ATLANTIS
Journal of the Spanish Association of Anglo-American Studies
46.2 (December 2024): 27-47
e-ISSN 1989-6840
DOI: http://doi.org/10.28914/Atlantis-2024-46.2.02

English Transported to Australia: Factors Affecting the Choice of Relativisation Strategies in Diaries Written from 1788 to 1900

Ignacio Calle-Rubio
Universidad Complutense de Madrid
icalle@ucm.es

This paper explores the distribution of different relativisation strategies, namely, the *wh*-relatives, *that* and *zero*, in diaries written in Australia in the last decades of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. Several factors have been considered in order to determine the reasons behind the choice of these strategies: gender, period, status, syntactic position and animacy of the antecedent. According to the results, *wh*-relatives were more likely to be used in the first half of the nineteenth century. In addition, the authors with low or average education tended to favour the use of non-case marked relatives to the detriment of *wh*-relatives. By contrast, gender was determined not to have played a role in the selection of relativisers. Furthermore, syntactic position and animacy of the antecedent also influenced the relative markers that could be present in a specific syntactic slot.

Keywords: Australian English; prescriptivism; relative clauses; Late Modern English; diaries and journals; dialects

...

El inglés transportado a Australia. Factores que determinan la elección de las estrategias de relativización en diarios escritos desde 1788 a 1900

Este artículo se centra en la distribución de las diferentes estrategias de relativización (relativos *wh-*, *that* y *zero*) en diarios que se escribieron en Australia en las últimas décadas del siglo dieciocho y todo el diecinueve. Los factores que se han tenido en cuenta para determinar qué razones existen para la elección de una u otra estrategia son género, periodo, estatus, posición sintáctica y la condición del antecedente (humano o no humano). Según los resultados, los

relativos *wh-* tienen una mayor probabilidad de uso durante la primera mitad del siglo diecinueve. Además, los autores con poca formación mostraban una mayor inclinación a utilizar *that* y *zero* en detrimento de *wh-*. La posición sintáctica y la condición del antecedente también eran factores que determinaban el pronombre relativo que se utilizaba.

Palabras clave: inglés australiano; prescriptivismo; oraciones de relativo; inglés moderno tardío; diarios; dialectos

1. Introduction

This article explores the distribution of relative clauses in a wide array of diaries written in Australia, or possibly abroad. These diaries were the work of predominantly British settlers and some Australian-born authors in a timespan covering the end of the eighteenth century and the whole nineteenth century (1788-1900).

As contended by some scholars of the origins of Australian English (Hammarström 1980; Cochrane 1989; Turner 1994; Trudgill 2004), this language variant seems to have arisen from the vernacular dialects which were spoken in the south-eastern part of England and were exported to the colonies in the southern hemisphere in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The new dialect that resulted from the contact and mixing of these vernaculars is commonly referred to as Australian English.

Prescriptive pressure over the correct usage of the language was building among British grammarians of that time who wanted to preserve the purity of English. This attitude, in conjunction with the gradual appearance of a middle-class in the U.K., led to an uptick in the publication of grammar-books, letter-writing manuals and dictionaries (Yáñez-Bouza 2012). However, education was still to be improved and literacy rate data manifest that the majority of the population in the British Isles was illiterate, with differences evident between males and females. That is, half of the male population was considered illiterate whereas three quarters of the female population were illiterate (Damousi 2010). This meant that while the notions of stigma and status promulgated by the new prescriptive material could not directly permeate this group of speakers, those who could access it were susceptible to its influence.

This period also witnessed changes which affected relativisation strategies in the ensuing standard variety of English, possibly motivated by prescriptive pressure (Bacskai-Atkari 2020, 95; 112); namely, the animacy distinction between *who* and *which*, the case distinction between *who* and *whom*, the retreat of *that* and *zero* in favour of *wh*-relatives and the use of *zero* as an object relative and its disappearance as a subject relative, among other shifts.

It is, therefore, the aim of this research to analyse adnominal relative clauses with *wh-*pronouns (*who*, *whom*, *which*) and unmarked relatives *(that* and *zero*) in diaries written in Australia in order to ascertain their possible distribution at the time when the language was exported to the island. The article is organised as follows. Section 2 comprises the

literature review concerning diary writing, the socio-linguistic situation in Britain and in Australia and previous investigations carried out in relation to this period. Section 3 includes the methods applied to accomplish the analysis with the research questions and hypotheses involved. Finally, section 4 shows the results and their corresponding discussions and section 5 brings together the main conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Contextualising Diaries

When analysing the language of the past, both diaries and journals,[1] as well as emigrant letters, are considered valuable sources as they are expected to portray linguistic features which are close to speech despite being orthographic media (Elspaß 2012) and they do not appear to be influenced by traditional patterns used in other texts (Dossena 2007).

In the case of emigrant letters, which convey the vernacular language, the focus is on authors with a low level of education (Fairman 2003; Elspaß 2012), whose language was not apparently affected by linguistic norms pertaining to standardness and appropriateness and whose main reason for writing is to maintain contact with relatives who remained in their homeland (Hickey 2019). As for diaries, the fact of diary writing seems to be a "cause and effect of bias" (Hassam 1994, 11). This suggests that this practice was common among those who emigrated to Australia and were sufficiently literate to write diaries and, therefore, had an acceptable level of education which allowed them to write at least comprehensibly, such as middle-class people. What is more, various cases of diaries written on behalf of emigrants who did not have a sufficient degree of literacy to do so themselves have been recorded. It must also be noted that having acquired the basic ability to read and write did not seem to be enough in terms of keeping a constant daily record of experiences and in fact it required, to some extent, a higher degree of literacy (Hassam 1994).

Apropos of linguistic style, when the author's personal experiences are referred to, as in diaries, the language tends to be more familiar or colloquial (Korte 2000) on account of the absence of an audience that could condition the linguistic register used. However, when the account involves detailed descriptions of places or people, as in journals, the favoured language tends to possess a more formal and adjusted style, as the hypothetical presence of an addressee is quite possibly considered by the author (Yáñez-Bouza 2015a).

Overall, stylistic trends usually involve certain caveats being attached to authors and that may influence the approach to the writing task, such as social class, education or linguistic awareness (Yáñez-Bouza 2015b). This means that there may be some

[1] In this paper, for the sake of consistency, the terms *diaries* and *journals* are used indistinctively although it is acknowledged that there are some differences between them regarding participants, situational background, channel and style, as indicated by Yáñez-Bouza (2015a). For further details, consult Yáñez-Bouza (2015a).

uncertainty about the vernacular features found in the language used in diaries since the authors could be conditioned by their status. Finally, as identified by Hickey (2019) in terms of emigrant letters, the diaries studied here, written at the end of the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, may record features which could have been generated by dialect mixture and in fact no longer exist in the source community. Diaries, then, exert and reflect no variation from the language spoken in their home community as the authors portray their vernacular in a specific period of time that is distanced physically and temporally from other speakers in the original community.

2.2. Contextualising Great Britain and Australia in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

During the eighteenth century, Great Britain underwent several social changes (e.g., growth of the population, the Industrial Revolution, the burgeoning of the middle-classes, mobility) that led to a "linguistic fever" (Damousi 2010, 11), which resulted in an increase in the publication of grammar books, letter-writing and rhetoric and elocution manuals. The zeal behind this proliferation was motivated by the necessity to standardise the language, especially when migration shifted from rural to urban areas. This exodus also implied that the different dialects spoken in various British regions would come into contact and would thus bring about a deviation from the correct and proper way of speaking and writing English. This fact, in concert with the emergence of a newly literate class (Yáñez Bouza 2012), revealed to many grammarians (e.g. Lowth 1763; Priestley 1772; Murray 1798) the need for the codification and standardisation of English by establishing boundaries between correct and incorrect usage which, in turn, would aggrandise a unified society and bestow prestige on the language (Damousi 2010).

In the colonies, the correct use of the language was considered by some to be a vehicle for the establishment and development of key facets of society such as education, law, administration and politics (Sheridan 1756). However, this refined language was only spoken by those who belonged to the middle- and upper classes from London, thus demonstrating a clear-cut distinction between them and other free working-class settlers (Damousi 2010). In other words, in the case of Australia, the majority of the first European inhabitants were not concerned about correctness when speaking and, instead, they probably reproduced their own dialect without any linguistic prescriptions.

In turn, education in Australia, among other factors, played a prominent role in spreading the British value of the standardisation of language in speech and writing (Mugglestone 1995). Notwithstanding the endeavour to develop a uniform language, the English of native-born Australians did not seem to resemble the variety of English which was prescribed to them, as noted by the comments of some observers (Meredith 1973; Twain 1973; Twopeny 1973). In fact, although Australia fully embodied British

traditions and institutions, a sense of *Australianness* was to develop from the mid-eighteenth century onwards (Damousi 2010) so as to distance the country's inhabitants from the British sense of refinement.

2.3. Relativisation Strategies and Factors Affecting the Choice

The period under analysis in this study, i.e., Late Modern English (c. 1700-1900; henceforth LModE) has been labelled as 'transitional' (Aarts et al. 2012, 870) between the innovations implemented during the Early Modern English period (henceforth EModE) and the fixation established in Present-day English (henceforth PDE).

The introduction of *wh*-relatives in the relativisation system, in addition to the already existing *that* and *zero*, took place during Middle English and they conform to the strategies which can be used in PDE. In this sense, what the LModE period witnesses is the varying distribution of these relative markers conditioned by specific restrictions prescribed by eighteenth century grammars: a) the distinction between animate *who* and inanimate *which*, as exemplified in (1) and (2), respectively;[2] b) the use of the invariable relativiser *that*, which can be used interchangeably with both animate (3) and inanimate antecedents (4) in different syntactic positions, was regulated in favour of *wh*-relatives in order to foster distinctiveness and avoid ambiguity (Beal 2004, 76) from the eighteenth century onwards (Rissanen 1999); c) the distribution of the gap relativisation strategy *zero* (5) also declines during the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth century (Visser 1963-1973), being confined to informal styles and disfavoured in the subject position.

(1) D_WHO_8_[2]: **The men** *who* found it—four ill-looking persons—were in attendance, waiting to be paid for it.

(2) D_WHICH_6_[2]: We saw no rays but an enormous **shark** *which* was prowling about so close to the shore.

(3) D_THAT_2_[1]: **A Convict** *that* Made his Escape from the Alexr Transpt At. this port. Was taken by a Corpl & Six prts.

(4) D_THAT_11_[1]: this night Captn Lt Meridth read **the Letter** *that* his Majesties Sent to us att our first Entering on this Expidison.

(5) D_ZERO_3_[2]: under the opening made by the Home Govt in their foolishly legislating for **a country** ⦸ they know so little *about*.

In this sense, *which* was initially used with both animate and inanimate antecedents, but it became specialised with the latter from the sixteenth century onwards (Rissanen

[2] Examples are given an identification code of letters and numbers that follows the structure (type of text_ relative pronoun_number of relative clause_[period: 1=1788-1845; 2=1846-1900]). In the following examples, D stands for Diaries and the number included just after corresponds to the order in which such a relative pronoun appears in the corpus.

1999) until the present distinction between animate *who* and inanimate *which* was made clear. However, as Austin (1985) states, the use of *which* with an animate reference continued until the end of the eighteenth century among illiterate speakers.

When the antecedent is stressed in order to determine the choice of relative pronouns, *who* is preferably used with animate antecedents in adnominal sentences rather than the invariable relative *that*, which is dispreferred after the end of the eighteenth century (Dekeyser 1984, 71-72). Likewise, Ball (1996) stresses the influence that some variables such as antecedent and syntactic function exert on the choice of relative markers. In her study of written data from 1700-1900, she detects that *that* is regressing rapidly, which, in turn, is conducive to the increase of *wh*-relatives during the eighteenth century until this upturn levels off in the nineteenth century. In the twentieth century, marked relatives recede a little in comparison to unmarked relatives (Ball 1996, 248-51). According to Visser (1963-1973), there is a decline in the use of *zero* throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth century in educated contexts, while it is considered acceptable in colloquial texts when it functions as an object (Denison 1998, 280-81).

In addition to the changes which the relativising system underwent in LModE, the distribution of these relative markers is susceptible to fluctuation on the basis of certain internal linguistic factors and/or some standardisation of external norms. In this respect, the realisation of relatives could be influenced by: a) the type of clause, i.e., restrictive or nonrestrictive; in this study this is partly considered because nonrestrictive relative clauses are mostly realised by *wh*-relatives and, therefore, they have been excluded (cf. 3); b) the animacy of the antecedent; and c) the syntactic role of the relative, i.e., subject relative or object relative (Romaine 1982). As for the externally-motivated factors, prescriptive pressure is clearly instantiated in "schooling, in language in formal and official contexts and in general in the public use of language" (Hickey 2020, 57-58).

There are also other relatively recent studies which explore the distribution of relative markers and the possible factors affecting the writer's choice in accordance with what has been described previously in this article. Even though they mostly coincide during the period covered, they may differ in their selection of relativisers and the type of relative clause and the textual category employed.

In her study of relativisers, Johansson (2006) analyses the distribution of *wh*-forms and *that*, with the exception of *zero*, in restrictive and nonrestrictive relative clauses within two subperiods (1800-1830; 1870-1900) for three different categories of text (Science, Trials and Letters). Firstly, Johansson (2006) found that predominance of *wh*-forms is attested in all three types of text, their use in Science being the most salient on account of its formal and informative nature. Secondly, *which* is found most frequently, mainly with inanimate antecedents and, once again, especially in Science. Thirdly, *wh*-forms with animate antecedents (*who*, *whom* and *whose)* are found in approximately 20% of the relative clauses, with Letters being the category with the highest presence. Fourthly, *that* similarly accounts for 20% of the total relative clauses in the corpus and it is most present in Trials. Finally, speakers and writers

appear to have favoured the use of an explicit strategy such as *wh*-items to refer to an antecedent (Johansson 2006, 179-80).

Collins (2014) tracks the development of relative clauses in Australian English (AusE) in the nineteenth and twentieth century in comparison to British (BrE) and American English (AmE).[3] The category he selected is fiction and the focus is on *wh*-relatives and *that*. Overall, *wh*-relatives exhibited a progressive decline in all three English varieties over time, with the exception of *who*. In the case of *which*, AmE records the most substantial drop, closely followed by AusE and, to a lesser extent, BrE, which displays the most conservativism. As for *that*, AmE leads the change, followed by AusE and BrE (Collins 2014, 365).

Huber (2017) carries out a similar analysis with a corpus of speech-related texts transcribed from proceedings from the *Old Bailey* in London (henceforth OBC; Huber et al. 2016). The study explores the distribution of *wh*-relatives, *that* and *zero* in restrictive relative clauses in three periods (1720-1789; 1790-1849; 1850-1913) based on the animacy of the antecedent, as well as the syntactic role of the utterances and sociolinguistic factors such as gender and social class. On the whole, *that* is found to be the most common relative, followed by *zero* and *wh*-items. Furthermore, inanimate antecedents are more commonly found than animate heads, whilst non-subject syntactic positions are relativised more frequently than subject positions (Huber 2017, 83). When analysing the results in detail, the distribution of *that* can be seen to gradually retreat from common use between 1720 and 1913, while the frequency of *wh*-items and *zero* progressively increased. With respect to syntactic roles, *wh*-relatives tend to occur more frequently in the subject position but remain stable over time in non-subject positions. On the other hand, *that* diminishes in both syntactic roles, whereas *zero* becomes predominant as object relative over time, effectively replacing *that*. As for the animacy of the antecedent, *wh*-forms are more likely to be found with animate heads and *that* and *zero* with inanimate (Huber 2017, 84-89). Huber (2017) concludes that the expansion of *wh*-forms to the detriment of *that* could be explained by prescriptive forces, which, by the same token, might have had a late effect in spoken English by slightly increasing the use of *zero*.

Another study, carried out by Bacskai-Atkari (2020), compared the original version of the *King James Bible* (n.a. 1611-1769) with the modern version (1989) in order to highlight the principal changes which occurred during LModE (cf. 2.3).[4] This work mainly explores subject and object relative clauses with animate referents. In terms of the use of *which* with animate heads, the distinction between *who/m* and *which* is grammaticalised in accordance with the animacy of the antecedent in the standard

[3] The corpora used to trace relative clauses in AusE were the *Corpus of Oz Early English* (COOEE; Clemens 1995-2002) and the *Australian National Corpus* (AusCorp; Australian National Corpus Incorporated 2010). *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers* (ARCHER; Biber and Finegan 1990-2013) was used for BrE and AmE.

[4] The findings concerning the use of *as* with relative clauses are not included in the present study.

variety, although this was also possible in EmodE (Johansson 2012). With respect to *that* as subject relative, the decline in the modern version may have been affected by a "strongly norm-oriented use that goes beyond mere standardisation" (Bacskai-Atkari 2020, 107), something which cannot be confirmed in the case of object relative clauses.

3. Method

The data were obtained from the *Corpus of Oz Early English* (COOEE; Clemens 1995-2002), more specifically, from the subcategory *Diaries*. The corpus contains 212,396 words and it has been divided into two periods, each covering approximately fifty-five years (P1: 1788-1845; P2: 1846-1900), but with a dissimilar number of words (table 1). The relative pronouns chosen for the present study are *who*, *whom*, *which*, *that* and *zero*, as they seem to be the ones most commonly found in the standard variety in the U.K. and can be classified under the categories subject relative, object relative or complement of a preposition . The relative clauses found with each relativisation strategy are analysed according to their distribution in terms of the variables gender, period, status, animacy of the antecedent and syntactic role.

Table 1. Number of Words in Each Period

Periods	Number of words
1788-1845	61,640
1846-1900	150,756
Total	212,396

The software used to obtain concordances with the relative pronouns proposed was *AntConc* 3.4.3 (Anthony 2014). After this, a manual analysis was carried out, partly due to the fact that the corpus was untagged, in order to exclude false positives such as *wh*-words functioning as interrogative pronouns (9 tokens) and *that* functioning as subordinator or demonstrative (1,365 tokens). This step was also necessary in order to find instances of *zero* as a relative pronoun.

Of the fifty-three authors in the corpus, the majority of the texts were by male authors (77%) whereas only 23% were by female writers (table 2). Education and social status are also two relevant factors to consider when analysing the diaries contained in the corpus. According to Fritz (2004, 77), these authors can be divided into four social levels:

- Status I: upper class such as nobility and high ranks of government.
- Status II: well-educated people with university studies, and professions such as politicians, rich merchants, lawyers, well-to-do farmers, etc.
- Status III: people with some education and money (small-scale farmers, ordinary soldiers and lower ranks of civil servants).

- Status IV: convicts, farm workers and miners who have barely any education and have little, or more likely, no money.

Table 2 also shows that writers with an apparently good education (statuses I and II) constitute 62% of the corpus while those with little or no education (statuses III and IV) make up the remaining 38%. In the present study, statuses I and II were analysed together (118,412 words) as it was assumed that members of these groups had access to a similar level of education (Hassam 1994, 11; Fritz 2004, 77), while statuses III and IV were analysed separately (93,984 words in total).[5]

Table 2. Gender and Status of Authors

Gender		Status	
Male	77%	**I**	7%
Female	23%	**II**	55%
		III	34%
		IV	4%

The type of relative clause examined in the present study is the adnominal, which depends on a nominal antecedent and can be introduced by *wh*-items, *that* and *zero*. Sentential and nonrestrictive relative clauses were not considered as they are almost invariably introduced by *wh*-pronouns and, therefore, would show no variation and the distribution of *wh*-pronouns would be overrepresented. Adnominal relative clauses modify a noun as in (6), whereas a sentential relative clause does not modify a noun but a whole sentence or part of it, as in (7):

(6) D_WHO_6_[1]: A seafarer *who* had had many years experience as a sealer.

(7) D_WHICH_328_[1]: Rankin called, and insisted on my accompanying him to his residence at Saltram, *which* I accordingly did.

It must also be acknowledged that the task of classifying certain relative clauses was somewhat problematic due to their ambiguity, deriving from the fact that punctuation in older texts is not completely trustworthy or methodical. This means that a closer inspection was needed in order to decide whether to accept or discard these dubious instances.

[5] As seen in table 2, the distribution of authors in each status is unbalanced, that is, there are more writers who were educated (statuses I and II) than those who had more difficulties having access to education (statuses III and IV). Therefore, the results in this investigation must be taken with caution as they may portray linguistic features which could be conditioned by several factors such as formality or education, and may not show those characteristics of the vernacular described in section 2.1.

In (8) and (9) the insertion or absence of the comma seems to be arbitrary and does not apparently match the PDE criteria to classify them as restrictive or nonrestrictive. For instance, in (8) the omission of the comma seems to be erroneous, as the antecedent is represented by a proper name *Mr Jones* whose notion is already restricted, and therefore the item was classified as nonrestrictive due to its non-essential nature. However, in (9) the insertion of the comma would intuitively result in the item being labelled as nonrestrictive, but this is in fact not needed as the relative *that* restricts the notion of *the first land*.

(8) D_WHO_[1]:[6] After my arrival the first person I saw to my great astonishment was Mr Jones *who* was as much as amazed as I was to see me in London.

(9) D_THAT_34_[1]: We now entered the county of Cook, so named by me, in considering that its lofty summits must have been the first land, *that* met the eye of the celebrated navigator.

3.1. Research Questions and Hypotheses

Australian English is said to be the product of the contact and mixing of regional British dialects in the eighteenth century (Cochrane 1989; Turner 1994; Trudgill 2004). When Australia was first populated by British settlers, they had accents and dialects originating in the southeast of England (Moore 2004, 21; Trudgill 2004, 8). In her study of relative clauses in spoken and written British English, Ball (1996, 248-51) reveals that *that* gradually retreats in favour of *who* and *which* in the nineteenth century, whereas in the twentieth century *who* and *which* both moderately recede in favour of *that*. In addition, the use of *zero* seems to be common in the colloquial language found more often in private letters (Romaine 1996, 28). Assuming that the first settlers were indeed from the Southeast of England, will the distribution of relative markers in diaries show a similar trend? The hypothesis is that the distribution should at least show an analogous presence of relatives, with *wh*-pronouns serving as the predominant relativisers. Although non-standard markers (Denison 1998, 282-83) have not been included in the present study, these are likely to be found in the corpus.

As indicated in section 2.2, if prescriptive pressure was indeed present during the eighteenth century, would this have exerted any type of influence on the writers of diaries and, by extension, on the whole corpus? The hypothesis is that this will have had an effect on authors belonging to statuses I and II (i.e., upper- and middle class) by distinctively favouring the use of *wh*-pronouns over non-case marked relatives, despite the informal style of diaries. This could also be explained by their

[6] The examples which do not have the numeration corresponding to the count of instances were labelled as nonrestrictive and thus excluded from the sample.

presumed easier access to linguistic sources than lower class authors (statuses III and IV) would have had.

Are relativisation strategies, which the language underwent in LModE, fully attested in diaries, in line with previous studies (section 2.3)? The hypothesis is that they will indeed be well-established in the language transported to Australia.

4. Results and Discussion

The data analysed clearly show the higher presence of *wh*-items compared to non-case marked relatives such as *that* and *zero*. Table 3 shows the distribution of each strategy disaggregated by gender, period and status.

On the gender of the authors, it was predicted that male authors would promote the use of *wh*-pronouns to a greater extent than their female counterparts by reason of the limited access to education that women had during the period under investigation and the unequal levels of literacy present within the British population. However, the uneven distribution of authors notwithstanding, both males and females displayed similar frequencies in the use of relative markers. Hence, this factor did not yield any significant differences and contradicted the assumption that gender played a role in the selection of relativisers (table 3).

When the two periods were compared, it was observed that in both P1 and P2 *wh*-relatives prevail, followed by *zero* and then *that*. The use of *wh*-relatives in P1 (64.1%; table 3) is significantly higher ($p < 0.001$) in comparison to P2 (52.9%) and, therefore, demonstrates that its use was progressively reduced throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. As for the use of *that*, the distribution is fairly similar in both periods, with only a subtle increase in frequency over time (11.1% to 13.2%), thus conveying stable behaviour. In relation to the gap relativisation strategy *zero*, there is a significant increase from P1 to P2 (24.8% to 34%) ($p < 0.001$), unlike for *that* and *wh*-items. In sum, the incidence of *wh*-relatives diminishes throughout the century, while *that* maintains its distribution and *zero* shows a considerable increase. Comparing these findings with those of Huber (2017), the only relativiser that exhibits similar behaviour in both COOEE (Clemens 1995-2002) and OBC (Huber et al. 2016) is *zero*, as its frequency exhibits a considerable rise during the whole nineteenth century (26.7% to 38.3%) (Huber 2017, 87). On the other hand, the moderate increase of *wh*-relatives and the considerable fall of *that* in OBC (Huber 2017, 87) are not played out in this study. Hence, the results of this study suggest that the authors analysed in the first period could have been influenced to a greater extent by prescriptive rules oriented towards the use of case-marked relatives. This is also buttressed by the number of authors with higher literacy levels (table 2), amounting to 62%, who possibly wanted to endorse this norm in their diaries. Another possible factor affecting the stability and subtle increase of *that* might be related to the contribution which Australian-born authors, as well as free immigrants, made

to this corpus during P2.[7] Specifically, around the time-span 1855-1861 (Trudgill 2004) this variety of English, that is, the one that was being formed, was most probably found in the first adolescent speakers, whose parents' dialects served as the first contributions to this incipient variety. These native Australians would therefore have accommodated "to the speech of any peer-group of which they become long-term members" (Trudgill 2004, 35) rather than that of their parents or teachers.

Table 3 also shows the use of relativisers in relation to author status. It can be seen that no significant differences are found in the choice of *wh*-relatives between status IV (67%) and statuses I-II (64.6%). However, there are values that significantly differ in the occurrence of *wh*-relatives between authors belonging to status III (44.1%) and both statuses I-II/IV. Whilst the use of this strategy by authors with statuses I and II may be feasibly conceived, it was expected that the group with the lowest significant distribution of *wh*-relatives would be status IV, and not status III, since their social profile would have favoured the use of other strategies that were considered more colloquial such as *that* or *zero* (Rissanen 1984, 420; Görlach 2001, 127). As for *that*, the frequencies are similar in statuses IV (12.6%) and III (15.9%). However, authors belonging to the upper class who are well-educated show a significantly lower use of the particle *that* (9.9%) ($p < 0.001$) compared with those in status IV (12.6%). Thus, the wider expansion of *that* in upper class authors found in Huber's (2017) study is not attested in COOEE (Clemens 1995-2002). In this respect, as indicated previously, it could be reasonably argued that the corpus is biased inasmuch as well-educated writers constitute 62% of the sample.[8] This leads to the notion that this group would not show any internally-motivated change in their selection of relativisers as their style could be externally conditioned by their education, at a time when access to such education for those who were less well-off was rather limited. However, the remaining authors (38%), who were not by any means linguistically oriented, could also hint at the plausible expansion of *that* in P2. This could arguably be supported, firstly, by the arrival of free settlers from the 1820s onwards and, secondly, by the beginning of an Australian-born population which was not influenced by normative guidance from Great Britain. Additionally, the predominant use of *wh*-relatives in authors who are barely educated (status IV), amounting to 4%, must be viewed with caution as the sample for this group is reduced and unbalanced (cf. 3). To address this, more studies are needed that focus on this same social group and examine different types of text (e.g., private letters, speech-related texts).

[7] From 1826 to 1850 the number of free immigrants and Australian-born people increased considerably. From 1860 onwards, the native-born population in Australia amounted to 53.5% and was rising continuously (Borrie 1994, 65).

[8] According to Damousi (2010, 18), this group was formed by, among others, magistrates, naval and army officers, chaplains and surgeons.

Regarding the relative pronoun *zero*, table 3 indicates that there are significant differences ($p < 0.001$) in the use of this strategy by authors who have some education (40%) in comparison to authors who are barely educated (20.4%) and those who are well-educated (25.5%). This noticeable difference in frequency could lead one to think that the selection of *zero* was mostly preferred by authors of lower social classes with some education. Curiously, this is supported in OBC (Huber et al. 2016) only in the first period analysed (1720-1789), its use being reduced in the second period in the lower-class group whilst it increases in higher social classes. This fact may give rise to the idea that, during the time the distribution of *zero* was reaching its peak in Great Britain, the same linguistic silhouette was transported to Australia and was able to avoid the ensuing tendency, the higher use of *zero* in the upper class, that occurred in Great Britain. Interestingly, the wide distribution of *zero* in higher social classes in OBC throughout the nineteenth century (Huber 2017, 92) is also confirmed in COOEE (Clemens 1995-2002). In this respect, even though this strategy might be felt to be more familiar and colloquial, it was generally used by authors belonging to all statuses.

Table 3. Distribution of Relativisers According to Gender, Period and Status

	Relativisation strategy, *n* (%)			***p*-value**
	Wh-	**That**	**Zero**	
Gender				0.367
Male	581 (56.9)	131 (12.8)	309 (30.3)	
Female	59 (59)	8 (8)	33 (33)	
Period				**< 0.001**
1788-1845	**271a (64.1)**	47 (11.1)	105a (24.8)	
1846-1900	369b (52.8)	92 (13.2)	**237b (34)**	
Status				**< 0.001**
Barely educated (Status IV)	69a (67)	13ab (12.6)	21a (20.4)	
Some education (Status III)	**186b (44.1)**	67a (15.9)	**169b (40)**	
Well-educated (Status I and II)	385a (64.6)	**59b (9.9)**	152a (25.5)	

a-b: post hoc Bonferroni. Within the same strategy, different letters between two groups indicate statistically significant differences

Table 4. Distribution of Relativisers According to Syntactic Position and Animacy

	Relative pronoun, *n (%)*					*p*-value
	Who	**Whom**	**Which**	**That**	**Zero**	
Antecedent: Human						**< 0.001**
Subject	103a (99)	**1b (4.3)**	7a (87.5)	13a (100)		
Direct Object	1a (1)	8b (34.8)	1ab (12.5)		**23c (82.1)**	
Prepositional Complement		**14a (60.9)**			5b (17.9)	
Antecedent: Nonhuman						**< 0.001**
Subject			215a (42.6)	**92b (73)**	1c (0.3)	
Direct Object			84a (16.6)	28a (22.2)	**255b (81.2)**	
Prepositional Complement			**206a (40.8)**	6b (4.8)	58c (18.5)	

a-b-c: post-hoc Bonferroni. Within the same syntactic position, different letters between two groups indicate statistically significant differences

A multinomial logistic regression analysis (table 5) was carried out in order to determine which variables (gender, period, status, syntactic position and nature of the antecedent) influence the use of each strategy (*wh*-, the one that has been used as a reference, *that* or *zero*).

Table 5 suggests that gender did not play a role in the choice of strategy, as also attested by Huber (2017). In his study, the significant differences that are highlighted are simply related to the social classes within both genders.

In terms of period, the data illustrates that in P1 *that* and *zero* are less likely to be used in comparison to *wh*-relatives. However, during P2 (1846-1900), the probability of using *zero* (p= 0.002) generally changes, and these, *that* and *zero*, are now more likely to be present in contrast to *wh*-relatives. This could be motivated by various factors: a) the linguistic accommodation through which the speakers of different statuses adjust their style to other participants involved in the interaction; b) the Australian-born generations were more likely to adapt their language to that of their peer-group, which may differ from that of their parents or teachers (Trudgill 2004, 35); and c) the language used in diaries tends to depict the spontaneity of face-to-face communication. Indeed, this trend anticipates the panorama in the twentieth century with the increase in popularity of *that* (Collins 2014, 364).

In relation to author status (cf. 3), those with some education (status III) are more likely to use unmarked strategies ($p < 0.001$) in contrast to those who are well-educated (status II), this being the group that has been used as a reference, since they conform the majority of the corpus. However, barely educated authors (status IV) exert no effect on the corpus as a whole. This implies that education may play a role in the choice of strategies employed because of the restricted access that authors with some education would probably have had to letter-writing manuals or grammars. Accordingly, the language used by writers educated to only a certain degree is more prone to the use of grammatical features that are commonly found in speech-like situations.

As for the syntactic position, *that* shows an increased likelihood of being used as subject and object relative ($p < 0.001$). In contrast, while it is true that a marginal instance of *zero* as subject relative is found in the corpus, which confirms its absolute isolation in this syntactic slot since EModE (Romaine 1982, 76ff; Dekeyser 1984, 71, 79; Johansson 2012, 782; Huber 2017, 100), the direct object position increases the possibility of employing *zero* ($p < 0.001$) at the expense of *wh*-relatives. This matter would not be fully explored without acknowledging the nature of the antecedent. In this sense, it is demonstrated that a higher degree of animacy, i.e., *who* and *whom*, favours the use of *wh*-relatives to the detriment of *that*, which is in turn accommodated to inanimate heads ($p < 0.001$; cf. table 4). This is also confirmed in OBC (Huber et al. 2016), where there is a clear association of *that* with inanimate heads in the first decades of the nineteenth century as well as with the pronoun *who* with animate heads in subject positions (Huber 2017, 97-102). Anecdotally, the only instance of *who* in a different syntactic slot with an animate antecedent refers to a direct object (10), instead of the prescribed *whom*. This also alludes to the possible overrepresentation of educated authors who markedly favoured the use of *whom* over *who* as object relative. Moreover, there are, albeit limited, instances where *which* is found relativising animate heads as subject relative, and this certainly shows a clear pattern: the lack of reasoning on the part of the antecedent, in this case "aboriginals" (Priestley 1772; Murray 1798), as seen in (11).

(10) D_WHO_35_[2]: When I got halfway, to my surprise I met a young man *who* I had met at Mount Margaret.

(11) D_WHICH_33_[2]: May 23. - Hold Divine Service at the Doctor's hut at Maiden's Punt. Ten adults and fifteen children attended—quite a refreshing number, in comparison with the very few *which* usually attend my ministrations.

However, it is also demonstrated that in COOEE (Clemens 1995-2002), the animacy of the antecedent does not affect the selection of *zero* ($p = 0.486$; table 5) and, therefore, its distribution is only influenced by syntactic position, the period and the writer's status.

In table 4, it can also be seen that when the relative functions as the complement of a preposition with animate heads, *whom* is selected significantly more often (60.9%)

than *zero* (17.9%). With inanimate heads, *which* (40.8%) dominates in this position over both *that* (4.8%) and *zero* (18.5%). Interestingly, the latter shows stable behaviour in this position. This advance of *wh*-forms in this syntactic slot could be justified by: a) the educated nature of the corpus, which allows for the spread of this strategy; b) the number of descriptions found in the texts selected for the study (cf. section 2.1); and c) the prescription of fronting the preposition with *wh*-relatives. In addition, it would be interesting to exclude the cases of pied-piping, that is, when the preposition is fronted, with *wh*-relatives, as this is not possible with unmarked relatives, in order to observe cases of variation with these relatives in this syntactic position and only focus on cases of stranding, which are allowed with all the relative markers under analysis.

In brief, the variables that determine the choice of unmarked strategies in the language transported to Australia are: a) the period, as from the mid-nineteenth century on, the possibility of using *that* and *zero* is higher; b) the status, that is, the lower the educational level of the writer, the higher the probability of them using these relatives; and c) the syntactic position, which, depending on the slot, also increases the distribution of *that* as both subject and object relative, mostly with inanimate heads, as well as *zero* as object relative, irrespective of the nature of the antecedent. Although it is acknowledged that the influence of these variables obviously affects whether or not a *wh*-relative is used, it is the animacy of the antecedent that strongly determines the use of this strategy, for example *who*, which, according to Collins (2014, 364), is the one relative that successfully resists the progressive reduction in the use of *wh*-relatives in the twentieth century.

Table 5. Multinomial Logistic Regression

	B(ET)	Wald	OR (95%CI OR)	*p*-value
That				
Gender (male vs. female)	0.30 (0.41)	0.54	1.35 (0.60 - 3.02)	0.463
Period (1788-1845 vs. 1846-1900)	-0.52 (0.22)	5.94	0.59 (0.39 - 0.90)	**0.015**
Status				
Barely educated	0.32 (0,35)	0.80	1.37 (0.69 - 2.75)	0.371
Some education	0.88 (0.22)	16.34	2.41 (1.57 - 3.69)	**< 0.001**
Well-educated	1			
Syntactic position				
Subject	2.77 (0.43)	40.58	15.90 (6.79 - 37.24)	**< 0.001**
Direct object	2.54 (0.47)	29.28	12.71 (5.06 - 31.93)	**< 0.001**
Prepositional complement	1			
Nature (human vs nonhuman)	-1.13 (0.32)	12.19	0.33 (0.17 - 0.61)	**< 0.001**

Zero				
Gender (male vs. female)	-0.54 (0.36)	2.19	0.58 (0.29 - 1.19)	0.139
Period (1788-1845 vs. 1846-1900)	-0.64 (0.21)	9.59	0.53 (0.35 - 0.79)	**0.002**
Status				
Barely educated	0.10 (0.35)	0.09	1.11 (0.56 - 2.21)	0.771
Some education	1.32 (0.20)	41.72	3.72 (2.50 - 5.55)	< **0.001**
Well-educated	1			
Syntactic position				
Subject	-4.50 (1.02)	19.58	0.01 (0.00 - 0.08)	< **0.001**
Direct object	2.52 (0.20)	157.01	12.40 (8.37 - 18.39)	< **0.001**
Prepositional complement	1			
Nature (human vs nonhuman)	0.24 (0.34)	0.49	1.27 (0.65 - 2.49)	0.486

5. Conclusions

The bias of the corpus in favour of the educated class may have triggered the finding of the wider expansion of *wh*-relatives, mostly in the first years of colonisation, which corresponds to P1. Accordingly, authors from statuses I and II would have voluntarily chosen to use this strategy by virtue of their literacy and greater access to schooling in order to strengthen their cultivated social status. Moreover, some of these diaries could have been produced by literate authors on behalf of those who were barely educated (status IV). The lower distribution of *that* in comparison to *wh*-relatives also hints at the possibility of a highly standardised language in the corpus. This idea is further buttressed by the few isolated instances of non-standard relative constructions such as *what* or *as*, along with the single example of *zero* as subject relative, which were dialectally possible. Hence, the first hypothesis is validated as the study shows patterns of relativisation which are fully standardised.

However, the progress of the century plus the increasingly common arrival of free settlers and the appearance of an Australian-born population who was not concerned with prestigious linguistic styles and grew up with the language of their peers could have contributed to a greater usage of unmarked relative pronouns because they are simpler in relation to those that concern animacy and syntactic role. As such, then, the second hypothesis is partially corroborated on the basis of those authors belonging to the upper classes who exert a pervasive force of a norm-oriented writing style and, therefore, the use of *wh*-relatives. Although this is also confirmed by Collins (2014) in the case of fiction, other studies devoted to correspondence, speech-based texts and even more formal texts (i.e., reports, news, petitions and proclamations) would undoubtedly complement the findings of these two investigations.

In addition, the main changes which relative markers underwent in LModE (cf. section 2.3) are clearly established in these diaries written in Australia, which may also support the notion that writing styles were fully standardised and conservative. This means that the third hypothesis is confirmed on the basis of: a) the distinction between animate and inanimate heads with *who* and *which*, respectively; b) the pervasive use of marked relatives in detriment to *that*; and c) the use of *zero* being mostly favoured as object relative rather than subject relative. However, this does not mean that the inversion of these trends will not happen in the subsequent years, coinciding with the arrival of free settlers and the appearance of the first Australian-born generations. In other words, the attestations of the increasing likelihood of using *that* as subject relative and *zero* as object relative found here suggest that these changes were becoming more common among the Australian population in the last decades of the nineteenth century. Further research is needed, though, in order to complete the picture.

In sum, bearing in mind the limitations in this corpus (cf. section 3), the study reveals that the patterns of relativisation contained in the diaries tend to be more conservative or similar to the standard patterns established by prescriptive grammars, most likely due to the high literacy levels of a large proportion of the authors. This implies that non-standard relativisation strategies that were present in the language spoken in Great Britain at the time when Australia was colonised (e.g., *as* or *what*) are not found in this corpus, which further supports the notion of the corpus being biased in favour of the educated classes (cf. section 2.1). Two noteworthy events that could have shifted the prevalence of marked relatives in favour of *that* or *zero* and which are not conditioned by either animacy nor syntactic function, are, firstly, the formation of a "new, unitary dialect" (Trudgill 2004, 27) occasioned by contact between and the mixing of dialects; and, secondly, the appearance of the first Australian-born generations, who would probably have adhered to the vernacular spoken by their parents in the first stages of Australian settlement, thus there may have been more possibilities for the unmarked forms to spread, although they were not as dominant as *wh*-forms. The findings of this work could be strengthened by future studies with other types of texts, ranging from epistolary writing to more formal sources.

Works Cited

Aarts, Bas, María José López-Couso and Belén Méndez-Naya. 2012. "Late Modern English Syntax." In Bergs and Brinton 2012, 869-87.

Anthony, Laurence. 2014. *AntConc (version* 3.4.3). Computer Software. Tokyo: Waseda University.

Austin, Frances O. 1985. "Relative *Which* in Late 18th-century Usage: the Clift Family Correspondence." In Eaton et al. 1985, 15-29.

Australian National Corpus Incorporated. 2010. *Australian National Corpus*. University of Melbourne.

Bacskai-Atkari, Julia. 2020. "Changes Affecting Relative Clauses in Late Modern English." In Kytö and Smitterberg 2020, 91-115.

Ball, Catherine. 1996. "A Diachronic Study of Relative Markers in Spoken and Written English." *Language Variation and Change* 8: 227-58.

Beal, Joan. 2004. *English in Modern Times*. London: Arnold.

Bergs, Alexander and Laurel J. Brinton, eds. 2012. *English Historical Linguistics. An International Handbook*. Vol 1. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Biber, Douglas and Edward Finegan, comp. 1990-2013. *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers (ARCHER Corpus)*. University of Manchester.

Borrie, Wilfred D. 1994. *The European Peopling of Australasia: A Demographic History, 1788-1988*. Canberra: Demography Program, Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University.

Burchfield, Robert, ed. 1994. *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Vol 5, English in Britain and Overseas: Origins and Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Clemens, Fitz, comp. 1995-2002. *Corpus of Oz Early English*. Free University of Berlin.

Cochrane, George R. 1989. "Origins and Development of the Australian Accent." In Collins and Blair 1989, 176-86.

Collins, Peter. 2014. "Relative Clauses in Australian English: A Cross-Varietal Diachronic Study." In Gawne 2014, 355-71.

— and David Blair, eds. 1989. *Australian English*. St. Lucia: U. of Queensland P.

Culpeper, Jonathan and Merja Kytö. 2010. *Early Modern English Dialogues: Spoken Interaction as Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Damousi, Joy. 2010. *Colonial Voices: A Cultural History of English in Australia 1840-1940*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Dekeyser, Xavier. 1984. "Relativicers [*sic*] in Early Modern English: A Dynamic Quantitative Study." In Fisiak 1984, 61-87.

Denison, David. 1998. "Syntax." In Romaine 1998, 92-329.

Dossena, Marina. 2007. "As this leaves me at present: Formulaic Usage, Politeness and Social Proximity in Nineteenth-Century Scottish Emigrants' letters." In Elspass et al. 2007, 13-29.

Eaton, Roger, ed. 1985. *Papers from the 4th International Conference on English Historical Linguistics*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Elspass, Stephan. 2012. "The Use of Private Letters and Diaries in Sociolinguistic Investigation." In Hernández-Campoy 2012, 156-69.

— et al., eds. 2007. *Germanic Language Histories 'From Below' (1700-2000)*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Fisiak, Jacek, ed. 1984. *Historical Syntax*. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Fritz, Clemens. 2004. "From Plato to Aristotle-Investigating Early Australian English." *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 24 (1): 57-97.

Gawne, Lauren, ed. 2014. *Selected Papers from the 44th Conference of the Australian Linguistic Society*. Melbourne: University of Melbourne.

Görlach, Manfred. 2001. *Eighteenth-Century English*. Heidelberg: C. Winter.

Hammarström, Göran. 1980. *Australian English: Its Origins and Status*. Hamburg: Buske.

Hassam, Andrew. 1994. *Sailing to Australia: Shipboard Diaries by Nineteenth-Century British Emigrants*. Melbourne: Melbourne UP.

Hernández-Campoy, Juan Manuel and Juan Camilo Conde Silvestre, eds. 2012. *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Hickey, Raymond. 2019. *Keeping in Touch: Emigrant Letters across the English-Speaking* World, Vol. 10. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

—. 2020. "The Interplay of Internal and External Factors in Varieties of English." In Kytö and Smitterberg 2020, 43-64.

Huber, Magnus. 2017. "Structural and Sociolinguistic Factors Conditioning the Choice of Relativizers in Late Modern English: A Diachronic Study Based on the Old Bailey Corpus." *Nordic Journal of English Studies* 16 (1): 74-119.

—, Magnus Nissel and Karin Puga, comp. 2016. *Old Bailey Corpus*, v.2. Open University, University of Hertfordshire and University of Sheffield.

Johansson, Christine. 2006. "Relativisers in 19th-Century English." In Kytö, Rydén and Smitterber 2006, 136-82.

—. 2012. "Relativisation in Early Modern English Written Versus Speech-Related Genres." In Bergs and Brinton 2012, 776-90.

King James Bible. 1611-1769. *King James Bible*, online version. [Accessed April 20, 2023].

Korte, Barbara. 2000. *English Travel Writing from Pilgrimages to Postcolonial Explorations*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kytö, Merja, Mats Rydén and Erik Smitterberg, eds. 2006. *Nineteenth-Century English: Stability and Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

— and Erik Smitterberg, eds. 2020. *Late Modern English: Novel Encounters*. Vol 214. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Lass, Roger, ed. 1999. *The Cambridge History of the English Language. Vol III, 1476-1776*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Lowth, Robert. 1763. *A Short Introduction to English Grammar: With Critical Notes*. 2nd ed. London: A. Millar.

Meredith, Louisa A. 1973. *Notes and Sketches of New South Wales*. Melbourne: Penguin.

Moore, Bruce. 2004. "The Dialect Evidence." *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 24 (1): 21-40.

Mugglestone, Lynda. 1995. *Talking Proper: The Rise of Accent as Social Symbol*. Oxford: Oxford UP.

Murray, Lindley. 1798. *English Grammar Adapted to the Different Classes of Learners: With an Appendix Containing Rules and Observations for Assisting the More Advanced Students to Write with Perspicuity and* Accuracy. 4th ed. New York: Collins and Perkins.

Priestley, Joseph. 1772. *The Rudiments of English Grammar: Adapted to the Use of Schools; with Notes and Observations. For the Use of Those Who Have Made Some Proficiency in the Language*. London: John and Francis Rivington.

Rissanen, Matti. 1984. "The Choice of Relative Pronouns in 17th Century American English." In Fisiak 1984, 417-35.
—. 1999. "Syntax." In Lass 1999, 187-331.
Romaine, Suzanne. 1982. *Socio-Historical Linguistics. Its Status and Methodology*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
—, ed. 1998. The *Cambridge History of the English Language*. Vol IV, 1776-1997. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.
Sheridan, Thomas. 1756. *British Education*. London and New York: Routledge.
Trudgill, Peter. 2004. *New-Dialect Formation. The Inevitability of Colonial Englishes*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP.
Turner, George W. 1994. "English in Australia." In Burchfield 1994, 277-327.
Twain, Mark. 1973. *Mark Twain in Australia and New Zealand*. Melbourne: Penguin.
Twopeny, Richard. 1973. *Town Life in Australia*. Melbourne: Penguin.
Visser, Frederikus Theodorus. 1963-1973. *An Historical Syntax of the English Language*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
Yáñez-Bouza, Nuria. 2012. "Grammar Writing and Provincial Grammar Printing in the Eighteenth-Century British Isles." *Transactions of the Philological Society* 110: 34-46.
—. 2015a. "'Have you Ever Written a Diary or a Journal?' Diurnal Prose and Register Variation." *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 116 (2): 449-74.
—. 2015b. *Grammar*, *Rhetoric and Usage in English*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP.

Received 20 February 2023 Revised version accepted 20 July 2023

Ignacio Calle-Rubio has worked as a lecturer in the Department of English Studies (Linguistics and Literature) at Complutense University of Madrid (UCM) since 2019. His main research interest is in the evolution of the language from a historical sociolinguistic perspective based on the exploration of diverse corpora. He is currently working on the evolution of the different relativisation strategies depending on some social factors (e.g., nationality, status, timespan) and the type of text (e.g., private letters, diaries, newspapers, narratives, etc.).