398	340	788	287
ourselves	2	4	13	9	60	2
us	120	29	258	248	378	120
we	265	183	674	982	1165	265
we're	0	0	0	0	0	0

CHET is the subcorpus with the greatest number of types registering no occurrences. Excluding the contraction we're that is not present at all in the material, there are five absent forms in History texts overall, two in the 18th century (I'd and I'll) and three in the 19th (the same two plus I'm). The texts on Astronomy show a greater use of pronominal forms. In this case, the forms which are used also occur more frequently, and there are only five types that are not represented at all, I'd in both centuries and I'm and I'll for the 19th. The case of CEPhiT is again different in the sense that almost all types are present, with the only exceptions of I'd and I'll for the 19th century. If we accept Pahta and Taavitsainen's (2010: 551) assumption that "a typical research article intended for professional readers with a great deal of shared knowledge has a highly conventionalised macro-structure and is characterised by a high frequency of discipline-specific terms, complex sentences containing subordination, and an impersonal style created by frequent use of passive constructions, extended noun phrases describing nominalised actions and a low frequency of first- and second-person

pronouns"12, then the texts in CEPhiT might have been intended for (and addressed to) a different readership. However, an examination of the prefatory material to these works makes it clear that this was not the case, and the reason for the abundant use of first person pronominal forms must be sought elsewhere. The cultural atmosphere of the times is perhaps a valid place to start.

4.2. Sex

The second variable I will consider in the analysis is the sex of the authors, in that the consideration of gender as a social construct may have more relevance here. Information in the texts themselves, or in the metadata accompanying them, can of course provide no clues here beyond mere biological sex, and this is all that we can use to establish the division between male and female authors. As mentioned above, the low number of texts written by women is a mirror of the state of things in late Modern English-speaking countries. It is probable that women wrote more than we know, but they often did so under a pseudonym or acted as research assistants. The CC contains works by women which were published under their own name, which explains why, as Figure 7 shows, only 132,485 words (11%) are by women, whereas 1,079,264 (89%) are by men across the three disciplines.

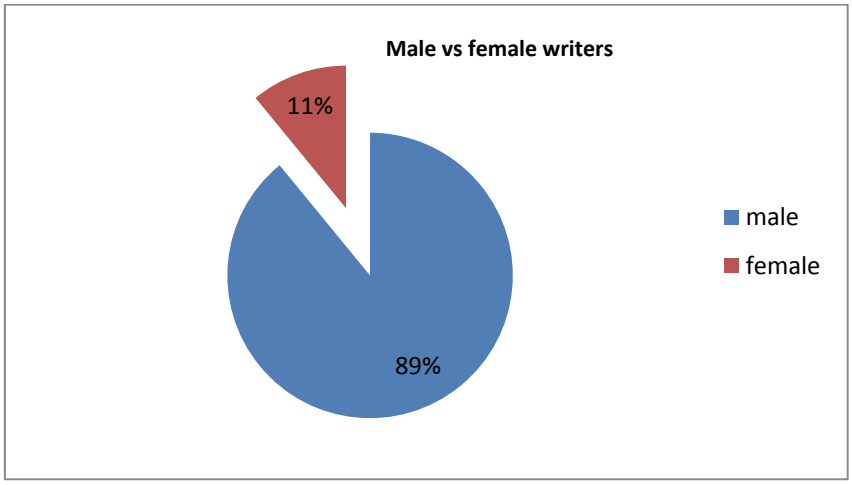

Figure 7. Proportion of words by male and female authors

Figure 8, below, shows how the material is distributed per sex across the subcorpora, with CHET containing the most female authors, with a total representation of 81,497 words, followed by CEPhiT with 30,192, and CETA with 20,796. At first sight the findings for this variable are as surprising as those for discipline; History is the field where least pronominal forms occur, and is the discipline in which female authors are more numerous in the data. This merits further attention, and thus I will now analyse the use of pronouns by sex and discipline.

[12] They ground this claim on Biber (1988) and Swales (1990, 2004), among others.

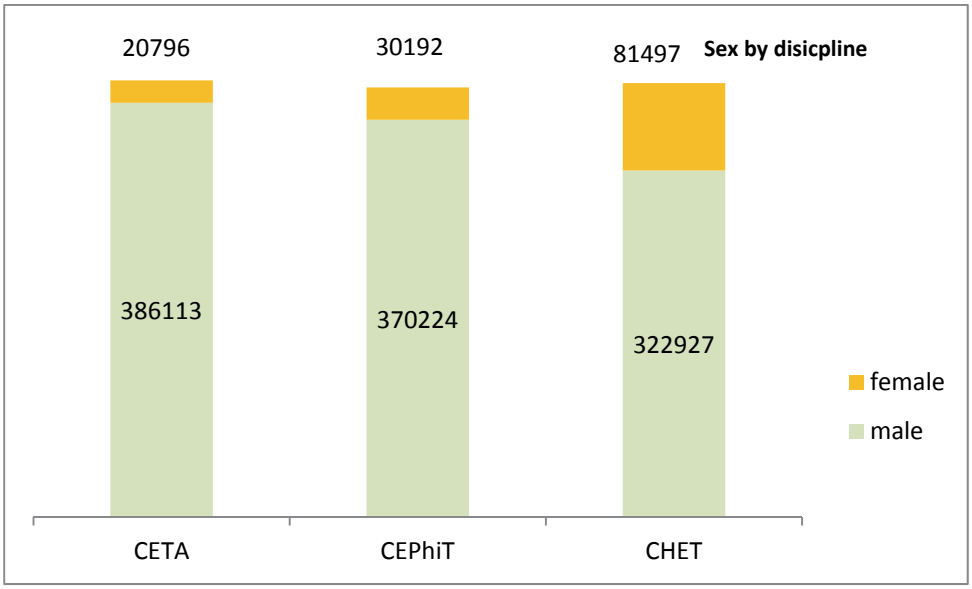

Figure 8. Words per sex and discipline

The use of pronouns must be considered an important linguistic device, and in previous work on hedging and stance taking (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015) we saw that this was the second most frequently used device by women, after private verbs. It is my intention now to see whether this is still true when compared to male writers within the same discipline, and in this way to ascertain whether the use of pronouns as stance taking markers is due to discipline constraints or, rather, is related to the sex of authors; we note that in other studies (Koppel, Argomon and Shimoni 2002; Argamon et al. 2003) personal pronouns are seen to be favoured by females whereas noun determiners are favoured by males as significant indicators of author gender. Herring and Paolillo (2006: 445) also identify personal pronouns as a preferentially female feature.

Raw numbers for the use of pronominal forms per sex in each discipline are set out in Figure 9 below. As can be seen, in general terms it seems that women use fewer pronominal forms than men in all subcorpora (for CHET 354 by women vs. 1,078 by men; CEPhiT 336 by women vs. 7,010 by men; for CETA 218 by women vs. 3,352 by men). Hence, women writing on Astronomy tend to use such forms least frequently.

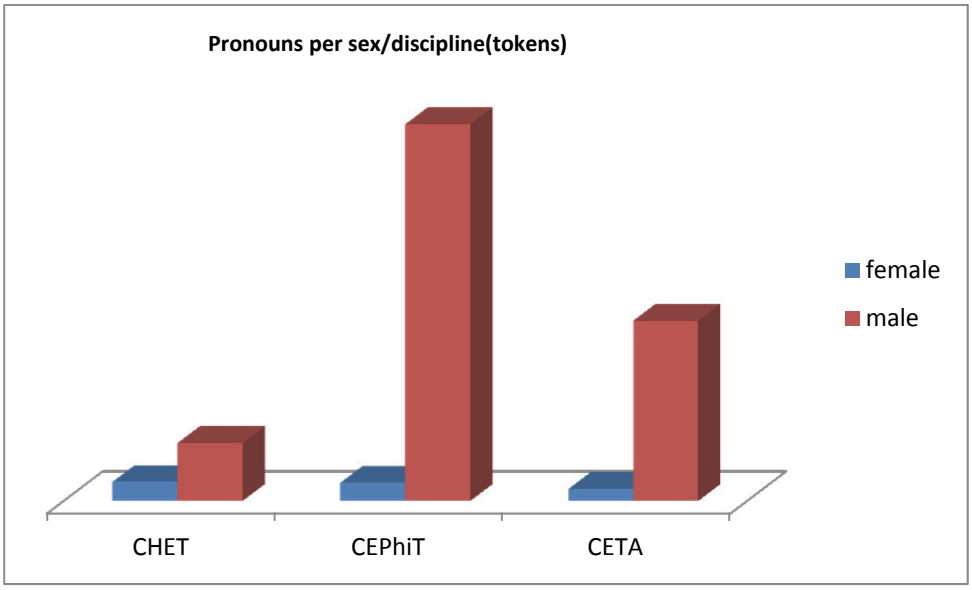

Figure 9. Raw frequencies for the use of first pronoun forms by men and women in each discipline

However, since samples by women are numerically far fewer than those by men, proportions will give us a better portrait of how this linguistic feature was employed by authors from both sexes during the late Modern English period. Thus, normalised frequencies show a slightly different situation.

Table 3. Normalised frequencies for use of pronouns per sex and discipline

	male nf13	**female nf**
CHET	333.8	43.4
CEPhiT	189.4	111.3
CETA	86.8	104.83

The normalised frequencies, as shown in Table 3 above, reveal that in general, and contrary to what has been generally claimed, female authors tend to use the first person less frequently than male writers, especially in history (for women 43.4; for men 333.8), and overall it is the CHET subcorpus in which the first person is most abundant. The scant numbers here for female writers and the abundance for their male counterparts can perhaps be accounted for by their attitude towards what

[13] Frequencies have been normalised to 10,000 words.

they are writing: it may again be that women over-react and try to disappear as authors in order to sound objective and scientific, that is, to be taken seriously, whereas men may not feel the need to do so and thus can express themselves more overtly. CEPhiT reflects this tendency, the second subcorpus in terms of the use of pronouns here, and again females tend to make less use of them (for women 111.3; for men 189.7), probably for the same reason, or perhaps due to the fact that this is a language-conscious discipline, as we can observe in the following example from the corpus:

> The moment that, in consequence of such an impression, a sensation is excited, we learn two facts at once; —the existence of the sensation, and our own existence as sentient beings: —in other words, the very first exercise of my consciousness necessarily implies a belief, not only of the present existence of what is felt, but of the present existence of that which feels and thinks; or (to employ plainer language) the present existence of that being which I denote by the words I and myself (Stewart, 1810: 8.)

Not surprisingly, the Astronomy subcorpus shows itself to be the discipline where such linguistic forms are least abundant: it seems that the observational sciences, such as Astronomy, are well settled by the late Modern English period and their discourse patterns are not easily influenced by movements seen as being from outside the scientific domain (such as Romanticism and its influences). What is surprising, nonetheless, is the fact that it is the only discipline of the three in which women do not seem to be especially shy as authors, and although we only have one sample for each century (this underrepresentation typical of published work in Astronomy at the time) it is unwise to make any sort of generalisations. Perhaps female authors wanted to exhibit their own point of view as a means of intentionally claiming their place in a disciplinary community dominated by men. According to Cegala (1989) highly involved communicators use more immediate language, speak with greater certainty, and use more relational pronominal references than their less involved counterparts. And this may be happening here. Whatever the case, "there is no universal means of structuring knowledge above the social practices of the particular disciplinary communities which bestow meaning, legitimacy and appropriacy on discourse forms" (Hyland, 1998b: 448).

5. Concluding remarks

This study has sought to address separately how subject-matter (or discipline) and an author's sex can be considered as two variables, acting independently and having an influence on how scientific texts from the 18th and 19th centuries used personal pronouns. Nevertheless, scrutiny of the text samples contained in the CC used here, namely, those from the *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy*, the *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* and the *Corpus of English History Texts*, has revealed that these variables do not operate independently, and in fact the discipline seems to have a greater bearing than that of sex of the author in the three subcorpora.

In Crespo and Moskowich (2015: 78) we claimed that "the use of first and second person pronouns is undoubtedly one of the devices used by authors either to involve the reader, or to show their own involvement with and proximity to both the message conveyed and the readership." On the other hand, Herring and Paolillo (2006: 454), in discussing findings on gender in Argamon and Koppel (2003), argue that female writing tends to be more interactive whereas that of men is more

informative, and that this could also be extended to genre. According to the data and analysis in the present study, it can be argued that "interactivity" and "informativity" are also influenced by discipline. In other words, it is not only that women tend to be more interpersonally involved and men more informative in their communicative orientation. Herring and Paolillo claim that "interactivity" and "informativity" are properties of genres, and I argue that they are also discipline-dependent, since each discourse community imposes its uses and patterns on language, and these are not easily changed. If differences in the distribution of pronouns are wider across disciplines than between gender, this may be because it is mostly the discursive requirements of the discipline, and only partially the sex of authors, that dictates such usage, a point we also made in Crespo and Moskowich (2015: 79); in that study, also using the CC, we found that discipline could exert a significant influence on the writer's use of language, that is, subject-matter could indeed impose certain constraints on linguistic choices made, as seems to be the case here.

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Apparently, *fairly* and *possibly* in the Corpus of Modern English History Texts (1700-1900)

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Abstract: This paper seeks to explore the uses and functions of adverbial metadiscourse devices in history scientific texts from the Modern English period (1700-1900), as compiled in *The Corpus of English History Texts*, a subcorpus within *the Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* (University of A Coruña, Spain). There have been previous inspiring studies on metadiscourse features in texts from this and earlier periods of the English language (cf. Moskowich and Crespo 2014; Alonso-Almeida and Mele-Marrero 2014; Gray, Biber and Hiltunen 2011). Following this tradition, I focus on adverbials as metadiscourse devices in the sense in Hyland (2005). The main reason to select adverbials as the target linguistic devices of this analysis lies in the fact that there seems to be widespread agreement that adverbials stand as one of the grammatical categories that most clearly contribute to the expression of interpersonal meanings (Biber and Finegan 1988). Their use by eighteenth and nineteenth century writers of history texts will be described in order to characterise them in terms of authorial presence, and to check how authors use those devices to negotiate interactional meanings with their potential readers, mostly colleagues. It will be shown that, depending on the context, they can fulfill several pragmatic functions, such as the indication of different degrees of authorial commitment or detachment towards the information presented, persuasion, and politeness, among others.

Keywords: metadiscourse, stance, epistemic modality, evidentiality, evaluation, adverbs, hedges.

1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the analysis of adverbial metadiscourse devices in history texts from the Late Modern English period (1700-1900). For this purpose, I will analyse the texts from a corpus of scientific papers in the field of history, the *Corpus of History English Texts*, in order to identify adverbial metadiscourse devices, and to examine the different pragmatic functions they fulfill in each specific context.

I will also discuss some related features such as mitigation, politeness, epistemic modality; all these concepts are closely related to the one of evidentiality. For some scholars, evidentiality represents a subdomain of epistemic modality, there are others, however, who consider evidentiality as an independent category. Epistemic modality seems to be strongly connected to the idea of truth and the authors' responsibility regarding their statements (Traugott 1989; Sweetser 1990; Stukker, Sanders and Verhagen 2009), but I will come to this later in the section 2.

The aim of this paper is to shed further light on the pragmatic functions of the adverbs selected: apparently, fairly and possibly to achieve this objective, a corpus-based analysis of this adverbs has been carried out by taking into consideration their communicative context. The focus of the analysis will be essentially placed upon their function as hedges. This said, the outline of this paper is, as follows. First, a description of the corpus and the methodology used will be carried out. Then, I shall focus on the theoretical framework within I shall discuss concepts such as metadiscourse, stance and hedging. After this, the analysis done and a comment on the results will be offered and finally the conclusions.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1. Metadiscourse

The term metadiscourse was first mentioned in 1959 by the American linguists Zellig Harris "as a method to understand language in use, representing a writer's or speaker's attempts to guide a receiver's perception of a text" (Hyland, 2005: 3). As Hyland (2005: 16) himself puts it, we are dealing with a fuzzy term: "Metadiscourse has always been something of a fuzzy term, often characterized as simply 'discourse about discourse' or 'talk about talk'". Currently, there is broad agreement among scholars that the term metadiscourse makes reference "to material which goes beyond the subject matter to signal the presence of the author" (Hyland, 2005: 35), but there is still no agreed definition of what the term signifies. In this paper, the following Hyland's definition of the term has been adopted: "Metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assisting the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a particular community" (Hyland, 2005: 37-38). This definition is clearly related to the ones presented in previous works about the subject, but it clearly differs from them "overlapping with other views of language use which emphasize the interpersonal, such as evaluation, stance and engagement."

According to Hyland and Tse, (2004) the main principles of metadiscourse are:

1. Metadiscourse is distinct from prepositional aspects of discourse;
2. Metadiscourse refers to aspects of the text that embody writer-reader interactions;
3. Metadiscourse refers only to relations which are internal to the discourse.

(Hyland and Tse 2004 in LI Fa-gen, 2012: 847)

The relevance of metadiscourse in academic texts is undeniable as has been highlighted in Mauranen (1993), Hyland (1998, 2005), Hyland and Tse (2004) and Mur Dueñas (2011), among others. In this paper, the division of metadiscourse into two dimensions will be followed (Hyland and Tse 2004: 161). On the one hand, there is the interactive dimension, which includes code glosses, endophoric markers, evidentials, frame markers and transition markers, and the interactional dimension including attitude markers, boosters, engagement markers, hedges and self mention, on the other. Readers are an essential part in academic writing and authors are responsible for promoting and guiding the interaction with them as a consequence, the use of interactive metadiscourse devices is basic for

writers to successfully interact with their readers. Mur-Dueñas (2011: 3069) describes this division in the following terms:

Thus, both interactive metadiscourse features (intended to organise and shape the material in the light of the readers' likely needs and expectations) and interactional metadiscourse features (aimed at portraying the scholars as authors and at binding writer and reader together) are a response to the interpersonal component of writing.

The following is a framework for the analysis of interactive resources proposed in Carrió-Pastor (2016: 93-94) and based on Mur-Dueñas (2011) and Cao and Hu (2014):

Interactive metadiscourse types	Subtypes	Function
Transitional markers	Additive markers Contrastive markers Consecutive markers	Relations of addition Relation of comparison Relation of cause and effect
Frame markers	Sequencers Topicalisers Discourse labels Announcers	The order of units The shift between topics Discourse stages Discourse goals
Endophoric markers	Anaphoric references Cataphoric references	References to previous text References to subsequent text
Evidential markers	Personal evidentials Impersonal evidentials	References to other scholars References to shared knowledge
Code glosses	Exemplification markers Reformulation markers	Meaning with examples Reformulation of discourse

In relation to the interactional metadiscourse dimension, Mur-Dueñas (2011) divided it into the following categories.

- Hedges: features which limit the writer's full commitment to what is stated in a proposition and which may be the result of certain pragmatic conventions in academic writing.

- Boosters: features which highlight the writers' certainty and conviction about a proposition and which may be the result of certain pragmatic conventions in academic writing.

- Attitude markers: items which show the writer's affective evaluation of given parameters or entities.

- Engagement markers: elements through which scholars bring the readers into the text, involving them in the negotiation of academic knowledge. These include personal pronouns, question forms, directives and asides.

- Self-mentions: explicit signals of the authorial persona of the scholar(s). They feature self-references and self-citations.

(Mur-Dueñas 2011: 3070)

In this section, I have sought to show that in academic writing there are expressions, which make reference to the authors and to the potential readers. Those expressions are known as *metadiscourse*. We can claim that, without metadiscourse devices, communication would be less effective due to the lack of contextual information for the readers to understand the message and, therefore, writers would be unable to convey their ideas and engage their readers effectively (Hyland, 2005).

As Hyland (2005: 18) claims, most rhetoricians, linguists and composition theorists agree on using metadiscourse in a wider sense. In this sense, they refer to the various linguistic tokens used to guide a reader through a text, so both the text and the writer's stance can be clearly identified. In other words, it is the author's manifestation in a text to "bracket the discourse organisation and the expressive implications of what is being said" (Schiffrin, 1980: 231).

2.2. Stance

Stance is a complex linguistic concept whose function is to signal authorial attitudes. Much research has been carried out as to the way in which language is used to express opinion and attitude. The concept has been analysed from different perspectives; but there is no scholarly consensus as to the exact extent of its scope. The following shows this lack of conceptual uniformity:

2. Stance relates to the expression of the speakers and writers' "personal feelings, attitudes and value judgements, or assessments" (Biber et al., 1999: 966).
3. Stance "can be seen as an attitudinal dimension and includes features which refer to the ways writers present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions and commitments. It is the way that writers intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement (Hyland, 2005: 176).
4. "Stance is generally understood to have to do with the methods, linguistic and other, by which interactants create and signal relationships with the propositions they utter and the people they interact with" (Johnstone, 2009: 30-31).
5. "the writer's identity as well as the writer's expression of attitudes, feelings, or judgements" (Dzung Pho, 2013: 3).

These definitions have in common that all of them identify the evaluative dimension of stance. In general terms, stance can be understood as the way in which speakers appraise people, objects and ideas, but it also covers self-evaluation, as Alonso-Almeida (2015: 1) claims. Evaluation is defined by Hunston and Thomson (2000), as follows:

evaluation is the broad cover term for the expression of the speaker or writer's attitude or stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about. That attitude may relate to certainty or obligation or desirability or any of a number of other sets of values. When appropriate, we refer specifically to modality as a sub-category of evaluation (Hunston and Thompson 2000: 5).

This notion of evaluation leads us to consider other linguistic phenomena, also included within the arena of stance, namely: epistemic stance (Marín Arrese 2011), epistemic modality (Cornillie 2009; Kranich 2009), commitment (Branbater and Dendale 2008), mitigation (Caffi 1999; 2007), reinforcement (Brown 2011), involvement (Cornillie and Delbecque 2008), hedging (Hyland 1998;

2005), politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) modality and evidentiality (Chafe 1986; Diewald et al. 2009), affect (Ochs 1989), and vagueness in language (Channell 1994; Myers 1989). All of these concepts have received scholarly attention as rhetorical devices to convey mitigation and strengthening of claims.

Biber et al. (1999) consider the term stance to be a superordinate, which covers not simply the senses speakers want to convey, but also the propositional content. The term is defined as the expression of "personal feelings, attitudes and value judgements, or assessments", as already mentioned. The linguistic elements, which can convey stance, are numerous but we shall focus on adverbs. Biber et al. (1999) make a distinction between three main groups of adverbs: (i) circumstance adverbs, i.e. *here*, *now*; (ii) linking adverbs i.e. *nevertheless*, *moreover*, *additionally*; and (iii) stance adverbs, which are categorised as and defined, thus:

Epistemic stance adverbials and attitude stance adverbials both comment on the content of a proposition. Epistemic markers express the speaker's judgment about the certainty, reliability, and limitations of the proposition; they can also comment on the source of the information. Attitude stance adverbials convey the speaker's attitude or value judgment about the proposition's content.

Epistemic stance adverbials (Biber et al. 1999: 59-60) can entail a large number of meanings such as:

1 Doubt and certainty, i.e. *perhaps, probably.*
2 Actuality and reality, i.e. *actually, in fact, really.*
3 Source of knowledge, i.e. apparently, evidently, according to
4 Limitation, i.e. in most cases, typically, mainly
5 Viewpoint or perspective, i.e. in my opinion, from my perspective.
6 Imprecision, i.e. *kind of, roughly.*

Those stance adverbs can be used to indicate authors' attitude and certainty towards their propositions. The adverbs object of our analysis, namely *apparently, fairly* and *possibly* fall within this category. The forms *fairly* and *possibly* indicate a low level of authorial commitment to text content by presenting information with doubts and hesitancy. On the other hand, adverbs such as *apparently* can be classified as perceptual evidential adverbs, as they indicate that the evidence the author has for the content he/she expressed has been obtained through the senses.

As seen in the classification of stance adverbs, adverbs such as *evidently* are said to indicate *source of knowledge*, or to use the technical term *evidential meaning*. They relate the information "to the source of evidence the speaker has for his or her assessment" (de Haan 2009: 263). Evidentiality is a concept, which is closely connected to the one of stance and epistemic modality. For some scholars evidentiality represents a subdomain of epistemic modality, but there are others who consider evidentiality as an independent category: "Evidentiality is concerned with indicating the information source the speaker is relying on to make a claim. This places this category next to epistemic modality without, however, merging them into one" (Diewald, Kresic and Smirnova 2009: 190). Epistemic modality is frequently associated with the ideas of truth, commitment, reliability and authorial responsibility with respect to the strength of their claims (Lorés Sanz 2011; Stukker et al. 2009; Traugott 1989). As noted by Pic and Furmaniak (2012), discourse-oriented studies of epistemic markers have frequently focused their attention on hedging "of which epistemics are the most common realisation" (2012: 19)

As I said previously, the main reason to choose adverbials as the target part of speech of this analysis is that it seems that adverbials stand as one of the grammatical categories that most clearly contribute to the expression of interpersonal meanings (Biber and Finegan 1988). Classifications of adverbials include three main types, specifically adjuncts, conjuncts and disjuncts. Nonetheless, and as happens with other linguistic concepts, this taxonomy coined by Greenbaum (1969) and adopted, among others, by Quirk et al. (1972, 1985) has not been followed by all linguists. One case in point is Biber et al. (1999: 763). They use circumstance, stance and linking adverbials as the corresponding terms. Within Systemic Functional Linguistics, Halliday et al. (2004: 123ff) proposes a similar classification of adverbs comprising three types as well: circumstantial or adjuncts, conjunctive, conjuncts or linking adverbials and finally modal or disjuncts. Generally speaking, adverbials contributing to referential meaning have been referred to as adjuncts or circumstantial adverbials; those fulfilling connective and text-organising functions are conjuncts, or conjunctive/linking adverbials; and adverbials conveying the speaker's evaluation of the propositional information are disjuncts or modal adverbials. *Apparently, fairly* and *possibly* fall precisely under this last category.

Focusing specifically on those adverbials expressing some evaluation of the propositional information, Greenbaum (1969) and Quirk et al. (1985) identify a group of adverbs, which provide a "comment about the truth-value of what is said". Greenbaum (1969) distinguishes between adverbs that "merely express shades of doubt or certainty" and adverbs that "in addition refer to the observation or perception of a state of affairs". Quirk et al. (1985), on their part, distinguish between adverbs that "express conviction" and adverbs that "express some degree of doubt", and similarly, Biber and Finegan (1988, 1989) deal with "surely-adverbials" and "maybe-adverbials". Biber et al. (1999), in contrast, take all of these adverbials to be under the label epistemic stance adverbs conveying doubt or certainty. In the same line as Greenbaum's (1969) original distinction, Biber et al. (1999) and Fraser (1996) further distinguish between adverbials that merely convey degrees of certainty and adverbials that indicate the type of source.

In the fashion of Biber et al. (1999), Hyland (2005) classifies *apparently, fairly* and *possibly* as stance adverbs. They express possibility or a lack of complete commitment to the truth of a specific proposition, thus exhibiting a hedging function. They clearly indicate the authors' attitude towards their texts, and their use depends on the effect an author is seeking to have on readers.

2.3. Hedging

My analysis of hedges in history texts in the eighteenth and nineteenth century includes a definition on hedges based on existing studies, including Hyland (1994, 1996, 1998), Salager-Meyer (1994), Markkanen and Schröder (eds. 1997), Crompton (1997), Caffi (2007) and Fraser (2010), among others. All these show their own methodology of study and body of data, but, for the purpose of this paper, I will follow Hyland's definition (1998: 5), which states that the term *hedge* can be defined as "the means by which writers can present a proposition as an opinion rather than a fact". For his part, Fraser (2010) highlights that, although there exist different taxonomies related to hedges, there is "general agreement today that hedging is a rhetorical strategy, by which a speaker, using a linguistic device, can signal a lack of commitment to either the full semantic membership of an expression

(propositional hedging) […] or the full commitment to the force of the speech act being conveyed (speech act hedging)" (Fraser 2010: 22)

Salager-Meyer (1994) claims hedges are used for two different purposes:

(i) the first one: to "present the true state of writers' understand, namely, the stronger claim a careful researcher can make" (p. 150) what means that writers use hedging devices to express uncertainty because they are really not sure about the information given or cannot demonstrate it, and
(ii) the second one: to "convey (purposive) vagueness and tentativeness, and to make sentences more acceptable to the hearer/reader, thus increasing their chance of ratification and reducing the risk of negation" (p. 150).

Hyland's position (1998) is not really in contradiction with Salager-Meyer's introspection and contextual analysis. In fact, the analysis of context is unavoidable in this study if one really wants to highlight cases of hedging with any degree of confidence (Alonso-Almeida, 2012). In this paper, I analyse the use of some adverbs, *apparently, fairly* and *possibly* as metadiscourse elements in historical texts from the Modern English Period, being their role as hedges the main object of this analysis. Corpus linguistics tools will be used, but manual analyses are fundamental so that the results are interpreted in context.

3. Corpus description and Methodology

The corpus used for the present research is The *Corpus of English History Texts* (henceforth CHET), one of the sub-corpuses within the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*. Crespo and Moskowich (2015) has offered an extensive description of this corpus on their paper *A Corpus of History English Tetxs (CHET) as Part of the Coruña Corpus Project* (2015), description that is followed in the present work.

Several scientific landmarks have been considered in order to limit the time-span represented in the sub-corpus. The first text in CHET dates back to 1704. The end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth century have been recognised by Taavitsainen and Pahta (1997) as the moment at which the medieval scholastic thought-style started to be gradually superseded by new patterns of thought, and new methodological procedures based on observation started to be used. The foundation of the Royal Society in 1660 and the publication of the guidelines for presenting scientific works in a clear and simple way had a greater impact on accentuating the importance of style in scientific communication.

The last text in CHET dates back to 1895. Again, the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century roughly coincide with some important events in the history of science such as the discovery of the electron (1896), the formulation of Planck's Quantum Theory (1900) and the publication of Einstein's Special Theory of Relativity (1905). Obviously, all of these events brought about the need to change scientific discursive patterns, as put forward by Huxley in the 1897 *International Congress of Mathematics*. As regards the genres represented in CHET, there are

articles, essays, lectures, textbooks and treatises written by both male and female authors. CHET covers about 400,000 words, distributed as shown in Table 1, below.

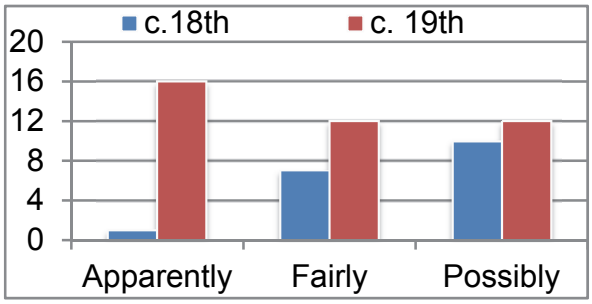
Table 1. Words in CHET (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015)

Eighteenth century	201,794
Nineteenth century	202,823
Total	404,617

The relevance of this data lies in the fact that previous studies have shown that 1,000-word samples are not really enough for the study of variation within the scientific register (Biber 1993), mainly because the scientific register was not as standardized at that time as it is nowadays (Crespo and Moskowich, 2015). For the purpose of this study I have used the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for quantification and text retrieval. Then manual analyses have been performed as well in order to check stance adverbs' functions.

4. Analysis and Results

Apparently, fairly and *possibly* are semantically close adverbials in the two subcorpora, as they indicate authorial evaluation of state of affairs. They are frequently used to indicate that the speaker elaborates and/or appraises propositional content presumably on the basis of some observed, obtained or inferred evidence and, as such, they may be considered as evidential adverbs, especially in the case of *apparently* and *fairly*. The form *possibly* is often categorised as a purely epistemic adverb. The analysis of these three adverbs will show how these are used to show the authors' perspective concerning a particular event as well as the degree of likeliness that an event may actualise, remarkably in the case of *possibly*. I have used the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for text analysis and retrieval. There are some occurrences of these forms in the corpus: 17 tokens of *apparently*, 19 of *fairly* and 22 of *possibly,* distributed as shown in Graph 1, below.



Graph 1. Occurrences of *apparently*, *fairly* and *possibly*

In what follows, I shall describe the meaning and function of these adverbs, each one in turn.

4.1. Apparently

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines *apparently* as a sentence adverb, which makes reference to "as far as one knows or can see." Following Biber et al.'s taxonomy, this adverb would be classified as a stance adverb. Of the three adverbs chosen to be the focus of this study, *apparently,* with only 17 occurrences, is the less frequent one in our corpus. In relation to the adverb position in the sentences, it appears in post-verbal position, pre-verbal position and apposition. This fact is relevant because, as we shall see, position has an effect on meaning in the case of this adverb.

The following examples illustrate apparently in pre-verbal position:

(1) Robert accepted his excuſes, and was **apparently** reconciled; but he was too well acquainted with the diſpoſition of Stephen, to repoſe the ſmalleſt degree of confidence in his oaths. (1790 Gifford)

(2) PETER PETOW was appointed by the former, and FRANCIS MALLET by the latter; but during the dispute her majesty died, and the accession of Queen Elizabeth occasioned a decided change in ecclesiastical affairs. Under the new sovereign, and the next bishop, the reformation assumed a positive, popular, and permanent character. Henry the Eighth **apparently** tolerated it merely to secure his own supremacy; but Elizabeth protected and encouraged it from fervent zeal in the cause. (1814 Britton)

In (1) *apparently* has an evidential meaning, particularly it stresses the visual nature of the information source. This evidential meaning is reinforced by the presence of the adversative particle *but*, which contradicts this visual input to some extent. Similarly, in (2) the evidential meaning of the adverb is again reinforced by the use of *but* again later in the sentence. The evidential meaning presented is of a cognitive, rather than a visual, nature, and so this adverb could be compared to the cognitive evidential adverb *presumably* to indicate that Henry's tolerance was pretended for his own protection.

The following examples illustrate *apparently* as apposition in the utterances:

(3) HUMBERT, the leader of this singular body of men, was himself as extraordinary a personage as any in his army. Of a good height and shape, in the full vigour of life, prompt to decide, quick in execution, **apparently** master of his art, you could not refuse him the praise of a good officer, while his phisiognomy forbad you to like him as a man. (1800 Stock)

(4) The same rights and liberties which had been claimed, demanded, and insisted upon, when the crown was tendered, were afterwards converted into the materials of an act, which was presented to the king, and received the royal assent, and the whole was then [quotation] "declared, enacted, and established by authority of that present parliament, to stand, remain, and be the law of the realm for ever." This was done and no more; this was all that, **apparently** at least, was attempted; no pretences were made to any merit of salutary alteration or legislative reform; the original declaration, the subsequent bill of rights, were each of them expressly stated to be only declarations of the old constitution; they were each an exhibition of the rights and liberties of the people of England, already undoubted and their own; experiment, innovation, every thing of this kind, is virtually disclaimed, for nothing of the kind is visible in the style or language of these singular records. (1840 Smyth)

(5) Military subordination is as essential to the successful conducting of a campaign as personal courage. If the accounts of the Invasion can be relied on, the latter was conspicuous —the former may be improved. Apart from the opinion prevalent in Canada, of mismanagement and inattention in the highest military authority at that time in Upper Canada, there was also singular want of proper information, and ignorance of the topography of the country. In an enemy's country**, apparently,** the routes could not have been more thoroughly unknown —on this point all seemed confusion. Yet the whole affair took place in a small angle of the oldest settled part of Canada, had been anticipated in that quarter for weeks before, and looked for by those in charge of the military defence of the country.(1872 Gray)

In (3) *apparently* has an evidential meaning, and it stresses the visual nature of the information source again, as the context itself suggests: "a good height and shape", "full vigour of life", "quick in execution", etc. In (4) the adverb is also of a cognitive nature, as it follows from a deductive process. This deduction results from Stock's interpretation of the style or language found in some records. Additionally, the evidential meaning is reinforced by the phrase *at least* which serves to mitigate, or even contradict to some extent, the evidential meaning of the adverb. Similarly, in (5) my interpretation of this adverb as an evidential is supported by the use of the phrase "could not have been more thoroughly unknown —on this point all seemed confusion" later in the sentence. This adverb could be compared to the cognitive evidential adverb *seemingly* to indicate the lack of knowledge about the routes. It seems to capture the author's inferential process, which is exemplified in the list of the different aspects why this invasion took place. Pragmatically, *apparently* has a mitigating function, seeking to soften the claims put forward by the authors. In fact, this adverb might be categorized as a negative politeness device, as the authors want to avoid imposing their views.

Finally, in examples 6 and 7 *apparently* is used in a post-verbal position:

(6) But the Established Church, with all its advantages, was barely able to maintain its ground. In 1731 there were in Ireland, according to Burke in his Hibernia Dominicana, [p]. 28, 2,010,221 of a population —made up of 1,309,768 Romanists, and 700,453 Protestants. This is **apparently** a grossly incorrect estimate. In 1733 it was computed that there were about three papists to one Protestant. (1875 Killen)

(7) There was **apparently** some peculiarity in the relationship of Biddlesdon or Bitlesdon and its parent-house Garendon, for the former is expressly stated both in the charter of Ernald de Bosco [Monast] "Sciatis me dedisse terram meam de Bitlesdena in bosco et in plano ordini de Cistels intitulato ad abbatiam de Gereldona. (1893 Cooke)

In (6) and (7), *apparently* is not used with a mitigating function, but as a booster. In the want of some more examples to verify this, I am inclined to think that this adverb in post-verbal position belongs to the realm of clarity rather than presupposition, as evidence given in the examples contradicts the initial assumptions in these instances. Note that, in (6), the author demonstrates with figures the wrong estimates stated by Burke. The adverbs in these cases may well be substituted by *evidently*.

4.2. Fairly

The adverb *fairly* is defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a "submodifier to indicate a moderately high degree", or it can be also used "to emphasize something surprising or extreme". In CHET, we can find 7 occurrences, which belong to the eighteenth century, and 12 occurrences in texts from the nineteenth century. In relation to its position in the sentences, the adverb is generally placed before the verb and in most cases used after a modal verb: *could, may, might* and the verb comes after the adverb. Examples are the following:

(8) Becauſe from their knowledge of its great ſtrength, and of the many reſources its prodigious wealth furniſhed, they judged the conqueſt of it impracticable at this time, and before Sicily was ſubdued. And that they judged right, one may **fairly** conclude from Polybius's not reproving their policy, and from the difficulties they afterwards met with in that enterprize, even when maſters of Sicily, and of all the iſlands between Italy and Africa.(1745 Hooke)

(9) As the connexion between them is so natural, it might **fairly** be supposed that the same advancement which the former seemed at this epoch to have received, would have been received in like manner by the latter; but there is more difficulty in this latter case than there is even in the former, and the same sort of efforts for religious liberty that failed at the Restoration, failed likewise at the Revolution.(1840 Smyth)

(10) Previous to the erection of this church, and for many years after, it was customary for the Protestant inhabitants to bury their dead in the graveyard attached to the Church of [St]. Michael the Archangel, [note] This was pulled down in order to afford building materials for the Kilbrogan Church; and, if walls have ears, we may **fairly** assume that the stones in the first Protestant church in Ireland have been listening to both sides of the question for centuries. [endnote] now the Roman-Catholic burial-ground at Kilbrogan, where a few of their monuments still remain, such as: "Here lyeth the body of Anne Dyke, alias Harrison, a virgin, formerly from Bristol." (1862 Bennett)

(11) The joy of the British at the cessation of the war led the upper classes to disregard all risks in order to gratify the intense passion for foreign travel which had for centuries been characteristic of the aristocracy. Not that any one could be **fairly** supposed to guess that if the war broke out again Napoleon would detain every English man and woman within his dominions, a proceeding worthy of an Oriental despot. (1895 Burrows)

All the cases of *fairly* show a similar pattern, as they co-occur with epistemic modals (*may*, *might*, *could*) and cognitive verbs (*conclude*, *suppose*, *assume*, *guess*). The function of the modals as epistemic markers is reinforced by the presence of *fairly* in an attempt to mitigate the claim resulting from the deductive process in all the instances.

4.3. Possibly

The mitigating function of *possibly* is semantically defined, as it always suggests a likely situation that may actualise or not, but one the speaker is blatantly not confirming. In my corpus, I have found ten occurrences in texts from the eighteenth century and twelve in texts from the nineteenth century, being thus evenly represented in each century. Note that, *apparently* is rare in the eighteenth century subcorpus, with the majority of cases identified in the nineteenth century subcorpus .

In relation to its position in the sentences, in the eight examples presented, the adverb is always used after a modal verb, e.g. *could, may, might*, thus preceding the main lexical verb, as shown in the following excerpts:

(12) The middle ſyllable is, as I underſtand it, the ſign of the genitive in the Highland tongue, and gall ſignifies a ſtranger; ſo that the word imports the fort of ſtrangers. Or if Gall be ſuppoſed the firſt ſyllable of Galgacus, then 'tis Galgacus's fort. I only farther add, that [Mr]. Gordon in his account of his Galgacan camp takes no notice, I think, of a ſtone that is in the middle of it, a tumulus nigh it, and a military way that goes from it; and in computing its contents, omits the legions, and the four alae, that were kept as a reſerve: for the auxiliaries alone were eight thouſand, and the horſe on the wings were three thouſand. But the legions might **poſſibly** have been at Ardoch, or Innerpeffery, before they marched to the battle.(1732 Horsley)

(13) But as it does not appear that any wiſe or good end could be anſwered by this dream, as his wife was dead before he could **poſſibly** come to her aſſiſtance, ought it not to be aſcribed to thoſe fancies of the brain of which no rational account has been yet given.(1780 Cornish)

(14) The demand of the prince was now formally enforced by ambaſſadors deputed for that purpoſe; but the king peremptorily refuſing to comply with it, David again entered Northumberland, at the beginning of the year 1138; when his troops committed the moſt deſtructive ravages, reducing whole towns to aſhes, and putting the defenceleſs inhabitants to the ſword, without the ſmalleſt diſcrimination either of age or ſex.Theſe abominable acts of cruelty are chiefly attributed by the Scottiſh hiſtorians to the men of Galloway; whom they repreſent as a ferocious, undiſciplined band, that no endeavours of their ſovereign could **poſſibly** reſtrain within the ſmalleſt degree of ſubordination.(1790 Gifford)

(15) And as it appears from Marius Mercator that Celestius had been a disciple and hearer of Pelagius some twenty years before the disclosure of the Pelagian heresy in 405, the natural conclusion is, that letters were certainly known in Ireland, at least to some persons, in the beginning of the fourth century, and might **possibly** have been known nearly a century earlier, a period which would extend to Cormac's time. —See Ussher's Primordia, [pp]. 206 and 211, and Rerum Hibernicarum Scriptores; Prolegomena,[p]. lxxxiii. (1839 Petrie)

(16) The soldiers left the assembly to follow the advice of Xenophon.Every thing that could **possibly** be spared was set on fire, and soon after the ten thousand Greeks proceeded on their retreat.(1857 Sewell)

(17) Helyot also falls into this error. (Endnote) there being nine abbeys of the order besides Cîteaux then in existence. These with Cîteaux herself may **possibly** make up the ten mentioned, says Manriquez, in the collection of "diffinitiones" of 1134. This was the assembly which sent forth the celebrated "Charta Charitatis," the "Great Charter" of the Cistercian order, in which its own constitution, as well as that of the entire system of which it formed a part, is declared. (1893 Cooke)

The scalar nature of the adverb *possibly* suits beautifully the purposes of the epistemic modal meanings in all cases. The authors combine this form with *may, might* and *could* to indicate different levels of likeliness of the events to be true. This combination of the modal and *possibly* may mean either that the author lacks the necessary evidence for the conclusion presented, or it may be a negative politeness strategy to avoid imposition. The use of this adverb suggests the authors' need to

protect their public image rather than a real evaluation of the state of affairs. That is, even if they rely on solid ground to assert a particular conclusion, *possibly* adds an extra rhetorical effect to enhance the epistemic meaning as realized by the accompanying modals. Their objetive, it seems, is to avoid future harsh criticism.

5. Conclusion

This study presents evidence of the use of adverbs as devices showing authorial perspective concerning a particular proposition in eighteenth and nineteenth century English history texts. Focus has been placed on the use of the stance adverbs *apparently*, *fairly*, and *possibly*. The findings suggest an authorial tendency to use the adverbs *apparently* and *fairly* with a primary evidential meaning to indicate how meaning has been elaborated, and they pursue different pragmatic effects. Among these effects, there are mitigation of truth regarding a particular proposition, negative politeness and even manifestation of collegiality and solidarity. In the case of *possibly*, its epistemic sense in all occurrences found is incontestable. As shown also in the examples presented, softening a particular claim can imply lack of knowledge on the author's side but that is not always the case. As Alonso-Almeida, 2012: 218) affirms, it depends on contextual factors, as "writers cannot always fully rely on the methods or the sources available, and hence they safeguard their public self-image by admitting drawbacks or limitations." In the specific case of *apparently,* however, its primary mitigating function is not fulfilled in post-verbal position, and it rather works as a booster in that syntactic context.

Future research will focus on disciplinary similarities and differences as represented in other the subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus,* namely the *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy,* the *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* (CETA) and the *Corpus of English Life Sciences Texts* (CELiST). Apart from that, the number of adverbials under investigation could be enlarged so as to get a more precise and exhaustive picture of the pragmatic functions of stance adverbials as indicators of the authorial presence in scientific texts.

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“If I miſtake not” Conditionals as stance markers in late Modern English scientific discourse

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Abstract: The versatility of conditional structures makes them particularly useful in scientific discourse. Among other functions, conditionals may be used to convey the uncertainty of authors as to the form, relevance or veracity of the contents in a text. This study will analyse three types of conditionals used by authors to convey uncertainty, all of which can be said to be expressions of authorial stance. Selected conditional particles are drawn from three of the subcorpora in the *Coruña Corpus*. Following disambiguation, all occurrences of the three types of conditionals will be identified, and will then be analysed according to a series of parameters in order to see, a) whether the use of these types of conditionals is subject to any kinds of socio-historical constraints, and b) if there are particular correlations between the different types and particular formal characteristics.

Keywords: conditionals, stance, uncertainty, scientific discourse, *Coruña Corpus*, Late Modern English

1. Introduction

Conditionals are characterized by their significant degree of variability, in terms of both form and the functions they fulfil: in scientific writing, conditional structures can introduce hypothesis and theories, propose tentative conclusions, and can also help achieve a better reception of authors’ claims by their peers. This latter aim can be achieved, among other options, by using conditionals to convey the uncertainty of an author towards what is being presented. In this function, conditionals may be considered to be expressions of authorial stance.

The aim of this chapter is to analyse three particular uses of conditionals as examples of stance. In order to do so, searches will be made for conditional particles in three subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*, and, after disambiguation, the remaining examples will be analysed both socio-historically (according to the period, the discipline and the genre of the texts, and the sex of the authors) and from a formal point of view, looking for correlations between each of the types and particular formal characteristics.

In what follows, Section 2 reviews the functions conditionals play in scientific discourse; Section 3 looks into the use of conditionals as expressions of stance, and focuses on the three types of conditionals under consideration here; Section 4 presents the corpus and methodology used; Section 5 presents the results of the analysis, and Section 6 offers some tentative conclusions.

2. Functions of conditionals in scientific writing

One of the most notable characteristics of conditional structures is the degree of variability which they allow. Formally, conditionals may present one constituent (a protasis) or two (a protasis and an apodosis), which may appear with the protasis before, after, or in the middle of the apodosis. Moreover, protases can be introduced at different grammatical levels and by several types of particles (*if*, *unless*, other conjunctions, and inversion markers) and also allow multiple combinations of tenses.

This formal richness has its parallel on the functional plane, as conditionals are also able to fulfil a significant range of different roles in discourse. This led Dancygier to observe that conditionals are "an area of language use where the interaction of form, meaning, and context is exceptionally complex and fascinating" (1998: 2).

It is precisely this functional versatility that makes conditional structures a valuable resource in academic discourse (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 191). The main function of such structures here is to establish a link, most frequently a causal one, between two statements, sometimes including a judgment on the probability of the link. In this role, they help establish *facticity* (Latour 1987), since conclusions stemming from valid conditional links and factual premises are consequently elevated to the status of facts (Warchal 2010: 146).

This core function has several uses in scientific writing. In its most basic manifestation, conditionals can be used to express well-known causal relationships, such as physical properties (as in example 1 below), or mathematical equalities and operations, as exemplified in (2).

> (1) If you heat water, it boils. (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet, 2008: 192)

> (2) Given that $x=y$, then $n(x+a)=n(y+a)$ must also be true. (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 1090)

Moreover, conditional structures can also express dependencies (Ferguson 2001: 61) at several grammatical levels. Thus, they can convey the relation between a phenomenon and its consequence or between two statements, and they are also useful in establishing links between paragraphs, between premises and conclusions, or even between different sections of a text (Warchal 2010: 146). An example of this latter function is shown in (3) below, in which the author explains, during the discussion of their findings, how a different experiment could have led to different results.

> (3) If perceptions of change had been measured, then the findings may have been different (Warchal 2010: 144)

A further use of the causal link function is to state pre-requisites and instructions, as exemplified in (4) below. This is very common in sections on methodology in research articles, as a simple form of explaining procedural decisions as a result of pre-existing conditions.

> (4) Patients entered the study if they satisfied the WHO criteria for stroke (Ferguson 2001: 71)

A different set of functions is triggered by the inherent non-assertiveness of conditionals (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 191). Thus, they can be used to introduce claims and conclusions in a more tentative way. Moreover, this tentativeness can be graduated by means of the different formal options available, creating "a cline from conditionals that are sufficient and necessary to those that are

merely probable, thus determining the degree of certainty of the conclusions reached" (Horsella & Sindermann 1992: 138). As shown in example (5) below, tentativeness can be achieved, for instance, by introducing the modal verb *may*, whereas if it is not present, as in the contrasting example (6), such tentativeness is absent.

> (5) If a patient has an early failure from a low anterior resection, they may be able to be retrieved by resection. (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 200)
>
> (6) ...glucagon is ineffective if hepatic glycogen stores are depleted. (Ferguson 2001: 72)

The non-assertiveness of conditionals makes them a particularly useful tool to convey speculation in language, and as such they are used in scientific writing to assess the consequences of different options and to formulate hypotheses and theories.

2.1. Conditionals and the interpersonal nature of scientific discourse

As we know, since the demise of the logocentric scholastic paradigm, scientific communication ceased to be a unidirectional process and is now best conceived of as a dialogic exercise between members of the scientific community. Thus, authors do not only have to provide sufficient evidence to support their claims, but also have to persuade their peers to accept these claims as valid. This is done by using certain rhetoric and linguistic strategies, such as introducing expressions of humility and politeness, in order to assure the best reception possible (Bazerman 1988; Myers 1989; Swales 1990; Hyland 1996, 1998, 2000).

Conditionals are among these linguistic strategies, having been defined as a "rhetorical device for gaining acceptance for one's claims" which help in "establishing agreement between the writer and the reader of an academic text" (Warchal 2010: 141-142). Conditional structures help researchers move their peers towards acceptance in several ways. For instance, they can be used as *space-builders* (Fauconnier 1994, Dancygier 1998), allowing researchers to create argumentative spaces in which their claims hold, and, as a consequence, also helping authors avoid criticism by circumscribing the scope of these claims (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 191). An example of this use is seen in (7) below, which shows how the author delimits the scope of a claim, allowing it to hold, by introducing in the protasis the particular interpretation of a concept. At a textual level, this function also allows researchers to establish the *niche* (Swales 1990) of their research, relating it to the existing literature.

> (7) As such, it can be said to belong to modality if the category is defined as the expression of the speaker's attitude or stance. (Warchal 2010: 148)

Another function of conditional structures is to contribute to achieving a better reception of one's claims among peers. Conditionals may be used with this objective either directly, by means of using one of several conditionals which function as conventional expressions of politeness, as in example (8) below, or in a more covert way, by recognising the contributions of one's peers and thus considering competing points of view and possible alternatives (Declerck & Reed 2001, Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 191). This latter function is exemplified in (9) below, in which the protasis is used to introduce an alternative which has been envisaged and under which the apodosis still holds, thus emphasising the fact that different alternatives have been considered.

(8) If I may be quite frank with you, I don't approve of any concessions to ignorance. (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 1095)

(9) Even if health care providers are diligent in keeping current with genetic medicine, the interpretation of the results of genetic testing is often complex. (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 202)

A further interpersonal role is that of *signposting devices*, allowing authors to present their audience "with guidance about the author's intentions and the development of the text" (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 194), as in example (10) below. This is particularly useful in conference presentations and other face-to-face interactions, as the author seeks to maintain the attention of the audience and guide them through the presentation.

(10) Now if we go to patients who experienced mucositis toxicity. (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008: 194).

Finally, conditionals can also be used by authors to express their uncertainty or to tone down claims which could otherwise be considered categorical. This makes it possible for authors both to underline their modesty and to avoid potential criticism by means of recognising their uncertainty and hence avoiding categorical claims.

This latter conditional type will be the focus of this chapter. The aim here will be to analyse three different kinds of such conditionals, focusing on their nature as expressions of authorial stance and looking into both their formal nature (and the possible preference for particular formal characteristics to express a given type) and their socio-historical distribution. In what follows, these three kinds of conditionals are further analysed. However, before that, it is necessary to understand what is understood by "stance" and how it affects conditional structures.

3. Conditional structures and the expression of stance

The concept of "stance" is a fuzzy one. It has been used in very different ways by different writers, who have adapted the definition and scope of the concept to their various needs. A further problem is that stance is related, and has sometimes been used interchangeably, with several associated notions, such as "epistemic modality", "evaluation", "involvement", "hedging", "evidentiality", or "metadiscourse" (Alonso 2012: 202), with which it presents different levels of conceptual overlap. The result is that, as Keisanen and Kärkkäinen have put it, "stance" as a concept is "not monolithic but understood and studied in a number of different ways" (2014: 295).

In the present study, "stance" is understood in a broad sense, following Biber and Finegan's definition, as "the lexical and grammatical expression of attitudes, feelings, judgments, or commitment concerning the propositional content of a message" (1989: 93). Thus, several types of conditionals can safely be assumed to be expressions of stance. For instance, in (9) above the use of the conditional, though primarily expressing an alternative option, subtly presents some scepticism on the part of the author as to the possibility of any other option being capable of achieving results, whilst in (3) above the conditional presents the author's (real or pretended) lack of commitment to their results.

However, the types of conditionals which are perhaps the clearest examples of expressions of stance are those which are used to show uncertainty. Examples of these are given in (11-14) below.

> (11) His style is florid, if that's the right word. (Quirk *et al*. 1985: 1096).
>
> (12) Finally (if this is important), the S1 meaning can be converted into an S meaning to recover a more intuitive object to represent the meaning of the original sentence. (Warchal 2010: 148)
>
> (13) If we are correct in suggesting that there is an isomorphism between the Helmholtze-Gibson debate and the debate about linguistic knowledge, then a computational approach to language seems promising. (Warchal 2010: 147)
>
> (14) Chomsky's views cannot be reconciled with Piaget's, if I understand both correctly. (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 1096)

All these conditionals help present "personal feelings, attitudes, value judgments, or assessments" as each one is an "expression of degree of certainty" (Biber *et al.* 1999: 966)[14]. In (11) above, the author doubts the adequacy of a particular choice of words to refer to a given reality, expressing their uncertainty as to the form of the content. In (12), it is the relevance of the statement that the author is uncertain about. In (13), the author questions the reliability of their own assumptions, while in (14) the author recognises that they may not have a good understanding of other authors' claims, that is, they might be mistaken in their understanding. As can be seen, all of these examples convey the author's uncertainty, whether this concerns its form (11), its relevance (12), or its veracity, questioning the veracity of their own points (13) or their understanding of those of others (14); hence, all can be considered expressions of authorial stance.

In this chapter, conditionals functioning as expressions of uncertainty will be classified into three different types: metalinguistic conditionals (as in example (11) above), relevance conditionals (12), and non-committal conditionals (examples (13) and (14) above).

Metalinguistic conditionals are used by authors to comment on the form of the discourse, implying that a word may not be wholly adequate in its context or that there is perhaps a better alternative. Thus, authors put forward their own doubts as to their choice of words. Example (11) above, then, can be interpreted as the admission by the author that they doubt whether "florid" is an adequate word to define "his style".

Concurrently with this superficial meaning, at a deeper level this type of conditional may also be used to convey irony. Example (11) above, rather than as a comment on the suitability of the word "florid" as a good characterisation of "his style", can also be interpreted as an ironic comment on the style in question, which would thus be interpreted as something rather different from, and perhaps less attractive than, "florid".

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[14] Or perhaps, following Alonso & González-Cruz, "listeners' interpretations [about the authors' value judgments] in accordance with particular selections of contextual premises in the act of processing the information given" (2012: 325).

Metalinguistic conditionals are very similar to their homonymous types in Quirk *et al*. (1985: 1096), and are also present in Warchal's classification (2010: 145). Gabrielatos (2010:239), however, referred to them as "comment" conditionals.

Relevance conditionals are used by authors to explain the circumstances under which the statement of the apodosis should be considered relevant. In all other circumstances, the apodosis should be ignored. In (12) above, it is only if the addressee thinks that "it is important" that the content of the apodosis should be taken into account.

These conditionals are commonly used in scientific discourse by authors to introduce information which they do not regard as essential, but as an extra which may be interesting to some readers, using the protasis to state the reasons why the information in the apodosis may be considered relevant. In this way, they also convey their uncertainty as to the relevance of the content here.

Relevance conditionals are also used extensively in general language, with examples such as (15) and (16) below. In (15), the author establishes a scenario on account of which the apodosis should be analysed: only if the protasis holds (if the speaker and the addressee do not see each other before Tuesday) is the apodosis to be taken as effective. The type commonly known as the "biscuit conditional" (Ebert, Endriss & Hinterwimmer 2008) is exemplified in (16). Here, the conditional is acting as an invitation, which is only to be considered as effective if the protasis holds, in this case, if the addressee is hungry.

> (15) If I do not see you before Thursday, have a good Thanksgiving! (Dancygier & Sweetser, 2005)
>
> (16) If you're hungry, there's biscuits in the tin (Ferguson 2001: 65)

Relevance conditionals are similar to Gabrielatos' (2010: 239) and Warchal's (2010: 144-145) homonymous types. They are also the prototypical examples of Sweetser's Speech act conditionals (1990: 121).

Finally, *non-committal conditionals* are used by authors to distance themselves from claims which are presented to the reader, but which the author avoids endorsing. The claims which are put forward may indeed be the author's, as in (13) above, or those of others, as in (14). This type of conditional is perhaps the one in which stance is expressed most clearly, in that non-committal conditionals are used to convey rather straightforwardly the lack of commitment of the author towards the veracity of what is being stated. Non-committal conditionals cover both Warchal's "reservation conditionals" (2010: 145), which convey the doubts of the author towards their own statements, and Quirk *et al.*'s "uncertainty conditionals (1985: 1096), which refer to an author's lack of commitment to the claims of other authors.

Before analysing the uses of these conditionals in scientific discourse, describe both the corpus and methodology used.

4. Corpus and methodology

In order to obtain the data which is analysed in Section 4 below, this study uses three of the subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus*: the *Corpus of English Texts on Astronomy* (*CETA*), the *Corpus of English Philosophy Texts* (*CEPhiT*) and the *Corpus of English Life Sciences Texts* (*CELiST*), together containing 122 text samples, and totalling 1,215,003 words. These subcorpora will be searched with the *Coruña Corpus Tool* (Parapar & Moskowich 2007), using the simple and multiple-term search functions.

Although it is fairly common that studies on conditionals are conducted by searching only for *if* conditionals (Werth 1997, Ford 1997, Facchinetti 2001, Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jolivet 2008, Warchal 2010), particles other than *if* are also capable of introducing conditionals. In a study such as this, which aims to analyse the possible correlations between a number of functions and their possible preferred forms of expression, such a narrow approach is not appropriate, and hence it is necessary to search for all conditional markers.

In order to determine which conditional markers are to be searched, Quirk, Greenbaum, Leech & Svartvik's *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language* (1985) and Declerck & Reed's *Conditionals. A Comprehensive Empirical Analysis* (2001) were consulted, and the information therein cross-checked with the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) and Rissanen's (1999) chapter on Syntax in Volume III of the *Cambridge History of English*. Thus, the list of conditional elements was adapted to the period under study, and all particles whose main role is not conditional were eliminated. Once this process had been conducted, a classification of conditionals in use during the period 1700 to 1900 was obtained, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Elements introducing clauses with conditional interpretations during the period 1700-1900

Central conditional subordinators	*If, unless*
Peripheral conditional subordinators	*As long as, so long as, assuming (that), given (that), in case, in the event that, just so (that), lest, on condition (that), on the understanding that, provided (that), providing (that), supposing (that), so (that).*
Operators allowing inversion with conditional interpretation.	*Had, were, should, might, could, may, would, is, be, did*

These particles constitute the list of terms which have been searched for with the *Coruña Corpus Tool*, plus spelling variants in use during the period according to the *OED*, which have also been searched.However, the *Coruña Corpus* is not POS-tagged and, consequently, when a particle is queried all the results containing that particle will appear, independently of their function. As a consequence, it has been necessary to manually disambiguate the list of occurrences obtained with the *Coruña Corpus Tool*, eliminating all non-conditional uses of the particle. These include all occurrences of verbs which can function as conditional inversion triggers in which they do not fulfil

that role, the uses of *if* as an interrogative or as part of the conjunctive locution *as if*, and comparative uses of *so long as*, among others.

After disambiguation, the number of conditional occurrences in the corpus was 3735, or 3074.07 per million words. The analysis of these cases is described in what follows.

5. Analysis of the results

The analysis of the results shows that the three types of conditionals under investigation here represent only 6.16% of the total uses of conditionals. As can be seen in Figure 1 below, 18 examples of metalinguistic conditionals (0.48% of all cases), 161 examples of relevance conditionals (4.31%), and 51 non-committal conditionals (1.37%) were found.

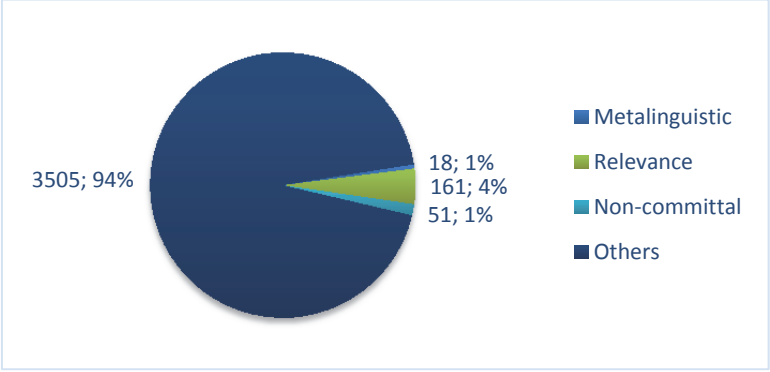

Figure 1: Use of selected conditional functions in three subcorpora of the *Coruña Corpus*

The analysis of the results is divided in four parts. First, the use of the three selected types of conditionals will be assessed according to four socio-historical parameters: diachronic evolution, the discipline of the texts, their genre, and the sex of the author. Then, each of the three functions (metalinguistic, relevance, and non-committal conditionals) will be discussed in separate subsections. Their uses will be analysed according to three formal parameters (their conditional marker, the order of their constituents, and the verb-form combinations in each of them) in order to identify the preferred formal characteristics for each function. Examples of each of the types will also be provided and analysed.

5.1. Socio-historical distribution

These three conditional types show relatively minor distributional differences according to the four socio-historical parameters analysed (period, discipline, genre of the text, and sex of the author).

The analysis of the diachronic axis reveals that their use remained fairly stable over time. As can be seen in Table 2 below, relevance and non-committal conditionals show only a minimal decrease, comparable to the general decrease over time in the use of conditional structures. Metalinguistic

conditionals, however, present a more notable decrease, being used more than twice as often in the eighteenth century than in the nineteenth century.

Table 2. Use of selected conditional functions over time. Normalised figures (N=1,000,000)

Century	Metalinguistic	Relevance	Non-committal	Others	Total
18th century	21.3590	134.7257	42.7179	3189.0563	3387.8589
19th century	8.2459	130.2859	41.2297	2579.3301	2759.0916

This is also the case in terms of the sex of the author. As shown in Table 3 below, there are only subtle differences in the use of relevance and metalinguistic conditionals between male and female authors. Non-committal conditionals, however, present clearer differences, their use being more than five times more frequent among men than women.

Table 3. Use of selected conditional functions per sex of the author. Normalised figures (N=1,000,000)

Sex	Metalinguistic	Relevance	Non-committal	Others
Male	14.67	134.74	45.83	2963.27
Female	16.13	112.92	8.07	2193.94

The analysis of the data according to the different disciplines of the samples shows more obvious differences. As shown in Figure 2 below, non-committal conditionals were used more frequently than average in philosophy (25 uses, 1.65% of all conditionals in philosophy texts) and life-sciences texts (21 uses, 2.70%), and, on the contrary, less frequently than average in astronomy texts (five uses, 0.35%). This is also the case for metalinguistic conditionals, which were used more frequently than average in philosophy (13 uses, 0.86% of all conditionals in philosophy texts) and life-sciences texts (four uses, 0.51%), while appearing just once in astronomy texts, thus representing only 0.07% of all conditionals in those samples.

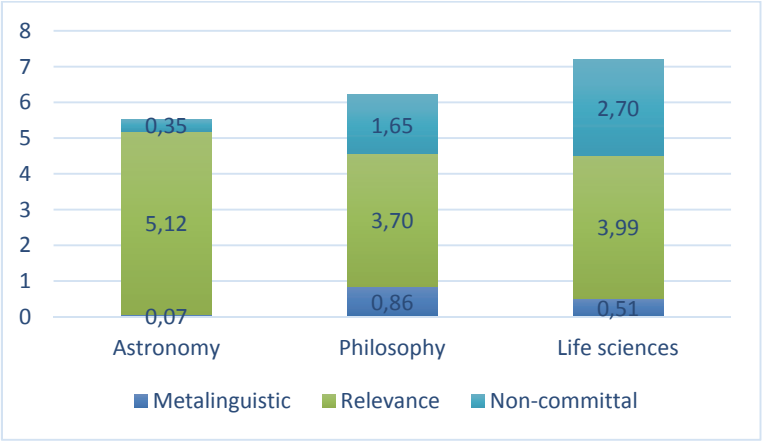

Figure 2. Percentage of use of selected conditional functions per discipline

On the contrary, relevance conditionals are most frequently used in astronomy texts (74 cases, 5.12% of all conditionals in astronomy texts), compared to their use in both philosophy (56 cases, 3.70%) and life-sciences (31, 3.99%).

Findings relating to the genre of samples are the most varied. As shown in Table 4 below, non-committal conditionals are particularly prominent in dialogues (200.09 uses per million, 4.44%), but much less so in other genres, representing here less than 2% of cases in each category.

Table 4. Use of selected conditional functions per genre of the text. Normalised figures (N=1,000,000)

Genre	Metalinguistic	Relevance	Non-committal	Others	Total
Treatise	16.39	108.16	45.89	2771.30	2941.74
Textbook	0.00	174.52	14.54	2690.56	2879.62
Essay	28.06	168.36	63.13	4124.75	4384.30
Lecture	16.59	82.96	16.59	2546.92	2663.06
Article	18.57	222.80	55.70	3100.57	3397.64
Letter	19.40	174.57	38.79	1765.10	1997.87
Dialogue	0.00	150.07	200.09	4151.87	4502.03
Others	0.00	99.56	0.00	2289.92	2389.49

Relevance conditionals are also used frequently in articles (222.80 uses per million words, 6.56% of all conditionals in articles), letters (174.57 uses per million, 8.74% of all conditionals) and textbooks (174.52, 6.06%), but their use is comparably infrequent in lectures (82.96 uses per million words, 3.12% of all conditionals in lectures), and treatises (108.16 uses per million, 3.68%). Metalinguistic conditionals, on the contrary, present a uniformly low level of use, representing less than 1% of all conditional uses in all genres, and showing no presence in textbooks and dialogues at all.

5.2. Metalinguistic conditionals

Eighteen metalinguistic conditionals were found in the corpus. All are introduced by *if*, and no example of metalinguistic conditionals with any of the other particles was found.

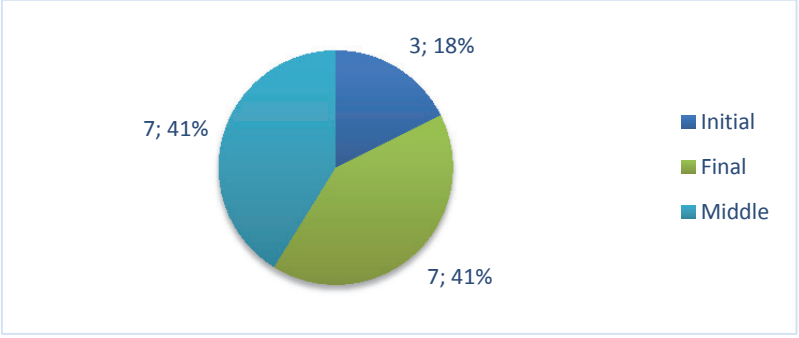

Figure 3. Use of constituent orders in metalinguistic conditionals

Regarding the order of the constituents of the conditionals, the preferred position of the protasis in metalinguistic conditionals is after (final) or in the middle of the protasis, with 7 cases (41%) each, as shown in Figure 3 above. Conditionals with the protasis in initial position represent only 18% of cases. Metalinguistic conditionals are, together with politeness conditionals (not analysed in this study), the only conditional functions in which the initial protasis is not the preferred order.

However, the most notable characteristic of metalinguistic conditionals is their preference for particular verb-form combinations. As shown in Table 5 below, only nine different verb form combinations were found, and twelve of the eighteen cases (66.66%) present the modal *may* in the protasis. Among these, the most frequently used combinations are *may, present simple* (seven cases, 38.89%) and *may, verbless* (four cases, 22,22%).

Table 5. Verb form combinations in metalinguistic conditionals

Verb combination	Number of cases
May, Present simple	7
May, verbless	4
Past simple, would	1
Past perfect, would present perfect	1
Present subjunctive, past simple	1
Present simple, should	1
May, might	1
Present simple, verbless	1
Could, verbless	1

Prototypical examples:

As discussed above, metalinguistic conditionals help authors to convey their doubts as to the appropriateness of the form of a claim or statement. These doubts may relate to the semantic plane, questioning the appropriateness of a word used to describe the idea in question, as in (17) below, or to the pragmatic plane, expressing uncertainty as to using a given word in the context of the text, as in (18) and (19).

> (17) then indeed the Competition (**if it may be called ſuch**) between Moral and Poſitive Duties might eaſily and ſpeedily be adjuſted. [88 (9903)][15]
>
> (18) Thus a Wheel and all its parts is an Organ of a Watch, **if I may ſpeak ſo**; [83 (3039)]
>
> (19) The features constituting the whole process […] are in actual experience "telescoped," **if I may use the word**, into one another. [121 (7965)]

[15] Examples from the *Coruña Corpus* are provided an identification number from the *CCT*. The first number identifies the sample from which the example has been taken in the list of samples in the *Coruña Corpus*. The second number, between brackets, identifies the position of the searched word (in this case, 'if') in the sample.

Some of these conditionals may also include other semantic nuances. This is the case with (20) below, in which the author seems to be asking rhetorical permission of the audience to use "ſo uncommon an application of the term", serving as evidence of the interpersonal nature of scientific writing in the period. It is noteworthy that this example, presenting such semantic nuance, contains the modal *may*, in contrast to example (21), in which the author directly criticises another author's choice of words, and in doing so does not employ such a verb.

> (20) As this doth not, like moral reaſoning, admit degrees of evidence, its perfection in point of eloquence, **if ſo uncommon an application of the term may be allowed**, conſiſts in perſpicuity. [97 (4985)]

> (21) It would have been better **if [Dr]. Hartley had uſed the words ſingle and compound, inſtead of ſimple and complex [**102 (3421)]

All these examples show the preference for middle and final conditionals, a preference which may be related to the fact that in metalinguistic conditionals the protasis frequently refers to a word or concept appearing in the apodosis, thus explaining the preference for an order of constituents in which the protasis appears after the term to which it is referring.

5.3. Relevance conditionals

Relevance conditionals allow several introductory particles. As shown in Figure 4 below, most of them are introduced by *if* (81%), but there are also a sizeable number of conditionals introduced by *unless* (eight, 5%) and other conditional conjunctions (eight, 5%), as well as conditionals formed by the inversion of the operator (fourteen, 9%). Among these, the triggers used the most are *were* (six uses) and *should* (five).

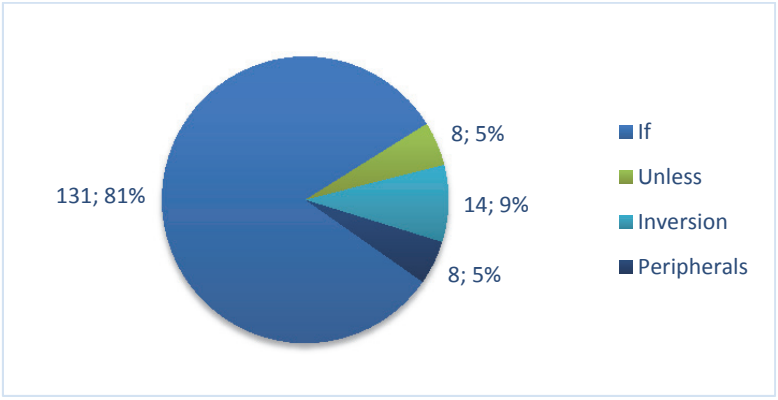

Figure 4. Relevance conditionals per type

There are two conditional markers which function only as relevance conditionals. These are *lest* (five cases) and the inversion marker *would* (one example, shown in (22) below). These are the only examples of conditional markers other than *if* expressing exclusively one function which have been found in the corpus.

(22) Therefore **would I know what day of the Month the firſt Sunday in June will be on, Anno 1709**, finding as before B is the Dominical Letter, I find by the Diſtich E begins the Month, therefore counting in the Natural order of the Alphabet on to B thus, E1, F2, G3, A4, B5, I find the firſt Sunday in June is the 5th. day of the Month. [0 (3513)]

Regarding the order of the constituents, shown in Figure 5 below, most relevance conditionals (111, 69%) have their protasis before their apodosis, although there is a sizeable minority (32, 20%) in which the apodosis appears first. Cases with middle protasis and apodosis-less conditionals are scarcer (7% and 4%, respectively).

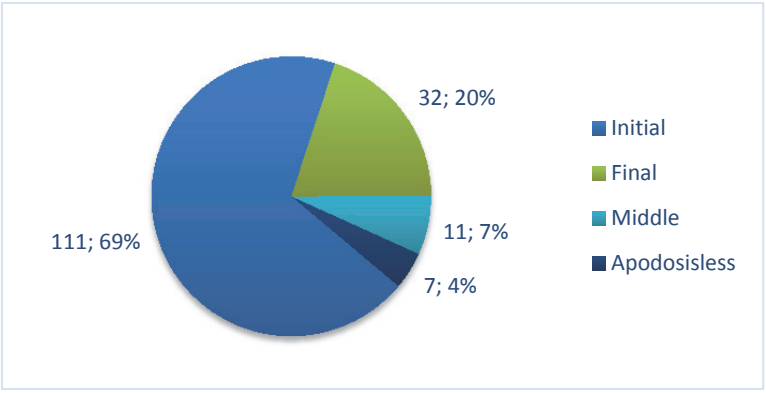

Figure 5. Use of constituent orders in relevance conditionals

Finally, relevance conditionals are characterized by a notable number of different possible verbal combinations. As shown in Table 6 below, sixty-four different combinations have been found in the corpus. Among these, the most frequent are *present simple, present simple*, with 21 cases (13.04%), but there are also a significant number of such conditionals with imperatives in the apodosis, with combinations such as *present subjunctive, imperative* (nine cases) and *present simple, imperative* (seven).

Table 6. Verb form combinations in relevance conditionals

Verb combination	Number of cases
Present simple, present simple	21
Present subjunctive, imperative	9
Present simple, imperative	7
Present subjunctive, present simple	6
Present simple, will	6
Present simple, must	6
Present subjunctive, must	6
Past simple, should	6
Another 56 different combinations	94

Prototypical examples:

Relevance conditionals help authors convey their uncertainty as to the relevance of what they are presenting. As explained above, these conditionals are commonly used by authors to introduce extra information which they think may be of interest to some, but perhaps not all, readers. In this way, authors are implicitly expressing their stance, in that they are uncertain of the relevance or interest of what they are presenting. This can be seen in the examples below:

> (23) **If the reader should be desirous of comparing the apparent diameters of the sun, moon, and planets, as given by English observers, with those given by the French**, he ought to be aware, that the centesimal division of the circle, of late years adopted by the latter, causes a great seeming difference in the results. [24 (2335)]

> (24) **If additional evidence of this fact were required**, it is furnished by the comet of 1770; which actually became entangled among the satellites of Jupiter, and yet produced no perceptible derangement in their motions [28 (2829)]

In (23), the author introduces an explanation which is only to be considered "If the reader should be desirous of comparing the apparent diameters of the sun, moon, and planets, as given by English observers, with those given by the French". This is also the case in 28 (2829), in which further explanations are given in case "additional evidence of this fact were required".

> (25) From the laſt article it is evident, that **if we want to find the angular diſtance between a near object H, and a diſtant one G**, look at the diſtant one directly and make the image of the other to coincide with it, and their angular diſtance is found in the ſame manner as for two diſtant objects. [19 (5937)]

> (26) **Lest some of our readers should think that astronomers do things rather roughly after all**, it may not be improper to add that this angle of 8".80 is equal to that subtended by a cable $2^{7}/_{10}$ inches in diameter, seen at the distance of a mile [38 (1572)]

Examples (25) and (26) illustrate two characteristic formal features of relevance conditionals, the use of imperatives in the apodosis and the conjunction *lest*, respectively. Both of these examples fulfil similar functions as those of the previous examples above.

5.4. Non-committal conditionals

Out of the fifty-one different non-committal conditionals found in the corpus, only one is introduced by a particle other than *if*, the inversion trigger *should*. This case is shown as Example (27) below:

> (27) But from the description and peculiarities here given, others can easily restore it to its proper place, **should** I be mistaken. [71 (5679)]

Regarding the order of the particles, as shown in Figure 6 below, most non-committal conditionals (48%) feature their protasis in the initial position, 33% in middle position and 19% in final position. There is no case of apodosis-less conditionals with a non-committal function.

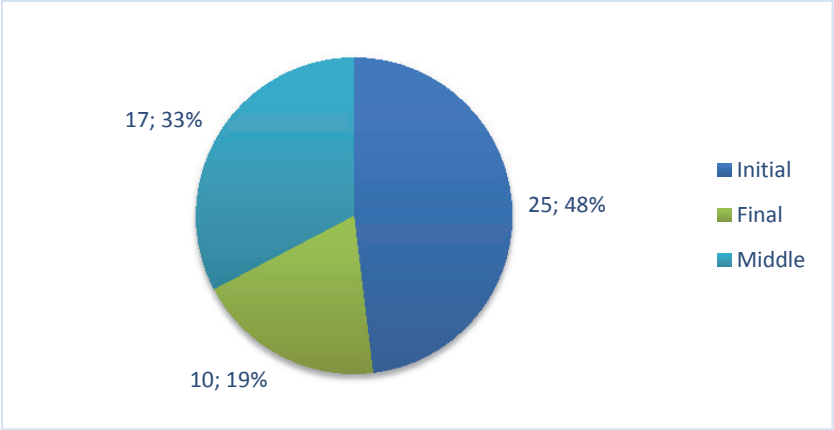

Figure 6. Use of constituent orders in non-committal conditionals

Finally, regarding the choice of verb-forms, non-committal conditionals feature twenty-eight different combinations, among which, as shown in Table 7 below, the most frequent is *present simple, present simple*, with thirteen cases. The use of *may* in the protasis, found in six examples, is also common among these conditionals.

Table 6. Verb form combinations in non-committal conditionals

Verb combination	Number of cases
Present simple, present simple	13
May, past simple	3
Present subjunctive, present simple	3
May, Present simple	2
Past simple, past simple	2
Past simple, verbless	2
Present simple, must	2
Present simple, past simple	2
Present subjunctive, can	2
Present subjunctive, will	2
Other 18 combinations	18

Prototypical examples:

Non-committal conditionals are characterised by their quasi-conventional nature. As shown in the examples below, they commonly feature semi-fixed expressions, such as "if I understand…", "if I mistake not", "if X may be believed", "if we may trust…".

(28) **If I understand you rightly**, the whole force of the sun is, on your principle, not directed to the planets, but diffused through all space in the plane of its motion [106 (7592)]

(29) The paſſive Powers are ſummed up in Intelligence, and Senſibility; in reſpect of which, the Mind appears, **if I miſtake not**, ſuſceptible of diſtinct Obligations. [88 (963)]

(30) It is of ſuch great Strength, that it can (**if ſome Writers may be believed**) toſs an Horſe and Horſeman. [47 (6318)]

(31) The ejection of part of the germinal vesicle in the formation of the polar cells may probably be paralleled by the ejection of part or the whole of the original nucleus which, **if we may trust the beautiful researches of Bütschli**, takes place during conjugation in Infusoria as a preliminary to the formation of a fresh nucleus. [78 (7896)]

All these conditionals help the author to convey their uncertainty about the veracity or reliability of what they are presenting. As discussed above, the uncertainty conveyed by the author might be their own responsibility, that is, it concerns their own claims or the interpretation they make about other authors' claims (in a sense similar to Warchal's "reservation conditionals" (2010: 145), and examples (28) and (29) here); or it can be the responsibility of other authors, when the uncertainty concerns the reliability of these other authors' claims (in a sense similar to Quirk *et al.*'s "uncertainty conditionals" (1985: 1096), and examples (30) and (31) here).

It is of note that conditionals which present an author's uncertainty about the claims of other authors, and which might thus represent a more interactionally sensitive moment in the discourse, feature the modal *may*, which appears to assist in deflecting part of the tension, while those with other functions do not present this modal.

6. Conclusions

The analysis of results here, and the prototypical examples selected, have shown that the three types of conditionals analysed in this study can safely be considered examples of expressions of authorial stance.

The examination of their distribution according to socio-historical parameters, however, has not shown major differences. Relevance conditionals are used more frequently than average in astronomy texts, while both metalinguistic and non-committal conditionals appear to be more common in life science and philosophy samples. Non-committal conditionals have also been found to be particularly frequent in dialogues, as well as being infrequent in texts by women. This lack of use by women authors could be related to the confrontational nature of some non-committal conditionals; women authors held a less powerful position in the epistemic communities of science at the time, and thus might have tried to avoid uses of language which could perhaps be interpreted as aggressive.

The analysis of the formal characteristics of these conditionals was more fruitful. Relevance conditionals show a distribution in line with other conditional functions, but both metalinguistic and non-committal conditionals have been found to be almost exclusively conveyed by *if*-conditionals.

This restriction may be explained by the fact that *if*, as the central conditional subordinator, can convey all functions, but other conditional particles, with their more restrictive meanings, can only convey some of them, leading to the (almost) exclusive expression of some specialized functions with

if, such as metalinguistic and non-committal conditionals. In any case, from a more practical point of view, it could also be the case that, rather than having restrictions, uses of these types of conditionals without *if* were simply not found in the corpus, as such conditionals are used quite infrequently.

Metalinguistic and non-committal conditionals also present some typical formal features: Metalinguistic conditionals are characterised by their use of *may* in the protasis, as well as by the preference for the use of the protasis in medial or final position. Non-committal conditionals commonly feature semi-fixed expressions, and the analysis has also found some interesting correlations between the presence of *may* and the recipient of the uncertainty being expressed.

Relevance conditionals, however, are less characteristic, showing formal features with a greater similarity to those of other functions. Their most noteworthy formal characteristic is that relevance conditionals are the only type which can be conveyed by conditionals introduced with *lest*, and that they feature imperative forms in the apodosis more frequently than average.

There are at least three avenues for future research on this topic: first, a rhetorical analysis in greater depth of all the different examples could uncover more particular uses and might perhaps allow a classification of sub-functions. Second, other conditional functions in which the expression of stance is not as clear as in the ones examined here might be investigated in order to establish whether or not such functions are indeed expressions of stance. And third, the analysis could be broadened by adding further subcorpora from the *Coruña Corpus*, such as *CHET* (*Corpus of Historical English Texts*) and *CECheT* (*Corpus of English Chemistry Texts*).

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Vague language in the *Corpus of Historical English Texts*

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Abstract: This paper seeks to explore how vagueness is linguistically manifested in the *Corpus of Historical English Texts*, a subcorpus within the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* containing eighteenth and nineteenth century history texts. I shall draw on Zhang's (2015) framework for the study of vague language in terms of elasticity. This notion is understood as a property of language which allows communicators to use and shape vague linguistic units in order to fit into the different purposes of given communicative situations, providing a ground for negotiation of meanings between speakers/writers and listeners/readers, in which case vagueness is an eminently interactional strategy. With the help of the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for both quantification and text retrieval, I shall firstly identify the items belonging to the four lexical categories of elastic language in Zhang's (2015) taxonomy, namely (i) approximate stretchers (approximators and elastic vague quantifiers), (ii) general stretchers (general terms, placeholders and elastic vague category markers), (iii) scalar stretchers (intensifiers and softeners) and (iv) epistemic stretchers. I shall then analyse manually their pragmatic functions within the context of scientific writing and illustrate how writers use strategically vague language to make generalisations, to emphasise or mitigate their claims, or to persuade their readership.

Keywords: vague language, elasticity, interactional strategy, approximate stretchers, general stretchers, scalar stretchers, epistemic stretchers, boosting, hedging, persuasion.

1. Introduction

It has been traditionally considered that the principle of precision should guide effective communicative situations so that the more precise an individual is when communicating, the more efficient the message is supposed to be. Stubbs (1996) explicitly challenges this assumption by pointing out that precision and efficiency are not equivalent when it comes to human communication. This claim has been gradually adhered to by many scholars from the eighties onwards so much so that nowadays it is argued that there may be speech events in which some degree of vagueness is even preferable in order to achieve certain communicative goals (Channell 1994; Cheng and Warren 2001; Ruzaite 2004; Cutting 2007, 2013; Murphy 2010).

In her seminal work on vagueness, Channell (1994: 3) contends that the key to vague language use is appropriateness. When we are engaged in a communicative exchange, we tend to make estimations regarding what would be considered to be appropriately vague and what would not be so by relying on both our expectations and our knowledge of our interlocutors' expectations about what is supposed to be normal in interaction (Cheng and Warren 2001: 83). It is not difficult to imagine communicative situations in which it would be more suitable to attain a higher degree of precision than others. Think

of the differing degrees of precision normally expected from a university lecture and from an informal conversation with a friend.

The ability of making adequate use of vague language, that is, of adjusting the degree of precision attached to utterances when communicating as well as the ability of correctly interpreting these utterances are part of our pragmatic competence. The contextual factors surrounding the communicative situation are critical in order to work out, for instance, what the referent for a vague expression such as *and the like* is. In this sense, O´Keeffe (2004: 19) stresses the importance of the context-dependent nature of vague language categories for whose interpretation participants have to draw on their shared knowledge and on their shared socio-cultural background. Schwarz-Friesel and Consten (2011: 351) suggest that full-fledged interpretations of vague referential items are derived by hearers "by incorporating both information from the text and information activated through conceptual instantiation and inferential processing".

In the context of scientific communication in particular, precision is perhaps one of the most widely agreed-upon requirements of a successful scientific style. Towns (1990) states that "vagueness, ambiguity, and inability to express clearly and succinctly are intolerable in a scientist". However, while it seems highly desirable that scientific knowledge is communicated accurately as a mode of securing the empirical and theoretical contributions made by scientists, the importance of achieving complete exactness in scientific discourse should not be overestimated because, as Margenau (1974: 755-756) puts it, "there is no absolute, ultimate or final truth in science". Interestingly, epistemic vagueness as linguistically manifested through hedges, for instance, has been identified by several authors as being fundamental in the construction of scientific discourse since it assists writers in the negotiation of meanings with their readers as well as in establishing relationships with them.

The aim of this research is to offer an overview of the ways in which vagueness is linguistically manifested in the *Corpus of Historical English Texts* (henceforth CHET), a subcorpus within the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* containing eighteenth and nineteenth century history texts. I seek to analyse these texts with an eye on pragmatics in order to account for the interactional dimension of vague language use. In order to do so, I shall follow Zhang's (2015) approach to linguistic vagueness in terms of elasticity. With the help of the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for both quantification and text retrieval, I shall firstly identify the items belonging to the four lexical categories of elastic language in Zhang's (2015) taxonomy, namely (i) approximate stretchers (approximators and elastic vague quantifiers), (ii) general stretchers (general terms, placeholders and elastic vague category markers), (iii) scalar stretchers (intensifiers and softeners) and (iv) epistemic stretchers. I shall then analyse manually their pragmatic functions within the context of scientific writing and illustrate how writers use strategically vague language to make generalisations, to emphasise or mitigate their claims, or to persuade their readership.

As regards the different spoken and written genres in which vague language has been analysed, some of them include biomedical slide talks (Dubois 1987), academic writing on economics (Channell 1990), telephone conversations (Urbanová 1999), radio phone-ins (O'Keeffe 2004), academic, business, leisure and political discourse (Ruzaite 2004), poetry (Cook 2007), commercial advertising (Wenzhong and Jingyi 2013), and adults and teenagers spoken English (Palacios-Martínez and Núñez-Pertejo 2015). It has been also compared across languages or language varieties and cultures,

particularly in conversations as in British and Irish English (Evison, McCarthy and O'Keeffe 2007), German and New Zealand English (Terraschke and Holmes 2007), English and Lithuanian (Ruzaite 2009), or Japanese, Korean and Mandarin (Hayashi and Yoon 2010).

From a diachronic perspective, research on vague language categories is scarce. Ortega-Barrera (2012) discusses the occurrence of extenders in a corpus of recipes and identifies both the form and functions of these vague language items from 1564 to 1770. Carroll (2009) searches the recipe collection of the *Forme of Cury* for devices indicating vagueness. This author partially bases her study on Channell's categories, i.e. approximated quantities, vague categories and placeholder words, and three additional categories, i.e. flexibility, superordinacy and omission. In a previous work (Carroll 2007), she also analyses the form and function of extenders in Middle and early Modern English letters. Hedging, as a pragmatic function of vagueness, has been looked into more extensively and, in scientific writing specifically, in the works by Alonso-Almeida (2012), Salager-Meyer and Defives (1998), Skelton (1997), Salager-Meyer, Defives and Hamelinsck (1996), among others.

The structure of the paper is as follows: the next section contains an overview of vague language. In order to provide a solid theoretical background, different stances towards the notion are considered, and the suitability of various frameworks for its analysis is discussed. The description of the model of elastic vague language as formulated in Zhang (2015) is presented after that. Section three contains the analysis of elastic vague language items in the texts and their pragmatic interpretation. Section four contains the conclusions derived from the present study.

2. Vague language

Vagueness has been recognised both as a fundamental feature of language and a valuable communicative strategy in itself (Ruzaite 2004). It may be generally defined as "a semantic manifestation of indeterminacy" (Urbanová 1999: 99), but definitions of the term showing a wide range of nuances as well as typologies of vague language have sprung up over the last three decades. Vague language has become a prominent field of study within linguistics thanks to Channell's (1994) semantic and pragmatic analysis, where she states that "an expression or word is vague if: a. it can be contrasted with another word or expression which appears to render the same proposition; b. it is 'purposely and unabashedly vague'; c. its meaning arises from the 'intrinsic uncertainty' referred to by Pierce" (Channell 1994: 20). In her discussion, this author seems to equate vagueness with imprecision pointing out that "there are a number of ways in which speakers can avoid being precise or exact" (Channell 1994: 17). Similarly, for Crystal and Davy (1975: 11) and for Cook (2007: 21) the term applies to "lack of precision" and to "the absence of that quality [being 'precise']", respectively.

Kempson (1977: 124) uses the term vagueness as distinct from ambiguity to refer to "lack of specification". Likewise Drave (2002: 52) deals with vague language in terms of "non-specificity" and so do Cheng and Warren (2001), who further differentiate vague language from "inexplicitness". According to them, non-specifity is an inherent quality of vague language, that is, it "is non-specific regardless of the context in which it is uttered". In contrast, inexplicit forms of language "achieve specific meaning from the negotiation of context between participants in conversation" (Cheng and

Warren 2001: 52). In practice, this means that vague language items retain their vagueness even when they are contextualised.

The notions of explicitness/implicitness have been also frequently invoked, for instance, while Koetser (2007: 41) suggests that vagueness and explicitness are opposing terms, Cutting (2007: 4) points out that vagueness and implicitness may overlap noting that the latter "can be expressed with [vague language] and other language features" and, at the same time, "[vague language] can express implicit meaning but it can be taken as its face value".

Many other concepts have been employed in dicussions about vagueness, making the whole panorama even more confusing. Sperber and Wilson (1991: 540) deal with this notion in terms of "loose talk"; Channell (1994) simply refers to "vague language". Stubbs (1996: 202), on his part, equates vagueness and lack of commitment, and recently, He (2000: 7) tries to integrate many of the subtleties attached to vagueness by pointing to "fuzziness, vague language, generality, ambiguity or even ambivalence". Cheng and Warren (2003: 384) observe that though there is indeed a lack of terminological consensus to refer to this phenomenon, "the realizations of vagueness are more consistent across the various studies".

Vague language may come in different forms. Channell's (1994) categorisation of vague language is often quoted as it is thought to be exhaustive and systematic. It includes three categories, namely approximators, vague category identifiers and placeholder words. Approximators are those items concerning vagueness of amounts and quantities. Vague quantifying expressions in this group may be used (i) with numbers, i.e. *three or four books*; (ii) with approximators properly speaking, i.e. *about*/*approximately*/*around five hundred people*; (iii) with round numbers, i.e. *to be six feet tall*; (iv) with faded numbers, i.e. *a couple of chairs*; and (v) with partial specifiers, i.e. *at least twenty minutes*. Approximators also include non-numerical positive, negative or neutral vague quantifiers such as *lots of*, *a bit of* or *some*, respectively. The second category in Channell's (1994) taxonomy, that is, vague category identifiers, include expressions such as *and things like that* and *or stuff like that*. Their structure is often that of tags, consisting of *exemplar + tag, i.e. I'll have some coffee or something like that*, where *coffee or something like that* means "any hot beverage". The examplar always precedes the tag and is frequently made up of noun phrases, verb phrases and embedded sentences. Lastly, placeholder words comprise items like *thingy* and *whatshisname* which refer to names of objects, people or places which are not provided at the time of speaking as in *pass me that thingy, you know, that thing for fasting the handouts together*.

Channell's (1994) categories have been taken as the starting point for classifications in later studies, where they have been regrouped and referred to by different labels. Cotterill (2007: 99) deals with approximators and vague category identifiers under the heading "vague additives"; placeholder words and other vague quantifiers are covered under "vagueness through lexical choice"; and vague quantifying expressions with round numbers fall within "vagueness by implicature". Adopting an interactional approach to vagueness, Jucker, Smith and Lüdge (2003) suggest two additional categories and reorganise the categories proposed by Channell (1994). Their system then includes four main types: (i) representations of people and places, embodying cases of referential vagueness (e.g. the pronoun *it*); (ii) assigning events and experiences, which encompasses devices like downtoners (e.g. *a bit*, *kind of*, *sort of*), vague category identifiers and placeholder words; (iii)

representations of amounts, frequencies and probabilities, which involve vague quantifying expressions, adverbs of frequency (e.g. *sometimes*, *usually*), vague adverbs of likelihood (e.g. *maybe*, *probably*) and approximators; and (iv) propositional attitudes, where devices expressing lack of commitment are taken into account (e.g. adverbs like *presumably*, modal verbs like *might*, and parentheticals like *I think*).

The addition of categories in Jucker, Smith and Lüdge's (2003) system makes manifest the need to include the notions of possibility/probability and lack of commitment as representations of vague language, none of which is taken into account in Channell's (1994) taxonomy, at least explicitly, and so Channell's (1994) categorisation does not seem to be adequate for a comprehensive analysis. Jucker, Smith and Lüdge's (2003) system does not seem to be suitable either because, although the model they set up is enlarged so as to include these other ways of expressing vagueness, it suffers from certain overlap, i.e. adverbs of likelihood in category (iii) with propositional attitudes in category (iv), making the quantification of vague language items in any corpus difficult. To the author of this paper, these notions are intrinsically related to vagueness and, siding with Trappes-Lomax (2007), in this research I opt for a more inclusive approach in which vague language is defined as "any purposive choice of language designed to make the degree of accuracy, preciseness, certainty or clarity with which a referent or situation (event, state, process) is described less than it might have been" (Trappes-Lomax 2007: 122).

With the aim of systematising this less restrictive approach to vague language, I shall follow Zhang (2015), who points out that a distinction should be made between the conventional and the liberal approaches to linguistic vagueness. The former focuses on vague quantifying expressions, vague category identifiers, placeholder words and other similar items. The latter, on its part, does not only include the items covered in the conventional approach, but also others that are epistemic in nature. This author observes that the main advantage of adopting more liberal approaches is that they may offer a more representative picture of vague language, but they have to be narrowed down in order not to include open-ended vague categories, i.e. vague adjectives/nouns/verbs, otherwise sound empirical analyses would not be feasible.

Zhang's (2015) perspective is specifically developed in terms of elasticity. This concept is to be understood as "the springy nature of language that makes it able to adjust readily to different contexts and communicative goals" (Zhang 2015: 5), and it applies to those linguistic units which have "an unspecified meaning boundary, so that its interpretation is elastic in the sense that it can be stretched or shrunk according to the strategic needs of communication" (Zhang 2013: 88). In this framework, the meaning of vague language items is negotiated in order to fit into the communicative needs of a particular speech event, so contextual information, including the purpose of the exchange, is a key element here. Elasticity is seen ultimately as a strategic feature of vague language, which in fact is not at odds with Juker, Smith and Lüdge's (2003) view of vagueness as an interactional strategy.

Zhang's (2015) typology of elastic language comprises four lexical categories: approximate stretchers, general stretchers, scalar stretchers and epistemic stretchers. Approximate stretchers include numerical and non-numerical approximators and elastic vague quantifiers conveying inexact quantities (*about*, *a lot*, *a few*, *many*, *some*). General stretchers are "expressions with limited semantic specificity" (Zhang 2015: 36), such as general terms, placeholder words and category markers (*thing*,

someone, *something*, *and things like that*). Scalar stretchers cover softeners and intensifiers (*a bit*, *quite*, *really*, *so*). Epistemic stretchers covey the speaker's uncertainty and lack of commitment to the propositional content (*could*, *possible*, *probably*, *I guess*).

As regards the pragmatic functions of vague language, hedging is one of the most extensively addressed in earlier literature. The term "hedge" was firstly used by Lakoff (1972: 195) precisely to refer to "words whose job is to make things more or less fuzzy". In this sense, Salager-Meyer (1994: 150) observes that hedging is related to intentional or purposive vagueness and tentativeness, and so hedging devices are used to increase fuzziness. The term "hedge" has since Lakoff's work been broadened to include linguistic items "used to qualify a speaker's confidence in the truth of a proposition" (Hyland 1998a: 1). For Hyland (1998a: 1), hedging is "any linguistic means used to indicate either a) a lack of complete commitment to the truth value of an accompanying proposition, or b) a desire not to express the commitment categorically". To the extent that hedges may be used to express tentativeness and possibility, they are also related to the notion of epistemic modality, which is concerned with "(the linguistic expression of) an evaluation of the chances that a certain hypothetical state of affairs under consideration (or some aspect of it) will occur, is occurring, or has occurred in a possible world" (Nuyts 2001: 21).

The less than straightforward categorical assertions brought about by the use of hedges allow speakers and writers to detatch themselves from what they say, thus expressing their lack of certainty and/or commitment in the truth of the propositional content. Uncertainty arising at the time of speaking or writing may be but one of the motivations for using vague language in which case vagueness ensures smooth communication even when speakers or writers do not have at their disposal accurate information about identities, qualities or quantities. Consequently, not all forms of vague language have to be necessarily pragmatically interpreted as hedging strategies (Itani 1996). McEnery, Xiao and Tono (2006: 106) suggest other pragmatic functions of vague language such as "politeness strategies, softening implicit complaints and criticism, and providing a way of establishing a social bond". The pragmatic functions of vague language items in CHET will be analysed in depth in the following section.

3. Analysis and discussion

This section presents the preliminary findings of this research. Following Zhang (2015), I have searched CHET for elastic vague language items. They have been classified as approximate stretchers (approximators and elastic vague quantifiers), general stretchers (general terms, placeholders and elastic vague category makers), scalar stretchers (intensifiers and downtoners) and epistemic stretchers. I have used the *Coruña Corpus Tool* for both quatification and text retrieval, but manual analyses have been in order as well so as to identify, for instance, the core meaning of modals and other cases of polysemy. The total number of words analysed is approximately 400,000. Figure 1 presents the distribution of elastic vague language categories in the corpus:

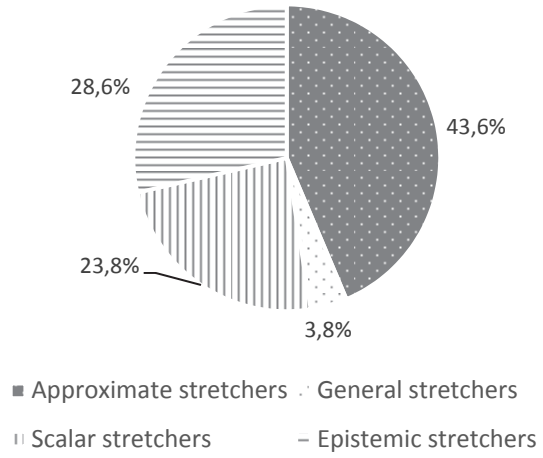

Figure 1. Distribution of elastic vague language categories in CHET

Figure 1 shows that approximate stretchers are by far the most frequent elastic vague language category used by writers in the corpus, accounting for 43,6% of the cases. They are followed by epistemic and scalar stretchers with similar frequencies of occurrence for both categories, i.e. 28,6% and 23,8%, respectively. General stretchers stand as the least frequent elastic vague language category, occurring only in 3,8% of the occassions. These results indicate that vagueness applies mainly to the expression of quantity. In this sense, it should be noted that references to number concepts are expected in texts belonging to the scientific register, and specifically in historical texts, where history timelines are usually provided. Vagueness in quantification results from the writer's not knowing the specific information or from his/her unwillingness to be specific. Other types of vagueness such as that related to epistemicity are also quantitatively significant; they may also arise from these two circumstances, but what is interesting in all cases is to analyse the pragmatic effects derived from the use of vague language. These will be looked at in detail in the remainder of this section.

3.1. Approximate stretchers

Approximate stretchers are items expressing amounts in an imprecise way, and they cover approximators and elastic vague quantifiers. The expression of quantity is obviously an integral part of scientific communication and, as a matter of fact, scientific and technological advances cannot be transmitted without making reference to number words and concepts (Condry and Spelke 2008). This becomes apparent when dealing with texts on history where dates are necessary so as to sequence events in the order of their occurrence as well as to indicate the cause-effect relationship between them. Apart from dates, providing other numerical data may be of interest to historians in order to offer a detailed description not only of the events, but also of the people involved in them.

Approximators have been labelled differently in earlier literature on linguistic vagueness, i.e. approximations (Channell 1980), approximators (Wachtel 1981; Channell 1994; Biber et al. 1999), or rounders (Prince, Bosk and Frader 1982), among others. In the case of the texts analysed, *about* is the most frequent approximator used by the writers:

(1) The Firſt of this Sirname I have found is Donaldus MackGilchriſt, Dominus de Tarbart, who was a Benefactor to the Monaſtery of Paſly, by giving the Monks and their Succeſſors the Privilege of cutting Wood, for ſupporting of the Fabrick of the Monaſtery, in any part of his Woods that lay moſt convenient for them; which Deed he expreſſes to be made for the Health of the Souls of his Ancestors, and for the Welfare of his own Soul: Which I take to be **about** the beginning of the Reign of King Robert Bruce (1710 Crawfurd)

(2) Which Charter has probably been **about** the Year 1189, when Roger was elected Biſhop of St Andrews, in the Reign of King William (1710 Crawfurd)

As can be seen from these examples, *about* is used to approximate time expressions. While in (2) the approximate year in which the charter was produced is given, i.e. 1189, in (1) the writer does not provide a numerical time reference. This invites the inference that the author is appealing to some shared knowledge with his audience as regards the specific year in which King Robert Bruce began his reign. In both cases, the occurrence of some epistemic elements in the immediate context indicates that the approximator is used as a hedging device. In (1), the sequence preceding *about*, i.e. *I take to be*, is a subjectiviser, that is, an element "in which the speaker explicitly expresses his or her subjective opinion vis-à-vis the state of affairs referred to in the proposition, thus lowering the assertive force" (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989: 284). In (2), on its part, the stance adverbial *probably* marks the degree of likelihood of the state of affairs being referred to in terms of probability, indicating that the author is not completely certain about the truth of the proposition.

About is also used in the corpus to approximate measures like distance and weight as in (3), money as in (4), and quantities involving people and things as in (5):

(3) From thence they travelled to Mount Real, which is an Iſland of 30 miles long and 12 wide, lying in the middle of the River commonly called St Lawrence's River; **about** 180 miles up from Quebeck, navigable for Veſſels of **about** 100 Tons (1726 Penhallow)

(4) It is a sea port, borough, and market town, and a county in itself, extending on each side of the Boyne, and comprising within its liberties 5780 statute acres, the contributions of two of the richest agricultural counties of Ireland, Meath and Louth. The estimated annual value of this tract is £14,402, giving an acreable average of **about** £2 10s (1844 D'Alton)

(5) IN brief, there's in this valuable Collection, **about** 90 Royal Charters and Grants; **About** 52 Deeds, by Nobles and Barons, **about** 266, by Gentlemen; **About** 131 by Popes, Biſhops, Abbots, Priors and Convents, and other Religious Perſons and Houſes; And **about** 130 other Original Deeds and Copies; Which will amount in all **about** the number of 670 (1705 Anderson)

The excerpt in (3) is part of a description of the journey undertaken by some English gentlemen during the wars of New England with the Eastern Indians. It contains the geographical details of the island of Montreal. *About* qualifies first the distance between the island and Quebec, and then the supposed safe weight for ships to navigate on Saint Lawrence River. It seems to me that in this case

there is no need of providing a precise estimate of both distance and weight, at least for the purposes of the exchange which is simply to offer a general description of where these English gentlemen were heading to. Similarly, the example in (4) illustrates the use of *about* to make a generalisation about the value of the tract of the county of Drogheda in Ireland. The occurrence of the word *average* in the immediate context reinforces this reading as it refers to something that is typical or usual (Ruzaite 2004: 233-234). Whenever generalisations are made, higher degrees of precision appear to be almost unattainable, and so the use of the approximator in these two examples cannot be deemed to be a hedging device.

The use of *about* in (5) is worth commenting on, too. Here the writer enumerates some of the historical documents he has come across during his stay in Durham. As noted by Jucker, Smith and Lüdge (2003: 1760), "[s]peakers are likely to round up or down to conventional figures such as ten", and that applies in this example to *about 90 Royal Charters*, *about 130 other original Deeds and Copies*, and *about the number of 670*. The writer is, however, somewhat more precise in *About 52 Deeds, by Nobles and Barons, about 266, by Gentlemen; About 131 by Popes, Biſhops, Abbots, Priors and Convents, and other Religious Perſons and Houſes*. This higher level of precision places the focus on the exact numbers themselves, in spite of the fact that they are approximated with *about* anyway. Nothing in the immediate context accounts for this distinction made by the writer, but, bearing in mind that the writer has had physical access to the historical documents as permission was granted to him to do so, he could have even had the chance to count the texts held in custody, and that may allow him to be more accurate.

Together with approximators, elastic vague quantifiers are included in Zhang's (2015) category of approximate stretchers. Carter and McCarthy (2006: 389) refer to them as determiners or indefinite pronouns, and indicate that they are used to talk about things in general. In contrast to approximators, they are not accompanied by numbers. Their use in the corpus can be illustrated with the examples below:

(6) Ther's here yet preſerved, the Original Charters of three of our Kings; Whereof we know no other Originals extant: And further, here and here only, ſo far as is yet known, is to be had; a full and compleat ſeries of the true and Genuine Seals undefac'd, of our Kings, ſince Malcolm Canmoir, to our King James the ſecond; And with **much** civility, I was allow'd to take draughts of them, which are of great import (1705 Anderson)

(7) A ſmart Engagement followed, which held till Night: When finding his Thigh broken, and **moſt** of his Men ſlain, was oblig'd to haſten aſhore (1726 Penhallow)

(8) **Many** brave knights among the noblest of the Moors fell that day; Abul Hassan, by the assistance of his brother Seleine, obtained possession of the Alhambra, where he continued to reign, and was called the sheik, while his son and rival, under the name of Zaquir, was acknowledged in the Albaycin (1828 Callcott)

(9) On the whole, then, it may be safely concluded from the preceding evidences, that the Seanchus Mor was not, as Colgan and the subsequent writers supposed, a mixed compilation of history and law, but a body of laws solely; and though perhaps there is not sufficient evidence to satisfy an unprejudiced inquirer that the Apostle of Ireland had any share in its composition, or even that its origin can be traced to his time, **little** doubt can be

entertained that such a work was compiled within a short period after the full establishment of Christianity in the country (1839 Petrie)

(10) […] afterwards, a house in which he was sleeping was set on fire in the night, and when he rushed out, he found himself surrounded by a body of armed men, who immediately murdered him. **Some** say this was done by the order of the Persian governor; others, that **a few** persons whom he had offended took this means of revenging themselves (1857 Sewell)

Many and *few* are elastic vague quantifiers which combine with plural countable nouns; *much* and *little*, on their part, combine with noncountable nouns. A distinction can be made on the basis of the quantities being referred to, either large or small, when using these items: *many* and *much* are multal quantifiers while *few* and *little* are paucal quantifiers (Quirk et al. 1985). According to Ruzaite (2009: 240), this distinction is relevant because multal and paucal quantifiers fulfill different communicative functions. *Much*, *most* and *many* in (6), (7) and (8) are used to make broad generalisations. In (6) the generalisation applies to the polite behavior displayed by the people who let the writer have access to some original charters; in (7) and (8), to the people involved in some battles. In none of these two cases would a precise number be relevant for the reader, and so using *most* and *many* turns out to be more informative as their use places the focus of attention on the events themselves and on their consequences.

The excerpt in (9) illustrates the use of the paucal quantifier *little*, which modifies the noun *doubt*, with an emphatic function. Since the context is negative, the effect of employing this elastic vague quantifier is the expression of the writer's almost certainty as for the time taken to compile the legal texts in Senchus Mor. Here the writer recognises that there may be other positions regarding this issue, but he opts for narrowing them down (Hyland 2005: 52). *Some* in (10) has a non-identified referent (Duffley and Larrivée 2012), and this is particularly important because this vague language item is exploited for the purposes of attribution of information as indicated by the use of the communicative evidential verb *say*. The writer is confronting alternatives about who may have murdered Alcibidades, but the provider of the information remains unknown to the reader. There are two possible explanations for the use of *some*: on the one hand, the writer may not be confident about who the provider of information is and so he necessarily withholds their names, or on the other, he may be concerned about providing just the right amount of information which may solely be who the murderers of Alcibiades are rather than who says who the murderers of Alcibiades are. Nothing in the context leads us to think in one direction or the other. To the author of this paper, the paucal quantifier *a few* in this excerpt may fulfill any of these two functions as well.

3.2. General stretchers

General stretchers are devices with a low degree of semantic specificity such as general terms, placeholders and elastic vague category markers (Zhang 2015: 36). Just as approximators and elastic vague quantifiers, the subcategories within general stretchers constitute prototypical examples of vague language whose "interpretation […] depends largely on the hearer's framework of knowledge" and they can be "replaced by a more precise item" (Ruzaite 2007: 38). Consider the following examples:

(11) This is not to say that sufficient efforts have been made to keep the National Debt within safe bounds. France and the United States have each in turn read a much later lesson to Great Britain, which ought to be taken to heart; but **something** has been done to reduce the British Debt, and the way to do more has been opened up in recent times. It was emphatically credit, the British power of raising loans on the public security to almost any extent and paying no exorbitant interest, which saved Europe (1895 Burrows)

(12) The unremitting activity and the spirit of detail which belonged to him fitted him in a peculiar manner for the part of a disciplinarian, and scarcely **anything** was found remote enough or minute enough to evade the relentless scrutiny which he made to himself a duty of exercising (1833 Aikin)

(13) She conſulted Mr. Firmin upon this, who approved the advice, and was one of the firſt that ſubſcribed the compoſition, but remitted to her his whole debt, and endeavoured to procure ſomething from others, in which he did not ſucceed according to his wiſh; but he himſelf made her a preſent of a good Norwich **ſtuff**, that very well clothed her, and her four children (1780 Cornish)

(14) But, on a closer inspection, it will be found that there were causes in operation which not only produced social resemblances between the different states, perceptible amid all their differences of race, language, **and the like**, but also taught them to regard themselves as mutually related (1855 Masson)

The general terms *something* and *anything* in (11) and (12) are non-numerical specifiers (Drave 2002). What the writer means by *something* remains initially vague and whatever action has been taken in order to reduce the British debt is unstated. However, the excerpt continues making explicit that the British debt has been reduced thanks to credit. *Something* in (11) exemplifies a persuasive use of vague language, i.e. emphasis. The occurrence of the cleft sentence (*It was emphatically credit […]*) in the immediate co-text seems to provide harmonic reinforcement to this persuasive, emphatic interpretation (Ruzaite 2007: 87). Something similar happens with *anything* in (12) which is modified by the negative approximator *scarcely*, resulting in an emphatic effect of the utterance in which they are embedded. In this context, assertive general terms like *something* ultimately appear to help writers in building arguments to persuade their audience.

Stuff in (13) illustrates the use of placeholders in CHET. Placeholders are "expressions that convey no referential content in themselves but that instead invite the listener to infer a referent" (Jucker, Smith and Lüdge 2003: 1749). The effective use of vague language items like placeholders indicates that context and the shared common ground between interactants are essential in the domain of referential interpretation (Hanna, Tanenhaus and Trueswell 2003). Relying on some shared knowledge, a reader may have safely inferred that *stuff* refers to a material, particularly a type of fabric crafted in Norwich at that time. By appealing to the knowledge that both writer and reader have in common, the writer thus creates bonds with his audience.

The function fulfilled by *stuff* in (13) parallels that fulfilled by *and the like* in (14). *And the like* stands as an elastic vague category marker. This subcategory of general stretchers has been given different names such as set marking tags (Dines 1980), post noun hedges (Meyerhoff 1992), vague category identifiers (Channell 1994), or general extenders (Overstreet 1999). They are used in lists and have no specific referent. Their structure tends to be highly formulaic, consisting normally of a conjunction,

i.e. *and* or *or*, followed by a noun phrase. Overstreet (2005: 1847) identifies two types of extenders, adjunctive or disjunctive, depending on the conjunction introducing the sequence. *And the like* in (14) falls under the adjunctive type of extenders, and so *and* points at the addition of other elements in the list. More importantly, the use of *and the like* coveys "an assumption of interpersonal understanding" (Overstreet 2005: 1851) indicating explicitly that the reader has an implicit knowledge about the elements intervening in creating differences among European nations in the tenth and eleventh centuries.

3.3. Scalar stretchers

Scalar stretchers are vague language items "concentrate[ing] on various scales and continua of stretchers" (Zhang 2015: 36). They comprise intensifiers and downtoners. These two subcategories can be considered to stand at opposite ends in the continuum of degree of intensity, and while intensifiers are used to increase the tone of speech, downtoners are used to decrease the tone of speech (Zhang 2015: 37):

> (15) As Albert, in the diſcontented ſtate of his kingdom, knew not where to gain a freſh ſupply of money when this was ſpent, nothing could reduce him to greater difficulties than prolonging the war; he, therefore, to bring it to a ſpeedy iſſue, ſent **a ſort of** challenge to Margaret, inviting her to give him battle on St. Matthew's day, on a plain near Falkoping. The Queen accepted the defiance, and the two armies engaged accordingly (1862 Scott)
> (16) Princeſs Sophia, in hopes of ſoothing this Madman Couvanſki, ſent her Compliments to him, with Thanks for the Zeal he had ſhewn in revenging the Death of her Brother: But this had a **quite** different Effect from what ſhe expected (1740 Bancks)
> (17) It is **really** lamentable that such nuisances should be permitted: and it is equally to be regretted that national buildings should be at the mercy and caprice of ignorance and avarice (1814 Britton)

Sort of in (15) is an example of a downtoner. Again, and as customary when dealing with vague language categories, not all scholars use the term downtoner to refer to this type of vague language item. For instance, some use the term adaptor (Prince, Bosk and Frader 1982), others prefer the term detensifier (Hübler 1983). Lakoff (1972) observes that *sort of* may be used to make things vague by providing attenuation of the membership of a given expression. In the same line, Prince, Bosk and Frader (1982) state that this item is a hedging device which affects the propositional content and describe the relationship between the element hedged with *sort of* and *sort of* itself in terms of prototypicality. Jucker, Smith and Lüdge (2003: 1746) explain that the use of *sort of* implies that "there is a relevant mismatch between the prototype and the item being described". In our example, *sort of* suggests that *challenge* is not the word that best describes what Margaret I Queen of Denmark was sent by Albert III King of Sweeden, though it may have been pretty close to what a challenge was supposed to be like at that time. The pragmatic effect attached to *sort of* here is attenuating the strength of the speech act, implicating that the writer is less than fully commited to the truth of the statement.

Quite and *really* in (16) and (17) illustrate the intensifier category. Intuitively, they are adverbs which maximise the meaning of the words they modify. Meanings can only get maximised when the target

of the intensifier is associated with a scalar, non-binary property (Eckardt 2009), i.e. *different* in (16) and *lamentable* in (18). According to Greenbaum and Quirk (1990), these two adverbs are boosters: their use stands as a communicative strategy which helps writers in amplifying their statements. In this sense, Hyland (1998b: 349) notes that boosters "allow writers to express conviction and assert a proposition with confidence, representing a strong claim about the state of affairs". Apart from this, they may also convey affective meanings, carrying the writer's negotiation of attitudes, feelings and judgements with their audience (Hyland 2004: 87). *Quite* and *really* do obviously carry affective meanings here if only because removing them from the stretch of discourse would result in a different emotional display. In our examples the negotiating space appears to be restricted because the writers present their claims as substantiated, and so *quite* and *really* are deployed as a persuasive tactic.

3.4. Epistemic stretchers

In Zhang's (2015) framework, epistemic stretchers refer to epistemic stance markers, this being understood in the sense given in Biber et al. (1999: 854), that is, devices used to "express the speaker's judgement about the certainty, reliability […] they can also comment on the source of information", in which case this category comprises genuinely epistemic items as well as others with evidential nuances as shown in the examples below:

> (18) After being elected professor of divinity in the university of Glasgow, he was honoured and benefited by the acquaintance of the Duchess of Hamilton, who prevailed on him to write the "Memoirs of the Dukes of Hamilton." This **may** be considered the foundation-stone of his fame and fortune (1814 Britton)
> (19) Madame de la Peltrie considered that there was another opportunity for distinction, and she turned away from her foundation in Quebec, then struggling in its infancy and requiring her whole attention, to join the expedition to Montreal, **possibly** in the hope of acting in the new community an equally prominent part, as that which in Quebec had made her name celebrated (1887 Kingsford)
> (20) IF we allow not quite ſo much to Julius Frontinus his ſucceſſor, but rather three years only; it will ſuit well both with Tacitus's ſhort account of this legate, and with the hiſtory of Agricola too; and bring us to the year 78, a proper date for beginning his command in Britain, which is **clearly** confirmed by ſome other paſſages in the hiſtorian. AGRICOLA left Britain, before Cerialis reſigned to Frontinus. This, **I think**, is **highly probable**, becauſe the hiſtorian ſo expreſſly mentions his ſerving under Cerialis, but ſays nothing of his being under Frontinus (1732 Horsley)
> (21) It must, however, on the other hand, be carefully noticed, that though the Bill of Rights **might** not propose itself as any alteration, it was **certainly** a complete renovation of the free constitution of England; the abject state to which the laws, the constitution, and the people themselves, had fallen, must never be forgotten; and it then can **surely** not be denied that this public assertion on a sudden, this establishment and enactment of all the great leading principles of a free government, fairly deserves the appellation which it has always received, of the Revolution of 1688 (1840 Smyth)

These excerpts contain epistemic and/or evidential adjectives, adverbs, and lexical and modal verbs. In (18) *may* stands as a vague language item which renders a genuine epistemic interpretation. The

possibility sense expressed by this modal "denotes a speaker-dependent potentiality" (Dirven 1981: 146) and illustrates a subjective use which conveys the writer's lack of certainty as to whether or not the proposition is true, thus softening the writer's assertion (Coates 1983: 136). In the same way, as a stance adverb expressing likelihood (Biber 2006: 103-106), *possibly* in (19) is used to indicate the writer's stance as for the existence of a spectrum of alternatives, thus assessing the truth of the proposition in terms of possibility. It is clear that in both examples the pragmatic function fulfilled by these epistemic stretchers is to mitigate the degree of commitment towards the proposition manifested.

In contrast to the genuinely epistemic stretchers in (18) and (19), those in (20) do certainly have evidential nuances. *Clearly* is an evidential marker which does not only indicate how certain the writer is about the factual status of the proposition, but also that his certainty follows from the evidence at his disposal. This interpretation is futher strengthened by the occurrence of the evidential lexical verb *confirmed* in the immediate co-text. In this line, Alonso-Almeida and Adams (2012: 15-16) point out that verbs like *confirm* "primarily show source or mode of information either perceptually or cognitively". *Clearly* also indicates that the proposition is evaluated in terms of expectedness as derived from the evidence in historical records about the year in which Agricola became governor of Britannia. The parenthetical use of *I think* is also worth commenting on here because of its interactional dimension. Zhang (2014: 252) highlights the elastic nature of *I think* paying attention to "the non-discrete nature and elastic boundaries" of this vague language item. Some of the functions associated to *I think* include (i) the expression of tentativeness (Jucker 1986), i.e. uncertainty and approximation, (ii) mitigation (Blum-Kulka, House and Kasper 1989), i.e. diminishing assertiveness, (iii) emphasis (Holmes 1984), i.e. increasing assertiveness, or (iv) discursive (Aijmer 1997), i.e. structural device. In the argumentative context depicted in (20), in which the writer refers to the evidence provided by historical records about the stay of Agricola in Britannia, *I think* appears to be used emphatically: it has a "bleached cognitive attitude verb function […] signalling the speaker's viewpoint" (Cappelli 2007: 189), and so its primary function is not that of indicating lack of authorial commitment, but mode of knowing, i.e. it explicitly marks the internal cognitive process through which the writer has inferentially construed his representation of the situation referred to in the excerpt. Pragmatically speaking, this evidential helps the writer in building his authorial persona. This emphatic reading is supported by the occurrence of the intensified epistemic stance adverbial *highly probable*.

The excerpt in (21) illustrates the use of *might* to express logical possibility (Biber et al. 1999: 491-493). Palmer (2001: 58) claims that *might* is similar to *may*, the difference between the two being that *might* "merely indicates a little less certainty about the possibility". In this example, *might* is marking a medium to low degree of uncertainty in the actualisation of the proposition and so works as a hedging device. It stands in sharp contrast with the high level of certainty conveyed by *certainly* and *surely*. They are epistemic certainty adverbs which may be "defined positively as expressing a high degree of speaker commitment to the truth of the proposition, and negatively as not specifically referring to modes, sources or matches of knowledge" (Simon-Vandenbergen and Aijmer 2007: 84). None of them displays any core meaning associated to evidentiality; their sense is purely epistemic. As boosters, they definitely constitute a strategy for the writer to present the information as consensually given and to develop his authoritative persona.

4. Conclusion

In this paper I have explored the linguistic manifestation of vagueness in CHET following Zhang's (2015) taxonomy for the identification of the lexical categories of elastic language. The four categories and the corresponding subcategories listed in Zhang's (2015) classification have been attested in the corpus.

Approximate stretchers stand as the most frequent category in the texts analysed. Their use seems to be expected because quantification is in order when dealing with scientific texts on history for sequencing the occurrence of events and their relationship. As regards their pragmatic functions, not all approximate stretchers are used as hedging devices; most importantly, they are used to make generalisations. As such, they do not carry any implications whatsoever as for degrees of uncertainty with which the writers present the information; they simply indicate that higher levels of specificity cannot be achieved or, at least, that higher levels of specificity are not necessary in the context in which the approximate stretcher is deployed. When used as hedging devices, the immediate co-text has proved crucial in order to derive epistemic interpretations.

Epistemic stretchers follow next in the frequency of occurrence. Epistemicity as conveyed through the use of these vague language items does not only have to do with the writer's lack of certainty in the proposition manifested, but also with evidentiality and reliability values. Purely epistemic stretchers are used as hedging devices and so aimed at softening the writers' statements which are evaluated in terms of possibility. They emphasise the subjective position upheld by the writers who seem to be open to negotiation with their readership by recognising the existence of other alternatives. Epistemic stretchers with associated evidential values are primarily used for emphatic purposes, implying that statements are based on the writers' reasoning and helping them to develop their authoritative persona.

Scalar stretchers have a frequency of occurrence similar to that of epistemic stretchers. They may fulfill two main functions, namely downtoning and intensifying the strength of speech acts. When used as downtoners they allow the writers to present their arguments with medium to low degrees of confidence on the ideational content. When used as intensifiers, scalar stretchers represent expressions of affective meanings, i.e. authorial belief, and serve as a means of persuasion. In the same vein, general stretchers, which are the least frequent category of elastic language in the texts analysed, may be also used to persuade the readership of the writers' arguments so that they align with the writers' opinions.

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