

Mining Foreign Language Teaching Manuals for the History of Pragmatics

Nicola McLelland, University of Nottingham (nicola.mcllland@nottingham.ac.uk)

Abstract

Foreign language learning manuals can be valuable sources for the history of pragmatics and historical pragmatics. They may contain explicit guidance on pragmatics not found in native-speaker grammars: for example, accounts of German forms of address in seventeenth and eighteenth-century English-German manuals provide evidence of changing views on the appropriateness of *ihr* and *Sie* earlier than does the “native” grammatical tradition. The bilingual model dialogues typical of such manuals may also implicitly model appropriate linguistic behaviour, demonstrated here by examining the communicative genre of bargaining in a series of three related English-Dutch language manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, the dialogues may provide metalinguistic comment on linguistic behaviour, for example criticizing the culture of excessive negative politeness. Such sources can enrich our knowledge of language use and attitudes to language use in the area of politeness, complementing the evidence to be gleaned from mainstream native grammars, civility manuals, merchants’ guides, and the like.

Keywords: Historical pragmatics; history of pragmatics; Dutch; German; language learning manuals; forms of address; politeness

1. Introduction

In the growing field of historical pragmatics there have so far been two main ways of accessing relevant data about the spoken language, direct and indirect. One direct way is to induce generalizations about pragmatic rules of the past from texts from the past. Here corpus linguistics can provide qualitative and quantitative data (see for example Whitt 2015 on the encoding of evidentiality in Early Modern German, drawing on the GerManC corpus); we may also benefit from approaches such as Historical Dialogue Analysis, a multidisciplinary approach to analysing dialogues in the past, in order to make inferences about rules governing conversation in the past, with the usual caution when analysing written representations of oral discourse (cf. Jucker et al. 1999, and the series founded by Nine Miedema and colleagues, whose first volume is concerned with the historical analysis of

dialogues in medieval epics: see Unzeitig et al. 2011). Alternatively, we can rely not directly on evidence of language in use, but on indirect, metalinguistic evidence, in which case *historical pragmatics* may overlap with the *history of pragmatics* within the wider history of linguistic thought – see, in Gardt’s history of linguistics in Germany, his discussion of *Kommunikationskultur* in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Germany, with the emphasis on reflections on language in use found in guides to letter-writing, titularies, rhetorics, and the like, sources which may be of particular relevance for the history of politeness (Gardt 1999: 158-171; see also Till 2004, esp. pp. 111-196). Angelika Linke’s work on *communicative genres* in bourgeois nineteenth-century Germany provides another approach to this kind of analysis, albeit from a different theoretical perspective (Linke 1996, 1998, 2007). Within Dutch language history, Van der Wal’s 1992 language history is, in essence, a history of language standardization, and Rutten & Vosters (2011) still more or less equate linguistic norms with spelling norms. Recent years have, however, seen work on the history of politeness in Dutch, including the work of Marcel Bax and his colleagues (Bax 2001, Bax & Streekstra 2003, and a special issue of this journal, Bax & Kádár 2011).

Against this background, I argue here for the value of an additional kind of source that has so far received scant attention in historical pragmatics and the history of pragmatics: foreign language learning manuals, a genre now receiving increasing attention in language history and in the history of education.¹ There is a long tradition, at least from the fifteenth century, of language learning manuals to help Europeans to learn each others’ languages (see, for the Dutch and German contexts, Loonen 1991, Noordegraaf & Vonk 1993, Klippel 1994, McLelland 2004, Glück 2002, 2013). Typically, such language manuals consisted of a grammar (or, in the earliest versions, sample forms or sentences from which patterns could be induced) and a number of model dialogues, usually bilingual, with the two languages presented in parallel columns. Recent studies have begun to show the importance of such foreign language grammars for understanding how the language structures of vernacular languages were understood in late medieval and early modern times (e.g. Langer 2004, McLelland 2008). There has also been some work on the representations of the “target” culture in early foreign language textbooks (e.g. Van der Lubbe 2008, Guthke 2011). This paper will examine these materials as some of the earliest surviving materials that give an

¹ For an overview of the state of research in the history of language teaching in Europe, see the special issue of *Language & History* 57.1, ed. McLelland & Smith (2014).

insight into the historical pragmatics of Dutch and German, and the history of presenting – implicitly or explicitly – pragmatic rules. For, as we might expect, the dialogues contained in these language manuals are interesting because they do not just model language *forms* for the learner to copy, but also the correct *use* of those forms in context, i.e. the relationship between form and function.

Before embarking on the analysis, it is important to note the methodological risks inherent in using foreign language manuals as sources. One fundamental difficulty applies to any kind of historical text that we seek to use as evidence of oral language use, whether it be the dialogue of dramas and narrative prose, the language of sermons, or the language of newspapers, for example:² the evidence that we have is indirect. We must hope either that written texts preserve some of the features of spoken language, or, in the case of dialogues, that their authors are reasonably successful mimics of “real” conversation, at least with regard to those features that we seek to analyse. Other problems, however, are more specific to foreign language learning manuals. First, we are faced with constructed language which, although we may assume it is intended to mimic “real” conversation for the benefit of learners, nevertheless also simplifies the nature of conversation. False starts and interruptions are rare, for example; turn-taking seldom, if ever, needs to be negotiated. Equally, while conversations may sound relatively naturalistic (e.g. with frequent modal particles in Dutch and German), they may also exaggerate the features of a communicative genre (such as bargaining, discussed below), in order to illustrate the use of certain structures, vocabulary and functions chosen by the authors.³ This is not, necessarily, so problematic – it is perhaps no worse, say, than the practice, in other branches of linguistics, of analysing language elicited from subjects asked to perform certain tasks in response to given stimuli, modelled on real-life but nonetheless constructed in an artificial context. However, it needs to be borne in mind.

Another potential problem is the bilingual nature of the model dialogues: it can be difficult to be sure whether the language on *both* sides of the language pair would have passed as a good

² The documentation of the Early Modern German corpus distinguishes, somewhat problematically in my view, between the genres drama, newspapers, sermons, personal letters and journals as “orally oriented”, and academic, medical and legal texts, intended to represent more print-oriented registers. See <http://www.llc.manchester.ac.uk/research/projects/germanc/>.

³ For example, alternative phrasings may be given in a single “turn”. See Table 2 below, where the seller’s words in 6.iv. of Table 2 below, *I am able to sell it as cheap as any other man, as any in the City*, where *as any other man*, and *as any in the City* are probably to be read as two alternative formulations for the same context.

imitation of the spoken language of the time. Some authors are likely to have been less competent in one language and culture than another, resulting not just in constructed language, but potentially in language that is *badly* constructed – even if not ungrammatical, possibly unnatural to a contemporary native-speaking member of the speech community. The risk is reduced when we have external evidence that the authors were competent bilinguals – a case in point is William/Willem Sewel (1653-1720), discussed below, a Dutch author of English background who also spent ten months in England, who produced both a grammar of Dutch and a manual of English for the Dutch, in addition to a bilingual dictionary (Sewel 1705, 1708a, 1708b; see Salmon 1992: 135, Scheurweghs 1960; Hall 2004). But we cannot assume that every author was as well-qualified as Sewel.⁴

An additional, related, complication is that material was endlessly recycled. Whole manuals could be adapted to new language pairs. To give just two examples, Sewel's guide to English for Dutch (1705) was reworked by Matthias Kramer (1746) for the German market (Klippel 1994: 67, 71);⁵ Giovanni Veneroni's *Maître italien* (1678) for teaching Italian to the French was repurposed not just to teach Italian to the English (Courville 1728) but also to teach French to Spanish speakers (Veneroni & Uvedale 1728; Bruña Cuevas 2014). So many dialogues and manuals attributed to the Antwerp language teacher Noel de Berlaimont (d. 1531) circulated, in so many language combinations, from the sixteenth century onwards, that his name gave rise to a genre, the *Parlament* (Hüllen 2005: 55-57). Even within language pairs, dialogues were often recycled from one manual to later ones, so that an "original" text or author is difficult or impossible to identify. A traceable example of such a recycled dialogue in the German tradition is that "Between a German learning English and his master of languages", published in a manual of German for English learners (Beiler 1731: 283-288), but first published a few years early in an English grammar for German learners, Thomas Lediard's *Grammatica Anglicana Critica* (1725). However, an untraceable line of descent seems to lie behind dialogues modelling exchanges with a draper, extending from 15th-century European manuals (see Section 3.1 below) right up to 20th-century manuals of

⁴ Sewel's use of the form *swimmed* for *swam* (Sewel 1706: 256) might suggest an imperfect mastery of English, but *swim* was attested as a weak verb in English, dialectally at least until the 18th century (*Oxford English Dictionary* online, s.v. *swim*). See Loonen (1991: 336-342) for a compilation of what we know about English teachers in the Low Countries in the period 1500-1800.

⁵ See also Loonen (1991: 180-184) for examples of borrowing between English language learning materials in the Low Countries.

Mandarin (Williamson 1947; see McLelland 2015a), and although it would be impossible to trace a clear line of descent between these two examples, they (and the many similar dialogues that one could readily identify over the centuries in between, including those discussed below) give an indication of the wide circulation within European language learning traditions of highly similar dialogues dealing with prototypical scenarios. A final important caveat is that we cannot be sure, when material is recycled years later more or less verbatim, that the language described in the grammar or modelled in its dialogues still reflects current usage – certainly, sometimes dialogues are updated, but sometimes clearly outdated material is cynically reprinted for commercial gain.⁶ In some cases, however, we can turn the recycling of dialogues across the years to our advantage, for when authors (or compilers) do take the trouble to update them, they may provide useful evidence of changes in language forms and/or language use, as I will tentatively suggest in Section 3.2 below.

With those caveats in place, this paper presents two case studies of the kinds of ways in which foreign language learning materials can be valuable sources for the history of linguistics: first, in what they state explicitly about pragmatic rules, here taking forms of address in German as an example (Section 2), and second, in the conversations they model, (Section 3). In Section 3, I will draw on two theoretical approaches to examine the model conversations: the notion of the communicative genre, as used by Linke (2007) in her study of nineteenth-century German bourgeois culture (including, for example, paying a call); and the notion of negative politeness (Brown & Levinson 1987; see also Culpeper 2009). My examples are taken from German-English manuals and Dutch-English language manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries,⁷ but they are intended to illustrate the potential of these sources for the historical pragmatics of European (and probably non-European) languages more widely.

2. Case study 1: Forms of address in German

We already know that grammars and language manuals for non-native learners can be valuable sources in the history of linguistics and language history (see Langer 2002,

⁶ An example is the Mandarin Chinese of Williamson's *Teach Yourself Chinese* (1947), which, when reprinted in 1979, still modelled the language of a pre-revolutionary China long gone. See McLelland 2015a.

⁷ On the history of German manuals for English speakers, see McLelland 2015b and references there. On the history of Dutch-English manuals, and Dutch for English speakers, see Scheeurweghs (1960), Loonen (1991), Salverda (2004), and Verbaan & Vismans (2010).

McLelland 2008), because they may include codifications of some aspects of the language before “native” grammarians do, or in greater detail, because they have to make explicit to learners the unwritten rules by which proficient native speakers operate. For example, McLelland (2008) demonstrated that seventeenth-century grammars of German for foreign learners were more alert to the problems of German word order and were more innovative in trying to describe them than was the native grammatical tradition of the time, and it seems likely that mainstream “native” grammars later drew on these foreign-language grammars. But the same can also be said with regard to pragmatics: once again, materials aimed at non-native speakers pay attention to matters that are not necessarily of interest to native-speaker grammars,⁸ as we shall see by examining the presentation of German forms of address in early modern manuals for English speakers.

Today’s German has three second-person pronouns *du*, *ihr* and *Sie*. The distinction between *du* and *ihr* is one of number, between singular and plural;⁹ the polite form *Sie* (historically, a third person plural, and morphologically identical with it, except for capitalization of the polite *you* forms) may be used to singular or plural addressees. However, in medieval German, *ihr* was the usual polite form, singular and plural; *Sie* had not yet emerged. The early modern period sees the shift from this two-way system of the language to the current three-way system, going through a lengthy period where *ihr* and *Sie* both functioned as polite forms, alongside other alternative polite forms, their uses variously differentiated (as we shall see below). Not only did the conventions governing forms of address change in the early modern and Enlightenment periods,¹⁰ but the whole matter also became ideologically charged, given the influence of French manners (*politesse*) on the rest of Europe and later

⁸ They may be dealt with other kinds of guides for native speakers, however: in civility manuals, epistolaries and the like, a point to which I return in Section 4.

⁹ In fact, although *ihr* is usually described in grammars, for native- and non-native speakers alike, as the plural for a group whom one would address individually as *du*, it has long been observed that it can be used to any group “to stress plurality, even if all would normally be addressed individually as *Sie*”. It may serve as a “neutral compromise” to mask uncertainty about whether to use *du* or *Sie* (Durrell 2002: 54).

¹⁰ On the history of forms of address in German, and in comparison with other countries, see Besch (1996), Glück (2006), Polenz (1999: 60-61, 383-387) and further references there.

criticism of such perceived artifice, in the context of Enlightenment preferences for ‘natural’ communication over ‘artificial or ‘affected’ style.¹¹

The earliest statement by a grammarian about the pragmatic rules of address that I know of is found in the very first grammar of German for English speakers, the *High Dutch Minerva* of Martin Aedler, a native German who moved to England, where he wrote his grammar (Aedler 1680). Although not a member of the *Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft* or ‘Fruitbearing Society’, the most important German language society of the time, Aedler had connections with it (Van der Lubbe 2007: 58-68); and his grammar shows the clear influence of the first ever comprehensive grammar of German, produced by one of the Society’s prominent members, Justus Georg Schottelius (Schottelius 1663; see McLelland 2011: 245-249). Aedler’s credentials as an authority on the German language were, then, impeccable. However, he did not follow Schottelius slavishly, and in the area of forms of address, he went well beyond Schottelius, who had said nothing whatever about how the different pronouns forms were to be *used*. Aedler (1680: 169) specified the pragmatic rules governing the three German second-person pronouns *du*, *ihr* and *Sie* as follows:

Children and our own servants, as well as beasts: second person singular [i.e. *du*]; for the servants of others, and other common sort of people as peasants and tradesmen are 2nd ps. Pl [i.e. *ihr*]; to a Gentleman or Gentlewoman and upwards, in the third person singular, and a magistrate of authority (though a single person) in the third person plural [i.e. *Sie*]

Perhaps for the very first time in a German grammar, Aedler’s explanation tackled the relationship between grammatical *form* and pragmatic *function* in the pronoun system, because it needed to be explained to non-native speakers. Aedler spelled out explicitly the circumstances under which grammatically plural *forms* might serve the *function* of addressing a single interlocutor; and when third person forms might be used to address someone in the second person. His account is far more informative than those found in the ‘native’ German grammatical tradition of the same time. Both Aedler’s most immediate predecessor and influence, Schottelius (1663), and, a decade after Aedler, Kaspar Stieler (1691: 118-119) offered a purely grammatical account of singular and plural, first, second and third person. A

¹¹ On *politesse* see Losfeld (2011) and the review by Turcot (2011); on discussions of natural or artificial style in German rhetorics, see Till (2004).

half-century later, Beiler's *New German Grammar* (Beiler 1731: 69) provided a very similar specification to Aedler's: the descriptions differ slightly, but the perceived hierarchy is the same: *ihr* should be used "to common Servants, and mean people independent of us"; the third person singular is used "in speaking to our equals", and the third person plural "to Superiors, Nobles, and Princes". The potential for *du* to be deliberately offensive is also noted: it may be used "to any one, to whom we would shew Contempt o[r] Anger".¹²

By the middle of the eighteenth century, German grammars for native speakers were also attending to forms of address. Table 1 presents Gottsched's account in his grammar of 1748, as summarized by Polenz (1999: 384); note the characterization of the new third person plural *Sie* form of address as *überhöflich*, "overly polite". Gebhard Wendeborn, Minister for the German chapel on Ludgate Hill in London, was also an active teacher of German and successful publisher of German language learning materials; he used Gottsched's grammar as a basis for his *Elements of German grammar* (1774) for English speakers (see Carr 1935). His observation that the "plain and simple" system of address that had existed in Latin and Greek had now yielded to a tendency of "an affected politeness", with the third person being used as a form of address (Wendeborn 1774: 34), seems to share with Gottsched the typical Enlightenment impatience with the insincerity of affected politeness.¹³ Adelung's influential grammar of 1782 still listed the same four options given by Gottsched (1748) (plus a fifth, using a demonstrative *Dieselben* or titles such as *Ew. Exzellenz*). Polenz (1999: 183), following Besch (1996: 92) suggests that in Adelung's account we can "find hints of" (*andeutungsweise ablesen*) the emergence of a system which only became firmly established in Germany in the nineteenth century, today's two-way choice between polite *Sie* on the one hand and informal *du* (sg.) and *ihr* (pl.) on the other.

<i>Du</i>	'you', second person singular, informal	<i>natürlich</i> 'natural'
<i>ihr</i>	'you', second person plural, informal	<i>althöflich</i> 'old-style polite'
<i>er</i> or <i>sie</i> singular	'he' or 'she', third person singular	<i>mittelhöflich</i> 'medium polite'
<i>Sie</i>	'they', third person plural [capitalized]	<i>neuhöflich</i> 'new-style polite' and <i>überhöflich</i> 'overly polite'

¹² The text has "Contempt of Anger", but I have assumed that "of" is an error for "or".

¹³ On the concomitant changing status of politeness in rhetorical theory of the 18th century, see Till (2004).

Table 1: Forms of address according to Gottsched (1748) (as summarized by Polenz 1999: 384)

Yet evidence from grammars of German for English learners suggests that both Gottsched and Adelung were somewhat conservative in their accounts, presenting a system that already appeared dated to some speakers at least; today's *du/ihr* vs. *Sie* system may well have been further advanced than we have hitherto realized. Virtually contemporary with Gottsched (1748), John Bachmair's grammar of German for English learners (1751), although it made the same four-way distinction as Gottsched had (*du; ihr; er* or *sie; and Sie*), did not share Gottsched's disdain for the "new" polite form *Sie* as "overly" polite. Rather, Bachmair already presented *Sie* as the normal polite form: "In the polite Way of writing and speaking we use always the third Person of the Plural, *sie*, they, but the Meaning is *you*" [sic: *Sie* is not capitalized] (Bachmair 1751; 1771 ed.: 53).¹⁴ Whereas Gottsched stigmatized the new form *Sie* as "overly" polite, Bachmair even appears implicitly to stigmatize Gottsched's preferred unmarked polite form, the third person singular *er/sie* form, because of its pragmatic and grammatical ambiguity. First, it could be used between equals of lower station, but also from a superior to an inferior:

3. Common Trade, People speaking to each other make use of the third Person of the Singular, *er, he*, to a Man; and *sie, she*, to a Woman; yet the Meaning is *you*. This is also done by great People speaking to any Person of a much inferior Station.

Second, Bachmair pointed out, according to context, *Er ist mein Freund* could mean either 'he is my friend' or 'you are my friend' (Bachmair 1771: 53).

We have already seen that Wendeborn (1774) presented the same system as Gottsched and regretted the emergence of "an affected politeness" (Wendeborn 1774: 34). Yet he also already stated that addressing "a person of distinction in the plural number of the third person" – which Polenz (1999: 183) implies was only established in the 19th century – was already the

¹⁴ The full account reads: "1. Husbands and Wives, Parents to their Children, Brothers and Sisters, or very good Friends, by way of Familiarity, make use of the second Person singular; *du, thou* [...]; 2. To Servants, and the meaner sort of people, we say *ihr* [...]; 3. Common Trade, People speaking to each other make use of the third Person of the Singular, *er, he*, to a Man; and *sie, she*, to a Woman; yet the Meaning is *you*. This is also done by great People speaking to any Person of a much inferior Station. [...]; 4. In the polite Way of writing and speaking we use always the third Person of the Plural, *sie*, they, but the Meaning is *you*; 5. Yet *du* and *ihr* are used in Poetry and from the Pulpit; *du* for the Singular, or to one Person; *ihr* for the Plural, or to many Persons."

“prevailing custom”, as in “*Wie befinden sie [sic] sich?* How do THEY do? instead of, *Wie befindet ihr euch?* How do YOU do?” (Wendeborn 1774: 34). Wendeborn also already viewed the use of *Ihr* to address someone in the singular as a “singular [i.e. odd] way of speaking”, though it was, he says, common in the time of Charles V [i.e. 1519-1556] (Wendeborn 1774: 34).¹⁵ Thus, at least two authorities on German for English speakers predating Adelung (1782) already presented the *Sie* plural polite form either as the form “always” used or as the “prevailing custom”.

This small case study shows that grammars for foreign learners can provide additional metalinguistic evidence for attitudes to language change. In this case, the presentation to English learners of the pragmatics of German forms of address in the eighteenth Century reveals a somewhat different picture to that presented by the native grammatical tradition and mainstream language histories, one that allows us to see evidence of changes before they become visible in the native-speaker grammatical tradition.

3. *Model conversations*

Having given an example of how examining the *explicit* rule-giving in language learning manuals can enrich our understanding of the history and historiography of pragmatics, I shall now illustrate what the model conversations in such manuals can tell us. Radtke (1994) already used seventeenth-century manuals of French as a foreign language to reconstruct the spoken language of the period, though from a Conversation Analysis perspective; I am not aware that anything similar has been tried previously for the Germanic languages. My examples come from three related Dutch-English language learning manuals of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1664, 1706, 1788), chosen because they allow us to chart changes over time in otherwise very similar materials. I consider first the communicative genre of agreeing a price (3.1). Dialogues on agreeing a price are ubiquitous in language manuals in early modern Europe – it is telling that Loonen’s study of English-Dutch manuals between 1500 and 1800 is entitled *For to learne to buye and sell* (Loonen 1991); Radtke (1994: 151-237) also chose the situation as a case study in his history of

¹⁵ For Crabb (1800: 99-100) – who followed and adapted Adelung for English learners – it was “not uncommon to use *ihr* to tradesmen”, and *er/sie* to male or female domestics; *sie* (i.e. *Sie*) was “usual” in addressing “your equals and superiors”. Since Crabb was not, however, a native speaker of German as far as we know, and the full title described his grammar as “a translation from Adelung”, his evidence is of lesser weight.

spoken French.¹⁶ The analysis here thus invites future comparison with similar analysis for other language pairs. Second, I consider negative politeness between a host and his guest (3.2), in order to complement the more straightforward case of polite forms of address in Section 2, in a period where notions of politeness (and excessive politeness) were changing.

3.1 Case study 2: Agreeing a price as a communicative genre

A communicative genre is “marked by fixed linguistic patterns, whose function is to indicate the socio-cultural significance of an action”, according to Linke (2007: 475), with reference to Günther & Knoblauch (1995: 6), who state that

communicative genres may be seen as taking the burden away from the actors, relieving them (“Entlastung”) of having to co-ordinate every communicative action anew. By way of routinization these interactive tasks become ‘non-problematic’ and speakers may concentrate on other tasks. Genres are generated as soon as communicative interactants are faced with recurring problems which are of great relevance to the actors. [...] Functionally, communicative genres can be defined as historically and culturally specific, pre-patterned and complex solutions to recurrent communicative problems. (Günther & Knoblauch 1995: 8).

The conversations that I examine below are not primary sources for conversation analysis, for which Günther originally developed the notion of the communicative genre; they are several steps removed from the reality of spoken language. However, they are primary sources for the historian of language education and linguistic historiography, and it is as such that I shall treat them.¹⁷

The communicative genre of negotiating a price is an extremely consistent feature of language manuals from the late middle Ages onwards. The earliest surviving example is found in a German-Italian manuscript aimed at cloth merchants.¹⁸ By the fifteenth century at

¹⁶ The first Dutch-English (or Flemish-English) manual was published by Heunrdrix in Antwerp in 1576, according to Salmon (1992: 136); see also Loonen (1991). On Hillenius see Scheurweghs (1960), Vorlat (1969), and Salmon (1992). On Sewel, see also Scheurweghs (1960) and Hall (2004). Loonen has no information on Teissier, nor have I been able to glean any myself.

¹⁷ Linke (2007) provides a precedent for applying the notion to historical contexts, considering how primary, secondary and metalinguistic sources can be used to reconstruct a communicative genre such as that of “paying a call”.

¹⁸ On German merchants in Italy see also Glück (2002: 246-250).

the latest, such texts were a well-established tradition, in particular for Venetian cloth-merchants trading with merchants from southern German cities (Pausch 1972, Blusch 1992).¹⁹ An example of haggling first given in McLelland (2004: 212-215) is provided below. (The original is German-Italian; I have replaced the Italian with my English translation.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| - Zaig her den parchant fon der chron. | - <i>Show me the 'barchent'²⁰ with the crown on it.</i> |
| - Ich mag euch chain pösen zaigen, also helff mir Got. Ich bird in euch allsamt zaigen und ir bert nemen den der euch aller paz gefelt. Und den der euch aller nutz sey ze furn. | - <i>I won't show you any bad one, so help me God. I'll show them all to you and you take the one which pleases you best of all. And the one which will be of most use to you to carry.</i> |
| - Du sagst wol, do mogst nicht poz sagen. Hastu gueten falessi und gueten bochasin? | - <i>You speak well, you cannot speak better. Do you have good 'falessi' and good 'bochasin'?</i> |
| - Han ich euch nicht gesagt? ich han den aller pesten der in diser stat ist. | - <i>Haven't I said so? I have the very best there is in this town.</i> |
| - Pring her! Lass in sehen! | - <i>Bring it here! Let me see it!</i> |
| [there follows a discussion of price] | [...] |
| - Du peucz in zetewr. Ich mag in wol anderswo leichter haben. | - <i>You are offering it at too high a price. I can surely get it more easily elsewhere.</i> |
| - Ez ist mir liebt ob er alz guet ist als der. | - <i>That's fine by me if it is as good as this here.</i> |
| - Ich gelaub er sey noch pesser zwen auff ein zentar. | - <i>I think it is better still at two [ducats] per hundredweight.</i> |

An extract from Cod. it. 261, cited in Höybye (1974: 174ff.)

The tradition of modelling how to strike a bargain recurs throughout language manuals over the following centuries. In the following, I will consider this communicative genre across three related Dutch-English language manuals. Hillenius (1664) contains eleven dialogues (pp. 2-92); Sewel (1706) contains four unnumbered dialogues (Part II, pp. 2-29) and a further 41 numbered dialogues (pp. 97-288). Finally, James Teissier's revision of Sewel's text

¹⁹ Hellgardt (1996) believes both sets of glosses are based on a much older tradition of using conversation in language teaching represented by the so-called *Hermeneumata pseudodositheana* of ca. 200 A.D., which contained models of Greek conversation for speakers of Latin. The earliest preserved exponent of the tradition dates from 1424, and we have evidence of a Venice language school run by a certain Master George of Nuremberg (Rossebastiano Bart 1983, 1984; Höybye 1956, 1964, 1974); a version of Italian-German language manuals attributed to Adam von Rottweil was printed in 1477 in Venice (ed. Giustiniani 1987).

²⁰ *Barchent* was a type of mixed cotton-linen cloth produced in Nuremberg. See the Nuremberg *Stadtlexikon*: <http://online-service.nuernberg.de/stadtarchiv/rech.FAU?sid=6E6B18478&dm=2&auf=0>, accessed May 2013.

(Sewel & Teissier 1788) contains 39 dialogues (pp. 248-434). The opening dialogues in Hillenius (1664) and Sewel (1706) are identical, save minor variations in wording; and Hillenius's Dialogue 5 *To learne how to buy, and sell* (1664: 13-21) is also virtually identical to Sewel's third dialogue, with the same title (Sewel 1706 Part II 6-18). Very little of Hillenius's dialogue material survives into Teissier's revisions of Sewel (1788), where a rather different dialogue headed *Of buying and selling* appears as Dialogue 6 (pp. 267-270). However, much of Sewel's new dialogue material is preserved in Teissier's revisions: Teissier's Dialogues 13 to 37 (pp. 296-416) repeat Dialogues 17-41 from Sewel (1706: part II, pp. 161-288). Thus, while the possibility of additional intermediaries, in particular between Hillenius and Sewel, cannot be ruled out, the three manuals stand in a clear tradition, with word-for-word correspondences across all three. Differences between them can be interpreted as significant.

The external structure of the genre of bargaining can be summarized as follows.

A seller has a commodity to sell. He or she is keen to sell, but for the highest possible price. No one sale is obligatory, but overall, he or she must make some sales. There is a minimum price, related to the cost price, below which the seller will not sell.

The buyer is keen to buy the commodity. Typically, he or she needs to buy the item, but either has a maximum price in mind or – in some cases, it seems – simply wishes to be confident that he or she is not paying over the odds. There is more than one location where the commodity can be purchased.

The communicative genre is composed of a number of predictable, stereotypical elements – the examples in Table 2 are all taken from Sewel (1706, Part II, pp. 6-18, “To learn how to buy, and sell”), unless otherwise indicated. Many of the elements may be repeated.

Element	Example
1. Asking a price	<i>How much shall I pay for th'Ell of this cloth?</i> – Hoe veel sal ick voor d'Elle van dit Laken betalen?
2. Naming a price	<i>You shall pay five Schillinghs for it</i> – Gy sult 'er vyf schellingen voor betalen
3. Buyer refuses price	<i>It is a good deal too much</i> – Het is veel te veel
4. Invitation from seller to buyer to suggest a price	<i>Offer me something</i> – Bied my wat <i>Tell me what you will give for it</i> – Seght my wat ghy 'er voor geven wilt
5. Buyer offers a price	<i>I will give twenty and two styvers for it, and not a doit more</i> – Ick sal 'er twee en twintig stuyvers voor geven, en niet en duit meer

<p>6. Refusal to sell at that price, with various justifications</p> <p>i. Offers face-saving by de-personalizing it</p> <p>ii. Face-saving – external necessity</p> <p>iii. Flattery</p> <p>iv. Claim of genuine minimum price</p> <p>v. Existential necessity</p>	<p><i>You offer me loss – Ghy bied my verlies</i></p> <p>i. <i>If you were my Brother, I could not give you a better. Al waarje myn Broeder, ik en soude y geen beter kunnen geven.</i></p> <p>ii. <i>I may bestow no more, I should be chidden; ick en mach niet meer besteden, Ick soude bekeven worden.</i></p> <p>iii. <i>But seeing it is you, I doe abate you more than foure and twenty shillings in the piece - Maar nu dat ghy ‘t zijt/ ik sta u af meer dan vier-en-twintigh schillingen op ‘et stuk (Hillenius 1664: 77)</i></p> <p>iv. <i>I am able to sell it as cheap as any other man, as any in the City - Ik ben machtig om alsoo goeden koop te verkoopen als een ander man, als yemant in de Stadt</i></p> <p>v. <i>I must gain something [...] for I must live by it Ick moet wat winnen [...] want ik moet ‘er af leven</i></p>
<p>7. Face-threatening act from buyer to seller, e.g. bare challenge to face by accusing the seller of lack of probity</p>	<p><i>You have set it me at too high a price – Ghy hebt’et my al te hoog gelooft</i></p>
<p>8. Face-threatening act from seller to buyer, e.g. accusing buyer of being too hard to deal with</p>	<p><i>You fall too hard for me to deal with – Gy valt my al te hard om mede to handelen</i> <i>I can gain nothing by you – Ick kan an U E. niet winnen</i></p>
<p>9. Seller offers an alternative (generally intended to be unattractive) – an alternative for the same price, a larger quantity for the price, or suggests trying another seller</p>	<p><i>I have some here which I can sell you for that price, but [...] – Ick heb hier wel wat, dat ick voor dien prys verkopen kan, maar [...]</i></p>
<p>10. Buyer makes counter-offer</p>	<p><i>It’s too much – I’ll give you 17 shillings – Het is al te vel – Ik sal u seventhein schellingen geven (Hillenius 1664: 77)</i></p>
<p>11. Seller makes clear it’s final offer, take it or leave it</p>	<p><i>Well, God guide you, go and try elsewhere – Wel, God geleyde u: gaat, ende ondersoekt ergens op een ander</i></p>
<p>12. [Buyer walks away]</p>	
<p>13. Re-opener after “stalemate”</p>	<p><i>Now, hear yet a word – Nu, hoort nog een woort</i></p>
<p>14. Emphasize the small difference to be overcome</p>	<p><i>It is a shame that you should vex a woman so long for one stiver. – ‘t is schande dat je een Vrouwmensch om een stuyver soo lange tempteert.</i></p>
<p>15. Seller yields, with facesaver</p>	<p><i>I may not refuse handsel – Ick en mach geen handtgift ontseggen.</i> <i>Nevertheless I had rather lose then [sic] to send you away, hoping to take your mony an other time, and moreover this will induce you, to come to my Shop rather than to any others – niette-mine hadt ik liever te verliezen dan u heen te zenden; verhoopende op een anderen tijdt uw geldt te ontfangen ende dit wil U. E. echter aanleiden liever tot</i></p>

	mijnen Winkel dan tot yemandt anders aan te komen. (Hillenius 1664: 78)
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Table 2: Elements of the communicative genre of bargaining (examples from Sewel 1706, Part II, pp. 6-18, unless otherwise indicated)

These exchanges take many turns – in the dialogue in Sewel (1706), there are 28 turns (14 from each participant), and that is before they even begin to argue about whether the coins the buyer hands over have been clipped or are in any other way invalid. A second example of haggling in Hillenius (1664: 76-78), in Dialogue 10, *Discourses touching Merchandising*, is less complex (and less naturalistic), but still takes 14 turns.

However, in the two eighteenth-century manuals, there seems to be a preference for less haggling. Although Sewel (1706) re-uses the two relevant Dialogues 5 and 10 from Hillenius, he also introduces many additional interactions where buyer and seller must agree a price, but where the haggling is less lengthy. The first of these examples comes in a dialogue that immediately following the first “of learning how to buy and sell” (Sewel 1706 Part II, 22-23). Here, a gentlewoman deals with the master’s apprentice, who names a price for striped taffeta; although she retorts that she can buy it cheaper elsewhere, the apprentice does not waver, and the purchase of 25 ells is rapidly concluded in ten turns, with a reminder to the buyer that she can get a good price there in future.

B. Madam, it is of five guilders the ell.	B. Mejuffer, het is van vyf gulden de el.
Mrs. I can get it cheaper at another (place). [sic]	Juf. Ick kan dat op een ander beter koop krygen.
B. That is the price at the word, you can not any where get it cheaper.	B. Dat is de prys met een woort. Ghy kunt het nergens beter koop krygen.
Mrs. How many ells are there in that piece?	Juf. Hoe veel ellen is ‘er aan dat stuck?
B. Just twenty-five.	B. Net vyf en twintigh.
Mrs. To how much doth that amount in all?	Juf. Hoe veel beloopt het alles?
B. To an hundred and five and twenty guilders.	B. Tot hondert en vyf-en-twintigh gulden.
Mrs. There is your money, send it home by the porter.	Juf. Daar is u gelt, send het meet de kruyer t’huys.

(Sewel 1706 Part II, 22-23).

In the other dialogues of this kind in Sewel (1706), there are attempts at haggling too: over bills of exchange (p.44ff); over the hire of a coach (Part II, pp. 134-135), over the rent of two furnished rooms (pp. 141-142), and in three interactions to purchase, respectively, shoes (pp.

166-168), cloth for a suit (pp. 190-91), and a hat (pp. 192-193). Yet the coachman, landlord, shoemaker and hatmaker all stand by their prices in the face of bald on-the-record face-threatening challenges by the would-be hirer or purchaser. *Will you take no less? – No Sir, if you were my own brother*, says the landlord (p. 142). The shoemaker likewise insists that his price is set despite the bald *I do not believe you / Ik geloof u niet* of the purchaser (p. 168). In the case of the hat, the buyer admittedly begins with the face-threatening assertion *‘Tis too dear / Dat is al te duur* and makes a counter-offer, but already in his third turn says *Tell me the lowest price / Zeg my de minste prys* (p. 164), and then accepts the price.²¹ Only in the case of buying cloth does the haggling resemble the complexity of what we have seen in the earlier instances (which also concerned cloth), with a total of 22 turns, albeit short, drawing on the familiar repertoire of challenges (as to the quality of the merchandise) and justifications (the impossibility of beating the price elsewhere; claim to lose money compared to cost price):

The twenty-seventh Dialogue	De zeven-en-twintighste t’Zamenspraak
Have you good cloth?	Hebt gy goed Laken?
What cloth would you have?	Wat voor Laken belieft gy te hebben?
Black cloth.	Zwarte Laken.
There is some.	Zie daar.
How much is it a yard?	Hoe veel is d’el.
Thirty shillings a yard.	D’el is dertig schellingen.
This is not thirty shillings cloth.	Dit is geen laken van dertig schellingen.
‘Tis worth so much.	‘t is dat wel waardig.
Is it some of the finest?	Is het van ‘t mooiste?
Yes, Sir.	Ja myn Heer.
I have will have none at that rate, ‘tis too dear.	Ik wil ‘t zo hoog van prys niet hebben, ‘t is my te dier.
You cannot find cheaper in all the shops.	Gy zult het in gene winkels beter koop krygen.
Will you sell it for five and twenty?	Wilt gy ‘er vyf en twintig voor hebben?
Upon my word I should lose by it; it cost me above eight and twenty.	Op myn word, ik zoud ‘er aan verliezen; want het kost my self meer als achtentwintig.
It is impossible.	Dat is onmoogelijk.
‘Tis as true as you are here.	‘t Is so waar als gy hier zyt.
Make you but one word?	Houdt gy u zo aan een woord?
Have you said the utmost?	Hebt gy uysterste gezegd?
Yes, certainly.	Ja, zekerlyk.
Will you take eight and twenty?	Wily gy achtentwintig hebben?
I must gain something.	Ik moet immers iets winne.
You shall have twenty nine.	Ik zal u negen en twintig geeven.
Take it.	Wel neem het dan.

²¹ No specific prices are mentioned – they are replaced with suspension points [...].

Sewel (1706: 190-191)

Overall, Sewel's new dialogues in 1706 seem to model negotiations reflecting different norms in buying and selling compared to Hillenius (1664). Haggling is no longer represented as the normal way to buy and sell; there is an emerging expectation that prices are fixed. The reason for the survival of the old pattern of sustained hard bargaining in the case of cloth is unclear; perhaps simply because the dialogue comes from an older tradition; possibly buying cloth was considered a special case. Possibly the difference is one between wholesale dealing and retail (even if Sewel 1706 also contains numerous examples of commercial correspondence relevant to wholesale). The implied audience of Hillenius (1664) is trainee merchants, just as in the earliest such German-Italian manuals from the later Middle Ages. For example, the dialogues offer justifications for accepting *handsel* (i.e. making the first sale of the day) and for ensuring a good customer returns, and model how to check for counterfeit coins – in one exchange a coin is proved counterfeit by being nailed to a post. In the new material in Sewel (1706), we instead follow the experiences of a gentleman purchasing a suit, hat, and shoes. Further evidence that to haggle too meanly may be ungentlemanly comes from Dialogue 40 (Sewel 1706: 248-279), where a group of gentleman begin to haggle with a boatman over the price of carrying them to Greenwich for a day out. The boatman names his price of five shillings (a crown); one gentleman responds *It is too much, you shall have four shillings / Dat is te veel, gy zult veer schellingen hebben* (p. 251), but a companion intervenes: *We must give them five shillings, they are honest men, they must get their living / Wy moeten haar vyf schellingen geven, 't zyn eeryke lieden, zy moeten 'er van leven*. Modelled here is a certain *noblesse oblige*, especially as the gentlemen – admittedly a little the worse for wear after a day of drinking – tip an additional shilling as *drinkgeld* (p. 277).

To summarize, the hard bargaining modelled in Hillenius (1664) is reminiscent of the late medieval Italian-German cloth-merchants bargaining; Sewel (1706) adds to this numerous dialogues accepting a fixed price; Sewel & Teissier (1788) repeats the new 'fixed-price' material, and the original hard-bargaining dialogue of Hillenius (1664) is dropped. Overall, then, these three related Dutch-English texts reveal a change in the representation of the communicative genre of bargaining from 1664 to 1788. Whether it is possible to identify a change more widely in a European communicative genre of transacting a sale would warrant further investigation by examining manuals for further language pairs.

3.2 Case study 3: Negative Politeness between guest and host

While the case study above concerned the face-threatening acts in driving a hard bargain, my final example concerns threats to *negative* face (i.e., roughly, threats to an individual's freedom of action),²² and how they may be mitigated. Our case is the interaction in a dialogue where an Englishman invites a Dutchman to dinner (Sewel 1706, Dialogue 23: 174-180, corresponding to Dialogue 19 in Sewel & Teissier 1788: 310-315). We have noted in Section 2 that in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe politeness (and affected *politesse*) was a matter of explicit concern, with tension between the desire to be polite and the risk of being 'unnaturally' polite (as Gottsched viewed the use of *Sie* in some cases).²³ Host-guest interactions are also interesting given recent research on the notions of hospitality in the period (though more in the history of mentalities than from a linguistic perspective, e.g. Still 2011, Mander 2012). The dialogue contains several instances of face-threatening acts and responses to them; my glossing of the exchanges appears in italics, within square brackets:

I. Sewel (1706: 174); identical in Sewel & Teissier (1788:310)

A This is your place [*threat to negative face of B, removing freedom of choice; A takes pre-emptive redressive action through being indirect, rather than using an imperative. At the same time, A is offering an honoured place to B, which imposes a debt on B*]

B Sir, 'tis yours [*refusal of the imposition, with its possible incurring of a debt to A*]

A Pray, without ceremonies, sit you down. [*rejection of the refusal, re-statement of the face-threatening act as an imperative*]

II. Sewel (1706: 178, 180); identical in Sewel & Teissier (1788: 312, 314)

[*Some discussion persuading B to stay longer culminates in a bald on-the-record command: Sewel 1706: 178*]

A. Do not go so soon. [*A. notionally threatens B's negative face with an imperative, but more significant is the positive facework in making B feel appreciated.*]

B. 'Tis to obey you [i.e. *that I stay longer*]. [*B casts the imposition back on A.*]

A. You oblige us. [*A. casts it back on to B once more.*]

B. I would I were able to serve you. [*B. hopes in future to return the debt incurred*]

A. You are very obliging. [*A. accepts this, and returns the imposition*]

B. I never was so well treated. [*B. compliments A.*]

A. 'Tis but our ordinary [*A. minimizes the compliment*]²⁴

²² For nuanced discussion of the classic positions of Brown & Levinson and Goffman (1967) in the light of recent studies, see Culpeper (2009: 24-31). See also Jucker & Taavitsainen (2013, Chapter 7) for an introduction to positive and negative politeness in the context of historical pragmatics.

²³ See also Jucker (2011) on the changing weights ascribed to negative and positive politeness in the history of English.

²⁴ Compare also a similar minimizing of the compliment offered here: *This is good wine – 'Tis but indifferent* (Sewel 1706: 175).

[...]

B. I give you many thanks for your good entertainment. You overcome me with your civilities. [*B. seeks to redress the imposition of debt.*]

A. I am wholly yours. [*A. continues to impose the debt.*]

B. I find well the occasions to trouble you, but not to serve you. [*B. acknowledges the imposition.*]

Such exchanges are on the border between politeness and verbal jousting, as the interlocutors virtually compete in resisting the imposition placed on them by the other. One is reminded of the finding of Bax & Streekstra (2003), on the basis of their analysis of seventeenth-century Dutch correspondence, that “negatively polite ostentation is by and large a ritual affair, particularly since the use of subservient phrases and other expressions according to the humiliating mode is generally a game, rather than earnestly paying deference. [...] Early modern society was quite preoccupied with various genres of ‘deceit’, artistic and otherwise, and took much pleasure in the witty exploitation of multiple meaning design, also when it concerned doing the civil thing” (Bax & Streekstra 2003: 303). The same seems to be true, too, of the eighteenth-century exchanges modelled here.

We find another example of such playfulness – or more accurately, of the unmasking of the game as a game – in a dialogue where gentlemen criticize each other for “standing on ceremony” and “making too many compliments” in their eagerness to ensure they are not the first to step into a boat ahead of their fellows (Sewel 1706: 253-254, corresponding to Sewel & Teissier 385-386).

<p>C. Come then, Gentlemen, let us step into the Boat.</p> <p>D. Step in first, we will follow you.</p> <p>A. Without ceremony, Gentlemen, let him follow me that loves me.</p> <p>B. What needs so many compliments; For my part I never use any; I take my place by you, for you keep the Bottles.</p> <p>C. Sir, I intreat you not to let me commit any incivility.</p> <p>D. Sir, I will not go before you, I know well the respect that is due to you.</p> <p>C. But, Sir, you will laugh at me, we will stay here then till tomorrow.</p> <p>A. I must confess, Gentlemen, you are very ceremonious.</p> <p>B. Come, come Gentleman, let us make haste, what needs so many</p>	<p>C. Komt, dan, Heeren, laat ons in de Schuyt treden.</p> <p>D. Stap eerst in, wy zullen u volgen.</p> <p>A. Zonder Ceremonien Heeren, die my lief heft mag my volgen.</p> <p>B. Waar toe zo veel Complementen? Ik voor my, gebruik ze nooit: Ik ga by u zitten, want gy hebt de Bottels by u.</p> <p>C. Myn Heer, ik bid u, laat my geen onheusheyd began.</p> <p>D. Myn Heer, ik wil voor u niet ingaan, ik weet zeer wel, wat eerbiedigheyt ik u schuldig ben.</p> <p>C. Maar myn Heer, gy lacht om my, zo doende zullen wy hier wel tot Morgen stan.</p> <p>A. Ik moet bekennen Heeren, dat gy vol Ceremonien zyt.</p> <p>B. Kom, kom, Heeren, laat ons wat haast maken, waar toe zo veel Ceremonien onder</p>
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ceremonies among friends? D. I beseech you, Sir, let us not make these Gentlemen stay. C. Sir, I had rather commit an incivility, than to disobey you.	vrienden? D. Ik bid u myn Heer, laat ons deeze Heeren niet doen wachten. C. Myn Heer, ik wil liever een onbeleefdheid begaan, dan u ongehoorzaam syn.
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Sewel (1706: 253-254)

Another instances can be found in Sewel's 25th dialogue (Sewel 1706: 186), where two gentlemen seek to pay for the other, until one exclaims, "We are not in France", presumably an allusion to the idea that excessive politeness is a French habit in its origin; and in the rejection of excessive apologizing in an exchange between a lady and gentleman (Sewel 1706: 187-88). In such cases, model dialogues can become themselves metalinguistic commentary on pragmatics.²⁵

4. Conclusion and outlook

Notwithstanding the methodological risks noted in Section 1., I hope here to have demonstrated the potential of foreign language learning materials to illuminate both the history and historiography of pragmatics. First, metalinguistic statements can contribute explicitly to the historiography of linguistics and the history of language change, as in the case of German conventions for forms of address. Second, we may examine how linguistic behaviour is modelled in dialogues and so trace evidence for changes in pragmatics over time, as explored here in the apparent changes to the unwritten rules governing the communicative genre of bargaining. Thirdly, dialogues may encode metalinguistic commentary, for example on excessive politeness, exposed in Sewel (1706) and Sewel & Teissier (1788) as a game.

In a further step, these bilingual dialogues – adapted and recycled, with often changing language pairs, including French, Spanish and Italian as well as the Dutch, German and English cases considered here – could be valuable sources for tracing the exchange of cultural knowledge and cultural practices, including pragmatics, across early modern and Enlightenment Europe. It would also be fruitful to compare the pragmatic information

²⁵ In a variation on the game, in Dialogue 44, a brother claims to be complimenting his sister on having invited such a charming lady to dinner; the compliment is of course directed at the guest. Here complimenting becomes intertwined with ritualized love-making (Sewel 1706: 284-85), another topic which is frequent in a number of 18th-century language learning manuals.

contained in such language manuals for non-native speakers not just with native grammars of the time (as here in Section 2) but also with manuals intended for competent native-speakers: civility manuals such as Courtin's *Nouveau traité de la civilité* (1672), swiftly translated also into English, German and Italian (see Mander 2015), titularies, epistolographies, and rhetorics (such as Sattler 1604 and its successors; see Till 2004 for the history of rhetoric in German), and, indeed, merchants' guides (e.g. Savary 1713). For the present paper, however, I have limited myself to the first step of exploring the potential of manuals for non-native speakers.

Finally, this article has offered a 'proof of principle' for using historical language learning materials to examine speech acts (e.g. complimenting) but also, on a larger scale, communicative genres (e.g. bargaining). We must continue to exploit such sources to help provide a historical perspective on core topics in contemporary pragmatics: to examine apologies, complaints, or the expression of epistemic modality, for example; but also to examine communicative genres such as patient-doctor interactions, an obvious candidate because they are not only the focus of current research (e.g. Cordella 2004), but were also frequently modelled in language learning dialogues.

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