

A Grammar of Authority?

Directive speech acts and terms of address in two single-genre corpora of Classical French

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Directive Speech Acts (DSAs) are a major feature of historical pragmatics, specifically in research on historical (im)politeness. However, for Classical French, there is a lack of research on related phenomena. In our contribution, we present two recently constructed corpora covering the period of Classical French, *SERMO* and *APWCF*. We present these corpora in terms of their genre characteristics on a communicative–functional and socio-pragmatic level. Based on the observation that, both in *SERMO* and *APWCF*, DSAs frequently occur together with terms of address, we analyse and manually code a sample based on this co-occurrence, and we compare the results with regard to special features in the individual corpora. The emerging patterns show a clear correspondence between socio-pragmatic factors and the linguistic means used to realise DSAs. We propose that these results can be interpreted as signs of an underlying “grammar of authority”.

Keywords: corpus, correspondence, directive speech acts, politeness, sermons, terms of address

1. Introduction

Trying to convince or persuade someone to perform an action is one of the universal challenges that linguistic means have the ability to resolve – not only in educational settings, but also in families, politics and communities where a directive must be imposed. To overcome such challenges, modern languages make use of Directive Speech Acts (DSAs), a range of subtly different linguistic tools. DSAs have been shown to vary throughout history and across genres (Kohnen 2000, 2002): the constructions used to realise DSAs result from linguistic developments and continuous adaptations. However, the precise reconstruction of these changes is a challenge for historical linguistics, not only due to the available data, but

also due to the nature of the linguistic features themselves. What are, in fact, the linguistic means used to perform a DSA? A DSA represents an order and indicates that the speaker wants the addressee to “do, or refrain from doing, some act A” (Brown and Levinson 1987: 66). The DSA limits the hearer’s freedom of action, threatening their negative face. Intrinsically, a DSA represents a Face-Threatening Act (FTA; Brown and Levinson 1987: 65). How, linguistically, does one deal with this challenging moment – a possible crisis in communicative interaction? To what extent are the linguistic means used to realise a DSA conventionalised and stored in the language system? Is there evidence for the emergence of consistent patterns which can be described in terms of a “grammar of authority”?

As DSA constructions are scarcely studied within historical pragmatics (Kohnen 2008; Mauri and Sansò 2011: 3491; Denoyelle 2013a, b) and only rarely mentioned in historical grammars, the development of an historical approach is interesting. In the following paper, we present two corpora from Classical French, *SERMO* (sermons) and *APWCF* (diplomatic letters), which allow us to compare and analyse the linguistic constructions used to perform DSAs. They contribute to the existing resources for Classical French: for example, in the oldest and most important database for the history of French, *FRANTEXT* (Montémont 2011), the only religious sermons are those made available by the *SERMO* corpus. As for letters, while there are important collections of personal letters, documents pertaining to political or diplomatic traditions are lacking. Thus, the genres we present provide new opportunities to look at pragmatic features like DSAs. The nature of both corpora is complementary: *SERMO* lends itself to tracing a diachronic perspective, whereas *APWCF* provides synchronic insight into the rules which apply to different hierarchical levels. When comparing both corpora, these characteristics are taken into account.

The corpus linguistic approach allows our hypothesis to be supported by quantitative analysis, where the occurrences are then manually checked. This procedure is highly necessary; but at the same time, the size of the corpora (2.4 million tokens in *APWCF*) means that extensive manual checks are not feasible. We therefore limited our research to occurrences classified as DSAs co-occurring with terms of address (henceforth *TAs*, see Section 4.1). This decision ensures a quantitatively sound basis and allows for careful treatment of the linguistic means used to express DSAs. In further research, these results can help to detect DSAs in larger corpora in contexts where they do not co-occur with *TAs*.

An ongoing discussion tackles the question of which linguistic features are indicators of pre-Classical French, the period between Middle French and Classical French. A recent proposition places the “pivotal point” between pre-Classical and Classical French in c. 1630 – that is, later than what older models of periodisation claim, which put it, for example, in the beginning of the seventeenth century

(Ayres-Bennett and Caron 2016: 46; Amattuzzi et al. 2020). As our corpora cover the later decades of pre-classical French, they allow for observations regarding the ongoing evolutions in the period when the norms of Classical French were implemented. While pre-Classical French is marked by linguistic enrichment and a wide range of variations, through the impact of normative endeavours as favoured by the foundation of the Académie Française in 1635, the linguistic structures of Classical French are quite stable. However, they still present some features of variation (reflected in Vaugelas 2018 [1647]), documenting the process of grammaticalisation and degrammaticalisation (Combettes 2003: 7), and other studies on linguistic variation in Classical French – for example, on negation (Badiou-Monferran 2004), on word order (Marchello-Nizia 2008) and on the slow but continuous establishment of the linguistic norm (Ayres-Bennett 2014).

Less is known about linguistic change on the level of pragmatics. Studies of the historical pragmatics of French have focussed on different subjects (for an overview, see Radtke 2006), such as politeness in general (Magendie 1970), salutations (in particular, those of the Middle Ages; see Lebsanft 1988), terms of address (Lagorgette 2004) and orders (Kremos 1955; Frank 2011). Yet there are important desiderata to be answered in order to integrate the social, cultural, economic, political and linguistic perspectives. As we want to show in the following analysis, the period covered by our data seems perfectly suited to tackle these aspects: in the Baroque era, representative styles and the impact of formal “symbolic” means of communication played a central role in politics, but also in society. Among the important examples of this relationship are the ceremonial privileges or “Caeremonial-Rechte”, which were established with the Peace of Westphalia. They include certain linguistic traits, such as the title “Excellency” being used to address the ambassador of a sovereign leader (see Stollberg-Rilinger 2008: 152). Even if only used in a “symbolic” manner, these ceremonial privileges were of high political relevance: in the first stages of the negotiations of the Peace of Westphalia, the seemingly banal question of whether the Elector of Brandenburg should be addressed with *excellence* caused a long-term controversy and resulted in the negotiations eventually being called-off (Christ 2004). Quoting this example, we want to give evidence for the hypothesis that one can reconstruct an inherent relation between the deeply hierarchically structured socio-political system of the Baroque era and the patterns of use of pragmatically relevant constructions, such as ceremonial titles – and, as we want to show in detail, DSAs.

The interplay between the use of linguistic means, communicational functions (directives) and situational features (social position) in the period of Classical French marks a special stage in the emergence of contemporary DSA constructions (Mauri and Sansò 2011); from a typological perspective, it has been shown that imperative sentences use only one of the possible morpho-syntactic

forms associated with DSAS (Kissine 2013: 112). We will look at the linguistic manifestations of the DSAS to see whether genre determines their selection, and how hierarchical relationships are dealt with, when referring to different levels of authority, for example. How strong are cross-genre similarities, and does the hierarchical position of the individual speakers make a difference in formulating DSAS?

2. Presentation of the two corpora

2.1 SERMO

SERMO is a corpus of Protestant sermons written in French, dating from 1555 to 1745, thereby covering the period of Classical French during its central stages and allowing for a detailed longitudinal analysis (Skupien-Dekens 2018). The sermons originate from communities in Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands, and were printed in Geneva, Paris or in the Huguenot refugees' towns (London, La Haye and Berlin).

In the following diachronic analysis, thirty Protestant sermons are taken into consideration (1555 to 1745, see Sources). The size of the corpus used for this study is 275,154 tokens. For the SERMO corpus, the sermons were transcribed diplomatically (that is, strictly respecting the original spelling, including punctuation, spaces, line breaks, tildes, ß/ss, u/v and i/j). An annotation scheme following the XML/TEI guidelines was implemented. The corpus was lemmatised using LGERM (University of Lorraine) and part-of-speech-tagged using the PRESTO parameters for TREETAGGER (Cologne and Lyon; see PRESTO). The use of such tools for historical corpora is not possible without manual evaluation and continuous improvement. More specialised tools for Classical French have been developed for SERMO.

Despite its central role in the Calvinist liturgy and theology, preaching was neglected by historians for a long time. Recently, Reformation historians have begun to consider sermons as a source for Reformed piety and sociability (Engammare 2013), especially in the complex social contexts caused by the Wars of Religion in France between 1560 and 1590 (Maag 2006), and, after the Edict of Nantes Revocation (1685), the “Second Refuge” of the French Huguenots in the Netherlands (van der Linden 2015) and the “Désert” in southern France (Bost 2013; Carbonnier-Burkard 2015). The Protestant arts of homiletic (Ford 2001; Brian 2014) led to the innovation of rhetorical models. The written Protestant sermon, either as a manuscript or in print, is a direct representation of the spoken discourse – that is, the actual preaching. This representation can take different forms (Goeury 2018): some of the writers were sitting under the pulpit, and espe-

cially in the case of Calvin, whose sermons are “transcrit mot à mot”, recorded word by word during the preaching, while others were transcribed before or after the spoken realisation.

In the discourse of sermons, the authority of the preacher is inherent. In his role as preacher, the pastor is not considered to be an equal member of the community; in fact, he possesses a transcendent authority, in the words of Jean Calvin: “it’s God himself speaking”, as in Example (1).

- (1) Si Dieu parle à nous, il nous semble que ce n’est rien, d’autant que sa Parole nous est prêchée par les hommes mortels. Car voilà un homme qui parle en chaire, et nous ne sommes point touchés de cette doctrine comme il est requis ; il y devrait avoir là une majesté céleste, et nous sommes si lourds et grossiers que nous ne connaissons point que c’est Dieu qui parle.
[‘If God speaks with us, we think it’s nothing, as His word is preached by mortal human beings. Because indeed it’s a man in flesh and blood speaking, and we are not touched by this doctrine as we should be. It’s necessary to have a celestial majesty, and we are coarse and rough, if we do not understand that it is God talking to us.’]

(76th sermon on Deuteronomy, CO XXVII, p.107, in Stauffer [1980:169])

In the sermons, preachers directly address the religious community. The relation between the preacher and the community is hierarchical in nature; we are dealing with a face-to-face, yet one-to-many relationship. The architectural innovations used in the building of churches of the Reformation era reflects this dynamic: the pulpit of the pastor is placed in the centre of the space, and the community is placed on benches around the pulpit. This setting suggests surveillance and makes it impossible for members of the community to change places or to leave, as was possible in Catholic churches (Mentzer 2017: 47). On the other hand, the rite of laying on of hands was meant to show the churchgoers the magnitude of the priesthood (“de montrer aux fidèles la grandeur du ministère”, Calvin, *Institution de la Religion chrétienne*, L. IV, Chapter 3, Section 16, in Léonard 2017: 318–319). If the authority of the pastor over the congregation was *a priori* unquestionable (Kohnen 2007: 151), it is worth remarking that this distance could vary following historical events which is reflected in the language used by the preachers (Skupien-Dekens 2018: 76–77).

2.2 APWCF

The diplomatic letters in APWCF date from 1644 to 1648. In this period, envoys from all over Europe engaged in tough negotiations in the Westphalian city of Münster, as well as in the city of Osnabrück, aiming to secure powerful positions for their

governments in shaping the new political landscape and putting an end to the divisions caused by the Thirty Years' War. The French kingdom was one of the great opponents of the Holy Roman Emperor leading the Catholic powers, and in this position, the French government, even though it represented a Catholic power itself, had common interests with the Protestant kingdom of Sweden and the Protestant Imperial Estates. The French delegation was located in Münster, but it was obliged to thoroughly comply with the instructions of the French government in Paris. As a consequence, the period of negotiation, the Congress of Westphalia, was marked by the frequent exchange of letters between the Parisian government and the ambassadors in Münster. These two parties are the senders and recipients of the letters which comprise the APWCF corpus: in Paris – Queen Anne, the cardinal and Chief Minister Jules Mazarin (1602–1661) and the secretary of state for foreign affairs Henri-Auguste de Loménie, comte de Brienne (1595–1666); in Münster – Henri II d'Orléans, duc de Longueville (1595–1663), who was the French delegation's head, as well as the diplomats Claude de Mesmes, Comte d'Avaux (1595–1650) and Abel de Servien, Comte de la Roche (1593–1659). The ambassadors in Münster, d'Avaux and Servien, were stuck in continuous struggles (Osthus 2014), both for personal reasons and also because they represented different political stances (Tischer 1999:127–128). Ambassadors, as stated by a famous manual with various re-editions and translations throughout the seventeenth century, had to be very eloquent. Furthermore, they were obliged to respect strictly the rhetorical principal of *aptum*, dealing with different situations when talking to “the Prince, the Council or in public” (“l'Eloquence est de telle force & si importante à une telle charge [...] soit qu'il parle au Prince, au Conseil, ou en public”; Hotman 1613:27). Thus, as part of the formation of ambassadors, highly developed linguistic awareness was crucial (Braun 2014). The great political importance of the sources of ACTA PACIS WESTPHALICAE (APW, published since 1962) is reflected by the amount of historical research conducted on a broad range of related topics. The in-depth insights gained by historians help to reconstruct the situational factors that should be taken into consideration in an historical–pragmatic approach. The authors of the French letters included in the corpus APWCF, their points of view, and their individual and collective relations in particular have been studied in a detailed manner (Tischer 1999).

The linguistic corpus was constructed using the digitised version of the monumental printed edition of APW (APW II B 1–APW II B 6), resulting from a joint research project conducted by the Zentrum für Historische Forschung (Bonn) and the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (München; see APW digital). The corpus APWCF was constructed using the edition of French correspondence from APW digital, adapting the XML schemes to linguistic needs. APWCF has a size of

2.4 million tokens. As with *SERMO*, the corpus *APWCF* was part-of-speech-tagged using the *PRESTO* parameters for *TREETAGGER*.

In the *APWCF* letters, both parties – the government and the ambassadors – try to convince their counterparts to behave as they propose. The diplomats, noblemen and wealthy politicians of influence argue that they should be allowed to act in a manner that they view as advantageous; on the other hand, the French king (represented by his mother Queen Anne, the cardinal Mazarin and the secretary of state) orders his deputies to follow official instructions as closely as possible. However, there are more complex interests present: the position of the Münster ambassadors must be continuously affirmed, as in Example (2).

- (2) J'espère, Monsieur, que l'on considèrera à la Cour que je demeure tousjours sur la déffensive et que d'une fasson ou d'autre Monsieur Servien renouvelle sans cesse l'aggression.

[‘I hope, My lord, that you take into account, at the court, that I am always in a position of self-defense and that some way or in another, Monsieur Servien renews continuously the aggression.’]

(APWIIB1, n° 0310, d’Avaux to Brienne, Münster, 3 December 1644)

The hierarchical position has consequences on the manner of writing (Gerstenberg 2014), and – to a certain degree – also on the manner of giving orders. In determining the linguistic form of the diplomatic letters, the hierarchical positions and the resulting differences between both counterparts are crucial. Thus, Cardinal Mazarin has the right to write to his ambassadors in Münster that he is not abiding by the due politeness, as in Examples (3) and (4).

- (3) On se contente de vous dire sans beaucoup de politesse le sens et la substance.
[‘It is sufficient for me to tell you without much politeness the sense and the meaning.’]

(APWIIB2, n° 0220, Mazarin to Longueville, Fontainebleau, 23 September 1644)

- (4) C'est pourquoy vous ne devés pas trouver mauvais si je vous escriis succinctement et avec moins d'ordre et de politesse que je ne ferois si j'avois plus de loisir.

[‘That’s why you shouldn’t find it bad if I’m writing in a short manner and not well-regulated, as I would do if I had more leisure.’]

(APWIIB5-1, n° 0126, Mazarin to Servien, Paris, 15 February 1647)

At the same time, we can also infer the presupposition from these two quotations that the Cardinal and Chief Minister himself felt obliged to be polite.

2.3 Synthesis: Pragmatic perspectives on SERMO and APWCF

In terms of the communicative dimension of the genres considered, the two corpora we present here share the same aim and represent the same central communicative functions: giving instructions and making interlocutors do what the speaker/writer commands. Different text functions can be complementary and present in a single text – although one tends to have a central role, such as the function of “exhortation” in the case of religious instruction, investigated by Kohnen (2010: 528), and seen as “the functional element that may be most associated with religious instruction since it aims at a change of the addressee’s behaviour”. Similarly, we consider the function of instruction in sermons as well as in diplomatic letters to be complemented by other functions such as narration and argumentation. These functions can be associated with single paragraphs or with sermons/letters as a whole.

Denoyelle (2013a: 154) has shown that the hierarchical relations within a medieval society and different types of DSA are linked to one another. If the speaker is in a hierarchically superior position, according to Denoyelle, DSAs are classified as orders if it is for their own benefit, or classified as counsels if it is for the benefit of the interlocutor. For the sermons, it would be necessary to add DSAs which are for the benefit of the community (Fr. *prions* [‘let’s pray’]).

At a socio-pragmatic level, the hierarchical structure of the two corpora’s communicative contexts is comparable, since the preacher as well as the representatives of the government occupy a clearly defined position of authority that the recipients would hardly dare challenge. On the other hand, the legitimation of the respective hierarchical positions is different: the preacher fulfils the role of an advisor for the community; in the sermons, the preacher tries to advise the community to perform religious actions and reflect on their lives. While the sermons also comprise longer passages of contemplation or theological exegesis, the underlying speech act is fundamentally a call to follow his thoughts and to reflect actively on the content being conveyed by the pastor who represents the divine authority in an absolute and transcendent style (see Example [1]). The hierarchical relation between the French government and the diplomats in Germany is based on social prestige, political power and economic dependency. This complex architecture demands a reciprocal respect and the use of a fine-tuned linguistic means of expressing what the one party wants the other to do.

The analyses of the two corpora benefit from rich information on the historical context, rhetoric traditions in Protestant sermons, and the formation of diplomats in the Baroque era; therefore, the reconstruction of important socio-cultural contextual details is, to a certain extent, possible, and the key question of “attributing functions to historical expressions” (Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice

2007: 26) can be tackled. With the comparative approach, it is possible to reconstruct a more fine-grained scale of correlations between the linguistic forms employed, their function and their respective genres. The availability of information on the situational context, the relation between the interlocutors, and the difference of social rank helps to develop a refined understanding of the pragmatic meaning.

The historical approach is based on the comparability of the relevant phenomena, which is something of a methodological challenge. But, as Moessner (2010: 220) states, the similarity of text functions can serve as *tertium comparationis*. This criterion is linked to the definition of the textual genre as a “class of communicative events”, with different communicative purposes and constraints on form, content and positioning (Swales 1990: 45; Denoyelle 2013a). Genres are shaped for their audiences (Palander-Collin 2015: 89), but in highly formalised genres, flexibility in this respect is restricted. This is, to a certain extent, the case for the two corpora, even if the text types that constitute our corpora – sermons and letters – have been of central interest since the inception of this approach (Jucker 1994: 535), given that they imitate the spoken word to a certain extent (Skupien-Dekens 2014). At the same time, as “learned” texts, they are widely shaped by formal restrictions. However, both the sermons and the diplomatic letters allow for an adaptive use of the underlying genres: they present opportunities for the development of an individual style and demonstrate spontaneity, including pieces like narratives, emotional expressions and interjections. Emphatic speech is present in both the sermons and the diplomatic letters; essentially, both of them are used to try to convince the audience to behave in a certain manner and to perform actions that conform to the speaker’s wishes. Thus, on the one hand, the formal traits of both corpora facilitate the reconstruction of a system of different types of DSAs. On the other hand, within this system, variability and individual traits emerge.

3. Politeness and speech act analysis in diachronic (corpus) pragmatics

3.1 General problems

Most pragmatic analyses of directives relate to English (e.g., Kohnen 2007, 2008; Moessner 2010) or medieval French (Denoyelle 2006, 2013b). It is only now that corpus-based studies of French historical data are becoming more common (Gleßgen 2005; Selig 2005; Oppermann-Marsaux 2010; Bennett et al. [eds] 2013; Combettes 2014; Prévost 2015). There is also a corpus-based study on orders:

Frank (2011) analyses a corpus of printed and digitised texts, applying a primarily manual coding system.

As has been pointed out in different places, there are important caveats to be taken into consideration when developing approaches in corpus pragmatics (Diani 2015; Rühlemann and Aijmer 2015), particularly in corpus pragmatics using historical data (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2014). This also applies to one of the central concepts for the study of DSAs: as Jucker (2011) noted, the applicability of “facework” to earlier stages of linguistic history cannot be taken for granted. With regard to French language history, important hints for the underlying notion of “face” can be found in meta-linguistic texts dealing with, in our example, the adequate linguistic behaviour of a gentleman. Therefore, in a letter written by Guez de Balzac, dated 15 August 1618, it is clear that the model of the gentleman eschews the directive style, considering it to be too forceful. In such a framework, DSAs must be avoided (see Example [5]).

- (5) un honneste homme propose toujours ses opinions de la mesme sorte que ses doutes, & n'esleve jamais le ton de sa voix pour prendre avantage su ceux qui ne parlent pas si haut; [...] Qu'il faut fuir les gestes qui paroissent des menaces, & les termes qui sentent le stile des Edicts ; qu'il ne faut, dis-je, ny accompagner son discours de trop d'action, ny rien dire de trop affirmatif.
[‘a true gentleman presents his opinion always in the same manner as his hesitations, and he does not raise the tone of his voice in order to be stronger than those not talking as loud as him (...) one must abstain from actions which could be seen as threats, and words which sound like edicts; speech must neither be accompanied by too much activity, nor be too assertive.’]

(de Balzac 1934: 119)

In this scenario, the risk of a possible FTA is mostly directed at the sender: he who speaks in the “style of edicts” risks losing his prestige, as he does not behave in the manner expected of a gentleman. In the study of directives, the emphasis is mostly put on the question of how the FTA for the hearer is dealt with, or how the exerted “pressure” is linguistically coded; thus, “directive speech acts [...] are characterized by the relations which they generate between speaker and hearer; they effectively imply a constraint, whereby the speaker puts pressure on the hearer to carry out a certain action” (Denoyelle 2013a: 152). Confronting this view with the contemporary perspective of de Balzac (1934) reminds us not to forget the status and prestige of the individual who is performing a FTA. As a consequence, it is important when developing a historical speech act analysis of DSAs to very carefully approach not only its meaning for the addressee, but also its relevance for the speaker’s facework with regard to their social position. This coincides with the comments cited in Section 2.2: the authors of the letters in APWCF were very aware of the social significance of their linguistic behaviour.

3.2 Linguistic analysis of DSA in historical corpora

The question we focus on here is how to detect the linguistic manifestations of speech acts – that is, to formulate queries in the corpus linguistic analysis. The authors of the works featured in Taavitsainen and Jucker (2008a) emphasise how difficult it is to research manifestations of speech acts in a corpus, given the sheer number of forms they may take, which are impossible to catalogue. To examine DSAs, they identify two possible methods: making a list of speech acts, sourced from dictionaries, and finding them in the text, or starting with a detailed analysis of a corpus and inventories of speech acts, alongside their “indirect manifestations”, as chosen by Kohnen (2007: 141). In his analysis of directives, he classifies these and another three categories, formed (1) of performatives, (2) of imperatives, and (3) of modal expressions. Indirect manifestations are – in terms of corpus linguistics – hidden, as they can only be detected and processed if labelled manually, which is clearly impossible in sizeable corpora or can only be done on the basis of samples (a decision made by Frank [2011: 150]).

Expressions that are used to perform speech acts can be assigned to the category of “routine formulae”; “expressions whose occurrence is closely bound to specific social situations and which are, on the basis of an evaluation of such situations, highly predictable in a communicative course of events, are often very frequent in language use and become subject of standardisation and idiomaticisation” (Coulmas 1979: 239). In the context of DSAs, these routine formulae are realised as politeness markers. One famous example is the well-known French expression “s’il vous plait” (meaning ‘please’), but literally translated as ‘if you like’, which has been in use since the twelfth century (DHLE, s.v. *plaire*).

A systematic study of the grammar of historical DSA constructions is lacking, but the grammars of the seventeenth century contain certain linguistic features that are now obsolete, thus indicating change in the language. Some examples are subjunctives as independent propositions (“Vous soyez, Monsieur, le Bienvenu” [‘You shall be, Mylord, welcome’]; Spillebout and Antoine 2007: 221) or infinitive constructions, calqued from Latin, such as “les choses que ce même décret a voulu dépendre de notre libre arbitre” (‘the things that this decree wanted to (make) depend on our freewill’; Descartes, cited in Fournier 1998: 111) – a construction that largely remains in a predicative style, according to Fournier. In these grammars, the imperative is presented as a volitional mood; assuming no oversights on our part, there is, however, no clear condemnation of the overly blunt expression of volition, which would be at odds with the model of the gentleman cited in Example (5).

A very important grammatical category in DSAs is the future. Denoyelle (2013a: 166, 173) identifies some, albeit infrequent instances of the simple future

used as assertatives with a potential directive function or of advice. According to her, imperatives are mostly used to express DSAs in medieval French, while in modern French, this mode is mostly replaced by indicative present and future. Indeed, the jussive future is attested in modern French grammars (Bon usage 2008: § 887; Riegel et al. 2009: 551–552, “futur injonctif”). In the period covered by our corpora, the future occurs more frequently as an expression of directives: Oppermann-Marsaux (2000) investigates the deontic mode of future tense in seventeenth-century French which she describes, according to the various contexts, as “giving orders” or as “compulsory”. This use of the so-called jussive futures is also mentioned in some grammars of Classical French, regarded as Hebraisms (“Vous aimerez le Seigneur votre Dieu de tout votre cœur, de toute votre âme, et de toutes vos forces” [‘you shall love the Lord your God from all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength’]; Le maistre de Sacy, translation of Deuteronomy VI, 4–5 [1684], cited in Spillebout and Antoine 2007: 205). Still, the use of future tense as “jussive” is not always unambiguous. In the attestations found in our corpora, the co-occurrence with a TA helped to distinguish the temporal from the deontic use. So, in Example (6), the future II is used as tense, in Example (7), the TA “my brothers” helps to identify the DSA that makes the community discover (*see*) the religious message.

- (6) puis qu’après que vous aurez tasché de l’espuser par repentance, vous y sentirez encore sourdre des nouvelles pensées & inclinations à mal ?
[‘because you will have tried to calm it with your repentance, you will continue to see new thoughts and bad inclinations emerge?’]
(1645_Mestrezat, SERMO)
- (7) si mes freres vous prenés la peine de le lire, vous y verrés comē ce peuple fait monter vers le ciel l’encens de ses prieres pour la conseruation de ce Roy
[‘if, my brothers, you will take upon you the effort of reading it, you will see in it how this nation makes the incense of their prayers raise to the heaven, for the conservation of this king’]
(1680_Chevalier, SERMO)

4. Methodological decisions and coding

4.1 Retrieving DSA

By choosing a speech act present in the two corpora, we are therefore dealing with a shared, and thus comparable, semantic level: these two corpora share a pragmatic genre marker, namely the presence of numerous DSAs. Whether involving the orders given by the court to the ambassadors at Münster, or impassioned pleas directed at Reformed believers, the speakers and authors produce many DSAs,

allowing us to isolate this type of speech act and compare them. However, as we have pointed out, the identification of DSAs in historical corpora is a problem that is difficult to resolve. For the analysis of our corpora, our starting point was the observation that TA and DSA frequently occur in conjunction with one another. This observation was confirmed after having taken our initial sample of DSA candidates including TA, prompting our decision to focus on these co-occurrences in this initial case study (Largorgette 1994:208). As we have pointed out (see Section 1), the resulting sample is certainly not exhaustive, but it covers a meaningful sample of DSAs embedded in moments of direct contact between preacher/author and hearer/reader.

Thus, the first methodological decision was to start with a concordance of terms of address and to code the use of a DSA in their contexts. As the number of TA used in our corpora is limited, it was possible to make an inventory of the most important forms. With regard to the size of our corpora, it cannot be ruled out that the list does not comprise the entirety of all TA types (Lagorgette 2006), but it does comprise the most frequent and conventionalised TAs used when the preacher/author spoke/wrote to the community/the recipient; in *SERMO*, this is *mes frères* ('my brothers'). In *APWCF*, these are the titles *Monsieur*, *Madame*, etc., between commas (Section 5.1).

The moment of uttering a TA is one of direct interaction – a part of the discourse where the pragmatic volition to give orders is potentially at its most pronounced. The TA directly involves the interlocutor, and this intense moment in the course of a communicative event can be seen as optimal to the performance of a DSA. This actual moment turned out to be a precious key in helping to explore the underlying rules of our Baroque period sources.

4.2 The structure of DSAs: Bottom-up classification and coding

According to the first methodological decision, we defined, for the context of the comparative analysis, a DSA as a directive speech act addressing the interlocutor personally using a TA. In his definition of DSA, Kissine (2013:105) underlines the decisive role of the conversational background to be taken into account for the classification of an utterance as a DSA: further decisions on including or excluding an utterance in the sample was made on the basis of the complete TA-Key Word in Context (KWIC) analysis with a span of thirty words on the left- and right-hand side of the key word (TA). A careful analysis of the wider context was essential when considering the long sentences with many embedded clauses that were used, especially in letter writing (*APWCF*).

In a bottom-up approach, we identified a DSA co-occurring with a TA in the TA-KWIC list. We included units corresponding to the definition of directives as

“attempts (of varying degrees, and hence, more precisely, they are determinates of the determinable which includes attempting) by the speaker to get the hearer to do something” (Searle 1976:11). In Kohnen’s (2007:143) classification, also based on Searle, the “attempts” and what the addressee is supposed “to do” are comprised in one single type of DSA – the performatives, which “contain a directive speech act verb [...] and the requested act”. In the review of the TA-KWIC from our corpora, the “varying degrees” to which the sender makes clear that they want something to be done by the interlocutor turned out to be particularly interesting and crucial for the very identification of a DSA. We found that constructions introducing the DSA contribute considerably to reducing the face-threatening impact. With the aim of developing a fine-grained classification of DSA+TA, and taking into account the question of authority in the sender–recipient context (who is addressing whom), we decided to go further and to separately analyse first how the attempt is expressed, and second how the need for action is linguistically expressed. As we have pointed out (see Section 3.1), a DSA can include an FTA directed not only at the hearer. The division of the DSA into two parts and thereby including both more content and the speech act words used by the speaker, helps form a more complete picture of a DSA in its situational context. This approach resulted in the separation of every DSA-unit in two parts: we called the first part P1, expressing the “attempt” and the second part P2, ordering “to do something”. One of the typical DSAs from APWCF, see Example (1), is comprised of P1, which includes the speech act verb Fr. *supplier* (‘beg’), the TA *Monseigneur* and P2, which contains the verb describing the action to be performed; the author of the letter wishes to retain the trust of his superior.

- (1) *je vous supplie très humblement, Monseigneur, de me continuer.*
 I you beg very suppliantly My lord to me continue.
 ‘[(P1) I beg you very humbly], [(TA) My lord], [(P2) to rely on me].’
 (APWIIB1, nr° 0121, d’Avaux to Mazarin, Münster, 28 May 1644)

The coding was done manually, as a careful reading and classification of each potential DSA was essential. Depending on the context, the coding of P1 included not only *verba dicendi* such as *conjurer* (‘supply’) or *conseiller* (‘counsel’), but also the epistemic verbs *croire* (‘believe’) or *attendre* (‘expect’). Furthermore, expressions asking for the attention of the interlocutor such as “vous jugez bien que” (‘you will find that’) or the expression of a command of the institution behind the interlocutor, such as “Dieu veuille” (‘God wishes’) were coded as P1. While one could argue that this is not the opening of a directive, but more of an indirect speech act, the very presence of TA is, in our view, a strong indicator for the direct addressing of the audience or interlocutor. Such wishes expressed in the third-person third-party wishes can be found in reported speech or in imper-

sonal constructions. Consequently, even the impersonal or third-person expression of the need for the action to be performed is directly linked to the active and personal communicative situation of “order”, such as impersonal expressions for the need that the action should be performed (e.g., “il est nécessaire” [‘it’s necessary’] and “c’est à vous de [verb]” [‘it’s up to you to (verb)’]), where an anonymous unquestionable authority is referred to. Finally, P₁ could also be politeness formulae such as “s’il vous plait” in the pragmatic meaning of ‘please’. DSAs in citations (such as from the Bible in *SERMO*) were not taken into consideration.

Amongst the imperatives that we have counted as DSA in *SERMO*, there were some cases of first-person plural forms like *disons* (‘let us say’) or second-person plural forms like *voyez* (‘seeIMP’). Both cases are known, today, as discourse markers. Still, we included *disons* for its adherence to the paradigm comprised of verbs like *remarquer* (‘remark’), and as it was expanded in constructions like *disons-le*. In the case of *voyez*, it is equally important to note that a number of verbs used makes it probable that the semantic bleaching was not yet at an advanced stage. With *voyez*, as well as with *considérez* [‘take into consideration’], the preacher seems to guide the viewpoint of his community.

In *APWCF*, neither the indicative form *vous voyez* (‘you see’) was coded as a DSA, nor were the pragmatized forms *voilà* and *voici* (literally ‘you see here’ with the function of a discourse marker). As they appeared to belong to the same paradigm, they were excluded in *APWCF*.

For P₂, the crucial criterion was if the action was to be performed by the interlocutor or by somebody else, which led to the exclusion of the respective unit. Each of the two parts, P₁ and P₂, were coded for grammatical and lexical features. On the level of the lexicon, the whole *VP* was coded, including the lemma of modal verbs, if there were any. Furthermore, central morphological categories, such as tense, mood, person and number, were coded, followed by the subjects of the speech acts that could be impersonal, a pronoun or a noun. Syntactical phenomena were coded in terms of the *CP* or matrix clause where the DSA occurred, and for the presence of cleft sentences.

The morphological coding of the P₁ constructions led to the identification of the authorities behind them: not only the speaker (writer) was accepted as likely to utter a DSA, but also impersonal or third-person authorities (see Section 5.2).

5. Comparative analysis

5.1 Terms of address and DSAs

Of the 306 terms of address identified in the SERMO corpus (excluding biblical citations and the names of God), we record 144 as occurring alongside DSAs. In the APWCF corpus, there were 988 TA occurrences; 290 of them were identified as being in the context of a DSA (see Table 1). As the corpora differ in size, we normalise the results of the following analysis using the relative frequencies (percentages).

Table 1. DSAs co-occurring in SERMO and APWCF: corpus description

	SERMO	APWCF		
		Ambassadors	Government	All
DSA + TA	144	248	92	340
Number of sermons or letters	23	176	69	238
Tokens of sermons or letters	218,652	278,050	70,381	348,431
Mean length of sermons or letters	9,506	1,580	1,135	1,464

In SERMO, the most used TA is *mes frères* (see Table 2), often accompanied by *my dear (mes chers)*. Often, these TAs are introduced with an interjection (*ô chrétiens* [‘oh Christians’]).

Table 2. Terms of address (TAs) co-occurring with DSAs in SERMO ($n=144$)

Fr.	<i>frère</i>	<i>chrétien</i>	<i>fidèle</i>	<i>homme</i>	<i>âme</i>	<i>peuple</i>	[titles, institutions]
Engl.	‘brother’	‘Christian’	‘faithful’	‘human’	‘soul’	‘people’	
Abs.	100	15	8	5	4	3	9
%	69.44	10.42	5.56	3.47	2.78	2.08	6.25

In APWCF, both groups of interlocutors – the members of government as well as the ambassadors – must realise DSAs and verbally express the actions they want the other side to perform. The choice of TA is highly formalised (see Table 3): *Monseigneur* or *Votre Éminence* addressing Cardinal Mazarin, *Monsieur/Messieurs* addressing Brienne and the ambassadors in Münster, and *Madame, Votre Majesté* addressing Queen Anne. The ambassadors address one another with *Monsieur*, and also the French *secrétaire d’État*, Brienne, who is on the one hand permitted to advise them with the instructions of the government, and is on the other hand under them in the formal hierarchy (Tischer 1999: 78).

Table 3. Terms of address (TA) co-occurring with DSA in APWCF ($n = 290$)

Addressing	The queen	A superior (card. Mazarin)	An inferior or a peer
	<i>Madame, Vostre</i>	<i>Monseigneur, Messeigneurs, Vostre</i>	<i>Monsieur,</i>
Fr. TA	<i>Majesté</i>	<i>Éminence</i>	<i>Messieurs</i>
Abs.	15	66	209
%	5.17	22.76	72.07

5.2 Expressions introducing a DSA (P1)

P1 constructions do not seem to be regularly used in SERMO (see Table 4). While an introduction appears in more than half of the DSAs in APWCF, it is scarcely used in SERMO. In this corpus, a broader range of constructions is used – that is, thirty different types in thirty-three tokens (type–token ratio 0.91).

Table 4. Subject used to introduce DSAs in SERMO (P1, $n = 144$)

Subject	Example	Translation	Abs.	%
First person (preacher)	<i>je dis, mes Freres, que</i>	‘I say to you, my brothers, that’	10	6.94
Third-person Biblical authority	<i>Dieu veuille, mes freres, que</i>	‘God wants, my brothers, that’	13	9.03
Third-person common noun	<i>Le devoir vous oblige de</i>	‘The duty obliges you to’	10	6.94
None (\emptyset P1)			111	77.08

With this variety of types and the quote of P1-bare DSA, these introductory constructions do not seem very conventionalised. If used, they underline the authority of those who utter the DSA: in ten cases, the preachers use speech act verbs (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2008b), such as *dire* (‘say’; Section 5.2), mostly with a 1SG pronoun. In the other utterances taken into consideration, they rely on other authorities than their own. In some cases, they are quoted from the Bible, as personal authorities (God, the Apostle), as being related to the tradition (“Ces choses sont écrites” [‘These things have been written’]), or he cites religious duty and the inherent obligation to behave according to the following DSA in a more abstract manner.

The picture resulting from the analysis of DSAs with P1 in APWCF is, however, very different: in two-thirds of the DSAs, a P1-construction could be identified (see Table 5).

Table 5. Constructions used to introduce DSAS in APWCF (P1, $n = 290$)

Subject	Example	Translation	Abs.	%
First person (writer)	<i>Je vous prie</i>	‘I beg you’	102	35.17
First- person plural (writer)	<i>Nous supplions donc</i>	‘So we implore’	29	10.00
Third-person personal	<i>Sa Majesté remet à vous</i>	‘HRH leaves it to you’	3	1.03
Third-person impersonal	<i>Il sera bon</i>	‘It will be good’	35	12.07
Discourse marker	<i>s’il vous plaist</i>	‘If you like’	24	8.28
None (\emptyset P1)			97	33.44

Out of the DSAS identified, in the most frequent case, representing more than one-third of the total, the writing instance is explicitly marked in the introducing construction, plus 10 percent where the first person appears in its plural form. This reference marks the strong position of the speaker in the situational context, combined with speech act verbs, such as *conjurer* and *supplier*, both meaning ‘beg’. The original meaning of *prier* (‘beg’; eleven occurrences with the first-person singular) has faded, as it has lost, since the fifteenth century, its religious sense (DHLF, s.v.). In her study of orders and requests appearing in literary sources of Classical French, Kremos (1955: 45) observed hardly any examples of “I beg you” (‘je vous prie de’). According to this rare use in fictional dialogues, and also in APWCF, the construction “je vous prie de...” does not seem to be pragmaticalised as a politeness marker. The presence of an adverb (*humblement* [‘humbly’]) in one of these cases, the paradigm of speech act verbs (*conjurer* – *prier* – *supplier*), and its syntactic embedding *prier de* (‘beg to [do something]’) mark a clear difference to the verb *plaire* (‘like’) in the politeness marker *s’il vous plaist* (historical spelling variant for modern *s’il vous plaît*, see Section 3.2). The latter is, syntactically, deletable, which supports its interpretation as a pragmatic marker.

The hierarchical position of the individual who signs the letter is systematically coded in the frequency and in the use of verbs in P1: while *conjurer* and *prier* (nine occurrences) and *supplier* (three occurrences) are used in letters signed by Mazarin in its simple form, the diplomats add adverbs when imploring: *supplier humblement* (Longueville) or *supplier très humblement* (Servien), and they make a far more frequent use of the verb *supplier*.

Aside from these lexico-pragmatic differences, no statistically significant differences could be found between the authors of the letters, grouped by their different level of authority (diplomats *versus* government members), neither with regards to the subject nor to the choice of speech act verbs.

5.3 The action to be performed (P2)

Concerning the aspect of content (i.e., what the preachers or the authors of the letters wish their audience to do), in both corpora mental actions like *se souvenir* ('remember'), *considérer* ('take into consideration') or *voir* ('see; understand') feature in *SERMO*, the latter being the most frequent lemma in *APWCF*, followed by *savoir* ('know; learn') and *juger* ('estimate') (*APWCF*). For the preachers, one of the main aims is the moral renewal of the audience, so maintaining their attention and guiding their reflection is one of the primary concerns when a DSA is performed. In the diplomatic letters, the writers try equally hard to attract attention to important topics that could convince the reader to follow their point of view. Further actions as commanded in the DSAs are, in *SERMO*, religious activities, such as *contempler* ('contemplate'), *rendre grâce* ('thank') or *glorifier* ('worship') or, in *APWCF*, *faire savoir* ('let know; notify'), *mander* ('send'), *ordonner* ('order') or *écrire* ('write'), which express the need for information. In *SERMO*, speaker and hearer are to be imagined in the same room, but physically on different levels, as the pulpit is, in most churches, elevated above the members of the public.

Morphologically, the most frequent form used is the imperative (see Table 6).

Table 6. P2 (Action to be performed): Salient morphological features in *SERMO* ($n=144$)

	Example	Translation	Abs.	%
Imperative	<i>Venez donc, Chrétiens, contempler</i>	'so come, Christians, and contemplate'	88	61.11
Subjunctive	<i>combien il importe que vous serviez</i>	'how much it does matter that you serve-SBJV'	18	12.50
Infinitive (in VP with modal verb)	<i>Vous devés aujourd'huy, mes Freres, renouveler vostre Alliance avec Dieu</i>	'You have today, my Brothers, to renew your alliance with God'	17	11.81
Infinitive (in PP)	<i>vostre deuoir vous obligeoit d'aimer leur Altesse Serenissime cette grande Princesse</i>	'your duty obliges you to love Her Highness, this honourable Princess'	15	10.42
Future	<i>vous y verrés cōme ce peuple fait monter vers le ciel lencens de ses prieres</i>	'you will see how this people raises the incense of its prayers to heaven'	3	2.08
Indicative	<i>Je dis mes Freres que vous luy deués tout premierement lamour</i>	'I tell you, my Brothers, that you owe him first (your) love'	3	2.08

With similar frequencies, constructions using the subjunctive, modal verbs and prepositional phrases with an infinite action verb follow, while future and

indicative verbs are not of great importance. As *SERMO* allows for a diachronic reconstruction, we can trace the evolution leading to this result (see Figure 1).

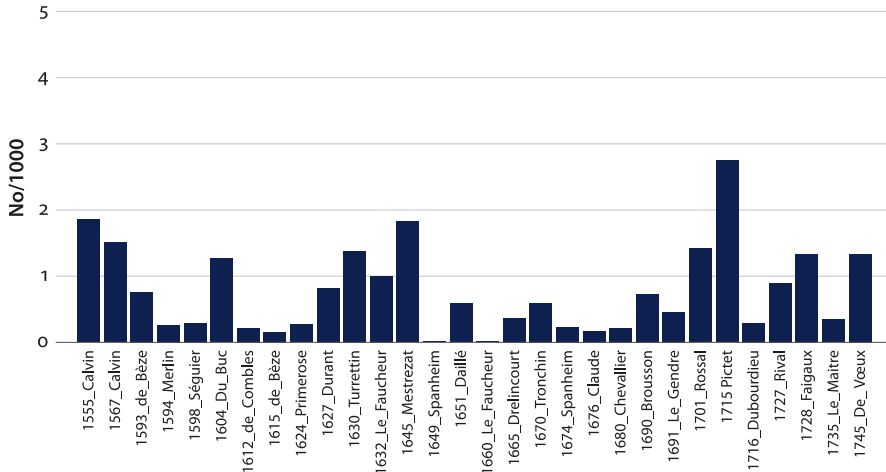


Figure 1. *SERMO*: Diachronic evolution in the use of imperative (first-person plural)

As far as the first person is concerned, we can see periods in which this form is used more often (Skupien-Dekens 2018). However, upon closer inspection, these instances are mostly specific to a personal style. This puts us at the limit of quantitative methodology, as noted by Prévost (2015: 43), a purely quantitative approach risks “disguis[ing] substantial variations between texts”.

As for the second-person plural imperative (see Figure 2), we recorded a notable diachronic evolution, with a sharp increase in usage beginning around 1670, regardless of stylistic idiosyncrasies.

Re-examining the results of the two graphs above, we can see a transition from the dominant usage of the first-person, up to the mid-seventeenth century, to that of the second-person. The pragmatic effect of this change is a widening of hierarchical distance, as the deictic reference of the first-person imperative joins the preacher and its audience, while *vous* (‘you’) clearly addresses a group to which the preacher does not belong.

This is the opposite of what we can observe in *APWCF* (see Table 7). Here, in direct relationship to speech act verbs like “beg ... to”, the verb of the action to be performed is typically not inflected and is part of a prepositional phrase. In some cases, where the action could be easily inferred, nouns were included, as is the case when the sender waits for *commandements* (‘orders’).

Future tense is in second place. This specific use is known as a “jussive future” (see Section 3.2), and its preferred use as a politeness marker gives evidence for its

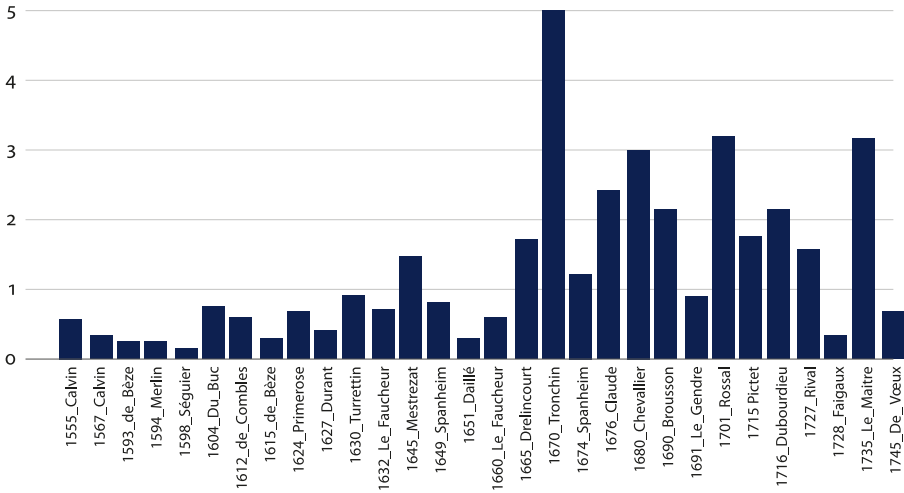


Figure 2. SERMO: Diachronic evolution in the use of imperative second-person plural

pragmatic value. In APWCF, the use of the future tense applies in both directions. There is no statistically significant difference between its frequency distribution, according to the position of the authors in Münster and Paris. If the imperative is used, it is accompanied with politeness markers like “s’il vous plait”, with few exceptions.

Table 7. P2 (Action to be performed): Salient morphological features in APWCF ($n = 290$)

	Example	Translation	Abs.	%
Infinitive (PP)	<i>Je vous prie, Monsieur, de me mander votre sentiment sur ce que l'on pourroit leur donner</i>	‘I beg you, My lord, to let me know what’s your opinion on what one could give them’	104	35.86
Future	<i>Vous jugerez bien, Monsieur, que</i>	‘You will estimate, My lord, that’	84	28.97
Infinitive (in VP with modal verb)	<i>Vous pouvés juger, Monsieur, de tout ce que ...</i>	‘You can estimate, My lord, concerning ...’	52	17.93
Subjunctive	<i>Il est à propos, Monsieur, que vous sçachiez</i>	‘It’s necessary, My lord, that you know SBJV’	17	5.86
Imperative	<i>Songez un peu s’il vous plait, Monsieur</i>	‘Reflect, please, My lord, a moment [a bit]’	13	4.48
Indicative	<i>vous sçavez, Monsieur, de quelle importance il est ... de</i>	‘you know, My lord, how important it is ... to’	10	3.45
Other	<i>J’attendray s’il vous plait, Monsieur, les volontéz de la Reyne sur ce sujet</i>	‘I’ll wait, please, My lord, for the wishes of the Queen on this topic’	10	3.45

The most frequently used morphological means in the inflected forms are imperative and future. The difference between their occurrences in the two corpora is statistically highly significant (Pearson's Chi-square Test for Independence, $p < 0.01$).

6. Discussion

The two different genres of *SERMO* and *APWCF* are marked by the presence of DSAs, but including all levels of analysis, the two corpora present strong differences in the precise formulation of DSA constructions. Together with the extra-linguistic information available, including the hierarchical position of the interlocutors and their communicative goals, one can observe the emergence of a fine-grained scale of lexico-grammatical features used in the construction of DSAs in Classical French. As we restricted the analysis to constructions showing a co-occurrence of TA+DSA, we ensured that a direct interaction was represented in the texts.

The use of a first part of a DSA (P1), mostly a speech act verb, as in *je vous supplie* ('I beg you'), is a distinguishing feature that helps to clear up the differences between the two genres represented in our corpora; *SERMO* shows a flexible and irregular use of P1. This can be linked to the very physical presence of the interlocutors and the implicit role of advisor or instructor that the preacher embodies. In more than three quarters of the DSA, the individual who is uttering the DSA is not expressed. By contrast, explicit performative verbs, emphasising the person giving the order, such as the infinitive construction, are very frequent in *APWCF*. Together with the TA, they strengthen the idea of a direct exchange reflected in the diplomatic letters. In two thirds of the cases, who utters the DSA is not grammatically expressed.

We have found a clear difference in the linguistic means used to express DSAs in the two genres of sermons and diplomatic letters. These differences can be explained by the different nature of the speaker roles. The frequent use of imperatives, as well as the explicit use of the modal verb *devoir* ('have to, must'), are exclusive traits of *SERMO* and could be explained by the – literally – higher position of the preacher to their audience. By the nature of his "divine" authority, he is not bound to politeness rules and to avoiding FTA.

By contrast, even in the letters signed by the highest French authorities, imperatives in *APWCF* are rare, and they can also be used by speakers when addressing an interlocutor who is in a hierarchically higher position, but they are then mitigated by using adverbs like *humblement* ('humbly'). In *APWCF*, hierarchies are non-negotiable, but opinions and instructions are, and one of the means of doing so is represented by DSAs. There was no significant difference in the use

of verbal categories such as mode and tense between speakers of different hierarchical levels, with the jussive future being one of the preferred forms. As we have seen (see Section 3.2), this frequent use can be regarded as the culmination of a long period of development, and the genre of diplomatic letters seems to favour it. In the grammaticalisation of future for imperatives, within the genre of diplomatic letters, this represents a rather late use – a further development of the prediction sense (Bybee et al. 1991: 28).

These results allow the sample to be enlarged, going beyond the limited instances of DSAs that occur with TAs. We intend to find the most pertinent patterns to study across the corpus, not only those where TAs are found. Outside TA+DSA constructions, the VP *vous jugerez* ('you will estimate') is used more than 100 times in APWCF. On the basis of our results concerning frequent verb groups and future forms used in DSA, other corpora can be searched focussing directly on these occurrences; in the light of the DSA analysis, the jussive value of the future tense can be taken into account when discussing the pragmatics of such occurrences, and the interplay between pragmatics and grammar (Simon 2003).

7. Conclusion

We have found evidence for our hypothesis of a genre-specific use of lexico-grammatical features in DSAs. Both genres allow for a varied usage of this construction, which is potentially face-threatening and is criticised by contemporary authors. The linguistic form of DSAs had to accord with the pragmatic conditions of the utterance following a complex system of rules for which it seems that inter-genre differences are more important than intra-genre differences on the level of hierarchy when shaping the linguistic expression of a DSA.

These rules concern the prevalent use of imperative forms in the sermons, as well as the use of the jussive future in diplomatic letters, but also refer to the methods employed when mitigating imperative forms when addressing a person on a higher level (intra-genre difference).

There is, evidently, a relationship between socio-pragmatic factors, such as genres and hierarchical position, and the observable grammar of authority, as far as it can be seen in DSAs. Both corpora provide many opportunities to study the socio-political system of their period, and future research could certainly yield a deeper understanding of hierarchical position and linguistic formality. In order to get a clearer sense of the period between classical and modern French, later corpora and different genres could be included. Intriguing questions for future work would include how the deontic value of future attested in the corpora was continuously grammaticalised, and how the use of imperatives successively lost

ground. Unquestionable authorities and the reciprocal respect between hierarchical positions play, as we have seen, a major role in a crucial stage in this process.

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