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Volition ascription to the addressee in a diachronic perspective

A unifying hypothesis for some post-volitional developments of Latin *uolo*

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Pragmatic studies have recently shown that volition ascription to the addressee corresponds to specific strategies and deserves more attention. This paper discusses a series of post-volitional developments attested by second-person forms of the Latin verb *uolo* (‘I want’). Whilst these grammaticalisation phenomena – some of which are also attested cross-linguistically – have mainly been dealt with separately, this paper shows that they can be treated in a unified manner, as all originally employ volition ascription as a conversational strategy. In Latin, *uolo* constructions featuring the verb in the second person allowed the speaker to offer the addressee options to choose from or, in the case of prohibitive sentences, to preclude them from a specific choice. In this way, this paper sheds new light on volition ascription strategies as a pragmatic device and their diachronic developments in Latin as well as cross-linguistically.

Keywords: diachrony, free choice, grammaticalisation, intersubjectivity, Latin, politeness, volition ascription

1. Introduction

Along with the notion of modality itself, the description of volition as a modal category is a much-debated matter. As pointed out by Nuyts (2016: 37), volition has been considered as a dynamic, a deontic or even a non-modal category. In his tentative synthesis of agreed-upon modal notions (Nuyts 2016), he describes

it together with intention as a deontic notion, whilst characterising boulomaic¹ modality as conveying the disposition of the individual. In other frameworks, volition is a notion crossing other, better established, modal categories. For example, Portner (2009:135) unifies abilities, opportunities and dispositions as dynamic modal notions related to a volitional individual. Adopting another perspective, Narrog (2012) has developed an original view according to which modal categories are divided into volitive (deontic and boulomaic) and non-volitive categories (dynamic and epistemic). Against this unclear, yet stimulating background, this paper aims to investigate a specific set of grammaticalisation phenomena attested by the Latin verb *uolo* ('I want'). They are post-volitional (but not necessarily post-modal, as shown below) phenomena – that is, the relevant source constructions share the property of conveying the semantic notion of volition, whilst the target constructions have lost this semantic feature (or this is largely bleached).² Moreover, all source constructions explicitly ascribe volition to the addressee. After having discussed the post-volitional pathways and having provided, when possible, cross-linguistic parallels, a new hypothesis is formulated hinting at the possibility of dealing with the relevant phenomena in a unified manner.

This paper is structured as follows: Section 2 gives a working definition of volition and outlines the recent developments in its study with a focus on volition ascription in pragmatic research; Section 3 presents the Latin phenomena and offers some cross-linguistic parallels; Section 4 outlines a unifying hypothesis and suggest a possible explanation for the different results of the grammaticalisation processes; Section 5 wraps up the main results and some further lines of research are outlined.

1. The adjective *boulomaic*, as well as *bouletic*, is related to Ancient Greek *boulómai* meaning 'I will, I wish, I am willing'. *Boulomaic*, *bouletic* and *volitional* are sometimes used as synonyms, but they can also correspond to different concepts according to specific theoretical backgrounds.

2. The term "post-volitional" is used here with reference to the diachronic process by which an item conveying volition or related meanings begins to convey non-volitional meanings. In the framework of this study "post-volitional" is a better term than "post-modal", as it is not always clear whether the post-volitional meanings developed by Latin *uolo* should be traced back to the pre-modal or to the modal meaning, as shown below. To my knowledge, the terms "post-modal" and "pre-modal" have been introduced by van der Auwera and Plungian (1998), when outlining their modality semantic map. They are also diachronic concepts. A pre-modal meaning or function precedes the development of the modal meaning, while a post-modal meaning or function derives from a modal meaning (see below).

2. The study of volition (with a focus on pragmatics)

This section highlights some aspects of the recent investigation of volition ascription to the addressee that are important in view of the hypothesis formulated in Section 4. There is, however, no claim to be exhaustive. The focus is on pragmatic research, because, as the perspective on philological and cross-linguistic data adopted in Section 3 will show, a pragmatic approach enables a unifying view on phenomena that seem disparate at first sight. Before doing this, however, it is necessary to provide a working definition of volition. Modelling its definition on that of the core modal notions of necessity and possibility (see, for example, van der Auwera and Plungian [1998]), volition is defined here as the expression of the wishes, desires and intentions of a participant with regard to a particular state of affairs. The state of affairs is modalised – or introduced, if one does not want to use modal categories – by an explicit volitional marker, such as English *want* or Latin *uolo* ('I want'). This paper specifically deals with volitional markers used in the second person, hinting at a real or fictive partner in dialogic and/or discursive contexts. With regard to the distinction between volition and intention, it must be specified that it is beyond the scope of this work to investigate in what respects these two notions overlap and differ (see, for example, Matthews [1991: 157]). Moreover, in the studies cited below, there is not always a clear separation, so that it would be improper, at least for the moment, to suggest one *a posteriori*.

With respect to the investigation of the expression of volition (see below for references), research has mainly focussed on the *ego*, the speaker-agent of discourse as a volitional and control-endowed entity and, only to a lesser extent, on the ascription of volition to the addressee or on a third party that can be present or absent during the dialogic event. With reference to the relevant focus here – that is, the addressee – it must be stressed that (negative) politeness strategies require the speaker not to assume or presume the hearer's wants, desires, beliefs and abilities, as stated by Brown and Levinson (1987: 144–145) in their seminal work on politeness. Assumptions about them must be put in the form of questions or must be hedged (see Brown and Levinson [1987: 130–172] for the strategies). It is important to specify that explicit and direct references to the hearer's volition can be used as both negative politeness strategies (e.g., to avoid face-threatening acts) or positive politeness strategies (e.g., to show concern about the addressee), as shown below.³ However, it is also important to point out that, the choice of explicitly (not) referring to volitionality goes beyond politeness

3. I would like to express my gratitude to one of the anonymous reviewers for emphasising this particular point.

strategies – as shown, for example, by Caffi and Janney (1994) in a foundational paper presenting the historical development of emotion research. They present volitionality as self-assertiveness specifying the agent/object status of the participant in the event (Caffi and Janney 1994: 355, 357–358). To illustrate, it is possible to attribute several degrees of emotive markedness to the following sentences (ordered here from “more” to “less” emotively marked). In the imagined context the speaker wants to suggest that it is time to leave.

- (1) *I want to leave now.*
- (2) *Should we leave now?*
- (3) *Do you think it's time to leave?*

Though they do not rely on real linguistic data, Examples (2) and (3) show a preference for including the addressee and their volitional disposition by using the interrogative form (along with the relevant personal pronouns). In keeping with this view, interpersonal volitionality has often continued to be understood in terms of self-assertiveness (“I want to leave”) *versus* unassertiveness (“Do you want to leave?”). See, more recently, Leech (2014: in particular, 149–150 and 153–154), who, however, also deals with the “you might want...” construction, associating possibility and volition and showing proximity to the hearer (Leech 2014: 138). Along the traditional speaker-centred lines, it is worth mentioning the use of the label “wilful” for certain directives – such as orders, commands, demands, requests, pleas, entreaties – as, to quote Huddleston (2017: 930), “it is, with varying strength, *my* will that you comply” (emphasis added). It is important to specify, however, that statements about the addressee’s volition are not avoided in discourse and can correspond to specific strategies, as shown by recent research on volition ascription.

In fact, a research development particularly important in the context of this investigation concerns explicit action ascription (Deppermann and Haugh [eds] 2022), including volition self-ascription (Childs 2012a, b; Deppermann 2014) and volition ascription to the addressee (see, in particular, the pioneering work by Curl [2006] on the use of the construction “do you want me to...” to offer help for latent, not explicitly mentioned problems; Drew and Couper-Kuhlen [(eds) 2014]; Kendrick and Drew [2016]) or to a third party (Broth et al. 2019; Harjunpää 2021). It is worth specifying that the studies mentioned above mainly focus on the mobilisation of explicit intention ascription as an interpretative resource at the interpersonal level. Harjunpää (2021: 137–139) offers a synthetic and useful state-of-the-art about the study of the most common strategies based on volition self-ascription along with ascription to the addressee (I also refer to this publication

for aspects of the study of volition ascription that are not relevant for the specific goals of this investigation).

As shown by Deppermann and Kaiser (2022), explicit intention ascription to the addressee can be used, for example, to clarify the meaning of a prior action, to obtain information about the addressee's action orientations, or to index a problem with the prior turn. Amongst the properties they describe as associated with intention ascription strategies, two properties seem particularly important from the viewpoint of the interpretation of the phenomena in focus here. In fact, intention ascription can be associated with conscious control of the agent and their action can be described as chosen by free will. Interestingly, Deppermann and Kaiser (2022) also point out that volition ascription can be performed through questions along with statements, the second conveying – as expected – a higher degree of certainty and commitment on the part of the speaker.

As will be evident from the diachronic phenomena presented below, at the time when Latin *uolo* in the source constructions still conveyed volition, the speaker was using devices that explicitly employed volition ascription to the addressee. As I will show, this strategy was employed to provide the addressee with the possibility of “(free) choice” in response to a prior turn or action of the conversational partner, or, in the case of the prohibitive marker, to prevent them from choosing a specific option.

3. Five cases of grammaticalisation based on volition ascription to the addressee

I have been able to count at least five cases of grammaticalisation of second-person forms of the Latin verb *uolo*.⁴ Some of them are also attested cross-linguistically. They are as follows, ordered by forms:

- i. The free-choice indefinite series featuring the marker *-uis* (Section 3.1.1);
- ii. The polyfunctional adverb and concessive subordinative conjunction *quamuis* ('even though') (Section 3.1.2);
- iii. The focus-marking particle *sis* (Section 3.1.3);
- iv. The polyfunctional marker *uel*, which also works as the disjunctive conjunction *or* (Section 3.2); and,

4. Post-modal or post-volitional developments of Latin *uolo* are not limited to the ones investigated here (see Dell'Oro [forthcoming]). However, the other developments are not specifically associated with second person constructions.

v. The prohibitive marker *noli* (Section 3.3).

In the relevant literature, there is agreement on the description of these forms as cases of grammaticalisation. See, for example, Fruyt (2004:318 for [i] and [iv], 305–308 for [ii]) and Fruyt (2011:678 and 828 for [iv], 717 for [v], 828 for [iii], 828–830 for [ii]), both contributions discussing grammaticalisation in Latin. However, a unifying overview – based on the fact that the source form is consistently a second-person singular form – has not yet been suggested. Some remarks on the use of the term “grammaticalisation” are in order here. I will also briefly show that it is unclear whether the changes should be defined as post-modal (see also Footnote 2).

“Grammaticalisation” has been early described as consisting “in the increase of the range of a morpheme advancing from a lexical to a grammatical or from a less grammatical to a more grammatical status” (Kuryłowicz 1975:52). This classical definition is still referenced, for example, by Ramat (2015). Diewald (2011:366) has stressed that “[g]rammaticalization is a complex multifactorial type of language change which does not consist of a single process but of a set of interacting processes”. Any description of such processes relies on a specific view of what a grammar is. In line with Diewald (2011:371), I have adopted “a broad view on grammar comparable to the one expressed in Traugott (2003:626), who sees grammar ‘as structuring communicative as well as cognitive aspects of language’, and therefore includes a much wider range of phenomena, e.g., ‘focusing, topicalization, deixis, and discourse coherence, into the realm of grammar’”. It is within this approach that phenomena of pragmaticalisation, such as the above-mentioned development in Latin of the focus-marking particle *sis*, can be viewed as phenomena of grammaticalisation. It must also be mentioned that, though there are different sets of formal criteria to identify the degree of grammaticalisation of a linguistic item.⁵ They share some common points (e.g., gradualness), so that they should be seen in a complementary way. In this investigation I will use the relevant criteria within Lehmann’s set as a diagnostic tool. This will allow me to show the degree of grammaticalisation of each use of each form (along with some desiderata). For reasons of comparability, the focus will be on the volitional markers – that is, (-)uis, uel, noli – and not on the related constructions (*quiuis, quamuis*, etc.).⁶

5. The most widely known and discussed are the ones suggested by Lehmann (1995 [1982]), but see also Hopper (1991), Traugott (2003:644) and Heine (2003:579).

6. The constructional framework (Traugott and Trousdale 2013) could also provide useful insights on the forms under investigations. It could be interesting, for example, to discuss whether they should be interpreted as cases of constructional change or of constructionalisation. To discuss this approach is beyond the scope of this paper.

At the onset of the grammaticalisation process it is possible to find both lexical or grammatical forms (see above). Though the issue is not relevant for the interpretation of [i] to [v] as grammaticalised constructions, it is worth specifying that it is not always clear whether the onset forms are the pre-modal (i.e., more lexical) or the modal (i.e., more grammatical) ones. This is the main reason why the phenomena are not called “post-modal”, but “post-volitional” (see Footnote 2). The distinction between pre-modal and modal can be illustrated in formal terms: when *uolo* governs a nominal phrase, the construction is pre-modal, when *uolo* governs an infinitive (or a subjunctive), the construction is modal. To illustrate with English cases, compare Examples (4) and (5).

- (4) Pre-modal construction:
I want (i.e., I desire) *that car*.
- (5) Modal construction:
I want (i.e., I desire / I have the intention) *to buy that car*.

However, from a semantic point of view, it is more difficult to trace a distinction based on the absence (pre-modal) or presence (modal) of a state of affairs, as a nominal phrase can notionally refer to a state of affairs, as in Example (6).⁷

- (6) (Pre-modal construction from the syntactic point of view, but possibly modal from a notional point of view)
I want that change (i.e., I desire that a certain change takes place).

With respect to van der Auwera and Plungian's (1998) modality map and the post-modal developments from the volitional domain (e.g., future), it must be pointed out that none of the phenomena outlined here are mentioned. Indeed, with the exception of the prohibitive *nolī* which scopes over a verb and is post-modal, all of the other post-volitional constructions can scope over a nominal phrase, hinting at the role played by the related pre-modal constructions, at least at the syntactic level. However, it may be impossible to draw a clear dividing line when both uses, the pre-modal and the modal ones, are active, as in the known historical stages of the Latin language. It is beyond the scope of this paper to investigate this issue in more detail.

3.1 The marker (-)uis

With respect to the paradigm of *uolo* it must be noted that the (indicative) second-person form *uis* – dealt with under Sections 3.1.1, 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 – goes back to the

7. In the relevant literature it remains most often implicit that modal items modalise a state of affairs.

Proto-Indo-European root **ueih*₁- ('strive for') (LIV: s.v. *ueih*₁). The other forms of *uolo* come from PIE **uelh*₁- ('choose') (LIV: s.v. *uelh*₁). This clearly shows the instability of the (indicative) second-person singular form 'you want' that was soon replaced by that of another verb. This could be due to some difficulties in pronouncing the form (which is not attested) or in keeping it distinct from other forms of the verb (see under Section 3.2). Perhaps the use of *uis* could also hint at a preference for addressing the hearer's wishes and intentions with a specific verb. Unfortunately, these hypotheses cannot be tested. Moreover, it is worth stressing that in the historically attested stages of the Latin language, from a synchronic point of view, the non-grammaticalised second-person *uis* ('you want') has the same semantics as the other forms of *uolo*.

It goes without saying that in some cases the choice of writing *uis* as a separate graphic element or not (e.g., *quam uis* or *quamuis*) could rely on modern editorial decisions based on the contextual function of the relevant elements (see also below).

3.1.1 Free-choice indefinites

The study of the properties and distribution of free-choice indefinites has been carried out adopting a number of different perspectives (Haspelmath [1997], Dayal [1998] and Chierchia [2013], amongst others). For the goals of this paper, it will suffice to say that a free-choice indefinite (marker) allows the speaker to explicitly leave the identification of an individual entirely open, as suggested by Gianollo (2018:9).

From a diachronic standpoint, Degano and Aloni (2022) have complained that, theoretical, in particular semantic, accounts of free-choice indefinites have rarely been analysed on the background of their diachronic development. In fact, diachronic philological-based accounts remain rare. Haspelmath (1997:130–141) has pointed out the sources of indefinites, recognising the following source types, based on etymology: the "dunno" type, the "want/please" type, the "it may be" type and the "no matter" type. In several Indo-European languages, expressions meaning 'want' or 'please' combine with already extant interrogative and/or relative pronouns. The verb can be in the second person or in the third person. It is important to stress that the use of the third person does not automatically exclude the possibility that the speaker is addressing the hearer. A case in point is Latin, as it has both forms: *quiuis* ('whatever person you (second person) want') and *quilibet* (literally, 'whatever person it pleases (you / someone)'). *Libet* ('it pleases') is impersonal, so that the experiencer can be the addressee or a third party (see Example [28]). See also the Umbrian indefinite pronoun *pisher*, whose precise semantics remains unclear (see Untermann [2000: s.v. U. *pisher*]). Spanish and Italian have generalised the third-person forms: *cualquiera* (literally, 'whichever

(thing or person) one wants, chooses’) (Company Company 2016: 523–524; Aloni 2021) and *qualsivoglia* (literally, ‘whichever (thing or person) one wants’), respectively. Ossetic has the second-person form *či-fændy* (literally, ‘whichever person you want’). Haspelmath also includes in this category expressions meaning ‘dear to someone’ as in Serbian/Croatian *ko mu drago* (literally, ‘whichever person dear to him’).

In Latin *uis* has given rise to the following pronominal and/or adjectival series: masculine *quiuus*, feminine *quaeuis*, neuter pronominal *quiduis* and adjectival *quoduis*, the dual determiner *uteruis* (‘whichever of the two you please’) and the place adverb *ubiuis* (‘anywhere you like’).

The compound pronoun *quiduis* originated from the unbound form *quid* (accusative) *uis* (‘what(ever) you want’), a construction compatible with interrogative and conditional contexts, as *quid* can function as both the interrogative and the indefinite pronoun. It is important to specify that the nominative *quiuus* is made later (Leumann *et al.* 1977: 267). See Example (7), a direct question, and Example (8), an indirect question, for the interrogative context; and see Example (9), for the use in a conditional context.⁸ In Example (7), the slave Palaestrio addresses Pleusicles, a young man who is in love, and is knocking at the door.

- (7) [...] *adulescens, quid est? quid uis?*
 young_person.VOC.SG what.NOM.SG be.3SG what.ACC.SG want.2SG
quid pultas? [...]
 (what>)why knock.2SG
 (‘Young man, what is it?
 What do you want? Why are you knocking?’)
 (Plautus, *The Braggart Soldier* 1296–1297, late third century BCE)⁹

In the next passage the hanger-on, Artotrogus, flatters the lying, braggart soldier, Pyrgopolinices, by assuring him that he (Artotrogus) already knows everything about Pyrgopolinices’ exploits. Therefore, Artotrogus already knows what Pyrgopolinices is going to say next.

8. In selecting the Latin examples for each investigated phenomenon, I have chosen the earliest available attestations. These are predominantly found in the comedies of Plautus, which serve as the preferred source in cases where a phenomenon is also early attested by another source. The Latin examples are glossed according to the Leipzig Glossing Rules system. I have added the abbreviations INT for “interjection” and PTCL for “particle” to the standard set.

9. If not otherwise specified, the Latin texts and the English translations come from the Loeb Classical Library Database (2025). The Loeb translators are John Barsby (Terence), Wolfgang de Melo (Plautus), Sander M. Goldberg and Gesine Manuwald (Ennius), L.H.G. Greenwood (Cicero) and E.H. Warmington (*Twelve Tables, Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus*).

- (8) [...] *ehem, scio iam quid uis dicere. factum*
 INT know.1SG already what.ACC.SG want.2SG say.INF happen.PTCP.PST
hercle est, memini fieri. [...]
 INT be.3SG remember.1SG happen.INF
 ('Yes, I already know what you want to say. It did happen, I remember it
 happening.') (Plautus, *The Braggart Soldier* 37–38, late third century BCE)

In the following passage Pyrgopolinices requests the attention of the slave Palaestrio. Palaestrio declares his willingness to comply with Pyrgopolinices' orders.

- (9) (Pyr.) *aliquam mihi partem hodie*
 some.ACC.SG I.DAT.SG part.ACC.SG today
operae des denique,
 care.GEN.SG give.SBJV.2SG finally
iam tandem ades: uolo te.
 now_at_last attend.SBJV.2SG want.1SG you.ACC.SG
 (Pal.) *assum, impera si quid uis.*
 attend.1SG command.IMP.2SG if anything.ACC.SG want.2SG
 ('Give me some part of your attention in the end today, now attend to me at
 last: I want you.'
 'I am attending to you, command me if you want anything.')
 (Plautus, *The Braggart Soldier* 1030–1031, late third century BCE)

When used in specific contexts, for example, with verbs of saying or commanding, *quid uis* ('what (do) you want(?)' / '[if] you want anything') could have been reinterpreted as *quiduis* with *-uis* extending the hearer's options, from 'something/anything' to 'anything you want'. Compare Example (10), where *quid* is an argument of both *loquere* ('say! (imperative)') and *uis*, and Example (11), where *quiduis* is an argument of *imperat* ('(someone) orders').

- (10) [...] (fisher Gripus) *Quin loquere quid uis.*
 in_fact say.IMP.2SG what.ACC.SG want.2SG
 ('Say what you want.') (Plautus, *The Rope* 946, late third century BCE)

The context of Example (10) is compatible with 'anything you want', as the speaking character is refusing to hear his partner in the dialogue. See the exchange reported in English here:

It is important to stress that, in Latin, the grammaticalisation process clearly developed from the constructions featuring the second person singular, hinting at dialogue as the source context of the Latin free-choice indefinite pronouns. As shown in the next section, Latin has generalised the second-person strategy far beyond free-choice indefinites.

3.1.2 *Quamuis*

Uis combined with the relative and interrogative adverb *quam* ('to what degree') means 'to any degree you like' and was originally used with adjectives and adverbs expressing scalar concepts. Compare Example (13), where *uis* is a lexical (pre-modal) verb, and Example (14), where *uis* is a bound element. In both cases, the speaker wants to leave the hearer the choice of the quality degree, including – and sometimes implicitly hinting at – the maximum possible degree (see Spevak [2005:75–76]).

- (13) *solet iocari saepe me=cum illoc modo.*
 have_the_habit.3SG joke.INF often I.ABL.SG=with that.ABL.SG way.ABL.SG
quam uis ridiculus est, ubi uxor non
 to.what.degree want.2SG funny.NOM.SG be.3SG when wife.NOM.SG NEG
adest.
 be.present.3SG
 ('He often jokes with me in that way. He's as funny as you wish for when his wife isn't around.')
- (Plautus, *The Two Menaechmuses* 317–318, probably about 200 BCE, translation adapted)

- (14) *noui, Neptunus ita solet, quamuis*
 know.1SG Neptune.NOM.SG so have_the_habit.3SG however_much
fastidiosus aedilis est: si quae improbae sunt
 exacting.NOM.SG inspector.NOM.SG be.3SG if any.NOM.PL bad.NOM.PL be.3PL
merces, iactat omnis.
 merchandise.NOM.PL throw.3SG all.ACC.PL
 ('I know, that's what Neptune is like, he's an ever-so-particular market inspector: if there's any bad merchandise, he throws the lot overboard.' / '... he's an extremely demanding market inspector ...')

(Plautus, *The Rope* 372–373, end of third century BCE, second translation added)

The form *quamuis* developed into the concessive conjunction *quamuis* ('even though'), whilst other functions also evolved (see Example [15] and below). For the diachronic process, see also Fruyt (2004:305–308). With regard to the bridging construction from which the concessive conjunction arose, there are

several suggestions. Leumann et al. (1977: 603) propose that in certain contexts *quamuis* could be read as referring to both the adverb and the verb, as in the following example.

- (15) *locus hic apud nos, quamuis subito*
 place.NOM.SG this.NOM.SG at I.ACC.PL however/though suddenly
uenias, semper liber est.
 come.SBJV.2SG always free.NOM.SG be.3SG
 (‘However suddenly you might come [referring to the adverb] / Though you
 may come suddenly [referring to the verb], here at our place there’s always a
 free space.’)

(Plautus, *The Two Bacchises* 82, early second century BCE, translation adapted)

Spevak (2005: 74–82) suggests that the use of *quamuis* with an adjective expressing a non-gradable quality, but semantically conveying a superlative meaning, led to the re-interpretation of *quamuis* as ‘even’ (see also Example [17]). When a phrase such as *quamuis pernicioso* (‘even harmful’) was followed by the copula, *quamuis* extended its scope from the word to the clause and became a subordinate conjunction, able to introduce various types of concessive clauses. A new corpus-based investigation could probably help in better identifying the grammaticalisation pathway followed by *quamuis*. However, this point is beyond the scope of this study.

According to Spevak (2005: 74), *uis* is added to *quam* as a frozen element to form *quamuis*. It is possible that *quamuis* was built on the model of the *-uis* series of indefinites (see Section 3.1.1), but this does not automatically imply that the volitional meaning totally faded away for Latin speakers. As seen above, non-grammaticalised *uis* co-exists with grammaticalised *-uis* already in the most ancient texts we have access to. The point to be made here is that the formation of *quamuis* can still be considered as directly based on volition ascription to the addressee, even though *-uis* was already a grammaticalised free-choice marker. Indeed, when *quamuis* is used with gradable adjectives or adverbs, as in Example (16), we can still perceive the volitional meaning. It is up to the addressee to set the precise value, no matter how high in the scale this will be. Note that a concessive reading is not licenced in these examples, as there is no opposition with another state of affairs or event, unlike in Example (15) (see also below).

- (16) *quamuis sermones possunt longi texier.*
 to.any.degree(you.like) talk.NOM.PL can.3PL long.NOM.PL produce.INF.PASS
 (‘Chattering of any length can be produced. / Talks as long as you like can be
 produced’)

(Plautus, *Three-Dollar Day* 797, early second century BCE, second translation mine)

In Example (16), *quamuis* co-occurs with a verb of possibility such as *possum* ('I can'). The use of *possunt* ('they can') puts the state of affairs in the realm of the possible – talks can be long – whilst *quamuis* invites the addressee to give the length a value of their choice, implying that the truth of the sentence is independent from it and inviting the inference that the addressee can choose the maximum possible value.

Concessive subordinators have the function of backgrounding a statement, preparing the foregrounding of another statement. The backgrounded statement is given as possible by the speaker and can be common ground to speaker and hearer. Volitional verbal forms such as *uis* ('you want') or *libet* ('it pleases (one)') can help introduce the backgrounded statement by suggesting to the addressee that they have free choice in the degree to which they can accept the statement as true, including the highest degree (see Leumann et al. [1977: 603–604] and Pinkster [2021: 366–369] for further bibliography). Interestingly, drawing on previous research on unconditionals (i.e., subordinate sentences associated with a 'no matter' implicature and whose main sentence is entailed by the whole construction), the study by Degano and Aloni (2022) on Italian *qualsiasi* ('any, whatever (it be)') has hinted at a diachronic link between free-choice indefinites and concessive subordination in Italian. The point to be made here is that free-choice markers and universal concessive conditionals (Haspelmath and König 1998) share the property of "indiscriminacy" (it does not matter what or to what degree or how, etc.).¹² In the case of forms originally based on volition ascription, such as *quiuuis* and *quamuis*, it is up to the addressee to establish what, to what degree, how, etc. I will come back to this point later in Section 4.

As in the case of the indefinite series, Latin also attests a competitor featuring the third person: *quamlibet* ('in whatever degree it pleases you/one'), which is attested in a seemingly concessive use, from Lucretius (3, 987) onward (Leumann et al. 2016: 604).

12. One of the reviewers suggested that *-uis* could be interpreted as a marker of "non-relevance" within the framework of Relevance Theory (Sperber and Wilson 1995). See Lo Baido and Mauri (2022) on *It. tanto* ('anyway') as an "irrelevance marker", though their analysis is not limited to Relevance Theory. This interesting issue would need in-depth investigation from both a theoretical and a terminological point of view. In the context of this investigation, it is only possible to make a couple of remarks. First, Relevance Theory does not work on the basis of an explicit marking of relevance (or irrelevance), as relevance is a property – for example, of an utterance – resulting from a positive balance between contextual effects and cognitive efforts. Second, part of the problem is certainly terminological ("indiscriminacy marker" is perhaps a better choice).

In Latin *quamuis* can also develop rectifying meanings such as ‘nevertheless, still’. As outlined by Leumann et al. (2016:604), the earliest examples can be observed in Propertius for poetry and Celsus for prose, respectively.¹³ Interestingly, similar to *sis* (Section 3.1.3) and *uel* (3.4), *quamuis* can also work as a focus-marking particle. To illustrate, see Example (17), if *insipiens* is understood as conveying a non-gradable concept (‘an idiot’), and Example (18).¹⁴

- (17) *quamuis insipiens poterat persentiscere*
 even idiot.NOM.SG can.PST.3SG realize.INF
 (‘Even an idiot could realise...’)
 (Plautus, *The Merchant* 687, probably late third century BCE, translation adapted)

- (18) *quicumque senator uoluerit fieri, quamuis*
 whoever.NOM.SG senator.NOM.SG want.SBJV.PST.PFV become.INF even
puer, quamuis indignus, quamuis ex eo
 child.NOM.SG even unworthy.NOM.SG even from that.ABL.SG
loco ex quo non liceret, si is
 place.ABL.SG from which.ABL.SG NEG be.lawful.SBJV.PST.IPFV.3SG if he
pretio apud istum idoneos uinceret,
 bribe.ABL.SG at this.ACC.SG suitable.ACC.PL oust.SBJV.PST.IPFV.3SG
factum esse semper [...].
 become.PTCP.PST.ACC.SG be.INF always
 (‘If anyone who wished to become a senator — even a child, even someone incapable, even someone from a legally disqualified standing — ousted (more) suitable people through a bribe paid to this man (Verres), he invariably became a senator [...].’)
 (Cicero, *Against Verres* II, 2, 121, first century BCE, translation mine)

The bound element *-uis* in *quamuis* shows a high degree of grammaticalisation as in the case of *quiuus* and the related series (see Section 3.1.1). It is interesting to notice that unverbated *quamuis* also underwent a process of pragmaticalisation.

13. For *quantumuis* (‘to as great a degree as you want’) and *quantumlibet* (‘to as great a degree as it pleases (one)’) showing at least partially similar developments with respect to *quamuis* and *quamlibet*, respectively, see Leumann et al. (2016 [1965]:604).

14. It is worth specifying that other interpretations are possible, as shown by the Loeb translations: “Any idiot could realize” (‘to any degree you like’, emphasis mine) and “that anyone who wished to become a senator, however young or incapable or disqualified by his legal standing, had only to pay Verres a larger bribe than more suitable people offered, and a senator he invariably became” (‘to any degree you like’, emphasis mine), respectively.

3.1.3 *Sis*

The third case of grammaticalisation featuring (-)uis is the parenthetical conditional clause *si uis* ('if you wish'), appearing under the contracted form *sis*.¹⁵ It is traditionally interpreted as a polite 'please' (amongst others, Risselada [1993: 154], Rosén [2009: 331–332] and Pinkster [2015: 349, 351])¹⁶ or as urging (e.g., Adams [1984: 67] and Barrios-Lech [2016: 134, 139]). Recently, Dickey (2019) suggested that the use of *sis* as a politeness marker weakened early and that *sis* is already working as a focus-marking clitic particle in the most ancient passages. With respect to verb forms, it mostly appears to be associated with an imperative (98 percent of the occurrences in the early Latin corpus used by Dickey [2019]). This is particularly interesting from the perspective adopted here, as it confirms the relevance of the dialogic context in which the use of *sis* originated and developed. To illustrate, Example (19) shows *sis* still having its lexical meaning (it introduces *erum sospitari* ['that your master be saved']),¹⁷ Examples (20) and (21) outline its use as focus-marking particle, with imperatives and with other words, respectively:

- (19) [...] *sis erum tuis factis sospitari,*
 if=want.2SG master.ACC.SG your.ABL.PL deed.ABL.PL save.INF.PASS
da mi istas uiginti minas. [...]
 give.IMP.2SG I.DAT.SG this.ACC.PL twenty mina.ACC.PL
 ('[...] if you want your master to be saved through your deeds, give me those
 twenty minas.')
- (Plautus, *The Comedy of Asses* 683–684, late third century BCE)

- (20) *occlude sis fores ambobus pessulis. iam ego hic*
 lock.IMP.2SG PTCL door.ACC.PL both.ABL.PL bolt.ABL.PL now I.NOM.SG here
ero.
 be.FUT.1SG
 ('Lock the door with both bolts. I'll be here in a moment.')
- (Plautus, *The Pot of Gold* 103–104, early second century BCE, translation adapted)

15. This form must not be confused with the subjunctive form *sis* ('that you be'), from the verb *sum* ('I am').

16. See Ancient Greek "ei théleis" ('if you want') (Ruiz Yamuza 2022), French "s'il vous plaît" ('if it pleases you (plural)') and other similar constructions.

17. It is worth specifying that Example (19) is not an isolated case. See, for example, Plautus, *The Comedy of Asses* 309: "sis amanti subuenire" ('if you want to help the lover' [translation mine]). See also below.

- (21) *illuc sis uide: non “paedagogum” iam me, sed “Lydum”*
 there PTCL look.IMP.2SG NEG instructor.ACC.SG now I.ACC.SG but Lydus.ACC.SG
uocat.
 call.3SG
 (‘Look at that! He isn’t calling me “tutor” any longer, but “Lydus.”’)
 (Plautus, *The Two Bacchises* 137–138, early second century BCE, translation adapted)

The later use of parenthetical *si uis* with imperatives shows that volition ascription as a politeness strategy is still at work in the Latin language. Instances such as Example (22) (and see also Example [24]) also shows the long-lasting co-occurrence of volition ascription to the addressee in parenthetical structures and imperatives.

- (22) *dic, si uis, de quo disputari uelis*
 say.IMP.2SG if want.2SG about what.ABL.SG discuss.INF.PASS want.SBJV.2SG
 (‘tell me, if you wish, what subject you wish to discuss’)
 (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 2.13, first century BCE, translation mine)

Adopting a diachronic point of view, it is possible to suggest that at the beginning of the grammaticalisation process, the speaker employed the parenthetical *si uis* to politely introduce an imperative (see Dickey [2019]). Conditional volition ascription was used as a pragmatic device, conveying to the hearer the idea that they could choose whether to perform or not the action expressed by the imperative. A similar pragmatic use is also attested for *uel* (Section 3.2).

To my knowledge, in this case, there is not a (-)libet variant, showing a parallel development.¹⁸ It is worth mentioning the existence of the plural pendant *sultis* (‘if you (pl.) want’). See Example (23) where *sultis* appears as *sulti*.

- (23) *pandite sulti genas et corde relinquite*
 open.IMP.2PL PTCL eyelid.ACC.PL and heart.ABL.SG remove.IMP.2PL
somnum
 sleep.ACC.SG
 (‘open your eyelids, if you please, and remove sleep from your heart’)
 (Ennius, fragment 86, third or second century BCE)

According to Hofmann (1951: 132), *sultis*, an analogical form based on *sis*, shows that the Latin speakers still perceived the volitional meaning of *sis*.

18. For the partially similar use of *si placet* (‘if it pleases (one / you)’), see Fedriani (2021).

With regard to the cline of grammaticalisation, there are some differences with respect to the two previous forms featuring (-)uis. At the end of the cline, *uis* (in *sis*)¹⁹ has lost semantic and phonetic integrity along with its own structural scope and paradigmatic cohesion. It does not show paradigmatic variability. This different development can be partially due to the different syntactic construction at the basis of *sis* (conditional structure evolving into a parenthetical structure) with respect to *quiuuis* and *quamuis* (relative-interrogative structure).

3.2 *Uel*

With respect to the development of the disjunctive function ‘or’, Latin *uel* is in keeping with cross-linguistic tendencies about the use of volitional markers in the formation of free-choice indefinites such as *quiuuis* (see Section 3.1.1). Cross-linguistic evidence – though mainly from European languages – shows that disjunctive co-ordinative particles can develop from imperative (see Hungarian *akár* [‘or’], imperative of the verb *akar* [‘want’]), second-person (see Ossetic *fændy* [‘or’] from ‘you want’) and also third-person (see Portuguese *quer* [‘or’] from *quer* [‘wants’], Romanian *ori* [‘or’] perhaps from late Latin **uolet* [‘wants’]) forms of volitional verbs (Haspelmath 1997: 168).²⁰ Moreover, as it can also be used as a politeness marker associated with an imperative, it also shows strategies and developments that are similar to those outlined for *sis* (see Section 3.1.3). Finally, as it can also function as a scalar focus particle, its behaviour is also similar to that of *quamuis* (see Section 3.1.2).

Uel is a second-person form of *uolo*. However, it is not possible to establish with certainty whether it is an archaic imperative, meaning ‘want!’, or the original second person singular of the indicative, meaning ‘you want’ (see Walde and Hofmann [1965: s.v. *uel*] and Leumann et al. [1977: 526], amongst others). See also Section 3.1. As shown above, cross-linguistic studies confirm that both indicatives and imperatives can be the sources of ‘or’. As in both cases, the source construction features a second-person form, the issue of the etymology of *uel* does not affect the present investigation.

Uel is still poorly studied in Latin linguistics (see OLD [2016]: s.v. *uel*; see also Rosén [2009]). It can be used to introduce two options (double *uel*), as in the following example.

19. The syntagmatic variability of *sis* is low, as the form clearly tends to be used after the imperative (Dickey 2019: 216).

20. See also Russian *libo* (‘or’) from *ljubo* ‘pleasant’ (‘one wants’).

equidem ioco illa dixeram dudum tibi,
 truly joke.ABL.SG that.ACC.PL say.PST.PFV.1SG litte.while.ago you.DAT.SG
ridiculi causa. uel hunc rogato Sosiam.
 fun.GEN.SG for PTCL this.ACC.SG ask.IMP.FUT.2SG Sosia.ACC.SG
 ('I said those things as a joke to you a while ago, for fun. Ask Sosia here if you like.')

(Plautus, *Amphitryon* 916–917, early second century BCE)

In Example (27), Philolaches is playfully complaining about the price paid to free his sweetheart Philomatium. The translation of *uel* as 'go ahead' underscores the urging, yet playful, character of the following order.

(27) *etiam nunc decem minae apud te sunt; uel rationem*
 also now ten mina.NOM.PL at you.ACC.SG be.3PL PTCL account.ACC.SG
puta.
 reckon.IMP.2SG
 ('Even now ten minas are with you; go ahead, balance the account?')

(Plautus, *The Ghost* 299, early second century BCE)

Sometimes *uel* works as both introducing multiple options and accompanying an imperative, as in Example (28).

(28) *uel tu me uende uel face quid*
 or you.NOM.SG I.ACC.SG sell.IMP.2SG or do.IMP.2SG what.ACC/NOM.SG
tibi lubet.
 you.DAT.SG please.3SG
 ('You can sell me or do whatever you like.')

(Plautus, *The Persian* 398, early second century BCE)

It is difficult to ascertain the phonetic integrity of *uel*, as we do not have access to the original form (see above). The picture that is possible to draw for *uel* is different from those outlined above, though the form also shows a high degree of grammaticalisation. The main difference is that *uel* still has a structural scope, as it alone can introduce the alternative. Moreover, it did not coalesce with another form. It has lost paradigmatic cohesion and does not show paradigmatic variability. Though statistical data are missing, it usually precedes its scope, showing reduced syntagmatic variability.

In all developments outlined until this point (see Sections 3.1 and 3.2), the speaker employs *uolo* advancing volition ascription to provide the addressee with options of their choice. The last case to be presented here, that of the prohibitive marker *nolī*, is different, but can be explained applying the same logic.

22. For other developments of *uel*, see OLD: *s.v. uel*.

3.3 Prohibitive marker

Latin has also a prohibitive marker that originates from the verb *uolo*. The prohibition marker *nolī* (with the plural *nolīte*) comes from the negation *ne* and the second person singular optative (Proto-Italic) form **uel-ī-*. Literally, *nolī* meant ‘may you not want (to do something)’, as in Example (29).

- (29) *quaeso hercle nolī, Saurea, mea causa hunc*
 ask.1SG INT NEG Saurea.VOC.SG my.ABL.SG cause.ABL.SG this.ACC.SG
uerberare
 flog.INF
 (‘by Jove, please, Saurea, don’t flog him, for my sake / may you not want to flog him because of me’)

(Plautus, *The Comedy of Asses* 417, late third century BCE, second translation added)

In this passage, the Merchant asks the slave Leonida (who is pretending to be the steward Saurea) not to flog the slave Libanus for being late. In fact, Leonida has repeatedly expressed his wish to flog Libanus: see Line 415 *malam rem effugies numquam* (‘you will never escape a thrashing’), and Line 417 *utinam nunc stimulus in manu mihi sit* (‘I wish I had a cattle-prod in my hand now’). This example shows that *nolī* has the function of preventing the hearer from doing something they wish. It could also show a higher degree of intersubjectivity with respect to the use of other directive devices not based on an explicit marker of volition (for example, a negated subjunctive). As made explicit in the second translation, *nolī* seems to directly oppose the wishes previously expressed by the addressee.

It was originally a polite way of issuing a prohibition (see Risselada [1993] and Devos and Van Olmen [2013], amongst others) which progressively ousted negative imperatives from classical prose.

As shown by Aikhenvald (2010: in particular 353–354), volitional markers can contribute to the formation of imperatives and prohibitive constructions. See also, for example, the ‘want not’ strategy in Example (30).

- (30) (Middle) Dutch
Wilt niet schrikken
 want.IMP NEG be_afraid.INF
 (‘Don’t be afraid!’)

(Van der Horst [2008: 1161, 1163], quoted from Devos and Van Olmen [2013: 4])

With regard to Latin, it is important to stress that the Latin construction is not the imperative of *uolo* (as is often claimed), but an optative construction, soliciting the volition of the addressee. In a certain way, *nolī* combines two strategies

for forming prohibitives: the use of volition (see Example [31]), and the negation of a wish (see Example [32]). It is worth noticing that Example (31) features the first person singular of *nolo*, conveying the wish of the speaker for something not to happen.

(31) (Indicative)

meis consanguineis nolo te iniuste loqui
 my.DAT.PL kinsman.DAT.PL NEG=want.1SG you.ACC.SG unjustly speak.INF
 ('I don't want you to abuse men of my own blood')

(Plautus, *The Little Carthaginian* 1037, early second century BCE, translation adapted)

(32) (Subjunctive)

molestus ne sis nunciam, i rus,
 annoying.NOM.SG NEG be.SBJV.2SG here_and_now go.IMP.2SG country.ACC.SG
te amove
 you.ACC.SG retire.IMP.2SG
 ('stop annoying me this instant! (lit. 'don't be a nuisance!') go back to the farm! Vanish!')

(Plautus, *The Ghost* 74, early second century BCE, translation adapted)

It is worth noting that the *uolo*-type prohibition can be embedded by using verbs such as *interdico* ('to forbid'), etc. To illustrate:

(33) *interdico ne extulisse extra aedis puerum usquam*
 forbid.1SG NEG carry.INF.PST out_of house.ACC.PL child.ACC.SG to_any_place
uelis
 want.SBJV.2SG

('I forbid you to carry the child anywhere out of this house.' / lit. 'I forbid that you may want to carry the child anywhere out of this house.')

(Terence, *The Mother-in-Law* 563, second century BCE, second translation mine)

Though this can be related to a gap in the Latin documentation, Cormany (2012) points out that the use of *uolo*-type prohibitions – in which *uolo* appears in the subjunctive form – is typical of ancient legal documents. In these texts the *uolo*-prohibition always refers to a third party. In fact, there is no defined addressee (i.e. a specific individual) to which legal documents are addressed, nor is the group of addressees thought to be present at the moment of issuing the legal text because of place and time constraints. In these attestations, the function of *uolo* is that of evoking a possible choice of a third party that the ones issuing the law want to avoid. Example (34) illustrates this.

- (34) *Magister neque uir neque mulier quisquam*
 master.NOM.SG NEG man.NOM.SG NEG woman.NOM.SG any.NOM.SG
eset. Neue pecuniam quisquam eorum
 be.SBJV.IPFV.3SG NEG treasury.ACC.SG any.NOM.SG they.GEN.PL
comoine<m h>abuise uelet.
 common.ACC.SG have.INF.PST want.SBJV.IPFV.3SG
 (‘Let not any man or woman be a master or any likewise be minded to institute a common fund. / lit. ‘[...] that no one of them shall wish to have charge of a common treasury.’)
 (*Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus* 10–11, early second century BCE, second translation mine)

Cases such as this show that the development of *nolī* as a prohibitive marker is part of a more general strategy of the Latin language.

With respect to the grammaticalisation criteria, the original form **uel-ī-* has partially lost phonetic integrity in *nolī* as in the case of *uolo* vis-à-vis *nolo* (‘I do not want’). As in the cases outlined above, semantic integrity is only definitely lost at the end of the grammaticalisation cline (see Example [29]). The structural scope is reduced to infinitives (with their arguments and satellites). The original optative and the prohibitive marker are not integrated into the historical paradigm of *uolo/nolo*. They cannot appear in isolation. The prohibitive marker *fuge* (‘shy away from (doing something)’) can be used instead of *nolī*, allowing for a certain degree of paradigmatic variability.²³ Though statistical data are missing, it can be observed that *nolī* usually precedes its scope.

4. A new look at grammaticalised second-person forms of *uolo*

In the previous section, an analysis of the grammaticalisation pathways of the five second-person constructions *qui uis*, *quam uis*, *si uis*, *uel* (+ option / + imperative) and *nolī* (+ infinitive) was carried out, showing strategies of ascription volition that enrich the picture outlined in Section 2. It was suggested that when ascribing volition to the addressee the Latin speaker was leaving them the possibility to choose, extending the interpretation of *qui uis* and *quam uis* as markers of (free-)choice to the other constructions. Whilst some of the grammaticalisation

23. The use of *fuge* is mostly poetic (or archaic, see Leumman et al. [2016:340]). It must be specified that in Latin – along with the negated subjunctive – there are other means to express prohibition without using a negated imperative. A case in point is the construction *cave* + subjunctive. They are not considered as showing paradigmatic variability with respect to *nolī* + infinitive as they are used with the subjunctive and not with an infinitive.

phenomena are also attested cross-linguistically, sometimes in correlation (e.g., free-choice determiner and disjunctive conjunction based on the same volitional source), it is worth stressing that, to my knowledge, Latin seems to be a unique case, offering multiple developments. Instead of the formal point of view adopted above (see Section 3), I provide here an overview of the main results of the previous analysis by taking into account the possible presence or absence of the addressee. In this way, I will show that, whilst the results of the grammaticalisation processes may appear disparate, there are connections between the diachronic developments.

The presence of an interlocutor to whom the speaker can ascribe volition was verified for all the source constructions. For some target constructions, this point is still pertinent. In fact, the prohibition marker *noli* can be used exclusively when addressing the hearer. This is also true for *si uis* at the end of its grammaticalisation pathway, as *sis* typically combines with imperatives. *Uel* is more flexible, but one of its uses is that of accompanying an imperative. If we look at forms that can be used in non-dialogic contexts as they are no more related to an addressee, we find *quiuvis*, *quamuis* and *uel* (used as a focus-marking particle or a disjunctive conjunction). This configuration is perhaps not random or can hint at a pragmatic property of (free-)choice devices.

When using *qui uis*, *quam uis* and *uel* ('choose!/you choose'), the speaker is giving the addressee the possibility of choosing a referent, a degree, or an option, respectively. In all cases, the final choice of the addressee does not matter from the point of view of the speaker. One possible interpretation of this is that the presence of indiscriminacy between multiple possibilities amounts to cancel the addressee's volition – passing from a volitional 'it's up to you (to choose)' strategy to a non-volitional 'it does not matter (what you choose)' strategy. If the choice of the addressee is not relevant, volition is not anymore a semantic component of the *uolo*-construction and this is likely to be the reason why *quiuvis*, *quamuis* and *uel* (used as a focus-marking particle or a disjunctive conjunction) could be used without an interlocutor being present.

Table 1 outlines the complex relationships between the forms investigated in this study.

Table 1. Outline of the relationships between the five grammaticalised forms *quiuus*, *quamuis*, *sis*, *uel* and *noli*

	Originally a politeness marker	Obligatory presence of a real or fictive addressee	Employed to convey one or more options	Scalar focus marker ('even')	Employed in association with an imperative
<i>quiuus</i> (for the <i>-uis</i> indefinite series)	Possible	No	Yes (free-choice options; double option for <i>uteruis</i> ['whichever of the two'])	No	No
<i>quamuis</i>	Possible	No	Yes (scalar free-choice options)	Yes	No
<i>sis</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<i>uel</i>	Possible	Yes (when used with an imperative)	Yes	Yes	Yes
<i>noli</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes

5. Conclusion

The investigation outlined in this paper has shed new light on already recognised phenomena of grammaticalisation in Latin which were not connected in the relevant literature. The new unifying hypothesis is based on pragmatic grounds related to the presence of the second-person singular of the volitional verb *uolo* in the source construction. In all five cases studied in this paper, the grammaticalisation process started from a construction in which the speaker is giving (or taking away from) the speaker the possibility of choosing between two opposite or multiple (sometimes gradable) choices. With respect to the cross-linguistic situation, where some languages only show some of the outlined phenomena, Latin *uolo* stands out for displaying multiple results. The reasons for the situation outlined in Latin must be investigated in more detail in further studies.

To sum up, this study has outlined multiple phenomena of grammaticalisation featuring five second-person forms of Latin *uolo* and the ways in which the speaker employs them to attribute volition to the addressee. In fact, though corresponding to several moods (indicative, imperative and optative) and clause types (conditional, directive and optative) all source constructions appeal to the addressee and their volition in an explicit way. It has been shown that for four source constructions, *qui uis*, *quam uis*, *si uis* and *uel*, the speaker is giving

the hearer the possibility of choosing, sometimes in terms of free choice (*qui uis, quam uis, uel* [‘even’]), sometimes by suggesting one (*si uis* + imperative, *uel* + imperative) or more option (*uel... uel...* [‘or... or...’]), so anticipating the possible wishes and choices of the hearer. As shown in 3.5, the prohibitive marker *nolī* can also be explained along these lines. When volition ascription appears in a prohibitive sentence, it refers to a specific action or state of affairs that the hearer wants (they have formulated their wishes or intentions) or may want (wishes and intention are anticipated by the speaker) and that the speaker wants to avoid. The strategy is similar to that seen with *uel* as presenting the hearer with a choice. What changes is that, with prohibitive sentences, the wish for a certain option is negated.²⁴ If these explanations are correct, the phenomena outlined in this paper can be explained in a unified way, as all are based on providing the addressee with at least one choice. They correspond therefore to a specific strategy of volition ascription whose investigation enriches the picture developed by pragmatic studies briefly outlined in Section 2.

It has also been shown that some target constructions – *quiuis, quamuis* and *uel* (used as a focus-marking particle or as a disjunctive conjunction) – have lost their original connection with a dialogic context, whilst other target constructions continue to be used in dialogic contexts, typically with imperatives (*sis, uel, nolī*). As suggested in Section 4, a possible explanation could be that, for the first group, the final choice of the hearer is absolutely irrelevant from the point of view of the speaker, so that the volitional semantics of *uolo* got lost. This is not the case for the second group, as the speaker is interested in guiding the addressee’s volition towards a specific choice.

As has been pointed out, most of the phenomena outlined in this paper have parallels in other Indo-European languages and sometimes even beyond. Therefore, it is desirable that the investigation of volition ascription be extended to those languages by combining the diachronic and the pragmatic point of view.

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24. As observed by one of the reviewers, negating the addressee’s volition (in favour of the speaker’s point of view) can result in a more intersubjective value. See also Section 2 about volition of ascription.

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