



Zeltia Blanco Suárez

Tese de doutoramento

**DEATH-RELATED INTENSIFIERS IN THE
HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH
LANGUAGE: GRAMMATICALISATION
AND OTHER
PROCESSES OF LANGUAGE CHANGE**

Departamento de Filloxía Inglesa e Alemá
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Autoriza a presentación da tese indicada, considerando que reúne os requisitos esixidos no artigo 34 do Regulamento de Estatutos de Doutoramento, e que como directora da mesma non incorre nas causas de abstención establecidas na lei 40/2015

Asdo.: María José López Couso

Aos meus pais, Pili e Manolo

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Corpora and electronic collections

ARCHER = A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers

ECF = Eighteenth Century Fiction

EEBOCorp 1.0 = Early English Books Online Corpus (version 1.0)

HC = The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts

NCF = Nineteenth Century Fiction

Dictionaries

MED = *Middle English Dictionary*

OED = *Oxford English Dictionary*

Grammatical terms (in the Leipzig glosses)

ACC = accusative

DAT = dative

DEFART = definite article

F = feminine

INF = infinitive

M = masculine

NOM = nominative

PL = plural

PRS = present

PST = past

PTCP = participle

SG = singular

SUP = superlative

1 = first person

3 = third person





1. Introduction

Human communication consists not only in the mere exchange of propositional content, since, as claimed by Jakobson (1960) and Scheibman (2002: 9), language has functions other than the referential. One of these is the emotive or expressive function, which is focused on the speaker/writer, and which ‘flavors to some extent all our utterances, on their phonic, grammatical, and lexical level’ (Jakobson 1960: 354). With this function we highlight the importance of our message and add weight to our arguments, given that it implies the direct expression of the speaker’s or writer’s attitude towards the proposition. By way of illustration, if we want to emphasise the importance of something, we will not, in all likelihood, describe it simply as *important*. Instead, we will probably refer to it as *terribly important*, *incredibly important*, or *highly important*, stressing as well, through intonation, the intensifying adverbs *terribly*, *incredibly*, and *highly*. The use of expressive features such as interjections, stress, and intensifying adverbs, therefore, is aimed to persuade our interlocutors and thus achieve our conversational purposes.

Humans show in fact an apparent taste for hyperbolic expressions and exaggeration (Peters 1994: 271), which is directly linked to the expressive function of language: the more we stress the relevance of our message, the more persuasive it will be. Our tendency to overstatement manifests itself in a proliferation of mechanisms of intensification in everyday language. Such linguistic devices, used to give prominence or relevance to our discourse, are known as *intensifiers* or *intensification strategies*, and include, among many others, intensifying adverbs (*bloody* and *awfully*, for instance), intensifying prefixes (e.g. *super-* and *mega-*, as in *super cute* and *mega rich*), intonation, the use of the superlative, and the repetition of words (e.g. *very*, *very important*). In the present work intensifiers are defined, along the lines of Bolinger (1972: 17), as ‘any device that scales a quality, whether up or down or somewhere between the two’. They are, therefore, words and expressions which indicate a degree along a scale. Consider the examples in (1.1)-(1.4) below:

- (1.1) *Emma has a **super** cute outfit on, doesn't she?* (14/02/2007. *All my children*. *Corpus of American Soap Operas*)
- (1.2) *That's **fucking** good coffee.* (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*, s.v. *fucking* adj. and adv.)

(1.3) *I'm **dying for** a cup of coffee* (MacMillan Dictionary, s.v. *be dying for something/to do something*)

(1.4) *That's **awfully** good of you. It's just too bad you didn't catch him.* (2003. Lisa Tucker. *The song reader: a novel*. COHA).

The intensifiers in bold in these examples reinforce the expressivity of the utterance, and are equivalent to *very cute*, *very good*, *I'm really looking forward to having a cup of coffee*, and *very good*, respectively. Although *super*, *fucking*, *dying for*, and *awfully* in (1.1)-(1.4) are all expressive of high degree, intensifiers can also indicate low degree, as in (1.5), in which *at all* expresses the lowest degree possible ('I do not support her in any way'):

(1.5) *They don't support her **at all**.* (Quirk et al. 1985: 598)

A widely-used classification of intensifiers, based on the degree which they express, is offered by Quirk et al. (1985) (cf. section 2.2.1.1). These authors suggest a twofold distinction: on the one hand, *amplifiers*, i.e. those intensifiers which magnify a given quality, whether to a high or to a maximum degree (boosters and maximisers, respectively); on the other hand, *downtoners*, i.e. those intensifiers which indicate a low degree on a given degree scale. Low degree, however, can be further specified, so that downtoners can be subdivided into approximators, compromisers, diminishers, and minimisers (cf. Quirk et al. 1985). Other authors, by contrast, prefer to restrict the label *intensifier* to those forms which indicate high or maximum degree. Throughout this dissertation, however, I will use *intensifier* as an umbrella term to refer to those elements which can indicate either high or low degree.

The use of intensifiers or intensification strategies so as to convey the relevance of our message has, however, a downside. Over time, intensifiers may lose their initial expressive force through frequent use and may eventually be replaced by other forms fulfilling the same function. Renewal or *recycling* within the intensifier domain is highly conspicuous (Tagliamonte 2008), since these words are particularly liable to fashion, as well as highly sensitive to sociolinguistic factors. Intensifiers, therefore, offer an exceptional 'picture of fevered invention and competition that would be hard to come by elsewhere' (Bolinger 1972: 18). This susceptibility to change has placed intensifiers in the spotlight of studies on semantic change and sociolinguistic variation. However, despite all the scholarly attention which they have received, there is still room for further research on intensifiers. The present dissertation is therefore intended as a

contribution to enhance our understanding of the origin, development, and use of English intensifiers. In the remainder of this chapter, I look into the scope and aims of the study (section 1.1) and provide the outline of this piece of research (section 0).

1.1. SCOPE AND AIMS OF THE STUDY

Anthropologically speaking, the experience of death is of the most genuine concern for all cultures and societies worldwide, since it marks the most extreme limits of human existence. With such an impact on our daily routines, it comes as no surprise that death can successfully be exploited as a source of intensification in language, perhaps even cross-linguistically. As noted by Claridge (2011: 176), ‘the existence of hyperbolic uses in different languages within the same semantic fields and partly with the same items is evidence for a cross-linguistic universal’.

The present dissertation explores the use of death for intensification purposes in the English language. In particular, it aims to shed light on how certain forms from the semantic field of death, such as the ones illustrated in (1.6)-(1.10) below, came to be used as intensifiers to express high degree in Present-Day English (PDE).

- (1.6) *Like quinoa, freekeh is chock-full of protein, slightly nutty, and **dead** easy to cook.* (07/03/2013. *The Independent*)¹
- (1.7) *He wasn't joking. I could tell he meant it. He was **deadly** serious and I knew it.* (1991. Malcolm Hammer. *Sudden death*. BYU-BNC)
- (1.8) *‘Southwest,’ amended the young man Martin.’ And in a **mortal** hurry by all the signs.”* (1992. Ellis Peters. *The holy thief*. BYU-BNC)
- (1.9) *Th-- this impression that I got or er erm (pause) that incident at school, played such a big part in my life after that, I was **mortally** embarrassed for the rest of my school life.* (1987. Gwynedd County Council tape 5: interview for oral history project (Leisure). BYU-BNC)
- (1.10) *Four and a half thousand pounds! [...] She's chuffed **to death**. Only thing she weren't chuffed about is she couldn't cash cheque, it had to go all through bank and everything.* (1992. 25 convs rec. by ‘Kathleen2’ (PS1FC). BYU-BNC).

Although the use of death for intensifying or hyperbolic purposes has been explored in part by Claridge (2011: 197-207), Margerie (2011), and Blanco-Suárez (2013, 2014a, 2014b), a comprehensive diachronic corpus-based study of death-related intensifiers in English is still missing. This thesis thus tries to fill this gap by looking into the

¹<http://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/food-and-drink/features/le-freekeh-cest-chic-the-middle-eastern-grain-has-food-lovers-and-chefs-smitten-8525279.html>

behaviour and semantic development of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* from Early English to the present day. To this end, the dissertation examines the different collocational patterns of these intensifiers in several corpora and electronic collections of texts, so as to account for the types of meanings which prevailed at the different periods. The analysis takes as a model the cline for the semantic development of intensifiers proposed by Sylvia Adamson (2000), which distinguishes three different types of meanings of intensifiers: descriptive > affective > intensifying. Thus, intensifiers originally show literal or descriptive meanings. Over time, these forms increase in subjectivity and come to express more affective or subjective values, before developing, at a later stage, purely intensifying meanings. This is the case, for instance, of the intensifier *awfully* (e.g. *awfully glad*), which initially meant ‘terribly, dreadfully’ (OED, s.v. *awfully* adv. I 1). A number of initial research questions arise here. Is Adamson’s model adequate to account for the semantic development of death-related intensifiers too? When are the first intensifying uses of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* attested? In which contexts can we find these early intensifying uses? Are there any parallelisms in the collocations of the death-related intensifiers under study? These and other questions concerning death-related intensifiers constitute the focus of the present dissertation.

In order to study the semantic development of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*, a number of variables were considered. The first of these concerns the actual collocation in which these intensifiers are attested, that is, the word(s) with which they co-occur. The type of meaning of the collocation (e.g. *deadly sin*, *dead sure*, *mortal scared*) is the second variable examined. For this, I have adapted the threefold distinction made by Adamson (2000), and distinguished two further intermediate levels: one between descriptive and subjective meanings, and another between subjective and intensifying. The addition of these stages to the cline was intended to minimise the bias in the analysis of the data, given that assigning the examples to a particular category was not always straightforward. Thirdly, I looked at semantic prosody, that is, whether the collocate of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* was semantically positive, negative, or neutral. Finally, I also took into consideration the type of word modified by these forms, i.e., whether it was a noun, an adjective, a verb, an adverb, etc. These four linguistic variables were examined in detail for each of the forms in four different historical periods, namely Middle English (ME), Early Modern English (EModE), Late Modern English (LModE), and twentieth-century English, and were statistically tested.

Moreover, the actual strength of the association between the intensifier and its collocate was calculated by means of various statistical measures designed to assess the degree of collocational strength: the mutual information (*MI*) test and its cubed variant (*MI³*), the log-likelihood test, and the *z*-score.

The collocational analysis conducted in this piece of research relied chiefly on corpora and electronic databases, though additional sources were used to supplement the corpus data. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) were consulted in order to obtain a preliminary overview of the origin and development of these intensifiers. The information provided by these historical dictionaries was subsequently expanded with evidence from a number of corpora and electronic collections of texts. Two classic corpora, which together cover the whole history of English, HC (*Helsinki Corpus of English Texts*) and ARCHER (*A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*), were used in the hope of gaining an understanding of the overall evolution of these forms in the long diachrony, from the ME period up to PDE. The evidence from these sources, however, turned out to be insufficient, and was hence complemented with larger corpora and databases for EModE and LModE. Thus, *Early English Books Online Corpus 1.0* (EEBOCorp 1.0), *Eighteenth Century Fiction* (ECF), and *Nineteenth Century Fiction* (NCF) shed light on the uses of the forms under analysis at these specific periods, providing a good number of examples of intensifying uses, which were scarce or inexistent in much smaller corpora such as the HC and ARCHER.

The novelty of this dissertation, however, lies not only in its topic. The diachronic semantic analysis presented in this piece of work is unprecedented in trying to provide a systematic analysis of a large volume of data, given the number of examples eventually examined (40,976 occurrences in total). A semantic analysis of the type conducted here posed an additional major challenge, since many of the instances involved discriminating between closely related meanings and, therefore, establishing rather fine-grained distinctions.

1.2. OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

The present dissertation consists of two clearly differentiated parts, the first one devoted to the literature review (chapters 2, 3, and 4) and to methodological issues (chapter 5), and the second one presenting the case study on death-related intensifiers (chapter 6).

Chapter 2 opens with a theoretical discussion of the role of intensification in language and how it is realised linguistically by means of various intensification strategies or intensifiers. Section 2.2 discusses the defining features of intensifiers and reviews the different definitions and models of classification which have been put forward in the literature (cf. section 2.2.1). These models can be subsumed under two very broad categories: those which classify intensifiers on the basis of a degree scale (cf. 2.2.1.1), on the one hand, and those which propose a semantic classification of intensifiers, on the other (cf. 2.2.1.2). After presenting the different models of classification, I assess their suitability and introduce the model adopted in this dissertation (section 2.2.2), before providing some concluding remarks for the chapter (cf. 2.3).

The purpose of chapter 3 is to offer a detailed overview of grammaticalisation, the theory upon which this dissertation hinges. After some preliminary remarks about the history of the term and its development in section 3.1, I introduce the parameters and principles of grammaticalisation, as established by Lehmann (1985) and Hopper (1991), respectively (section 3.2). Next, in section 3.3, some of the phenomena typically associated with grammaticalisation are discussed, specifically unidirectionality, reanalysis, (inter)subjectification, and frequency. Section 3.4, in turn, reviews some recent trends in the field of grammaticalisation, before closing the chapter with a brief summary in section 3.5.

Chapter 4 is intended to link the two theoretical chapters on intensification and grammaticalisation (chapters 2 and 3) with the corpus-based study on death-related intensifiers (chapter 6). The chapter thus includes an overview of different English intensifiers which have been discussed in the literature, either from the point of view of grammaticalisation (section 4.1) or from a variationist perspective (section 4.2). Section 4.1 examines the development of several reinforcers and attenuators over time (4.1.1 and 4.1.2, respectively). For reinforcers, some additional remarks are provided on the competition of this type of intensifiers in two specific text types, letters and medical writing (4.1.1.3). In turn, section 4.2 summarises some studies which have tackled intensifiers from the perspective of variation, either in terms of social variation (4.2.1) or of geographical variation (4.2.2).

Chapter 5 is concerned with methodological issues. As stated in section 1.1 above, this dissertation is primarily corpus-based. The chapter therefore opens with some introductory remarks on usage-based models of language and on the rise of corpus

linguistics, the methodological framework of the thesis (section 5.1). Next, in 5.2 I introduce the different sources of data which were consulted for the current piece of research: dictionaries, corpora, and electronic databases. Section 5.3, on the other hand, is concerned with the computer tool used for the analysis, namely Wordsmith 6.0, in particular its Concordance function, and with the different tests which were used to assess the statistical significance of the results. Finally, section 5.4 explains the design of the database and its particulars, as well as the variables of analysis.

The actual corpus-based study is presented in chapter 6. In the first part of the chapter (6.1), I provide an outline of the evolution of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* by resorting to evidence from the OED and the MED. Next, I turn on to corpus evidence, in particular to two classic corpora, the HC and ARCHER, to trace the long diachrony of these intensifiers (section 6.2). EModE and LModE are the focus of section 6.3, which turn out to be decisive periods in the history of the forms under discussion. Section 6.4, on the other hand, summarises the evolution of each of the death-related intensifiers considering the type of meaning they express, the semantic prosody of the collocations in which they occur, and the type of word which they modify. Lastly, in 6.5 I discuss the development of the selected intensifiers in relation to the framework of grammaticalisation, hence applying to the data the theoretical concepts discussed in the chapters devoted to the literature review.

Finally, chapter 7 provides a summary of the main findings of the dissertation, together with some thoughts on possible future research.



2. Intensification and intensifiers in language

As mentioned in the introduction, the first theoretical chapter of this thesis, chapter 2, deals with intensification and intensifiers in language, and therefore lays the foundations of the doctoral dissertation. I specifically aim to shed light on the concepts of intensification and intensifiers, that is, the different mechanisms which are used across languages to express intensification (cf. section 2.1). Section 2.2 opens with some terminological issues and with the presentation of the general features of intensifiers, and then introduces various classifications which have hitherto been proposed in the literature on intensifiers (cf. section 2.2.1). Finally, section 2.2.2 reviews the main advantages and disadvantages of the different models and further specifies how the concept is understood in the present work, before closing the chapter with some remarks in the guise of conclusion (section 2.3).

2.1. DEFINING AND CONVEYING INTENSIFICATION

In the interest of maximum communicative efficiency, speakers are constantly looking for new ways of attaining the required expressiveness, so that languages show a natural tendency towards constant innovation and the recycling of unproductive elements. The apparent human taste for hyperbolic expressions (Peters 1994: 271) fits in perfectly with this idea of a continuous updating of languages. Exaggeration and intensification are pervasive in everyday communication because they are very convenient devices for the purpose of convincing others, and persuading our interlocutor(s) is one of the basic goals of any communicative act. In fact, language is not only used for the expression of content (what Halliday labels the *ideational* function), but can also serve an interpersonal function, by means of which the speaker intrudes on the speech event to express an opinion, persuade, etc. (Halliday 1973: 106). This intrusion on the part of the speaker to express commitment to the proposition is defined as *intensity* by Labov (1984). In this sense, intensification or intensity can be an extremely fruitful tool for emphasis and, hence, for persuasion. In Partington's words, 'the importance of intensification in the communicative process is that it is a vehicle for impressing, praising, persuading, insulting, and generally influencing the listener's reception of the message' (1993: 178).

Intensity or intensification is not an exclusive property of language, as it also applies

in other fields, such as Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Music, and Geology (cf. Vermeire 1979; Flores 2004). However, the crucial question here is what is understood by intensification and how it is manifested in language. Intensification in language refers to the degree of a specific quality, and it cannot be measured objectively, but is rather a 'subjective norm relative to the speaker's experience' (Vermeire 1979: 9), which implies expressing an emotional attitude towards what is being predicated (1979: 15). Thus, temperature can be calculated in objective terms, so that a temperature of 2,000° C is considered to be intense heat. Nevertheless, temperature can also be subjectively perceived, since it depends on one's own experience. For instance, 40° C is certainly not as suffocating for a person living in the desert as for a person living in Oslo. The difference in temperature, however, can also be indicated in language through different nuances: *boiling hot*, *suffocatingly hot*, *rather hot*, and even *slightly hot*.

Inherent to the concept of intensification are the notions of quantity and scalarity or configuration of scales. Intensity always involves measuring a quantity. Nonetheless, while quantity is more concrete and can easily be expressed numerically (e.g. cake), intensity is more abstract and applies to abstract uncountables (e.g. happiness). Moreover, intensification is also directly linked to the recognition and formation of mental scales, a cognitive-linguistic process common to all humans. The basis for the construction of these mental scales is provided by comparison, since, as Flores (2004) argues, it is only when a situation is comparable that it will also be gradable. For instance, if we say that something is big, it is because we can contrast it with something else which we consider smaller, and it is in this way that we may place it on a continuum or scale of size. Furthermore, it seems that languages tend to create fictional boundaries even in those cases when a limit is not given. Flores (2004: 41) gives the example of *vor Neid platzen* in German ('to be green with envy', literally, 'to explode with envy'), where the explosion is obviously an unreal consequence of being envious of something; a limit or extreme is set up, that is, being envious to the extreme.

Intensification, therefore, can be broadly defined as the 'placement of a predication on a scale of intensity, or degree of realisation of the predication, reaching from extremely/very low to very/extremely high' (Claridge 2011: 9). It is thus conceived as a binary process which implies looking both upwards and downwards on a scale. In other words, it serves to express both exaggeration and depreciation (cf. Bolinger 1972: 20; van Os 1989: 1). Gradability, however, is not an exclusive property of adjectives, but can also be shown in verbs, nouns, adverbs, and even prepositional phrases (cf. Bolinger

1972; van Os 1989; Flores 2004). For Bolinger (1972), for instance, in addition to degree adjectives and degree adverbs, there also exist degree nouns and degree verbs. For example, he explains that the noun *fool* admits a degree reading, as in *he is a big fool* ‘he is very foolish’, whereas the noun *lad* does not, and if modified by the adjective *big* it just means ‘large in size’ (1972: 146). As far as verbs are concerned, Bolinger suggests that those which can be intensified accept intensifying adverbs such as *rather*, *so*, or *quite* (e.g. *he quite exasperates me*), whereas those which do not accept such readings cannot be modified by these adverbs. This is the case of the verb *wait*, a non-degree verb which does not admit the adverb *so* (e.g. in a question such as **why do you wait so?*) (1972: 160).

Intensification can be linguistically fulfilled by means of various strategies or mechanisms. Linguistic elements with both a reinforcing and a weakening effect and which modify items that can be placed on a degree scale are generally known as *intensifiers* or *degree words*. Early works, such as Borst (1902) and Kirchner (1955), opted for the generic label *Gradadverbien* (‘degree adverbs’), though under this term they also included forms which are not formally adverbs. In line with authors such as van Os (1989) and Bolinger (1972), in this dissertation I will adopt the general label *intensifier* to refer to those forms which can have both a reinforcing and a downgrading function. Whenever it is necessary to highlight the different ways in which intensification is linguistically fulfilled, I will equally refer to intensifiers as *intensification/intensifying strategies* or *intensification/intensifying mechanisms*.

Two of the pioneering scholars in the academic discussion about intensification are Cornelis Stoffel and Eugene Borst, who already at the beginning of the twentieth century devoted whole monographs to degree adverbs, published in 1901 and 1902, respectively. Since then, however, studies on intensification strategies or intensifiers have succeeded. In the remainder of this section I will refer to the most relevant works on intensification since the publication of Stoffel’s and Borst’s monographs, namely the studies by Mathesius (1939), Kirchner (1955), Moreno de Oliveira (1962), Spitzbardt (1965), Biedermann (1969), Bolinger (1972), Bäcklund (1973), Cruzeiro (1973), Vermeire (1979), Suscinskij (1985), van Os (1989), Peters (1993), Renkema (1997), Lorenz (1999), Flores (2004), and Claridge (2011). However, rather than presenting them in chronological order, I have opted for a threefold classification based on the type of intensification strategy discussed. Though the specific labels used by these authors vary, the intensification mechanisms which they examine can be broadly classified into

three types: a) those which highlight the relevance of a given message through the use of figures of speech (section 2.1.1); b) lexical and morphosyntactic devices (section 2.1.2); and c) those where intensification is achieved by means of intonation and stress (section 2.1.3). These three types of intensification strategies will therefore be examined in detail in the remainder of this section.

2.1.1. Intensification through figures of speech

Academic discussions on intensification provide comprehensive lists of strategies which can be used in language in order to stress the importance of a message. Other than intonation and stress, the remaining mechanisms of intensification commonly discussed in the literature, of a multifarious nature, roughly comprise two different types: figures of speech such as litotes, hendiadys, and hyperbole, as well lexical and morphosyntactic devices, among many others the use of prefixes and of word order. In what follows, I look into the use of figures of speech for intensification purposes.

2.1.1.1. *Litotes*

Litotes, the expression of a concept through its antonym, seems to have been rather frequent in OE, and was continued in later stages of the language, as suggested by Borst (1902: 6). The negative prefix *un-* was commonly used in litotes. In OE, for instance, *unlytel*, literally ‘unlittle’, denoted something or somebody very big, and *unfrod*, literally ‘unold’, referred to a young person. ME *unfew* was used to indicate a good quantity of something, and Borst gives an example from *The Times*, referring to a certain Mr. Tallien, who is about ten feet high and whose face is *not unhandsome*, meaning ‘very handsome’. This author further notes that the forms *not a little* (*no little*), *not so bad*, and *not half bad* are especially frequent. This figure of speech is also tackled by Bolinger (1972) and Renkema (1997). In examples (2.1) and (2.2), taken from Bolinger, *not overly bright* and *no small respect* convey precisely the opposite idea: ‘he’s rather stupid’ and ‘I’m pretty respectful’, respectively. The same applies to *niet onaardig* (‘not bad’) in (2.3), an example from Dutch taken from Renkema (1997), where *niet onaardig* is used to suggest that the person in question has good writing skills.

(2.1) *He’s not overly bright.*

(2.2) *I have no small respect for that man.*

- (2.3) *Hij schrift niet onaardig.*
 he write-PRS.3SG not bad

2.1.1.2. *Hendiadys*

Hendiadys involves the paratactic association of two adjectives or adverbs through the conjunction *and*, which demands a logic connection between the two conjoins. This is found, for instance, in *nice and early* ('very early') or *nice and warm* ('very warm'). These forms, discussed by Borst (1902) and Kirchner (1955), appear to have been rather frequent in eighteenth-century English, specifically in Jonathan Swift's writings, as claimed by Kirchner.

2.1.1.3. *Hyperbole*

Although hyperbole is also discussed by Bolinger (1972), the most comprehensive account of this figure of speech is undoubtedly the one offered by Claudia Claridge in her 2011 monograph. According to this author, hyperbole is an intensification device which expresses gradability, but is also intensive in the emotional sense, since it is a strategy used to express the speaker's commitment to the truth of the proposition, what Labov (1984) called *intensity* (cf. section 2.1 above). The term *hyperbole* has a very long history, since it was already in use in classical Greece, and has been widely discussed in the rhetorical tradition. However, hyperbole is not a figure of speech restricted to rhetoric, but is prevalent in our daily interactions. As already noted by Quintilian (quoted in Claridge 2011: 1), hyperbole is 'commonly used even by ignorant people and peasants, which is understandable, as all people are by nature inclined to magnify or minimise things and nobody is content to stick to what is really the case'. As can be gathered from Quintilian's remark, hyperbole is a ubiquitous phenomenon on account of the human tendency to exaggeration. It is also referred to as *overstatement* and *exaggeration*. These labels, however, are much more generic and non-technical, and are not associated to any particular domain, whereas *hyperbole* is typically identified with rhetoric.

As Claridge notes, hyperbole is a highly contextual phenomenon, because depending on how the contextual information is interpreted, a speaker might understand a situation as hyperbolic and another speaker as non-hyperbolic. As recognised by the author, context comprises extralinguistic factors about the speech situation, the characteristics of the participants, and their social relationships (2011: 12). Furthermore, hyperbole

always entails a contrast between a literal or unmarked form and the corresponding hyperbolic expression. The former implies agreement with the extralinguistic facts, while the latter implies an excess of the limits of fact, i.e., ‘more of X’ (2011: 5).

Although hyperbole, as exaggeration, might in principle be associated with the expression of extremes, in hyperbole any part of the scale of gradability can be used to exaggerate. Moreover, it is not necessarily expressed by a single word, but can also involve propositions. Thus, Claridge distinguishes between single-word, phrasal, and clausal hyperboles. Single-word hyperboles are the most frequent ones, because they are also less complex and easier to produce (2011: 46). It is also for this reason that they are more likely to become conventional hyperboles (e.g. *ages*, *sec* [‘second’]). In phrasal hyperboles, in turn, it is the combination of words and their meanings that triggers the hyperbolic reading. In *been here, there and everywhere*, the example given by Claridge (2011: 54), the hyperbolic sense is provided by the combination of the adverbs *here*, *there*, and *everywhere*. Finally, clausal hyperboles comprise, as their name suggests, a combination of two or more clausal constituents (e.g. *nobody ever learns anything*). In addition to these three types, Claridge (2011: 58-70) also mentions numerical hyperboles (e.g. *we go via Truro. The 15,000 roundabouts, you know*), as well as hyperboles involving comparisons, superlatives, and repetitions (e.g. *I avoid mornings like the plague* or *but he’s just really really really strange*).

One of the concomitant features of hyperbole is subjectivity, which, as Finegan claimed (1995: 1), involves the ‘expression of self and the representation of a speaker’s [...] perspective or point of view in discourse – what has been called a speaker’s imprint’ (cf. section 3.3.3). As Claridge notes, ‘expression of self is basically unavoidable, as completely neutral or objective language use is not possible’ (2011: 74). In fact, even in the case of certain semantic domains which may at first sight seem rather objective (e.g. TIME or QUANTITY), hyperbole can bias those readings and render them more subjective. With other inherently subjective semantic domains (e.g. VALUE or HUMAN STATE), hyperbole just magnifies those subjective interpretations. In Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, Juliet utters the oft-quoted *a thousand times good night*. In principle, *a thousand times* is something quantifiable and hence of an objective nature; however, in this particular case it is clearly exaggerated, because she is obviously not saying goodbye to anybody so many times on the same night. Conversely, sometimes speakers may use a downtoning strategy, typically an adverbial placed immediately before the hyperbolic expression, to attenuate the force of the hyperbole, as

in the slogan *probably the best beer in the world*, quoted by Claridge.

The expression of emotion is also intrinsic to hyperbole and closely related to subjectivity or ‘the speaker’s imprint’. When expressing something hyperbolically, we are overemphasising our feelings about something, that is, focusing the attention on our self. At the same time, however, we also try to involve our interlocutors in our emotional state. Therefore, hyperbole is not only a subjective phenomenon, but it is also intersubjective (Claridge 2011: 77) (cf. section 3.3.3).¹ Furthermore, it appears that when people talk about their emotions, they tend to use more figurative language and exaggeration, especially to convey negative opinions about something (Gibbs et al. 2002). This owes to the fact that humans tend to ‘look on (and talk of) the bright side of life’ (Boucher and Oswood 1969: 1). In other words, a positive state of affairs is the unmarked state, while negative feelings need to be emphasised as being the abnormal or unexpected situation.

In relation to the expression of the self and hyperbole, Claridge also explores if it is actually the case that women use more figurative language than men, as it is commonly thought that they are more emotional. She finds that there are more females than males represented in her data, which clearly has an impact on her results. In spite of this, after normalising the frequencies, she still finds a statistically significant difference, and, more conspicuously, a female preference for expressions such as *starve*, *die for*, *ages*, and *to death*, in contrast to the typically male expressions like *incredible*, *tons of*, *hundreds*, and *gigantic*. In connection to this, Bowers, Metts, and Duncanson (1985) mention that women attach more importance to sharing their emotions, whereas men prefer expressions which emphasise achievements (cited in Claridge 2011: 90).

Another important aspect related to the expression of the self is the image that we want to project of ourselves in our daily interactions. Hyperboles are aimed to show more empathy and solidarity with our interlocutors, as well as to increase the credibility of our message. Our degree of involvement and of persuasiveness is also closely related to the type of hyperbole we use. Claridge establishes a classification into creative, semi-creative or semi-conventional, and conventional hyperboles. The more creative the hyperbole is, the more effective and persuasive our discourse will sound, although it can cause greater misunderstandings, because our interlocutor(s) might not interpret our

¹ Intersubjectivity (cf. section 3.3.3) is understood as the relationship to the addressee and the addressee’s face, and the process of codification of these intersubjective meanings is known as intersubjectification (cf., among others, Traugott 2003, 2010; Cuyckens, Davidse and Vandelanotte 2010; López-Couso 2010).

speech act as hyperbolic. Conventional hyperboles are ‘well-established, repeatedly used expressions’ (2011: 100) (e.g. *thousand, to death*), while semi-creative hyperboles are those which combine creative and conventional elements. For instance, in *two short planks does not describe this boy*, an example found in Claridge’s data, the speaker is playing with the expression *to be as thick as two short planks*. Depending on the type of hyperbole we use, the processing effort on the part of the hearer will vary. Thus, conventional hyperboles require a minimal processing effort for the interlocutor(s), because these expressions are lexicalised, highly frequent, and part of our shared knowledge. By contrast, the other types, especially novel uses or creative hyperboles, demand greater effort for the hearer. However, creative and semi-creative hyperboles are not only more effective than conventional ones, but they can also increase the positive image which the hearer may have of the speaker.

2.1.2. Intensification through lexical and morphosyntactic devices²

2.1.2.1. Repetition

Repetition may involve reduplicating a given lexeme, as in the case of the adverb *too* in (2.4) and of the Portuguese adjective *escuro* (‘dark’) in (2.5). In the first example, from Shakespeare’s *The two gentlemen of Verona* (Borst 1902: 11), *too* is used twice to emphasise that the speaker really loves that woman. Likewise, the speaker in (2.5) repeats the adjective *dark* to indicate that it was pitch-dark (Moreno de Oliveira 1962: 93).

(2.4) *Oh, but I love this lady too too much.*

(2.5)	<i>Ontem</i>	<i>ás</i>	<i>cinco</i>	<i>e</i>	<i>meia</i>
	yesterday	at.DEF.ART.F.PL	five	and	half
	<i>era</i>	<i>escuro escuro</i>			
	be-PST.3SG	dark dark			

Repetitions, however, do not necessarily involve the same lexeme, as in (2.4) and (2.5) above. It is also possible to find reiterations of synonymous words, which can be joined by the coordinating conjunction *and*. For instance, in the expression *safe and sound*, both *safe* and *sound* mean ‘free from injury’. Repetition of synonymous concepts

² In this section, I have decided to consider lexical and morphosyntactic strategies together, since it is sometimes difficult to keep them apart. For instance, an attenuating or downgrading function can be performed by lexical elements such as adverbs (e.g. *rather* or *fairly*), but also by morphological devices, as is the case of the prefix *-ish*.

is thus frequent in stereotyped phrases and is often accompanied by alliteration, as in the case of the phoneme /s/ in *safe and sound*.

Authors such as Borst (1902) and Kirchner (1955) claim that repetitions were habitual in OE for emphatic or expressive purposes, and they continued to be used in ME, further reinforced by French, the language of prestige at the time. In fact, it was a very common practice to have, next to a French word, its equivalent in English or a paraphrase (cf. Jespersen 1972: 89; Crystal 1995: 60; Hughes 2000: 125), as in *ended and fynished* or *bylde and edifye their habitation and dwelling*, two examples which Borst takes from Caxton.³ In the first case *finish* is a loanword from French, which is recorded for the first time in English around 1375 (cf. OED, s.v. *finish* v.), while *end* is its English counterpart, from OE *endian*, provided here so that the reader understands the meaning of the recently-adopted Romance borrowing. In the second case we have a double pair of synonyms, coordinated by the conjunction *and*. *Bulden* is a ME form derived from OE **byldan*, while *edifye* was taken from French in the first half of the fourteenth century (OED, s.v. *edify* v.). The same applies to *habitation*, which was borrowed in the second half of the fourteenth century, whereas *dwelling* with the meaning ‘residence, abode’ is a noun derived from the OE verb *dwellan*.⁴

2.1.2.2. *Adverbs of degree*

Degree adverbs can also be used cross-linguistically for intensification purposes. This is the case, for instance, of the English adverbs *really* and *extremely*, and of their German and Portuguese counterparts *wirklich* and *extremamente*, as shown in (2.6) and (2.7). Authors such as Kirchner (1955) also suggest other mechanisms which, though not formally adverbs, can be regarded as functional equivalents of degree adverbs. This is the case of the prepositional phrase *by all accounts* in (2.8), of nouns, adjectives, and participles which modify an adjacent adjective (e.g. *snow white* ‘extremely white’, *dirty-cheap* ‘extremely cheap’, *amazingly cheap* ‘extremely cheap’), and of nouns used as degree adverbs (*you are **no end** cleverer and stronger*).

(2.6) *Er ist wirklich gut*
 he be-PRS.3SG really good

³ Caxton also made use of such doublets or binomials for justification purposes at the end of a line (cf. Tani 2014). For an in-depth discussion of binomials, refer to Molin (2012) and Kopaczyk and Sauer (2017).

⁴ The accumulation of ‘redundant’ linguistic material of this kind is generally referred to as *accretion* (cf. Kuteva 2008) or *hypercharacterisation* (Lehmann 2005; López-Couso 2014).

(2.7) *D. Ramón era extremamente sensível à beleza.*
 Mr Ramón be-PST.3SG extremely sensible to.DEF.ART.F.SG beauty

(2.8) *She had by all accounts the better mind of the two.*

Borst (1902) also discusses combinations of an adjective with other adjectives, nouns, and prefixes, although he calls this strategy *composition* (*Komposition* in German), which he argues is characteristic of the Germanic languages, particularly of German. For example, in *steinalt* ‘old as the hills’ and in *sonnenklar* ‘crystal clear’ the nouns *Stein* (‘stone’) and *Sonnen* (‘suns’) are just acting as reinforcers of the quality expressed by the adjectives *alt* ‘old’ and *klar* (‘clear’). In English, these combinations are typically stereotyped phrases such as *stone still*, *bitter sweet*, *boiling hot*, and *freezing cold*.

Degree adverbs as an intensifying strategy are also examined by Mathesius (1939), Moreno de Oliveira (1962), Bolinger (1972), Cruzeiro (1973), Vermeire (1979), Suscinskij (1985), van Os (1989), Peters (1993), and Renkema (1997). In addition to the many examples provided in these works, some of these authors also deal with the defining characteristics of degree adverbs. Thus, features such as their semantic bleaching or desemanticisation (cf., among others, Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991; Heine 2003; Hopper and Traugott 2003; Marchello-Nizia 2006) (cf. section 3.2) are already mentioned in the earliest works, such as Borst (1902). Other features such as their susceptibility to change, their status as vogue words or *Modewörter* (Kirchner 1955), and the variation between zero forms and their suffixed *-ly* counterparts (e.g. *total* vs. *totally*) are also tackled in many of these monographs.

2.1.2.3. *Prefixes and suffixes*

Some prefixes were used as intensifying particles already in OE, although some of these prefixes, such as *for-* (e.g. *forwiðe* ‘very much, utterly’) and *through-* (e.g. *purh-bitter* ‘very bitter’), are no longer productive in this function in PDE. An example of a productive prefix is the onomatopoeic prefix *ker-* (e.g. *kerflop*, *kersplash*, and *kerslap*), mentioned by Kirchner (1955), which seems to have originated in the United States, and which heightens the idea of sound and impact. The Latin prefix *super-* was adopted in English in the second half of the sixteenth century to form adjectives, verbs, nouns, and adverbs designating something possessing a quality to the highest, a very high, or an excessive degree (cf. OED, s.v. *super-* 3a). Even though the prefix dates back to centuries, it is still productively found as an intensifying mechanism in English (e.g. *super important*), but also in German (e.g. *superleicht* ‘super light’) and in the

Romance languages. In (2.9), an example from Portuguese given by Moreno de Oliveira (1962), the prefix is heightening the noun *chatice* ('bummer'), indicating that the latter possesses the quality of being disappointing or unpleasant to the highest degree.

(2.9) *Oh que super chatice*
oh what super bummer

In contrast to the prefix *super-*, which has an upgrading function, there are also suffixes which indicate the lower parts or even the lower end of a degree scale. This is the case of English *-ish*, which in the written language is mainly applied to colours (Borst 1902: 10). However, in the spoken language *-ish* is frequently added to adjectives from other semantic fields (cf. Trousdale 2011), as in *sweetish*, *youngish*, *newish*. Likewise, its Portuguese counterpart, the diminishing suffix *-inho(s)/a(s)*, also has a diminishing effect (as in, e.g., *pequeninhol/a* 'smallish'). Nevertheless, although this suffix is typically downgrading, there are cases in which it can acquire a reinforcing reading. *Obrigadinho*, for instance, does not mean 'ungrateful', but precisely the opposite. Moreover, the suffix *-inho(s)/a(s)* may also have affective connotations, something which also holds true for Galician.

2.1.2.4. Comparatives and superlatives

In this type of strategy, the adjective denotes a quality in a very high or in the highest degree. Comparisons typically involve the conjunctions *as*, *than*, and *like* (cf. examples (2.10)-(2.12) below, from Kirchner (1955: 104-109)). Example (2.10), which Kirchner takes from Shakespeare's *Merry wives of Windsor*, *as much as I can do* means 'all that I can do'. In other words, there is nothing else which the speaker can further do, as everything possible has already been done. Likewise, *nothing less than scandalous* in (2.11) indicates that the matter referred to is totally scandalous, and *doubt like hell* in (2.12) means that the speaker has serious doubts about the fact described: that any Japanese person would give up for the reason mentioned.

(2.10) *It is as much as I can do to keep the terms of my honour precise.*

(2.11) *It is nothing less than scandalous.*

(2.12) *I doubt like hell if any Jap gave up for this reason.*

Comparatives with *as* very often concern stereotyped uses. This is the case of expressions such as *as cold as stone*, *as light as a feather*, *as poor as a church mouse*,

meaning ‘very cold’, ‘very light’, and ‘very poor’, respectively. Stereotyped comparisons such as these have been alive in the language for centuries. Kirchner draws on examples from Thomas More and Ben Johnson. This type of comparative strategy is also commented by scholars such as Moreno de Oliveira (1962), Bolinger (1972), Mathesius (1972), Cruzeiro (1973), Vermeire (1979), Suscinskij (1985), Renkema (1997), and Flores (2004). Examples from languages other than English are Portuguese *teimoso/a como un burro* (‘as stubborn as a mule’) and *frio/a como o gelo/a neve* (‘as cold as ice’), and German *wie ein Klotz schlafen* (‘to sleep like a log’). The second element of the comparison can also be occupied by the indefinite pronoun *anything*, as noted by Borst (e.g. *as wild as anything* ‘very wild’; *as proud as anything* ‘very proud’). Other examples of the comparative with *as* include *as often*, *as like*, *as frequently as not*, *as likely as not*, and *nothing so (as) much as* (e.g. *it resembled nothing so much as a ‘threedecker’ sandwich*).

Comparisons with the conjunctions *than* and *like*, as in examples (2.11) and (2.12) above, are argued to be American forms (Kirchner 1955: 104-109). As in the case of comparisons with *as*, the second element in comparisons with *like* and *than* can also be an indefinite pronoun such as *everything*, *anything*, and *nothing*, as in *to swear like anything* (‘to swear a lot’).

Absolute superlatives, whether synthetic (–*est*) or analytic (with *most*), can also be used with an intensifying effect, as noted by authors such as Borst (1902), Moreno de Oliveira (1962), and Cruzeiro (1973). In (2.13) and (2.14), taken from Borst’s monograph (1902: 9-10), *most exemplary* and *the mightiest* are thus equivalent to ‘exceedingly, extremely exemplary’, and ‘exceedingly, extremely mighty’, respectively. The Portuguese synthetic superlative ending *–íssimo/a* has exactly the same effect. *Importantíssima transformação* (‘the most important transformation’) in (2.15) is hence highlighting the crucial importance of the construction works to change Boavista Avenue (Moreno de Oliveira 1962: 65).

(2.13) *Your conduct has been **most exemplary**.*

(2.14) *A little ere **the mightiest** Julius fell.*

(2.15) *Está quase pronta a Avenida de Boavista que
be-PRS.3.SG almost ready.F.SG DEF.F.SG avenue of Boavista that
acaba de passar por **importantíssima** transformação.
finish-PST.3.SG of pass-INF through important-SUP.F.SG transformation*

Another form of the superlative discussed by Borst is the so-called *genitive superlative*, which is mostly found in biblical contexts, but may also appear in poetical texts. The genitive indicates that the noun which governs it embodies the perfection of a certain quality. For instance, in *king of kings* the genitive *of kings* shows that the referent of the noun *king* is the best among all existing kings. Similarly, in *faireste of faire, o lady myn*, an example from Chaucer, the lady is said to be the prettiest of all ladies.

2.1.2.5. *Inherently superlative forms*

Intensification or emphasis in language can also be expressed with the use of adjectives or participles which either have an intrinsic superlative meaning (e.g. *capital*, *exquisite*) or which, through use, have come to acquire such a meaning (e.g. *grand* or *rare*) (Borst 1902: 7). Borst includes here participles with an intensifying effect, such as *killing* or *ripping* (e.g. *a killing bow*; *a ripping game*), as well as hyperbolic expressions such as *to be dying to do something* and *in no time* (1902: 9), illustrated in (2.16)-(2.17).

(2.16) *I know she's **dying to** hear you.*

(2.17) *'A good run to you!' says the sportman ... and is by the coachman's side **in no time**.*

Inherently superlative forms are also widely attested in other languages. Moreno de Oliveira (1962: 97-105) argues that in Portuguese adjectives can also be used in a superlative fashion and, as such, have a moderate intensifying value, as in the case of *terrível* ('terrible'), *bestial* ('total', literally 'beast(ly)'), and *monstro* ('huge, great', literally 'monster'). In (2.18) and (2.19), the adjectives *bestial* and *monstro* serve to indicate an extremely high degree. *Desordenada bestial* and *sucesso monstro* can be hence paraphrased as *terribly messy* and *huge success*.

(2.18) *Sou* *uma* *desordenada* ***bestial***.
be-PRS.1.SG INDF.F.SG messy-PTCP.F.SG terrible

(2.19) *O* *número de* *ontem*
DEF.M.SG show of yesterday
foi *um* *sucesso* ***monstro***.
be-PST.3.SG INDF.M.SG success monster

Moreno de Oliveira also makes reference to the quick semantic bleaching of these adjectives, although *terrível*, for instance, can still preserve its original value of instilling terror. In addition, the author claims that these words are subject to fashion, as happened to Portuguese *pyramidal* ('pyramidal'), which was a fashionable intensifier

meaning ‘very, extraordinary’, but which is no longer used as such. Van Os (1989) provides ample evidence of inherently superlative adjectives in German, as is the case, for instance, of *bestialisch* (‘bestial’), *katastrophal* (‘catastrophic’), *verheerend* (‘devastating’), *unglaublich* (‘unbelievable’), and *unvergleichlich* (‘incomparable’).⁵

2.1.2.6. *Word order*

An unusual word order may call our attention to a specific element or elements in the discourse, and hence be used for intensification purposes. Examples of intensification through word order are inversions and focusing constructions, as illustrated in (2.20)-(2.23) below. In (2.20), from Kirchner (1955: 114), the speaker is emphasising the desire to eventually take some holidays, a sentence which could be paraphrased as *I am really looking forward to my holidays*. In this case, however, the speaker does not choose an intensifying adverb such as *really*, but rather opts to invert the canonical subject-verb order to focus the attention on that part of the utterance, and hence achieve an intensifying effect. Likewise, the canonical word order is disrupted in (2.21)-(2.23), where the object is fronted. Example (2.21), given by Vermeire (1979: 10), is a focusing construction with *what*. In this case what the speaker wants to highlight is not the fact that the interlocutor has a beautiful dress, but rather that the dress is very beautiful. Examples (2.22) and (2.23), corresponding to contemporary and medieval Portuguese, respectively, are taken from Moreno de Oliveira (1962: 53) and Cruzeiro (1973: 28). In both cases, the direct object is fronted and occupies the initial position rather than the canonical post-verbal position. The emphasis is thus laid on the topicalised direct objects: *o susto* (‘the fright’) and *maas novas* (‘bad news’).

(2.20) *I’m finally going to take a vacation... and boy, **am I** looking forward to it!*

(2.21) ***What** a beautiful dress you have!*

(2.22) **O** *susto que me pregou.*
 DEF.ART.M.SG fright that I-DAT.SG give-PST.3SG

(2.23) *Ai, donzela, maas novas vos trago!*
 oh lady bad news you-DAT.SG bring-PRS.1SG

⁵ Renkema (1997) also recognises the intrinsic superlative nature of certain elements. Thus, the category which he names *semantic intensifiers* is identified through comparison. For instance, the Dutch adjective *kolossaal* is more intensive than the neutral form *groot* ‘big’ (cf. section 2.2.1.2).

2.1.3. Intensification through intonation and stress

According to Borst (1902: 3-5), stress can be used in language to express both upgrading (*Verstärkung*) and downgrading (*Abschwächung*). Nouns and articles can thus be used emphatically in both the spoken and the written language, as in (2.24) and (2.25) below, in which the noun *dear* and the definite article are stressed, respectively. The same applies to adjectives, which can acquire an ironic or sarcastic effect thanks to stress and to their combination with words such as *quite*, *any*, and *so*.

(2.24) *He is a **dear**!*

(2.25) *He is **the** man.*

Likewise, Bolinger remarks that intensification can also be achieved by exaggerating certain components of accent, such as length, pitch range, and intensity. In fact, intensifiers are often accompanied by phonological intensification (1972: 281).

Moreno de Oliveira (1962) and Cruzeiro (1973) also treat intonation in depth in their monographs. Moreno de Oliveira (1962: 3), for instance, argues that exclamation alone, frequently accompanied by interjections, can maximise a quality. In her words, exclamation ‘retira da sombra elementos que na frase assertiva passam mais ou menos desapercibidos, e utiliza-os como instrumentos de intensificação’.⁶ Moreover, exclamation is not exclusive of speech, but can also occur in writing, typically identified by exclamation marks. Exclamative sentences very often preserve the same form as their affirmative counterparts, although they show a rising intonation. Nonetheless, this is not always the case, and on many occasions intensification is indicated not only by means of a rising tone, but also by word order and by the presence of certain elements such as demonstratives, articles, or adverbs. A few examples, taken from Moreno de Oliveira (1962: 12-18) and Cruzeiro (1973: 38), follow here:

(2.26) *Ai que calor que eu tive, que arrependida*
 oh what heat that I.NOM.SG have-PST.1.SG how repent-PTCP.F.SG
que eu fiquei de ter levado o casaco!
 that I-NOM.SG become-PST.1.SG of have-INF take-PTCP DEF.ART.M.SG jacket

(2.27) *Que coita tamanha ei a sofrer*
 what grief huge have-PRS.1.SG to suffer-INF
por amar amigu' e non o veer!
 for love-INF beloved and not he-ACC.M.SG see-INF

⁶ Literally: ‘it [exclamation] takes from the shadows elements which in the affirmative sentence go more or less unnoticed, and uses them as instruments of intensification’ (my translation).

- (2.28) *Como é bonito o seu nome!*
 how be-PRS.3SG beautiful DEF.ART.M.SG your.M.SG name
- (2.29) *O que a tua avó M. chorou, coitadinha, a ler aquela carta!*
 DEF.ART.M.SG that DEF.ART.F.SG your-F.SG granny M. cry-PST.3SG
 poor to read-INF that-F.SG letter

In (2.26)-(2.27), for instance, the adverb and the adjective *que* overtly mark the exclamative as such in Portuguese. Furthermore, their syntactic position suggests that they are in focus and hence are emphasised. The same applies to the adverb *como* in (2.28). In (2.29) we have a relativiser in initial position, *o que*, which again makes the sentence more emphatic. This example presents a case of elision as well. *O que a tua avó M. chorou*, literally ‘how much your granny M. has cried’, is the direct object of an elliptical (*tu não sabes*) *o que a tua avó M. chorou* ‘(you don’t know) how much your granny M. has cried’.

Although Moreno de Oliveira and Cruzeiro only deal with intensification in Portuguese, their remarks on intonation can be easily applied to English and to other languages as well. Thus, in exclamative sentences in English we also find the fronting of certain elements such as *what* or *how*, together with a prominent role of intonation. By way of illustration, example (2.28) above could be rendered in English as *what a beautiful name you have!*, in which *what* occupies sentence-initial position and overtly marks it as an exclamation.⁷

2.2. INTENSIFIERS

The items object of study in this dissertation receive different labels in the literature on the topic, among them *intensifiers*, *degree modifiers*, and *degree words*. In broad terms, these refer to ‘any device that scales a quality, whether up or down or somewhere between the two’ (Bolinger 1972: 17). David Crystal’s *Dictionary of Linguistics and Phonetics* also goes along the same lines and defines *intensifier* as ‘a class of adverbs which have a heightening or lowering effect on the meaning of another element in the sentence’ (2003: 237). Nevertheless, other views further restrict this notion and consider that intensifiers only have a heightening effect (cf. Paradis 1997; Biber et al. 1999; Méndez-Naya 2003).

In this work, the label *intensifier* is to be taken in the broadest sense, thus allowing

⁷ In French, Galician, and Spanish this would be expressed with exclamative *que* and in Italian by *che*. *Qu’il est beau son prénom!*, *que nome máis bonito ten!*, *¡qué nombre más bonito tiene!*, and *che bello è il suo nome!* are the equivalents in the aforementioned languages.

for indication of both upper and lower degrees on an imaginary degree scale. Given that I take intensification in Bolinger's sense (cf. section 2.1), i.e., as the expression of both high and low degrees on a scale, hence allowing for exaggeration and depreciation, I will be consistent with this position and take the term *intensifier* in this same way. However, it should be noted that the items examined here, death-related intensifiers, can only express high or extreme degree, which makes this distinction virtually unnecessary for my work. Furthermore, as understood in the present study, the category of intensifiers comprises not only the prototypical cases of intensifying adverbs modifying adjectives (*dead easy*), but also adjectives with an intensifying effect (*deadly drinker*), prepositional phrases (*to death*), and even constructions such as *to be dying for something* or *to be dying to do something*, as in (2.30) and (2.31). In this sense, Crystal's definition above is, to my mind, insufficient to a certain extent. For this reason, I differ from those scholars who establish a close correspondence between adverbs and intensifiers (cf., for instance, Partington 1993), and rather contend hereafter that elements other than adverbs can perform intensifying functions, traditionally attributed to adverbials.

(2.30) *I'm sick to death of you.* (Oxford Dictionaries: <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/es/definicion/ingles/death>)

(2.31) *She was dying to ask where he'd got it.* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, s.v. *die* v.)

Moreover, even though intensifiers are mainly associated with adverbs and they mostly function as modifiers of adjective phrases, they can also modify prepositional phrases, noun phrases, and verb phrases, as in (2.32)-(2.34), respectively, taken from Paradis (1997: 14):

(2.32) *They were **much** in love with each other.*

(2.33) *It was **quite** a sight.*

(2.34) *I **totally** agree with you.*

On the other hand, the terminological confusion arises partly on account of the difficulties in keeping apart the notions of degree and quantification. This issue, however, will not be delved into in the present dissertation, for the items under study are not expressive of quantification (cf., among others, Vermeire 1979).

Furthermore, intensifiers are to be distinguished from certain adverbs which can also

express the speaker's attitude (cf. van Os 1989). These adverbs, the same as quantifiers, can function as intensifiers when in contact with intensifiable elements, although their main function is not that of intensification (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 447). They express speaker stance and modify the whole sentence in many cases. The main difference with intensifiers, however, is that they can be both left and right dislocated. Quirk et al. (1985: 447 and 612-631) use the terms *emphasiser* and *disjunct* in their work. Emphasisers thus achieve a very similar effect to that of intensifiers, that is, they add to the force of the element they are modifying, although not to their degree (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 447). When emphasisers are dislocated they are called *disjuncts*. In (2.35) *frankly* is considered to be an emphasiser, while in (2.36), where it is left-dislocated, it is regarded as a disjunct in Quirkian terminology. The same applies to the German adverb *wirklich* in examples (2.37)-(2.38), taken from van Os (1989: 85). In (2.37) *wirklich* ('really') functions as an intensifier modifying the adjective *gut*, meaning 'really good', whereas in (2.38) and (2.39) *wirklich* is a sentence adverbial which expresses the speaker's commitment to the truth of what (s)he is saying, either right (2.38) or left dislocated (example (2.39)).

(2.35) *I'm frankly surprised at your behaviour.*

(2.36) *Frankly, I'm surprised at your behaviour.*

(2.37) *Er ist wirklich gut.*
 he be-PRS.3SG really good

(2.38) *Er ist gut, wirklich!*
 he be-PRS.3SG good really

(2.39) *Wirklich, er ist gut!*
 really he be-PRS.3SG good

2.2.1. Models of classification

The models which have been proposed to categorise intensifiers can be classified into two broad groups. While most classifications consider intensifiers as markers of degree on a given degree scale (cf. section 2.2.1.1), some authors have suggested to classify intensifiers on semantic grounds (cf. section 2.2.1.2). In what follows, I present an overview of the different models which have been put forward in the literature, from the earliest categorisations to the most recent ones.

2.2.1.1. *Models based on a degree scale*

Many authors regard intensifiers as markers of degree and hence opt for specific labels according to the number of divisions which they establish on the degree scale. The level of specificity varies considerably, ranging from very detailed models, such as the ones by Bäcklund (1973), van Os (1989), or Quirk et al. (1985), to much less specific proposals of categorisation, such as those found in the grammars by Biber et al. (1999) and Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002). As shown in Table 2.1, Biedermann (1969), Bäcklund (1973), and van Os (1989) establish the greatest number of levels for intensifiers and their classifications partially coincide. For instance, the three models account for high, moderate, low, and minimum degree. However, Biedermann claims that intensifiers can specify up to six different levels of degree, while Bäcklund and van Os distinguish ten and eight levels, respectively.

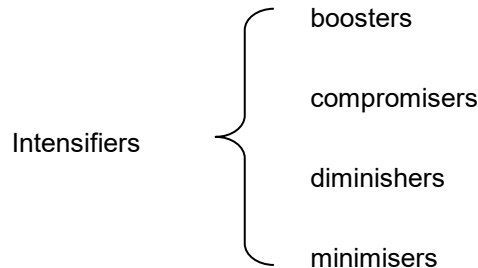
Table 2.1. Biedermann's (1969), Bäcklund's (1973), and van Os' (1989) models

Biedermann (1969)	Bäcklund (1973)	van Os (1989)
absolute degree: <i>völlig</i> 'completely', <i>total</i> 'totally'	partial/complete absence of something: <i>nearly, virtually</i>	absolute degree: <i>komplett</i> 'completely'
high degree: <i>ganz</i> 'quite', <i>sehr</i> 'very'	minimum degree: <i>barely, hardly</i>	approximate degree: <i>nahezu</i> 'virtually, almost'
moderate degree: <i>recht</i> 'quite, well', <i>ziemlich</i> 'quite'	low degree: <i>a little, somewhat</i>	highest degree: <i>außerordentlich</i> 'extraordinarily'
low degree: <i>ein bisschen</i> 'a bit', <i>etwas</i> 'slightly'	low degree of a positive idea: <i>little</i>	high degree: <i>so</i> 'so', <i>sehr</i> 'very'
minimal degree: <i>kaum</i> 'barely', <i>wenig</i> 'little'	moderate degree: <i>pretty, rather</i>	moderate degree: <i>ziemlich</i> 'rather'
negative degree: <i>keineswegs</i> 'in no way', <i>nichts</i> 'nothing'	increasing degree: <i>increasingly</i>	low degree: <i>ein bisschen</i> 'a bit'
	high degree: <i>very, awfully, terribly</i>	minimal degree: <i>wenig</i> 'little'
	the highest degree: <i>fully, completely</i>	negative degree: <i>nicht</i> 'not', <i>kein</i> 'no'
	adverbs meeting the demands of a subsequent verbal: <i>enough, sufficiently</i>	
	PRO-forms as adverbs of degree: <i>this, that</i>	

Bolinger's classification of intensifiers has been one of the most influential and hence most widely used since the publication of his monograph back in 1972. Unlike Biedermann, Bäcklund, and van Os, who specified between six and ten different degree levels, Bolinger distinguishes only four. Thus, on the basis of the position which they

occupy on the degree scale, intensifiers can be classified as boosters, compromisers, diminishers, and minimisers (1972: 17), as shown in Figure 2.1.

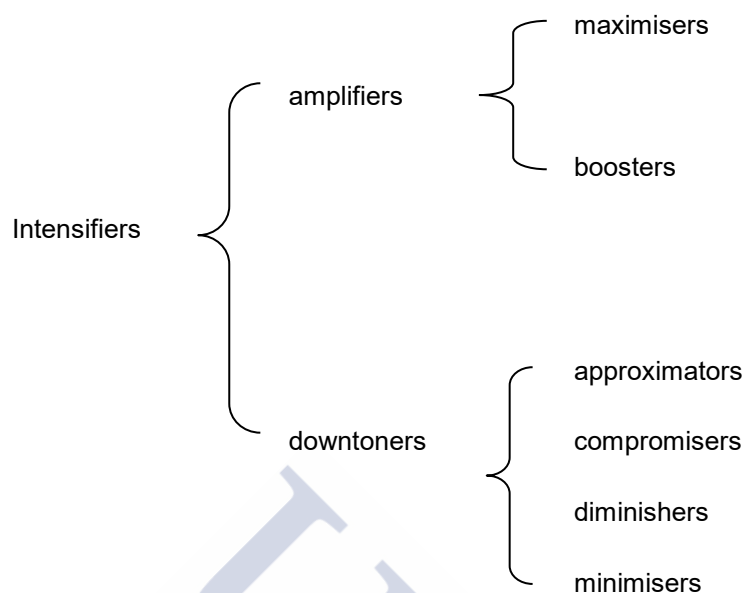
Figure 2.1. Bolinger's (1972) classification of intensifiers



Boosters occupy the upper part of this scale, looking up (e.g. *total*, *pure*, *terrible*, *perfect*, among others); compromisers occupy the middle part, often trying to look both up and down (*rather*, *somewhat*, *sort of*, *kind of*, etc.); diminishers, in turn, refer to the lower parts, looking down (*slightly*, *mildly*, *partially*, etc.); and, finally, minimisers refer to the lowest part of the scale (*little* or *few*, for instance).

Quirk et al.'s (1985) classification of intensifiers draws extensively on Bolinger (1972), though it adds two further levels: maximisers and approximators (see Figure 2.2 below). Like Bolinger, Quirk et al. also consider that an intensifier 'indicates a point on an abstractly conceived intensity scale; and the point indicated may be relatively low or relatively high' (1985: 589). Moreover, this comprehensive grammar subdivides intensifiers into two major types: amplifiers and downtoners, with different levels each (1985: 589 and ff.). Amplifiers are subdivided into maximisers and boosters, and downtoners are further categorised as approximators, compromisers, diminishers, and minimisers.

Figure 2.2. Quirk et al.'s (1985) classification of intensifiers



Amplifiers always scale upwards in the intensity scale. The difference between the two types distinguished by Quirk et al. (1985) lies precisely in the degree conveyed by the amplifier. Thus, maximisers (e.g. *totally*, *absolutely*, *extremely*, *entirely*, etc.) indicate the upper extreme of the scale, while boosters (e.g. *enormously*, *greatly*, *terribly*, *well*, among others) denote a high degree on this scale.

Downtoners, on the other hand, scale downwards in the intensity scale and are, in the main, used with gradable constituents. Within the group of downtoners, approximators indicate that the item which collocates with them expresses more than is relevant. Among the approximators cited by these authors we find *almost*, *nearly*, *practically*, *virtually*, *as good as*, and *all but*. Consider (2.40) and (2.41).

(2.40) *They **as good as** ruined the school.*

(2.41) *I **almost** resigned.*

Compromisers have only a slight lowering effect and tend to question the suitability of the item concerned. *Kind of*, *sort of*, *rather*, *enough*, *more or less*, and some uses of *quite* can be included within this class of downtoners. Examples of their use, from Quirk et al. (1985) are given under (2.42) and (2.43):

(2.42) *As he was walking along, he **sort of** stumbled and seemed ill.*

(2.43) *I **quite** enjoyed the party, but I've been to better ones.*

Note that the adverb *quite* can function both as a maximiser and as a compromiser. While in (2.43) above *quite* is equivalent to other compromisers like *kind of* (in informal registers) or *more or less*, in (2.44) it can be paraphrased as *completely* and is therefore a maximiser:

(2.44) *I **quite** forgot about her birthday.*

Diminishers, in turn, scale downwards in the intensity scale and are roughly paraphrasable as *to a small extent*. Quirk et al. (1985: 598) establish a further subdivision within diminishers, namely expression diminishers (e.g. *mildly, partially, partly, in part, to some extent, a bit*, among others) and attitude diminishers (e.g. *only, merely, simply, just*). The former express only part of the potential force of the item in question (cf. (2.45)), whilst the latter convey the limitation of the force of the item concerned (cf. (2.46)):

(2.45) *I **partly** agree with you.*

(2.46) *It was **merely** a matter of finance.*

Finally, minimisers mean '(not) to any extent', and are negative maximisers. Two types of minimisers are distinguished in this grammar: negatives (*barely, hardly, scarcely, little*), as in (2.47), and non-assertives (*in the least, in the slightest, at all, a bit*), as shown in (2.48):

(2.47) *He **little** realizes what trouble he has caused.*

(2.48) *We don't mind **in the slightest**.*

Quirk et al. (1985: 599) also attribute a minimiser function to some noun phrases in negative clauses, as *a wink* and *a thing* in (2.49) and (2.50), respectively:

(2.49) *I didn't sleep **a wink** last night.*

(2.50) *I don't owe you **a thing**.*

In addition to amplifiers and downtoners, Quirk et al. also attribute a reinforcing function to what they label *emphasisers* (see above), which have a similar effect to amplifiers, especially when modifying gradable words. In (2.51), for instance, the emphasiser *certainly* has an effect akin to that of an intensifier like *very*:

(2.51) *She is **certainly** intelligent.*

Emphasisers, however, are not concerned with the expression of degree, but with modality, and can appear with non-gradable constituents, unlike amplifiers. Typical emphasisers include *actually*, *certainly*, *definitely*, *obviously*, *really*, and *surely*. In example (2.52) below, *originally* cannot take the intensifier *very* because being from Cleveland is not a property that can be possessed in different degrees, i.e., it is non-gradable. Conversely, in (2.53) *originally*, as a synonym for *creatively*, can actually take intensifiers like *very*.

(2.52) *She came from Cleveland (*very) originally.*

(2.53) *She always writes (very) originally.*

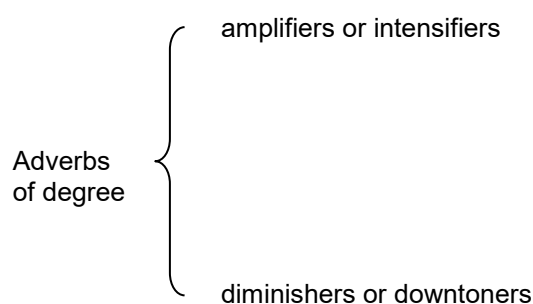
Moreover, Quirk et al. (1985: 590) suggest a test for the inclusion of items in the category of intensifiers, namely the possibility of occurring with *to some extent* in the negative, although this is not feasible in all cases. Emphasisers, by contrast, cannot be used in this way. The following instances taken from their grammar illustrate this point. In (2.54) *completely* is an amplifier and can therefore occur with *to some extent*, while this is not possible in (2.55), where *really* is an emphasiser:

(2.54) *He didn't ignore my request completely, but he did ignore it to some extent.*

(2.55) **He didn't really ignore my request, but he did ignore it to some extent.*

Biber et al.'s (1999) grammar defines adverbs of degree as those which describe the extent to which a characteristic holds, and subdivides them into amplifiers or intensifiers, on the one hand, and diminishers or downtoners, on the other, as shown in Figure 2.3 (1999: 554-556).

Figure 2.3. Biber et al.'s (1999) classification of intensifiers



For Biber et al. amplifiers, also known as intensifiers, are those degree adverbs which increase intensity. These can both indicate a certain degree on a scale (e.g. *very*, *so*, *extremely*) and an endpoint on a scale (e.g. *totally*, *completely*). Nonetheless, unlike

authors such as Bolinger (1972) or Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al. do not draw a distinction between these functions. Biber et al. (1999: 555) also remark that some manner adverbs can also be used as intensifiers, and when this happens these lose their literal semantic value, as in (2.56) below, where *awfully* does not retain its original meaning ‘in an awful way’, but rather serves to boost the quality of the adjective *safe*.

(2.56) *New York’s an awfully safe place.*

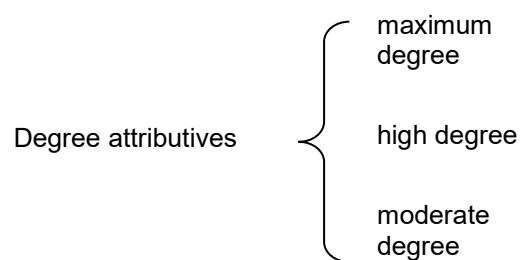
Biber et al. (1999: 557) also propose another category of adverbs different to that of adverbs of degree, which are included within the group of epistemic stance adverbs and are used to convey imprecision. These are called *hedges* or *approximators*, and occur with numbers, measurements, and quantities. They include elements such as *kind of* or *approximately*, as in examples (2.57) and (2.58). In (2.57) *kind of* is regarded as a hedge, expressing speaker’s stance and imprecision. Similarly, in (2.58) *approximately* denotes the imprecision of the quantifying expression *four months*.

(2.57) *It was kind of strange.*

(2.58) *So now I needed a job that I could do for approximately four months.*

The classification proposed by the most recent reference grammar of English, that by Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002), uses the label *degree attributives* (2002: 555-556) to refer to those words which serve to increase intensification. This category comprises both adjectives and adverbs, and their chief function is that of expressing the degree to which the property of the item concerned holds (see Figure 2.4). The degree which these adjectives and adverbs express can be maximum (e.g. *total(ly)*, *complete*, *extremely*, etc.), high (*enormously*, *terribly*, *immensely*), or moderate (*pretty*, *moderately*, *relatively*, etc.).

Figure 2.4. Huddleston and Pullum et al.’s (2002) classification of intensifiers



Although Huddleston and Pullum et al. do not use a specific label to refer to any of these different degrees, as other authors do, they indicate that for some of these the

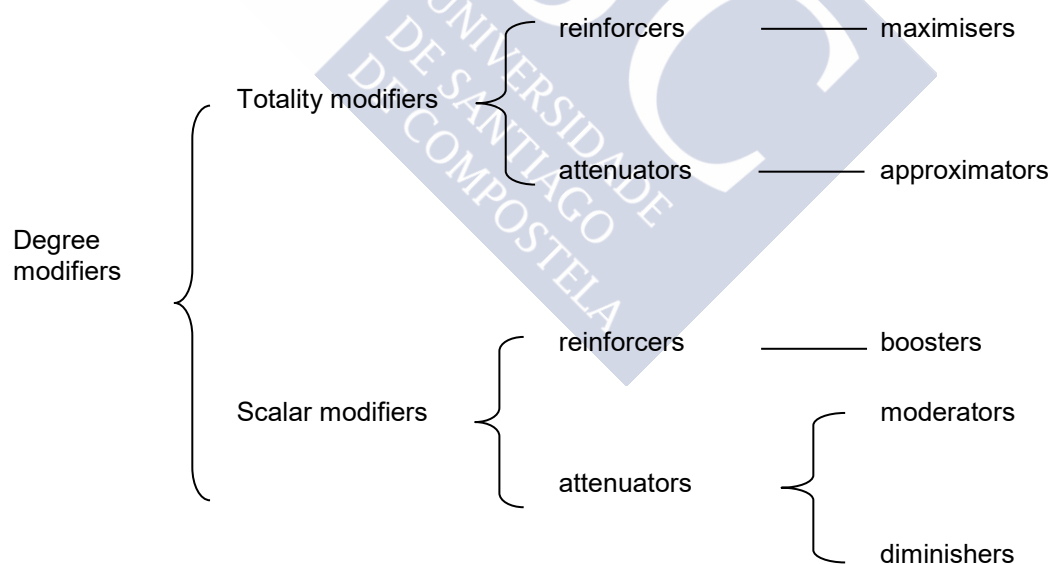
degree meaning is secondary, and their primary meaning is related to manner. Consider in this regard the different uses which they give of *suspiciously* in the examples reproduced below (cf. Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2002: 583). In (2.59) *suspiciously* conveys the manner in which they are acting; conversely, in (2.60) the adverb is merely intensifying the quality of the adjective *quiet*.

(2.59) *He was acting suspiciously.*

(2.60) *The kids are suspiciously quiet.*

Carita Paradis' model (1997) is also based on Bolinger's (1972) and Quirk et al.'s (1985). She distinguishes the same degree levels as Quirk et al., but discards the use of the label *intensifier*, choosing instead the term *degree modifier*. Degree modifiers are conceived of as occupying a position on a continuum which runs from the strongly reinforcing modifiers down to the strongly attenuating ones. The gradability which these items express can be seen in terms of an 'either-or' relationship (totality degree modifiers) or as expressing scaling (scalar degree modifiers), as shown in Figure 2.5 below.

Figure 2.5. Paradis' (1997) classification of intensifiers



In addition, both totality and scalar modifiers can have a reinforcing or attenuating function. Totality modifiers with a reinforcing function are called maximisers, as they express the maximum force, and include forms such as *absolutely*, *completely*, *totally*, *perfectly*, and *utterly*. In turn, scalar modifiers with a reinforcing value are called boosters, and consist of items like *very*, *terribly*, *extremely*, *awfully*, and *jolly*, among others. Totality modifiers with an attenuating function are named approximators, and

include modifiers of the type of *almost*. Finally, scalar modifiers of the attenuating type can be moderators, like *rather*, *pretty*, and *fairly*, or diminishers, such as *somewhat*, *slightly*, and *a little*. Note that except for the label *moderator*, which is taken from Allerton (1987), the other terms of totality and scalar modifiers recognised by Paradis are labels used in Quirk et al.'s (1985) grammar.

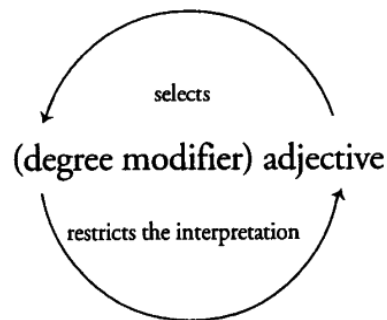
Interestingly, Paradis adopts a cognitive approach and claims that there exists a very close connection between a given adjective and the selection of its degree modifiers. In her view, the choice of the degree modifier depends heavily on the mode of construal of the adjective (i.e. whether it accepts a totality or a scalarity reading) and, to a lesser extent, on stylistic considerations, such as the emotive force of the modifier or its degree of formality. Gradable adjectives, i.e., those which can take degree modifiers, are subdivided into three different types, and it is precisely the conceptualisation of each of these types which constrains the choice of the modifier:

- i. Scalar adjectives. These are conceived of as occupying a range on an imaginary scale, and their conceptualisation calls for scalar degree modifiers, either with a reinforcing function (boosters) or with an attenuating one (moderators and diminishers). Scalar adjectives are mainly subjective (e.g. *interesting*, *nice*, *good*, etc.).
- ii. Extreme adjectives express a superlative degree of a feature. This allows for their conceptualisation as occupying the outer parts of a mental scale (e.g. *excellent*, *huge*, *terrific*, etc.). They are strongly evaluative or subjective and require totality degree modifiers, either maximisers or approximators like *almost*.
- iii. Limit adjectives are associated with some sort of limit and conceptualised in terms of 'either-or'. In contrast to extreme and scalar gradable adjectives, these are not subjective, since there is general consensus on the applicability of the adjective. Thus, in an example such as *a dead body*, nobody will question whether the body is dead or not. By contrast, examples such as *an interesting book* or *an excellent film* are likely to cause difference of opinion on account of the subjective nature of the adjectives *interesting* and *excellent*. Limit adjectives, since they are associated with completeness, can only take totality modifiers, either maximisers or approximators.

In brief, in Paradis' view, there is a harmonious relationship between the mode of construal of the adjective and the degree modifier which it can take. This close relation

is depicted in Figure 2.6, taken from Paradis (1997: 62):

Figure 2.6. Relationship between the adjective and its degree modifier (from Paradis 1997: 62)



In addition to her 1997 monograph, Paradis has also dealt with the topic of degree modifiers in several other works (cf. Paradis 2000, 2001, and 2008), in which she elaborates on this issue and revisits her initial taxonomy. As was the case in Paradis (1997), all adjectives with a potential degree modifier function accept two different modes of construal, i.e., in terms of totality or boundedness (*absolute, complete, perfect, total, and utter*) and in terms of scalarity or unboundedness (*awful, dreadful, horrible, terrible, and extreme*). As seen above, in her 1997 work Paradis drew attention to the interdependence between the degree modifier and the adjective in relationship to their modes of construal. The cognitive framework which she adopts in her 2000 chapter also establishes a very close and harmonious relationship between the adjective and the noun it modifies, insofar as it is the noun which conditions the interpretation of the adjective in polysemous cases through a mechanism labelled *selective binding*.

In her article on adjectives and boundedness (2001), Paradis extends the notion of boundedness, typically associated with nouns and verbs, to adjectives. The concept of boundedness is related to gradability in adjectives, and is a property which, according to the author, is not fixed but can be changed through a process called *contextual modulation* or *coercion*. As in Paradis (1997), degree modifiers can be classified as scalar or as totality modifiers on the basis of boundedness. Thus, scalar modifiers are unbounded, while totality modifiers are bounded. Resuming her former taxonomy, she further classifies gradable adjectives into three different types: scalar, extreme, and limit. Non-gradable adjectives, by contrast, of the type of *classical* in *classical music*, do not typically combine with degree modifiers. However, the flexibility inherent to language allows for the possibility of changes in meaning due to contextual factors. For instance, an adjective such as *true* is a limit gradable adjective, insofar as something can be either true or false, but there is usually no intermediate point. However, gradability

can be changed through *contextual modulation* or *coercion*, so that the adjective may on certain occasions adopt a scalar reading, hence *absolutely true* or *very true*. Even non-gradable adjectives such as *British* can take on gradable readings through this same process, as when referring to the way that someone is dressed (e.g. *he is terribly British*). This shows that the interaction between the content and the schematic domain is crucial to the interpretation or conceptualisation of the adjective.

Finally, Paradis (2008) replicates her previous studies on degree modifiers, applying also a cognitive framework, although in this article she uses the so-called *model of lexical meaning as ontologies and construals* (LOC). She argues that in contrast to what had been previously claimed, degree is not a fixed property characteristic of certain linguistic elements, but is instead something which can be associated with most meanings of words and expressions. In cognitive semantics, meanings are not stable but dynamic; they are negotiated and highly contextually dependent. This is especially conspicuous in novel uses of words or expressions, while some other lexical concepts might be well-entrenched and routinised and context is not so critical. Moreover, in cognitive semantic models lexical meanings occupy a conceptual space, and they are arranged according to two different types of structures: CONTENT STRUCTURES and CONFIGURATIONAL STRUCTURES. The former involve meaning structures related to THINGS, EVENTS, and STATES, inter alia, while the latter combine with content structure and include, among others, boundaries, scales, degree, etc. It is precisely the interaction between content and configurational structures that determines the interpretation of a particular reading. Paradis quotes as an example the noun *male*, typically non-gradable, but for which a scalar reading will be evoked when combined with *very*.

In this study Paradis slightly reformulates her previous taxonomy of degree modifiers. Thus, while in her 1997 monograph and subsequent works she uses the labels *totality* as opposed to *scalar modifiers*, in her 2008 article *totality* and *non-scalar degree modifiers* are used, in contrast with scalar degree modifiers. Moreover, building on her previous models, she further states that DEGREE structures are divided into two types of OPPOSITENESS: complementarity (non-scalar or totality degree modifiers) and contrariety (scalar degree modifiers). In addition to corpus data, which was also the methodology followed in her earlier research on the topic, Paradis (2008) complements the corpus figures with information retrieved from psycholinguistic experiments regarding the felicity or suitability of certain combinations of degree modifiers and adjectives. These results are basically consistent with the data from the corpora, and

ultimately reveal the importance of configurational structures such as BOUNDEDNESS and SCALE in human communication.

2.2.1.2. *Semantic classifications of intensifiers*

Semantically-based models establish a twofold classification of intensifiers: on the one hand, those intensifiers which are predominantly objective and which refer to qualities such as dimensions, quantity, excess, and totality (e.g. *highly*, *completely*, and *abundantly*); on the other hand, those intensifiers which are predominantly subjective and which indicate psychological conditions and feelings (e.g. *magnificently*, *furiously*, *horribly*). This is the case of the models proposed by Spitzbardt (1965) and Suscinskij (1985), the latter for German.

Spitzbardt (1965) divides intensifiers into two main spheres: the predominantly objective-gradational sphere and the predominantly subjective-emotional sphere. Likewise, Suscinskij (1985) distinguishes between those intensifiers which are neutral or unmarked and those which are stylistically marked and, therefore, have an emotional and expressive component. However, Spitzbardt's model is more complex than Suscinskij's. For instance, within objective or neutral intensifiers, Spitzbardt distinguishes between restrictive and intensive adverbs, while Suscinskij does not consider any further divisions. Moreover, Spitzbardt contemplates different types of both restrictive and intensive adverbs. The different subdivisions established in the predominantly objective-gradational sphere are detailed in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2. Intensifiers from the predominantly objective-gradational sphere (Spitzbardt 1965)

Predominantly objective-gradational sphere	
<i>Restrictive adverbs</i>	<i>Intensive adverbs</i>
'approximation, shortcoming, imperfection': <i>about</i> , <i>approximately</i> , <i>close to</i> , <i>half</i> , <i>kind of</i> , <i>next to</i> , <i>practically</i> , etc.	'totality, completeness, absoluteness': <i>absolutely</i> , <i>completely</i> , <i>entirely</i> , <i>perfectly</i> , <i>totally</i> , <i>utterly</i> , etc.
'average, mediocrity, acceptableness': <i>averagely</i> , <i>bearably</i> , <i>passably</i> , <i>pretty</i> , <i>quite</i> , <i>rather</i> , etc.	'extension, bigness, abundance': <i>abundantly</i> , <i>deeply</i> , <i>endlessly</i> , <i>invaluably</i> , <i>plentifully</i> , etc.
'pettiness, weakness, modesty' (<i>barely</i> , <i>a bit</i> , <i>a shade</i> , <i>sickly</i> , <i>tamely</i> , <i>vaguely</i> , <i>tolerably</i> , etc.	'specialty, astonishment, matchlessness': <i>abnormally</i> , <i>to an unheard-of degree</i> , <i>monumentally</i> , <i>strikingly</i> , <i>unusually</i> , etc.
	'emphasis, thoroughness, decision': <i>accurately</i> , <i>adroitly</i> , <i>heavily</i> , <i>robustly</i> , <i>violently</i> , etc.
	'correctness, reality, clearness': <i>actually</i> , <i>cleanly</i> , <i>in fact</i> , <i>outright</i> , <i>purely</i> , etc.
	'adequacy, plainness, smoothness': <i>adequately</i> , <i>authentically</i> , <i>frankly</i> , <i>just</i> , <i>simply</i> , etc.

As for subjective or emotional intensifiers, both authors contemplate different subdivisions according to the semantic fields to which these intensifiers belong. However, the semantic fields established by Suscinskij and by Spitzbardt vary substantially. Consider in this regard Table 2.3 below. Though the semantic fields are not quantifiable or objectively measured, they are still rather different.

Table 2.3. Intensifiers from the predominantly subjective/emotional sphere

<i>Spitzbardt (1965)</i>	<i>Suscinskij (1985)</i>
'fascination, magic, wonderfulness': <i>absorbingly, bewitchingly, fascinatingly, wonderfully</i> , etc.	GROUP 1: expressing intensity and quantity originally: <i>kolossal</i> 'colossal, enormous', <i>riesig</i> 'enormous', etc.
'magnificence, brightness, beauty': <i>admirably, amusingly, beautifully, fabulously, gorgeously</i> , etc.	GROUP 2: originally referring to something extraordinary or exceptional: <i>ausserordentlich</i> 'extraordinary', <i>aussergewöhnlich</i> 'unusually, exceptionally', etc.
'cordiality, warmth, sympathy': <i>cordially, fervently, heartfully</i> , etc.	GROUP 3: 'totality, completeness': <i>ganz</i> 'quite', <i>total</i> 'total(ly)', etc.
'keenness, courage, boldness': <i>ardently, audaciously, eagerly, zealously</i> , etc.	GROUP 4: 'impossibility of accomplishing what the root indicates': <i>undenkbar</i> 'unthinkable, inconceivable', <i>unermesslich</i> 'unmeasurable', etc.
'heat, pungency, shrillness': <i>barkingly, blatantly, burning, hotly</i> , etc.	GROUP 5: 'feelings': <i>erschütternd</i> 'deeply', <i>überraschend</i> 'surprisingly', etc.
'badness, unpleasantness, hopelessness': <i>aggravatingly, badly, deplorably, sorrowfully</i> , etc.	GROUP 6: 'inexistence of a quantity indicated by the stem': <i>zahllos</i> 'countless', <i>grenzenlos</i> 'endless', etc.
'absurdity, rage, madness': <i>absurdly, furiously, madly</i> , etc.	
'frightfulness, aggressiveness, painfulness': <i>abominably, grievously, horribly, terribly</i> , etc.	
'cruelty, brutality, deadliness': <i>brutally, dead(ly), to death</i> , etc.	
'curses, abusiveness, taboo-words': <i>bleeding, blessed, bloody, damnation</i> , etc.	

Another semantically-based approach to the classification of intensifiers is the one adopted by Renkema (1997). Although his model is mostly semantic, he also distinguishes between high and low intensification and takes into account textual and stylistic considerations as well. Moreover, although his classification is based on Dutch intensifiers, it can be cross-linguistically applied. His notion of *intensifiers* (*intensiveerders*) is in fact slightly different from that used in other classifications, since it refers to 'a formulation which can be replaced by a weakened variant' (1997: 497). This replacement can take place in various ways. For instance, a word may be substituted for another one, as is the case of *zeer brutal* 'very brutal' in relation to simply *brutal* 'brutal', the former being intensified with respect to the latter on account of the insertion of the adverb *zeer* 'very'. Speakers can also choose between words with

more or less specific meaning; for example, *schitterend* ‘gorgeous’ and *mooi* ‘beautiful, good-looking’, the former being more intensive from a semantic point of view, which means that intensity here is semantically achieved. More neutral expressions can be intensified with a figurative use, in which case intensity is stylistically achieved. For instance, *hij bezat niets* ‘he possessed nothing’ vs. *hij had geen roie cent* ‘he was penniless’; the latter means literally ‘he had no red cent’, referring to the primitive colour of the coin, and is thus a metaphorical expression equivalent to being poor.

Renkema’s classification of intensifiers distinguishes between lexical (*lexicale intensiveerders*), semantic (*semantische intensiveerders*), and stylistic intensifiers (*stilistische intensiveerders*), with several subtypes each, as shown in Table 2.4 .

Table 2.4 Renkema’s (1997) classification of intensifiers

lexical intensifiers	basic intensifiers time markers space markers quantifiers qualifiers precision markers markers of counter-expectation
semantic intensifiers	verbs nouns adjectives adverbs repetition tautology
stylistic intensifiers	pleonasm climax litotes comparison metaphor

Seven different types of lexical intensifiers can be identified, basic intensifiers being the most frequent. The remaining classes relate to the categories time, place, quantity, quality, and to markers of precision and of counter-expectation.⁸

- i. *basic intensifiers*: this category includes not only prototypical intensifying adverbs such as *erg* ‘very’, *zeer* ‘very’, and *totaal* ‘totally’, but also prefixes with a reinforcing function, such as *uren-* in *urenlang* (‘endless’);
- ii. *time*: e.g. *zelden* ‘rarely’, *vaak* ‘often’;

⁸ The categories of time, space, and quantity refer to a point in time, a period, or a frequency. In all these cases intensification is presented as either an increase or a decrease in the time, place, or quantity.

- iii. *space*: e.g. *tot in de kleinste uithoeken* ‘into the smallest corners’;
- iv. *quantity*: *slechts weinigen* ‘only few’;
- v. *qualifiers*: the intensifier is used to emphasise a property. For instance, in *het ging in razend tempo bergafwaarts* ‘it went downhill at breakneck speed’, *in razend tempo* is much more emphatic than simply saying *snel bergafwaarts* ‘quickly downhill’; similarly, *een snelle afdaling* ‘a quick descent’ is more expressive than just *een afdaling* ‘a descent’;
- vi. *markers of precision* indicate the focus, as is the case of *exact* ‘exactly’ or *met name* ‘especially, mainly’;
- vii. *counter-expectation markers* (e.g. *maar liefst* ‘even, no less’; *zelfs* ‘even’) is the most questionable category, according to Renkema, although it is necessary because the expression of surprise may also have an intensifying effect, as shown in *maar liefst dertig mensen waren aanwezig!* (‘there were even thirty people present!’).

In turn, semantic intensifiers can be of four different types, depending on the grammatical category they belong to:

- i. verbs;
- ii. nouns;
- iii. adjectives;
- iv. adverbs.

It is only through comparison that we can determine whether these words function as intensifiers or not, since this semantic categorisation presupposes a scalar organisation of the synonyms. Thus, the adverb *behoorlijk* ‘substantial, considerable’ is more intensive than *enigszins* ‘somewhat, rather’.

The last group discussed by Renkema, stylistic intensifiers, is made up of seven different figures of speech (cf. 2.1.1):

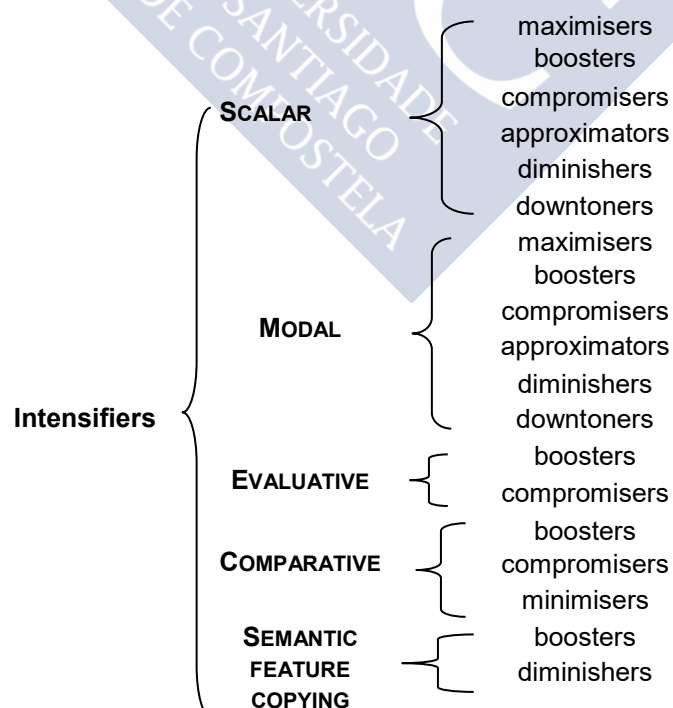
- i. *literal repetition* (e.g. *het was, het, het, het* ‘it was hot, hot, hot’);
- ii. *tautology*: repetition of words which have the same meaning (e.g. *nooit ofte nimmer*, which means ‘never ever’);
- iii. *pleonasm*s or repetitions of a certain aspect of the meaning (e.g. *de uiterste limiet*, where both *uiterste* ‘extreme’ and *limiet* ‘limit’ indicate a boundary);

- iv. *climax* or repetition with reinforcement (e.g. *hij wachtte uren, dagen, maanden* ‘he waited hours, days, months’);
- v. *litotes* (cf. 2.1.1.1), as stated by the author, conveys a false impression of distance from a qualification (e.g. *hij schrijft niet onaardig* ‘he does not write bad’, meaning that he actually writes well);
- vi. metaphors;
- vii. comparisons.

In four of them, ((i)-(iv) above), intensification is achieved through repetition (cf. 2.1.2.1). Metaphor and comparison are the hardest categories to determine, though they must be included as stylistic intensifiers in Renkema’s model because they have an effect which contributes to add more precision. However, this must be understood in context, and it must always be compared with a weaker formulation, as in *ze gingen als beesten tekeer* (‘they went like beasts’) in contrast to *als wilde beesten tekeer* (‘like wild beasts’).

A further semantic model is the one suggested by Lorenz (1999), whose proposal combines the Quirkian degrees of intensification (cf. 2.2.1.1) with semantic categories, namely SCALAR, MODAL, EVALUATIVE, COMPARATIVE, and SEMANTIC FEATURE COPYING, as shown in Figure 2.7.

Figure 2.7. Lorenz’s (1999) classification of intensifiers



In Lorenz’s semantic classification, SCALAR intensifiers are those items which exclusively have a scaling function, i.e., those which can only express degree. On the

basis of how these forms have come to acquire a scaling function, Lorenz distinguishes three different subgroups:

- i. adverbs which originate in adjectives with a scalar lexical meaning, indicating ‘degree’, ‘extent’, ‘size’, or ‘spatial extension’. They can thus be paraphrased as ‘to a/the ... degree/extent’ (e.g. *completely*, *enormously*, *extremely*, *greatly*, and *highly*).
- ii. adverbs which acquired a scalarity reading through grammaticalisation (e.g. *absolutely*, *perfectly*, *poorly*, *thoroughly*, and *profoundly*). They can also be paraphrased as ‘to a/the ... degree/extent’.
- iii. adverbs which, in isolation, denote ‘share’, ‘range’, and ‘emphasis’: *barely*, *generally*, *hardly*, *nearly*, and *purely*.

MODAL adverbs are a very productive source for intensifiers. Through a process of grammaticalisation (cf. chapter 3), modal adverbs very often acquire a degree or scalar meaning, in what Lorenz labels the ‘MODAL cline of delexicalisation’ (1999: 98). This is the case of adverbs like *very* or *utterly*, which originally had a truth-affirming function before developing their use as common intensifiers in PDE. Modal adverbs ‘modulate the truth value of an adjectival quality, positively enhancing it in most cases, while being much less frequently restrictive [...]’ (Lorenz 1999: 101). They are the equivalent of what Quirk et al. (1985: 429, 447-448) call emphasisers (cf. 2.2.1.1), and include items such as *basically*, *essentially*, *certainly*, *definitely*, *virtually*, and *possibly*. They can also mark scalarity and, therefore, Quirk et al.’s (1985) classification into maximisers, boosters, compromisers, approximators, diminishers, and minimisers also applies.

Lorenz’s semantic category of EVALUATIVE intensifiers is virtually open-ended, since new expressive forms can always be added to this class. Evaluative intensifiers can also be marked for scalarity, although these forms can only be boosters (e.g. *awfully*, *incredibly*, *terribly*) or compromisers (e.g. *sufficiently* and *reasonably*). Moreover, evaluative intensifiers can be of two types depending on the quality which they express:

- i. items which express plain affective speaker judgements (e.g. *extravagantly*, *terribly*, *ridiculously*);
- ii. items which imply a standard or some sort of criterion (e.g. *sufficiently*, *adequately*, *properly*).

Most intensifiers from the first subgroup, i.e., those which are emotionally charged,

belong to the booster type and have negative connotations. As Lorenz's explains, this can be accounted for by the possible tendency of humans to be more emotive about irksome aspects than about pleasant ones.

A more limited potential is that of COMPARATIVE intensifiers. These adverbs achieve intensification by establishing what Lorenz labels a 'peer-comparison', either explicitly or implicitly. Comparative intensifiers can be boosters (e.g. *especially*, *extraordinarily*, *particularly*), compromisers (e.g. *comparatively*, *relatively*), and minimisers (e.g. *not particularly*).

Finally, in SEMANTIC FEATURE COPYING intensifiers the modifier 'shares' or 'copies' a substantial part of the meaning of the adjective to achieve intensification (1999: 120). This is the case of, for instance, *easily accessible*, *clearly logical*, *strictly forbidden*, and *heavily loaded*. On other occasions the whole meaning of the modifier can be comprised in the adjective, thus achieving an amplifying effect, as in *darkly tanned*, *blatantly clear*, and *devastatingly shocking*. The range of collocations of FEATURE COPYING intensifiers is fairly limited, insofar as their selection depends to a large extent on the adjective they modify, hence the idiomaticity of their use.

2.2.2. Assessing the suitability of the different models of classification

As seen in 2.2.1.1 and 2.2.1.2, although most models for intensifiers are based on scales of degree, other proposals classify intensifiers according to their most inherent semantic features.

The main advantage of degree-based models is that the subdivisions which are established in these classifications can be relatively objective. In section 2.2.1.1, I looked into the proposals by Biedermann (1969), Bolinger (1972), Bäcklund (1973), Quirk et al. (1985), van Os (1989), Paradis (1997), Biber et al. (1999), and Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002), which differ mainly as regards the number of levels distinguished as well as in the labels used for each of them. The most influential of these classifications is the one proposed by Bolinger (1972), since his monograph has set a precedent for subsequent categorisations of intensifiers and continues to be the classical reference in the domain of intensifiers or degree words.

Bolinger's work offers a very rigorous account of the class of degree words, allowing for a wide interpretation of the notion of degree, which he applies to nouns and verbs as well as adverbs. In addition, he takes into account prosodic factors in intensification and the general patterns by means of which intensifiers emerge,

suggesting different grammaticalisation clines. His distinction between boosters, compromisers, diminishers, and minimisers has been adopted, with further adaptations, in subsequent work, most notably in the standard grammars of English, Paradis (1997, 2000, 2001, 2008), and Lorenz (1999).

Quirk et al.'s (1985) reference grammar offers a very comprehensive account of the category of intensifiers. Unlike other authors such as Paradis (1997) or Biber et al. (1999), these scholars subsume under the label *intensifier* those elements with an attenuating function. As has been mentioned, their taxonomy draws on Bolinger's, although Quirk et al. add two further subdivisions to Bolinger's initial proposal, namely maximisers and approximators. Moreover, as was shown in Figure 2.2 above, they consider two major classes of intensifiers: amplifiers and downtoners. Their taxonomy is, therefore, very accurate.

In contrast to Quirk et al. (1985), Biber et al.'s grammar (1999) does not provide such a detailed account of the class of intensifiers. However, it still offers an overview of this class of words and some of their general features, including their grammaticalisation, although this term is not explicitly used in the grammar. The use of the label *intensifier* is restricted to items which increase intensity and, therefore, differs from how the term is understood by other scholars such as Bolinger or Quirk et al. Besides, the indication of degree in this grammar seems to be limited to the class of adverbs. In addition, Biber et al. do not give an explicit label to the amplifiers which convey maximum degree or just high degree, and neither do they establish any subdivisions for those forms with a downtoning function, unlike previous models. However, the classification established by these scholars is, in general, very practical and straightforward.

The last grammar treated in this chapter, Huddleston and Pullum et al. (2002), does not give any specific labels to different types of intensifiers. Instead, these authors only distinguish several degrees which these items can express, namely maximum, high, or moderate degree, without delving into any of these or into the items which can express such degrees.

Paradis also draws on Bolinger (1972) and Quirk et al. (1985) in her work. She offers both a theoretical and an empirical approach to the topic of intensifiers or *degree modifiers*, in her terminology. Her monograph on degree modifiers of adjectives provides a thorough account of the structural and behavioural features of these forms and an exhaustive revision of previous models for their classification. Her 1997

taxonomy is also applied in subsequent publications, albeit with minor changes. Paradis' framework is essentially cognitive, inspired by scholars like Langacker, Taylor, or Cruse. Her main claim is that the final choice of the degree modifier is shaped by the conceptualisation of the adjective it accompanies in terms of a point on a scale (scalar adjectives), an extreme point on a scale (extreme adjectives), or limit conception (limit adjectives).

In her later work (2000, 2001, and 2008), Paradis delves further into the issue of degree modifiers, and shows that the concepts of gradability and boundedness are not properties inherent to certain grammatical categories, as has traditionally been claimed. Conversely, they are properties which many lexical items, not only adverbs, have the potential to express. In Paradis (2001) she discusses contextual modulation or coercion, a process by means of which boundedness can change. For instance, an adjective such as *Swedish* 'may be coerced into a gradable reading', in an expression such as *that woman is terribly Swedish* (cf. Paradis 2001: 58). Likewise, Paradis (2008) claims that it is easier for humans to turn bounded readings or interpretations into unbounded ones rather than the other way round. Thus, 'language users are more willing to lay things out on a SCALE than to set up BOUNDARIES where there are none' (Paradis 2008: 339).

In section 2.2.1.2 I have dealt with semantically-based models of intensifiers, specifically with the proposals by Spitzbardt (1965), Suscinskij (1985), Renkema (1997), and Lorenz (1999). As shown in this section, Spitzbardt's and Suscinskij's models are very similar, since both divide intensifiers into roughly two main types: those with a predominantly objective component, on the one hand, and those with a predominantly subjective component, on the other. Even so, the subdivisions which they establish for subjective or emotive intensifiers are rather different, and Suscinskij does not consider any subtypes for neutral or objective intensifiers. Two additional semantic categorisations which have been discussed in this section are those by Renkema (1997) and Lorenz (1999), which differ significantly from the preceding models.

Lorenz's (1999) approach combines the Quirkian degrees of intensification with semantics. For him, any taxonomy of intensifiers should take into account the semantic properties of intensifiers, an aspect which many authors neglect. Overall, his model for the classification of intensifiers is very comprehensive, as he considers not only the different degrees which these items may express, but also semantic criteria for their classification. Furthermore, he is also concerned with some of the paths of

grammaticalisation followed by these intensifiers, and explores the differences in the use of all these categories by native and non-native speakers of English from a corpus-based perspective.

Lorenz's model is broad enough as to leave room for intensifiers to fit into some of his semantic categories. His approach is in fact the most comprehensive and thorough of all semantically-based models, since he takes into account not only how these items express different levels of degree, but also how they have come to express such values and the different ways in which these can be grouped according to their semantic properties. Even so, there is a very fine line between some of the categories, which may partially overlap. Thus, for instance, *terribly* and *seriously*, which are regarded as EVALUATIVE, could also be considered as MODAL, and the COMPARATIVE *extraordinarily* could also be classified as MODAL or EVALUATIVE. Moreover, there is only a step away from MODAL to SCALAR, as the grammaticalisation clines qualitative adverbs > boosters (Peters: 1994) and 'modal-to-intensifier shift' (Partington: 1993) suggest. By way of illustration, Lorenz claims that intensifiers of the SCALAR type are those with a purely scaling function, and among these he mentions *profoundly*, *purely*, and *poorly*. Nevertheless, in PDE these forms can mean 'to or at a great depth', 'faultlessly, without blemish or corruption', and 'in a state of poverty or want', respectively, as suggested in the following examples from the OED:

- (2.61) *At its deepest level, **profoundly** down there below the surface, it is something more.* (1999. OED, s.v. *profoundly* adv. 1a)
- (2.62) *Not the triumph of a mystical spirit, but of a woman who lived bravely, consistently and **purely**, with unassailable integrity.* (1990. OED, s.v. *purely* adv. 2a)
- (2.63) *Weaver's mammy, living **poorly**, brought rice puddings for her little grandson;* (1993. OED, s.v. *poorly* adv.2)

Renkema's approach to intensifiers differs from the other semantic models presented here in that he regards intensifiers as any formulation which can be replaced by a weakened variant (1997: 497). In his view, intensifiers must be seen in context. In fact, some of his examples of intensifiers would not be considered as such according to the definitions provided by other scholars. As seen above, *een snelle afdaling* ('a quick descent') is said to be intensified in comparison with *een afdaling* ('a descent') in Renkema's model, while the adjective *snelle* ('quick, fast') would not be taken as an intensifier by other authors. Nevertheless, his division into lexical, semantic, and stylistic intensifiers is very clear.

All the models of classification of intensifiers which have been discussed in this chapter present, to a greater or lesser extent, some disadvantages. However, the classifications framed within degree-based models are, to my mind, less problematic in terms of categorisation than those which are semantically-based, for any subdivision into degree levels is more straightforward and objectively conceivable than any other classification based on semantics. Nonetheless, degree-based approaches are not devoid of problems either. For example, distinguishing too many degree levels may result in the overlap of certain categories. In this regard, Bäcklund's categories *low degree* and *low degree of a positive idea* overlap, and in van Os' model low and minimal degree (e.g. *a bit* and *little*, respectively) can partially coincide. Similarly, the division which Quirk et al. establish for intensifiers with a downtoning force is, in my view, too complex and impractical, for in some cases the limits between certain categories are not well-defined, especially in the case of diminishers and compromisers. Likewise, considering few levels, as in Biber et al.'s (1999), is also controversial, as it may be necessary to establish certain distinctions, such as, for instance, the distinction between high and absolute degree. From all degree-based models, the most comprehensive is that proposed by Paradis (1997, 2000, 2001, 2008), since it accounts not only for different degree levels, but also for semantic and cognitive issues.

In contrast to those models which are grounded on degree scales, semantically-based approaches are, in general terms, more ambiguous and less objective. As was the case with degree-based models, partial overlap may exist between categories. In this regard, Spitzbardt's semantic fields both for the predominantly objective and for the predominantly subjective intensifiers are too specific. For example, 'frightfulness, aggressiveness, painfulness' could be subsumed under 'badness, unpleasantness'. In this respect, Suscinskij's classification is simpler and easily applicable to all forms in general.

The classification which will be adopted in the present dissertation is the one by Paradis which, to my mind, is the most comprehensive, since in addition to establishing the relevant degree levels, considers the intrinsic relation between the degree modifier and the item modified. In her model, it should be recalled, intensifiers with a reinforcing function can be either totality or scalar modifiers: totality modifiers with a reinforcing function are called maximisers, while reinforcing scalar modifiers are labelled boosters. Death-related intensifiers, the focus of this dissertation, can only have a heightening function and, therefore, can only be boosters or maximisers. As a consequence, I will

disregard here any subdivisions of intensifiers with a downtoning effect. Nonetheless, unlike Paradis, I will be using the term *intensifier* throughout this dissertation, a label which she refuses to use on account of its ambiguity. As mentioned in 2.1, I have taken *intensification* in Bolinger's (1972) sense, that is, as an indication of both exaggeration and depreciation. By the same token, *intensifier* in the present work is to be taken as expressive of both high and low degree on the scale. In all other respects, Paradis' taxonomy of intensifiers will be subsequently followed.

2.3. SUMMARY

In this chapter I have offered a detailed account of the manifold mechanisms which are available in language to emphasise the expressivity of a given utterance, that is, to express linguistic intensification. I have shown that these intensification strategies or *intensifiers* are far from being restricted to degree adverbs. As shown in section 2.1 above, intensification strategies in language range instead from adverbs or adjectives with an intensifying function to prepositional phrases, idiomatic expressions, comparative and superlative expressions, or intonation, among many other devices. This chapter has also reviewed the main models of classification which have been put forward in the literature to categorise intensifiers. This was the focus of section 2.2.1. It has been shown that while some models propose a classification based on the degree levels indicated by the different intensifiers (2.2.1.1 above), other models rely on semantic criteria (section 2.2.1.2). Although neither degree-based nor semantically-based models are devoid of problems, in my view, classifications which take degree scales as a reference are, in general, more objective.

As shown above, intensifiers indicate several degree levels along an imaginary degree scale, ranging from maximum to minimum degree. However, death-related intensifiers, the items under study in this dissertation, have never expressed low degree. For this reason, in what follows I will focus exclusively on their boosting and maximising functions.

3. Grammaticalisation

3.1. SOME PRELIMINARIES

Language variation and change are consistently found in natural languages, and one of the tasks of the historical linguist is to identify and describe regularities in diachronic changes and explain how these are brought about (Marchello-Nizia 2006: 13). Grammaticalisation, as a theory aiming at the description of how grammatical forms emerge, dates back to the early twentieth century, when Antoine Meillet (1912) coined this term. Nonetheless, discussions about the origin of grammatical forms are much older and can, according to Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer (1991: 5), be traced back to the tenth century at least, when Chinese writers postulated a distinction between ‘full’ and ‘empty’ linguistic symbols and claimed that all empty symbols derived from formerly full ones.

It was, however, during the Age of the Enlightenment, in the eighteenth century, that the interest in grammaticalisation sparked off, with the work of the French philosophers Étienne Bonnot de Condillac and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who argued that grammatical complexity and abstract vocabulary had their origin in concrete lexemes. In fact, Condillac is claimed to have been the first to realise that verbal inflections, like tense suffixes, derive from independent words (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991; Lehmann 1995; Marchello-Nizia 2006). It was precisely one of Condillac’s contemporaries, John Horne Tooke, who is regarded by Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer (1991) as the father of grammaticalisation studies. Horne Tooke regarded nouns and verbs as essential ‘necessary words’, while other parts of speech, like adverbs, prepositions, or conjunctions, had their origins in these ‘necessary words’, which were abbreviated or ‘mutilated’ over time. It was also him who first described one of the oft-quoted examples in the literature on grammaticalisation, namely the development of inflectional and derivational affixes. Horne Tooke described these as formerly independent forms which agglutinated later on to root words.

The nineteenth century witnessed important developments in the field of historical linguistics, which itself consolidated as a scientific discipline of its own. This was the time when many well-known scholars like the Grimm’s brothers, Wilhelm von Humboldt, Franz Bopp, August Wilhelm von Schlegel, and Georg von der Gabelentz made substantial contributions to linguistics, describing changes which constitute

prototypical cases of grammaticalisation. Bopp, for instance, pointed out that auxiliaries, affixes, and inflections derived from the lexical domain, while von Schlegel already noted the development of the definite article from the demonstrative and that of the indefinite article from the numeral ‘one’, and described the evolution of *have*-constructions into perfective or past markers. However, the most refined theory about the genesis of grammatical forms was proposed by von Humboldt, who in 1822 gave a lecture entitled ‘On the genesis of grammatical forms and their influence on the evolution of ideas’, suggesting a four-stage process in the coding of grammatical meanings. These four stages agree roughly with the four morphological types identified in the typological classification of languages, with stages I and II corresponding to isolating languages, stage III to agglutinative languages, and stage IV to flexional languages (see Fischer 2010: 15). According to von Humboldt, at the initial stage only concrete meanings could be expressed, and the relationships between objects had to be inferred by the listener. Later on, the order in which these objects appeared became more and more fixed, thus giving rise to the syntactic stage; at this phase some words developed more grammatical meanings (function words). The third stage is the cliticisation one, when function words became loosely affixed to words with concrete meanings. Finally, at the so-called morphological stage, agglutinative pairs were fused into single-word complexes (cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003: 19-20).

Gabelentz also provided some insights as to the workings of grammaticalisation, suggesting that there are two driving forces behind this process: *Bequemlichkeitstrieb* (‘indolence, ease’), on the one hand, and *Deutlichkeitstrieb* (‘distinctness’), on the other. This author had already shown the effects of semantic bleaching, indicating that ‘forms “fade, or grow pale” (“*verblassen*”); their colors “bleach” (“*verbleichen*”), and must be covered over with fresh paint. More grimly, forms may die and become “mummified” (“*mummifiziert*”), lingering on without life as preserved corpses’ (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 20-21).

As suggested above, although these nineteenth-century scholars laid the foundations of grammaticalisation theory, it was Antoine Meillet who, in the early twentieth century, recognised the pivotal role of this phenomenon in language change and who named it with the label we attach to it today. In his 1912 article entitled ‘L’*évolution des formes grammaticales*’ (‘The evolution of grammatical forms’), Meillet maintained that there are only two ways of enriching the grammar of a language, namely by means of analogy and by means of grammaticalisation:

Les procédés par lesquels se constituent les formes grammaticales sont au nombre de deux [...]. L'un de ces procédés est l'analogie; il consiste à faire une forme sur le modèle d'une autre [...]. L'autre procédé consiste dans le passage d'un mot autonome au rôle d'élément grammatical (in Marchello-Nizia 2006: 18).¹

Grammaticalisation, the passage of an autonomous word to the role of grammatical element ('le passage d'un mot autonome au rôle d'élément grammatical'), affects the overall system, in that it introduces categories which formerly had no linguistic expression. By contrast, analogy entails the renewal of forms, but does not affect the system as a whole. Furthermore, Meillet claimed that there is a continuum in languages by means of which lexical items (*mots principaux*, 'principal words') evolve into auxiliaries and other morphemes with grammatical functions (*mots accessoires* or *mots vides*, 'accessory words' or 'empty words'). He also observed the correlation between frequency of use and decrease in expressivity, thus bringing about *mots accessoires* (Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991: 9).

From the very first decades of the twentieth century until roughly the 1980s the importance of grammaticalisation apparently lay dormant, mainly due to the weight of synchronic linguistics during this time. As Marchello-Nizia (2006: 14) puts it,

après les éclatants succès du comparatisme historique au XIX^e siècle, qui ont légitimé la linguistique comme champ scientifique propre, [...] la linguistique diachronique végétait discrètement à l'ombre des grands paradigmes synchronicistes qui ont dominé – et avec quels succès – toute cette période.²

The 1980s witnessed the revival of grammaticalisation studies, with grammaticalisation playing a crucial role in the work of a number of renowned linguists, including Bybee, Giacalone-Ramat, Heine, König, Lehmann, Ramat, and Traugott, among many others. However, modern studies on grammaticalisation are said to have begun in the early 1970s with the work of Givón (Narrog and Heine 2011: 1). In a seminal paper on the interrelationship between historical syntax and synchronic morphology, Givón (1971) traced the origin of several affixes to former syntactically independent phrases. This work has in fact become a landmark in grammaticalisation studies, owing to his oft-quoted slogan "today's morphology is yesterday's syntax" (1971: 413). Moreover, the development of corpus linguistics and of cognitive linguistics has contributed greatly to

¹ 'The processes by means of which grammatical forms are formed are two in total [...]. One of these processes is analogy; it consists in creating a form taking another one as a model [...]. The other process consists in the passage of an autonomous word to the role of a grammatical element' (my translation).

² 'After the resounding success of the historical comparative method in the nineteenth century, which has legitimised linguistics as a scientific field of its own [...], diachronic linguistics vegetated discreetly under the shadow of the major synchronic paradigms which dominated – and with such a success – all this period' (my translation).

the advances in the field of grammaticalisation over the last decades, to the point that it is now considered as ‘l’une des constantes de l’activité communicative et cognitive de l’homme’ (‘one of the communicative and cognitive constants of humans’) (Marchello-Nizia 2006: 19; my translation).

In current linguistic terminology, the label *grammaticalisation* has two different senses. On the one hand, it refers to a type of linguistic change and, on the other, to the theoretical approach which studies this type of change (cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003; Marchello-Nizia 2006, among others). As a type of change, grammaticalisation is found cross-linguistically, and denotes the process whereby particular items become increasingly more grammatical in the course of time. In fact, two types of grammaticalisation are commonly distinguished in the literature, namely primary grammaticalisation and secondary grammaticalisation. Primary grammaticalisation refers to the development of lexical items into grammatical material, while secondary grammaticalisation denotes the development of already grammatical forms into more grammatical ones (cf. Traugott 2010: 40-41). Moreover, grammaticalisation, also frequently referred to as *grammaticization* (Hopper 1991; Himmelmann 2004) and *grammatization* (Matisoff 1991), is cross-componential (McMahon 1994: 161), causing disruptions in all linguistic components. As McMahon has claimed, ‘grammaticalization is not only a syntactic change, but a global change affecting also the morphology, phonology and semantics’ (1994: 106).

Although grammaticalisation is generally seen as a process whereby a lexical or less grammatical item develops increasingly more grammatical meaning (Fischer and Rosenbach 2000: 2), recent literature on grammaticalisation regards this definition as inaccurate, inasmuch as it is not a particular lexical item that becomes grammaticalised, but rather the whole construction in which it appears (cf. Bybee 2003a: 602), as proved by the developments in Construction Grammar.³ In addition, the importance of discourse and pragmatic factors in grammaticalisation has also been pointed out over the past few years (cf. Fischer and Rosenbach 2000; Hopper and Traugott 2003; Couper-Kuhlen 2011; Degand and Vandenberg 2011; Diewald 2011a, 2011b; Nicolle 2011; Onodera 2011).

The potential items recruited for grammaticalisation denote, in the vast majority of cases, concrete objects, processes, or locations (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünnemeyer

³ See section 3.4 below for a brief account of the relationship between Construction Grammar and grammaticalisation.

1991; Heine 1997; Heine and Kuteva 2002). These source concepts are of frequent and general use, therefore belonging to the core vocabulary of languages. For instance, body parts are frequently selected as sources for the expression of location (e.g. ‘back’ or ‘buttock’ for the space behind; ‘chest’, ‘breast’, or ‘face’ for the front space, etc.). This is the case, for instance, of the Icelandic noun *bak* ‘back’, which provided the source for the preposition and adverbial (*að*) *bak(i)* ‘behind’, ‘after’, and of the Colonial Quiché⁴ noun *ih* ‘back’, which yielded the locative marker *-ih* ‘behind’ (Heine and Kuteva 2002: 47). Likewise, temporal terms are said to be metaphorically derived from spatial terms (e.g. *We are **behind** in paying our bills*) (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 85). It seems that we tend to explain nonhuman categories, such as spatial or temporal references, in terms of human ones, and the human body provides a particularly relevant model in this regard.⁵

Grammaticalisation on the whole correlates with a number of features such as semantic bleaching or erosion of meaning (desemanticization or semantic depletion as for Lehmann 1995), loss of phonetic substance (attrition in Lehmann 1985, 1995), loss of autonomy, increasingly fixed positions in the phrase or clause, reanalysis or reformulation of the construction, decategorialisation, and increase in subjectivity or subjectification (cf. Finegan 1995; Traugott 1989, 1995, 2003, 2007, among others). These features, which have been described in terms of grammaticalisation parameters and principles, or as phenomena concomitant to grammaticalisation, are discussed in detail in section 3.2 and section 3.3, respectively. Section 3.4 details the most recent developments in the field of grammaticalisation, while section 3.5 contains some concluding remarks which close this chapter.

3.2. GRAMMATICALISATION: PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

Grammaticalisation has been described in terms of a set of parameters (Lehmann 1985) and principles (Hopper 1991). These are presented in detail in this section, as they will be applied to the analysis of the intensifiers under study in the current piece of research (cf. chapter 6).

Christian Lehmann (1985, 1995) accounts for grammaticalisation as both a synchronic and a diachronic process, and further argues that the degree of

⁴ Colonial Quiché is a Mayan language spoken in Guatemala.

⁵ However, the bodies of animals can also be taken as a reference in some languages, as happens in Papago, a Uto-Aztecan language (Heine 1997: 40).

grammaticalisation of an element can be measured in relation to three aspects: weight, cohesion, and variability. These properties can in turn be considered both paradigmatically and syntagmatically, yielding a set of parameters, as shown in Table 3.1, adapted from Lehmann (1995: 123).

Table 3.1. Lehmann's parameters of grammaticalisation

Aspects	Paradigmatic parameters	Syntagmatic parameters
Weight	Integrity	Scope
Cohesion	Paradigmaticity	Bondedness
Variability	Paradigmatic variability	Syntagmatic variability

When we consider grammaticalisation from a diachronic perspective, taking into account these parameters and aspects, a number of processes come into play. These are shown in Table 3.2 (Lehmann 1985: 309).

Table 3.2. Lehmann's parameters and processes of grammaticalisation

	Parameter	Weak grammaticalisation	Process	Strong grammaticalisation
Paradigmatic	<i>Integrity</i>	Bundle of semantic features; possibly polysyllabic	<i>Attrition</i>	Few semantic features; oligo- or monosegmental
	<i>Paradigmaticity</i>	Item participates loosely in semantic field	<i>Paradigmaticisation</i>	Small, tightly integrated paradigm
	<i>Paradigmatic variability</i>	Free choice of items according to communicative intentions	<i>Obligatorification</i>	Choice systematically constrained, use largely obligatory
Syntagmatic	<i>Scope</i>	Item relates to constituent of arbitrary complexity	<i>Condensation</i>	Item modifies word or stem
	<i>Bondedness</i>	Item is independently juxtaposed	<i>Coalescence</i>	Item is affix or even phonological feature of carrier
	<i>Syntagmatic variability</i>	Item can be shifted around freely	<i>Fixation</i>	Item occupies fixed slot

The process by means of which a given linguistic sign loses part of its integrity, being deprived of semantic or phonological substance, is called **attrition**. Semantic attrition is also known as bleaching or desemanticisation (cf. Heine 2003, among

others), while phonological attrition or loss of phonetic substance is also referred to as erosion (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991).

Semantic attrition or bleaching implies generalisation or weakening of semantic content. Given that grammaticalisation typically involves a change from lexical to grammatical and that the items undergoing grammaticalisation become increasingly more general and abstract in meaning, so that they can be used in a wider range of contexts, semantic attrition is therefore characteristic of grammaticalisation. This is due to habituation (cf. section 3.3.4.1 below), because, as Bybee (2003a: 605) suggests, ‘a stimulus loses its impact if it occurs very frequently’.

In the grammaticalisation literature, it is generally acknowledged that semantic bleaching occurs only in the late stages of the process (cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003: 94), while the early stages of grammaticalisation are characterised rather by a shift of meaning. In the words of Hopper and Traugott (2003: 94), ‘there is no doubt that, over time, meanings tend to become weakened during the process of grammaticalization. Nevertheless, all the evidence for early stages is that initially there is a redistribution or shift, not a loss, of meaning’.

In this connection, Heine (2002: 83) claims that in order to study the development of grammatical meanings, we also need to take into account the contexts which give rise to them. He suggests that there exist a number of intermediate stages before a given construction with an original or source meaning develops into a new construction with a different meaning, the so-called target meaning. Thus, Heine distinguishes four stages in the rise of new grammatical meanings. At the very first stage we find a particular expression with a source meaning, which can occur in a variety of different contexts. The second stage corresponds to what Heine calls a *bridging context*, i.e., a context which facilitates the interpretation of that expression with a meaning different from the source one. Nevertheless, although at this stage a new or target meaning can be inferred, the source meaning cannot be discarded. The third stage is the so-called *switch context*, implying that at this time the source meaning is ruled out and that only the target meaning is found. Finally, at the last stage the target meaning expands to new contexts and is no longer dependent on the circumstances which gave rise to it. This is, therefore, in keeping with what Hopper and Traugott (2003: 94-95) suggest for semantic bleaching and grammaticalisation, that is, that bleaching does not occur all of a sudden; rather what we find at the very initial stages of any grammaticalisation process is a switch of meaning, which becomes increasingly more general as grammaticalisation

advances.

Since, as we have seen, bleaching is very closely related to grammaticalisation, the literature on grammaticalisation provides manifold instances of this change, many of which are cross-linguistically replicated. Paradigmatic examples include, among many others:

- i. Causal subordinators, which are argued to derive from temporal markers. This is the case, for instance, of French *puisque* (< Latin *posteaquam* ‘after, ever since’) and of German *weil* (< Old High German *dia wila so* ‘so long as’), both meaning ‘since, because’ (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2002: 291).
- ii. Concessive markers, which ultimately go back to temporal expressions, including prepositions and conjunctions. For example, English *while* and German *während* had a temporal meaning before developing the concessive reading ‘although’.
- iii. The indefinite article *a(n)*, which has its roots in the numeral *one*.
- iv. The indefinite pronouns *on* and *man* (‘they, people’) in French and German, respectively. These forms have their origin in Latin *homo* and German *Mann*, both of which were generic nouns meaning ‘man, male, person’ (cf. Heine and Kuteva 2002: 208-209).
- v. The PDE suffix *-ly*, which ultimately goes back to the OE noun *líc* ‘body’ (cf. Kastovsky 2006).

All the aforementioned examples involve bleaching and grammaticalisation. However, the first three cases (temporal > causal; temporal > concessive; numeral > indefinite) represent examples of desemanticisation of material which is already grammatical and which becomes increasingly more grammatical (secondary grammaticalisation). By contrast, the development of the indefinite pronouns *on* and *man* in French and German and that of the English suffix *-ly* constitute clear cases of grammaticalisation of lexical into grammatical material (primary grammaticalisation).

The other type of attrition discussed by Lehmann is phonological attrition or the gradual loss of phonetic substance, which is also known as erosion (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991). Phonological attrition takes place in a number of well-known examples of grammaticalisation, such as the *going to*-construction, which is often morphologically and phonologically reduced to *gonna* [‘gənə] (cf. Bybee 2003a, 2006), or the emerging modals *wanna* (< *want to*) and *gotta* (< *got to*), studied by Krug (2003), reduced to [‘wɒnə] and [‘gɒtə], respectively (cf. section 3.3.4). Further examples of

phonological reduction are exemplified by the transition from the Latin preposition *ad* to Romance *a*, implying the loss of the final consonant, and the development of the demonstrative in Latin in cases such as *illam amicam*, which gave rise to *l'amie* in French, being reduced to just one consonant (cf. Marchello-Nizia 2006: 39).

Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer (1991: 214) hold that there are two factors responsible for phonetic erosion. The first is called the quantity principle, according to which lexical forms contain more information than grammatical forms and, therefore, the chunk of code employed for their expression is likely to be reduced in the grammaticalisation process. The second factor at play here is frequency, higher frequency correlating with likelihood of erosion. This has also been noted by Bybee (2003a: 616), for whom 'increasing frequency of use of grammaticizing constructions leads to phonological reduction'.

Nonetheless, loss of phonetic substance or erosion is not exclusively found in grammaticalisation, since, as Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer (1991: 127) explain, it is omnipresent in linguistic change. Phonological erosion can therefore occur outside grammaticalisation (e.g. the diachronic levelling and eventual loss of verbal inflections from OE to ME or the evolution of OE *cniht* /kniçt/ into LModE *knight* /nait/). Likewise, we can also find instances of grammaticalised elements with no phonological attrition. One such instance is the French adverb *beaucoup* 'a lot, much' (cf. Marchello-Nizia 2006: 39), from Old French (*un*) *beau coup* 'a strong blow/knock', which evolved into Middle French *beau coup*, and later on *beaucoup*.

The second process discussed by Lehmann is **paradigmaticisation**, the tendency for grammaticalised forms to be arranged into paradigms (Heine 2003: 588). Paradigmaticisation leads to increased homogeneity in a given paradigm. In the aforementioned case of the Latin preposition *ad*, which grammaticalised to French *à*, the French prepositions form a more homogeneous category than the Latin ones, as they come to form the paradigm of oblique cases, while in Latin they could perform further functions.

Lehmann's **obligatorification** refers to the process by means of which certain elements become obligatory in a given context. Thus, the noun *pas* is the only compulsory element in negative clauses in contemporary French, so that the adverb *ne*, appearing before the verb, is frequently elided in speech: *je (ne) parle pas français* 'I do not speak French'. From a historical perspective, however, the only mandatory element in the negation pattern was preverbal *ne*, while *pas* was simply a reinforcing particle. In

fact, other forms could also be used to support the negation: *point* ‘dot, point’, *mie* ‘crumb’, *gote* ‘drop’, *amende* ‘almond’, *areste* ‘fish-bone’, *beloce* ‘sloe’, and *eschalope* ‘pea-pod’ (Hopper 1991: 26; Hopper and Traugott 2003: 117). Of these, *pas* and *point* were the most frequent, and they are actually the only ones which are still grammatically possible in contemporary French. *Pas*, which occurred predominantly with motion verbs at the beginning, became increasingly frequent over time. This increase in token frequency⁶ allowed it to expand to further constructions with verbs other than those of motion, eventually becoming the obligatory grammaticalised marker of negation in Present-day French. Another example of obligatorification is provided by the development of articles in the Romance languages (Lehmann 1995: 140). In Latin definite nouns were not necessarily preceded by definite determiners (e.g. *ille* ‘that’), and indefinite nouns by indefinite determiners (e.g. *unus* ‘one’). In the development towards the modern Romance languages the presence of determiners eventually became the norm, with the result that most contexts now require nouns to be preceded by determiners.

Moving on now to the syntagmatic axis, Lehmann’s process of **condensation** involves reduction of the scope of a given sign and structural simplicity: ‘the more a sign is grammaticalized, the less complex become the constituents with which it can combine’ (Lehmann 1985: 308). Illustrative examples of condensation are provided by the Latin preposition *dē*, which takes a cased noun phrase as complement, while the grammaticalised preposition in French (*de*) takes a caseless complement. The development from possessive *have* (*I have the letter written*) to perfective *have* (*I have written the letter*) also implies reduction of scope, in particular from clause to phrase level, and is hence another case of condensation (cf. Norde 2009: 128). For instance, *very* or *terribly* were originally adjuncts of manner, having the whole clause as scope; when they grammaticalised as intensifiers their scope was reduced to the phrase level, modifying only other adjectives or adverbs (cf. Méndez-Naya 2003: 376).

Coalescence is defined by Lehmann (1985: 308; 1995: 148) as an increase in bondedness (Lehmann 1985: 308; 1995: 148) or the ‘collapsing together of adjacent forms’ (Heine 2003: 588). In the case of the French prepositions *de* and *à*, these merged with the definite article *le*, yielding *du* and *au*, respectively.⁷ Further examples of

⁶ As defined by Bybee (2003a: 604), token frequency refers to ‘the frequency of occurrence of a unit, usually a word or morpheme, in running text’ (cf. section 3.3.4.2).

⁷ *Des* and *aux* would be the equivalent forms in the plural, resulting from the fusion of *de+les* and *à+les*, respectively.

coalescence are found in the development of the Latin construction *habeo* + infinitive into the future forms in the Romance languages (e.g. French *chanterai*) and in the development of the aforementioned French adverb *beaucoup* ‘a lot’ from the noun phrase (*un*) *beau coup* (‘a strong blow/knock’) (cf. Marchello-Nizia 2006: 142-148).

The last process discussed by Lehmann is called **fixation**, which entails the loss of syntagmatic variability (Lehmann 1985: 308); in other words, grammaticalised items occupy fixed slots and do not have as much freedom as items which show incipient grammaticalisation. Thus, the adverbs ending in *-ment(e)* in the Romance languages are derived from the Latin noun *mente* ‘mind’, which could precede or follow adjectives. In the Romance languages, however, this position has become fixed and the original noun *mente* has become a suffix which thus occurs only in postposition. The adverb *clearly* is hence *clairement* in French, *chiaramente* in Italian, *claramente* in Galician, Portuguese, and Spanish, and *clarament* in Catalan.

Lehmann’s parameters discussed in the preceding paragraphs can be complemented by Paul J. Hopper’s five principles of grammaticalisation, namely layering, divergence, specialisation, persistence, and decategorialisation (Hopper 1991: 22-31). In Hopper’s view, the main advantage of these principles is that they can be applied at early stages of grammaticalisation, while Lehmann’s parameters are characteristic of rather advanced stages of the process.

Concerning **layering**, it has been claimed that while new layers develop in grammaticalisation, the older ones may coexist and even interact with them. In Hopper’s words, ‘when a form or set of forms emerges in a functional domain, it does not immediately (and may never) replace an already existing set of functionally equivalent forms, but rather the two set of forms co-exist’ (1991: 23). These old and new layers may specialise or develop new meanings. For instance, some Romance languages typically express futurity by means of the morphological future and the *going to*-construction, the latter being the newest layer.⁸ Even so, these are not the only

⁸ Spanish *cantaré* (‘I will sing’) vs. *voy a cantar* (‘I am going to sing’); French *chanterai* (‘I will sing’) vs. *je vais chanter* (‘I am going to sing’); Galician and Portuguese *cantarei* (‘I will sing’) vs. *vou cantar* (‘I am going to sing’). Note that the *going to*-construction has no exact equivalent in Italian, since in this language the verb *go* (*andare* + infinitive) is interpreted in a literal sense. Thus, in a sentence such as *vado a comprare il giornale* ‘I am going to buy the paper’, *vado a comprare* indicates actual motion (cf. Amenta and Strudsholm 2002: 12). Catalan also has a periphrastic construction with *go*, but it is used for the past: *vaig a cantar* (‘I sang’), while the future is *cantaré* (‘I will sing’). Sicilian, by contrast, does have a periphrastic future but no simple future. Romanian patterns with Italian in this regard and does not have a periphrastic future either. Note also that the *going to*-construction takes the preposition in Catalan, Italian, Sicilian, and Spanish, while the use of the preposition in Portuguese and Galician is considered ungrammatical.

possible ways of conveying futurity in these Romance languages, which implies that there exist more layers than the two just mentioned, albeit with different semantic nuances.

The principle of **divergence** (“split” in Heine and Reh 1984) is similar to that of layering, in that it also implies the coexistence of layers. In fact, it can even be understood as a case of layering, as Hopper points out (1991: 24). Nonetheless, in the case of divergence, the forms in question perform different functions, whereas layering involves the coexistence of forms performing the same function. The French word *pas*, mentioned above, illustrates the principle of divergence, since it has two distinct meanings: on the one hand, it can be a negative particle ‘not’, as in *je ne parle pas français* ‘I do not speak French’; on the other, it has a lexical meaning ‘step, pace’, as in *il exécuta pas à pas, avec une patience tenace, un plan dont il avait longtemps mûri chaque détail* (‘he executed step by step, with an infinite [literally tenacious] patience, a plan whose details he had developed long ago’).⁹ While the negative adverb *pas* is a grammaticalised marker in Present-day French, the noun *pas* ‘step’ is not and retains its lexical meaning.

The principle of **specialisation**, which corresponds roughly with Lehmann’s obligatorification, applies only to advanced stages of the grammaticalisation process. Grammaticalisation thus correlates with restrictions on the array of available options, so that in the final stage the use of a particular form, with a more general and grammatical meaning, eventually becomes obligatory. Hopper exemplifies specialisation with the paradigm of French negators. As mentioned above, a number of forms could reinforce negation alongside *pas*. Nevertheless, it was only *pas* that specialised as a negative marker, becoming the only obligatory particle in negative clauses, whereas preverbal *ne* is often elided.

Persistence is another of Hopper’s principles, according to which ‘some of the traces of earlier meanings of an item undergoing grammaticalization are likely to survive in the form of the grammatical distribution of the item concerned’ (Heine 2003: 589). Thus, an auxiliary for the future such as *will* can still retain traces of its original volitional meaning in certain cases, as in *I will stay here* (Larreya 2009: 19). Likewise, some West African languages have developed object markers from former serialised

⁹ Cf. *Trésor de la langue française informatisé*, s.v. *pas*², subst. masc. The example is taken from Zola’s *Fortune Rougon* (my translation).

verbs¹⁰ like *take*. This is the case of the form *kɛ* in Gã (a Benue-Kwa language), which functions as a grammaticalised accusative case marker, being in origin a verb meaning ‘take’ (Hopper 1991: 28). However, *kɛ* cannot occur with all types of verbs, since ‘only objects which can be ‘taken’ are marked morphologically as accusatives’ (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 97). In other words, *kɛ* retains properties of its original meaning.

The last principle discussed by Hopper (1991) is **decategorialisation**, which entails the ‘loss in morphosyntactic properties characteristic of the source forms’ (Heine 2003: 579). Thus, forms which undergo grammaticalisation tend to lose or neutralise the prototypical features characteristic of their original class and begin to adopt traits of secondary classes (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünnemeyer 1991; Hopper 1991; Hopper and Traugott 2003, among others). Therefore, decategorialisation entails a shift from a ‘morphologically “heavier” unit to one that is lighter, that is, from one that tends to be phonologically longer and more distinct (e.g. with stressed vowels) to one that tends to be less distinct and shorter’ (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 106). This is equivalent to what Lehmann (1995: 132) labels *morphological degeneration*. Decategorialisation, therefore, involves a shift from a major category like noun or verb, i.e., from lexically open classes, to a minor category like conjunction, adverb, pronoun, demonstrative, or auxiliary, that is, to closed classes. This can be represented in the following cline of categoriality (from Hopper and Traugott 2003: 107): major category (> intermediate category) > minor category. As a consequence, one might safely assume that diachronically all minor categories have their origin in major categories (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 107).

Examples of the shift from major to minor word classes as a result of grammaticalisation processes are manifold. For instance, the conjunction *while* (e.g. *while you were writing*) derives from the OE noun *hwil* (‘a length of time’), a meaning which is still preserved in PDE in examples like *we were waiting for a while* (cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003: 107). The shift from noun to conjunction implies that when *while* comes to function as a conjunction, it can no longer take premodifiers like articles, demonstratives, pronouns, or adjectives. Moreover, as a conjunction *while*

¹⁰ Verb serialisation refers to the juxtaposition of verbs or verb phrases without any linker, which in other languages would be expressed through conjunctions or complementation (Larson 1991: 185; Thepkanjana 2008: 103). This is the case in a variety of world languages, among them Mandarin Chinese and West African languages such as Yoruba, Akan, and Gã. Consider the following example from Akan, where the verbs *go* and *come* occur side by side, while in English a conjunction is required to link them (Larson 1991: 185):

(i) Kofi kɔɔɛ baɛ.
Kofi went came
‘Kofi went and came.’

cannot function as a subject or appear in clause-initial position. However, these losses seem to be compensated by its ability to link clauses. Similar examples of this functional shift can be adduced from other languages. In French, for instance, the noun *cause* ‘cause’ has also given rise to a conjunction, namely *à cause de* ‘because of’, which coexists in Present-day French with the noun. Consider the following examples:

(3.1) *C'est toi qui es cause de ma folie, c'est toi aussi qui en es le remède* (Hugo, *Lettres à la fiancée. Trésor de la langue française informatisé*, s.v. *cause*² subst. fém.)
‘You are the cause of my madness, you too are the remedy’.¹¹

(3.2) *Je n'ai pas pu dormir à cause de la chaleur* (made-up example).
‘I couldn't sleep because it was too hot’ (literally ‘because of the heat’)¹²

In (3.1) *cause* is a noun and can, therefore, take modifiers (e.g. *la seule cause de ma folie* ‘the only cause of my madness’). Conversely, in (3.2) *à cause de* is a conjunction and as such it has lost the ability to take premodifiers.

Likewise, verbs may lose verbal properties like tense, aspect, modality, and person-number marking, and come to be interpreted as conjunctions, as shown in the comparison of (3.3) and (3.4), from Hopper and Traugott (2003: 108):

(3.3) *Carefully considering/Having carefully considered all the evidence, the panel delivered its verdict.*

(3.4) *Considering (*having carefully considered) you are so short, your skill at basketball is unexpected.*

In (3.3), the participle *considering* can be modified by an adverb (*carefully*) and can appear in either the present (*considering*) or the past tense form (*having considered*). Moreover, it has a recoverable subject, which has to coincide with that of the main clause (*the panel*). By contrast, none of these features apply in (3.4), where *considering* has lost its verbal properties and is now interpreted as a conjunction.

Although, as adduced by Hopper (1991), Lehmann's parameters are more characteristic of rather advanced stages of grammaticalisation (see above), I will make use of both Hopper's principles and of Lehmann's parameters in my discussion of the diachronic evolution of death-related intensifiers (cf. section 6.5).

¹¹ My translation.

¹² My translation.

3.3. GRAMMATICALISATION AND RELATED PHENOMENA

3.3.1. Unidirectionality and grammaticalisation clines

Examined from a diachronic perspective, grammaticalisation is thought to be unidirectional, proceeding in the same direction once it is started (cf. Heine 2003; Hopper and Traugott 2003; Haspelmath 2004, among others). The way in which this phenomenon advances gives rise to what have been called grammaticalisation clines (Hopper and Traugott 2003), grammaticalisation channels (Lehmann 1995), or grammaticalisation chains (Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991; Heine 1992). Such clines apply on all levels: semantic (lexical > grammatical; concrete > abstract and general meanings), syntactic (major > minor categories), and phonological (full > reduced phonological forms). Put differently, forms undergoing grammaticalisation typically move from a point at the left of the cline to the right of the cline, while the reverse movement is not frequently attested. These transitions from one stage to the other along the scale of grammaticalisation are, however, not abrupt, but rather smooth changes. These clines allow us to determine the degree of grammaticalisation of a particular item or construction in relation to another. Thus, the closer a given item is to the left and, hence, to the starting grammaticalisation point, the less grammaticalised it will be, while the more distant it is from this point, the higher its degree of grammaticalisation (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991: 228).

As mentioned above, on a semantic level grammaticalisation seems to operate in the direction from lexis to grammar or from less grammatical to increasingly more grammatical. Representative cases of this cline include the grammaticalisation of modal auxiliaries, the development of conjunctions and prepositions from original nouns, the emergence of pronouns from nouns (e.g. French *on* 'we', from Old French *hom* 'man'), and the rise of the definite article in French, which functions as a marker of gender, from an original demonstrative. Directionality within the semantic domain also correlates with increased (inter)subjectivity (cf. section 3.3.3) and a higher degree of generalisation and abstraction. Unidirectionality also operates on a syntactic scale, as evinced in the widely-attested cline major category > minor category. Thus, nouns are in many cases the source for the development of prepositions, conjunctions, and pronouns, and verbs of volition and of movement are often recruited for the formation of auxiliaries. At the phonological level, it has been noted that non-grammaticalised items and constructions preserve full forms, whereas grammaticalisation very often

involves phonological reduction, which is also related to frequency of the form (cf. 3.3.4.3). Modal auxiliaries, for example, tend to be reduced, while full verbs are not reduced on such a regular basis.

Although, as Hopper and Traugott (2003: 99) put it, ‘the evidence for unidirectionality is systematic and cross-linguistically replicated’, unidirectionality in grammaticalisation has been called into question, and some examples have been adduced as evidence against the argued directionality (cf. Fischer 2000; Lass 2000; Hopper and Traugott 2003). In this context, the label *degrammaticalisation* was coined by Lehmann (1982) for a phenomenon which was allegedly non-existent. Haspelmath (1999, 2004) is even more explicit when he claims that changes in the opposite direction of grammaticalisation hardly occur. In his own words, ‘it is a fair guess to say that 99% of all shifts along the lexical/functional continuum are grammaticalizations’ (1999: 1046). He maintains that reversals of grammaticalisation should imply exactly the same stages, though leading to the opposite direction of the cline, i.e., towards increasingly more lexical forms, and that the label which should be used for these complete reversals of grammaticalisation should not be *degrammaticalisation*, but *antigrammaticalisation* instead (2004: 27-28).

Nevertheless, *degrammaticalisation* is now widely accepted as a linguistic phenomenon. Thus, Hopper and Traugott (2003: 17-18) argue that ‘language change is not subject to exceptionless physical laws’, so that exceptions to the rule can be attested. Van der Auwera (2002: 26) is much more categorical, when he claims that *degrammaticalisation* ‘should be studied in its own right, and not as a quirky, accidental exception to grammaticalization’. Similarly, Ramat (1992: 557) argues against the directionality cline, suggesting that ‘today’s grammar may become tomorrow’s lexicon’, hence continuing Givón’s original quote ‘today’s morphology is yesterday’s syntax’ (1971: 413) (cf. section 3.1).

Nonetheless, the definitions of *degrammaticalisation* vary considerably according to whether this notion is understood in a broad or in a narrow sense. *Degrammaticalisation* understood in the broadest sense would thus include conversions (for instance, of prepositions such as *up* or *down* into verbs, or of morphemes like *-ism* or *-ade* into nouns in English, or of the Italian suffix *-anta* in numerals, which gave rise to the noun *anta* meaning ‘age from forty upwards’), the use of second person pronouns in some languages to create verbs (*tutoyer* in French, *duzen* in German, *tutear* in Spanish or in Portuguese, meaning ‘to use the familiar form of address’), as well as the rise of nouns

from former comparative forms (French *seigneur* ‘sir’ or English *mayor*) or from participles which are no longer part of the verbal paradigm (e.g. Italian *il defunto* ‘the deceased’).¹³ Those who defend a narrower definition of degrammaticalisation, by contrast, claim that these are examples of lexicalisation¹⁴ instead, or standard processes of word formation, given that the changes involved are abrupt and not gradual. This is in fact Norde’s view (2001, 2009), whose monograph on degrammaticalisation (2009) provides the most important and comprehensive account of the phenomenon so far. She emphasises the crucial role of context, claiming that changes into content items that are ‘taken out of their context [...] will be considered lexicalization, not degrammaticalization’ (2009: 9). For her, changes such as the ones undergone by suffixes which have become nouns are not gradual (see above), but rather ‘‘jump’ directly to the level of lexicality’ (2001: 236), and should hence be regarded as lexicalisation. For Norde (2009, 2010) degrammaticalisation can be of three types: degrammation, deinflectionalisation, and debonding:

- i. Degrammation can be defined as ‘a composite change whereby a function word in a specific linguistic context is reanalysed as a member of a major word class, acquiring the morphosyntactic properties which are typical of that word class, and gaining in semantic substance’ (2009: 135). Crucially, degrammation involves pragmatic inferencing, which enables grammatical elements to be contextually interpreted as members of a major word class. This is the case, for instance, of the verb *wotte* ‘wish’ in a variety of Pennsylvania German spoken in Waterloo County, Canada (cf. Burridge 1998). *Wotte* arose from the preterite subjunctive of the modal *welle* ‘want to’, thus involving a shift from more grammatical to more lexical.
- ii. Deinflectionalisation is ‘a composite change whereby an inflectional affix in a specific linguistic context gains a new function, while shifting to a less bound morpheme type’ (Norde 2009: 154). Examples discussed by the author are the *s-*

¹³ For an in-depth discussion of ‘reversals’ of grammaticalisation understood in the broadest sense, see Newmeyer (2001).

¹⁴ Lexicalisation will not be discussed in this dissertation, given that it is not a relevant issue in my data. Briefly put, lexicalisation can be considered both synchronically and diachronically, and also as a theoretical framework, just like grammaticalisation (Lightfoot 2011: 439). The diachronic dimension is the most problematic, since it is considered to be in conflict with grammaticalisation. In general terms, lexicalisation can be broadly understood in three different ways. Firstly, as an ordinary process of word formation, including here cases of compounding, derivation, initialisms, acronyms, and blends, which involve the erosion of boundaries between independent morphemes. Secondly, as a process of fusion resulting in reduced compositionality, as is the case of *handicap* < *hand in the cap* or *about* < OE *on + be + utan* ‘on/at + by + outside’. Thirdly, lexicalisation can involve ‘the emancipation of bound morphemes into free morphemes’ (Norde 2009: 10), for instance in the case of *ex* (from *ex-husband*) and *ology* ‘subject of study’ (cf. Brinton and Traugott 2005: 32-61).

genitive in English and Swedish, and the Swedish suffixes *-er* and *-on*. *-Er* was an inflection for the masculine singular of the nominative case, which was reanalysed as a derivational suffix, used to form nouns from adjectives, as in *en dummer* ‘a stupid one’ or *toker*, from the adjective *tok* ‘idiot’. Swedish *-on*, in turn, developed from a number suffix¹⁵ which came to denote berries, as in *hallon* ‘raspberry’ and *lingon* ‘lingonberry’, and eventually extended to further fruit names, such as *fikon* ‘fig’ or *plumum* ‘plum’.

iii. Debonding denotes ‘a composite change whereby a bound morpheme in a specific linguistic context becomes a free morpheme’ (Norde 2009: 186). Norde discusses a considerable number of examples of debonding, among others the following:

- infinitival markers in English and Scandinavian languages;
- English *ish*, developing from a suffix to a free morpheme;
- the Irish pronoun *muid*, originally a verbal suffix, also discussed in Willis (2007); and
- the quantifiers *tig*, *tich*, and *zig* in Dutch, Frisian, and German, respectively, themselves originating in a numeral suffix, cognate with English *-ty*.¹⁶

Of the three types of degrammaticalisation distinguished by Norde (2009, 2010), degrammation is considered to be primary degrammaticalisation, since it refers to the process by means of which a function word becomes a full lexical item; in turn, debonding and deinflectionalisation constitute secondary degrammaticalisation, given that an already grammatical element, in particular a bound morpheme, becomes ‘less grammatical’ (2010: 136). A common definition of degrammaticalisation, applicable to all three types, is to consider this linguistic phenomenon as ‘a composite change whereby a gram in a specific context gains in autonomy or substance on more than one linguistic level (semantics, morphology, syntax, or phonology)’ (2009: 120).

The three different types of degrammaticalisation have, according to Norde (2009: 120-123), four basic features:

- i. Counterdirectionality: this is the clearest feature to describe any change as degrammaticalisation, since it implies any shift from right to left on the cline of grammaticality presented in Hopper and Traugott (2003: 7): content item >

¹⁵ In Old Swedish it was the nominative and accusative plural inflection for weak neuter nouns ending in *-a*.

¹⁶ The development of Dutch *tig* appears to be rather recent, occurring mostly in internet language.

grammatical word > clitic > inflectional affix (> \emptyset).

- ii. Novelty: this is another criterion which degrammaticalised items must meet. If certain ‘less grammatical’ elements are derived from ‘more grammatical elements’ which were already present in the language, albeit with a marginal function, it does not count as degrammaticalisation. Norde cites the case of English *dare*, which Beths (1999) discussed as a case of degrammaticalisation, a view which Traugott (2001) and Norde herself contest. According to Beths, OE *durran* ‘dare’ was a main verb which developed as a modal in EModE. Nonetheless, in PDE *dare* is exclusively used as a main verb. Norde (2009: 121-122) contends that the case of *dare* does not involve degrammaticalisation, since the main verb uses of this form were always present in the language. In other words, given that *dare* does not comply with the criterion of novelty, it does not qualify as degrammaticalisation.
- iii. Infrequency: a third property common to degrammaticalised items is their infrequency if compared with grammaticalised forms, although the rate of degrammaticalised phenomena is also dependent on the definition of degrammaticalisation adopted. If we view degrammaticalisation more widely, allowing for the cases of conversions discussed above, then the degrammaticalisation rate is higher. Conversely, if we restrict the notion of degrammaticalisation to a definition such as the one proposed by Norde (2009), then its rate is considerably lower. Even so, it cannot be denied that the number of grammaticalised elements exceeds that of degrammaticalised ones, regardless of the definition of degrammaticalisation followed.
- iv. Discontinuity: degrammaticalisation cannot be regarded as the complete reversal of grammaticalisation; rather, it ‘entails a *single* shift from right to left on the cline of grammaticality’ (Norde 2009: 123).

Willis (2007) goes much along Norde’s lines, and argues that degrammaticalisation, going in the opposite direction of grammaticalisation, should involve five putative processes (2007: 273):

- i. phonological “strengthening”;
- ii. boundary reanalysis rightwards along the cline: affix > clitic > independent word;
- iii. category reanalysis from grammatical to more lexical;
- iv. metaphorical shift from abstract to concrete; and

v. pragmatic inferencing from abstract to concrete.

Moreover, Willis suggests the existence of different types of degrammaticalisation, the most important ones being deflexion and syntactic lexicalisation. Deflexion takes place when bound inflectional affixes or clitics become free morphemes, as is the case of the English possessive clitic 's, from an earlier genitive case ending (Norde's deinflectionalisation) and of the Irish first person plural pronoun *muid* (Norde's debonding), derived from a former verbal inflection. More interesting for the author, however, is syntactic lexicalisation, equivalent to Norde's degrammation, which constitutes a less well-known phenomenon and is the main focus of his paper. Syntactic lexicalisation is most prototypically grammaticalisation in reverse (2007: 276), or what Haspelmath (2004) labels *antigrammaticalisation* (see above), and involves the reanalysis of former grammatical categories into lexical categories, yet implying pragmatic inferencing and reanalysis. Willis (2007) provides the examples of the Bulgarian noun *nešto* ('thing'), derived from an indefinite pronoun ('something, anything'), the Welsh noun *eiddo* ('property'), derived from the possessive pronoun 'his', and the Welsh verb *nôl* ('fetch, bring'), derived from a preposition meaning 'after'. He also presents another case of degrammaticalisation, namely the reanalysis of conditionals in Slavonic, which clearly shows the close relationship between degrammaticalisation and other phenomena such as exaptation or adaptation.¹⁷

As we have seen in this section, degrammaticalisation is a rather controversial topic in grammaticalisation studies. Even though the definitions of the phenomenon vary considerably, it is generally accepted as a type of linguistic change. To my mind, and following Norde and Willis, degrammaticalisation, like grammaticalisation, should be contextually understood, so that the nouns *ism* or *ade* discussed earlier in this section are not cases of degrammaticalisation, but rather illustrate general processes of word formation.

¹⁷ Exaptation and adaptation are discussed in Vincent (1995), Lass (1997), and Traugott (2004), among others. The term *exaptation* originated in evolutionary biology, and was first used in 1982 by Stephen Jay Gould and Elizabeth Vrba to refer to 'those useful structures that arose for other reasons, or for no conventional reasons at all' (quoted in Lass 1990: 80). Thus, the reptiles' feathers, which formerly served thermoregulatory purposes, were redeployed for flight. The attribution of a new function to a given form is compared to jerry-building or *bricolage* in Lass (1997: 316-317), as a recycling strategy. An example in English would be the progressive: the structure verb + present participle existed in OE, but was only later clearly attributed a progressive meaning.

3.3.2. Reanalysis

Another phenomenon often associated with grammaticalisation is reanalysis, which is defined by Langacker (in Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991: 215), as the ‘change in the structure of an expression or class of expressions that does not involve any immediate or intrinsic modification of its surface manifestation’. In other words, reanalysis involves a redefinition of constituent boundaries, turning an original structure (A, B) C into a new one, reinterpreted as A (B, C). Prototypical examples cited in the literature on grammaticalisation and reanalysis include, among others, the expression of the English perfect, the development of complementisers from original demonstratives, and the expression of the future in several languages. These three examples are discussed in a summary fashion in what follows.

Concerning the expression of the perfect in English, its origin is apparently found in constructions of the type shown in (3.5), involving the lexical verb *have*, followed by a direct object and a past participle inflected like an adjective, functioning as a predicative complement:

- (3.5) *Ic* *hæbbe* *þone* *fisc* *gefangenne*.
 I-NOM.SG have-PRS.1SG DEF.ART.ACC.M.SG fish-ACC.SG catch-PTCP.ACC.M.SG
 ‘I have the fish caught’

Eventually, this construction underwent a process of reanalysis: *have* came to function as an auxiliary indicating a perfective action and the participle integrated in the verb phrase:

- (3.6) *Ic* *hæbbe* *gefangen* *þone* *fisc*.
 I-NOM.SG have-PRS.1SG catch-PTCP DEF.ART.ACC.M.SG fish-ACC.SG
 ‘I have caught the fish’

The reanalysis of the construction can therefore be represented as follows:

Ic [*hæbbe*] [[*þone fisc*] [*gefangenne*]] > *Ic* [*hæbbe gefangen*] [*þone fisc*]

S V DO PCO S Aux V DO

Another example of boundary shift is found in languages which have grammaticalised a direct speech pattern to a new structure of indirect speech (cf. Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991: 216). For instance, the English demonstrative *that*, formerly used to introduce direct speech, came to be reanalysed as a subordinator:

[I say that:] [he comes] > [I say] [that he comes].

A further example involving grammaticalisation and reanalysis concerns the inflectional future in the Romance languages (cf., among others, Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991 for Spanish, and Hopper and Traugott 2003 and Marchello-Nizia 2006 for French). It has been suggested that in these languages the inflectional future derived from the Latin construction which involved the verb *habeo*, a verb of possession, postposed to an infinitive, with the meaning ‘have to’, as in (3.7).

- (3.7) *Haec habeo cantare*
 these have-PRES.1SG sing-INF
 ‘I have these things to sing’

Constructions such as the one in (3.7), with a structure of the type [[*dicere* ‘say’] *habeo* ‘I have’], with the main verb *hab-* and an adjacent infinitive complement, can be interpreted as obligatory or at least as future-oriented since, if asked what one can say, it might be inferred that one should say it (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 54). This future inference led to the reinterpretation of the construction as [*dicere habeo*], in which the infinitive is no longer subordinate to the main verb *habere*, but comes to be bracketed together with it. Finally, in some Romance languages this construction became grammaticalised as a future tense marker. This is the case, for instance, of Spanish and Catalan *cantaré*, Galician and Portuguese *cantarei*, French *chanterai*, and Italian *canterò*, where the bold type highlights the grammaticalised verb *have*. The development for French is illustrated by Hopper and Traugott (2003: 55):

Classical Latin [[*cantare*] *habeo*] > Late Latin [*cantare habeo*] > French [*chant-e-r-ai*].

Future auxiliaries illustrate another case of reanalysis, since in some languages, including English, Greek, and Romanian, the current auxiliaries derive from full verbs expressing volition or willingness. Thus, the OE construction which involved the verb *willan* ‘want’ + bare infinitive developed over time into the PDE pattern future auxiliary *will* + infinitive (Heine and Kuteva 2002: 310). Likewise, the Romanian future auxiliary verb *va* ‘will’, which is inflected for person and number, has its roots in the Latin volitional verb *volere* ‘want’, and the Modern Greek future tense marker *tha* goes back to the Classical Greek volitional verb *thelo* ‘want’, which underwent bleaching and erosion and eventually came to be interpreted as a grammatical marker: *thelô ina* (‘I wish that’) > *thelô na* > *thena* > *tha* (cf. Heine 2003: 584-586; Hopper and Traugott 2003: 24).

In spite of the fact that all the examples discussed so far in this section concern both reanalysis and grammaticalisation, not all cases of reanalysis result in grammaticalisation, while grammaticalisation always involves reanalysis (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 59). These authors mention, for instance, the case of compounding, which implies a redefinition of word boundaries (e.g. *hussy* < *house* + *wife*, *fishwife* < *fish* + *wife* ‘woman’, *woman* < *wif* ‘woman’ + *man* ‘human being’), but not grammaticalisation. These are regarded as cases of lexicalisation instead.

3.3.3. (Inter)subjectification

Also closely related to grammaticalisation are (inter)subjectivity, a synchronic state, and (inter)subjectification, which is considered a diachronic process (cf. Traugott 2010: 30). Before discussing them in greater detail, a few words seem in order concerning subjectivity and its two major models, namely the ones proposed by Traugott and Langacker. However, special attention will be paid to Traugott’s view of (inter)subjectivity and (inter)subjectification, given that her approach is the one which is applied in the discussion of the data (chapter 6). After these initial remarks on the notions of (inter)subjectivity and (inter)subjectification, some examples of these phenomena are provided for illustrative purposes, before closing the section with some comments on the relationship between grammaticalisation and (inter)subjectification.

Although traditional accounts on the functions of language (cf. Bühler [1934] 1990 and Jakobson 1960) already recognised the expressive or emotive role of language, it is the referential or propositional function (*representational* in Bühler’s terms) which has traditionally been considered as the most significant. Over the past decades, however, the subjective component of language, and hence its expressive function, has been given much more prominence, so that it is now generally acknowledged that ‘language and communication are much more than the exchange of formal propositional material for purposes of conveying information’ (Scheibman 2002: 9). The notion of subjectivity, however, is by no means recent, since Bréal already recognised its importance in his *Essai de sémantique* ([1897] 2005), claiming that speakers leave their imprint in language, an intervention which he called the ‘côté subjectif du langage’ (‘the subjective side of language’). This involvement on the part of the speaker can be expressed grammatically by means of, among other devices, adverbials such as *peut-être* (‘perhaps’) or *sans doute* (‘no doubt’), the subjunctive (*Dieu vous entende* ‘may God hear you’), and imperative forms (Bréal [1897] 2005: 164-169). Benveniste’s

[1958] (1966) early account of subjectivity as a synchronic notion was, in fact, the most comprehensive, since he also described intersubjectivity, noting that speakers should pay attention to the needs of their interlocutors in the context of a conversational exchange; it is only this way that conversation can be successful (cf. Traugott 2010: 32).

In the general literature on subjectivity, however, we can distinguish two main trends, represented by Langacker and Traugott.¹⁸ Langacker's framework is grounded in cognitive semantics. A fundamental claim in his theory is that we cannot characterise objectively the meaning of an expression, so that its semantics depends on factors such as background assumptions, the relevance given to different entities, and the perspective taken on the scene (1990: 315). This becomes apparent, for instance, in the case of directional adverbs such as *right* or *left*, whose interpretation is strongly dependent on the perspective of the speaker/writer. The distinction between subjective and objective construal is, in Langacker's terms, related to the (a)symmetry between a perceiving individual or conceptualiser and the entity perceived (1990: 316). The construal is said to be objective when no reference is made to the speech event or participants, since the element itself is placed onstage as the focus of attention. Conversely, a construal is said to be subjective when the entity itself is implicit and in the offstage region (cf. also López-Couso 2010: 143 and Ghesquière 2014: 56-57). The following examples, taken from De Smet and Verstraete (2006: 369), serve to illustrate this difference.

(3.8) *The man next to me is James.*

(3.9) *This man is James.*

In (3.8) the speaker is explicitly mentioned by means of the pronoun *me*, which hence constitutes an objective construal. By contrast, in (3.9) there is no direct reference to the speaker, although the demonstrative *this* indicates proximity to him/her. This is, in Langacker's view, a subjective construal. Moreover, Langacker claims that we should avoid saying that an expression has a subjective or an objective meaning, since 'a given meaning always comprises both subjectively and objectively construed elements' (2006: 18).

Traugott's view of subjectivity, heavily influenced by Benveniste (1966) and Lyons (1977), contrasts considerably with that of Langacker. In her seminal paper on the

¹⁸ For further discussions about (inter)subjectivity and (inter)subjectification, refer to Nuyts (2001), Fitzmaurice (2004), De Smet and Verstraete (2006), Athanasiadou (2007), Cuyckens, Davidse, and Vandelanotte (2010), López-Couso (2010), Visconti (2013), Boye and Harder (2014), or Ghesquière (2014), among many others.

semantic and pragmatic aspects of grammaticalisation (1982), Traugott drew on Halliday and Hasan's (1976) distinction between the ideational, textual, and interpersonal components of language, though she used the terms *propositional*, *textual*, and *expressive* instead. The propositional component refers to the resources of any language to report a particular speech event, describing it in terms of truth. However, it also includes other categories which cannot be described in purely truth-conditional terms, given that they are also dependent on the speakers' and hearers' references. This is the case of deictics of place and time (*here* and *then*) and of personal pronouns, for instance (1982: 248). The textual component of language, in turn, is responsible for the creation of a cohesive discourse by means of connectives, relativisers, discourse markers, complementisers, anaphoric and cataphoric pronouns, etc. Finally, the expressive component includes those resources which the language has to indicate the speaker's assessment or evaluation of the proposition, including vocatives and honorifics, epistemic modals, and turn-taking markers. In subsequent work by Traugott (cf., for example, Traugott and Dasher (2002) and Traugott (2003)), the distinction between subjective and intersubjective meanings in language is drawn. Along the lines of Lyons (1982), therefore, Traugott takes subjectivity as the way in which natural languages lend themselves to the expression of 'self', whether lexically or grammatically. Subjective meanings thus explicitly encode the speaker's or writer's point of view, beliefs, and attitudes (cf. Traugott and Dasher 2002; Traugott 2010). In turn, intersubjectivity in Traugottian terms describes 'the way in which natural languages, in their structure and their normal manner of operation, provide for the locutionary agent's expression of his or her awareness of the addressee's attitudes and beliefs, most especially their "face" or "self-image"' (Traugott 2010: 33). Intersubjective markers, then, signal the speaker's attention to the addressee's self-image and his/her face.¹⁹

Although Traugott is indubitably one of the chief exponents in the literature on (inter)subjectivity and on the rise of linguistic markers signalling (inter)subjectivity, other authors have also extensively dealt with this topic and recognised the need for a more formal definition of these notions. De Smet and Verstraete (2006), for instance, distinguish two major types of subjectivity:

- a) Pragmatic subjectivity 'is inherent in language and is independent of the

¹⁹ Langacker's model is not concerned with intersubjectivity.

semantics of a particular expression' (2006: 384). For example, if we describe a person as being tall, it very much depends on our conceptualisation of the world, as the average male and female height in Sweden, for instance, differs considerably from the average in Indonesia or Vietnam.

- b) Semantic subjectivity, by contrast, is not concerned with how the speaker uses an expression, but with the inherent meaning of that particular expression. De Smet and Verstraete (2006) distinguish between ideational and interpersonal subjectivity. Ideational subjectivity 'involves the description of a content "situated in the speaker's subjective belief-state/attitude toward the situation"' (2006: 384). For instance, in the case of the Dutch attitudinal adjectives *leuk* ('pleasant') and *dom* ('bloody, cursed') (see below), it is the speaker that is clearly projecting his/her view of something being pleasant or cursed, respectively. Interpersonal subjectivity, on the other hand, 'deals with the positioning of the speaker with respect to this representation and his or her interaction with the interlocutor' (2006: 385). Dutch *leuk* thus shows ideational subjectivity, expressing an evaluation on the part of the speaker, while *dom* further illustrates interpersonal subjectivity, as in *domme toeristen* ('bloody tourists'), where *dom* does not specify a type of tourists but rather the speaker's stance.

Along the lines of De Smet and Verstraete (2006), Ghesquière, Brems, and van de Velde (2014) argue for the necessity to distinguish different types of intersubjectivity, depending on the meanings coded:

- a) attitudinal intersubjectivity refers to those meanings which code the speaker's image of the hearer and the attention to his/her face needs and social self (for example, through the use of T/V pronouns of address or discourse markers such as *sort of* or *well* used as hedges);
- b) responsive intersubjectivity is conveyed by those items which elicit a certain (speech) act or behaviour aimed at discourse continuity or cooperation (for example, by means of question tags or turn-taking devices such as clause-final *right* or *isn't it?*);
- c) textual intersubjectivity is evinced by those elements which 'are specifically oriented toward steering the hearer's interpretation' (2014: 137). This is the case, for instance, of certain uses of the demonstratives, which focus the hearer's attention on elements in the ongoing discourse.

Ghesquière, Brems, and van de Velde's classification, however, is flexible, and one element can in fact evince different types of intersubjective meanings. For example, *toch* in Dutch can serve as a question tag, in which case we expect a response from the hearer, as in *viel wel mee, toch?* ('that wasn't too bad, was it?'). This would represent responsive intersubjectivity. However, *toch* can express attitudinal intersubjectivity as well, since it can be used to acknowledge a potentially different view of the addressee, hence expressing a counter-expectational value, as in *mijn analoge ontvanger moet toch minimal 5 jaar meegaan vind ik* ('my analog receiver has to work at least for 5 years, if you ask me') (2014: 138). Therefore, Ghesquière, Brems, and van de Velde (2014) argue for a wider definition of intersubjectivity, which does not only codify those meanings which relate to the face of the hearer and his/her social self, but also 'textual meanings negotiating discourse referent tracking by the speaker to the hearer' (Ghesquière 2014: 69).

As seen in the preceding paragraphs, subjectivity is a synchronic state. The diachronic process giving rise to subjective meanings is named subjectification, 'a pragmatic-semantic process whereby meanings become increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition, in other words, towards what the speaker is talking about' (Traugott 1995: 31). Understood in this way, the phenomenon of subjectification appears to be pervasive in languages, given that speakers always want to justify the relevance of their speech acts. Nevertheless, although the persuasiveness of the speaker's message will ultimately depend on the way (s)he codes the message (cf. Traugott 1995), the collaboration of the hearer is necessary to decipher any possible inferences.

Subjectification has been pivotal in Traugott's theory of semantic change (cf. Traugott 1982, 1989), in which the following path of semantic evolution is established: propositional > textual > expressive (1989: 31), involving the gradual development of increasingly more subjective meanings. Traugott hence distinguishes three different tendencies:

- Tendency I: meanings based in the external described situation > meanings based in the internal (evaluative/perceptual/cognitive) described situation. This tendency includes semantic changes such as pejoration and amelioration, as well as metaphorical extensions from concrete to abstract meanings (1989: 34).
- Tendency II: meanings based in the external or internal described situation > meanings based in the textual and metalinguistic situation, as is the case, for

instance, of the development of connectives from lexical forms (e.g. *ýa while ýe* ‘the time that’ > ‘during’) (1989: 35).

- Tendency III: meanings tend to become increasingly based in the speaker’s subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition (1989: 35). Within this tendency Traugott subsumes changes such as the development of the future marker *going to*, from an original motion verb, or the rise of intensifiers such as *very*,²⁰ originally meaning ‘true’, a cognitive evaluation.

Crucial in Traugott’s theory of semantic change is Tendency III, which illustrates subjectification, i.e., the change from less to increasingly more subjective meanings. Subjectification is regarded as ‘the major type of semantic change’ (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 97), while Tendency I and Tendency II are best described in terms of metaphorical transfer and mapping from one domain to another (López-Couso 2010: 130).

Subjective meanings may in turn be used to convey the speaker’s attention to the addressee, hence resulting in the codification of intersubjective meanings, a process known as intersubjectification. As stated by Traugott (2003: 128), intersubjectification refers to the ‘explicit expression of the SP[eaker]/W[riter]’s attention to the ‘self’ of addressee/reader in both an epistemic sense (paying attention to their presumed attitudes to the content of what is said), and in a more social sense (paying attention to their ‘face’ or ‘image needs’ associated with social stance and identity)’. Intersubjectification is crucial in languages with honorific systems, like Japanese, where morphosyntactic choices are determined by the relationship between the speaker and the addressee. This does not mean, however, that in languages with no such systems, such as English, the speaker does not take into consideration the image of the addressee. Consider, for instance, honorifics like *sir/madam* and V-pronouns in the Romance languages and in German.

The following diachronic cline of subjectivity is hence commonly observed in Traugott’s theory of semantic change: non-/less subjective > subjective > intersubjective (cf. Traugott and Dasher 2002: 225; Traugott 2003: 134).²¹ Examples attesting to this unidirectional cline of subjectivity are manifold. In what follows, a few

²⁰ For a detailed account of the history of *very*, see Breban and Davidse (2016) (cf. section 4.1.1.2).

²¹ A further step down the cline has been suggested by Fitzmaurice (2004), who maintains that intersubjective readings may give rise to interactive meanings, focusing in her case study on the discourse markers *you know*, *you see*, and *you say*. Thus, from an intersubjective reading, attending to the addressee’s needs, these markers come to be used to ‘keep things going in a conversation’ (2004: 438).

selected examples are provided.

Margerie (2010) is concerned with the rise of the discourse marker *kind of* and its variant form *kinda*, which originated in a construction consisting of the head noun *kind*, followed by a prepositional phrase as modifier (e.g. *the kind of college*). This noun phrase developed an approximation reading over time (e.g. *a kind of reddish-brown colour*), and eventually turned into an intensifier (e.g. *I kind of like that sort of colour*). *Kind of* moved yet one step further, since it acquired different pragmatic meanings as a discourse marker: among other functions, it came to be used as a hedge or politeness marker, therefore showing intersubjectification (e.g. *it's kind of fucking important*). The development of subjective readings took place gradually, starting already in the approximative readings of *kind*, which imply an evaluation on the part of the speaker. It was these subjective readings that eventually triggered the intersubjective meanings of *kind of* and *kinda*.

Denison and Cort (2010) deal with the verb *better*, which has its origins in the OE construction *be* + the comparative form *better* (occurring with *have* from ME on). As the authors note, these forms already implied an evaluative comment on the part of the speaker/writer, and from LModE onwards started to be used with an intersubjective meaning, the advisability reading being foregrounded. Thus, in an example such as *you've talked me into an expensive holiday. The weather had better be good*, the speaker/writer is not merely expressing a subjective opinion, stating that it would be a good idea to do something, but (s)he is also trying to involve the interlocutor. As Denison and Cort put it, 'the speaker/writer doesn't just express an opinion but attempts to co-opt the hearer/reader into accepting the advice' (2010: 379).

The evolution of the attitudinal adjectives *leuk* and *dom* in Dutch is described in De Smet and Verstraete (2006). These had a propositional or objective meaning in origin: *leuk* meant 'neither hot nor cold' and *dom* 'dumb, unable to speak'. Over time, however, these adjectives developed an evaluative meaning, hence evincing subjectivity. *Dom* came to mean 'unintelligent' and *leuk* 'pleasant, nice', the latter via an intermediate stage in which it referred to people, denoting a calm and often slightly mocking attitude. Moreover, in Belgian Dutch *dom* developed even further, expressing a negative evaluation on the part of the speaker: 'annoying, cursed, bloody'.

Traugott (2014) presents the case study of *no doubt* and *surely*, which were borrowed from French in the fourteenth century and grammaticalised into adverbials; both underwent subjectification, *surely* being further intersubjectified, used for 'seeking

uptake/corroboration by the Addressee' (2014: 18). Interestingly, Traugott's findings challenge the general hypothesis about the correlation of the left periphery with subjective meanings and of the right periphery with intersubjective meanings (cf. Traugott 2010), since both *surely* and *no doubt* are mostly attested in the left periphery. This leads her to conclude that there might well be domains in which this tendency is more likely to occur (e.g. information-structuring), while in some other domains (e.g. discourse-management) this tendency is not as robust.

Another author who provides ample evidence of the directionality of (inter)subjectification is Ghesquière (2014), who describes the clines description > secondary determination and identification > noun-intensification. In regard to secondary determination, secondary determiners, which can be realised by various elements including adjectives, adverbs, and quantifiers, have their roots in lexical items, but develop determiner uses via a process of grammaticalisation and semantic generalisation. In the case of *sort of*, for example, *sort* occurred originally in constructions in which it was a head noun (e.g. *a more serious sort of problem*), but it came to be reanalysed as a secondary determiner (e.g. *these sort of problems*). In the latter function it expresses more subjective meanings, since such constructions involve an evaluation on the part of the speaker. Secondary determiners can even become fused with the determiner, as is the case of *another*, the outcome of a process of univerbation of the adjective *other* with the indefinite article *an*. The Dutch determiner *dezelfde* represents another case of fusion: article *de* ('the') plus adjective *zelfde* ('same'). As for the cline identification > noun intensification, Ghesquière notes that there are many noun intensifiers which once had lexical, descriptive uses, as is the case of *perfect*, *total*, *terrible*, or *complete*. Thus, in an example such as *a total ban on cigarette advertising*, which she takes from Athanasiadou (2007), *total* is an adjective which means 'complete'. By contrast, in *he had total contempt for her*, *total* functions as an intensifier, by means of which the speaker evaluates the noun phrase referent and hence expresses a more subjective meaning.

The examples mentioned above all attest to the unidirectionality of (inter)subjectification. Nonetheless, as is the case with grammaticalisation (cf. section 3.3.1), counterexamples to the (inter)subjectification cline do exist, as detailed in López-Couso (2010: 142-143) and Ghesquière (2014: 96-97). This is also duly acknowledged by Traugott (1995: 45), who claims that although in general terms 'the hypothesis of unidirectional increase in subjectification over time is very robust' (1995:

45), some examples may run counter to the directionality chain non-subjective > subjective, especially in the early stages of the grammaticalisation process or in primary grammaticalisation (cf. section 3.1). For instance, deictic elements such as *now* or *here*, which originally referred to the speaker or the context of speaking, gradually moved away from the speaker in what Adamson (1995) calls *de-subjectivisation*. Cornillie (2008) also presents another counterexample from Spanish, namely the semi-auxiliaries *parecer* ‘seem, turn out’ + infinitive and *resultar* ‘result’ + infinitive, which show a less-grammaticalised, intersubjective meaning over time, and which appeared earlier than *parecer* ‘seem’ + *que* ‘that’ and *resultar* ‘turn out’ + *que* ‘that’ in the historical records of Spanish.

A series of measures of (inter)subjectification have been identified in the literature. Company (2006), for example, accounts for subjectification as a phenomenon associated with a series of semantic-pragmatic and syntactic changes. Thus, in regard to semantics and pragmatics, (inter)subjective meanings are said to arise from former referential meanings, and subjectification often correlates with metaphoric and metonymic changes. Individual inferences, deduced from the context, can become generalised invited inferences, which may eventually become conventionalised as the default meaning of a particular item.²² Company illustrates this with the verb *andar* ‘walk’ in Spanish. Originally, in an example such as *de que Blasillo ande al escuela me [sic] e holgado mucho*²³ (2006: 378), the verbal form *ande* is interpreted literally (‘I am very happy about Blasillo’s going to school’). However, the verb *andar* can also occur in the expression *ándale*, common in Mexican Spanish, in which it does no longer express motion, as proved by the fact that it can be followed by another verb of motion, namely *ir*: *ándale, vete por otra camisa y una chamarra* (‘ándale, go and get me another shirt and a jacket’). As far as the interaction between syntax and subjectification is concerned, Company shows that subjectification is said to be concomitant with a weakening or loss of agent control. In the case of the examples just mentioned, in the original referential meaning of *andar*, *Blasillo* is the human, animate subject. In the case of the expression *ándale*, there is no subject, this being a fixed expression. Moreover,

²² See Traugott and Dasher (2002) for details of the Invited Inferencing Theory of Semantic Change (IITSC). This model accounts for the conventionalisation of pragmatic meanings and their reanalysis as semantic meanings. The authors thus claim the existence of a historical path of development: conversational implicature > generalised invited inference > new coded meaning (Traugott and Dasher 2002: 34-35).

²³ Note that the contracted form of the preposition (*al*) would be incorrect in Peninsular Spanish, given that *escuela* (‘school’) is feminine; hence the form in this variety would be *a la escuela*. Likewise, *he*, rather than *e*, is the grammatical form corresponding to the first person singular present indicative of the verb *haber* ‘have’.

subjectification is said to be commonly associated with fronting or widening of the scope of predication: *finalmente* ‘finally’, when used in the etymological sense of the last in a series of actions, is placed in medial position. Conversely, when used more subjectively, it can be placed sentence-initially. Finally, subjectification is also said to associate to fixation of the form and loss of syntactic capacities. Again, this can be illustrated with *ándale*, which has become an autonomous fixed expression admitting no variation, and as such does not allow a subject or a locative complement (Company 2006: 377-380).

Although, as we have seen, grammaticalisation correlates with an increase in subjectivity or ‘the linguistic expression of the self’ (Finegan 1995: 1), grammaticalisation and (inter)subjectification are in fact independent processes and may occur separately. Thus, the development of speech-act verb meanings in items like *agree* (originally ‘be pleasing, suitable’), *insist* (from a Latin past participle meaning ‘sat on’), and *promise* (from a Latin past participle meaning ‘sent forward’), evinces subjectification but not grammaticalisation (cf. Traugott 1995; López-Couso 2010). The same applies to processes of amelioration and pejoration. The interrelation between grammaticalisation and intersubjectification is, however, much less evident, because, as Traugott (2010: 61) notes, intersubjectification is frequently associated with politeness expressions, and these very often involve lexical rather than grammatical choices.

3.3.4. Frequency and grammaticalisation

The importance of frequency in linguistic studies is not recent. In fact, already in the late nineteenth century Käding published a dictionary of frequency in German, the *Häufigkeitwörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (1897). At the beginning of the twentieth century, Zipf stressed the relevance of frequency in his formulation of the Principle of Least Effort, and also noted the interrelation between frequency, the age of words, and their morphological simplicity. Nonetheless, as Krug states (1998: 286), it is probably with the weight of cognitively oriented linguistics and the focus on authentic data from the advent of corpus linguistics that the interest in this linguistic determinant and its connexions with language change arose. Ever since then, this factor has been of outmost importance in linguistic studies, from a wide variety of perspectives, among them cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics, language acquisition, and grammaticalisation, as well as at different linguistic levels, including phonology, morphology, and syntax.

Before actually accounting for the interrelation between grammaticalisation and

frequency (cf. section 3.3.4.3), some terminological notes seem in order. On the one hand, the notions of habituation, automatisisation, and entrenchment are commonly mentioned in the literature on frequency and grammaticalisation, and are therefore discussed in section 3.3.4.1. On the other hand, the distinction between type frequency and token frequency is detailed in 3.3.4.2, since it will be applied to the analysis of the data.

3.3.4.1. *Habituation, automatisisation, and entrenchment*

The notions of habituation, automatisisation, and entrenchment, described by Haiman²⁴ (1994) and Krug (1998, 2001, 2003), are not exclusive to linguistics. In fact, some of them have their origin outside this discipline, and are widely used in other domains such as ethology, anthropology, and psychology.

Habituation, as defined by Haiman (1994: 7), refers to the ‘decline in the tendency to respond to stimuli that have become familiar due to repeated or persistent exposure’. In other words, habituation takes place when an individual learns not to react to a stimulus which has neither positive nor negative consequences. In the animal kingdom, the behaviour of prairie dogs may serve as a good illustration of habituation. These burrowing rodents have a system of alarm calls to warn other members of their species that a predator, such as a snake or a coyote, is nearby and that they should take refuge in their burrows. Nevertheless, since prairie dogs are very often near paths or trails, they have become used to the presence of humans near their warrens, and have hence learned not to give alarm calls every time a person is spotted around, for humans are not generally potential predators, and raising the alarm would imply a waste of time and energy for the group (Breed 2001).

In linguistics, habituation finds its analogue in grammaticalisation. Repetition or frequency of linguistic structures is what renders them more semantically opaque. It is in fact the driving force that triggers semantic bleaching (cf. 3.2 above). Intensifiers, the

²⁴ Haiman (1998: 142) also deals with ritualisation, a term used by ethologists and anthropologists alike. In the animal world, for instance, ritualisation plays a capital role in courtship (e.g. peacocks, which spread their tail feathers when trying to entice peahens). Human ritualisation is far more complex, since evolution operates both on a biological and a cultural level. Prototypical instances of cultural evolution include rituals like hand-shaking, greetings, liturgical rituals, and marriages. Ritualisation, as the codification or creation of signs, is intimately related to the development of language, given that language also involves the creation of signs, which can occur independently of their original stimulus. Language can also become ritual when devoid of its communicative function, being used with ludic or phatic purposes (e.g. conversations about the weather, messages by telephone operators, etc.). Ritual language can also be accompanied by ritualised or stereotyped intonation, as, for example, in clichés of greetings or expressions which are repeated parrot-fashion, like those of telephone operators, receptionists, or flight attendants.

topic of this dissertation, may serve to illustrate the weight of factors such as frequency and habituation. They are very likely to occur in processes of ‘recycling’ (cf. Tagliamonte 2008), owing precisely to their markedly emotional function (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 122), which makes them particularly prone to renewal in virtue of their loss of expressivity. Macaulay (2006), for instance, claims that *pure* has come to replace *dead* in the intensifying function in Glaswegian English from the early 2000s; in the same vein, Tagliamonte (2008) examines the renewal of forms within the intensifying system, hinting at the rise of *so* and *pretty* in Toronto English at the turn of the twenty-first century (cf. chapter 4 for more details). In other words, when intensifiers are felt to have lost their force, a new fashionable word is recruited to perform this same function. In (3.10), for instance, *dead* may have lost some of its expressive nuances already, given its co-occurrence with another intensifier, *pure*, in the same context. This tallies in with Macaulay’s claim about the replacement of *dead* by *pure* in Glaswegian adolescent speech.

- (3.10) *The vet on duty is Elspeth an the pair discovers it wisnae a man Fiona wantit, but her first love, Elspeth. **Pure dead** brilliant!* (SCOTS. Robert Fairnie. *Scots tung wittins* 150).

Another of the concomitants of repetition and frequency is automatization. As Crystal mentions (2003: 72), automatization, also known as chunking, is used in psycholinguistics to refer to ‘the breaking up of an utterance into units (chunks) so that it can be more efficiently processed’. When we learn our ID number or telephone numbers, we usually break them into smaller chunks precisely because it is easier to process them this way. Automatization also applies to languages: when certain units are repeated over and over again, as is the case of collocations or idiomatic phrases, they end up being automatized. Ellis (2002: 157), quoting Pawley and Syder (1983), remarks that speakers eventually learn to retrieve these collocations and idioms as wholes or as automatic chains from the long-term memory, thus easing the process of language communication, since the speaker, rather than focusing on ‘clause-internal encoding work [...], [can] attend to other tasks in talk-exchange’. In Ellis’s words, ‘nativelike competence, fluency, and idiomaticity require an awful lot of figuring out which words go together’ (2002: 157).

Automatization is also intrinsic to grammaticalization. Bybee (2003b: 153) defines grammaticalization as ‘the process of automatization of frequently occurring sequences

of linguistic elements’, while Hoffmann (2004a: 186) suggests that ‘automatization leads to formerly separate elements of the grammar of a language into single, meaningful units’. Thus, the Spanish adverb *quizá(s)* ‘perhaps’, derived from the Latin construction *qui sapit* ‘who knows’, has been grammaticalised and become an autonomous word (cf. Rodríguez-Espiñeira and López-Meirama 2008: 310).²⁵ The construction has been unverbated and reanalysed as an adverb. The same holds for its equivalent in French, *peut-être*, an adverb resulting from the reanalysis of the twelfth-century construction *puet cel estre* ‘that can exist’.²⁶ Another example of a construction which has been automatised is the complex preposition *in view of*, which is bleached in PDE and has come to be processed as a single unit. The combination had a literal sense in origin, being used to describe something/someone which/who came within range of eyesight (cf. Hoffmann 2004a: 176-181).

Another concept which is very closely related to automatisisation and frequency is that of entrenchment, a term which Langacker uses in the *Foundations of Cognitive Grammar* (1991) and which other scholars have applied since then, among them Bybee (cf. Bybee and Hopper 2001; Bybee 2003a), Krug (2001, 2003), and Schmid (2007). According to Schmid, in cognitive linguistics this notion denotes ‘the degree to which the formation and activation of a cognitive unit is routinized and automated’ (2007: 119). This concept roughly corresponds with Bybee’s notion of lexical strength, which implies that whenever we hear and utter a word it leaves a slight trace in the lexicon, thus increasing its lexical strength (1985: 117). As she puts it, ‘each time a word in processing is mapped onto its lexical representation it is as though the representation was traced over again, etching it with deeper and darker lines each time’ (1985: 117). Likewise, Langacker remarks that ‘with repeated use, a novel structure becomes progressively entrenched, to the point of becoming a unit; moreover, units are variably entrenched depending on the frequency of their occurrence’ (1991: 59). Frequency is hence a clear concomitant of entrenchment.

In sum, what the notions of habituation, automatisisation, and entrenchment described above have in common is that their driving force is frequency and repetition, since both frequency and repetition result in a linguistic unit being eventually automated and

²⁵ Houle and Martínez-Gómez (2011) remark the dubious etymology of present-day Spanish *quizá(s)*. These authors explain that while Corominas (1980) suggests that it derives from the Latin relative *qui sapit* (‘who knows’), Menéndez-Pidal (1968) claims that it goes back to the Latin interrogative *quis sapit* (‘who knows?’). The cognate to this Latin phrase was in use in Spanish as late as the thirteenth century, when the unverbated form *quicab* is first attested, a form which eventually gained ground and replaced the original relative/interrogative phrase.

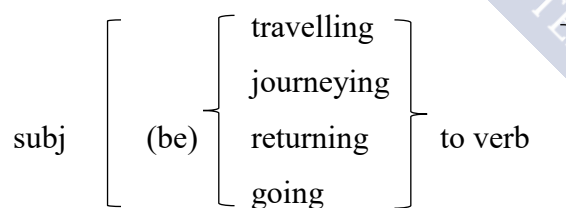
²⁶ Cf. Marchello-Nizia (2006: 130) and the *Trésor de la langue française informatisé* (s.v. *peu-être* adv.).

entrenched, as will be shown in the next section with the so-called ‘irregular’ plurals, among other examples.

3.3.4.2. *Token frequency and type frequency*

Bybee (2003a) distinguishes two types of frequency, namely *token frequency* and *type frequency*. Token or text frequency is ‘the frequency of occurrence of a unit, usually a word or morpheme, in running text’ (2003a: 604), although in a text we can also count the token frequency of constructions like *be going to* or *be supposed to*. Type frequency, on the other hand, refers to the different lexical items to which a particular pattern or construction is applicable (Bybee and Thompson 1997: 378), i.e., to its dictionary frequency. Bybee and Thompson mention the case of the past tense, which can be expressed in English in different ways, even though the device with the highest type frequency is the suffix *-ed* (e.g. in *waited*), which is the productive pattern in English. In the case of the plural formation of English nouns, the highest token frequency corresponds to the *-(e)s* plural marker. Other types, such as the *-(e)n* plurals (e.g. *oxen*) or the *i*-mutated plurals (e.g. *geese*), in contrast, have a much lower type frequency.

As Bybee (2003a) suggests, the concept of type frequency can also be applied to constructions undergoing a process of grammaticalisation, as is the case of *be going to*, which grammaticalised to express futurity. In the case of the *going to*-construction, for instance, its roots go back to an original purpose clause involving verbs of motion, such as *travel*, *journey*, and *go*, sometimes in the progressive:



The construction with the verb *go* was the most frequent and therefore gained in strength of representation. As a result, some new pragmatic inferences came to be associated with the construction, specifically intention and futurity. *Be going to*, therefore, evolved from the expression of movement (‘X is travelling to X’) to indicate futurity, finally allowing for static verbs which are incompatible with the original sense of motion (e.g. *she’s going to like it*).

Furthermore, token frequency and, more specifically, high token frequency, has

been associated with two opposing effects (cf. Bybee and Thompson 1997), namely the Reduction Effect and the Conserving Effect. These seem to foster change, on the one hand, and to fossilise constructions making them resistant to change, on the other. The so-called Conserving Effect is owed to the high level of entrenchment or lexical strength of a particular unit. Thus, high-frequency items and constructions escape the rules of productivity and resist change by reason of their high degree of entrenchment in language. Highly frequent forms are accessed much faster: the more common they are, the more their representation will be strengthened, facilitating their subsequent access. In Bybee and Thompson's words (1997: 380), 'words that are strong in memory and easy to access are not likely to be replaced by new forms created with the regular pattern'. The most common verbs, adjectives, and nouns thus retain suppletive forms cross-linguistically (cf. Bybee 1985: 92). This is the case of the English verbs *be* and *go*, which are among the most frequent and hence the most 'irregular', with a considerable number of variant stem vowels and consonants. Similarly, common adjectives like *good* or *bad* have suppletive comparative and superlative forms in a number of languages (e.g. English *good-better-best*). It is also high-frequency nouns such as *(wo)man*, *foot*, *goose*, *tooth*, or *child* which historically resisted the process of regularisation and still hang on to their old plural forms in PDE. Likewise, high-frequency verbs such as *know* or *think* were also the ones which lagged behind in the adoption of the auxiliary *do* in interrogative and negative clauses in the history of English. Although by the seventeenth century *do*-support was rather common, collocations such as *I know not* and *I think not* were habitual in Shakespeare's times. Bybee and Thompson (1997: 381) also discuss entrenchment in relation to the French impersonal construction with *falloir* 'have to'. According to these authors, the subjunctive is typically found with highly frequent irregular verbs such as *être* 'be', *avoir* 'have', *faire* 'do', and *aller* 'go', while when *falloir* is followed by other verbs, this rule is not automatically followed.

The Reduction Effect, on the contrary, is made manifest in three different dimensions: phonetic, syntactic, and semantic. At the level of phonetics, it is also elements with a high token frequency that undergo reduction faster. This is clearly evident in the case of grammaticalising elements of the type of *be going to*, reduced to ['gʌnə], or in phrases like *I'm gonna to* ['aimənə]. At the level of syntax, constructions such as *(be) supposed to* have lost internal constituent structure and have come to be processed as single chunks on grounds of their high token frequency: *be supposed to*

formerly functioned as a passive construction, but later developed into a mere auxiliary, like *gonna* or *wanna* (cf. Bybee and Thompson 1997). Concerning semantics, Bybee and Thompson remark that high token frequency results in semantic bleaching or loss of semantic force (cf. 3.2 above).

3.3.4.3. *Frequency effects in grammaticalisation*

Frequency does not only trigger grammaticalisation, since frequent items typically become grammaticalised, but is also a result of grammaticalisation, because the more grammaticalised an element is, the more frequent it will be. In fact, frequency is just another concomitant of grammaticalisation, just as semantic bleaching or phonological reduction. Bybee hence argues for the recognition of the crucial role of frequency in grammaticalisation, which she defines as ‘the process by which a *frequently* used sequence of words or morphemes becomes automated as a single processing unit’ (2003a: 603; emphasis added). Nevertheless, in spite of the close association between frequency and grammaticalisation, low-frequency items can also grammaticalise. This is the case, for instance, of complex prepositions such as *in view of*, discussed above (Hoffmann 2004a: 170-210; Hoffmann 2005), of the deverbal conjunction *seeing (that)* (Mair 2004: 133-136), of the complex subordinator *on the basis that* (Mair 2011: 246-250), and of size nouns such as *bunch*, *heap*, and *pile* (Brems 2003).

In the remainder of this section I will present some cases which have been discussed in the literature on frequency and grammaticalisation and which evince the cross-componential nature of grammaticalisation (McMahon 1994: 161). Bybee (2003a), for instance, deals extensively with the issue of frequency and its influence on grammaticalisation, at the phonological, semantic, and morphosyntactic levels, which she discusses in relation to the development of the auxiliary *can*. *Cunnan*, the OE ancestor of *can*, originally meaning ‘know’, could take noun phrases as objects (e.g. *holy writings*), and could occur with verbs of communication and with those describing skills and mental states. The use of *can* ‘know’ with verbs like *ongitan* ‘understand’ already in the OE period suggests that at this time *can* was already losing semantic force and beginning to bleach, which is hardly surprising considering that it was a very frequent verb. In ME the scope of application of *can* widened, being used at this period with a larger number of verbs, beyond those describing skills, mental states, and communicative processes. In other words, the type frequency of *can* was enlarged. Finally, *can* generalised to express human ability in general and, eventually, to convey

root possibility, i.e., allowing for the intervention of external factors different to the subject. *Can* thus underwent semantic bleaching and grammaticalisation, in addition to reanalysis: from a main verb taking noun phrase objects, it came to be interpreted over time as an auxiliary. Similar developments to that of *can* have also been noted for other modal auxiliaries like *may*, *will*, and *must*, which also display a number of syntactic properties which make them special within the verb class, including the use of bare infinitives and the lack of *do*-support (cf. also Krug 2003).

Krug (2003) presents, *inter alia*, some evidence for the interdependence of String Frequency, i.e. the ‘absolute frequency of the dyad (or string, sequence) *XY*’ (2003: 23) and the ongoing grammaticalisation of ‘emerging modals’ in English, namely *gonna*, *gotta*, and *wanna*. On the basis of data from the *British National Corpus*, Krug concludes that the higher the frequency of the construction and its degree of fusion, the higher its degree of grammaticalisation. It appears that *going to/gonna* is the most grammaticalised of the three emerging modals, showing also the most drastic phonological reduction, from [ˈgəʊɪŋtə] to [ˈgənə]. *Gonna* is followed by *got to/gotta* and *want to/wanna* in the grammaticalisation cline (cf. section 3.3.1). Frequency also implies that *gonna* no longer retains traces of movement in its meaning, nor does *gotta* retain its original meaning of possession. By contrast, the least grammaticalised and frequent of the three, *wanna*, seems to preserve some traces of its volitional meaning. Therefore, the three emerging modals discussed by Krug (2003) have undergone phonological and semantic erosion, as well as reanalysis.

Another interesting case which concerns frequency and grammaticalisation is that of the paradigm of French negators (see section 3.2 above). As Hopper and Traugott (2003: 65-66) explain, clausal negation was originally realised in French by placing the negative particle *ne* before the verb, although verbs of motion could additionally be reinforced with the particle *pas* ‘step’. However, as a consequence of the repeated use of *pas* in clauses with verbs of movement, this originally reinforcing particle came to be interpreted as a mere marker of negation. Finally, by analogy (cf. section 3.1), *pas* ended up being used with verbs other than those related to movement.

López-Couso (2007) also discusses the effects of frequency, more specifically, two effects of high token frequency, namely the Conserving Effect and the Reduction Effect, in the history of the contracted negative *nis* ‘is not’. The negative particle *ne* was, already from OE, often attached to verbs of high frequency like *habban*, *willan*, or *beon/wesan*, given the appropriate phonological conditions. In short, the author shows

that the habitual co-occurrence or high token frequency of the negator *ne* and the verbal form *is* resulted in their fusion into *nis*. This form was rather common up until the end of the fourteenth century, especially in structures of the existential type. As a consequence, the sequence *nis* became highly entrenched and resistant to change, hence its survival even after the ME period, long after other similar contracted forms had disappeared from the language. This high level of entrenchment or lexical strength is, therefore, a product of the so-called Conserving Effect, itself a consequence of high token frequency. As López-Couso suggests (2007: 176), habituation through repeated occurrence turned *nis* into a kind of semi-grammaticalised marker of non-existence which did not paradoxically triumph as such, probably due to strong pressure of the productive existential pattern with the marker *there*. The examples of contracted negatives provided by López-Couso (2007), which involve reanalysis and phonological attrition, thus provide evidence of how frequency bears on grammaticalisation, and also of how grammaticalisation itself can result in higher rates of occurrence of a particular item.

To sum up, in this section I have tried to show the importance of frequency in language change, focusing on how it both triggers and results from grammaticalisation. It has also been shown that frequency causes changes at different levels, in the phonological, semantic, and morphosyntactic domains.

3.4. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN GRAMMATICALISATION STUDIES

The field of grammaticalisation has greatly benefited from a wide range of approaches and theoretical perspectives over the last few decades, among others corpus linguistics, language acquisition, pragmatics, and Construction Grammar.

The use of electronic corpora (cf. section 5.1) has considerably widened the perspectives for research on historical linguistics in general, and for grammaticalisation studies in particular. The study of grammaticalisation, understood as a type of linguistic change, has then profited immensely from recent developments in corpus linguistics, mainly because, as Mair puts it (2011: 240-241), ‘corpora and the use of corpus-linguistic methods enrich the empirical basis of grammaticalization theory and, in some important instances, even help it to develop its theoretical foundations’. Moreover, grammaticalisation research has recently spread beyond the well-documented European languages to regions such as East Asia and South America thanks to the compilation of

corpora in other languages (Narrog and Heine 2011: 2), giving further support to the thesis of grammaticalisation as a cross-linguistic phenomenon, and hence contributing to shed light on potential universal pathways of change (cf., among others, Heine 1993, 1997; Heine and Kuteva 2002, 2003, 2011; Heine and Reh 1984; Kuteva 2001).²⁷

Pragmatics has also been influential in grammaticalisation theory, serving to bring the fields of grammar and pragmatics together, which, as Diewald points out, ‘might not be as separate as assumed’ (2011b: 450). The interrelationship between grammar and pragmatics is perhaps most clearly seen in the debate on the convenience of the term *pragmaticalisation*, or whether cases included under this heading should not count as grammaticalisation instead. This discussion is directly related to two opposing conceptualisations of grammar. Linguists arguing for a broad definition of grammar defend the widening of the term *grammaticalisation* in order to allow for the development of elements not traditionally included under this label, such as, for instance, clause patterns or word order (Brinton 1996: 272). Conversely, those who justify a more traditional conceptualisation of grammar argue for the label *pragmaticalisation*. Broadly defined, pragmaticalisation refers then to ‘developments of lexical material into elements with primarily pragmatic functions’ (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 131), as is the case of discourse or pragmatic markers such as *I mean* (Brinton 1996) or *as it were* (Claridge 2013).

The label *pragmaticalisation* was introduced by Erman and Kotsinas (1993), who claim that it is possible for lexical items to develop directly into discourse markers without an intermediate stage of grammaticalisation. They thus contrast the development of grammatical elements (grammaticalisation) with that of discourse markers (pragmaticalisation). In their words, cited here from Dostie (2004: 28):

we suggest that lexical items on their way to becoming function words may follow two different paths, one of them resulting in the creation of grammatical markers, functioning mainly sentence internally, the other resulting in discourse markers mainly serving as textstructuring devices at different levels of discourse. We reserve the label *grammaticalization* for the first of these two paths, while we propose the term *pragmaticalization* for the second one.

Dostie (2004), in her monograph on pragmaticalisation and discourse markers, agrees with Erman and Kotsinas, claiming that lexical or grammatical units can develop uses in the conversational domain, being themselves the result of a process of

²⁷ For discussions on grammaticalisation in non-European languages, see Heine and Reh (1984), Chappell and Peyraube (2011), Heine (2011), Narrog and Ohori (2011), and Rhee (2011).

pragmaticalisation rather than grammaticalisation (Dostie 2004: 27). She mentions in this regard French *bien* ‘well’, originally a noun and adjective which developed quantifying uses and eventually turned into a discourse marker, *ben* ‘well’. In her study, she discusses forms originating in verbs of perception (*regarde* ‘look (you)’ and *voyons* ‘look (we)’) and of hearing (*écoute* and *coudon*, both meaning ‘listen’), and also other forms such as *tiens* ‘listen’ (to attract the listener’s attention) or *mettons* ‘let’s say’. The form *coudon*, for instance, is claimed to have its origin in the imperative form of *écouter* ‘listen’, followed by the conjunction *donc* ‘then’; *écoute donc* underwent phonological erosion and fusion to *coudon*, which is in use in Quebec French, documented in texts from the beginning of the twentieth century.

Waltereit also defends the use of the term *pragmaticalisation* in his study on the rise of the Italian discourse markers *guarda* ‘look (you)’ (Waltereit 2002) and *diciamo* ‘say (we)’ (Waltereit 2006). He argues that the development of these forms does not meet virtually any of Lehmann’s parameters of grammaticalisation (cf. section 3.2). In his view, these forms arise in contexts of floor-seeking. Thus, the form *guarda*, originally an imperative, came to be reanalysed as a discourse marker ‘I have something important to say that justifies an interruption’. In other words, what originated as a conversational implicature turned into a conventionalised meaning.²⁸

In the same vein, Claridge (2013) also argues for the use of the term *pragmaticalisation* in her research on the forms *as it were*, *so to speak*, and *if you like*. As she explains, these forms have lost their propositional or grammatical meaning and have come to serve a metacommunicative purpose. Furthermore, they fulfil an intersubjective function (cf. section 3.3.3 above) and are governed by conversational goals and principles, in addition to being optional elements, which can be moved around in the sentence (2013: 179-180). On this account, she justifies the use of a specific label to describe this type of change, precisely because it is not the process that is crucial here, but rather its outcome. Given that the pragmatic function is most notable, in her view the best term to describe this change is then *pragmaticalisation*.

Günthner and Mutz’s (2004) reasoning goes much along the same lines. These authors are concerned with the development of the discourse markers *obwohl* ‘although’ and *wobei* ‘whereby’ in German, and with several modifying suffixes in Italian, including *-ino*, *-etto*, and *-uccio*, *-ino* being the one most commonly used as a

²⁸ Interestingly, the imperative form *look* seems to have parallel uses as a discourse marker in several languages, including English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

pragmatic marker. They also claim that these discourse markers do not show typical features of grammaticalised elements, and some of their characteristics, such as their increase in scope or their non-obligatory nature, render them non-canonical grammaticalised forms. Therefore, they maintain that the label *pragmaticalisation* would be more suitable to describe their evolution.

Likewise, Aijmer (1997) addresses the development of *I think* as a discourse marker in terms of a scale of pragmaticalisation, which she complements with a comparative study of modal particles in Swedish. *I think* is thus regarded by the author as a pragmatic marker because it denotes the speaker's attitude towards the hearer, just like other markers such as *you know* or *you see*. From a semantic point of view, *I think* expresses epistemic modality, showing the speaker's evidence for something. The pragmaticalisation of *I think* thus involves conversational implicatures, metaphoric extensions, and principles such as Grice's Maxim of Quality ('do not say what you believe is false').

Unlike the authors mentioned above, who argue for the use of the label *pragmaticalisation*, other linguists defend the use of the term *grammaticalisation* to describe the comprehensive type of linguistic change which moves beyond traditional conceptualisations of grammar. Brinton's (1996) monograph is one of the first studies in which the development of discourse markers is explained from the perspective of grammaticalisation, even though these markers do not undergo phonological erosion and are not always fused morphologically. She tackles the history of several discourse markers, including *I guess*, *anon*, and OE *hwæt*, and argues for a wider definition of grammaticalisation. As she claims (1996: 272), 'in the case of pragmatic markers, one is not concerned with grammatical functions or categories, such as number, definiteness, tense, or aspect'. Hence, 'either the concept of "category" must be understood more broadly to encompass "pragmatic categories" such as foregrounding or politeness, or our conception of grammaticalization must be enriched'. Brinton (2001) focuses on the rise of *look*-forms and their uses as discourse markers, also adopting a grammaticalisation perspective. These discourse markers (forms such as *look'ye*, *lookye*, *lookee*, or *looky*) have their origin in imperative constructions, but were in the course of time reanalysed as pragmatic markers. As Brinton had already argued in her 1996 monograph, she defends the inclusion of these forms under the heading *grammaticalisation*, for there is a tendency in grammaticalisation studies to consider that constructions, not just lexical elements, can also grammaticalise (cf. section 3.1).

Likewise, even though these *look*-forms do not comply with certain of Lehmann's grammaticalisation parameters, such as scope reduction and fixation (cf. section 3.2), they can still be regarded as cases of grammaticalisation.²⁹

Fagard's study (2010) on *look*-forms in the Romance languages replicates Brinton's findings about the origin and evolution of these constructions in English, retrieving data from Catalan, French, Italian, Portuguese, Romanian, and Spanish. Just like Brinton, Fagard claims that these forms result from a process of grammaticalisation of former imperative constructions, evolving from propositional to textual, expressive, and later on intersubjective uses (cf. section 3.3.3). As is the case with their English equivalents, *look*-forms in the Romance languages also have different functions, including turn-taking, topic-shifting, hesitation, and introduction of reported speech (2010: 245).³⁰

Giocalone-Ramat and Mauri (2011, 2012) also consider the development of discourse markers in terms of grammaticalisation. Though focusing on the Italian adversative connectives *tuttavia* 'however, nevertheless', *però* 'but', and *mentre* 'while, whereas', these scholars also draw a comparison with French, Portuguese, and Spanish, concluding that their degree of grammaticalisation is not parallel despite their shared Latin source. For instance, *toutefois* 'however' developed a contrastive function earlier in French than in other languages, and its Spanish cognate, *todavía*, has mainly temporal uses in the contemporary language.

The development of the German modal particles *aber* 'but, really', *den* 'so, then', and *eben* 'just, simply' is discussed by Diewald (2011a), who also reviews the uses of the labels *grammaticalisation*, *subjectification*, and *pragmaticalisation*. She concludes that pragmaticalisation is only a subtype of grammaticalisation and that grammaticalisation should be widely understood, thus giving room to the rise of discourse or pragmatic meanings.

From the discussion above on grammaticalisation and pragmatics, it transpires that context is crucial in the growth of new meanings, since what originates as an implicature may in the course of time be conventionalised as a new meaning. Context has also been of paramount importance in another instrumental theory in

²⁹ The label *grammaticalisation* is also used by Fanego (2010), who accounts for the development of the Spanish discourse marker *de hecho*, and López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2014), who study the development of *like*-parentheticals in American English.

³⁰ Paradoxically, French *regarde* is less grammaticalised than its other Romance counterparts and does not display such a wide range of uses, although French is thought to be the most advanced of the Romance languages in terms of grammaticalisation (Fagard 2010: 262). The most likely explanation for this difference with the other Romance *look*-forms is the existence of additional elements in French which have encroached upon the domain of *look*-forms, including *bon* 'good', *ben* 'well', and *alors* 'so'.

grammaticalisation studies over the past decades, namely Construction Grammar, which lends itself as a particularly well-suited framework for research in the development of new meanings. It arose in the 1980s from Fillmore's work, influenced by previous research on semantics and cognition, and drawing on preceding models of grammar such as Case Grammar, Relational Grammar, and Gestalt Grammar.³¹

Construction grammarians have an all-encompassing view of grammar, in line with those grammaticalisation researchers for whom grammar should also take into account elements with pragmatic functions. Thus, this theoretical framework does not establish a clear-cut distinction between syntax and lexis, considering instead that constructions are part of a lexicon-syntax continuum (Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013: 1). Nonetheless, Construction Grammar presents itself as more comprehensive than grammaticalisation theory, since it does not only allow for grammatical change, but also for lexical change and, hence, for lexicalisation (cf. section 3.3.1). As Hilpert notes (2013: 460), 'the diachronic branch of Construction Grammar is thus a broader enterprise than the study of grammaticalization [...]'. In a constructional framework, both grammaticalisation and lexicalisation are viewed as constructional changes involving entrenchment (cf. 3.3.4.1 above), though grammaticalisation involves the emergence of more schematic constructions, which are typically frequent, whereas in lexicalisation constructions are more substantive³² (Trousdale 2010: 53-54).

Diachronic changes in this model are, therefore, best explained in terms of changes in particular constructions.³³ Constructions are regarded as the result of the entrenchment of routines in the minds of a network of users, first arising through pragmatic inferencing, and eventually becoming conventionalised in language and hence more distinctive as a construction (Trousdale 2010: 54). For instance, in (3.11) below, taken from Gisborne and Patten (2011: 94), the verb *laugh* behaves in a non-canonical way. Although it is an intransitive verb, in this context it takes a direct object (*his way*); in other words, *laugh*, which is not a verb of motion, is here actually interpreted as such. This pattern is known as the *way*-construction, studied also in Goldberg (1995). The so-called *way*-construction has become progressively entrenched

³¹ Cf. Östman and Fried (2004: 2-6) for a brief overview of the history of Construction Grammar.

³² The term *substantive* refers here to having a fixed phonological form (cf. Hoffmann and Trousdale 2013: 2). For instance, in *take something for granted*, both *for* and *granted* are invariable. The only elements which can vary are the verb *take*, the object (what is taken for granted), and the subject (whoever takes something or somebody for granted).

³³ For constructional diachronic studies, see, among others, Petré and Cuyckens (2008), Traugott (2008), and Barðdal et al. (2015).

over time (cf. section 3.3.4.1), licensing an increasingly wider range of verbs, such as *talk* in (3.12) below, which is not a verb of motion either.

(3.11) *He laughed his way into the room.*

(3.12) *After a stint of cello study in France, he talked his way into the Princeton graduate philosophy seminar of Thomas Kuhn, an icon of postmodernism, the man who coined the term “paradigm shift.”* (COCA. 2012. Ron Rosenbaun, ‘A wilderness of Errol’. *The Smithsonian*).

The reason why constructions such as the *way*-construction become entrenched is that, as Hilpert suggests (2013: 459), ‘each linguistic form that is mentally stored by the speaker (because of either its idiosyncrasies or its frequency) represents a node in this constructional network. Diachronically, single nodes or groups of nodes in the network may change’. This is precisely what occurred to the *way*-construction, given that it has come to allow for verbs other than those of motion, even intransitive ones.

The last domain I would like to discuss in connection with recent developments in grammaticalisation studies is language acquisition, which has also been studied in relation to language change. Authors such as Givón (2009), Ziegeler (1997), and López-Couso (2011) have noted the parallels between the development of the child’s first language and diachrony, mostly in morphology and phonology. However, as Diessel (2011: 131) indicates, there are also similarities in the development of grammatical markers. By way of illustration, Diessel (2011) offers several case studies from various domains, including adpositions, future tense auxiliaries, modal verbs, and the present perfect. In relation to adpositions, it seems that children do actually code spatial meanings before temporal ones, although in child language, unlike in grammaticalisation, prepositions do not have a lexical source. Similarly, the development of *be going to* in child language is also reminiscent of its diachronic evolution:³⁴ the earliest utterances by the child imply a motion event (Diessel 2011: 134), as in *going wash a hands*, in which the infant actually goes into the kitchen. However, Diessel shows that the parallels between diachrony and ontogeny apply on the semantic and pragmatic levels, but not on the morphosyntactic and phonological ones. For instance, in language acquisition grammatical markers do not have a lexical origin, and in fact children may well acquire the grammatical expression first. Thus, children learn the conjunction *because* prior to the noun *cause*, while the opposite pathway is

³⁴ A comparison of the diachronic and ontogenetic development of the *be going to*-construction is also established in Schmidtke-Bode (2009) and López-Couso (2017).

typical of grammaticalisation. Likewise, as we have seen in section 3.2, grammaticalised expressions undergo phonological reduction rather frequently. Children, by contrast, very often acquire the reduced forms first (e.g. *don't* or *gonna*) than the corresponding full forms (*do not*, *going to*). For these reasons, Diessel concludes that language acquisition and diachronic change are independent of each other.

3.5. SUMMARY

This chapter has provided a very broad overview of the phenomenon of grammaticalisation, often characterised in terms of a set of parameters and principles (cf. section 3.2). Some of the phenomena frequently associated with grammaticalisation were also discussed here, in particular unidirectionality, reanalysis, (inter)subjectification, and frequency (cf. 3.3 above). The framework of grammaticalisation in general, and these notions in particular, provide the theoretical foundations for the present research, and they will be resumed again and discussed in greater detail in the light of the data in chapter 6 (cf. section 6.5). Overall, it has been shown that grammaticalisation occurs cross-linguistically, and that it is ‘the cross-componential change *par excellence*’ (McMahon 1994: 161), affecting semantics, phonology, morphology, and syntax alike. Representative examples have been provided to illustrate how grammaticalisation affects these levels, as well as to show some of the most oft-quoted clines of grammaticalisation in the literature. The chapter closed with some comments on recent developments in the field of grammaticalisation (section 3.4), mostly in relation to the domain of pragmatics.



4. English intensifiers: a historical overview

A noteworthy characteristic of intensifiers is their tendency to continuous renewal by virtue of their quick loss of expressivity (cf. Lorenz 2002; Méndez-Naya 2003; Tagliamonte 2008, among others), which makes them a very fruitful topic in the study of synchronic and diachronic variation and change. Spitzbardt (1965) hence remarks that ‘each period in the history of any language is characterized by its peculiar catchwords including adverbs of degree’ (1965: 350). Thus, *rare*, *wondrous*, and *monstrous* were in vogue in EModE, and *vastly* rose in popularity in the eighteenth century. By contrast, adverbs such as *right* or *very* have been around in the intensifier system for centuries and up to present-day.

Another important feature of intensifiers is that they are mostly recruited in the domain of lexis (Méndez-Naya 2003: 375) and gradually develop more general and abstract meanings, i.e., they become grammaticalised in the course of time (cf. chapter 3). The prototypical example of a fully grammaticalised intensifier which is regularly cited in the literature is that of *very* (cf. Bolinger 1972: 18; Lorenz 1999: 85; Méndez-Naya 2003: 375, among others), historically derived from the ME adjective *verray* ‘true’. Nonetheless, not all intensifiers are as advanced as *very* in their grammaticalisation process. In some of them their original meaning can still be traceable. This is the case, for instance, of *terribly*, whose modern collocates reveal a predisposition to negative elements (cf. Partington 1993: 184).

Closely related to the grammaticalisation of intensifiers are the process of subjectification (see, among others, Athanasiadou 2007; cf. section 3.3.3) and their restrictions in mobility or fixation, in Lehmann’s 1985 terms (cf. section 3.2). Thus, the development of intensifying meanings has been associated with a continuous increase in subjectivity, as well as with a fixation of the word order options due to a reduction in their scope of modification. Sylvia Adamson, in her article on the intensifier *lovely* and word order options (2000), has shown that intensifiers undergo a gradual shift from originally descriptive meanings to progressively more affective or subjective meanings (i.e. subjectification or subjectivisation), finally reaching the intensifying stage. Adamson has also demonstrated that this increase in subjectivity correlates with a left position in the phrase. Thus, the more subjective the item is, the more likely it is to appear in the leftmost position. Conversely, objective meanings tend to appear to the right (cf. section 4.1.1.2). Prior to Adamson, however, Partington had also pointed to

the interdependence between syntax and semantics in regard to intensifiers. According to him, the more delexicalised or grammaticalised an intensifier is, the more syntactic restrictions it has (Partington 1993: 189-191).

Intensifiers do not only express speaker involvement and his/her commitment to the truth of the proposition (cf. Suscinskij 1985), but also function as markers of group-membership to a speech community (cf. Peters 1992; Stenström 1999; Tagliamonte and Roberts 2005; Macaulay 2006; Barnfield and Buchstaller 2010). As Lorenz has noted (1999: 24-25), ‘intensifiers are used as ‘shibboleths’, as linguistic clues to the identity and group-membership of the speaker’. In a similar vein, Claridge (2011: 176), in relation to hyperbole, claims that this strategy aims to strengthen the speaker’s standing and to consolidate group identity. This statement could, in my view, be extended to apply to intensifiers as well, these being typical hyperbolic devices. This consolidation of group identity is especially noticeable in the language of teenagers (cf. Stenström 1999, 2000; Núñez-Pertejo and Palacios-Martínez 2011), who are constantly adding new sets of expressions to the paradigm of intensifiers, like Spanish *mogollón* (literally ‘loads of’) (see (4.1)), *puto/a/os/as* (‘bitch, asshole’), and *jodido/a/os/as* ‘fucking, damn’ (cf. Núñez-Pertejo and Palacios-Martínez 2011), and the comparative phrase *como a area* in the vernacular of the Galician spoken in Fisterra, as shown in (4.2).

- (4.1) *Luis Tosar no es guapo*
 Luis Tosar not be-PRS.2SG handsome.M.SG
pero es mogollón de atractivo.
 but be-PRS.2SG loads of attractive.M.SG
 ‘Luis Tosar [a Spanish actor] is not handsome, but he’s very attractive’. (2002, Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual, Real Academia Española, s.v. *mogollón*)
- (4.2) *Ten cartos como a area.*
 have-PRS.3SG money like DEF.ART.F.SG sand.SG
 ‘(S)he is rolling in money’.

When the intensifier which makes a speech community so distinctive spreads to other groups, the word loses its former function of identity marker, and the ‘linguistic trend-setters’ (Peters 1994: 271) will coin a new one. In other words, intensifiers can also be regarded as ‘fashion victims’.

In what follows I present different studies which have been carried out in the literature on intensifiers from the perspective of grammaticalisation (cf. section 4.1) and from a variationist perspective (see section 4.2 below). This chapter hence intends to link the two previous theoretical chapters (chapters 2 and 3) with the corpus-based study on death-related intensifiers presented in chapter 6.

4.1. INTENSIFIERS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF GRAMMATICALISATION

This section reviews a number of studies which have been published on intensifiers within the framework of grammaticalisation. Section 4.1.1 presents some diachronic studies which have been carried out on reinforcers (cf. 2.2.1.1), i.e., those intensifiers which indicate high or maximum degree, either maximisers (e.g. *absolutely*, *to death*) or boosters (e.g. *very*, *right*). In addition, some remarks on the competition of reinforcers are provided to close the section. Section 4.1.2, in turn, deals with attenuators (cf. 2.2.1.1), i.e., those intensifiers which indicate low or minimum degree (e.g. *fairly*, *pretty*, *rather*, etc.), in line with Paradis' (1997) terminology (cf. 2.2.1.1 above).

4.1.1. Reinforcers

4.1.1.1. Maximisers

A number of PDE maximisers ultimately go back to ME, including *absolutely*, *downright*, and *utterly*. Some others which originated at this period died over time, such as *throughout* or *þwert-out*. By contrast, other maximisers date to EModE, as is the case of *complete*, *to death*, and *whole*.

Absolutely, whose most recent history is explored in Núñez-Pertejo (2013), has a wide variety of functions in PDE: intensifier, verbal adjunct with scope over the verb or even a whole clause or sentence, and response token, in which case it expresses emphatic affirmation (Núñez-Pertejo 2013: 250). In this latter function, it is argued to be more characteristic of the spoken language and of American English. Moreover, *absolutely* can modify a wide variety of elements as an intensifier: adjectives (e.g. *absolutely brilliant*), nouns (e.g. *absolutely shit*), adverbs (e.g. *absolutely never*), pronouns (e.g. *absolutely nothing*), determiners (*absolutely no reason*), and prepositional phrases (e.g. *absolutely without doubt*). The intensifying function of *absolutely* is, however, far from new in the language, its first occurrences dating back to the fifteenth century. Over time, and following the cline of directionality of other adverbials such as *in fact* or *actually*, *absolutely* evolved into a response token.

Absolutely typically collocates with non-gradable adjectives in the nineteenth and twentieth-century British and American data examined by Núñez-Pertejo (2013), that is, with adjectives which already indicate an extreme or absolute degree (e.g. *terrifying*). It can occur as a modifier of adjectives with positive and negative polarity alike, even though Núñez-Pertejo notes 'a clear 'semantic preference' towards adjectives with

negative connotations’ (2013: 259). However, the adjective which most frequently collocates with *absolutely* in both the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is *necessary*.

The occurrence of *absolutely* as a noun modifier is regarded as characteristic of teenage speech. Though attested already in the eighteenth century (e.g. *that the Father is God absolutely*), in twentieth-century data it is usually followed by taboo or swear words such as *fuck* or *shit*. Moreover, *absolutely* as a noun modifier was more flexible in earlier stages of the language, given that it could appear in different positions in the clause or sentence.

Another of the maximisers which developed its function in ME is the adverb *downright* (cf. Méndez-Naya 2008). *Downright* was originally a spatial adjunct indicating directional path ‘straight down, right down (to the ground)’, hence typically collocating with verbs such as *fly* or *fall*. Moreover, in OE *right* could also appear before *down*, so that the lexicalisation of the combination *downright* was not yet complete at this stage. In ME, however, *downright* developed its degree reading: ‘out-and-out, absolutely’. Thus, *downright* typically modified verbs which involved hitting somebody with a weapon, such as an axe or a sword (e.g. *hew*, *cleave*). According to Méndez-Naya (2008: 272), these specific contexts were the ones which favoured an interpretation of *downright* as ‘completely’. The most likely evolution of the adverb, therefore, was: to give a blow with a cutting weapon ‘straight down, down to the ground’ > to cut ‘from top to bottom’ > to cut ‘completely’. *Downright* has predominantly negative semantic prosody (cf. Stubbs 1995), occurring mainly with negative collocates (e.g. *affront*, *mock*, *refuse*), though positive collocations are also marginally found (e.g. *accept*, *love*, *worship*), mainly in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In addition to adverbial uses, *downright* also occurs from the sixteenth century as an adjective, therefore modifying nouns (e.g. *Papist*, *denial*). In this use, *downright* originally had a clearly directional sense: ‘directed straight downwards’ (e.g. *downright stroke*). It was not until the following century, however, that the adjective *downright* developed an intensifying reading, becoming a popular intensifier in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (e.g. *downright generosity*, *downright adoration*). As was the case with its adverbial counterpart, adjectival *downright* collocated predominantly with negative heads.

Like *downright*, a series of maximisers originating in the spatial domain and sharing the meaning ‘out’ also developed an intensifier function in ME. This is the case of *outly*, *throughout(ly)*, *þwert-out*, *outright*, and *utterly*, discussed in Méndez-Naya (2014).

Unlike other intensifiers derived from lexical elements, these adverbs originated in a more abstract source, though they have also undergone a process of grammaticalisation and metaphorical change over time. This process where elements meaning ‘out’ develop intensifying readings is by no means exclusive of English, but occurs also in other languages such as Spanish (the prefix *extra-*, as in *extraplano* ‘very flat’, from Latin *extra* ‘on the outside, without’) or German (the prefix *ur-*, originally meaning ‘out of’, as in *uralt* ‘very old’).

Utlice or *outlice* derive from the spatial adverb *ut* ‘out’ by means of the suffix *-lice*. Even though *outlice* could already express maximal degree in OE, meaning ‘utterly, completely’, it was in fact a low-frequency item at this early stage. The intensifying function of *outlice* was continued in ME, but the actual corpus evidence for these uses is very scarce (Méndez-Naya 2014: 248). In PDE, however, remnants of the former intensifying uses can still be traced, though only in northern English and in Scots (Méndez-Naya 2014: 250).

Throughout(*ly*) was recorded in OE as a spatial preposition ‘throughout, right through’, whose meaning, as Méndez-Naya suggests (2014: 250), issues from the image schema of the CONTAINER, indicating a path and hence a motion across the enclosure of the container from side to side. As was the case with *downright* (see above), *throughout* also occurred typically with verbs involving weapons, such as spears, swords, etc. (e.g. *saw*, *cut*, and *cleave*), from which a degree reading would be inferred and foregrounded. *Throughout* could also be found as a degree modifier of adjectives and adverbs from the beginning of the thirteenth century, in which function it could also collocate with positive adjectives (e.g. *good* or *proud*). At the close of the fifteenth century, however, the intensifying function of *throughout* faded. Another rather common intensifier in ME was *þwert-out*, which could modify verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and negative expressions, although its prototypical heads were adjectives. As verb modifiers, however, *throughout* and *þwert-out* collocated mainly with negative items. The change from negative to positive semantic prosody was owed, in all likelihood, to the most frequent verbal collocates of these adverbs, meaning ‘abandon’, which usually took complements such as sins or something which was undesirable (Méndez-Naya 2014: 258-259). Abandoning something undesirable was conceived of as something good, and this inference is hypothesised to have led to the change in the semantic prosody of these intensifiers.

Outright dates back to the beginning of the fourteenth century. Curiously, the temporal reading of *outright* ‘straightaway, immediately’ was available prior to the spatial reading ‘directly out’, which is only attested from the fourteenth century onwards. This seems to contradict the general grammaticalisation cline by means of which temporal readings derive from spatial meanings (cf., among others, Hopper and Traugott 2003). However, Méndez-Naya acknowledges that this is due to the data which have been preserved. Verb collocates of *outright* were mostly negative (e.g. *bitraien* ‘betray’ and *painen* ‘suffer’), and there are in fact very few examples of *outright* as a modifier of adjectives (only *wood* ‘mad’ and *mad*).

Utterly, by contrast, is much more frequent than *outright*, and it was also a ME development, arising in the thirteenth century with spatial meanings (‘outwardly, superficially’), and then, from the fourteenth century onwards, as an intensifier occurring mainly with negative heads, as was the case with *outright*.

As mentioned above, several maximisers developed a degree reading in EModE. *Complete*, for instance, features in the historical records from the end of the fourteenth century onwards. In its earliest descriptive meanings, it was constrained to months or periods of time and invoked ‘a boundary relative to which ‘completion/completeness’ is assessed’ (e.g. *complet the laste meridie of decembre*) (Davidse 2009: 268). The set of collocates of *complete* was expanded in the following centuries. In addition to the meaning of completion, *complete* had other senses, namely ‘having all its parts or members’ (e.g. *their shoulders broad for complete armour fit*), attested from the sixteenth century, and also ‘perfect in nature or quality’ (e.g. *his lawe is compleet*), which is documented from the end of the fourteenth century. It is precisely this latter meaning which eventually gave rise in the seventeenth century to the sense ‘fully equipped for’, collocating with nouns denoting professions (e.g. *the completest actors*). *Complete* could also occur in EModE in secondary determiner uses (e.g. *the compleate number of Common Counsell men*), helping to single out the referent and forming a unit with the primary determiner, and finally, as a noun intensifier (*a compleat villaine*). According to Davidse (2009), the noun intensifying occurrences of *complete* arose out of the former descriptive function of the adjective and did not develop, as Bolinger (1972) had claimed, from its secondary determiner uses. As a noun intensifier, *complete* appeared first with unbounded items, referring mainly to people (*knave, villain*) or to entities (*harmony*). Later on bounded attestations emerged, first with collocates such as *victory, wreck, success*, etc., to which *complete* attributes the

‘full realisation’ (Davidse 2009: 278).

The maximising function of *whole* is argued to have originated in descriptive senses rather in the quantifying-identifying function of the adjective (Ghesquière and Davidse 2011: 264). This use of *whole* as a secondary determiner, making reference to the whole entity referred to by the head noun, is attested from ME, and these readings later on triggered the intensifying meanings of *whole*, recorded from EModE onwards. It is one construction in particular, *all the whole* + noun (e.g. ***all the whole*** way), especially common in LME and EModE, which favoured the emergence of the intensifying reading. Ghesquière and Davidse also point out that *whole* invoked originally closed intensification scales,¹ but from the end of the EModE period it could appear with open intensification scales as well, which also entailed a widening in the range of the collocates sanctioned by *whole*.

According to Margerie (2011), the earliest uses of the prepositional phrase *to death*² occurred in resultative constructions (‘X CAUSE Y TO BECOME Z’) as a postmodifier of verbs of physical beating, torturing, or killing (e.g. *wound*, *beat*, *stab*, *kill*, etc.). After these early prototypical uses, *to death* started to occur in a number of transitional constructions which paved the way for the later emergence of a degree reading of the phrase:

- i. The first of these transitional stages is labelled by Margerie *resultative constructions with a telic verb* (e.g. *he sloh him wið a stan to deaðe*). This phase is very similar in fact to the prototypical resultative one (occurring also with telic verbs such as *slay* or *wound*), though Margerie keeps them apart and claims that the two constructions are distinct. For her, the prototypical resultative construction, although construing death as an end point as is the case with the transitional pattern, represents a unitary process. Conversely, the transitional construction represents two processes and hence ‘makes a DEGREE reading of *to death* significantly more likely than the prototypical construction’ (Margerie 2011: 122). To my mind, it is at least doubtful whether it can actually be inferred from the context whether a given process is simple and unitary or, by contrast, it represents two distinct processes. Note that Margerie uses the same verbs *wound*

¹ The distinction of closed and open intensification scales drawn by the authors is based on Kennedy and McNally (2005). Open scales ‘lack a minimal element, a maximal element, or both’, while closed scales have ‘minimal and maximal elements’ (Kennedy and McNally 2005: 352).

² Given that *to death* is one of death-related intensifiers discussed in this dissertation, Margerie’s (2011) study will also be examined in connection with my data in section 6.4.7.

and *kill /slay* to illustrate both stages, and also that her examples lack a sufficiently expanded context, which makes it difficult to discriminate between the two constructions.

- ii. Constructions in which *to death* appears with verbs which do not have a literal resultative reading (e.g. *hate* or *bore*), which involve more speaker involvement towards the proposition and hence represent a case of subjectification (cf. Traugott 1995; Hopper and Traugott 2003; López-Couso 2010, among others).
- iii. Constructions in which *to death* is preceded by an adjective or past participle (e.g. *sick to death* or *frozen to death*), which establish a causal relationship between a state (that of being sick or frozen) and the process whereby that state may end up in death.

The final stage in the development of *to death* represents the emergence of degree readings of the intensifier, therefore suggesting semantic bleaching (cf. section 3.2). Margerie mentions that the first recorded use, in which *to death* modifies the verb *hate*, dates to 1568 (e.g. *the which Castell the king hated to the death*). However, very few uses of intensifying *to death* appear before the eighteenth century.

In PDE *to death* shows a collocational preference for negative items (e.g. *bored*, *worried*, *scared*), along the lines of other negative intensifiers like *horrifically*, although it is also recorded with elements with positive semantic prosody, such as *love* or *tickle*, therefore showing signs of ongoing grammaticalisation. Moreover, data on current uses of the language reveal occurrences of this prepositional phrase in attributive function (e.g. *pretty to death dress*).

To close this section, Figure 4.1 summarises the history of the forms discussed so far, presented in alphabetical order. The figure indicates the period at which these forms first developed an intensifying function, as well as the stage until they are attested as intensifiers. As can be gathered from the figure, most of these forms remain as maximisers in the present day, though some of them are only marginally used in this function.

Figure 4.1. Maximisers in the history of English

Intensifier	Period				
	OE	ME	EModE	LModE	PDE
<i>absolutely</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>complete</i>			→	→	→
<i>downright</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>outly</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>outright</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>throughout</i>		→			
<i>þwert-out</i>		→			
<i>to death</i>			→	→	→
<i>utterly</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>whole</i>			→	→	→

4.1.1.2. Boosters

Although EModE was a very fruitful period for the creation of boosters, as noted by Peters (1994), some boosters developed their degree reading considerably earlier, specifically in OE. This is the case of *all* and *swipe*, studied by Buchstaller and Traugott (2006) and Méndez-Naya (2003), respectively.

In OE *eall* could be a quantifier modifying nouns or pronouns and as such it was inflected for gender, number, and case. *Eall* could also be an adverb, which occurred mainly with bounded adjectives and participles, reinforcing ‘the boundedness/completeness of the resultant state denoted by the participle’ (Buchstaller and Traugott 2006: 353). Even though the adverb *eall* already showed a degree meaning in OE, examples of this function were rare at this stage. Further evidence for this scalar modifier function, however, is to be found in the set of compound forms derived from *eall*, in which the adverb simply boosted the quality of the adjective on a degree scale. Such OE examples include *ealgrene* ‘all green’ and *eallmihtig* ‘almighty’. Over the course of ME the adjectival collocations of *all* increased, and the adverb came to occur with both bounded (e.g. *al dead* ‘completely dead’) and unbounded adjectives (*al sad* ‘very sad’). ME also witnessed an increase in fixed phrases with *all*, such as *al aboute(n)* ‘in all directions’, and in concessives such as *albeit* and *although*.

Intensifying *all* continued through EModE. During this period, uses of this adverb as a modifier of adjectives and other adverbs became less common, although they did not die out, as suggested by Buchstaller and Traugott (2006: 355). Collocations such as *all demonyak* (‘possessed by the devil’) and *all too heavy* are attested in their data. EModE also witnessed the development of new functions for the adverb *all*. Thus, it was in this

period when *all* came to modify nouns, typically mass nouns such as *obedience*. Moreover, new compound forms with *all* developed at the time (e.g. *all-eloquent*, *all-heart*), and the distributional difference between the adverb *all* and the quantifier *all* emerged. Thus, when *all* follows a verb, it is interpreted as an adverb, whereas when it follows an auxiliary, the most likely interpretation is that of a quantifier. In (4.3), for instance, *all* appears after the copula *be* and immediately before the adjective *open*, on which account it is interpreted as an adverb. In turn, in (4.4) *all* is postposed to the auxiliary *might*, and is hence interpreted as a quantifier (Buchstaller and Traugott 2006: 356).

(4.3) *The King did also send tow gilt Keyes to his Hignesse ... to the end that his Palace might be all open vnto them.*

(4.4) *But they must all be voluntarie, that they might all be meritorious.*

In LModE *all* underwent further developments. Although uses of the adverb as a modifier of nouns arose in EModE, these expanded in LModE to denote types of people (*all Jacobin*) and personal names (e.g. *all Rider Haggard*). Moreover, verbs other than the copula *be* became popular in copulative constructions, such as, for instance, *turn*, *get*, or *become*. Finally, Buchstaller and Traugott note some recent trends in relation to their PDE data. On the one hand, *all* has become increasingly common as a modifier of proper names (e.g. *all Rambo*) and, on the other, two new functions become possible, namely *all* as a modifier of a wider range of verbal heads (e.g. *all screamed*; *all jumped*) and as a quotative marker (*she's all*, *'I didn't tell you to call him'*).

Like *all*, *swiþe* also developed a boosting function already in OE. In fact, *swiþe* was, together with *full*,³ one of the most common intensifiers at this early stage. The adverb derived from the adjective *swiþ* 'strong, powerful' and the derivational suffix *-e*. The grammaticalisation from manner adverb *swiþe* 'strongly, powerfully' to intensifier *swiþe* (e.g. *swiþe coueytous* 'covetous'), therefore, must have taken place before the earliest records. Moreover, the high degree of bleaching of the adverb applies to its three different uses: as a modifier of adjectives or adverbs, as a modifier of participles, and as a modifier of verbs. Nonetheless, *swiþe* appeared mostly as a modifier of adjectival or adverbial heads (cf. Méndez-Naya 2003).

³ According to Borst (1902: 68-70), *full* could occur in OE both as adjective and adverb modifier and was, together with *swiþe*, one of the preferred intensifiers at this stage. *Full* increased its frequency over ME, especially by the fourteenth century, when *swiþe* had lost its popularity. By EModE, however, *full* was already outdated, and in PDE it is only found in certain dialects.

Until the mid-thirteenth century *swiþe* continued to be favoured as an intensifier. From the fourteenth century, however, it underwent a drastic reduction in its use as a modifier of adjectives and adverbs in favour of the intensifier *full*. Méndez-Naya attributes this loss of popularity to the fact that *swiþe* had been in vogue as an intensifier for centuries and had, therefore, lost its expressive force by this time. The encroachment of *full* upon the domain of *swiþe* took place in the fourteenth century according to Peters (1993), while Méndez-Naya dates this replacement already to the second half of the thirteenth century. The final demise of intensifier *swiþe* occurred in the sixteenth century and was motivated partly by the loss of its use as a verbal intensifier (Méndez-Naya 2003: 379).

The downfall of *swiþe* in the course of ME favoured the emergence of new forms in the paradigm of boosters. One such form is *right*, explored by Méndez-Naya (2006, 2007, and 2008b). Drawing on data from the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (HC) and the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English*, second edition (PPCME2), Méndez-Naya (2006) traces the evolution of *right* as an adjunct at the phrasal and clausal levels, as a modifier of adjectives and adverbs, and as a discourse marker. As an intensifier modifying other adjectives (e.g. **right fat**), *right* is a ME development. The first examples are documented in the *Ormulum*, most likely due to Scandinavian influence (cf. Méndez-Naya 2007: 194). The collocates of *right* are mostly bounded and have positive semantic prosody, although unbounded collocates are also attested, mostly when *right* is at its height in the late fourteenth and throughout the fifteenth century. In EModE, by contrast, the frequency of *right* dropped dramatically and in this period it is only marginally found in collocations such as *right glad* and in honorifics (e.g. **right honourable father**, **right singular lady**), a use which has survived into PDE. The uses of *right* find a parallel in another ME booster, intensifying *most* (e.g. *a most effective assistant*), discussed by Méndez-Naya (2008b). Both *right* and *most* are argued to be non-prototypical boosters, because they both collocate predominantly with bounded rather than with unbounded elements. Unlike *right*, however, *most* gains ground in EModE, reaching its peak in frequency in the first half of the sixteenth century. *Most* occurs in Méndez-Naya's (2008b) data mainly in combination with positive elements, modifying, as a general rule, evaluative or subjective adjectives, and with honorifics (e.g. **Most Honourable**), in which function it eventually replaced *right*.

Another form which entered the paradigm of boosters in LME is *very*, which is

frequently given as a prototypical instance of the grammaticalisation of intensifiers. Though it ultimately goes back to Latin *verus* ('true'), it was borrowed in the thirteenth century from Anglo-Norman. The first records in the English language appear in the context of religious collocations such as *warrai man and godd warrai* ('true man and true god'), as noted by Breban and Davidse (2016). As an intensifier, however, *very* is only documented from the late fourteenth century. In this function, it modified only nouns (e.g. *this is a verray sooth* ('truth')). In fact, the co-occurrence of the adjective *very* and the noun *sooth* implied semantic redundancy, which eventually triggered the reanalysis of *very* as a degree marker. This semantic redundancy also applied to *very* as an intensifier of adjectives and adverbs (e.g. *a very trewe evidence*). In the earliest examples, however, it is very difficult to differentiate between the original modal meaning of *very* ('truly') and its degree meaning. At the end of ME *very* developed yet another intensifying function, namely that of intensifier of postdetermining adjectives such as *same* and *self* (e.g. *the very self place*), adding expressive force to the whole combination.

EModE proved a crucial stage in the semantic evolution of *very*, which developed new uses and remained a popular booster over the period. Thus, it came to modify a wider set of nouns, specifically of human types (e.g. *very fool* or *very wretch*). These uses were already possible from LME, but peaked precisely in EModE. Likewise, two further contexts were especially frequent in EModE as well: the modification of nouns which referred to emotional states (e.g. *very joy* or *very pity*) and the modification of nouns which denoted a beginning, an end, or a middle point in space or time (e.g. *the very end*, *the very bottom*) (Breban and Davidse 2016: 232-233). Moreover, the uses of the intensifying adverb *very* grew exponentially in EModE, an increase which was continued in the LModE data. *Very* thus emerged as a modifier of adjectives in the superlative form (e.g. *the very richest* or *the very poorest*), of numerical ordinals (e.g. *very first*) and non-specific ordinals (e.g. *very next*), as well as of quantifiers (e.g. *very many*, *very few*).

EModE also proved a very prolific period for the emergence of boosters, as noted by Peters (1994). One of the intensifiers which developed a boosting function in this period is *really*, which dates back to the fifteenth century and was a synonym for *bodily*. The intensifying function of *really*, its main function in PDE, emerged only in the second half of the seventeenth century, as claimed by Defour (2012) and D'Hondt and Defour (2012). In the first part of the century *really* was only recorded as an adjunct and an

emphasiser (e.g. [...] *he was really a smith*), highlighting in the latter function the truth level rather than the objective reality of the proposition. Together with its first uses as an intensifier (e.g. *Mr. Stopwell wrongs the Court-Ladies; some of which are really Great Beauties*), during the second half of the seventeenth century *really* came to be used as an attitudinal disjunct in initial position (e.g. *really Sir, this honest freeholder speaks a great deal of truth*). By the eighteenth century *really* developed its very last function, that is, its use as a verbless question (e.g. *really?*). D'Hondt and Defour (2012) also note that the apparent late development of intensifying *really* was influenced by its relation with other competing forms: *truly*, *very*, and *verily*. However, this late intensifying meaning was compensated with the rise of a new disjunct function of *really*, with pragmatic meaning, while *truly*, *very*, and *verily* remained as manner adverbials.

Like *really*, *truly* also developed an intensifier reading in EModE. Though dating back to OE already, it did not have a truth-related value in Early English, but meant instead 'faithfully, loyally'. In fact, it only became an emphasiser with a truth-related value ('in a true manner') in the first half of the fourteenth century, and it is also before the end of the ME period that it developed disjunct uses occurring in initial position. When placed in initial position, *truly* was ambiguous between a manner adverbial and a disjunct, most conspicuously with verbs of communication such as *tell*. This ambiguity made the transition towards disjunct uses (*I tell you truly* > *(I tell you) truly*), as suggested by Defour (2012). *Truly* occurred in ME mostly in biblical or religious contexts under the fixed pattern *treuli, I seye to you*. It was only from 1500 onwards that *truly* gained ground as an intensifier.

Another booster which emerged in EModE is *bloody*, which is argued to be an atypical intensifier, since in addition to being a booster, it can be an attenuator (e.g. *I'm not bloody surprised*). Although the adjective *bloody* dates to OE, originally meaning 'of the nature of, composed of, or like blood', it did not develop a boosting function until the seventeenth century, typically in the collocation *bloody drunk* (Biscetti 2008: 54-55). The socio-historical context in which the phrase *bloody drunk* arose is of paramount importance in order to understand the rise of its intensifying function. Being drunk in the context of the Reformation was equivalent to being drunk with God's blood, since for Catholics 'consecrated wine is substantially transformed into the blood of Christ in the Eucharist' (Biscetti 2008: 60). The use of *bloody*, therefore, was not just a swearword, but could also be considered a heretic expression. The collocation *bloody*

drunk denoted the cruelty and excess which ensued an inebriated state. In addition to cruelty, drunkenness became associated with moral execration, sin, and something to be ashamed of. Thus, *bloody* could occur with *damn(ably)* and *cursed(ly)*, hence indicating that intoxication deserved a curse. *Bloody* had, therefore, strong religious connotations. From this meaning ‘worthy of extreme blame an execration for being excessively drunk’, a degree meaning of excess became foregrounded (‘excessively drunk’). Finally, the inherently negative semantic meaning lost weight, so that it became possible for *bloody* to occur with positive items (e.g. ***bloody*** *passionate*). Moreover, in PDE *bloody* has come to develop a new function as a focus marker (e.g. *you **bloody** now you didn’t*).

Unlike the boosters discussed in the preceding paragraphs, the adjective *lovely* came to be used with a boosting function in the nineteenth century. The development of its intensifying meaning is explored by Adamson (2000), who links it to the order of elements in the premodifying string. According to her, there is an ordering principle of premodifiers based on their inherent meaning. Those adjectives which are *descriptive*, i.e., which describe relatively objective properties of the head of the noun phrase, tend to appear closer to it. In turn, *affective* adjectives, that is, those which denote more subjective properties that can be a matter of opinion, generally appear to the left of the noun phrase. Position is, therefore, crucial to understand the meaning of the adjective (Adamson 2000: 45-46), as illustrated with the use of the adjective *rotten* in (4.5) and (4.6) below:

(4.5) *short **rotten** planks*

(4.6) ***rotten** short planks*

In (4.5) *rotten* is taken to be descriptive, indicating a state of decay and hence describing an objective property. Conversely, the left position of *rotten* in the noun phrase in (4.6) favours an interpretation of the adjective as affective (‘worthless’), that is, as expressive of a subjective evaluation. This correlation between subjective meanings or subjectivity and the left periphery in the noun phrase is explored by Adamson in relation to the adjective *lovely*. The evolution of *lovely* from an originally descriptive adjective to its final use as an intensifier in the nineteenth century is discussed in the light of data from ARCHER (*A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*).

Lovely goes back to the OE adjective *luflic* ‘loving, amiable’. The original meaning

of *lovely* was descriptive, since it denoted a relatively objective quality. It was only in the ME period that *lovely* acquired a new affective reading ('physically beautiful') (e.g. *the lely, lufely to sighte*), a sense which gained ground in the course of EModE and which became dominant by the eighteenth century (Adamson 2000: 48). A further affective sense of *lovely* arose in the seventeenth century, indicating the speaker's approval (e.g. *this trout looks lovely*). In this case, *lovely* could still denote the physical beauty of the trout. However, as Adamson claims (2000: 48), it is much more likely that in this context *lovely* refers to a comment by a fisherman, approving of the size of the trout, or by a person who is about to taste the trout. The intensifying meaning of *lovely* ('very'), as in *lovely long legs*, only arose in the nineteenth century.

In the light of the evolution of *lovely*, Adamson hypothesises the following grammaticalisation cline for intensifiers (2000: 55):

descriptive adjective > affective adjective > intensifier

According to her, adverbs of degree go back to former manner adverbs which denoted objective properties but which, through a process of subjectification (cf. section 3.3.3), came to express increasingly subjective meanings. Finally, the shift to the left of the adjective string (e.g. *lovely big party*) triggered the categorial reanalysis (cf. 3.3.2) from adjective to intensifier and the reinterpretation of the construction as [adv. + adj.] rather than [adj. + adj.].

Like *lovely*, *very much* also emerged as an intensifier in LModE, though the first documented uses of the form date to the mid-sixteenth century (e.g. *Judges not indifferent but very much affectionate against me*). It was, therefore, in LModE that it became a competitor to *much* as a booster modifying other adverbs or adjectives, as suggested by González-Díaz (2008). Moreover, in the data examined by the author *very much* is also attested as an elliptical answer to a polar question, in cases in which the verb involved is gradable (e.g. 'Do you like her?' *Sibyl queried. 'Very much. She is charming.'*). In this function it behaves similarly to *indeed*, and has a confirmatory meaning. This function seems to point also to a use of *very much* as a sentence modifier and, therefore, to a higher degree of grammaticalisation of the form.

González-Díaz complemented her corpus materials with a questionnaire containing examples in which *very much* could be ambiguous between a noun phrase modifier and a modifier at the sentence level. This applies to copulative constructions with a noun phrase subject complement introduced by the definite article *the* or a possessive pronoun (e.g. *this writing is very much the style from which our modern everyday hand*

has descended). Two versions of the test were created, allowing for the two patterns with *very much*: 1) auxiliary + *very much* + verb + NP (e.g. *has very much been his creation*), and 2) auxiliary + verb + *very much* + NP (e.g. *has been very much his creation*). The questionnaire was then administered to two different groups: members of staff at the University of Liverpool, all of whom were native speakers of British English aged 30-50, and British undergraduate students aged 18-23. The two groups were asked to judge the grammaticality of both examples, if one version sounded more correct than the other, and if they noticed any difference in meaning between the two types of examples. In general terms, both versions were judged as grammatically correct by both groups of speakers, which suggests that *very much* 'is acceptable in syntactic slots usually associated with sentence-modifier functions' (González-Díaz 2008: 238). In these slots *very much* has the meaning 'truly, certainly', and it appears to have been more easily detected by the younger generation of speakers. In conclusion, although the corpus examples of *very much* in prototypically sentential-modifier slots were scarce, the grammaticality judgement test by native speakers served González-Díaz to confirm the hypothesis that *very much* is moving towards sentence-adverbial status in PDE.

Other forms which developed intensifying meanings in the most recent history of the language concern Measure Nouns (MNs), discussed in detail by Brems (2003), who studies the semantic changes undergone by *heap(s) of*, *bunch(es) of*, and *pile(s) of*. These are, strictly speaking, not nouns of measure such as *acre*, *litre*, and *pound*. Instead, most of these Measure Noun constructions have undergone semantic change and developed a more figurative sense over time. Thus, they no longer denote a physical object, but are in turn used to refer to an indefinite mass or quantity, hence favouring readings as quantifiers (e.g. *heaps of atmosphere*, *bunches of skinheads*).

Drawing on data from the *Bank of English* (COBUILD), Brems provides a grammaticalisation account of the development of these particular Measure Noun constructions, arguing that not all of them have grammaticalised to the same extent. Instead, they can be positioned at different levels along a scale depending on their degree of semantic bleaching. Furthermore, the differences are also conspicuous with regard to the uses of MNs in their singular and plural forms. *A bunch of*, for instance, is far more advanced in the grammaticalisation process than *bunches of*, since there are not many clear instances of quantifier uses of *bunches of* in the corpus, while *a bunch of* is overwhelmingly used as a quantifier. By contrast, there are only few cases in which *bunch* functions as a head noun with a literal reading (e.g. *a bunch of flowers*). The

bleaching of *a bunch of* is also evinced in the type of noun which appears in the second slot, in the sense that once grammaticalisation has started, it opens up possibilities for abstract nouns to occur in this slot. This process of bleaching is what paves the way for grammaticalisation, according to Brems, and this is the reason why the grammaticalisation of *bunch(es) of* is claimed to be semantically-driven.

The case of *pile(s) of* and *heap(s)⁴ of* differs from that of *bunch(es) of* in that the former MNs do not have a very clear set of collocates at the very initial or literal stage, before being semantically bleached. The only restriction which is applicable in this case is for the second noun (N2) to be organised into a pile or heap. The results show, however, that *heap* takes the lead in the grammaticalisation process, whereas *pile* lags behind. The reason for this lies in the inherent bleaching potential of both forms, inasmuch as the notion of ‘heap’ is vaguer than that of ‘pile’, and hence favours in itself the bleaching required in grammaticalisation processes. This restriction is also evinced in the set of collocates allowed by these forms, *pile* being used mainly with entities which are prototypically stackable, such as paper, letters, and bricks. This intrinsic semantic difference is crucial to account for their divergent grammaticalisation status. Moreover, *heap*, unlike *bunch*, is more frequently used as a quantifier in the plural (*heaps of*), since the singular form (*a heap of*) favours a literal interpretation and a head function. This is not the case of *pile*, which prefers the literal reading in both the singular and the plural.

According to Brems, MNs offer a great potential for being recruited as intensifiers, which goes without saying in the cases of *bunch* and *heap*. However, she claims that *pile* may also be exploited for these purposes considering its novelty and the susceptibility to fashion of intensifiers.

Figure 4.2 is provided here as an outline of the evolution of the English boosters described in this section.

⁴ *Heap(s)* is studied by Brems (2003), who focuses on PDE. According to the OED (cf. OED, s.v. *heap* n. 4a and 4b), *heap(s)*, with the meaning ‘a large number or quantity; a (great) deal, ‘a lot’ is recorded in English from the sixteenth century in the plural (*heaps*) and from the seventeenth century in the singular (*heap*).

Figure 4.2. Boosters in the history of English

Intensifier	Period				
	OE	ME	EModE	LModE	PDE
<i>all</i>	→	→	→	→	→
<i>bloody</i>			→	→	→
<i>heaps</i>				→	→
<i>lovely</i>				→	→
<i>most</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>really</i>			→	→	→
<i>right</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>swīþe</i>	→	→			
<i>truly</i>			→	→	→
<i>very</i>		→	→	→	→
<i>very much</i>				→	→

4.1.1.3. *Reinforcers in competition: letters and medical writing in focus*

The variation and competition of intensifiers, reinforcers in particular, within specific text types or genres, has also been subject of debate in the literature. Thus, the ‘fevered invention’ of intensifiers in EModE was explored by Peters (1994) in relation to the epistolary genre, while Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) looked into the use of intensifiers in medical texts in both ME and EModE.

Peters (1994) is concerned specifically with the use of reinforcers of the booster type in EModE letters, though he also draws on correspondence from the fifteenth and early eighteenth centuries. EModE shows, as he claims, no parallel with any other stage in the history of the language, both in regard to the development of these adverbs and as concerns their rate of change. Peters indicates that in previous stages of the language boosters derived mainly from local, dimensional, and quantitative adverbs, whereas the sources for EModE boosters were mainly qualitative adverbs. More conspicuously, large numbers of boosters were adopted between 1590 and 1610 and then between 1650 and 1660 (Peters 1994: 272). Moreover, in this latter period boosters were mainly of foreign etymology.

For the fifteenth century, Peters analyses data from several letter collections: the Paston Letters, the Stonor Letters, the Cely Letters, and the Shillingford Letters. Of these collections, the Paston and the Stonor Letters include personal correspondence. On the other hand, the Cely Letters deal with business correspondence, while the Shillingford Letters report on legal negotiations. In general, the evidence from the fifteenth century indicates a rather restricted set of boosters, with some innovations

encouraged by younger writers. In the Paston Letters, for instance, the old family members continued using the most common ME intensifiers, *right*, *well*, and *full*, and boosters were exclusively used in the formulaic components of the letters. Conversely, the younger members of the Paston family made use of a relatively wider range of intensifiers, including *excessive*, *fervently*, and *very*, mostly in the main body of the letters. Correspondence from the Stonor family showed a very similar picture, intensifying *very* appearing only at the very late fifteenth century. The highest amount of intensifiers is found in the letters with more emotional content, such as love correspondence. In the Cely and Shillingford Letters, which tackle more businesslike issues, the occurrence of intensifiers is broadly restricted to formulaic elements, since the writers of such letters could not report or elaborate on their particular feelings or opinions.

Evidence for the seventeenth century was gathered from the Wentworth Papers and the Basire Correspondence. From the former Peters selected the letters from Sir Thomas Wentworth, Earl of Strafford, which are mainly concerned with politics, although there are also letters of a more private nature. As for the Basire Correspondence, the letters were written by Reverend Dr. Isaac Basire, a French parson, by his wife, and by some colleagues. Regarding the correspondence of Thomas Wentworth, Peters notices a change with regard to the fifteenth century correspondence. This century witnessed the demise of intensifying *full* and *right*, which became restricted to formulaic expressions. In turn, Thomas Wentworth often resorted to intensifying *very*, although relatively recent developments such as *marvellous* or *wonderful(ly)* are also occasionally attested.

The eighteenth century is the last period studied by Peters. The letters in this case were all addressed to Thomas Wentworth, who was ambassador in Berlin, and were written by his wife Lady Anne, his mother Isabella, his brother Peter, and his children Lucy and William. In Isabella's letters, *very* is the most frequent intensifier, although there is considerable variation, and some of the boosters she used are in fact relatively recent adoptions, including *terribly*, *real*, and *particularly*. According to Peters, Thomas' brother, Peter, shows the largest repertoire, and his use of *damn'd* even antedates the OED first record by about 40 years. Lady Strafford, by contrast, does not use such a wide variety of boosters as her direct relatives, and the ones she employs are not recent recruitments. The number of letters from Thomas' children is not very large, but even so Peters concludes that *vastly* seemed to be in vogue at that time.

Like Peters (1994), Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) also studied intensifiers in ME

and EModE. Their focus is, however, on the competition of intensifying items as modifiers of adjectival heads in medical texts from 1375 to 1700. To this end they take into account Dixon's taxonomy of adjectives (Dixon 1977), which distinguishes 13 adjectival classes.⁵ The forms examined are *right*, *full*, *well*, *very*, and *highly*. Moreover, they also look at their suffixed *-ly* counterparts, except for *verily* and *rightly*, which do not show intensifying functions in the data examined. The material for their study is taken from the *Corpus of Early English Medical Writing* (CEEM), comprising the *Middle English Medical Texts* (MEMT) (1375-1700) and the *Early Modern English Medical Texts* (EMEMT) (1500-1700).

The most frequent intensifier in the ME data examined by Méndez-Naya and Pahta was *ful(ly)*, whose use dropped considerably in the second half of the fifteenth century. This decline in popularity of *ful(ly)* ran parallel to the reduction of its collocates. Thus, *ful(ly)* could occur with nine different adjectival classes at the beginning of ME, but from 1500 onwards it was only found with two classes, namely VALUE and PHYSICAL PROPERTY, mainly with the adjective *ripe*. Along the lines of *ful(ly)*, intensifying *right* remained more or less stable in ME, and it is only from the sixteenth century that it began to lose its former popularity, which entailed a reduction of the types of adjectives with which it could co-occur. In fact, most of the adjectives which collocated with *right* at this time were of the VALUE type (e.g. *excellent*, *good*, *honourable*), therefore suggesting that it was no longer among the preferred forms. In contrast to *right* and *full*, *very* was attested with an intensifying function in the data in the second half of the fourteenth century and its frequency rose steeply after 1540. Moreover, *very* shows an opposite behaviour to *well*, *full*, *right*, and *high*, since rather than modifying less adjective types through time, it came to be increasingly used with a greater variety of types (from just one in the ME period to ten different types in EModE).

In line with Peters (1994), Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) also note a higher frequency of occurrence of intensifiers in EModE, coinciding with the reported growth in intensification. Overall, intensifiers were more common in treatises, most conspicuously in the transition to EModE, but also in recipes, although this genre was delayed in the adoption of the change. With regard to the different intensifiers in this period, the authors observe a steady decrease of *full* from ME to EModE; *well* and *right*

⁵ The categories proposed by Dixon are the following: DIMENSION (*big*, *small*), AGE (*young*), VALUE (*good*, *bad*), COLOUR (*black*), PHYSICAL PROPERTY (*hard*, *soft*), HUMAN PROPENSITY (*jealous*, *happy*), SPEED (*fast*, *quick*), DIFFICULTY (*easy*), SIMILARITY (*similar*, *unlike*), QUALIFICATION (*true*, *likely*), QUANTIFICATION (*all*, *many*), POSITION (*high*, *near*), and CARDINAL NUMBERS (*first*, *last*).

were on the decrease as well, even though this change took place gradually. In fact, *well* is said to be ‘residual’ and appeared mainly in fixed collocations such as *well near* or *well worth*. By contrast, *very* expanded in EModE, matching with a general rise in intensification, which may be accounted for by the growing demand for medical books, which entailed a proliferation of persuasive strategies, and intensifiers certainly counted as such. *High* was not very frequently attested, and it is mostly used to modify the adjective *red*, with the exception of one example, in which it occurs as a modifier of *mighty*. Its *-ly* counterpart *highly* was recorded only in the very last subperiod of the *Early Modern English Medical Texts* (EMEMT), 1650-1700, which leads Méndez-Naya and Pahta to conclude that it must have spread to medical writings after 1700.

Considering that *very* was the trigger of the rise on intensification in the overall materials, Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) take a closer look at this adverb in comparison with *right*, the other intensifier which held its position longer. For this, they examine the sixteenth century and divide it in twenty-year periods. The results show that the dramatic rise of *very* took place from 1540 to 1559 and was most noticeable in treatises. Recipes also increased remarkably, but after this period, from 1560 to 1579. Remedy books adopted *very* more slowly and seemed to be more reluctant to discard *right*.

Regarding the communicative uses of intensifiers, Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) point to three different contexts of use, that is, descriptive, instructive, and evaluative. As far as descriptions are concerned, intensifiers were frequently employed to highlight, for instance, the specific features of body parts or of illnesses. With regard to instructions, intensifiers gave advice on how to administer medicines or treat patients, for example. However, the most common type of communicative context for intensification was evaluation, which was used to emphasise the particular importance of a treatment or the benefits for the patient, among many other contexts.

4.1.2. Attenuators

This section reports on a number of studies on attenuators, that is, those intensifiers that scale downwards on an imaginary degree scale (cf. 2.2.1.1), which clearly represent a minority in historical research. Although most studies on attenuators describe the semantic development of moderators, such as *fairly*, *pretty*, *rather*, and *sort of*, diminishers have also been examined, as is the case of *a bit*, studied by Claridge and Kytö (2014).

Claridge and Kytö (2014) focus on the use of *a bit* throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries on the basis of data from the *Old Bailey Corpus* (OBC). In their material *a bit* occurs as a noun phrase, denoting a piece of something, and also more abstractly, referring to a ‘while’. *A bit of* is also rather frequent and occurs mainly with concrete nouns such as *cheese* or *paper*, being hence a partitive. It can also appear with mass and plural nouns as a quantifier. The authors also remark an increase in the uses of *a bit of* with nouns denoting actions, such as, for instance, *walk*. *A bit of* can further take the indefinite article, *a bit of a*, mostly as an attenuator, but also sometimes as a booster (e.g. *we had a bit of a feast*).

Claridge and Kytö conclude that although *a bit (of (a))* could occur as an intensifier from the seventeenth century, in the periods which they studied it was still undergoing grammaticalisation and that the grammaticalisation process ‘was far from complete’ (2014: 49), since in most cases *a bit* functioned as head of the noun phrase.

Other than diminishing *a bit*, a number of moderators arose in EModE. One of such forms was *sort of*, which is found from the fourteenth century with the meaning ‘kind, variety’ (e.g. *Daphnoides, called of the commune sort Laureola*) (cf. Davidse 2009). From the sixteenth century on, *sort of* started to occur as a complex determiner, in which *sort* was no longer the head of the noun phrase, but rather had quantifying or intensifying uses. The earliest construction in which these quantifying uses emerged is *all sort(s) of*, collocating at first with very general nouns such as *people* and *things*. A second quantifying use of *sort of* is *a (good/great, etc.) sort of*, which is attested even earlier, in the fifteenth century. It is these two early uses of *sort of* as quantifying complex determiners which paved the way for the noun-intensifying uses of *sort of*, which initially appeared anaphorically or cataphorically with other determiners such as *what*, *such*, or *this* (e.g. *whate a sorte of greedie wolves*). Finally, Davidse highlights the importance of specific collocations in the emergence of these intensifying meanings (e.g. *suche a sorte of herytykes*), which in the case of *sort of* was facilitated by ‘the semantic continuity between the intensifiers of the quantifiers (*all* and *good/great*) and the primary determiners *such*, *what*, *this*, *that* of the intensifiers’ (2009: 290).

Like *sort of*, moderator *pretty* also arose in the sixteenth century. It goes back to the rather infrequent OE adjective *prættig* or *pættig* (‘cunning, clever’) (cf. Nevalainen and Rissanen 2002; Claridge and Kytö 2014). In ME the meanings of the adjective *pretty* expanded and was thus recorded with the meaning ‘handsome, well-proportioned’, though as an adverb it was hardly attested. It is only in the late sixteenth century that

adverbial and intensifying uses of *pretty* arose (e.g. *pretty hard*), increasing speedily over the next century. As noted by Nevalainen and Rissanen (2002), this intensifying function could have been modelled on other zero-derived intensifiers available at the period, among them *full* or *right* (see above). What is far from clear in the evolution of intensifying *pretty* is whether this form developed as a moderator from the very beginning, or whether, on the contrary, it occurred first as a reinforcer and then these reinforcing uses gave way to the moderator function. The contexts of the examples in Nevalainen and Rissanen's data do not serve to solve the puzzle, as in many cases *pretty* was used interchangeably with *very*, and in some others it seemed to have a moderator function.

The intensifying function of the moderator *rather* is examined by Rissanen (1999, 2008a). The adverb *rather* goes back to the OE comparative form of the adverb *hraþe* 'quickly, immediately', derived from the adjective *hræd* 'quick, speedy'. In these early senses *rather* denoted the quickness of an action or movement. The uses of OE *hraþe* in the comparative favoured an interpretation of the temporal reading as preferential through metonymy. In Rissanen's words, 'from the cognitive point of view, the expression of temporal sequence, 'I would first do this and then that' or 'I would do this more promptly than that' includes the implication of preference' (Rissanen 2008a: 349). This preference meaning was even more conspicuous in those cases in which *hraþe* appeared with the volitional verb *willan*. The OE phrases *hraþor* (...) *þone* ('rather than') or *þy hraþor* ('the rather') were not very common, but their frequency increased in ME, and they were both crucial in the development of intensifying readings of *rather* (see below). In ME the preferential uses of *rather* increased, while the original temporal uses ('rapidly, speedily') waned.

According to Rissanen (2008a), the first uses of the moderator *rather* (e.g. *rather uneasy*) are recorded in letters from the seventeenth century, although *rather* did not become common in this function until the second half of the eighteenth century. The development of a moderator function was in fact prompted by politeness. As Rissanen puts it, 'if something was not exactly good, a polite means of expression may have been something like 'rather good than bad' and, subsequently, 'rather good'' (2008a: 355).

This semantic reanalysis also had syntactic implications, since from this moment onwards *rather* occurred more often as a modifier of adjectives and adverbs than of verbs and nouns, as had been the case when it had a contrastive meaning. This is also

reflected in the data, given that from the second half of the eighteenth century, with the establishment of the moderator *rather*, the use of *rather* with adjectives and adverbs prevailed. Interestingly enough, the picture has changed considerably from the late eighteenth century to PDE, as PDE shows again an increasing popularity of contrastive *rather*, whereas its moderator uses are on the decrease, a factor which Rissanen attributes to the rise of other moderators such as *fairly*.

*Fair(ly)*⁶ ultimately goes back to OE *fæger* and *fægere*, adjective and adverb, respectively. These were rather common forms in OE, while their suffixed counterparts *fægerlice* and *fairli(che)* were far less frequent in both OE and ME.

The meanings of *fæger(e)* were already quite varied in OE: ‘beautifully to the eye’, ‘of gentle movement or procedure’, ‘with propriety, in a becoming manner’, and ‘justly, in equity’ (Nevalainen and Rissanen 2002: 365). However, the range of meanings of the adverb and adjective was further expanded in ME. In fact, it was also in this period that the adverb *faire* developed intensifying uses (‘fully, completely, very much’), as in (4.7), taken from the MED (Nevalainen and Rissanen 2002: 367).

(4.7) *His tithes payde he ful faire* [‘fully, completely, very much’] *and wel, Bothe of his propre swynk* [‘work’] *and his catel.*

In addition to these semantic changes, the data considered by Nevalainen and Rissanen (2002) evince a gradual restriction in the syntactic position of *fair(ly)*. Thus, the adverbs *fægere* and *fægerlice* could be placed more or less freely in relation to the verbal group in OE. However, they came to be preferred in the postverbal position as early as ME. The trigger for this change was the omission of the final unstressed *-e*, so that the adverb became homophonous with the adjective. As a result, it was necessary for the adverb to be syntactically marked in order to avoid potential ambiguity (2002: 372).

EModE turned out to be crucial for *fair(ly)*. It was in the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the zero form *fair* became outdated at the expense of the *-ly* counterpart *fairly*, although the former did not disappear from the records, as there are still some occurrences in the twentieth century. In turn, *fairly* showed a strong preference for preverbal position, since it was often followed by present and past participles, on which account it became associated with an intensifying function. It was

⁶ *Fairly* functions mainly as a moderator in PDE, though there also exist archaic uses of *fairly* as a maximiser (e.g. *the general was fairly vanquished*). Given its main role as a moderator, the development of *fairly* is discussed in this section on attenuators, rather than in the section on reinforcers (4.1.1 above)

also during EModE that *fair(ly)* acquired new meanings ('honestly', 'moderately') (e.g. *you are more dishonest than the Common women, for they fairly tell us what they are*), which favoured the development of intensifying and emphasising readings ('completely', 'fully') (e.g. *fairly domesticated*). Nevalainen and Rissanen's results show that although the intensifying and emphasising functions of premodifying *fairly* can be traced to EModE, it was not until the second half of the nineteenth century that *fairly* became common as a moderator in premodifying position, increasing further in frequency in the twentieth century.

Like Nevalainen and Rissanen (2002), Margerie (2008) approached the evolution of the moderator *fairly*, though she was concerned exclusively with its development from the nineteenth century up to present-day. To this end, she retrieved data from the Project Gutenberg for the nineteenth century and from the British National Corpus (BNC) and the Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English (MICASE) for the contemporary language. In line with Nevalainen and Rissanen (2002), Margerie also claims that the use of *fairly* as a moderator is a rather recent development, going back to *The Wagonner*, a poem composed by William Wordsworth in 1805. In fact, occurrences of *fairly* in this function during the first half of the nineteenth century were scarce, because *rather* remained the favourite moderator over the nineteenth century, even up to the first decades of the twentieth century (see above). A difference which Margerie (2008) notes in relation to the use of both moderators is that *rather* generally patterns with negative elements, whereas *fairly* tends to collocate with positive adjectives already from its earliest attestations. It is only in the early twentieth century that *fairly* gained ground and that its occurrence with positive adjectives outnumbered the attestations of *rather* in combination with positive elements. However, the evidence from the first half of the twentieth century suggests that *fairly* still lags behind *rather* in its overall uses as a moderator. The written data from the BNC and MICASE also confirm the tendency towards negative polarity of *rather* and towards positive polarity of *fairly*, although there are also adjectives such as *small*, *low*, or *good* which co-occur with either intensifier. *Rather* is also the preferred form with comparatives, which owes most likely to the origin in a comparative form of the adverb (see above). Finally, the preference of *fairly* for positive adjectives might be due to the original meaning of the adjective from which it derives, *fair*, which, as mentioned above, has clear positive connotations.

Figure 4.3 serves to close this section on intensifiers from a historical perspective, summarising the development of English attenuators from OE up to PDE.

Figure 4.3. Attenuators in the history of English

Intensifier	Period				
	OE	ME	EModE	LModE	PDE
<i>a bit</i>				→	→
<i>fairly</i>				→	→
<i>pretty</i>			→	→	→
<i>rather</i>			→	→	→
<i>sort of</i>			→	→	→

4.2. INTENSIFIERS FROM A VARIATIONIST PERSPECTIVE

This section sets out to provide an overview of the main studies which have been carried out on intensifiers from a variationist perspective. In particular, it focuses on sociolinguistic variation, considering the distribution of intensifiers across different population groups (cf. 4.2.1), and on their use across different varieties of English (section 4.2.2).

4.2.1. Sociolinguistic variation

4.2.1.1. Sociolinguistic variation from a diachronic perspective

Most research on intensifiers and sociolinguistic variation concerns the use of these forms by adolescents, mostly in contrast to adult speakers in the contemporary language (cf. section 4.2.1.2). Nevertheless, sociolinguistic variation in regard to intensifiers has also been explored from a diachronic perspective by Nevalainen (2008), who analyses the history and social distribution of a set of dual-form intensifiers from the fifteenth to the late seventeenth centuries, just before the heyday of prescriptivism, by resorting to the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC). The forms examined by Nevalainen are *exceeding/exceedingly*, *excellent/excellently*, *extraordinary/extraordinarily*, *extreme/extremely*, *full/fully*, and *marvellous/marvellously*.

The formation of adverbs by means of the addition of the *-ly* suffix to an adjective was by no means the norm in previous stages of the language. In fact, it was not until ME, with the levelling of final inflections, that the *-li(che)/-ly(che)* suffix gained ground, and hence zero adverbial forms were ousted by suffixed ones in LME and EModE. Furthermore, eighteenth-century prescriptive grammarians such as Robert Lowth branded zero adverbs, especially intensifiers, as ‘improper’, ‘inelegant’, ‘unidiomatic’, or ‘ungrammatical’ (Nevalainen 2008: 290). In PDE, however, though

the *-ly* suffix can be appended virtually to any adjective, there exists variation in the use of the suffixed and suffixless forms, most conspicuously regional (cf. Kortmann and Schneider (2006), cited in Nevalainen 2008: 293) and social (cf. Ito and Tagliamonte 2003; Macaulay 2006) variation.

Nevalainen's findings are in keeping with Ungerer's remarks on the distribution of zero and *-ly* forms (cf. Ungerer 1988), according to which *-ly* adverbs function as subjuncts, modifying verbal or participial elements, while zero forms are word modifiers, typically of adjectives or adverbs. In Nevalainen's data this correlation between form and function is also applicable, though it is also contended that suffixed forms came to be used as well as word modifiers.

In addition to examining the different uses of *exceeding/exceedingly*, *excellent/excellently*, *extraordinary/extraordinarily*, *extreme/extremely*, *full/fully*, and *marvellous/marvellously*,⁷ Nevalainen (2008) also looked into the social distribution of intensifiers among the different social classes. For this, she limited her analysis to the three most frequent dual-form adverbs in her data: *exceeding/exceedingly*, *full/fully*, and *extreme/extremely*. As far as gender is concerned, she found no significant differences except in the case of *extreme(ly)*, which was used remarkably more often by females than by males, especially the suffixed form. As for social differences, it is important to bear in mind the classification adopted by Nevalainen (detailed in Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003: 136-138): on the one hand, the upper ranks comprise the nobility, the upper gentry, and the lower gentry; on the other, she differentiates between professional people and wealthy merchants, making the middle ranks, and all the ranks below the gentry, that is, the lower ranks. With regard to the form *full(y)*, social variation was only statistically significant in the fifteenth century. At this period, the higher ranks opted for the form *full* rather than for the suffixed adverb. However, Nevalainen qualifies in this regard that professional men in her data are 'the absolutely most frequent users of *full*' (Nevalainen 2008: 304), which may bias the correlation between frequency of use and social rank. The *-ly* form *fully* was preferred overall by the nobility and then by the merchants (middle ranks), though this preference was

⁷ *Full* was regularly used with an intensifying function in the fifteenth century, and *fully*, relegated to subjunct functions, did not become common, even in this function, until the sixteenth century. This coincided with the rapid spread of *very* as an intensifier (cf. 4.1.1.2) and the demise of *full*, with *fully* specialising then as a subjunct. Intensifier *marvellous* reached its peak in the sixteenth century, although its success was rather limited, since its use dropped sharply just a century later, together with its *-ly* counterpart in subjunct uses. This quick loss of popularity overlapped with the rise of *exceeding(ly)* and *extreme(ly)* in the seventeenth century.

neutralised in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when *fully* came to be used by all ranks alike. In fact, in the seventeenth century the most frequent users of *fully* were the professionals and the lower gentry. In turn, the forms *extreme(ly)* and *exceeding(ly)* are mainly attested in Nevalainen's data in the seventeenth century. Her findings show that *extreme* and *extremely* were encouraged by the highest social ranks, mostly by women, especially in the case of the favourite suffixed form. *Exceeding*, conversely, showed a rather even distribution across the different social groups, and *exceedingly* was more commonly found among the lower gentry and professional men.

Regarding the distribution of the three *-ly* intensifiers, *extremely* was the most frequent, reaching its peak in the second half of the seventeenth century, followed by *exceedingly* and *fully*. The latter was in fact rather limited in its modifier function at this time. The most popular form, *extremely*, was especially promoted by women. Significantly, no *-ly* forms were attested in the correspondence of the lower ranks in the seventeenth century. Nonetheless, Nevalainen cautiously points out that this fact might owe to the scarcity of evidence from this social class, given that the upper and middle ranks account for the majority of the materials in the correspondence. This apparent absence of suffixed forms in the language of the lower ranks may also explain why prescriptive grammarians banned the use of zero forms as modifiers.

Nevalainen's findings therefore suggest that although there is social variation in the use of the intensifiers under analysis in the CEEC, none of the items was restricted to a particular social rank. In turn, in the diffusion of these forms input was received from different social groups. Some of these intensifiers (e.g. *exceeding*) were shared by all social ranks and genders alike, while some others, as was the case of *extremely*, were preferred by the upper ranks and by women. The findings are also in keeping with sociolinguistic data on PDE (cf. 4.2.1.2), which suggest that suffixed forms are not promoted by the lower classes: Nevertheless, the evidence from the CEEC should be interpreted with caution, since there is a considerable percentage of the illiterate population which is not represented in the data.

4.2.1.2. *Sociolinguistic variation from a synchronic perspective*

As mentioned above, intensifiers are especially conspicuous in the language of teenagers, functioning as markers of group identity. On this account, much of the synchronic research on intensifiers has targeted this specific population group. The language of London teenagers, specifically their use of intensifiers, is the focus of a

number of papers by Stenström (1999, 2000, 2002) with data mostly from the *Bergen Corpus of London Teenage Talk* (COLT), which was compiled in 1993 and includes the recordings of conversations of teenagers aged 13-17, all coming from different boroughs in London.

The most common intensifier among London teenagers in COLT is *really* (see Stenström 1999, 2002), although *absolutely* and *completely*, for instance, are more frequent as premodifiers of adjectives. Moreover, in the COLT data all the intensifiers show a strong preference for elements with negative semantic prosody, except for *really*, which is more often found with positive collocates. Furthermore, Stenström's results reveal a wider variety of intensifiers used by boys than by girls. Thus, even though boys employ intensifiers less frequently than girls, they make use of *absolutely*, *completely*, *really*, *bloody*, and *fucking*. In turn, girls resort more frequently to intensifiers, but they instead stick to the same neutral form: *really*. Adults, by contrast, resort to other intensifying elements such as *terribly*, *awfully*, and *deeply*, which are clearly disfavoured or yield very few occurrences in teenage talk. Other intensifiers which seem to be rather specific of adolescent speech are *enough*, *right*, and *well*.

Enough as a premodifier (e.g. *enough funny*) is alleged to be a recent innovation, attested in teenagers from a working-class or lower-middle class background (cf. Stenström 2000, 2002). The COLT teenagers also make frequent use of *well* to modify adverbs, adjectives, and participles, a use which is on the increase and for which boys take the lead. The incidence of *well* and *enough* in adult speech, in contrast, is much lower, with only two occurrences of intensifying *well* and none of intensifying *enough* in the *British National Corpus* (BNC). Moreover, *well* and *enough* are first observed in London teenage speech, which, as Stenström points out, should come as no surprise, given that new trends are likely to show first in big cities. Stenström (2002) also reports on the use of *right* as an intensifier, which is itself an influence of American English. As for *really*, the preferred intensifier in the data, the informants alternate the use of *really* with its zero counterpart *real*, which is also much more common in American than in British English. The data show, therefore, that '*real* is on its way to enter British English, at least in British teenage language' (Stenström 2002: 151).

Stenström's results for intensifiers in London teenage language are replicated by Palacios-Martínez and Núñez-Pertejo (2012), who explore the different intensification strategies used by teenagers (aged 13 to 20) in comparison with adults. In addition to COLT, they use the *Saarbrücken Corpus of Spoken English* (SCoSE) and other sources,

such as the British Library archival sound recordings, web-based glossaries of teenage language, and magazines addressed to teenagers (*Sugar, Bravo, Seventeen*, etc.). According to Palacios-Martínez and Núñez-Pertejo (2012: 779), adults use intensifiers significantly more often than teenagers, which owes to the adolescent preference for other forms of intensification, such as taboo words and swear words like *fucking* or *bloody*. The intensification strategies (cf. section 2.1) examined by Palacios-Martínez and Núñez-Pertejo (2012) are taboo and swear words, expletives, negative strengthening, lexical intensification devices such as affixes, as well as certain specific words and expressions used by adolescents with a clear reinforcing value. As far as taboo and swear words are concerned, two forms stand out in the language of teenagers: *fucking* and *bloody*. As for constructions with negative import (e.g. *no way, by any means, at all*, etc.), the preferred form among adolescents is *no way*, although *at all* is also used, in addition to negative idiomatic expressions such as *give a shit* or *give a fuck*. Moreover, teenagers often resort to expletives such as *fuck, fucking hell, or bloody hell*. Finally, Palacios-Martínez and Núñez-Pertejo (2012) are concerned with certain lexical devices, such as the use of prefixes (e.g. *super-*, *mega-*, and *uber-*) or certain words and expressions characteristic of British teenage speech, as is the case of the adjectives *massive, cool, and wicked*. Adults also use a much wider selection of intensifiers, among them *absolutely, extremely, and very*. Teenagers, by contrast, opt for forms such as *really* and *so*. Moreover, the adverb *real* is also recorded in the teenage data, a use which may be on the increase, according to the authors, and which had already been reported by Stenström (2002). Other intensifiers such as *right, well, and enough* in pre-modifying position are typical of adolescent speech as well, whereas very few instances of these are recorded in adult speech, which evinces again the innovative character of the language of teenagers.

The forms discussed in the preceding paragraphs concerned intensifiers in the language of London teenagers, as compared with that of adults. Some of the intensifiers reported for this specific population group, however, find their parallel in other geographical areas. This is the case, for instance, of the youngest generation of speakers in York and Tyneside. The intensifier system in the city of York, northeastern England, is examined by Ito and Tagliamonte (2003). The population of York is described by the authors as retaining a conservative character, with ‘in-migrants’ coming mainly from the surroundings. Data for the study are retrieved from the *York English Corpus*. The different samples of their speakers are separated according to sex and age (17-34; 35-

65; 66+) to test the effects of the educational level of the informants.

Very and *really* account for the overwhelming majority of intensifiers in the corpus data, but other intensifiers such as *bloody*, *so*, *right*, and *pretty* are also found. *Very* is mostly used among the speakers who are over 35, but its use decreases among the under-35-year-olds. By contrast, intensifying *really* is most popular among the youngest age group, while the over-35-year-olds hardly ever use it. This finding, therefore, coincides with the uses of *really* among London teenagers, for which *really* is also the preferred form.⁸

Ito and Tagliamonte (2003) also explore the collocational patterns of the two most frequent intensifiers in their data, *very* and *really*, taking as a model Dixon's taxonomy (1977).⁹ The authors suggest the existence of a direct correlation between collocational patterns and grammaticalisation: the more bleached an item is, the more widely it will collocate (Ito and Tagliamonte 2003: 268). The oldest generation in Ito and Tagliamonte's data is the one who uses *really* the least. The uses of this adverb therefore coincide with the most frequent categories of *really* in the general data, that is, with *really* as a modifier of adjectives which indicate VALUE, HUMAN PROPENSITY, DIMENSION, and PHYSICAL PROPERTY. Although the middle generation does not show a high percentage of use of *really* overall, in this age group *really* expands into one further adjective category: AGE. Finally, in the youngest generation *really* spreads to all categories and further increases in frequency.

A further sign of the grammaticalisation of an intensifier is its occurrence with predicative or attributive uses, for the 'use of intensifiers with predicative adjectives could be taken as evidence for a later stage in the delexicalisation process' (Ito and Tagliamonte 2003: 271). Ito and Tagliamonte's data show indeed that both *really* and *very* are consistently preferred in predicative than in attributive functions, but as happened with the diffusion of collocational patterns, the alternation between predicative and attributive uses also reveals conspicuous differences, especially in the case of *very*, which evinces a higher degree of bleaching than *really*. Furthermore, if we compare *really* and *very*, it also becomes apparent that while the only possible interpretation of *very* is its intensifying function, *really* can still retain a modal meaning. In fact, in the older generation in the data, *really* is taken more often as a modal than as

⁸ Intensifying *really* is also tackled by Tagliamonte and Ito (2002), who deal with the variation between the zero form *real* and its suffixed counterpart *really*. Their results show that *really* is the overwhelmingly preferred form in their York data. However, less educated male speakers use instead the zero form *real*.

⁹ For a summary of Dixon's classification, cf. footnote 5 above.

an intensifier.

The effects of the level of education and sex in the use of *really* and *very* are also discussed by Ito and Tagliamonte. Thus, higher education correlates with a greater use of *really*, both in the middle-aged and the youngest generation. As far as the variable of sex is concerned, it is only in the middle generation that this factor is statistically significant. In other words, women are the leaders in the change to *really* in the middle-aged generation, but this does not apply to the youngest generation (Ito and Tagliamonte 2003: 275-276).

In the light of the studies presented so far for PDE, *really* seems to be a widely used intensifier. The intensifying uses of *really* are also reported by Barnfield and Buchstaller (2010), who discuss boosters in the Tyneside area, in the northeast of England, as reflected in the *Diachronic Electronic Corpus of Tyneside English* (DECTE). The DECTE corpus comprises three different databases, which include data collected in different decades. Thus, the *Tyneside Linguistic Survey* (TLS) dates to the 1960s, the *Phonological Variation and Change in Contemporary Spoken English* (PVC) was developed in 1994-1995, and the *Newcastle Corpus of Tyneside English 2* (NECTE2) includes data gathered in the period 2007-2009. In total, this evidence represents speakers who were born almost 100 years apart, since the earliest birth date of the informants is 1895 and the latest 1990 (Barnfield and Buchstaller 2010: 259). Speakers are further divided according to age, gender, and social class.

The data examined by Barnfield and Buchstaller (2010) show that the major developments in the system of intensification took place after the 1960s. During this decade the prevailing intensifier is *very*, which is largely preferred by all age and social groups. The authors link this to social factors, which are reflected in the linguistic behaviour of the different groups. Thus, the speakers interviewed, who were in their teens and early twenties, had pretty much the same responsibilities and roles as adults, which explains why their patterns of intensification do not differ from those of adult. By the 1990s, however, Barnfield and Buchstaller identify new trends in the development of intensifiers in Tyneside. By this time, *really* had beaten *very* as intensifier, which came in third position. The preferred intensifying form is *dead*. *So* and *absolutely* are also attested, but much less frequently.

In addition to the wider variety of intensifiers, Barnfield and Buchstaller notice a significant gender and age effect in intensification in the 1990s. *Very* is only preferred among the older speakers, while it is clearly disfavoured among the younger

generations. *Really*, on the other hand, which was not very frequent in the 1960s, grows in popularity in all age groups, mostly among the younger informants. Furthermore, females take the lead in the adoption of *really* as intensifier, in keeping with Stenström's findings (1999, 2002) for *really* in the London area (see above).

As for *really*, females also take the lead in the use of intensifying *dead*, the favourite variant among young speakers. In the final period examined (2007-2008), *really* continues to increase among the younger speakers, whereas *dead* reduces its frequency significantly. Furthermore, a number of new forms emerge: *absolutely*, *pure*, *proper*, and *canny*. These intensifiers are either infrequent in the earlier corpus data or are simply not previously attested. Significantly, *canny* (e.g. *canny crap*) is an innovation favoured by young men which is not yet mentioned as an intensifier in the OED. *Pure*, by contrast, is preferred by young women. Intensifier *so*, however, remains stable across the different decades and age groups and has therefore not enjoyed popularity in any of the time frames covered in Barnfield and Buchstaller's (2010) study.

Barnfield and Buchstaller also take into account the type of adjectival head modified by these intensifiers, adopting for this purpose Dixon's (1977) taxonomy. *Very* is the intensifier which is found across more adjective categories over time. However, as soon as the other intensifiers emerge in the picture in the 1990s and the 2000s, its frequency declines and is no longer in the lead with certain adjective classes, *really* and *dead* encroaching upon its domain. Other intensifiers such as *so* also expand across the different groups, albeit at lower frequencies. The increase in frequency of intensifying *dead*, which, as seen above, reaches its peak in the 1990s, is also concomitant with an extension across the range of adjective heads.

The study by Barnfield and Buchstaller (2010) just discussed revealed two forms which were specific of the Tyneside area: *pure* and *canny*. The use of *pure*, however, is also found in the speech of Glaswegian teenagers, studied by Macaulay (2006). Data for his research are retrieved from a series of recordings of middle-class and working-class adolescents aged 10-11, 12-13, and 14-15. These recordings were made in 1997 and 2003-2004, and topics included drinking, stealing, vandalism, and loss of virginity.

Macaulay's research shows the rapid expansion of intensifying *pure* among adolescents, a form which originated in the speech of Glasgow working-class teenagers without any apparent external influences. *Pure* is found to be more common among girls than boys. Next to *pure*, *dead* is also used as an intensifier, though to a lesser extent. In the earliest materials intensifying *pure* occurs mainly with negative collocates

(e.g. *pure embarrassing*), but in the more recent materials (2003-2004), the use of *pure* with positive adjectives (e.g. *pure gorgeous*) increases considerably. Moreover, *pure* is attested as a modifier of a wide range of items, not just adjectives. It can thus be a modifier of nouns, adverbs, verbs, and prepositional phrases (e.g. *pure into the wood*), in addition to having a quotative function (e.g. *and she's pure "you got it wrong"*).

The use of the intensifiers *pure* and *dead* is also discussed by Macaulay (2002) in another study on the system of intensifiers in the area of Ayr and Glasgow. In this work, however, he is concerned not only with adolescent speech, but also presents the uses of intensifiers among the working and middle classes of adult speakers in the 1970s and 1990s. Macaulay makes an interesting observation in regard to intensification uses and social class. According to him, middle-class speakers tend to make more emphatic statements, 'making quite clear their opinions and their attitudes' (2002: 415), even though they also like to soften their statements with different hedges. By contrast, working-class speakers are much more explicit and opt for other strategies to focus attention, such as clefting and right or left dislocations.

Macaulay considers, on the one hand, the distribution of intensifiers ending in *-ly* and, on the other, the zero adverbs *pure*, *dead*, *quite*, and *just*. In his data, middle-class speakers opt for adverbs in *-ly* more than twice as frequently as working-class speakers, mostly men, and these results are replicated in the adolescent data. The most recurrent forms appear to be *really* and *actually*. The lower rates of use of *-ly* forms by working-class speakers of both age groups, however, do not owe to educational factors. In fact, working-class speakers sometimes resort to forms which are not present in the middle-class data, including *automatically*, *entirely*, and *literally*. The lower percentage of use of *-ly* forms does not correlate either with a higher rate of zero forms by the working-class.

As regards the attestations of the intensifiers *pure*, *dead*, *quite*, and *just*, the adolescent data record two new intensifier uses which were absent in the adult data: *pure* and *dead*. The differences in the use of *pure* and *dead* between middle-class and working-class speakers are minimal. However, girls use these forms three times more often than boys. By contrast, the preferred intensifying forms among adult middle-class speakers are *very* and *quite*. In turn, *just* is most commonly found in the recordings from the working-class informants. The distribution of *just* in adolescents is pretty much the same in both social groups.

The distribution of intensifiers among teenagers and adults is also examined by

Tagliamonte for Canadian English, on the basis of evidence from the *Toronto English Corpus*, which includes informal conversations of people who were born and raised in Toronto in the early 2000s. In the light of her data, the most frequent intensifiers in Toronto English are *really*, *very*, *so*, and *pretty*. *Really* is the most frequent of all the intensifiers, thus matching the results from other varieties, as reported by Stenström (1999, 2002) for teenagers in London (see above). *Very*, which led the intensifier paradigm in the 1990s and has been in the system for many centuries, is found to be declining, followed closely by *so*. Intensifying *so* is not a recent development either, but its first unequivocal uses go back to the first half of the nineteenth century. Finally, *pretty*, which has been around as an intensifier from the sixteenth century (Tagliamonte 2008: 369-370) (cf. section 4.1.2), is apparently a North American phenomenon.

The picture which emerges from the different age groups reveals that the four intensifiers are used by speakers of all ages, though to different degrees. *Very* is the preferred form among the speakers over 50, but its use decreases in the language of the younger speakers, particularly among those under 30. *Really* shows the opposite development, being the preferred option among the younger generations, particularly among the 20-29 year-olds. In turn, *so* and *pretty*, the least common of the four, show a similar pattern, with peaks in use among the 13-29 year-olds. In sum, ‘the 13- to 29-year-olds have a system which prefers *really*; the 30-to 49-year-olds have a mixed system in which both *really* and *very* are dominant; and among the 50+ age group *very* is the favoured intensifier’ (Tagliamonte 2008: 372).

Another aspect explored by Tagliamonte is the degree of delexicalisation or grammaticalisation of each of these intensifiers, for which purpose she takes into account different parameters (cf. also Ito and Tagliamonte 2003). Thus, she explores their uses with predicative and with attributive adjectives, the latter use indicating a higher degree of delexicalisation. Another of the factors examined is the collocational patterning of the adjectives modified by these intensifiers and the diffusion of these forms across different adjective types, inasmuch as the more widespread a given intensifier is across adjective classes, the more advanced it will be in the grammaticalisation process. For the semantic classification of adjectives, Tagliamonte takes Dixon’s classification as a model (cf. Dixon 1977). The findings show that the most frequent intensifier, *really*, has expanded across categories, most conspicuously among the youngest speakers, who use them with all adjective types.

As far as adjective function is concerned, speakers over 30 show a higher percentage

of use of intensifying *very* with predicative adjectives, while the younger generations do not show a consistent pattern. With regard to *really*, it is preferred with predicative adjectives in the under 20s, but from the 20-year-olds up to the 50+ age group the percentages are rather even. *Pretty* is consistently found more often with predicative adjectives across all age groups, whereas *so* is almost restricted to predicative positions. A plausible argument for this is that *so* has its origin in a comparative conjunction rather than in an adjective, as the other forms examined by Tagliamonte (2008).

4.2.2. Geographical variation

As mentioned above, much of the synchronic research on intensifiers has focused on sociolinguistic factors, mostly on their use in teenage language. However, a number of studies have also discussed the current use of intensifiers in specific varieties of English.

Altenberg (1991), for instance, explores the uses of a total of 190 reinforcers (21 maximisers and 169 boosters) in spoken British English, including *absolutely*, *altogether*, *downright*, *totally*, *extremely*, *highly*, and *terribly*. In spite of the high number of reinforcers examined in Altenberg's data, the results show that speakers tend to resort to the same items for intensification purposes. *Quite*, *absolutely*, *completely*, *perfectly*, and *entirely* feature among the most frequent maximisers in the *London-Lund Corpus*, and *very (much)*, *so*, *extremely*, *awfully*, *jolly*, and *terribly* are also often found as boosters in the data. Moreover, boosters are preferred over maximisers: they combine with a wider range of words and are more productive (1991: 132-134).

The relationship between intensifiers and adjectives in the light of data from the *British National Corpus* (BNC) is discussed by Kennedy (2003). He explores the uses of 17 modifiers and their most frequent collocates, a total of six maximisers (*absolutely*, *completely*, *entirely*, *fully*, *perfectly*, and *totally*), six boosters (*clearly*, *heavily*, *highly*, *particularly*, *terribly*, and *very*), and five moderators (*fairly*, *pretty*, *rather*, *relatively*, and *somewhat*). The results from his analysis indicate that although, in principle, there is potential interchangeability between the members of each set, in practice individual adjectival collocates tend to occur with particular intensifiers. For instance, *completely* typically modifies *refurbished*, *absolutely* is strongly associated to the adjective *diabolical*, while *fully* collocates with the adjective *fledged*. Moreover, intensifiers tend to associate with groups of adjectives with common grammatical or semantic properties. Thus, *completely* and *fully* occur predominantly with *-ed* adjectives, *clearly* is mostly

associated with adjectives related to perception (e.g. *visible*, *audible*, *recognisable*), whereas *rather*, *pretty*, and *somewhat* collocate mostly with negative adjectives.

The use of intensifiers in the varieties of Broad Scots and Scottish English is examined by Anderson (2006), who explores their use through the *Scottish Corpus of Texts and Speech* (SCOTS). Intensifiers which are specific to the Scottish variety are *gey* and *unco*. *Gey* collocates mainly with negative items, although positive contexts also occur in the data (e.g. *a gey dreich day this* ‘a very dull day, this’, *gey could* ‘very cold’, or *gey prosperous*). Interestingly, this intensifier is documented in both literary and parliamentary texts, but there are also a few instances in an interview. The other Scottish intensifier, *unco* (e.g. *unco dozy*), is also frequent in the corpus data.

Other intensifiers attested in Scottish English are *totally* and *utterly*. *Totally* appears to be rather productive and performs a number of different functions. It can occur as a qualifier of verbs (e.g. *I was totally reminded of Rafi*), as a modifier of a whole proposition (e.g. *I'm totally interrupting you*), and as a quotative marker¹⁰ (e.g. *Art and English liked me and then Maths and that were totally “Oh no”*). *Totally* is also found as a separate comment to indicate agreement with the interlocutor (e.g. *Maybe. Totally*), as a synonym for *definitely*. *Utterly*, by contrast, is more restricted and appears mostly as a modifier of elements with negative meaning (e.g. *utterly repugnant*, *utterly boring*).

Although the articles reported heretofore in this section deal with intensifiers from a general perspective, some authors have focused on specific intensifiers in a given variety. This is the case, for instance, of Tao (2007), Palacios-Martínez (2009), and Carretero (2010).

Tao (2007) is concerned with the uses of *absolutely* in contemporary spoken American English. For this purpose, he retrieved data from the *Cambridge University Press/Cornell University Corpus* (CU), the *Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English* (SB), the *Corpus of Spoken Professional American-English* (CSPA), and the *Michigan Corpus of Academic Spoken English* (MICASE). In these materials, *absolutely* is overwhelmingly found as a modifier of adjectives and verbs, but it can also occur in independent uses as an answer to a previous question or a comment about a previous utterance. In Tao's data *absolutely* modifies a greater percentage of positive elements, which contradicts the previous findings on *absolutely* for British English (cf. Kennedy 2003).

¹⁰ Anderson (2006: 13) considers that *totally* in this function is used to intensify the effect of a quotative expression.

Another issue discussed by Tao in relation to *absolutely* is the connection between the dependent and independent uses of the adverb. Although attestations of *absolutely* as a discourse marker could be accounted for in terms of grammaticalisation and pragmaticalisation, Tao discusses the relationship between the dependent and independent functions of the form in terms of lexical strengthening and lexical priming. In line with Bybee (1985: 117), who claimed that ‘each time a word is heard and produced it leaves a slight trace on the lexicon, it increases its lexical strength’, Tao argues that the repetition of the combination *absolutely* + X with positive meaning eventually results in the positive inference of the independent uses of *absolutely*. In other words, the close association of *absolutely* with positive elements reinforces considerably ‘the ability of the adverb to stand alone and carry over the semantic and pragmatic forces of the affirmative expression (Tao 2007: 16). Finally, Tao concludes that although *absolutely* has been traditionally seen as a synonym of adverbs such as *completely*, *totally*, and *perfectly*, these forms cannot be regarded as synonyms of *absolutely*, since they cannot occur as independent discourse markers. The reason for this is that they do not have the same collocational patterns and lexical strength as *absolutely*. In fact, it is adverbs such as *definitely*, *certainly*, and *exactly* which can be regarded as synonyms of *absolutely* in this function, although they are not maximisers.

Absolutely is also discussed by Carretero (2010) for British English. The results from the *British National Corpus* (BNC) for *absolutely* examined by the author reveal that the adverb is much more frequent in the spoken than in the written data. As in the American English material for *absolutely* analysed by Tao (2007), *absolutely* also has a wide variety of functions in British English. It can thus occur as a modifier of adjectives expressing meanings of evaluation or certainty (e.g. *right*, *fine*, *certain*, and *confident*), and also as a modifier of adverbs, prepositions, determiners, nouns, modal auxiliaries, and verb phrases. Moreover, *absolutely* can appear as *clause-oriented adverb* after the anchoring clause, emphasising agreement with what has just been mentioned (e.g. *I agree with you, absolutely*), and also as (parts of) minor clauses, in responses to a previous comment. Carretero’s findings suggest that the discourse functions of *absolutely* are like those of other adverbs of certainty such as *certainly* and *definitely*, since they are expressive of strong subjectivity, which is in keeping with Tao’s results for the adverb in American English.

Another adverb which has also been discussed in the light of present-day British English data is *quite*. Palacios-Martínez (2009) examines its different functions with

material from the *International Corpus of English* (ICE) and a judgement test administered to a group of fifteen different native speakers of British English. The results show that *quite* has two distinct functions in PDE: maximiser, as a synonym for *absolutely*, generally with non-gradable items, and as a moderator equivalent to *rather*, typically with gradable words. In telling the maximiser and moderator functions apart, stress and intonation play an important role. Thus, when *quite* is given prosodic prominence, it is said to be a maximiser. By contrast, if the emphasis is put on its collocate, then *quite* is argued to function as a moderator. In addition to being a modifier of adjectives and adverbs, *quite* can also modify noun phrases (e.g. *quite a while*), prepositions (e.g. *I don't think there is anything quite like Toblerone*), and quantifiers (e.g. *quite a lot of money*). It may also modify verb phrases as a *subjunct*, in Quirk et al.'s (1985) terminology (e.g. *I quite agree with what you are saying*). In this function of verb intensifier, it is more frequently used in spoken than in written English. Interestingly, *quite* in the negative can either be a maximiser, conveying the idea of 'closeness to the state or situation mentioned' (Palacios-Martínez 2009: 201), as in *I didn't quite know*, or a hedge to reduce the force of the negative (e.g. *the model doesn't quite fit*). By contrast, in the affirmative *quite* expresses high degree. Moreover, *quite* may also function as an independent clause, in an answer to a previous statement, that is, as a *disjunct* in Quirk et al.'s terminology (1985). In this function as a response marker, it expresses agreement or disagreement with what has been said, similarly to other adverbs such as *absolutely*.

Quite is, overall, the most frequent intensifier after *very* in ICE and it is by far more frequent in speech than in writing. Its co-occurrence with other colloquial expressions and its wide variety of functions may account for its higher frequency in the spoken medium. In the written materials, *quite* is more often found in those texts which are closer to speech, such as telephone and face-to-face conversations. The other side of the coin is represented by academic texts and administrative writing, associated with more formal features and therefore with fewer attestations of intensifying *quite*. Fictional texts and press news also record a variety of uses of *quite*, since they include reported speech, either quoting the words of somebody or reproducing dialogues in fiction, for instance.

4.3. SUMMARY

In contrast to chapter 2, which approached intensifiers and their classification from a theoretical perspective, this chapter was intended to synthesise the corpus-based research carried out on English intensifiers. Specifically, I have reviewed the most significant diachronic and synchronic contributions to the field, tackled here from the framework of grammaticalisation (section 4.1) and variation (section 4.2). This chapter, mainly section 4.1, hence serves as a transition to the corpus-based study which will be presented in chapter 6.

Section 4.1 reviewed the intensifier system from OE up to PDE, paying attention to both reinforcers (4.1.1) and attenuators (4.1.2) and discussing the emergence of the intensifying function of these forms in terms of grammaticalisation. Some members of the intensifier paradigm turn out to be quite old, as is the case of the maximising adverbs *all* and *swiþe*, dating to OE times. In turn, some other forms developed an intensifying reading considerably later, as is the case of the attenuator *fairly*, whose moderating function emerged only in the nineteenth century. In this section on the history of intensifiers and grammaticalisation, I also presented some studies which have looked at the competition of intensifiers within specific text types, in particular letters and medical texts (section 4.1.1.3).

The second part of the chapter (section 4.2) was devoted to variationist studies on intensifiers, accounting for sociolinguistic (4.2.1) and geographical differences (4.2.2). Although most sociolinguistic research on intensifiers focuses on PDE, the use of intensifiers by certain social groups has also been explored diachronically in Nevalainen (2008) (cf. section 4.2.1.1), which examines the distribution of a set of *-ly* and zero adverbs among the upper, middle, and lower social ranks in a collection of letters from LME and EModE. In turn, sociolinguistic studies on intensifiers in contemporary English (cf. 4.2.1.2) are mainly concerned with their use by adolescent and adult speakers, given that intensifiers are one of the defining characteristics of the language of teenagers. Male teenagers are thus argued to resort to a wider repertoire of intensifiers than their female counterparts, including stronger forms such as *absolutely* and swear words (e.g. *bloody* and *fucking*). Girls, in turn, opt for more general intensifiers such as *really*, which is also the preferred form by all age groups. Finally, research on geographical variation (cf. 4.2.2) has shown that *really* is one of the preferred intensifiers across varieties. Even so, some studies have also revealed the existence of

dialectal differences and of intensifiers which are specific to certain varieties, as is the case of *gey* and *unco* in Scots, or of *pure* in Tyneside English and Glaswegian.





5. Methodology

5.1. THE RESEARCH FRAMEWORK: PRELIMINARY REMARKS

Linguists essentially have two different options to approach the study of language: the so-called externalised and internalised approaches (cf. Chomsky 1986). The former relies on actual manifestations of language as represented in the linguistic materials, while the latter makes use of concocted data and relies on the linguist's intuitions about grammaticality on the basis of his/her linguistic knowledge. These perspectives somewhat correspond to the notions of *parole* and *langue*, as used by Saussure (1976 [1916]), and *performance* and *competence* in Chomsky (1965). For them, *langue* and *competence*, respectively, were the ideal to be pursued. Chomsky thus argued that competence should be descriptive of our knowledge of the language and that the linguist should take it as a guide. Performance, in turn, was claimed to be deficient in nature, since there exist a number of factors which may condition it, among them excessive drinking or short-term memory constraints.

Saussure and Chomsky, as pivotal figures in the history of (modern) linguistics, are the key exponents of the formalist tradition (more specifically, of structuralism and generative grammar, respectively), which dominated the first half of the twentieth century. Conversely, the second half of the century, especially the last decades, witnessed a change of paradigm with a focus not on the speakers' idealised linguistic competence or *langue*, but rather on the actual uses of the language, or on what Chomsky and Saussure called performance and *parole*, respectively. This renewed focus on language usage marked the beginning of the functionalist school of thought in linguistics, with key figures such as Jakobson, from the Prague Linguistic Circle, Firth, and Halliday. However, owing to the development of the new technologies and, more particularly, to the advent of the personal computer, the 1960s also witnessed another milestone in the history of linguistics, namely the birth of corpus linguistics, a new methodology which radically transformed previous approaches to the study of language.¹ Since then, a considerable number of linguistic branches and subfields have resorted to corpora for the retrieval of data, including sociolinguistics, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and language acquisition, among many others.

¹ For an overview of the (early) history of corpus linguistics, see chapter 2 in Kennedy (1998: 13-87), chapter 1 in McEnery and Wilson (2001: 1-27), and chapters 1-3 in Lüdeling and Kytö (2008: 1-53).

Though the actual birth of corpus linguistics² can be dated to the late 1950s and early 1960s (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 52), with the compilation of the Brown corpus (see below), resorting to data to account for linguistic phenomena is far from being recent and can be traced at least to the eighth century. As Francis notes (1992: 17), the *Latin Corpus Glossary* was written at this time; it presented an alphabetical list of hard Latin words with their English counterparts or a less complicated Latin equivalent. It was not until much later, however, that the tradition of resorting to genuine uses of the language gained momentum. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries saw the revival of a renewed philological interest and the compilation of crucial lexicographic and dialectal works which offered many examples on the actual uses of the lemmas and expressions recorded. Thus, in 1736 Alexander Cruden published a celebrated concordance for the Authorised (King James) version of the Bible, which included not only lexical, but also grammatical words. Dr. Johnson's *Dictionary of the English language*, published in 1755, provided citations from classic English authors such as Shakespeare, Sidney, and Milton. Joseph Wright's *English Dialect Dictionary* (1898-1905) or James Murray's *New English Dictionary* also drew on examples from literary works, which they had recorded for decades in slips of paper. The latter was the germ of the current *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) (cf. 5.2.1.1), a project which started in 1879 and was only finished in 1928, when the last volume was published.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, before Saussure and Chomsky had made it to the linguistic arena, much of the linguistic research actually resorted to observed or empirical data. In the study of language acquisition, for instance, it was common to keep diaries recording the children's interventions, and grammarians such as Otto Jespersen, in line with prior lexicographic works, enriched their grammars with actual examples from the literature, as is the case of his seminal seven-volume *A modern English grammar on historical principles* (1909-1949). However, it was Father Roberto Busa, a pioneering scholar of modern corpus linguistics, who first created a machine-readable corpus and an accompanying concordance for the works of Saint Thomas Aquinas, a project which he started in 1949 and completed in 1967. As McEnery and Wilson note (2001: 20), Father Busa's initial corpus consisted of 10,000 sentences written on cards, but he then managed to convince IBM to create a searchable corpus based on his initial collection of cards. Equally important for the foundations of modern

² The review of corpus linguistics presented in this section draws on Francis (1992: 17-32), McEnery and Wilson (2001: 1-27), and López-Couso (2016).

corpus linguistics was the figure of Alphonse Juilland and his mechanolinguistics approach. This linguist also created machine-readable corpora, with a large collection of texts belonging to different genres. His aim was cross-linguistic, so that he managed to create word frequency lists for French, Romanian, and Chinese.

In the English linguistic tradition in particular, the *Survey of English Usage* (SEU) Corpus was ‘the most significant and influential pre-electronic corpus’ (Meyer 2008: 10). Its compilation started in 1959 and ended in 1989, led by Randolph Quirk at the *Survey of English Usage* (SEU), University College London. The original corpus contained 200 samples of both written and spoken British English, and as such it has established a landmark in the compilation of corpora and, hence, in the history of corpus linguistics. Shortly after 1959, Francis and Kučera set out to create a computerised corpus for American English, the *Brown corpus*, which was made available in 1964 and contained about one million words of written American English, distributed over 500 texts.

Since the pioneering compilation of the SEU corpus and the Brown corpus, new corpora for the English language have appeared. Jan Svartvik continued the initial enterprise of the SEU in the 1970s and compiled the London-Lund corpus, which was released in 1990 and consisted of 500,000 words of spoken British English, transcribed and annotated for prosodic features. It was also during the 1970s that work on the *Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen corpus* (LOB) started, under the direction of Geoffrey Leech and Stig Johansson. LOB was intended as the British English counterpart of the Brown corpus, as it also contained approximately one million words, distributed over the same number of texts. The corpus was made available in 1976.

However, a new era in corpus linguistics was yet to arrive with the so-called *megacorpora*, of which the *British National Corpus* (BNC), released in 1994, was the very first representative. The project, managed by a consortium led by Oxford University Press, consists of a collection of both spoken and written British English from the 1980s to the early 1990s, containing in total over 100 million words. The next megacorporus for contemporary English is undoubtedly COCA, the *Corpus of Contemporary American English*, which was compiled by Mark Davies (Brigham Young University) and made available for the first time in 2008. At present, it offers over 450 million words of American English texts, both spoken and written, from the 1990s to 2015.

The advances in the design and compilation of present-day English corpora have

been of great importance for historical linguistics, which of necessity has always been corpus-based (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 51). These developments also had a bearing in the compilation of historical corpora³ with ‘more accurate and multifaceted annotation’ (Rissanen 2008b: 54). They have in fact shaped the most recent research in historical linguistics and yielded a wealth of studies which examine social, discourse, and pragmatic factors from a historical perspective (cf., among many others, Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2003; Jucker and Taavitsainen 2010; Rissanen 2012; Taavitsainen and Jucker 2015).

The first corpora aimed at research on the history of English arose in the 1970s and 1980s, with the *Dictionary of Old English Corpus* (DOEC) and the *Augustan Prose Sample* project, which included a selection of texts from 1675 to 1725. Yet the most important milestone in the compilation of historical corpora is unquestionably the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (HC), a project led by Matti Rissanen at the University of Helsinki, which was published in 1991. The HC contains 1.5 million words and spans from the eighth to the early eighteenth century. In addition to the wide time span covered, the HC offers another important asset, namely its being a multi-genre corpus which contains an extensive collection of both formal and informal text types. Given the gap left by the HC in the most recent history of the language, from the Early Modern English period to the twentieth century, Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan set out to create a multi-genre diachronic corpus of about 1.7 million words which included texts from British and American English from the time span 1600-1999. It was thus that *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers*, ARCHER, came to light. Unlike the HC, however, ARCHER has undergone changes through time and there have been different versions over the years from the release of ARCHER-1 in 1993 to its current version ARCHER 3.2, completed in 2013.⁴

In addition to the HC and ARCHER, over the last few decades there has been an exponential increase in the compilation of corpora designed for specific genres and periods in the history of the language. The *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English*, second edition (PPCME2), and the *Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse* (CMEPV) cover the ME period. For Early and Late Modern English a large number of corpora are now available, among many others the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots*

³ For a review of the English historical corpora and other resources available, see Claridge (2008: 242-259), Curzan (2009: 1091-1109), Kytö and Pahta (2012: 123-133), and López-Couso (2016).

⁴ For a detailed account of ARCHER and its different versions, see Yáñez-Bouza (2011).

(HCOS), the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC), the *Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Early Modern English* (PPCEME), the *Corpus of English Dialogues* (CED), the *Corpus of Early English Medical Writing* (CEEM), the *Corpus of Late Modern English Texts* (CLMET), the *Corpus of Irish English* (CIE), the *Zurich English Newspaper Corpus* (ZEN), the *Salamanca Corpus* (SC), the *Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing* (CC), and the *Corpus of Historical American English* (COHA).

Far from being limited to the compilation of computerised corpora, the advances in the new technologies have fostered the growth of a wealth of electronic resources and collections, whose value for historical linguists and philologists in general is beyond question. Regarding electronic dictionaries, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) (cf. section 5.2.1 below) do not only offer etymological information for each of the headwords, but their electronic versions also contain searchable quotation databases which have been widely used in academic research (cf., for instance, Hoffmann 2004b; Allan 2012; Rohdenburg 2013). Particularly helpful for the study of regional variation are the atlases developed at the University of Edinburgh: *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Medieval English* (eLALME), *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English* (LAEME), and *A Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots* (LAOS). In addition to these atlases and electronic dictionaries, the last decades have witnessed a proliferation of electronic collections and repositories of texts which can be very helpful for an in-depth investigation of a particular period or author. Among these we find the Canterbury Tales Project, the Open Source Shakespeare, and online collections such as *Early English Books Online* (EEBO), *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* (ECCO), and *Literature Online* (LION) (cf. section 5.2.3).

In the light of the corpora and other resources discussed in the preceding paragraphs, it is clear that corpus linguistics as a methodology has advanced by leaps and bounds over the last decades and has profited immensely from other disciplines such as computing, statistics, and the digital humanities, especially in regard to corpus design and annotation, but also in the application of statistical software for the analysis of linguistic data.⁵

The framework adopted in the present dissertation is a usage-based one, taking corpus material as the basis for the analysis of the death-related intensifiers under study.

⁵ For an account of statistical methods in corpus linguistics, see chapter 36 in Lüdeling and Kytö (2009: 777-803), chapter 2 in McEnery and Hardie (2012: 25-56), Cantos-Gómez (2013), and Gries (2013a, 2013b).

Therefore, corpora feature prominently in this work, although historical dictionaries (cf. 5.2.1) and electronic databases (cf. 5.2.3) will also be used as sources of data. Although the analysis from the selected materials will be inherently quantitative, given the large amount of data examined, the investigation will also be qualitative. According to an oft-quoted passage by Fillmore (1992: 35), the armchair linguist and the corpus linguist should exist in the same body. That is precisely my aim here: tracing the history of the selected death-related intensifiers by resorting to a number of diachronic sources, providing at the same time a linguistic analysis ‘in the armchair style’. For, as will become apparent from the amount of data considered for this dissertation, ‘the best machine for grinding general laws out of large collections of facts remains the same as Darwin’s and Jespersen’s – the human mind’ (Svartvik 1992: 12).

5.2. SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

5.2.1. Dictionaries

This section is concerned with the description of the two major historical dictionaries of the English language, the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) and the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED), two of the sources of evidence used in the present research. As will be shown in chapter 6, both dictionaries provide valuable information about the diachronic evolution of the forms under examination here, including the dates of the first attestations in their uses as intensifiers and their different spellings through time.

Over the past few years, both the OED and the MED have been used in the guise of corpora in diachronic research. The suitability of treating dictionary quotations as a corpus is, however, a topic of great debate.⁶ The main evidence adduced against the use of these dictionaries as corpora is their limited context, since the quotations therein featured are rather short and clearly insufficient. Another of the weaknesses is the high percentage of quotations from certain authors and geographical areas, as is the case of Shakespeare and England. All these limitations can however be overlooked if we take into account their numerous advantages, since each of them contain over 2.4 million quotations. Therefore, the data provided by these sources should definitely be taken into consideration for linguistic analysis.

⁶ Cf. Fischer (1997), Hoffmann (2004b), Mair (2004), Chao-Castro (2008), Allan (2012), and Rohdenburg (2013).

5.2.1.1. *The OED*

As Hoffmann suggests (2004b: 18), the OED is normally regarded as ‘the world’s most comprehensive dictionary of the English language’. The OED began to take shape at the meeting of the Philological Society in London in the year 1857, where a committee formed by F. J. Furnivall, Dean Trench, and Herbert Coleridge was appointed to collect words which were not registered in the dictionaries available at the time. They decided that a mere supplement was unnecessary, and that a new dictionary of the English language was imperative, thus issuing in 1858 a formal ‘Proposal for the publication of a New English Dictionary by the Philological Society’. The main aims of this new enterprise were the record of every English word from about 1000, showing its evolution in meanings, uses, and spellings, and also allowing for quotations. The compilation and editing works began with Coleridge and Furnivall first, and in 1879 James A. H. Murray joined the project. In 1884 the first instalment was issued. By the early twentieth century four volumes had been published, and the final section was issued during the year before the Great Crash, 1928. The result is the product of close collaboration of the editorial staff and the thorough work of numerous collaborators who furnished quotations. The original name given to the dictionary was *A New English Dictionary on Historical Principles* (NED), but in 1895 its current name, *The Oxford English Dictionary*, was adopted, and has since then become its common designation. This masterpiece consists of ten large volumes and has over 15,000 pages. A supplementary volume appeared in 1933, including additions and corrections. In 1989 a second edition in twenty volumes appeared, and the CD-ROM version came to light in 1987 for the first edition, while the second one became available in 1992. This second edition is also available online, upon subscription.⁷

As stated in the OED webpage, the OED is the accepted authority on the evolution of the English language over the last millennium.⁸ In Baugh and Cable’s words, ‘it has increased our linguistic perspective and taught us to view many questions of language in a more scientific and less dogmatic way’ (2002: 344). As is also the case with the MED (cf. section 5.2.1.2 below), the information contained in the OED is of utmost importance for any historical linguist, with the additional advantage that it does not focus on a particular period. In view of its value, I will make use of this dictionary to trace the changes which the death-related intensifiers at issue here have undergone in

⁷ This description of the OED has been taken from Baugh and Cable (2002: 339-344).

⁸ Cf. <http://public.oed.com/about/>.

the course of time.

The OED entry for the form *dead* (adj., n., and adv.) in Figure 5.1 below serves to illustrate the format of the electronic OED.

Figure 5.1. The OED entry for the form *dead* (adj., n., and adv.)

dead, adj., n., and adv. Text size: **A** **A**

View as: [Outline](#) | [Full entry](#) Quotations: [Show all](#) | [Hide all](#) Keywords: [On](#) | [Off](#)

Pronunciation: Brit. /ded/, U.S. /ded/

Forms: OE–ME **déad**, ME **dæd**, (ME **dæd**), ME–16 **ded**, (ME **deede**, **deid**, **did**, *Ayenb. dyad*, *dyead*), ME–15 **deed**, **dede**, ME **deyde**, **dyde**, 15 **dedde**, 15–16 **deade**, (ME–Sc **deid**), 15– **dead**. ([show less](#))

Frequency (in current use): ●●●●●●●●

Etymology: A common Germanic adjective; originally participle: Old English *déad* = Old Frisian *dād* (West Frisian, North Frisian *dead*), Old Saxon *dōd*, Middle Dutch *dōt(d)*, Dutch *dood*, Middle Low German *dōt*, *dōd*, Low German *dōd*, Old High German, Middle High German *tōt* (German *tot*, *tot*), Old Norse *dauðr* (Swedish, Danish *død*), Gothic *daups* < Germanic **dau-do-z*, pre-Germanic **dhau-tos*, past participle from verb stem *dau-* (pre-Germanic *dhau-*), preserved in Old Norse *deyja* (< *dau-ǰan*) and in Old Saxon *dōian*, Old High Saxon *touwen*, 'to DIE V'. The suffix *-is* = Latin *-tus*, Greek *-τος*, Sanskrit *-tas*.

The suffixed *d* in Germanic **daudo-z*, English *dead* (pre-Germanic **dhau toz*), as opposed to the *β* in *dauβu-z*, *death* (pre-Germanic **dhauruz*), shows the influence of the position of the stress accent on the Germanic representation of original breath mutes, as set forth in Verner's Law.

[show less](#)

A. adj.
The compar. *deader* and superl. *deade* are in use where the sense permits; chiefly in *transf.* and *fig.* senses (e.g. A. 4, A. 16).
I. Literally, and in senses directly connected.
* *Said of things that have been alive.*

1. That has ceased to live; deprived of life; in that state in which the vital functions and powers have come to an end, and are incapable of being restored:

a. of men and animals.

OE *Beowulf* 467 *Da wæs Heregar dead, min yldra mæg.*
c1000 *West Saxon Gospels: Matt.* (Corpus Cambr.) ix. 24 *Nys þys mæden dead.*
1154 *Anglo-Saxon Chron.* (Laud) anno 1135 *þat lic 3ær warth þe king ded.*
c1275 (* ʔa1200) *Lajamon Brut* (Calig.) (1978) l. 9595 *Hire lauerd wes ded* [c1300 *Otho* *dead*].
c1400 (* a1325) *Cursor Mundi* (Vesp.) l. 6130 *Na hus..þat þar ne was ded* [*Trin. Cambr.* *deed*, *Göff.* *dede*] *man ligand.*
c1400 *Poems Vernon MS.* 534 *Better is a quik and an hol hounde þen a ded lyon.*
1458 in J. H. Parker *Some Acct. Domest. Archit.* (1859) III. 41 *To drawe a deed body out of a lake.*

Thesaurus >

As shown in this figure, the OED provides invaluable information concerning the diachronic and current uses of the word, specifically:

1. Pronunciation: it is possible to consult the pronunciation of a given word in both the British and American varieties, as in the case of *dead* here, in addition to its IPA transcription.
2. Spelling: from the information provided about *dead*, we gather that in earlier stages it could be spelt as *deid*, *deede*, *ded*, *deade*, and *dedde*, among many other forms. The historical period and specific century in which a particular spelling prevailed is also indicated; *deade*, for instance, was current in the sixteenth century, and *deid* was mainly found in Scots.
3. Frequency of use in PDE: a frequency band ranging from 1 (very low-frequency) to 8 (high-frequency) shows the overall frequency score of the word in question. As we can see in the entry for *dead* above, *dead* is in Band 6, which in the OED includes words occurring between 10 and 100 times per million words in the current uses of the language.⁹

⁹ Cf. <http://public.oed.com/how-to-use-the-oed/key-to-frequency/>.

4. Etymology: *dead* is a participial adjective of Germanic origin, with manifold Germanic cognates, including Old Frisian *dâd*, Old Saxon *dôd*, and Old Norse *dauðr*.
5. Word category: *dead* can be an adjective, a noun, and an adverb, in addition to a verb, though the latter is given a separate entry in the OED.
6. Meaning. *Dead*, being a highly frequent form, has numerous meanings, but the primary meaning of the adjective, the one which is listed first, is ‘that has ceased to live; deprived of life’. The various meanings of the form are illustrated with quotations from the various historical periods, arranged in chronological order. The first quotation which is given in the entry is the first known record of the form in the language. In this case, the first example of the adjective for which there is attested evidence appears in *Beowulf*.

As shown in Figure 5.1 above, *dead* can also be an adverb. The OED provides important insights in this regard, since it throws light on the first uses of the adverb as an intensifier, the focus of the present dissertation. The first record of the adverb with an intensifying meaning (‘utterly, entirely, absolutely, quite’) dates to 1589 (cf. 6.1.1), as shown in Figure 5.2, which documents ample evidence of this meaning of the adverb.

Figure 5.2. Extract of the OED entry for the intensifying adverb *dead*

2.

a. Hence more generally: Utterly, entirely, absolutely, quite. (Cf. A. 31a) Esp. **dead broke** (see *BROKE* *adj.* 3a), **dead certain**, **dead easy**, **dead frozen sure**, **dead level**, **dead right**, **dead sure**. Now *colloq.* Thesaurus »
Categories »

?1589 T. NASHE *Almond for Parrat* sig. 5. Oh he is olde dogge at expounding, and deade sure at a Catechisme.

1740 S. RICHARDSON *Pamela* I. xxxi. 146 A dead, spiteful, grey, goggling Eye.

1826 B. DISRAELI *Vivian Grey* I. i. v. 34 He cut the Doctor quite dead at Greek to-day.

1845 *Cultivator* 2 92 As I..come out upon the high prairie with the wind ‘dead ahead’.

1849 G. C. GREENWELL *Gloss. Terms Coal Trade Northumberland & Durham* 3. The small coals..are..passed over a second skreen, [to separate] the nuts..and the dead small, or duff, which falls through the skreen.

1857 R. TOMES *Americans in Japan* ix. 196 Before the rice is ‘dead ripe’.

1860 W. F. HOOK *Lives Archbps.* (1862) II. ii. 93 Only one horse..which soon became dead lame.

1861 T. WINTHROP *Canoe & Saddle* (1883) 280 Prairieland lies dead level for leagues.

1871 J. HAY *Pike County Ballads* 10 He’d seen his duty a dead-sure thing.

1883 ‘M. TWAIN’ *Life on Mississippi* xxxix. 414 We’ll cotton-seed his salad for him..that’s a dead-certain thing.

1885 ‘F. ANSTAY’ *Tinted Venus* 59. I saw directly that I’d mashed her—she was gone, dead gone, sir.

1894 in E. R. LAMSON *Yale Wit & Humor* 47 (caption) A Dead Easy Queen Caught His Eye.

1895 J. L. WILLIAMS *Princeton Stories* 166 You’re dead right in saying he’s too young.

1897 *Scribner’s Mag.* Sept. 297/2. I was dead frozen sure that I had a sure tip on a wheat deal.

1903 A. BENNETT *Let.* 24 Aug. (1960) 96 She is dead right all through.

1904 W. H. SMITH *Promoters* v. 92 For a dead easy mark in a business way, commend me to a preacher.

1906 *Springfield Weekly Republican* 12 July 3 His scouts..report that Moran [a candidate for governor] has a dead-sure thing.

1908 G. H. LORIMER *Jack Spurlock* i. 19 It was like having one of those mushy girls dead gone on you.

1922 D. H. LAWRENCE *Aaron’s Rod* vii. 71 She liked him because of his dead-level indifference to his surroundings.

1923 ‘B. M. BOWER’ *Parowan Bonanza* i. 15 ‘You’re dead right, old girl,’ Bill agreed.

1930 ‘J. J. CONNINGTON’ *Two Tickets Puzzle* xiv. 222 There’s no great trouble in guessing who’s mixed up in the business—that’s dead easy.

1930 W. GIBSON *Hazards* 12 He could always plane the deal Dead-level; ay, his work was always true.

1959 J. BRAINE *Vodi* i. 22 You’re mardy. You’re dead mardy.

5.2.1.2. *The MED*¹⁰

The printed version of the MED, compiled at the University of Michigan and covering the time span 1100-1500, was completed in 2001. The dictionary includes a selection of over three million citations of medieval English, on which account it has been described as ‘the greatest achievement in medieval scholarship in America’.¹¹

Lewis (2007: 3), one of the editors of the MED, reveals that the ME lexicographic tradition in the United States dates back to the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. At this time Ewald Flügel, a scholar from Stanford University, decided to undertake the project of the compilation of a dictionary with the works of Geoffrey Chaucer. Although only a few specimens of this dictionary were published before his death in 1914, his work arose the interest of the Middle English Language Group of the Modern Language Association of America, which by 1925 decided to continue his enterprise. The dictionary moved then from Stanford University to Cornell University and later to the University of Michigan. The dictionary resorted to the OED slips for the ME period, with additional materials extracted from various ME texts. Under Samuel Moore’s editorship (1930-1934), for instance, 280,000 additional quotations were taken out, resulting in almost 900,000 slips. During the war, the dictionary suffered a major setback, with a serious reduction in financial support. After the war, Hans Kurath, who had been elected as the new editor, decided that the dictionary should contain approximately 8,000 pages. Under Kurath’s editorship, the editing plan was published as *Plan and bibliography* (1954) and this is the plan which has been followed ever since. The project then received more funding, and the editorial staff was thus expanded. The editing process was finally completed in 1997. The MED consists of 115 fascicles, combined into thirteen volumes, and has 14,939 pages. The first fascicle was published in 1952 and the last one was released in 2001. Since 1998 the MED has also been available online.

The year 1100 was arbitrarily suggested as a starting date for ME because of the scarcity of texts which have survived from 1066 (another of the often cited dates for the start of ME) to the first half of the twelfth century. As for the closing dates for the ME period, the MED takes 1475 as the end date for the composition of texts and 1500 as the end date for the manuscripts, since many manuscripts are in fact dated ‘ante-1500’. As

¹⁰ The information included in this section has been retrieved from the MED website and from Lewis (2007: 3-7).

¹¹ Cf. <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>.

for the origin of the source works, they can be from England, Wales, and Ireland. Middle Scots texts have been excluded because they are represented in the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue* (DOST) (Lewis 2007: 6-7).

Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 show the format of the MED entries. Figure 5.3 illustrates the different meanings which the adjective *deadly* could have in the ME period, while Figure 5.4 shows the first meaning listed in the dictionary ('subject to death, mortal'), together with some quotations from different texts.

Figure 5.3. MED entry with the different meanings of the adjective *deadly*

dēdlī (adj.) Also -lich(e), -lik(e), -leche, -le(i) & dedeli, dedelike. [OE *dēadlic*]

- (a) Subject to death, mortal; ~ **eye**, human eye; ~ **man**, mortal man, human being; ~ **bodi**, ~ **flesh**; (b) as noun: a mortal man; (c) perishable, fleeting, transitory; mundane, temporal; ~ **letteres**, earthly learning; ~ **lif**, mortal life; ~ **land**, land of mortals, transitory world; ~ **skinnes**, fleeting parchment. [show quotations compact display](#) | [show quotations open display](#)
- (a) Inimical to life, destructive, killing, fatal; ~ **wound**, mortal wound; ~ **deth**, ~ **pein**, ~ **sorwe**; (b) to the death, wishing to kill; ~ **enemi**, ~ **fo**, mortal foe; ~ **hate**, ~ **hatred**; (c) of a medicine: mortificative. [show quotations compact display](#) | [show quotations open display](#)
- Destructive of the soul; also, very wicked; ~ **sinne**, ~ **vice**, one of the seven deadly sins. [show quotations compact display](#) | [show quotations open display](#)
- (a) Of death; ~ **bed**, deathbed; ~ **signe**, ~ **token**, a sign of approaching death; ~ **soun**, sound of dying men; (b) like death, deathly; lifeless looking or sounding; dull, gloomy, grim; ~ **chere**, lifeless appearance, gloomy manner; ~ **derknes**, ~ **mirknes**, gloomy darkness; ~ **soun** (vois), dull or lifeless sound (voice); (c) dying, about to die, near death; **ben made** ~, to be in danger of dying. [show quotations compact display](#) | [show quotations open display](#)
- (a) Dead, deceased, also as noun; (b) inanimate, lifeless; (c) insensible, death-like; (d) mortified, gangrenous. [show quotations compact display](#) | [show quotations open display](#)

Figure 5.4. Extract of the MED entry for the adjective *deadly* with quotations

dēdlī (adj.) Also -lich(e), -lik(e), -leche, -le(i) & dedeli, dedelike. [OE *dēadlic*]

- (a) Subject to death, mortal; ~ **eye**, human eye; ~ **man**, mortal man, human being; ~ **bodi**, ~ **flesh**; (b) as noun: a mortal man; (c) perishable, fleeting, transitory; mundane, temporal; ~ **letteres**, earthly learning; ~ **lif**, mortal life; ~ **land**, land of mortals, transitory world; ~ **skinnes**, fleeting parchment.

(a) **a1225**(*OE*) *Vsp. A. Hom. Init. Cron.* (Vsp. A. 22) 223: Se lichame is deadlic þuþ adames gylt. **c1225**(*Te1200*) *St. Kath. (I)* (Einemkel) 966: Godd, þe is undedlich, make deþ driehē, & dedlich man make deþ ouercomen. **c1225**(*Te1200*) *St. Kath. (I)* (Einemkel) 1101: He underfeng ban & flesch of ure cunde, þat is bruchet & dedlich. **c1275** *Ken. Seren* (LdMisc. 471) 215/41: Mirre, sigrofeith þet hi hadde be-lisse þet he was deadlich – þet deað solde suffer for man ken. **a1300** *I. herch. ny. ene* (Jes.-O. 29) 338: He is goddes sunne and is a dedlich moon. **(a1333)** *Herbert. Hilde. herizung* (Add. 46919) 6: Al þat ys in heuene þe herizeth, al þyn ouwe hondewerk and each dedlich mon. **(1340)** *Avenb. (Arms. 57)* 12/16: He is man dyadlich. **(1340)** *Avenb. (Arms. 57)* 244/20: Ne eye dyedlich ne may nast ysv. **(a1382)** *W. Bible (I)* (De. 369/11) Esth. 13.2: Thei shuden vse the pes desidir to alle deadli men [L. mortalibus]. **(a1387)** *Trey. Higd. (St. J. C. H. 1)* 7.135: Witeþ, al mortal and dedley men, þat the power of kynges is wayne. **(c1399)** *Canot. (I)* (Vyn) 291: Sepen þat þou art dedliche [F. mortel; L. mortalis]. Keep þe in þi weies euene. **(a1393)** *Gower. C. d. (Fif. 3)* 6.7: Adam of thilke Appel bot, Which dedly made the mankinde. **a1400**(*a1325*) *Cursor* (Vsp. A. 3) 10919: Godd bicom man dedli þus. **7a1425**(*a1415*) *Hycl. Lantern* (Hrl. 2324) 41/27: Þe werkis of deediþ men, duren but a while. **7a1425**(*c1380*) *Chaucer. Bo. (Benson-Robinson)* 5. pr. 6.201: Alle men ben mortal or dedly. **7a1425**(*c1400*) *Mandev. (2)* (Tit. C. 16) 30/11: The monstre, seyde he was a dedly creature such as god hadde formed. **c1430**(*a1410*) *Love. Mirror* (Brms. e. 9) 274: He goth with hem, kepynge now the mekenesse in his body glorified that he schewed before in his body dedly. **(7a1439)** *Lydg. FP* (Boþ. 263) 4.1295: For bi the passions which he dede endure, It shewed he was a dedli creature. **c1440** *PL. Alex.* (Thrn) 24/5: Bot godez þan, neuermare dyez, deynze noþte for to hafe þe felchipe of dedely men. **1447** *Bokeholm. Srs.* (Arms. 327) 7190: Þou schalt take, for a dedly lumbard, a sponse immortal. **c1450**(*7a1400*) *Wrys. Alex.* (Ashm. 44) 4057: Be dristin, sirs, I am a duke dedelike my-selfe. **(c1450)** *Coppr. St. yng.* (Add. 36794) 25/28: This booke tretisþ who þat a mannes soule is not dedly but hath lif for ever. **(a1470)** *Malory. Wks.* (Vim.-C) 999/31: That was the dedly fleysch which He had takyn in the wombe of the Blyssed Virgynne Mary. **a1475** *B. R. Quint.* (Sln. 73) 3/24: Þese two, schal geue influence in us, and þe condicions of heuene, as muche as it is possible, as dedly nature. **c1475**(*7c1400*) *Hycl. Apol.* (Dub. 245) 53: Judas sold lum onis dedly, and not glorified, wen he trovaid lum not God, but a dedly man. **a1500**(*7a1400*) *SL. Christ* (Hrl. 3909) 4/85: In flesche that dedely is our soule leiges. **a1500**(*1413*) *Pilgr. Soul.* (Eg. 615) 4.25.68b: Þat leve is not easy to gete, spirites for to apperen to dedly þouþ.

(b) **(1435)** *Misyn. FL* (Corp.-O. 236) 25/12: Þis trenly to all dedely [L. cunctis mortalibus] is vntrowabyll.
- (c) **a1225**(*c1200*) *Fices. & F. (I)* (Str. 34) 61/14: For ðs scal godes wrabbe forlesen hem, of dese deadliche lande ðe he on wunneþ and swa michel lussjeþ. **a1250** *HMaid* (Tit. D. 18) 13/163: Þis mihte is þat ðan þat ðis deadlich lif schrawen in lure estat of þe blisse undedlich; þat eadi lond. **(1340)** *Avenb. (Arms. 57)* 110/9: Vür in byep onis nyedualle me þise lyue dyadlich. **(1395)** *Hycl. 37. Concl.* (Tit. D. 1) 50: The bisschop of Rome that lyuth now in deadli lif. **7a1425**(*a1415*) *Hycl. Lantern* (Hrl. 2324) 5/18: Þe Holt Goost souden enspird hem [the Apostles], & þe þat þan traueid in deediþ lettris mekid hem self. **7a1425**(*a1415*) *Hycl. Lantern* (Hrl. 2324) 26/7: Þe passions of þis tyme, þat we suffer in þis deediþ lif, þen as noo passions. **7a1425** *Mandev. (2)* (Eg. 1982) 84/25: Godd of his grace will make me to passe oute of þis dedly lyf. **7a1425** *Mandev. (2)* (Eg. 1982) 145/27: And he myght giffe þam thinges þat ware aylastand and noot dedly [Tit. jnnortal]. þan wald þai thank him mykill. **(1434)** *Misyn. FL* (Corp.-O. 236) 108/26: Quþy bisys þou for dedely þingis? quþy þeris þou with grete desire þingis þat sall perys? **(c1438)** *M. Kempe. B.* (Add. 61824) 225/16: He xai comyn hom in sarþe, not ony in-to þis dedly lond, but also in-to þe lond of leuyng men, þen deth xai neuir aperyn. **a1450** *Ren. Rhet.* (Vsp. A. 35) 230: Whis we lend in þis dedely life. **(a1470)** *Malory. Wks.* (Vim.-C) 1030/7: My trew chyliden, bene com oute of dedly lyf into the spiruall lyf. **a1500**(*c1340*) *Rolls. Psalter.* (UC. 61) 17.13: He sett mykenis his tapistynge, that is, in this myrk lyf and dedly; he had him fra vs. **a1500**(*7a1425*) *Lambeth. 3. Sec.* (L. amb. 501) 49/27: It is swik a secre þat vnethis manys brest may it vnderstonde; how may it þanne be wrete in dedly skyus?

As these entries show, the MED provides three major types of information:

1. Etymology. Thus, we know that the adjective *deadly* derives from OE *dēadlīc*.
2. The range of spellings of a given word available at the time. Among other orthographic forms, in ME *deadly* could be spelt *dēdlike*, *dēdliche*, and *dedeli*.
3. The different meanings of the word. As shown in Figure 5.3, in addition to the meaning ‘subject to death, mortal’, *deadly* could be applied to a sin, for instance, to indicate that it was destructive of the soul (sense 3), or to the face, to indicate that the countenance resembled that of a dead person (sense 4b). As in the OED (cf. section 5.2.1.1), these meanings are complemented with numerous quotations from ME works, for which the source and approximate date of composition are provided.

It seems, therefore, that the information furnished by the OED and the MED is extremely valuable for any diachronic investigation, as it can be used to spot changes in the meaning of a particular word or expression, which may help to account for the factors behind these changes. In my view, the task of the linguist is not only to offer a mere description of the facts, but also to try to explain why things happen the way they do.¹²

5.2.2. Corpora

As mentioned in section 5.1 above, corpus work plays a pivotal role in the present study and lays the foundations for the diachronic analysis provided in chapter 6. Although historical dictionaries (5.2.1) and electronic collections (5.2.3) have also been used as sources of data, the vast majority of the evidence used in this dissertation is corpus-based. In what follows, I describe in some detail the different corpora which have been used as data sources: on the one hand, the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (HC) and *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers* (ARCHER),¹³ which will be

¹² Although I have illustrated the main features of these two dictionaries by resorting to the headwords for *dead* and *deadly*, I will not delve further into their semantics or their historical evolution in this section, for this issue will be addressed in chapter 6.

¹³ For further information on the HC and ARCHER, see CoRD webpage (<http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/CoRD/index.html>). CoRD, Corpus Resource Database, is an online resource offered by the Research Unit for Variation, Contacts and Change in English (VARIENG), which

used to outline the long diachrony of the selected death-related intensifiers; on the other hand, *Early English Books Online Corpus 1.0* (EEBOCorp 1.0), which has been chosen to gather data on the EModE period specifically, thus complementing the information provided by the HC and ARCHER. For the LModE period, I have used two electronic collections of texts, namely *Eighteenth Century Fiction* (ECF) and *Nineteenth Century Fiction* (NCF), which will be described in detail in 5.2.3.

5.2.2.1. *The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts* (HC)

The compilation of the *Helsinki Corpus of English Texts: Diachronic and Dialectal* (HC) started in 1984 under the directorship of Matti Rissanen and Ossi Ihalainen at the Department of English of the University of Helsinki. The project was finished in 1991. The dialectal part of the corpus contains transcripts of interviews conducted in the 1970s to speakers of British rural dialects. In turn, the historical part includes a selection of texts, covering from approximately 750 A.D. to 1710. This multi-genre corpus contains a selection of religious treatises, medical and legal texts, historical and biblical accounts, travelogues, sermons, letters (both private and official), diaries, and fictional works. It consists of a total number of 1,572,800 words, distributed across different periods and subperiods. The excerpts included in the corpus vary in length, but generally range from 2,000 to 10,000 words, with occasional shorter texts. Table 5.1 below displays the different periods and subperiods of the corpus and the number of words per period.

Table 5.1. Periodisation of the HC and number of words per period

Period	Subperiod				Number of words
OE	OE1 (-850)	OE2 (850-950)	OE3 (950-1050)	OE4 (1050-1500)	413,300
ME	ME1 (1150-1250)	ME2 (1250-1350)	ME3 (1350-1420)	ME4 (1420-1500)	608,600
EModE	EModE1 (1500-1570)	EModE2 (1570-1640)	EModE3 (1640-1710)		551,000

provides a full description of many of the currently available English language corpora.

The HC is available with the ICAME (International Computer Archive of Modern and Medieval English) CD-ROM, as well as through the Oxford Text Archive, and is accompanied by a manual. The *Manual to the diachronic part of the Helsinki Corpus of English Texts: Coding conventions and list of source texts* was published by Merja Kytö in 1996 (third edition). It includes a detailed description of the coding conventions followed during the compilation of the corpus, in addition to information on its overall structure, the reference codes used in the different texts for the COCOA headers,¹⁴ the different formats in which the corpus is available, and the use of the files with different concordance software.

5.2.2.2. *A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers (ARCHER)*

ARCHER-1, originally compiled by Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan in the early 1990s, comprised a variety of British and American English texts from different genres, covering the time span 1600-1999. From the time of compilation of the original corpus in 1993, a number of versions have succeeded ARCHER-1: ARCHER-2 (2005), ARCHER 3.1 (2006), ARCHER 3.2 (2013), and ARCHER 3.3 (in preparation). The versions which followed the original ARCHER-1 are a result of an international project which involves a consortium of participants from different universities around the world, namely the universities of Bamberg, Freiburg, Heidelberg, Helsinki, Lancaster, Leicester, Manchester, Michigan, Northern Arizona, Santiago de Compostela, Southern California, Trier, Uppsala, and Zurich. Since 2008 ARCHER has been coordinated at the University of Manchester. ARCHER can be consulted online on the CQP website¹⁵ or on site at the consortium universities.

The current version, ARCHER 3.2, is divided into eight fifty-year periods for the British English texts: 1600-1649, 1650-1699, 1700-1749, 1750-1799, 1800-1849, 1850-1899, 1900-1949, and 1950-1999. By contrast, the American English component is divided into five fifty-year periods, from 1750 to 1999. ARCHER 3.2 includes twelve different genres: advertising (a), drama (d), fiction (f), sermons (h), journal (j), legal (l), medicine (m), news (n), early prose (p), science (s), letters (l), and diaries (d). Each genre and variety features 10 texts of approximately 2,000 words each. The corpus is

¹⁴ COCOA headers refer to the header information or information which appears at the beginning of a file, such as the name of the file, the name of the text and its author, the date of the text, and the text type, etc. For further information on COCOA headers, see the manual to the HC by Kytö (1996) and Hickey (2003b: 7-8).

¹⁵ <https://cqpweb.lancs.ac.uk/>

available in both untagged and tagged formats. Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6 below show the periodisation of ARCHER 3.2, the number of words, and the number of files per period, for the British and American English components, respectively.

Figure 5.5. Periodisation of ARCHER 3.2 (BrE) and number of words per period¹⁶

BRITISH		a	d	f	h	j	l	m	n	p	s	x	y	total
1600-49	files	0	10	0	0	0	10	0	0	10	0	0	0	30
	words	0	32.342	0	0	0	21.026	0	0	32.741	0	0	0	86.109
1650-99	files	0	10	11	10	10	10	21	10	0	10	75	10	177
	words	0	30.328	41.667	21.818	21.186	20.466	23.811	22.304	0	21.427	38.767	20.488	262.262
1700-49	files	0	10	11	10	11	10	14	10	0	10	77	10	173
	words	0	27.862	44.057	21.511	23.265	21.315	22.066	21.612	0	20.812	33.896	20.495	256.891
1750-99	files	10	10	10	10	10	10	20	10	0	10	70	11	181
	words	25.386	27.484	45.198	21.752	21.284	20.367	21.002	23.172	0	20.599	29.589	23.043	278.876
1800-49	files	10	10	10	10	11	10	10	10	0	10	25	10	126
	words	30.804	31.211	45.107	21.777	23.249	20.531	20.286	22.951	0	21.015	12.671	20.883	270.485
1850-99	files	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	26	10	126
	words	30.684	34.856	43.427	21.322	21.243	20.757	22.265	23.072	0	21.810	10.819	21.789	272.044
1900-49	files	10	11	10	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	29	10	130
	words	26.717	31.391	45.408	21.123	22.208	21.160	20.213	21.977	0	21.664	12.529	22.424	266.814
1950-99	files	10	11	10	10	10	10	13	10	0	10	28	10	132
	words	23.437	32.200	45.109	21.093	22.723	20.721	20.994	22.935	0	21.385	11.361	22.060	264.018
Total	files	50	82	72	70	72	80	98	70	10	70	330	71	1,075
	words	137.028	247.674	309.973	150.396	155.158	166.343	150.637	158.023	32.741	148.712	149.632	151.182	1,957.499

Figure 5.6. Periodisation of ARCHER 3.2 (AmE) and number of words per period

AMERICAN		a	d	f	h	j	l	m	n	p	s	x	y	total
1750-99	files	3	10	10	10	10	12	9	10	0	10	58	10	152
	words	9.214	29.980	38.980	21.271	21.896	41.177	23.541	22.265	0	20.668	27.860	21.315	278.167
1800-49	files	1	10	10	0	10	12	0	10	0	10	10	10	83
	words	2.822	40.568	44.676	0	21.476	33.409	0	37.107	0	20.904	20.739	20.695	242.396
1850-99	files	8	10	11	10	10	10	10	10	0	10	28	11	128
	words	24.480	32.721	44.394	21.056	22.436	28.506	20.547	21.994	0	21.311	11.361	23.419	272.225
1900-49	files	10	10	10	0	10	11	0	15	0	10	52	10	138
	words	30.460	52.514	53.430	0	21.661	21.607	0	22.802	0	20.984	25.021	20.731	269.210
1950-99	files	10	10	10	10	10	12	10	10	0	12	30	10	134
	words	29.563	31.037	44.382	21.051	22.109	25.517	22.617	23.069	0	25.623	11.961	21.654	278.583
Total	files	32	50	51	30	50	57	29	55	0	52	178	51	635
	words	96.539	186.820	225.862	63.378	109.578	150.216	66.705	127.237	0	109.490	96.942	107.814	1,340.581

For the purposes of this dissertation, only the British English component of ARCHER has been used, given that this thesis addresses the evolution of death-related intensifiers in this particular variety of the language.

¹⁶ These figures have been taken from the Documentation page of the ARCHER Project website: <http://www.alc.manchester.ac.uk/linguistics-and-english-language/research/projects/>.

5.2.2.3. *Early English Books Online Corpus 1.0* (EEBOCorp 1.0)

Published in 1998 by the Chadwyck-Healey publishing group, Early English Books Online (EEBO) is a database which contains over 130,000 works printed in England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and North America, as well as English works printed elsewhere. EEBO covers the Early Modern English period, more specifically the time span 1473-1700. In addition to online consultation (upon subscription),¹⁷ transcriptions for different EEBO texts have also been developed by the Text Creation Partnership (TCP), so that it is possible to obtain some of the EEBO texts in TEI-compliant XML format. Since January 2015 EEBO (Phase I) can also be freely obtained from the TCP webpage.

The search interface for EEBO is shown in Figure 5.7 below.

Figure 5.7. EEBO search interface

The screenshot shows the EEBO search interface. At the top, there is a yellow banner with the EEBO logo and the text 'EARLY ENGLISH BOOKS ONLINE'. Below the banner is a navigation bar with links for 'HOME', 'MARKED LIST', 'SEARCH HISTORY', and 'HELP?'. The main search area is titled 'Basic Search' and includes a search bar with the text 'mortality'. There are several filters and options: 'Search using: Variant spellings' (checked) and 'Variant forms' (unchecked). The 'LIMIT TO:' dropdown is set to 'All items (131,226 records)'. The 'LIMIT BY DATE:' section has 'From: 1473' and 'To: 1900'. The 'Sort results:' dropdown is set to 'Alphabetically by author' and 'Display:' is set to '10 results per page'. There are two 'Search' buttons on the right side of the form.

Although, as seen here, we can type in the desired word or combination of words in the keyword box and further restrict the search to a given period, author, and/or work, EEBO searches pose some serious problems. For example, if we want to search for a particular item such as *mortality*, we obtain all the tokens for the relevant period, which can be ordered chronologically or alphabetically by author. However, in order to visualise them, it is necessary to click individually on every author or work. Moreover, we are given just one concordance line, which is clearly insufficient for the purposes of my analysis, which normally requires further context. This entails an additional difficulty, namely that the whole text has to be downloaded. Since many of the works in

¹⁷ EEBO can be consulted online at <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>.

EEBO contain a considerable amount of illustrations, the downloading process and the actual visualisation of the tokens are considerably delayed. Considering the number of occurrences yielded by this database for each of the intensifiers analysed in this dissertation (cf. Table 5.2 below), it is clear that the enterprise is, to say the least, impracticable.

Table 5.2. Number of tokens for *dead*, *deadly*, *mortal*, *mortally*, and *to death* in EEBO (Chadwyck-Healey)¹⁸

EEBO-Chadwyck-Healey	Number of tokens
<i>dead</i>	276,557
<i>deadly</i>	27,374
<i>mortal</i>	31,188
<i>mortally</i>	3,421
<i>to death</i>	64,222

EEBOCorp 1.0, based on EEBO, was created by Peter Petré in 2013 and contains about 525 million words. For the compilation of EEBOCorp 1.0, however, undated texts and posthumously published texts have been discarded. The different periods and number of words per period in EEBOCorp 1.0 are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3. The different periods in EEBOCorp 1.0 and number of words per period

	Period	Words		Period	Words
15th c.	1470-1479	356,261	17th c.	1600-1609	30,671,781
	1480-1489	1,604,649		1610-1619	32,527,120
	1490-1499	965,987		1620-1629	24,860,693
	TOTAL	2,926,897		1630-1639	25,352,647
16th c.	1500-1509	495,228	1640-1649	38,140,348	
	1510-1519	188,617	1650-1659	68,747,902	
	1520-1529	941,417	1660-1669	45,176,452	
	1530-1539	4,338,508	1670-1679	52,912,938	
	1540-1549	4,276,150	1680-1689	55,979,030	
	1550-1559	4,469,798	1690-1700	64,553,025	
	1560-1569	11,707,175			
	1570-1579	17,551,525			
	1580-1589	21,308,389			
	1590-1599	18,306,653			
	TOTAL	83,583,460	TOTAL	438,921,936	
	TOTAL		TOTAL	525,432,293 words	

¹⁸ These results refer exclusively to the PDE spellings of each of the five forms under analysis. If the variant spellings were considered, the figures would obviously be much higher.

EEBOCorp 1.0 is, on the whole, much more advantageous and suitable for linguistic research than EEBO, since it can be used with any concordancer and hence facilitate the searches. Although it is available with its own concordancer, namely EEBOCorp Concordancer 1.5, developed by Peter Petré, I opted to use WordSmith with all three corpora: HC, ARCHER, and EEBOCorp 1.0.

5.2.3. Electronic collections

In addition to the HC, ARCHER, and EEBOCorp 1.0, two historical databases have been used for purposes of data retrieval in the present dissertation, namely *Eighteenth Century Fiction* (ECF) and *Nineteenth Century Fiction* (NCF). Like the OED and MED (cf. sections 5.2.1.1 and 5.2.1.2 above), these databases can also be used as ‘historical corpora’ for linguistic research even though they are not corpora strictly speaking. According to Schlüter (2013: 119-135), one of the main difficulties historical linguists have to face is the limitation in the data for certain periods of the language, and collections of this kind, which contain a vast number of words, may well serve to fill some of the gaps left by traditional corpora.

ECF and NCF are produced by Chadwyck-Healey and distributed by ProQuest, and are available in CD-ROM format or online at a rather costly yearly subscription. In addition to their high price, as Schlüter notes (2013: 123), their main disadvantage is that they contain full texts rather than balanced samples. Moreover, these texts are not offered as simple text files, but are displayed through the Chadwyck-Healey search interface (see below), which is designed mainly for literary scholarship rather than for the purposes of linguistic analysis.

ECF is a collection of 96 complete works of British prose writers covering the period 1700 to 1780. The collection features celebrated authors such as Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson, Eliza Haywood, and Jonathan Swift, and totals over 11 million words. In turn, NCF contains 250 novels from British and Irish authors from the period 1782 to 1903, including Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, and the Brontës, totalling roughly 37.5 million words. The search interfaces of these two electronic collections are shown in Figure 5.8 and Figure 5.9.

Figure 5.8. ECF search interface

Figure 5.9. NCF search interface

In order to look for a specific intensifier, for instance, we have to type in the word(s) we wish to search in the field *Keyword(s) in Work*. This provides us with the total number of tokens in the whole database. These results are then displayed alphabetically by author and work, since it may be the case that several works by the same author are included in the collection. We then have to click on the individual records for that work in order to visualise the relevant occurrences in their context of use. Although this procedure is rather unpractical and time-consuming, the advantages of using these databases, given the vast amount of data which they contain, clearly outnumber their drawbacks. By way of illustration, Figure 5.10 and Figure 5.11 below show the total number of results yielded for *to death* in ECF (382 tokens) and *mortally* in NCF (124 tokens), respectively.

Figure 5.10. Results for *to death* in ECF

The screenshot shows the 'Eighteenth-Century Fiction' search results page. The header includes the site name, a navigation menu (HOME PAGE, SEARCH, COMPLETE CONTENTS, INFORMATION CENTRE, LITERATURE COLLECTIONS), and a logo with 'HELP | SITE MAP'. The main content area is titled 'List of Results' and shows search options: MARKED LIST | SEARCH HISTORY | MODIFY SEARCH | NEW SEARCH. The search criteria are 'You searched for: Keyword(s) in Work: to death'. It reports 'Eighteenth-Century Fiction found 78 entries, 382 hits.' Below this, there is a checkbox for the first result: '1. Amory, Thomas, 1691?-1788? [Author Page] John Bunclce (1756-1766) 1548Kb'. The result includes a 'Durable URL for this text' and a list of 12 hits. The hits are: 'Vol. 1', 'The CASE of John Orton . 50', '...the numbers I had drank ■ to ■ death, and secured in the...', '64.', and '...as spiders do, and fight ■ to ■ death when they meet. [note]...'. There are also links for 'Vol. 2' and 'Durable URL for this text'.

Figure 5.11. Results for *mortally* in NCF

The screenshot shows the 'Nineteenth-Century Fiction' search results page. The header includes the site name, a navigation menu (HOME PAGE, SEARCH, COMPLETE CONTENTS, INFORMATION CENTRE, LITERATURE COLLECTIONS), and a logo with 'HELP | SITE MAP'. The main content area is titled 'List of Results' and shows search options: MARKED LIST | SEARCH HISTORY | MODIFY SEARCH | NEW SEARCH. The search criteria are 'You searched for: Keyword(s) in Work: mortally'. It reports 'Nineteenth-Century Fiction found 77 entries, 124 hits.' Below this, there is a checkbox for the first result: '1. Ainsworth, William Harrison, 1805-1882 [Author Page] Jack Sheppard. A Romance (1839-40) 7053Kb'. The result includes a 'Durable URL for this text' and a list of 2 hits. The hits are: 'VOL. I.', 'EPOCH the first_ 1703_ JONATHAN WILD_', 'CHAPTER VI. THE STORM_', and '...rose again instantly; and though ■ mortally wounded, made a desperate effort...'. There are also links for 'VOL. III.', 'EPOCH THE THIRD_ 1724 THE PRISON BREAKER_', and 'Durable URL for this text'.

When several occurrences of a given headword are found in a particular text, it is possible to visualise all of these in one page, as illustrated in Figure 5.12 below, which shows all the tokens of *deadly* (a total of eight hits) in Dickens' *Oliver Twist*.

Figure 5.12. Total number of hits for *deadly* in Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist*

LITERATURE COLLECTIONS

[Oliver Twist; or, The Parish Boy's Progress. By "Boz". In Three Volumes.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)

Found 8 hit(s):

[VOL. I.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 CHAPTER XI. TREATS OF MR. FANG THE POLICE MAGISTRATE, AND FURNISHES A SLIGHT SPECIMEN OF HIS MODE OF ADMINISTERING JUSTICE.
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...tongue failed him. He was **deadly** pale, and the whole place...
 ...with water; his face a **deadly** white, and a cold tremble...
[CHAPTER XVI. RELATES WHAT BECAME OF OLIVER TWIST, AFTER HE HAD BEEN CLAIMED BY NANCY.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...that it had turned a **deadly** white. They walked on, by...

[VOL. II.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
[CHAPTER XXII. THE BURGLARY.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...the distance, and a cold **deadly** feeling crept over the boy's
[CHAPTER XXXII. WHEREIN THE HAPPINESS OF OLIVER AND HIS FRIENDS EXPERIENCES A SUDDEN CHECK.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...Rose, shuddering as though some **deadly** chillness were passing over her...
 ...and she was once more **deadly** pale. Oliver, who watched the...

[VOL. III.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
[CHAPTER XLV. FATAL CONSEQUENCES.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...death, and a fierce and **deadly** rage kindled by all---these were...
[CHAPTER XLIX. AFFORDING AN EXPLANATION OF MORE MYSTERIES THAN ONE, AND COMPREHENDING A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE WITH NO WORD OF SETTLEMENT OR PIN-MONEY.](#)
[\[Durable URL for this text\]](#)
 ...together with her unquenchable and **deadly** hatred of all whom they...

This is actually rather practical, as otherwise we would have to click on each of the hits individually in order to see the relevant token in context. Nonetheless, we are still faced with a crucial problem: the context may be too limited for the correct interpretation of the example and we may need to read its immediate cotext. In this regard, corpora and concordance software are clearly much more advantageous and time-saving.

Schlüter (2013: 123) mentions that Chadwyck-Healey offers the possibility of obtaining the raw data of ECF and NCF free of charge for their subsequent use with concordancing software.¹⁹ Since these data are provided in an XML-file, one would then need to convert them to plain text for their use with a concordancer. In the present dissertation, however, I opted to use Chadwyck-Healey's search interface in order to look for the items under examination, and these data were then stored in an Excel database (cf. 5.4.1) to be processed and subsequently analysed.

5.3. COMPUTER AND STATISTICAL TOOLS

5.3.1. Wordsmith 6.0

The software used to process the data retrieved from the three selected corpora (HC, ARCHER, and EEBOCorp 1.0) is WordSmith (version 6.0), which contains three different tools: WordList, Concord, and KeyWords, of which the second will be instrumental for the present research. The WordList tool makes lists of words or groups of words from a given text or texts arranged by alphabetical order or by frequency of appearance, both absolute and relative frequency. The Concord tool, in turn, is used to

¹⁹ This also holds for other Chadwyck-Healey collections not discussed here.

trace all the tokens of a particular word or construction in the text(s) selected, accompanied by the immediate left and right context, being therefore suitable for the analysis of collocations. Finally, the KeyWords tool is very useful for the comparison between word lists from two corpora, so as to test frequencies of occurrence of certain words or constructions. Figure 5.13 and Figure 5.14 illustrate the interface for the WordList and Concord functions, respectively. Figure 5.13 shows the list of the most frequent words in the three different EModE subperiods, organised by frequency of occurrence.

Figure 5.13. The WordSmith WordList tool: the top frequent words in the three different EModE subperiods of the HC

N	Word	Freq.	%	Texts	% Lemmas Set
1	THE	29.751	5,28	81	100,01
2	AND	22.471	3,99	81	100,01
3	OF	19.041	3,38	81	100,01
4	TO	15.871	2,81	81	100,01
5	THAT	9.335	1,66	80	98,77
6	IN	8.948	1,59	81	100,01
7	I	8.558	1,52	80	98,77
8	A	8.340	1,48	81	100,01
9	FOR	5.653	1,00	81	100,01
10	IT	5.550	0,98	80	98,77
11	IS	5.503	0,98	80	98,77
12	BE	5.270	0,93	81	100,01
13	HE	5.163	0,92	80	98,77
14	AS	4.455	0,79	81	100,01
15	OR	4.311	0,76	81	100,01
16	#	4.290	0,76	81	100,01
17	HIS	4.254	0,75	80	98,77
18	NOT	4.096	0,73	81	100,01
19	WAS	3.939	0,70	80	98,77
20	YOU	3.703	0,66	63	77,78
21	BUT	3.688	0,65	81	100,01
22	WITH	3.551	0,63	81	100,01
23	BY	3.529	0,63	81	100,01
24	MY	3.327	0,59	77	95,06
25	THEY	3.167	0,56	81	100,01
26	THIS	3.155	0,56	80	98,77
27	HIM	2.931	0,52	77	95,06

In Figure 5.14 the Concord function of WordSmith is displayed. For the sake of illustration, all the occurrences of the interjection *alas* were searched for in the HC, which yielded a total of 91 tokens. We see the actual hit, *alas*, appearing in blue in the middle of the concordance line, which is both preceded and followed by some context. To the right, under the column *File*, we find the file name, so that we can know the text in which this token appears. It is also possible to double-click on the line and access the source text immediately. However, if we just wish to expand the context a few lines, we can make use of a special command, namely the ‘Grow’ function, which is also very practical.

Figure 5.14. Concordance for *alas* in the HC

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	Sent	Para	Para	Para	Head	Head	Sect	Sect	File	Date	%
1	locis se disiungent;) ^) (^Phariseus^) Alas Alas I am ashamyd I am a-ferde	3.153	67	52	0	87					0	87	CMLUDUS	1991/dic./30	87%
2	susters And they cryed so pitously / Alas and weleaway for the deth of her	2.264	21	11	0	23					0	23	CMREYNAR	1991/dic./30	24%
3	and strake his # necke in two pecys. 'Alas' than cryed that lady, 'why haste	7.296	30	17	0	60					0	60	CMMALORY	1991/dic./30	61%
4	might we disguise him? (^Mist. Page.^) Alas! the day I know not, there is no	5.119	48	6%	0	81					0	81	CEPLAY2A	1991/dic./30	81%
5	dwellst thou?" quoth this parson. "Alas! sir," saithe this roge, "I haue	1.384	37	4%	0	25					0	25	CEFICT1B	1991/dic./30	26%
6	often hast thou broken thy promise? Alas man learn to be ashamed and	4.654	21	3%	0	94					0	94	CESERM1A	1991/dic./30	94%
7	you be so much afraide? (^Sam.^) Alas man, I could teeme it to goe, and	1.146	87	10	0	18					0	18	CEHAND2A	1991/dic./30	19%
8	/ Inso moche that lamentably he sayd alas what haue we done / we haue	3.193	36	56	0	54					0	54	CEHIST1B	1991/dic./30	53%
9	rede it better than ye / # Alas reynart alas said the wulf I pray you to leue	8.484	56	77	0	85					0	85	CMREYNAR	1991/dic./30	85%
10	for woo myn herte gynneeth to quake! Alas! I am so sorowfulle and sett in	3.869	26	10	0	96					0	96	CMDIGBY	1991/dic./30	97%
11	Who was it then? lets here. (^D. Rat^.) Alas! sir, aske you that? Is it not made	2.389	12	43	0	40					0	40	CEPLAY1B	1991/dic./30	40%
12	keepe a neele. (^Ga-mer^.) My neele alas ich lost it hodge, what time ich	981	51	5%	0	16					0	16	CEPLAY1B	1991/dic./30	17%
13	and eke without, to fynd your neele (alas) But all in vaine and without help,	1.339	71	82	0	22					0	22	CEPLAY1B	1991/dic./30	23%
14	pueros. \) ^) (^Prima muller. \) ^) Alas, alasse, good gossypes! This is	3.295	20	50	0	82					0	82	CMDIGBY	1991/dic./30	82%
15	your neele is where it was. (^Ga-mer^.) Alas my neele we shall neuer meete,	1.354	72	23	0	22					0	22	CEPLAY1B	1991/dic./30	23%
16	Nou kyng edward liue+ na more, alas! +tat he +get shulde deye! he	3.007	41	20	0	95					0	95	CMPOEMH	1991/dic./30	95%
17	Had he here, he rou+gte of noghte. Alas! lhesus he forsoke, And +te	345	27	10	0	4%					0	4%	CMHANSYN	1991/dic./30	5%
18	vp, seeing it was a woman, cryed out, alas, alas. How now, what is the	4.882	14	98	0	63					0	63	CEFICT2B	1991/dic./30	63%
19	go out ere he come? (^Mist. Page.^) Alas: three of M=, (^Fords^.) brothers	4.985	45	40	0	78					0	78	CEPLAY2A	1991/dic./30	79%
20	sonder. [They fight. \) (^Vxor. \) ^) Out, alas, I am gone! Oute upon the, mans	3.054	25	57	0	73					0	73	CMTOWNEL	1991/dic./30	73%
21	thy # lyft dayes had be done. And now, alas, she seyde, I have loste all my #	6.207	26	16	0	51					0	51	CMMALORY	1991/dic./30	52%
22	four must hold and two lay one.' Alas! sayth this # good wyfe, 'he is to	4.451	12	14	0	80					0	80	CEFICT1B	1991/dic./30	80%
23	all nakyd to london agayne and sayde alas alas helpe or I shall be stolen. For	6.496	16	91	0	98					0	98	CEFICT1A	1991/dic./30	98%
24	. Into inlonde to worri. in lu+ter time alas. Vor +toru treson of is owe men	634	56	10	0	5%					0	5%	CMROBGLO	1991/dic./30	6%
25	munke repenyd hym +tan, and +toght, "Alas!" he seyde, "what have y wrought	603	36	31	0	7%					0	7%	CMHANSYN	1991/dic./30	8%
26	no wepyn and I may kepe the therefro.' Alas, seyde sir Launcelot, 'that ever a	7.162	29	17	0	59					0	59	CMMALORY	1991/dic./30	60%
27	wan was gret pite. Aslawe were +ter alas. +te eue of +te trinite. As sir	2.861	22	45	0	25					0	25	CMROBGLO	1991/dic./30	25%

In order to run a concordance for a particular word or string of words in a corpus, we need to specify the search word first. To account for spelling variation at previous stages of the language, I have used the wildcard * in order to allow for the different orthographic variants of *dead(ly)*, *to death*, and *mortal(ly)*. The asterisk stands for any letter or combination of letters. *Dead* could hence be spelt as *deade*, *deede*, *deid*, *did*, *dyad*, *dyead*, *deed*, *dede*, among others; *deadly* had, among other orthographic variants, *dedli*, *dedeli*, *deadli*, *dyadlich*, *dyeadlich*, *deedli*, *dedly*, *dedely*, *deedly*, and *deadlie*. The same holds for the other forms under study here, which also allowed a wide range of spelling variants in earlier English.

5.3.2. Statistical tools

This section discusses the statistical tests which were used to assess the significance of the results. In the case of the three corpora, I have taken into account the variation in the raw frequencies from one period to another, to calculate if the increase or decrease in the number of occurrences was significant between periods, provided that one of the values in the comparison did not involve a zero value. In the HC, three different periods were compared, namely OE, ME, and eModE. For EBOCorp 1.0, I have established the following periods for comparison: period I (1470-1499), period II (1500-1549), period III (1550-1599), period IV (1600-1649), and period V (1650-1699). Finally, as for ARCHER, I have considered the seventeenth, eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth

century data separately. This comparison across periods applied to the variables ‘type of meaning’, ‘semantic prosody’, and ‘word category’ (cf. section 5.4.2). In this regard, two different statistical tests were applied: the chi-square test (χ^2) and Fisher’s exact test. The former was used when the absolute frequencies were over 5, while the latter applied in those cases in which the raw frequencies were 5 or lower, since the chi-square test is not as reliable as Fisher’s exact test with low frequencies. Both tests compare the observed values, that is, the actual number of tokens of a given word or construction in a particular corpus, with the expected frequencies of a given item in a text, i.e., ‘those frequencies that we would expect if the only factor operating had been chance’ (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 76). The greater the difference between the observed and expected frequencies, the less likely it is for chance to account for that difference. In turn, when the expected and observed frequencies are closer, the more likely it is that this difference is due to chance (cf. Cantos-Gómez 2013: 76). Moreover, the closer to 0 the probability value p is, the more statistically significant this difference will be; on the contrary, the closer this value is to 1, the most likely it is that this difference can be accounted for in terms of chance. The formula for the chi-square test is given in Figure 5.15.

Figure 5.15. Chi-square formula

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

The results for the observed and expected frequencies must be displayed in a contingency table, in this case a 2×2 contingency table. In order to calculate the chi-square value, I have used an online calculator,²⁰ in which the different frequencies in the contingency table were introduced and the results for the chi-square and p -values were automatically calculated. By way of illustration, Figure 5.16 shows the contingency table of an online chi-square calculator for the absolute figures of the descriptive uses of the adjective *mortal* in ARCHER in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (6 vs. 8 tokens). The first row shows the token frequency for the adjective in each period, while the second row shows the total number of words in ARCHER in each period (348,371 words in the seventeenth century and 535,767 words in the eighteenth century).

²⁰ <http://www.quantpsy.org/chisq/chisq.htm>.

Figure 5.16. Interface of a 2x2 contingency table and online chi-square calculator: descriptive uses of *mortal* (adj.) in the 17th and 18th centuries in ARCHER

	Gp 1	Gp 2	Gp 3	Gp 4	Gp 5	Gp 6	Gp 7	Gp 8	Gp 9	Gp 10
Cond. 1:	6	8								14
Cond. 2:	34837	53576								88413
Cond. 3:										0
Cond. 4:										0
Cond. 5:										0
Cond. 6:										0
Cond. 7:										0
Cond. 8:										0
Cond. 9:										0
Cond. 10:										0
	34837	53576	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	88413

Output:

Calculate Reset all

Chi-square: 0.07
degrees of freedom: 1
p-value: 0.79133678
Yates' chi-square: 0
Yates' p-value: 1

Status: Status okay

For the chi-square formula, an additional factor needs to be taken into consideration, namely the number of degrees of freedom. According to Cantos-Gómez (2013: 78), the degrees of freedom are calculated as follows:

$$df = (\text{number of columns in the table} - 1) \times (\text{number of rows in the table} - 1).$$

In the present research, the number of degrees of freedom was always 1 ($df = 1$), as there are always two columns and two rows: $(2 - 1) \times (2 - 1) = 1$.

As shown in Figure 5.16, the p -value is very close to 1 in the case of the chi-square version without Yates's correction (0.79133678), and it is exactly 1 in the version with Yates's correction, which is applied in cases in which the table shows low counts in some cells (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 80). In both cases, however, the values are very close to 1, which implies that the difference in descriptive uses between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in ARCHER is not statistically significant.

As mentioned above, Fisher's exact test is used with token frequencies of 5 or lower than 5, as is the case of the subjective meanings of the adjective *mortal* in ARCHER in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (1 vs. 5 occurrences, respectively). A typical 2x2 contingency table for Fisher's exact test is given in Figure 5.17 below, taken from an online calculator for this test.²¹ As in the case of the chi-square test, the first row shows the total number of attestations in the corpus, while the second row provides the total number of words in the corpus for that specific period.

²¹ <http://www.socscistatistics.com/tests/fisher/Default2.aspx>.

Figure 5.17. Interface of a 2x2 contingency table and online Fisher's exact test calculator: subjective uses of *mortal* (adj.) in ARCHER in the 17th and 18th centuries

Enter Your Data Below		
	P. I	P. II
Tokens I	1	5
Tokens II	348371	535767

After introducing the relevant values, the calculator gives the statistical value (cf. Figure 5.18) and the level of significance. In this case, the calculator indicated that the results from the test were not significant at $p < 0.01$.

Figure 5.18. Example of the Fisher's exact test value for the subjective uses of the adjective *mortal* in the 17th and 18th centuries in ARCHER

Results			
	P. I	P. II	Marginal Row Totals
Tokens I	1	5	6
Tokens II	348371	535767	884138
Marginal Column Totals	348372	535772	884144 (Grand Total)

The Fisher exact test statistic value is 0.41373. The result is *not* significant at $p < .01$.

The chi-square test and Fisher's exact test applied to the variables 'type of meaning', 'semantic prosody', and 'word category' (cf. section 5.4.2). However, in order to measure the actual strength of the associations of the different death-related intensifiers analysed in this dissertation with their collocates, more specific tests were required, in particular the Mutual Information (*MI*) and its cubed variant (*MI3*), the log-likelihood test, and the *z*-score.

The *MI* score (cf. Figure 5.19) calculates the strength of the association between a node word and its collocates. Here the node is the form (*dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*) and the collocate is normally taken to be the word which occurs either immediately before or after the node. *MI* measures the joint probability of observing a word₁ in combination with a word₂, that is, it compares the probability of observing these two words together with the probabilities of observing them independently. If the association between w_1 and w_2 is strong, the *MI* score will be higher than 0. If there is not a strong association between the node and the collocate, then *MI* will be around 0. Finally, the value will be negative in those cases in which the two words shun each other (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 205). Therefore, the higher the *MI* value is, the stronger the link between the node and the collocate. A cut-off point of 3 is sometimes established as evidence of two words being collocates; this is the value which has been taken as a

reference in the present dissertation. The *MI* test, however, appears to give too much weight to low frequency items, so that a corrected version of this test has been designed, the *MI3* formula (cf. Figure 5.20), which offers more realistic scores. This version is simply the same *MI* formula, but taken to the power of 3. In the case of the *MI3* formula, the cut-off point to be considered for statistical significance is 4.75 (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 207).

Figure 5.19. The *MI* formula (from Cantos-Gómez 2013: 205)

$$MI = \frac{P(w_1, w_2)}{\log_2 P(w_1) \times P(w_2)}$$

Figure 5.20. The *MI3* formula (from Cantos-Gómez 2013: 207)

$$MI3 = \frac{(p(w_1, w_2))^3}{\log_2 p(w_1) \times p(w_2)}$$

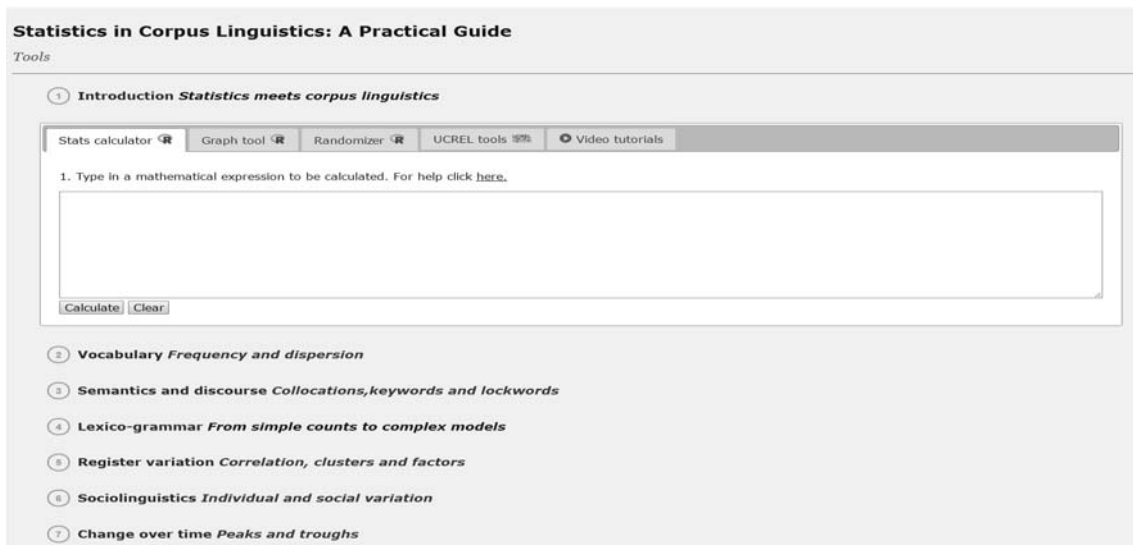
The *log-likelihood* test (*LL*) is also commonly used in relation to collocations. It ‘determines whether a word (w_1) is a collocation of another word (w_2) by taking the ratio between how often it occurs in a text/corpus compared to how often it would be expected to occur based on the model of chance (independence)’ (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 208). As for the *MI* values, the higher this score, the stronger the link between the node and the collocate. A value of 6.6 or higher is considered to be significant at $p < 0.01$.

The last test considered for collocations is the so-called *z*-score, which measures the difference between the observed frequency of a given node and its collocate, as well as their expected frequencies. For a score to be significant at $p < 0.01$, the cut-off measure should be at least 2.576.

In order to calculate all these collocational measures, I have resorted to a very functional tool designed by Brezina (2014) at the University Centre for Computer Corpus Research on Language (UCREL) from the University of Lancaster.²² This is a web resource called ‘Statistics in Corpus linguistics’, which allows to use different statistical tools for free. The ones which are relevant for the current discussion are found under ‘Semantics and discourse: Collocations, keywords and lockwords’, as shown in Figure 5.21.

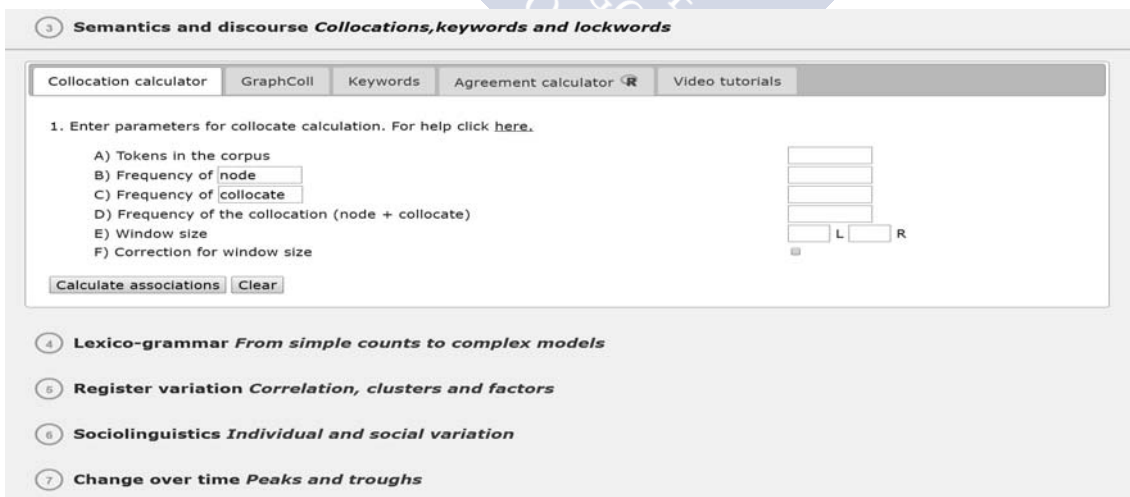
²² <http://corpora.lancs.ac.uk/stats/toolbox.php>.

Figure 5.21. Interface from the UCREL statistics tools



When we click on this function, it is possible to calculate all these measures by introducing the relevant figures for the number of tokens in the corpus, the frequency of the node (here the item under analysis) in that corpus, the frequency of the collocate in the same corpus (i.e., the number of occurrences of the collocate individually), and the window size (cf. Figure 5.22). In this case, I have marked one token to the left and one token to the right. If we then click on ‘Calculate associations’, we obtain the results for all the relevant measures.

Figure 5.22. Collocation calculator from the UCREL statistics tools



By way of illustration, consider the collocation *adjudged to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0 provided in Figure 5.23. EEBOCorp 1.0 numbers a total of 525,432,293 words, and this is the value which we enter in square A (‘Tokens in the corpus’). Then we have to introduce the absolute frequency of the node, that is, *to death*, which occurs 30,531 times in the whole corpus. *Adjudged* is found 4,318 times in EEBOCorp 1.0 (‘Frequency of collocate’), and the combination of the participle with the prepositional phrase is recorded 113 times (‘Frequency of the collocation’). In regard to window size, I have only marked one collocate to the right and one to the left.

Figure 5.23. Parameters for the collocation *adjudged to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0 in the UCREL collocation calculator

1. Enter parameters for collocate calculation. For help click [here](#).

A) Tokens in the corpus	<input type="text" value="525432293"/>
B) Frequency of <input type="text" value="node"/>	<input type="text" value="30,531"/>
C) Frequency of <input type="text" value="collocate"/>	<input type="text" value="4318"/>
D) Frequency of the collocation (node + collocate)	<input type="text" value="113"/>
E) Window size	<input type="text" value="1"/> L <input type="text" value="1"/> R
F) Correction for window size	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Once we introduce all the relevant parameters, the tool calculates the observed and expected frequencies (cf. Figure 5.24), as well as all the collocational tests discussed above: *MI*, *MI3*, log-likelihood, and z-score (cf. Figure 5.25). Considering the different results obtained for these tests, together with the cut-off values mentioned above, it can be concluded that the collocation *adjudged to death* is highly statistically significant.

Figure 5.24. Calculation of observed and expected frequencies of *adjudged* and *to death* in EEBOCorp1.0 with the UCREL statistics tools

OBSERVED FREQUENCIES

	Collocate present (collocate)	Collocate absent	Totals
Node present (node)	113	60,949	$30,531 \times (1 + 1) = 61,062$ [correction applied]
Node absent	4,205	525,367,026	525,371,231
Totals	4,318	525,427,975	525,432,293

EXPECTED FREQUENCIES

	Collocate present (collocate)	Collocate absent	Totals
Node present (node)	0.502	61,061.498	$30,531 \times (1 + 1) = 61,062$ [correction applied]
Node absent	4,317.498	525,366,913.502	525,371,231
Totals	4,318	525,427,975	525,432,293

Figure 5.25. Results of the statistical tests for the collocation *adjudged to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0 using the UCREL statistics tools

ASSOCIATION MEASURES

MU: 225.186	LL-short: 1,002.186 (p < 0.0001)	LOGDICE: 5.824
MI: 7.815	LL-long: 1,002.394 (p < 0.0001)	LOGRATIO: 7.853
MI2: 14.635	Z-score: 158.810	MINIMUM SENSITIVITY: 0.002
MI3: 21.455	T-score: 10.583	DELTA P: [0.002; 0.026]
	DICE: 0.003	

5.4. THE DATABASE AND THE VARIABLES OF ANALYSIS

5.4.1. The Excel database

In order to process the data for analysis, I have created an Excel database. In those cases in which the results were retrieved from corpora (HC, ARCHER, and EEBOCorp 1.0), the results have been exported directly from WordSmith to an Excel spreadsheet. This was in fact the most convenient and practical option, since the Concord function in WordSmith offers the possibility of exporting the concordances to Excel. By contrast, the two Chadwyck-Healey databases, ECF and NCF, do not allow to export the results automatically to Excel, on which account they had to be manually saved in an Excel spreadsheet with all the relevant information for the subsequent analysis. Figure 5.26 and Figure 5.27 show two such Excel spreadsheets with the data for *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0 and *mortal* (adv.) in NCF, respectively.

Figure 5.26. Excel spreadsheet with the results for *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of P	Period	Comments	File	P
1	grau"te that those were greouse wou"des / for the whiche our Lorde Christ must suff	wound	D	neg	N	1530s		D0000998412330000.txt II	
2	nemies hu"te for my soule, they beate & dryue it downe, they thrust it into darke dou"t	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D00009984548110000.txt II	
3	lorde shall beholde therthe euen from heuen. To heare the syghes of them that are in b	judged	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998412330000.txt II	
4	wayte for hym / and in co"cluyson. when he was taken, & was bounde, when he was s	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D0000998375140000.txt II	
5	wayte for hym / and in co"cluyson. when he was taken, & was bounde, when he was s	judged	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D0000998375140000.txt II	
6	the laste. This is it written / Esaye the .liiij. chaptyre. I shall be reputed amonge the wyc	harned	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D0000998412330000.txt II	
7	the laste. This is it written / Esaye the .liiij. chaptyre. I shall be reputed amonge the wyc	tugged	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D0000998412330000.txt II	
8	be oure spere and shyld. For yf we so do, then shall suche poysoned arowes eyther no	wound	D	neg	V	1530s		D000099839980000.txt II	
9	in hym, and in his worde. We ede of Susa"na, that what tyme she was in hir moost dist	judged	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998430500000.txt II	
10	to haue their children / their heires / & some commaunded to be beaten to deathe with	beaten	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998431300000.txt II	
11	o his departyng / when ludas se his mayster was lykly to be condemned to deathe, thi	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998412330000.txt II	
12	that here wyl remyte the synne of ye penytente, ther wyl condempne to deathe ye pr	condemn	D	neg	V	1530s		D0000998394690000.txt II	
13	dges, wher he was denyed, accused, and by false testimonye condemned to deathe, i	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998394690000.txt II	
14	rouned with thorne: blyndfelded, deryded, bobbed and bette, condemned to deathe: a	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000998394690000.txt II	
15	yngees seate, he that forswore hym selfe by this, was strenghte whipped to deathe. ¶W	whipped	D	neg	P	1530s		D0000231849730000.txt II	
16	but eyther one slue another to deathe maliciously / or els	slay	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
17	euery man hunteth hys brother to deathe: yet they saye they d	hunt	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
18	e prestes stoned the captayne to deathe, hewed them in peces	stone	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
19	he persecutd the christians to deathe, and yet he kept the	persecute	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998436390000.txt II	
20	his man maye not be condemned to deathe, for he hath preached	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
21	d innocent, them he condemned to deathe. Thus were they soone	condemn	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
22	deliuered him to be condemned to deathe, and haue crucified h	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000999002540000.txt II	
23	en that were either condemned to deathe, taken in the warn[is	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998535880000.txt II	
24	deliuered hym to be condemned to deathe: & haue crucified hym	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
25	the reame, and men condemned to deathe after the prescript o	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998422500000.txt II	
26	1: any man shuld be condemned to deathe, and haue not the wit	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998422500000.txt II	
27	ynid, and of hys condemnation to deathe auerlasting, by hys a	condemnation	D	neg	N	1540s		D0000998456500000.txt II	
28	t: why should we be co"demned to deathe because we can not vn	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998388680000.txt II	
29	grye, & many of them famished to deathe: In souch that they	famish	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
30	either strangled or famished to deathe. ¶Boniface the .viii.	strangled	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998535880000.txt II	
31	shortly after he was famished to deathe. ¶Boniface the .viii.	famished	D	neg	P	1540s		D0000998535880000.txt II	
32	le, and so they condemned her to deathe. Susa"na cryed out wil	condemn	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998566770000.txt II	
33	and than cruellly stoned him to deathe: Thus Staebon use the	stone	D	neg	V	1540s		D0000998431300000.txt II	

Figure 5.27. Excel spreadsheet with the results for *mortal* (adv.) in NCF

id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1862 II		Lady Audley's Secret	"It's a mortal du dull	I	neg	A		
2	1810 I		Self-control	"You may reme angry	S/I	neg	A		
3	1792 I		Camilla	"O yes, I shall. It spiteful	S/I	neg	A		
4	1853 II		Ruth	"Here's the nurs bad	I	neg	A		
5	1792 I		Camilla	"Them young ge unconvenient	I	neg	A		
6	1792 I		Camilla	"And she's mort fond	I	pos	A		
7	1792 I		Camilla	"Yes, yes, he's p cunning	I	pos	A		
8	1792 I		Camilla	Then, advancing kind	I	pos	A		
9	1858 II		The Three Clerks	"Oh, you may tri long	I	neu	A		
10	1862 II		No name	"Put your apron cold	I	neu	A		the atmosphere it mortal cold, not the person
11	1840 II		Barnaby Rudge	I put as good a f cold	I	neu	A		the atmosphere it mortal cold, not the person
12	1840 II		Barnaby Rudge	"Oh, you're her! lazy	I	neg	A		
13	1853 I		Bleak House	"O no, sir!" said high	I	neu	A		DOUBLE
14	1853 I		Bleak House	"O no, sir!" said passionate	I	pos	A		DOUBLE
15	1838 I		Oliver Twist	Mr. Chitling woi long	I	neu	A		
16	1850 II		The Personal History o	"Sit ye down by cold	S/I	neu	A		the hands are cold
17	1826 I		Vivian Grey	"I'm sure your h feared	S/I	neg	A		
18	1878 II		The return of the nativ	I ha'n't been the poor	I	neg	A		mortal poor chance
19	1857 II		Tom Brown's school de	"What! be thee sorry	I	neu	A		
20	1857 II		Tom Brown's school de	Says Giles "'Tis r hard	I	neg	A		
21	1857 II		Tom Brown's school de	"Well, he never angry	I	neg	A		
22	1859 II		The Ordeal of Richard	"Don't hit too hi hard	I	neg	A		
23	1850 II		Alton Locke	"Oh! ho! ho!---y good	I	pos	A		
24	1859 II		The Ordeal of Richard	He's a young ger wild	I	neu	A		
25	1859 II		The Ordeal of Richard	It is possible th; sure	I	neu	A		
26	1867 II		Under Two Flags	"You can't make hit	D	neg	P		
27	1861 II		The Cloister and the H	Then she went t;ly	I	pos	A		
28	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	I saw the mosq; still	S/I	neu	A		3 times
29	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	I saw the mosq; still	S	neu	A		3 times
30	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	I saw the mosq; chilly	S	neu	A		3 times
31	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	As he came nea sick	D	neg	A		
32	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	They say it read high	I	neu	A		DOUBLE
33	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	They say it read steep	I	neu	A		DOUBLE
34	1893 II		The beach of Falesa	But I knew whe tired	I	neg	P		tired of
35	1886 II		Kidnapped	"Stay, brother!" hungry	S/I	neg	A		
36	1897 II		Dracula	"I then saw the heavy	I	neu	A		

As shown in these two figures, both linguistic and extralinguistic information has been coded for each example. The different linguistic variables considered will be discussed in detail in section 5.4.2 below.

5.4.2. Linguistic variables

The core of the analysis carried out in this dissertation has been the data provided by the different corpora and collections of texts described in sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3 above. However, the OED and the MED have also been used in the hope of gaining further insights into the behaviour of the death-related intensifiers *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* over time. The analysis has focused on the different collocations of these forms, taking into account their type of meaning, on the basis of the cline for intensifiers described by Adamson (2000: 55): descriptive > affective > intensifying. As seen in section 4.1.1.2, Adamson proposed this cline in relation to the adjective *lovely*, which initially denoted a human quality, being a synonym for 'loving, amiable' (e.g., *for sheo to him so lovely was and trewe*), and came to develop a new meaning in ME: 'physically beautiful' (e.g., *the lely, lufely to syghte*). *Lovely* then acquired a value meaning 'excellent' in LModE, a process of subjectification, which later prompted an intensifying reading of *lovely*, as in *lovely big party* (2000: 54).

In this dissertation, however, I have adapted Adamson's initial cline in two different ways. On the one hand, I have opted for the label *subjective* instead of *affective* in my classification, given that, to my mind, the former reflects better the process of subjectification, which is so fundamental for the eventual development of intensifying

meanings. On the other hand, Adamson's cline has been found to be incomplete for the semantic analysis intended in this piece of research, since some examples of the relevant items in the data were ambiguous and not easily ascribed to one of Adamson's three developmental stages. On this account, I decided to use a fivefold classification based on Adamson's cline, to which I added two further intermediate stages: one for those meanings which were ambiguous between descriptive and subjective (D/S), and another for those meanings which were unclear between a subjective and an intensifying (S/I) reading. The addition of these two intermediate stages to Adamson's proposal is intended as a way of minimising any possible biased interpretation of the data, since sometimes it is very difficult to classify a given example into one particular category, mainly because the context is not sufficient, not to mention the additional complexity of dealing with historical texts, for which our way of thinking does no longer hold.

In addition to the type of meaning, the semantic prosody of the collocations has also been taken into consideration (cf. Stubbs 1995; Sinclair 1996; Louw 2000; Partington 2004; Smith and Nordquist 2012) (cf. also chapter 4). The collocates of the forms *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* were marked as positive, neutral, or negative, given that semantic prosody can be used as an indicator of their degree of grammaticalisation: death-related intensifiers are always negative in origin, but in the course of time they came to be used with elements which have positive semantic prosody, as the adjective *happy* in the collocation *dead happy*, or *chuffed* in *chuffed to death*. Positive semantic prosody, therefore, correlates with a higher degree of grammaticalisation; on the contrary, the more an intensifier occurs with elements which have negative semantic prosody, the less grammaticalised it will be. The analysis of the semantic prosody of these collocations was, however, not devoid of problems: it is sometimes difficult to categorise objectively whether an item is positive or negative, since, depending on the context, it could be interpreted in either way. By way of illustration, consider the adjective *proud*. *Proud* has positive semantic prosody in contexts in which, for example, we are proud of our family or of our work. However, we can also say that a person is very proud, hence implying that it is a negative quality, perhaps suggesting that (s)he is haughty and arrogant. Needless to say, this difficulty is even more conspicuous with historical data. On this account, the label *neutral semantic prosody* subsumes two different types of scenarios in this dissertation. On the one hand, I have labelled as *neutral* those elements modified by one of the forms under analysis which are in actual fact neutral, as is the case, for example, of the noun *body* in the collocation *mortal body*;

since a body cannot be positive or negative, it is hence considered as neutral. On the other hand, I have also characterised as neutral those elements which are contextually dependent and would thus allow either a positive or a negative reading, as is the case of the aforementioned adjective *proud*. In view of the vast amount of examples analysed, considering the individual context for each of the hits would not only be time-consuming, but in many cases the context would also be clearly insufficient to decipher the specific meaning of the word.

Furthermore, the word category modified by the items under analysis here has also been tagged. Although intensifiers have traditionally been associated with adverbs (cf. Quirk et al. 1985: 590), the category itself is much more complex and heterogeneous than previously assumed (cf. section 2.2), as suggested for example by Margerie (2011) for the prepositional phrase *to death* (cf. 4.1.1.1). Therefore, the type of word modified by the forms at issue (e.g. noun, adjective, participial item, prepositional phrase, etc.) has also been considered in order to understand better their behaviour and collocational patterns. This could help to explain the potential preference of these forms for one specific word class and trace recurrent patterns in their development. Concerning participial collocates, an explanatory note seems in order here. All the participial collocates of the forms at issue have been marked in the Excel database as *participial forms* (P), regardless of whether they are verbal participles (e.g. *wounded*) or participial adjectives (e.g. *tired*). Given the volume of data eventually considered for analysis and the ambiguity of many early examples, it would be unmanageable to consistently categorise these forms as either verbal or adjectival on the basis of the tests that are often considered in the literature for the categorisation of adjectives and participles (cf., for example, Quirk et. al 1985: 713-716). The application of these tests to my data is clearly out of the scope of the present dissertation. Moreover, although they may be applicable in many contexts, for many examples further contextualisation is required, and even so our bias towards the data would be inevitable.

Finally, concerning extralinguistic variables, the corpus-based analysis provided in chapter 6 has taken into account the period. This is particularly relevant in a diachronic analysis such as the one intended in this dissertation, since it allows us to record the specific stage at which the forms under analysis develop more subjective meanings, and hence get on their marks for the intensifying race. The file name in the case of corpora and the work in the case of electronic collections have also been noted. This was useful for going back to the individual examples, given that on many occasions it was

necessary to consult further context to understand the meaning of a given item. I have also included the field ‘Comments’, in which I noted down not only comments about a particular spelling, but also remarks about the meaning of a given word or about the position of the form in question.



6. A corpus-based analysis of death-related intensifiers in English

As suggested in chapter 5, which was devoted to the methodology, the approach adopted in the present dissertation is corpus-based. On this account, I rely heavily on corpus materials for the retrieval of data and subsequent analysis. In addition to the corpora and electronic collections presented in the previous chapter for the different stages of the language, supplementary data will be obtained from the two major historical dictionaries, the MED and the OED. It is hoped that the combination of these resources will serve to provide a comprehensive account of the diachronic development of death-related intensifiers over time.

Section 6.1 presents the evidence from the MED and the OED for the intensifiers *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*, which will provide an initial overview of their evolution. Section 6.2 shows the evidence from the HC and ARCHER, and is hence aimed to corroborate and further expand the information yielded by the two historical dictionaries for the long diachrony, that is, throughout the whole history of these intensifiers. Section 6.3 focuses on EModE and LModE, i.e., the periods in which the first intensifying meanings of the items under analysis are attested, and discusses the evidence provided by several corpora and databases. Section 6.4 is intended as an overview of the development of all the intensifiers examined across the different corpora and databases consulted. Finally, in the light of the data presented in the corpus-based analysis, in section 6.5 I set out the semantic evolution and the collocational behaviour of these death-related intensifiers through time from the perspective of grammaticalisation.

6.1. PRELIMINARY REMARKS: EVIDENCE FROM THE DICTIONARIES

6.1.1. *Dead*

The form *dead* can be an adjective, an adverb, and a noun. In what follows I concentrate exclusively on the adjectival and adverbial forms, given that these are the ones which will eventually develop intensifying uses. I therefore discard nominal occurrences of *dead* such as (6.1) below:

- (6.1) *Vysyte þe seke..And bere þe ded.*
visit the sick .. and bury the dead
(c. 1426. OED, s.v. *dead* n. B1b)

The adjectival form *dead*, originally participial, is a common Germanic adjective, and as such it is recorded already in the OE period, as in example (6.2), taken from *Beowulf*, with the same literal meaning as in PDE, i.e., ‘that has ceased to live; deprived of life’. This loss of life was not necessarily physical, but could also be spiritual, as recorded already from the ME period (example (6.3) below).

(6.2) *þa wæs Heregar dead, min yldra mæg*
 then be-PST-SG Heregar dead my older kinsman
 (c. 1100. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 1a)

(6.3) *Whanne ze weren dede in zoure giltis and synnes.*
 when you be-PST-PL dead in your guilt-PL and sin-PL
 (1382. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 4)

The state of being no longer alive was not exclusive of humans, but could equally concern animals, plants, or organs:

(6.4) *He had kytte [‘cut’] away the dede braunches fro the tre.* (1484. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 1c)

(6.5) *If..the skin be burnt dead.* (1643. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 1c)

Furthermore, adjectival *dead* could also apply to parts of the body, implying that these were benumbed or insensible, as in example (6.6), and to the state when somebody is in a swoon, or in a *dead sleep*, as in (6.7).

(6.6) *The messenger of so vnhappie newes, Would faine haue dyde: dead was his hart within.*
 (1590. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 2a)

(6.7) *þe dede slep him ouer-eode [‘overpowered’].* (c.1300. MED, s.v. *ded* adj. 4e)

A number of readings of *dead* which moved away from these literal meanings towards more metaphorical uses of the adjective arose also in the ME period. *Dead* could thus be used to refer to the countenance, for instance, implying that it was wan and pallid (6.8), or to a period of time in which there was no activity or sound (6.9), hence collocating often with nouns such as *calm* or *silence*, as in (6.10) and (6.11). In a metaphorical sense, it could also allude to a deadly or mortal hate for someone (see (6.12) below). In all these cases, the adjective does no longer imply a physical or spiritual death, but it denotes qualities or properties which rather suggest or are reminiscent of death, such as paleness, stillness, or lack of movement or activity. In the case of the collocation *dead hate*, it is implied that when we bear such an antipathy to a person, we wish his/her death.

Therefore, albeit in a more metaphorical sense, death is still in the background and can still be easily conjured in such instances.

- (6.8) *He can not but sobbe & wepe..with a **ded** visage.* (c. 1425. MED, s.v. *ded* adj. 3a)
- (6.9) *It was in the **deadist** time of winter.* (1573. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 18a)
- (6.10) *That we may not be tossed with boisterous Winds, nor overtaken by a sudden **dead** Calm.* (1673. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 26).
- (6.11) *A **dead** silence on the subject seems to have prevailed.* (1783. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 26).
- (6.12) *He come to þe kyng in a kene [‘fierce’] yre, Dang [‘beat’] hym derffly [‘fiercely’] in a **ded** hate.* (c. 1540. MED, s.v. *ded* adj. 6)

According to the OED, from the second half of the seventeenth century *dead* came to develop intensifying meanings (cf. (6.13)-(6.14) below). The original literal reading was cancelled and, therefore, no longer possible in these cases. In (6.13), for instance, the seed is fully grown and ripe, and in this case *dead* is a synonym for *complete* or *absolute*. Likewise, in (6.14) we are informed that the articles which were bought were very cheap, and *dead* here could also be paraphrased as *complete*, *absolute*, *downright*. It is then no longer possible to evoke death-related properties in this case, such as paleness, quietness, stillness, etc., as in examples (6.8)-(6.12) above.

- (6.13) *Till the seed..be come to a full and **dead** ripenesse.* (1660. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 31a)
- (6.14) *I had them a **dead** bargain.* (1766. OED, s.v. *dead* adj. I 31a)

The development of the adverb *dead* is comparable to that of its adjectival homonym, although the adverbial form could already occur with metaphorical uses from its early history, as is reflected in the meanings given for this word in both the MED and the OED: ‘as if dead’ and ‘in a manner, or to a degree, characteristic of or suggesting death’, respectively. The earliest example recorded in the dictionaries is from Gower’s *Confessio Amantis*, and dates from approximately 1393:¹

- (6.15) *Sche swounede in his hond, And, as who seith, lay **ded** oppressed.* (a. 1393. MED, s.v. *ded* adv. a)

In this case, *dead* modifies the participle form *oppressed* ‘overcome’, and hence both literal and more figurative readings of the adverb are possible. Since a person has fainted,

¹ Example (6.15) is recorded in both the MED and the OED.

apparently overcome with a particular feeling (*ded oppressed*), we might conjecture that the person has actually died, possibly as a consequence of a fall or of a heart attack. On the other hand, we might think that she has lost consciousness, but is not actually dead. If we read on, we realise that a literal interpretation is not plausible, since the character, Lucretia, commits suicide later on, after her rape. The MED gives a further example of an ambiguous reading of *dead*, in which it is not clear either whether the person is dead or actually alive:

- (6.16) *He was alle assmayhydde..* [‘stunned’] & *fell doune to þe grounde ded asswo.* (c. 1450. MED, s.v. *ded* adv. a)

In (6.16), taken from *Saint Editha*, we also read of a person blacking out, thus allowing for two possible interpretations of the adverb *dead*: a more literal one, with death as a result, and a non-literal one, in which there is no fatal outcome. It is only when we continue reading the text that we learn that the character is indeed alive. This episode relates the occasion in which King Cnut, who was not a good Christian, opened the cover of a coffin and saw the relics of Saint Editha. He was so shocked and stunned (*all assmayhydde*) that he actually fainted. The state of losing consciousness is, both symbolically and physiologically, close to death, and for this reason the reading of *dead* in (6.15) and (6.16) may be ambiguous without further contextual information.

In addition to these unclear contexts, the MED provides another example in which *dead* is used to refer to somebody’s eyes ((6.17) below). Interestingly, the eyes of the person in question cannot be literally dead, since (s)he has not passed away. What is assumed here is that the eyes of cowards hardly move (they are *of febill mevyng*) and are not as vivid as those of brave people. Therefore, in this quote from the medical treatise *Secreta secretorum*, *dead* shows incipient subjectivity, given that the writer, in characterising the eyes as *dede lokynge*, and this as a feature of a cowardly person, is expressing at the same time a negative appreciation of the situation.

- (6.17) *Lytill eighyn dede lokynge, lytille of stature and lowe, and of febill mevyng* [‘motion’]; *thes bene the tokenys of cowardy.* (a. 1500. MED, s.v. *ded* adv. a)

The early quotations of adverbial *dead* in the OED also reveal interesting parallels with the homonymous adjectival form, and in actual fact the collocates of the adjective and those of the adverb are very similar, hence collocations such as *dead slow*, *dead still*, or *dead calm*, which were also possible for the adjective:

- (6.18) *Leaden-footed griefe, Who neuer goes but with a **dead**-slowe pace.* (1596. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 1a)
- (6.19) *As **dead**-still as a marble man.* (1818. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 1a)
- (6.20) *In a few minutes it fell **dead** calm.* (1840. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 1a)

Finally, *dead* came to acquire intensifying meanings over time. The very first attestations of the adverb *dead* in this function date to the end of the sixteenth century, somewhat earlier than intensifying uses of the adjective *dead* (see above). The earliest example attested in the OED is given under (6.21), and additional examples are shown in (6.22)-(6.24). As in (6.13)-(6.14) above for adjectival *dead*, in these cases it is not possible either to assign death-related properties to the collocates of the adverb *dead*. In turn, *dead* is used here as a synonym for *utterly*, *entirely*, *absolutely*, and implies an outmost degree. It is, therefore, semantically bleached and does no longer admit a literal reading. In the examples below it could be paraphrased as *completely sure*, *fully ripe*, *extremely lame*, and *absolutely right*, respectively.

- (6.21) *Oh he is olde dogge at expounding, and **deade** sure at a Catechisme.* (1589. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 2a)
- (6.22) *Before the rice is '**dead** ripe'.* (1857. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 2a)
- (6.23) *Only one horse..which soon became **dead** lame.* (1860. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 2a)
- (6.24) *You're **dead** right in saying he's too young.* (1895. OED, s.v. *dead* C adv. 2a)

6.1.2. *Deadly*

As is the case with *dead*, *deadly* can be an adjective and an adverb, both forms having their roots in the OE period, as the MED and OED seem to suggest.

The adjective *deadly* originally meant 'subject to death, mortal', as evinced in collocations such as *deadly man* ((6.25)) or *deadly life* ((6.26)).

- (6.25) *Ʒæt an **deadlic** man mihte ealne middaneard oferseon.*
that a deadly man might all world observe
(c.1000. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 1a)
- (6.26) *Se lichame is **deadlic** þurh adames gylt*
the body be-PRS-SG deadly through Adam-G-SG gilt
(a. 1225. MED, s.v. *dedli* adj. 1a)

From its very earliest records, *deadly* could also apply to anything which could cause death, and hence be mortal. Thus, in (6.27) the victory is claimed to be *deadly* because it

was won after numerous battles, referring to the final victory of the Romans over the Samnites at the end of the Second Samnite War.² A deadly wound in (6.28) indicates a fatal wound, that is, a wound from which one dies. Similarly, *deadly* could also be applied to those sins which resulted in the spiritual death of the individual (6.29), as opposed to venial sins, which could be forgiven. In all these cases, then, *deadly* has a literal meaning.

(6.27) *Forbræcon Romane heora aþas .. and þær **deadlicne** siges geforan*
 break-PST-PL Romans the oath-PL .. and their deadly victory obtain-PST-PL
 ‘The Romans broke their oaths and gained their deadly victory’³
 (c.893. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 4a)

(6.28) *Non of hem had **dedeli** wounde.* (c. 1330. MED, s.v. *dedli* adj. 2a)

(6.29) *Lecherie..is on of þe zeuen **dyadliches** zennes,* (1340. MED, s.v. *dedli* adj. 3a)

From the ME period onwards, *deadly* could equally occur with non-literal and more metaphorical uses, in very similar contexts to those for adjectival and adverbial *dead*. It could thus apply to the countenance, suggesting extreme paleness, like that of a corpse (example (6.30) below). Darkness, gloom, dullness, or silence, which are figuratively associated with death, could also be qualified as deadly. Example (6.31), for instance, depicts an atmosphere of gloom and darkness; the terrifying roar of the waves breaking on the cliff in (6.32) could easily be taken as a presage of doom. Finally, in (6.33) the silence is also interpreted negatively and as a sign of a possible terrible fate. In all these cases, therefore, the adjective conveys negative affect, that is, the speaker’s negative appreciation of the situation, and *deadly* hence shows incipient subjectivity.

(6.30) *His coloure gan to chaunge in-to a **dedely** hewe.* (c.1400. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 7a)

(6.31) *þe folk in **dedeli** mirknes [‘darkness’] stadd.* (a. 1400. MED, s.v. *dedli* adj. 4a)

(6.32) *Ther were a fewe welles Came rennyng fro the clyves adoun, That made a **dedly**, slepyng soun.* (c.1450. MED, s.v. *dedli* adj. 4a)

(6.33) *There was such a **deadlie** silence in the porte.* (1600. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 7c)

From the second half of the seventeenth century *deadly* developed intensifying meanings (‘terrible’, ‘awful’), as in (6.34)-(6.35), for which a literal reading is more obscure. (6.34) describes a heavy drinker, and although drinking in excess can in actual fact have a fatal outcome, what is meant here is simply that this person drinks to excess,

² The Second Samnite War lasted from 326 to 304 B. C.

³ King Alfred’s *Anglo-Saxon version of the Compendious History of the World*: <https://archive.org/stream/kingalfredsangl00boswgoog#page/n348/mode/2up>

so the meaning of *deadly* in this case is much closer to that of an intensifier. This idea of excess is also present in (6.35), since the speaker criticises those who thirst for money and are in a terrible haste to become rich. Nonetheless, in none of these examples are death-related properties evoked, unlike in (6.30)-(6.33) above, which alluded to paleness, gloom, darkness, etc. *Deadly* in this case is semantically bleached and has therefore a more general meaning.

(6.34) *A **deadly** drinker he is, and grown exceeding fat.* (1660. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 8a)

(6.35) *Why such **deadly** haste to make money?* (1843. OED, s.v. *deadly* adj. 8a)

The adverb *deadly*, which is also recorded in OE, developed intensifying readings considerably earlier than its adjectival counterpart, since the intensifying adverb arose already in the fifteenth century (cf. (6.40)), while the first recorded uses of the intensifying adjective date to the second half of the seventeenth century (cf. (6.34) above). In origin, the adverb *deadly* was synonymous with *fatally*, *mortally* ((6.36)-(6.37) below), and, as was the case with the adjective, it also developed non-literal, metaphorical readings over time (6.38)-(6.39), eventually becoming an intensifier, as in (6.40)-(6.41). (6.36) and (6.37) thus show literal or descriptive uses of the adverb *deadly*: *deadliche idoruen feondes* ‘deadly wounded enemies’ suggests that these people had mortal wounds, and on this account they started to cry. In (6.37) the reader is prevented against shaving our beards, since that itself is a deadly sin, and hence results in spiritual death. By contrast, in (6.38) and (6.39) the adverb is no longer taken literally, though certain death-related aspects can still be called to mind: hating somebody so much might imply wishing that person’s death, and a *deadly pale face* is a face which is as colourless as a corpse. These examples, which show incipient subjectivity, count as subjective readings of the adverb. Finally, in (6.40) and (6.41) *deadly* does not admit a literal interpretation either, nor can death-related values be evoked. Instead, *deadly* here functions as a mere equivalent of *absolutely*, *extremely*: ‘extremely foolish’ and ‘extremely dear’, respectively. Thus, the quality of stupidity or foolishness is considered to be extreme in (6.40), and in (6.41) the cups are claimed to be pretty, yet very precious.

(6.36) *þe feondes* [‘fiends’], *þe þer weren **deadliche** idoruen* [‘wounded’], *fengen to zeien* [‘cry’]. (1220. MED, s.v. *dedli* adv. 1a)

(6.37) *Þei seye þat wee synne **dedly*** [F *mortelement*] *in schauynge* [‘shaving’] *oure berdes* [‘beards’]. (c.1425. MED, s.v. *dedli* adv. 2).

- (6.38) *Dedliche þat Jeu I hate.* (c. 1390. MED, s.v. *dedli* adv. 1a)
- (6.39) *Custaunce, with a dedly pale face..toward hir ship she wente.* (c. 1390. MED, s.v. *dedli* adv. 3)
- (6.40) *I þat es sa dedli dill* [‘foolish, stupid’]. (a.1400. OED, s.v. *deadly* adv. 4)
- (6.41) *These Cups are pretty, but they're deadly dear.* (a.1703. OED, s.v. *deadly* adv. 4)

6.1.3. *Mortal*

The adjective *mortal* is a borrowing from Anglo-Norman and Middle French *mortel*, the very first records of which date to the late fourteenth century. Unlike *dead* and *deadly*, however, which developed increasingly subjectivised meanings over time (cf. 6.1.1 and 6.1.2), *mortal* was adopted into the English language already with both literal and subjective meanings. Intensifying readings of *mortal* arose only later, in the eighteenth century.

With regard to the literal or descriptive meanings of *mortal*, this adjective was used as opposed to *divine*, hence applying to humans, to human life, the human body, etc. (cf. (6.42) below). It could also apply to anything which could cause death, such as an illness, a wound, a weapon, poison, or an armed conflict, as in (6.43)-(6.44). Examples (6.42) and (6.43) are taken from Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, the former from the *Parson’s Tale* and the latter from the *Tale of Melibee*. In (6.42) the body, once feeble and sick, is said to be immortal in Heaven, and in (6.43) two ladies have been wounded, the youngest of which has received five mortal or deadly injuries. (6.44) relates the renown of Julius Caesar in battle, whose mortal sword nobody can defeat.⁴ (6.45), in turn, refers to the deadly drinks prepared by Venus. This goddess, as Lydgate tells in his *Reason and sensuality*, took her name from the venom, and in this passage is said to have served delicious drinks to whoever went to her tavern. These, however, were treacherously poisoned. Finally, example (6.46) shows that, as was the case for the uses of *dead* and *deadly* (6.1.1 and 6.1.2 above), death need not necessarily be physical, but could also refer to the soul, especially after having committed a mortal or deadly sin.

- (6.42) *Ther as the body, that whilom* [‘once’] *was syk, freele* [‘feeble’] *and feble and mortal* [vrr. *mortell; dedely*], *is inmortal.* (c. 1390. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 1a)
- (6.43) *Thre of his olde foos..betten his wif and wounded his doghter with fyue mortal woundes.* (c. 1390. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 2a)

⁴ From Lydgate’s *Fall of Princes*.

- (6.44) *Thus gan encrece* [‘increase’] *the fame & the renoun Of Iulius conquest on se* [‘sea’] *& eek on londe, Whos **mortal** suerd* [‘sword’] *ther myht non withstonde.* (a. 1439. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 2b)
- (6.45) *But hir confecciouns alle..be so venymous..and so **mortal**.* (c. 1408. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 2a)
- (6.46) *Dedly synne..ycallyd ys **mortal** Be-cause hys hurtys ffynally Ben in effect verray dedly.* (a.1480. OED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 6a)

Parallel to these literal or descriptive meanings of the adjective, *mortal* had already in origin a number of non-literal and metaphorical readings showing some degree of subjectivity, which referred to semantic fields such as hatred, enmity, fear, or paleness, as was the case with *dead* and *deadly*. Hence, being a mortal foe or enemy of somebody and mortally hating someone implies wishing that person’s death, as in the case of Edippus’ sons, who were striving for the throne after their father’s demise (6.47), or of Palamon, who fights with his cousin Arcite and tells him that he is his deadly enemy in the passage in (6.48) from Chaucer’s *The Knight’s Tale*. A mortal face in (6.49) also suggests another feature which might recall death, namely paleness.

- (6.47) *Whan Edippus buryed was..his sones..be ful **mortal** hate For the crowne gonne to debate.* (a. 1450. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 3)
- (6.48) *For I am Palamon thy **mortal** [v.r. mortel] foo.* (c. 1385. OED, s.v. *mortal* adj. A 1a).
- (6.49) *But or she died she caste for to write..With pale face and a **mortal** cheere* [‘face’]. (a. 1439. MED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 5)

According to the OED, intensifying *mortal* was firstly attested in the eighteenth century. The uses of the adjective *mortal* as an intensifier, illustrated in (6.51)-(6.52), are most likely related to its prior use as an emphatic expletive, which is recorded from the early seventeenth century ((6.50) below), and which might have favoured the inference of extreme degree. In (6.50), for instance, the expletive *mortal* could be paraphrased as *by no means at all* or *by no earthly means*. In (6.51) *mortal* expresses extreme degree, implying that Lord Nottingham and the Duchess of Roxburgh made an enormous effort to persuade the Princess, and so does in (6.52), in which *a mortal hurry* can be substituted by *a terrible hurry*.

- (6.50) *Shall I goe fetch the ladies to the catastrophe?..Dav. By no **mortal** meanes.* (1616. OED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 7a)
- (6.51) *Lord Nottingham and the Duchess of Roxburgh take **mortal** pains to make the Princess think well of the Tories.* (1716. OED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 7a)

(6.52) *Well, it ain't that I'm in a **mortal** hurry.* (1864. OED, s.v. *mortal* adj. 7a)

The development of the adverb *mortally*, synonymous with its suffixed counterpart *mortally* (cf. 6.1.4), is similar to that of the adjective *mortal*, since it also developed intensifying meanings in the eighteenth century, though there are virtually no records for this adverb in the dictionaries. Thus, (6.53), also cited in the MED, (6.54), and (6.55) are literal meanings of the adverb. In (6.53), the sultanness (*sowdanesse*) is described as a scorpion. This quote from Chaucer's *The Man of Law Tale* tells the story of the sultan, who had fallen in love with Constance, the Christian daughter of the emperor of Rome, whom he later marries. The sultan had promised to convert to Christianity for his marriage, and the sultan's mother, the sultanness, who cannot withstand such a treason, resolves to kill all the Christian guests, including his son. (6.54) describes the danger of sirens for sailors, whose songs and music distract their attention from steering their ships and therefore they fall prey to them.⁵ The battle in (6.55) is said to be *mortal fierce*, that is, it was very bloody and there were many casualties. By contrast, examples (6.56) and (6.57) illustrate intensifying uses of *mortal*, meaning 'extremely'.

(6.53) **Mortall** [v.r. *mortaill*; *Heng: But this scorpion..The Sowdanesse..Caste vnder this ful mortally to styng*]. (c.1440. OED, s.v. *mortal* b adv.)

(6.54) *The pereyl ys so **mortal** strong.* (c.1450. OED, s.v. *mortal* b adv.)

(6.55) *The batayll was there **mortal** fyers & doubtous for bothe partyes.* (c.1500. OED, s.v. *mortal* b adv.)

(6.56) *St. John's well, after the name of a **mortal** cold bath in Nottinghamshire.* (1753. OED, s.v. *mortal* b adv.)

(6.57) *She is **mortal** fond of the book, and has got it by heart.* (1778. OED, s.v. *mortal* b adv.)

6.1.4. **Mortally**

The adverb *mortally* is formed on the adjective *mortal*, to which the suffix *-ly* is added. Like the adjective, the first records of this adverb date to the late fourteenth century (6.58). *Mortally* also had a literal meaning in origin ('fatally; in such a manner that death ensues'), referring to anything that could result in death, which could be physical (6.58)-(6.59) or spiritual (6.60). In (6.58), for instance, an example which was also recorded in the MED and OED entries for *mortal* (see (6.53) above), the sultanness has planned to kill the guests who have been invited to his son's wedding, and on this account she is

⁵ From Lydgate's *Reason and sensuality*.

characterised as a scorpion with a deadly sting. The same mortality is attributed to Scilla's dogs in (6.59), whose mortal bite can end fatally. This quotation is taken from Lydgate's *Pilgrimage of the life of man*. Scilla, also named Conspiracy, is one of the perils of the sea, since she sends hounds who bark at the sailors and bite them. Likewise, in (6.60) the protagonist confesses to have sinned deadly or mortally, on which account his soul will be condemned.

- (6.58) *Mortall* [v.r. mortail; *Heng: But this scorpion..The Sowdanesse..Caste vnder this ful mortally to styng*]. (c.1390. OED, s.v. *mortally* adv. 1)
- (6.59) *And thogh they berke nat On A man, fful mortally they byten kan*. (a.1475. OED, s.v. *mortally* adv. 1)
- (6.60) *I graunt my selfe therin to have..offended mortally, commyttyng* *deedly synne and dampnable*. (1526. OED, s.v. *mortally* adv. 1)

Conversely, (6.61)-(6.63) below show subjective readings of *mortally*, which were also present from the very early history of the adverb. In (6.61) the adverb collocates with the verb *hate*, and as we have seen for *dead(ly)* and *mortal* in the previous sections, death can be easily evoked in this particular context. In (6.62) the adverb modifies the verb phrases *make noise and crie*, and describes the scene from Lydgate's *Troy Book* in which Achilles kills Margariton, one of king Priam's bastard sons. After his death, the Trojans went home, making noise and crying. In this case, the Trojans felt such a deep pang of sorrow for the death of their hero that when they were leaving the city, they were unable to look at the battlefield. With Margariton's death, we might imagine, they too had been severely hurt and probably felt half dead psychologically.⁶ *Mortally irous* in (6.63) is analogous to *haten mortally* in (6.61). In this context the adjective *irous* might be ambiguous between 'wrathful, enraged', and 'fierce, cruel', given that it refers to king Thelamon, who bore a mortal hatred to king Philomene, whom he attacks with a spear.⁷

⁶ *Wher-þoru3* ['on account of which'] *Troyens my3t[e] not endure þe felde to hold, but home[-ward] gan hem hi3e* ['quickly'], *And mortally to make noise & crie*: http://xtf.lib.virginia.edu/xtf/view?docId=chadwyck_ep/uvaGenText/tei/chep_1.0284.xml;chunk.id=d3;toc.depth=10;brand=default.

⁷ *Ful proudly cam hym [for] to reskewe, And after sore gan for to purswe With a spere vp-on Philomene, And from his horse he leide hym on þe grene* ['field, grassy place, ground'], *Maugre* ['in spite of'] *his force, þe story telleþ þus, For he to hym was mortally Irous*: http://xtf.lib.virginia.edu/xtf/view?docId=chadwyck_ep/uvaGenText/tei/chep_1.0284.xml;chunk.id=d3;toc.depth=10;brand=default

- (6.61) *Ne telleth neuere no man in youre lyf How that another man hath dight* [‘have sexual intercourse with’] *his wyf; He wol yow haten **mortally*** [vr. mortelly], *certeyn.* (c. 1390. MED, s.v. *mortally* adv. b)
- (6.62) *Troyens..gan..**mortally** to make noise & criie..for þe deth of Margariton.* (c. 1425. MED, s.v. *mortally* adv. b)
- (6.63) *He to hym was **mortally** Irous.* (c. 1425. MED, s.v. *mortally* adv. b)

According to the OED, intensifying readings of *mortally* arose in the eighteenth century, as illustrated in (6.64)-(6.65), in which the adverb simply maximises the degree of a given quality, such as ugliness and dwarfism in (6.64) and the passion for fishing in (6.65):

- (6.64) *The people are in general **mortally** ugly and dwarfish.* (1789. OED, s.v. *mortally* adv. 5)
- (6.65) *I **mortally** love to fish—just any kind of fishin’.* (1975. OED, s.v. *mortally* adv. 5)

6.1.5. To death

The prepositional phrase *to death* is attested with a literal meaning from the OE period, while its first intensifying uses emerged centuries later. Thus, *to death* modified at first verbs which expressed a violent action, including those which already meant ‘to kill’, such as stoning somebody to death or slaying somebody:

- (6.66) *He sloh* [‘slew’] *him wið a stan **to deaðe**.* (c. 1225. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1a)
- (6.67) *And..a-quellen* [‘slew’] *hine **to deden**.* (c. 1275. MED, s.v. *deth* n. 2c)

Likewise, it could also modify verbs which expressed legal punishment, such as *condemn*, *sentence*, or *deem* (‘give or pronounce judgement’):

- (6.68) *Hig genyberiað hyne **to deape***
they condemn-PRES-PL he-ACC.M.SG to death
(OE. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1b)
- (6.69) *Thow hast thy felawe slayn, For which I deme thee **to the deeth** certeyn.* (c. 1395. MED, s.v. *deth* n. 3c)

To death could also appear with adjectives or participles indicating sickness or injury, as a synonym for *mortally*:

- (6.70) ***To the deth** he wounded was.* (a. 1450. MED, s.v. *deth* n. 3c)

- (6.71) *Fynally Pericles beinge sycke vnto death, the noble men commen vnto him to comforte hym.* (1542. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1c)

In the context of a battle, war, duel, etc., *to death* implied that this was fought until the end of one's life:

- (6.72) *In greate sufferance of persecusyon euen to the death.* (1546. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P2c)

However, *to death* could also occur from its very earliest records with non-literal and metaphorical uses, collocating with verbs expressing fear or worries, as in the OE translation of the *Vindicta Salvatoris* in (6.73), or with other verbs or adjectives of feeling, such as the verb *hate* in (6.64) or the adjective *sorrowful* in (6.75). In all these examples, then, *to death* shows traces of incipient subjectivity.

- (6.73) *Ʒa Ʒa cyningas..Ʒæt gehyrdon [‘heard’], hig wæron swyðe gedrefede [‘very disturbed’] and to deaðe afærede [‘afraid to death’].* (OE. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1b)
- (6.74) *Herodias him hated to ded.* (a. 1400. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1b)
- (6.75) *My soule is sorrowful til to the deth.* (c. 1384. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P2b)

It is in the course of the sixteenth century that *to death* appeared to show its first uses as an intensifier meaning ‘extremely’, as in (6.76)-(6.78):

- (6.76) *Clodius is inamoured to dead of a certaine yong woman.* (1583. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1(C)b)
- (6.77) *Some almost laugh’d themselves to dead.* (1806. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1(C)b)
- (6.78) *I’m sorry! I’m fucking sorry to death! Okay?* (1997. OED, s.v. *death* n. phrases P1(C)b)

In the light of the dictionary data presented above for the different intensifiers examined in the present dissertation, it seems that *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* show different degrees of grammaticalisation in PDE, even though they can all be used with intensifying uses. The cline suggested in the literature for the development of intensifying meanings, namely descriptive > affective > intensifying (cf. Adamson 2000: 55 and section 4.1.1.2), must be examined more closely considering corpus data, which will hopefully throw light on the rise of these different readings and on how these might be related.

6.2. TRACING THE HISTORY OF INTENSIFIERS: THE LONG DIACHRONY

6.2.1. Preliminary considerations

The HC and ARCHER, covering from OE to EModE, and from the EModE to the PDE, respectively, are two reference corpora particularly suitable for the study of the long diachrony.⁸ Thus, section 6.2 discusses the data from these two corpora for each of the intensifiers individually, with the aim of offering a full picture of the evolution of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* across time.

Given that these corpora cover a time span characterised by substantial spelling variation, the search for these intensifiers was carried out using the wildcard *, hence allowing for a number of orthographic variants of the items, among many others *deadlican*, *deedli*, *mourtal*, or *to deathe*. The asterisk sign has the obvious advantage that one simple search yields all forms of the matching words, but the main drawback is perhaps that this can leave us with many tokens to prune manually. This is in fact the case of *dead*. Searching for *d*d** in the corpora would actually allow for potential spellings of the form such as *deide* or *deade*, but would also result in a high number of false positives to be pruned manually. For this reason, for *dead* I have consulted its different spellings in the OED and then searched for each of them individually in the two corpora. Furthermore, it should be noted that I have disregarded the OE period in the case of *dead*. The searches for this form thus correspond exclusively to ME and EModE. Looking at the different spellings of this word in OE returned many hits of *dead* in predicative position as well as of the noun phrase *the dead*. Therefore, the number of relevant tokens for analysis turned out to be very low. Moreover, the intensifying function of *deadly*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* did not arise at least until ME (cf. section 6.1), so excluding the OE period in this case seemed justified.

As already suggested in chapter 5, devoted to the methodology (cf. section 5.3), the tool which was used to manage the total number of occurrences in the corpora was WordSmith Concordancer. In addition to the Concordance tool, I have used the Wordlist function, which allowed me to check for potential spellings of the items under study that are not recorded in the OED. Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2 below illustrate two such WordSmith concordances, specifically those corresponding to the adjective *deadly* in the HC and to *to death* in ARCHER 3.2. The concordances for the different intensifiers were

⁸ For a detailed description of these corpora, see sections 5.2.2.1 and 5.2.2.2 in chapter 5.

then exported to an Excel database for their analysis, as shown in Figure 6.3 for *deadly* in the HC and Figure 6.4 for *to death* in ARCHER.

Figure 6.1. Concordance for *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	Sent	Para	Para	Para	Para	Para	Date	%
1	without resistance, conceived on a deadly Feud, partly out of revenge of	2.587	58	69'	0	46'	0	46'	0	46'	CETRAV3B 1991/dic./30	47%
2	answers to holde your self content. A deadly grief vnto me, and moch more	7.681	34	44'	0	65'	0	65'	0	65'	CEPRIV1 1991/dic./30	65%
3	behinde him, like a man pursued with a deadly weapon, fearing euey twinkling	2.932	89	85'	0	38'	0	38'	0	38'	CEFICT2B 1991/dic./30	38%
4	than God, yet is it venial synne; and deedly synne when the love of any	8.093	29'	62'	0	88'	0	88'	0	88'	CMCTPROS 1991/dic./30	88%
5	munekes, +de bie+d # hersum ane deadliche manne al swa hit w+are	7.870	30	43'	0	68'	0	68'	0	68'	CMVICES1 1991/dic./30	68%
6	, on +ton w+as getacnod +t+at he w+as deadlic mon, ond +t+at he +turb his	716	36	57'	0	5%	0	5%	0	5%	COMARTYR 1991/dic./30	6%
7	ham to spananne to him, & on +dissum deadlican fl+asce he hine selfne	13.486	32	60'	0	75'	0	75'	0	75'	COCURA 1991/dic./30	75%
8	seo lyft +te we on lybba+d on +disum deadlicum life. Swa swa fixas cwela+d	5.065	19	96'	0	86'	0	86'	0	86'	COTEMPO 1991/dic./30	86%
9	n+afre ne atoria+d. +tonne man +done deadlican lichaman mid brosiendlicum	2.845	56	72'	0	53'	0	53'	0	53'	COAELHOM 1991/dic./30	54%
10	+ta tunglu her lyhta+ on +dysse deadlican worolde. [MA21 A 17]	6.216	27	99'	0	47'	0	47'	0	47'	COMARTYR 1991/dic./30	47%
11	& tintreohen +te alre meast derue +t ei deadlich flesch mahe drehen & drahen	4.022	87	23'	0	79'	0	79'	0	79'	CMKATHE 1991/dic./30	79%
12	of hem wole do, +toug it were fully deedi synne. And whanne it is +tus	4.821	17	97'	0	96'	0	96'	0	96'	CMHILTON 1991/dic./30	96%
13	+t+at alle vre treowe heom healden deadliche ifoan. And for +t+at we	278	13	95'	0	64'	0	64'	0	64'	CMDOCU2 1991/dic./30	64%
14	+t he dude +treo utnume heaued & deadliche sunnen o Bersabees	1.459	61	48'	0	14'	0	14'	0	14'	CMANCRE 1991/dic./30	14%

Figure 6.2. Concordance for *to death* in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	Sent	Para	Para	Para	Para	Para	Date	%
7	you, if only for the sake of your family, to desist. This is certainly the wildest	3.066	32	94'	0	99'	0	99'	0	99'	1899mart_d6 2013/dic./20	99%
8	, at the same time, with being frozen to death , buried in the snow, and	114	4	38'	0	53'	0	53'	0	53'	1717mmon_ 2013/dic./20	64%
9	, whereas he would have been frozen to death before he made the first post	300	8	86'	0	51'	0	51'	0	51'	1784walp_x4 2013/dic./20	54%
10	primary affection with T Gambiense to death from sleeping sickness. Two	697	28	93'	0	43'	0	43'	0	43'	1905mars_m 2013/dic./20	44%
11	CALIBAN Lo, lo, again! bite him to death , I prithe. STEPHANO	1.218	81	73'	0	38'	0	38'	0	38'	1611shak_d 2013/dic./20	38%
12	side of the water; besides I am hurried to death , and my head swims with that	685	15	46'	0	86'	0	86'	0	86'	1718mmon_ 2013/dic./20	87%
13	It is as if one's heart were beating itself to death in some empty hollow. LORD	2.393	20	69'	0	74'	0	74'	0	74'	1895wild_d6l 2013/dic./20	74%
14	laughed at, and almost josseld to death , never did any man take soe	898	21	66'	0	83'	0	83'	0	83'	1658lock_x2l 2013/dic./20	85%
15	trod upon a Snake, which stings me to death! Apart. PEREGRINE. Sure,	3.753	35	92'	0	87'	0	87'	0	87'	1671cany_d2 2013/dic./20	87%
16	see that every day brings me nearer to death ; that death is the end of my	601	13	57'	0	28'	0	28'	0	28'	17xxwils_h3b 2013/dic./20	29%
17	. And can't you avoid being press'd to death , like a felon who refuses to	519	53	35'	0	20'	0	20'	0	20'	1775kell_d4t 2013/dic./20	21%
18	injuriously treated, rejected, and put to death . But, granting the former	1.597	38	99'	0	76'	0	76'	0	76'	1732berk_h3 2013/dic./20	76%
19	amaze me. The informer Aretinus put to death for yielding him a true	109	11	13'	0	3%	0	3%	0	3%	1626mass_d 2013/dic./20	5%
20	had not that Privilege; I was lawfully put to death . In short, a Physician set me	359	13	94'	0	7%	0	7%	0	7%	1743fiel_f3b 2013/dic./20	8%
21	and the other disciples were in fact put to death , lest we be left under any	1.028	40	56'	0	48'	0	48'	0	48'	197xpowe_h 2013/dic./20	49%
22	obscenely, condemning the paper-seller to death . They had tea together. 'And	3.362	20	90'	0	84'	0	84'	0	84'	1973trev_f8b 2013/dic./20	84%
23	in this very gross world, and sick to death at the notion of things	486	20	58'	0	93'	0	93'	0	93'	1891dows_xl 2013/dic./20	91%
24	confusion, that I was almost squeezed to death . -- But if their operas are thus	424	14	98'	0	52'	0	52'	0	52'	1716mmon_ 2013/dic./20	55%
25	Nations, but 400 of them were starv'd to Death , and their City remain'd in	1.833	49	69'	0	82'	0	82'	0	82'	1708cook_j3 2013/dic./20	82%
26	on at the charge, and put 300 of them to death with the bayonet. At the time	1.299	50	94'	0	53'	0	53'	0	53'	1802joh2_n5 2013/dic./20	54%
27	sit in a fiery ring and sting themselves to death . It is what I am doing. In the	59	2	95'	0	11'	0	11'	0	11'	1891dows_xl 2013/dic./20	21%

Figure 6.3. Excel file for *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meanin	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	es*), and robbing the Churches without resistance, conceived	feud	S neg	N	N	E3		CETRAV3E
2	about, and with my former # answers to holde your self conte	grief	S neg	N	N	E1		CEPRIV-
3	ere another. euer # looking behinde him, like a man pursued w	weapon	D neu	N	N	E2		CEFICT2E
4	ugh that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne: a	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
5	- +treall. Al swa hie de+d +dese munekes, +de bie+d # hersu	man	D neu	N	N	M1		CMVICES-
6	da him brohte myrnan +ta wyr, on +ton w+as getacnod +t+at	man	D neu	N	N	O3		COMARTYF
7	e, & oft sende his englas us ham to spananne to him, & on +c	flesh	D neu	N	N	O2		COCURF-
8	& innate+d ure sawil, ac is seo lyft +te we on lybba+d on +d	life	D neu	N	N	O3		COTEMPF-
9	hora sawla gereordige +te n+afre ne atoria+d. +tonne man	lichama	D neu	N	N	O3		COAELHON
10	on his endebrydnesse, ac +tenden +ta tunglu her lyhta+ on +	world	D neu	N	N	O3		COMARTYF
11	bi+tench me anan teonen & tintreohen +te alre meast derue +	flesh	D neu	N	N	M1		CMKATHE
12	+ter in ony +ting +tat ne+ter of hem wole do, +toug it were fu	sin	D neg	N	N	M4		CMHILTO-
13	on+genes, we willen and hoaten +t+at alle vre treowe heom he	foe	S neg	N	N	M2		CMDOCU-
14	orte & for+get him seoluen. swa +t he dude +treo utnume hee	sin	D neg	N	N	M1		CMANCRE
15	oue: and among the rest here hee forbiddeth Vsurie, as one of	enemy	S neg	N	N	E2		CESERM2E
16	it time+d de dei, ear +ten me slepe. Hwa durste slepen hwil hi	foe	S neg	N	N	M1		CMANCRE
17	nnum swa s+a mid y+dum. [OC19 A 13] Ic w+as synna geor	lust	D neg	N	N	O3	eager for sin & on deadly lust	COMARTYF
18	that he hath to Jhesu Crist, and in this wise skippeh venial int	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
19	soule with venial synnes, the moore is he enclyned to fallen in	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
20	th any creature moore than Jhesu Crist oure Creatour, thanne	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
21	+at +tu nanne brydquman n+afre me ne namige, ne of minium	lichama	D neu	N	N	O3	postponed	COAELVE
22	hwinges vel +deah +t+at & gidulo aw+afre memisco & trofo l	life	D neu	N	N	O3	postponed	CODURHAN
23	s paynes dyd wash and wype, & clense our soules from euey	sin	D neg	N	N	E1		CESERM14
24	nchyng, algates the ship is dreynt. Right so fareth it somtym	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE

Figure 6.4. Excel file for *to death* in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	roformed the animal to death. Post mortem Exami	chloroform	D neg		V	19.2	Make (someone) unconscious with c	1873ferr_s6b.tx
2	ce Her mother burned to death in fire. Across that w	burned	D neg		P	20.2		1968donl_f8b.tx
3	Prisoner condemned to Death ever begged so hea	condemned	D neg		P	18.1		1743fiel_f3b.tx
4	Three men, condemned to death at the last sessio	condemned	D neg		P	19.2		1872glia1_n6b.tx
5	me, with being frozen to death, buried in the snow, a	frozen	D neg		P	18.1		1717mmon_x3b.tx
6	would have been frozen to death before he made th	frozen	D neg		P	18.2		1784walp_x4b.tx
7	o, lo, again! bite him to death, I prthee. STEPHAN	bite	D neg		V	17.1		1611shak_d1b.tx
8	besides I am hurried to death, and my head swims	hurried	I neu		A	18.1		1718mmon_x3b.tx
9	, and almost jossed to death, never did any man ta	jostle	S neg		V	17.2	elbow, hustle' (OED)	1658lock_x2b.tx
10	ke, which stings me to death! Apart. PEREGRINE.	sting	D neg		V	17.2		1671cary_d2b.tx
11	ning the paper-seller to death. They had tea togeth	condemn	D neg		V	20.2		1973trev_f8b.tx
12	ross world, and sick to death at the notion of things	sick	S neg		A	19.2		1891dows_x8b.tx
13	at I was almost squeezed to death. -- But if their op	squeeze	D neg		V	18.1		1716mmon_x3b.tx
14	of them were starv'd to Death, and their City remai	starve	D neg		V	18.1		1708cook_f3b.tx
15	my head was tickled to death, as my nurse used to	tickled	I pos		A	18.1		1720dfoe_f3b.tx
16	it all, and am tired to death, but as I know you expe	tired	S neg		A	18.2		1762len3_x4b.tx
17	vents, for I'm tired to death! Five and twenty miles f	tired	S neg		A	19.1		1839plan_d5b.tx
18	ndidates are worried to death with applicants for wo	worried	S neg		A	20.1		1907pall_n7b.tx

The Excel spreadsheet records the data about the different collocations for their semantic analysis (cf. Figure 6.3 and Figure 6.4 above). Thus, the first column corresponds to the example number and the second to the actual concordance. The third column indicates the collocation which is subject of analysis, while the remaining columns provide information about the type of meaning of the collocation, its semantic prosody, the type of word which the item is modifying, the period of the example in question, comments, and file name.

Before actually delving into the collocational behaviour of each of the intensifiers at issue in the two corpora, and, hence, into their long-term development (cf. sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 below), the overall figures for *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* in the HC and ARCHER are provided. Table 6.1 below summarises the total number of potential tokens for each of these items individually, in addition to the total number of examples which were finally considered for analysis.

Table 6.1. Raw figures and total number of examples analysed in the HC and ARCHER

	HC		ARCHER	
	Raw figures	Total analysed	Raw figures	Total analysed
<i>dead</i> (adj.)	691	45	388	77
<i>dead</i> (adv.)	0	0	1	1
<i>deadly</i> (adj.)	98	34	56	18
<i>deadly</i> (adv.)	3	3	3	3
<i>mortal</i> (adj.)	22	20	55	33
<i>mortal</i> (adv.)	0	0	1	1
<i>mortally</i>	3	3	6	6
<i>to death</i>	19	6	33	18

As can be gathered from the difference between the raw figures and the total of examples analysed, a considerable number of occurrences had to be discarded. Thus, I have not taken into consideration those hits in which *dead* or *mortal* functioned as nouns, as in (6.79) and (6.80) below.

- (6.79) *Verily, verily, I say vnto you, The houre is coming, & now is, when the **dead** shall heare the voice of the Sonne of God: and they that heare, shall liue.* (HC. 1570-1640. *The Holy Bible*)
- (6.80) *This stranger was doubtless regarded by the villains as a preternatural agent, she proved however, a mere **mortal**, frail and palpable as ourselves.* (ARCHER. 1809. William Dimond. *The foundling of the forest*. Act 11, scene 1).

I have also disregarded those examples in which the item in question appeared as part of a proper noun or a set phrase, as in (6.81)-(6.82). For instance, in (6.81) *dead* is part of the noun phrase *the Dead Sea*, the salt lake in the Rift Valley; in (6.82) *put to death* is itself a synonym of *kill*. Finally, in (6.83) *dede*, one of the manifold spellings of *dead*, is part of the originally compound form *alms-deed*. *Dede*, therefore, is not a variant of the adjective *dead*, but the noun *deed* in combination with the noun *alms*.

- (6.81) *The discovery of this “pocket war” was made during a tour of Israeli-occupied Jordan, a large tract of land west of the Jordan River and the **Dead Sea**.* (ARCHER. 1967. *The Sunday Times* 18/06/1967)
- (6.82) *Little though we may like it, he meant what he said, and the tradition of the Church has insisted that he and the other disciples were in fact put **to death**, [...]* (ARCHER. 1977. Enoch Powell. *Wrestling with the angel*)
- (6.83) *Thys fast plesyth God more and helpeth þe soule hegly [‘highly’]; for ryght as watyr quenchyth fyre, ryght so almys-**dede** quenchyth synne.* (HC. John Mirk. 1350-1420. *Mirk’s festial: A collection of homilies*)

Moreover, I have also left out those occurrences of the items which appeared in predicative position, as in (6.84) and (6.85).

- (6.84) *No, it is but a Venial Sinne; if it be any, it is not **deadly**.* (HC. 1554. *The trial of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton Knight, in the guildhall of London, for high treason*)
- (6.85) *but those Calues which fall in (^October, Nouember^), or any time of the depth of winter may well be reared vp for breed [...], prouided that you reare not vp any calues which are calued in the prime daies, for they generally are subiect to the disease of the sturdie,⁹ which is dangerous and **mortal**.* (HC. 1615. Gervase Markham. *Contrey contentments*)

Finally, searching for the intensifiers under analysis using the wildcard * in the HC and ARCHER also yields a considerable number of instances which do not correspond to the relevant forms, but to completely unrelated words. This is the case of (6.86) and (6.87), featuring the adverbs *designedly* and *deservedly*. These forms were obviously discarded.

⁹ ‘A brain-disease in sheep and cattle, which makes them run round and round; the turnsick’ (OED, s.v. *sturdy* B. n.1a).

- (6.86) *The next day, Trefry ask'd Caesar to walk when the heat was allay'd, and **designedly** carry'd him by the cottage of the fair slave; [...]* (HC. 1640-1710. Aphra Ben. *Oroonoko*)
- (6.87) *[...] I know a young woman of quality who is **deservedly** the object of public admiration, and yet has absented herself from all her admirers several evenings, and chosen a perfect retirement with Sir Charles; (ARCHER. 1754. Sarah Fielding. *Letter to Mr. Samuel Richardson*, July 6th 1754)*

In conclusion, I have only taken into account those cases in which *dead(ly)* and *mortal(ly)* were modifying an adjacent noun or adjective. In the case of the prepositional phrase *to death*, I considered those examples in which it modified other elements such as a participial form (*frozen*), an adjective (*tired*), or a verb (*condemn*). We must bear in mind that the syntax of *to death* differs from that of the other forms, in the sense that the elements which are modified by this phrase appear postposed rather than preposed. (6.88)-(6.90) below illustrate the type of examples which were considered for analysis in this piece of research. In (6.88) *to death* modifies the participial item *starv'd*; in (6.89) the adjective *dead* modifies the noun *person*, and, finally, in (6.90) *mortal* is modifying the noun *enemy*.

- (6.88) *He touch'd at King Philip's City, the Place the Spaniards would have fortify'd for securing that Passage to themselves against all other Nations, but 400 of them were starv'd **to Death**, and their City remain'd in Ruins; (ARCHER. 1708. Edward Cooke. *A voyage to the South Sea, and round the world, perform'd in the years 1708, 1709, 1710, and 1711*)*
- (6.89) *It may be worth while to remark, that his mother, from his complaining so much of the pain in the arm, examined it, and observed that, between the shoulder-top, and down towards the elbow, the skin was of a yellowish hue, having both the appearance and feel of that of a **dead** person. (ARCHER. 1775. Archibald Bathie. *The History of a Case of the Rabies Canin*)*
- (6.90) *And farther he shewyd that of all theyse matiers he sent the sayde Duke knowlege into Fraunce by one named Roger Smert admonastyng hym to prouyde by his wysedome to withsta~de the Kynges malyce / which shewyd hym to be his **mortall** enemye / (HC. 1500-1570. CEHIST1B. Robert Fabyan. *The new chronicles of England and France*)*

6.2.2. The HC

6.2.2.1. *Dead*

As indicated in Table 6.1 above, the HC yielded a total of 45 examples of true positives of *dead*, all of which correspond to the adjectival form. All the tokens were stored in an Excel spreadsheet with the relevant data for the collocational study, as shown in Figure 6.5.

Figure 6.5. *Dead* (adj.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meani	Semantic prosod	Modifier of	Period	Comments	File
1	h And there laye reynart the foxe dou on the # grounde lyke a dede i	caitiff	D	neg	N	M4		CMREYNAR
2	and wylst nat that he had slayne hym. Than he saw hym lye as a dede	corpse	D	neg	N	M4	spelling: corse	CMMALORY
3	s passed away, +Te body es noight bot erthe and clay, +Tat es a dede	thing	D	neu	N	M3		CMPRICK
4	helpe +tam +tat lyes or er in presoun. The Seound es, to bery dede r	man	D	neu	N	M4		CMGAYTRY
5	meruailes he wald +Dat many men till his troth war cald. +Dis dede	corpse	D	neg	N	M3		CMNORHOM
6	had went it had ben y=e= deuyll beryng away the spryte of y=e= dede	man	D	neu	N	E1		CEFICTIA
7	one all in whyte knakkyng nottes/ he had went it had bene y=e= dede	man	D	neu	N	E1		CEFICTIA
8	nement is gud for all wondis & to gedir new flesche, & fordose dede fit	flesh	D	neu	N	M4		CMTHORN
9	+He angels trompe sowme+in is eene sayinge +tus, +Ryse, +ge dede	man	D	neu	N	M4		CMROYAL
10	of dede Knight of Engeland, and understode wel +tat neuer +ge dede	thing	D	neu	N	M3		CMBRUT3
11	And with-outen +te lyfe is na felying, For felying may be in na dede th	thing	D	neu	N	M3		CMPRICK
12	+tis blame afir +tou telles, For I wrought neuere in worde nor dede Thy	thing	D	neu	N	M4		CMYORK
13	it passu+t # alle o+tre, And so in +tis +gate ben two maner of dede m	man	D	neu	N	M3		CMWYCSE
14	e' And so xj M slov eyreche odyr and fel dede for stynche of dede m	man	D	neu	N	M4		CMSIEGE
15	or +ter treysson in +ter boddyse, that +te strettys lay ful of dede men.	man	D	neu	N	M4		CMSIEGE
16	kape yt, qwat that a man dreme that nyght, but yf yt were off dede bo	body	D	neu	N	M4		CMMETHAM
17	emplaster clenese wondis and sowdis +tam to-gedir & dose owte der	flesh	D	neu	N	M4		CMTHORN
18	ues +ter of was agreued And smot of king Grandir is heued, +Te dede	corpse	D	neg	N	M2		CMBEVIS
19	y hilde a verray martir, and # worschipped +te sepulchre of +te dede m	man	D	neu	N	M3		CMPOLYCH
20	re stooden*) stytle to see +te eende. (*And Cryst seyde to +te dede b	body	D	neu	N	M3		CMWYCSE
21	ade a grett vought, and ther be vij holes a bowgitt to cast the Dede Cr	body	D	neu	N	E1		CETRAV1B
22	withall he feared. And than he sawe a fayre swerde lye by the dede i	knight	D	neu	N	M4		CMMALORY
23	one nyght theasas ye do another, and ye go # to ony bedde the dede	body	D	neu	N	M4		CMMALORY
24	of Camelot on horsebacke as much as he myght, and founde the de	body	D	neu	N	M4		CMMALORY

In the 45 examples analysed, *dead* occurs in combination with nouns in a total of ten different collocations, as illustrated in Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 below for the ME and EModE periods, respectively. Note that the majority of the attestations of *dead* date to the ME period (41 tokens; 91.11%), while only four of the occurrences of the adjective correspond to EModE (8.88%). This dramatic drop in the use of the adjective *dead* from the ME to EModE is also highly statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0; $p < 0.01$).¹⁰ Nonetheless, if we consider the decrease in the absolute frequencies of the collocations which are attested in both ME and EModE, in particular *dead body* and *dead man*, this difference is, in turn, not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.128235; $p < 0.01$ in the case of *dead body* and Fisher's exact test = 0.0616; $p < 0.01$ in the case of *dead man*).

Table 6.2. The collocations of *dead* (adj.) in ME

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>dead body</i>	6	85.71	9.86	7
<i>dead brother</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
<i>dead caitiff</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
<i>dead corpse</i>	3	100.00	4.93	3
<i>dead fermour</i>	2	100.00	3.29	2
<i>dead flesh</i>	9	100.00	14.79	9
<i>dead knight</i>	2	100.00	3.29	2
<i>dead lichame</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
<i>dead man</i>	11	78.57	18.08	14
<i>dead thing</i>	5	100.00	8.22	5
Total	41	91.11	67.37	45

¹⁰ It should be remembered that the closer the p -value is to 0, the more statistically significant it will be.

Table 6.3. The collocations of *dead* (adj.) in EModE¹¹

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>dead body</i>	1	14.29	1.81	7
<i>dead man</i>	3	21.43	5.44	14
Total	4	8.88	7.26	45

Moreover, from the list of collocations of *dead* in Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 above, it becomes apparent that it functioned exclusively as a noun modifier in the two periods analysed, which is only natural if we bear in mind that the only form attested in the corpus is the adjective. Regarding the types of meanings, *dead* had only descriptive or literal meanings in both ME and EModE. The adjective *dead* was thus used to modify a noun referent which was said to be no longer alive, such as a bailiff (*fermour*), a knight, a corpse, or flesh. In all these examples *dead* has a literal meaning: ‘lifeless, showing no sign of life’, as shown in examples (6.91)-(6.93), in which it modifies the nouns *caitiff*, *knight*, and *man*, respectively:

- (6.91) *And there laye reynart the foxe down on the grounde lyke a dede keytyf/* (CMREYNAR. 1420-1500. William Caxton. *The history of Reynard the fox*)
- (6.92) *Hourc Ladie forȝate hym not, but graciously herd is prayoure and anon send downe an aungell and reysed a ded knyȝthe called Sir Mercury, þe wiche was don to dethe by þis cursed Iulian.* (CMROYAL. 1350- 1420. *Middle English sermons*)
- (6.93) [...] *and þe sely [‘holy’] men bere an honde þat it was for þe holynesse of þat man, þat þey hilde a verray martir, and worschipped þe sepulcre of þe dede man wiþ solempne wacches [‘wakes’] and ȝiftes;* (CMPOLYCH. 1350-1420. John Trevisa. *Polychronicon*)

As mentioned in 5.3.2, in my collocational analysis I will use a number of statistical tests to measure the degree of collocational strength of the different intensifiers analysed and their collocates. In order to avoid possible hapax legomena and unusual word combinations, I have set a minimum threshold frequency of 3 for both the collocate, that is, the word which combines with the intensifier, and the collocation (the combination of the node, in this case *dead*, and its collocates). Moreover, I have considerably narrowed the collocation window, which has been reduced to one collocate to the right, and zero collocates to the left. In other words, I am interested exclusively in the word which appears immediately after the node *dead*. As shown in Table 6.2 and Table 6.3 above, adjectival *dead* occurred in the HC in a total of ten different collocations: *dead body*, *dead brother*, *dead caitiff*, *dead corpse*, *dead fermour*, *dead flesh*, *dead knight*, *dead lichame*,

¹¹ All the tokens of the adjective were recorded in the first period, corresponding to 1500-1570.

dead man, and *dead thing*. However, only five of these collocations are attested three times or more, the minimum collocation cut-off point. These collocations are *dead body*, *dead corpse*, *dead flesh*, *dead man*, and *dead thing*. If we consider the results from the relevant statistical tests, shown in Table 6.4 below, we notice that these five collocations are all statistically significant, except for *dead thing*.

Table 6.4. Standardised scores for *dead* (adj.) in the HC

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead body</i>	6.096	2.842	8.456	15.576
<i>dead brother</i>	0.551	0.785	0.785	0.249
<i>dead caitiff</i>	13.896	7.608	7.608	8.828
<i>dead corpse</i>	29.528	8.193	11.363	29.386
<i>dead fermour</i>	22.721	8.023	10.023	19.011
<i>dead flesh</i>	13.437	4.460	10.800	38.703
<i>dead knight</i>	0.959	0.960	2.960	0.720
<i>dead lichame</i>	3.697	3.964	3.964	3.641
<i>dead man</i>	7.054	2.424	10.039	24.334
<i>dead thing</i>	1.360	0.864	5.508	1.487

Thus, in regard to the first measure, the so-called z-score, this value should be at least 2.576 for a collocation to be counted as statistically significant (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 204), and this is actually the case for all these collocations but for *dead thing*. The mutual information values (*MI*), as Brezina, McEnery, and Wattam (2015: 159) point out, tend to emphasise rare combinations in a given corpus, and this explains why this formula is typically accompanied by the *MI3* formula. *MI3* is actually the *MI* formula taken to the power of 3, which also gives more weight to frequent events (Cantos-Gómez 2013: 207). The collocations *dead caitiff* and *dead fermour*, which occurred once and twice in the corpus, respectively, have a high *MI* score (7.6 and 8.0) despite their low frequency. Moreover, if we consider the isolated frequencies of these collocates of *dead*, we see that neither *fermour* nor *caitiff* are particularly common words in the HC, occurring only six and four times, respectively. Even so, the different statistical measures indicate that the occurrence of these words in combination is to be considered as statistically significant. If we consider now the *MI* scores for the relevant collocations, only *dead corpse* and *dead flesh* reach the cut-off value of 3. *Dead body*, *dead man*, and *dead thing* have all lower

scores and are not considered statistically significant according to this test. The reason for this is that these collocates alone have a much higher token frequency. However, if we turn to the *MI3* formula, it appears that all the five collocations, including *dead thing*, are statistically significant, since they all reach the threshold level of 4.75. The last statistical test used to measure the collocational strength was the log-likelihood test (*LL*), whose cut-off point is 3.8 for a collocation to be considered statistically significant at the level of $p < 0.05$ and 6.6 or higher at the level of $p < 0.01$. In the light of the data, then, it seems that the only collocation which is not regarded as significant is *dead thing*.

Regarding semantic prosody, there are only two collocations which are negative, namely *dead corpse* and *dead caitiff*. A corpse, by nature, is always associated with death, and, hence, negative in meaning. Being a caitiff (‘prisoner, slave’) is also negative, since it implies that one’s freedom is restricted, which is regarded as a bad and an unfortunate circumstance. The remaining eight collocations in the corpus (*dead body*, *dead brother*, *dead fermour*, *dead flesh*, *dead knight*, *dead lichame*, *dead man*, and *dead thing*) have neutral semantic prosody, as shown in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5. The semantic prosody of *dead* (adj.) in the HC

Period	Neg			Neu			Total
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	
ME	4	9.76	6.57	37	90.24	60.80	41
EModE	0	0.00	0	4	100.00	7.26	4

In the light of the data discussed above, it appears then that in the HC *dead* is only attested as an adjective functioning as a modifier of nouns, with predominantly neutral semantic prosody (in 91% of the occurrences). Moreover, in all the cases studied here *dead* is found with descriptive or literal meanings only, subjective and intensifying readings not being yet recorded in the HC data corresponding to the ME and the EModE periods.

6.2.2.2. *Deadly*

The HC records a total of 34 occurrences of the adjective *deadly* (cf. Figure 6.6 below), of which 26.5% correspond to OE (9 instances, NF 21.78), 50% to ME (17 tokens, NF 27.93), and 23.5% to EModE (8 examples, NF 14.52). The normalised frequencies per period thus evince a rise in the use of *deadly* from OE to ME, and then a decline during the EModE period. The difference in the number of tokens between these periods is not statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 0.165$; $p = 0.68459424$ between OE and ME, and $\chi^2(1) =$

1.832; $p = 0.1758915$ between ME and EModE).

Figure 6.6. *Deadly* (adj.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meanin	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	ees), and robbing the Churches without resistance, conceived	feud	S neg	N	N	E3		CETRAV3E
2	abour, and with my former # answers to holde your self conte	grief	S neg	N	N	E1		CEPRV3
3	ere another: euer # looking behinde him, like a man pursued w	weapon	D neu	N	N	E2		CEPCT2E
4	ugh that a man love it lasse than God, yet is it venial synne, a	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
5	- +treall. Al swa hie de+d +dese munekes, +de bie+d # hersu	man	D neu	N	N	M1		CMVCE3E
6	da him brohte myrran +ta wyrt, on +ton w+as getacnod +t+at	man	D neu	N	N	O3		COMARTYF
7	e, & oft sende his englas us ham to spananne to him, & on +c	flesh	D neu	N	N	O2		COCUR4
8	& innate+d ure sawul, ac is seo lyft +te we on lybba+d on +d	life	D neu	N	N	O3		COTEPMC
9	heora sawla gereordige +te n+afre ne ateora+d, +tonne man	lichama	D neu	N	N	O3		COAELHON
10	on his endebyrdnesse, ac +tenden +ta tunglu her lyhta+ on +	world	D neu	N	N	O3		COMARTYF
11	bi+trench me anan teonen & tintreohen +te alre meast derue +	flesh	D neu	N	N	M1		CMKATHE
12	+ter in ony +ting +tat ne+ter of hem wole do, +tou+g it were fu	sin	D neg	N	N	M4		CMHILTOF
13	on+genes, we willen and hoaten +t+at alle vre treowe heom he	foe	S neg	N	N	M2		CMDOCUJ
14	orte & for+get him seoluen. swa +t he dude +treo utneme hee	sin	D neg	N	N	M1		CMANCRE
15	oue, and among the rest here hee forbiddeth Vsurie, as one of	enemy	S neg	N	N	E2		CESERM2E
16	it time+d be dei: ear +ten me slepe. Hwa durste stiepen hiwi hi	foe	S neg	N	N	M1		CMANCRE
17	nnum swa s+a mid y+dum. [OC19 A 13] Ic w+as synna geor	lust	D neg	N	N	O3	eager for sin & on deadly lust	COMARTYF
18	that he hath to Jhesu Crist; and in this wise skippeh venial int	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
19	soule with venial synnes, the moore is he enclined to fallen ir	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
20	th any creature moore than Jhesu Crist oure Creatour, thanne	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE
21	+at +tu nanne brydguman n+afre me ne namige, ne of minum	lichama	D neu	N	N	O3	postponed	COAELIVE
22	iwunges vel +derh +t+at & giduolo aw+arfe mennisco & frofo l	life	D neu	N	N	O3	postponed	COAELHON
23	s paynes dyd wash and wype, & clense our soules from euery	sin	D neg	N	N	E1		CESERM1F
24	nchyngre, algates the ship is dreymt. Right so fareth it somtym	sin	D neg	N	N	M3		CMCTPROE

Within this set of 34 examples, there are a total of 12 different collocations, namely *deadly enemy*, *deadly feud*, *deadly flesh*, *deadly foe*, *deadly grief*, *deadly lichama* ('body'), *deadly life*, *deadly lust*, *deadly man*, *deadly sin*, *deadly weapon*, and *deadly world*, as shown in Table 6.6 to Table 6.8, which show the individual frequencies for each of the collocations of the adjective *deadly* in the different periods.

Table 6.6. The collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in OE

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>deadly flesh</i>	1	50.00	2.42	2
<i>deadly lichama</i>	3	100.00	7.26	3
<i>deadly life</i>	2	50.00	4.84	4
<i>deadly lust</i>	1	100.00	2.42	1
<i>deadly man</i>	1	50.00	2.42	2
<i>deadly world</i>	1	100.00	2.42	1
Total	9	26.47	21.78	34

Table 6.7. The collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in ME

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>deadly enemy</i>	1	33.33	1.64	3
<i>deadly flesh</i>	1	50.00	1.64	2
<i>deadly foe</i>	2	100.00	3.29	2
<i>deadly life</i>	2	50.00	3.29	4
<i>deadly man</i>	1	50.00	1.64	2
<i>deadly sin</i>	10	76.92	16.43	13
Total	17	50.00	27.93	34

Table 6.8. The collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in EModE

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>deadly enemy</i>	2	66.67	3.63	3
<i>deadly feud</i>	1	100.00	1.81	1
<i>deadly grief</i>	1	100.00	1.81	1
<i>deadly sin</i>	3	23.08	5.44	13
<i>deadly weapon</i>	1	100.00	1.81	1
Total	8	23.53	14.52	34

As we can see in these tables, there are certain collocates which seem to be specific to a given period, as is the case of *lichama* ('body'), *lust*, and *world* in OE, of *foe* in ME, and of *feud*, *grief*, and *weapon*, which are only recorded in EModE. However, there are other collocations which are documented across the different periods. Thus, *deadly flesh*, *deadly life*, and *deadly man* appeared in both OE and ME, but are no longer recorded in EModE, while *deadly enemy* and *deadly sin* are first reported in ME in this corpus. The difference for the two collocations between ME and EModE is, however, not statistically significant (for *deadly enemy*, Fisher's exact test = 0.607352; $p < 0.01$, and for *deadly sin* Fisher's exact test = 0.09745; $p < 0.01$).

As in the case of *dead* above (cf. 6.2.2.1), I have also run several statistical tests in order to measure the collocational strength of *deadly* and its collocates. I have only considered those collocations which were found in the corpus at least three times. Hence, the only collocations which could be subject to statistical testing were *deadly enemy* (3 tokens), *deadly lichama* (3 tokens), *deadly life* (4 tokens), and *deadly sin* (13 tokens). In all four cases, the combination of the node *deadly* and its collocates was found to be highly statistically significant (cf. Table 6.9).

Table 6.9. Standardised scores for *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>deadly enemy</i>	46.838	9.518	12.688	33.656
<i>deadly lichama</i>	44.684	9.383	12.553	33.091
<i>deadly life</i>	22.360	6.988	10.988	30.830
<i>deadly sin</i>	91.785	9.344	16.745	142.685

As far as meanings are concerned, the data from the HC seem to corroborate the evidence from the OED (cf. section 6.1.2), given that subjective readings of *deadly* (adj.) are also recorded for the first time in the ME period, although the percentage is still relatively low, amounting to barely 17% (see Table 6.10 below). This percentage increases 33% from ME to EModE (from roughly 17% to 50%), which is also reflected in the normalised frequencies, with a difference of 2.33 points. Descriptive meanings prevail in the three periods. These are in fact the only meanings available in OE, and they account for about 82% of the meanings in ME. Their percentage drops to 50% in EModE, which implies a difference of 15 points between ME and EModE. Intensifying readings for the adjective *deadly*, however, are not attested in the HC, even though, it must be recalled, they have been documented in the language from the seventeenth century, as the

OED suggests (see section 6.1.2 above). The only difference which is statistically significant is that concerning descriptive uses in ME and EModE, though at $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.034533).

Table 6.10. Meaning types for *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

Period	D			S			I			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
OE	9	100.00	21.78	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	9	21.78
ME	14	82.35	23	3	17.65	4.93	0	0.00	0	17	27.93
EModE	4	50.00	7.26	4	50.00	7.26	0	0.00	0	8	14.52

Examples (6.94)-(6.95) show descriptive meanings of the adjective: *deadly lust* and *deadly sins*, respectively, ruin the soul and are hence mortal, so the adjective *deadly* is to be taken literally here. (6.96)-(6.97) illustrate, by contrast, subjective meanings of the adjective. *Deadly foe* and *deadly enemy* in (6.96) and (6.97), respectively, refer to one's own enemy or adversary, that is, to somebody who seeks to do us wrong and perhaps wishes our own death. (6.98) is taken from a letter which Thomas More, the author of *Utopia*, wrote to his daughter Margaret Roper, telling her that for him it is much more afflicting to see her and his son-in-law in a dangerous situation than to hear of his own death.¹² Examples (6.97)-(6.98) can therefore not be taken in a literal sense, since hating somebody so much to the point of wishing his/her death does not imply killing him/her, and being overcome with intense sorrow does not necessarily entail someone's death either. Instead, death is construed here metaphorically, and so these meanings imply a stage further ahead than descriptive meanings in the cline towards the full grammaticalisation of *deadly*.

- (6.94) *Ic was synna georn ond in **deaðlicum** listum.* (COMARTYR. 950-1050. *Martyrology*)
- (6.95) *For certes ['surely, indeed'], the moore that a man chargeth his soule with venial synnes, the moore is he enclyned to fallen into **deedly** synne.* (CMCTPROS. 1350-1420. Geoffrey Chaucer. *The tale of Melibee*)
- (6.96) *Hwa durste slepen hwil his **deadliche** fa heolde an itohe sweord up on his heaued?* (CMANCRE. 1150-1250. *Ancrene Wisse*)
- (6.97) *He þat is þi **deedly** enmye, and þou here him so afraied þat he crye in þe heizt of his spirit þis lityl worde FIIR, or þis worde OUTE:* (CMCLOUD. 1350-1420. *The cloud of unknowing and the book of privy counselling*)

¹² It must be remembered that More was sentenced to death by Henry VIII in 1535, accused of high treason for refusing to swear to the Act of Succession.

- (6.98) *A deadly grief vnto me, and moch more deadly than to here of mine owne death, [...] is that I perceiue my good sonne your husband, and you my good doughter [...] in great displeasure and daunger of great harme therby.* (CEPRIV1. 1500-1570. Elizabeth Beaumont. *Beaumont papers*)

Regarding the functions of the adjective *deadly*, the data from the HC also show that it has exclusively functioned as a noun modifier across time, as might be expected from an adjective (cf. Table 6.11).

Table 6.11. Categories modified by *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

Period	N		Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw		
OE	9	21.78	9	21.78
ME	17	27.93	17	27.93
EModE	8	14.52	8	14.52

Further to the semantic prosody of the adjective (cf. Table 6.12), it seems that *deadly* developed predominantly negative semantic prosody at the close of the OE period. In fact, in this early period *deadly* occurred primarily in combination with elements which had neutral semantic prosody, as is the case of the nouns *man*, *life*, *lichama* ('body'), and *world*. However, it was also attested in the data with the noun *lust*, which is inherently negative, and with the noun *flesh*, which although it has been classified as neutral, in the context of religion we tend to contrast the soul, which is good, with the flesh, which represents evil and sin, and is hence immoral. Nonetheless, *deadly* occurs with neutral items in almost 90% of the cases in the OE data. It is only in ME and EModE that this adjective starts to collocate with nouns which have negative polarity, such as *sin*, *enemy*, *foe*, *feud*, and *grief*. Moreover, the increase in the absolute frequencies for negative semantic prosody from the OE to the ME period turns out to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.011749). The drop in the number of tokens from ME to EModE is, by contrast, not statistically significant, and neither is this difference statistically significant if we compare OE with ME, and ME with EModE in regard to neutral semantic prosody.

Table 6.12. Semantic prosody of *deadly* (adj.) in the HC

Period	Neg			Pos			Neu			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
OE	1	11.11	2.42	0	0.00	0	8	88.8	19.36	9	21.78
ME	13	76.47	21.36	0	0.00	0	4	23.5	6.57	17	27.93
EModE	7	87.5	12.70	0	0.00	0	1	1.81	0	8	14.52

The HC hardly yields any evidence of the adverb *deadly*: there are no examples dating to OE, and there are a total of three instances in the remaining periods (cf. Table 6.13 below). One token is recorded in ME (33.33%, NF 1.64) and two tokens in EModE (66.66%, NF 3.63), which indicates a slight increase in the use of *deadly* from ME to EModE, although this figure is not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.607352).

Table 6.13. Absolute frequencies, percentages and normalised frequencies of *deadly* (adv.) in the HC

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
ME	1	33.33	1.64
EModE	2	66.67	3.63

The three examples recorded in the corpus show a different collocation each, namely the combination of the adverb with the participial forms *idoruen* ('hurt') and *wounded*, and the verb *wound*, as shown in Figure 6.7 below.

Figure 6.7. *Deadly* (adv.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	riak and wan it by strength / But in the wynnyge therof he w	wounded	D neg	P		E1		CEHIST1B
2	n hire bodi bilehwit & iblesceden hit. +te feondes +te +ter we	idoruen	D neg	P		M1	'hurt'	CMMARGA
3	s, whereof, some fight one with another, wounding one anoht	wound	D neg	V		E2		CETRAV2B

The occurrences in this corpus indicate descriptive readings, that is, meanings which are to be taken literally, as in (6.99)-(6.100). In (6.99), for instance, we are informed that Sir Edmund Holland, Earl of Kent, was severely wounded in the head after having stormed the castle of Bréhat in Brittany, and that he died shortly after as a result of this injury. In (6.100) we are told that some elephants fight with each other, and, as a consequence, some members of the herd die. In the corpus data, therefore, there is no evidence of subjective or intensifying readings of the adverb, although it should be reminded here that by the early fifteenth century the adverb *deadly* had already developed intensifying meanings, and therefore subjective meanings as well, according to the OED (cf. section 6.1.2).

- (6.99) *But in the wynnynge therof he was so **deedly** wounded with an arowe in ye heed that he dyed shortly after* / (CEHIST1B. Robert Fabyan. 1500-1570. *The new chronicles of England and France*)
- (6.100) *Elephants royall, clad in cloth of golde and siluer, with drums fifes and trumpets, whereof, some fight one with another, wounding one another very **deedly**,* (CETRAV2B. Robert Coverte. 1612. *A true and almost incredible report of an Englishman*)

Concerning the semantic prosody of the adverb (cf. Table 6.14), and despite the scarcity of data, adverbial *deedly* occurs in the corpus only with elements which have negative semantic prosody: the verb *wound* and the derived participial *wounded* are inherently negative, and this is also the case of the ME participle *idoruen*, which also meant ‘hurt, wounded’. Finally, the three examples in this corpus also suggest the greater variability of adverbs in comparison with adjectives. Thus, adverbial *deedly* is found as a modifier of participial forms and verbs in the corpus (cf. Table 6.15), whereas the adjective *deedly* could only modify nouns.

Table 6.14. The semantic prosody of *deedly* (adv.) in the HC

Period	Neg			Pos			Neu			Total
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	
ME	1	33.33	1.64	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	1
EModE	2	66.67	3.63	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	2

Table 6.15. Categories modified by *deedly* (adv.) in the HC

Period	P			V			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
ME	1	33.33	1.64	0	0.00	0	1	1.64
EModE	1	33.33	1.81	1	33.33	1.81	2	3.63

In view of the data presented in this section, it appears that the adjective *deedly* was much more frequent than the homonymous adverbial form in the HC, although the results only partially confirm the evidence provided by the historical dictionaries. The corpus data bear out the preliminary picture provided by the MED and OED, in the sense that subjective readings for the adjective *deedly* are recorded from the outset of the ME period, while in OE the only available meanings were descriptive. Nonetheless, and despite the valuable information provided by the HC, there are no examples in the corpus which admit a possible reading of the adjective as an intensifier, while according to the OED the intensifying function of the adjective dates back at least to the seventeenth century. The evidence for the adverbial form *deedly* in the corpus is very scarce, with only three tokens, which hardly allows to draw any corpus-based conclusion about its uses in the periods

examined. In the light of the dictionary evidence the adverb *deadly* had developed intensifying readings considerably earlier than its adjectival homonym, since it could occur as an intensifier already in the fourteenth century (cf. example (6.40) above). However, the HC only gives evidence of descriptive readings for *deadly*.

6.2.2.3. *Mortal*

It should be remembered at this point that the form *mortal*, borrowed in ME, could be a noun, an adjective, and an adverb, the latter being the zero counterpart of the *-ly* form *mortally* (cf. section 6.1.3). Like the form *dead*, which could also be a noun as in the phrase *the dead*, all the nominal occurrences of *mortal* in the corpus were discarded, given that these would not eventually develop an intensifying function. Therefore, I have only searched for the adverbial and adjectival forms, as explained in section 6.2.1 above. The HC recorded a total number of 20 occurrences of *mortal*, all of which correspond to the adjective (cf. Figure 6.8 below).

Figure 6.8. *Mortal* (adj.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	riak and wan it by strength / But in the wyymynge therof he w	wounded	D neg	P		E1		CEHIST1B
2	n hire bodi bilehwt & iblesceden hit. +te feondes +te +ter we	idoruen	D neg	P		M1	'hurt'	CMMARGA
3	s, whereof, some fight one with another, wounding one anoht	wound	D neg	V		E2		CETRAV2B

Since the word was borrowed in ME, 11 tokens of the total correspond to the ME period (55%, NF 18.08) and 9 to EModE (45%, NF 16.33). The difference in the number of tokens between ME and EModE is, however, not statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 0$; $p = 1$). These 20 occurrences show nine different collocations (cf. Table 6.16 and Table 6.17 below).

Table 6.16. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in ME

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>mortal enemy</i>	1	25.00	1.64	4
<i>mortal folk</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
<i>mortal life</i>	2	66.66	3.29	3
<i>mortal man</i>	3	75.00	4.93	4
<i>mortal nature</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
<i>mortal thing</i>	2	50.00	3.29	4
<i>mortal violence</i>	1	100.00	1.64	1
Total	11	55.00	18.08	20

Table 6.17. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in EModE

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Total in HC
<i>mortal enemy</i>	3	75.00	5.44	4
<i>mortal hatred</i>	1	100.00	1.81	1
<i>mortal life</i>	1	33.33	1.81	3
<i>mortal man</i>	1	25.00	1.81	4
<i>mortal prince</i>	1	100.00	1.81	1
<i>mortal thing</i>	2	50.00	3.63	4
Total	9	45.00	16.33	20

Some of the collocations of *mortal* are specific to a given period. Thus, *mortal hatred* and *mortal prince* appear for the first time in the EModE data, and three other collocations, namely *mortal folk*, *mortal nature*, and *mortal violence*, are only recorded in ME. The remaining four collocations (*mortal enemy*, *mortal life*, *mortal man*, and *mortal thing*) are attested in both ME and EModE. *Mortal enemy*, for example, increased in frequency from ME to EModE, as indicated by the normalised figures, with a difference of 3.8 points between both periods. Conversely, *mortal life* and *mortal man* had become less frequent by EModE. The former, for instance, has only one token less in EModE than in ME, but the normalised frequencies indicate a drop of 1.48 points; the same holds for *mortal man*, documented three times in the ME data and only once in EModE, but the normalised frequencies indicate a difference of 3.12 points. The only collocation which seems to remain stable over time in the corpus data is *mortal thing*, with two occurrences in both periods and a difference of 0.34 points. The difference in the use of these collocations in both ME and EModE is not considered statistically significant, according to Fisher's exact test values. Moreover, the association between the adjective *deadly* and its collocates *enemy*, *life*, *man*, and *thing* was found to be statistically significant, as indicated by the different standardised scores for *mortal* (adj.), displayed in Table 6.18 below.

Table 6.18. Standardised scores for *mortal* (adj.) in the HC

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortal enemy</i>	76.742	10.526	14.526	50.486
<i>mortal life</i>	25.515	7.775	10.945	26.374
<i>mortal man</i>	14.609	5.790	9.790	25.006
<i>mortal thing</i>	19.730	6.634	10.634	28.874

As far as meaning is concerned, three quarters of the meanings of *mortal* in the HC are descriptive (75%, 15 tokens), while only 25% of them (5 tokens) are subjective, as shown in Table 6.19. As becomes apparent from the data, descriptive meanings are reduced in about 33% from ME to EModE, with a difference of over 7 points. In turn, subjective meanings grow exponentially in EModE, as there was just one occurrence in ME which was counted as subjective, represented by the collocation *deadly enemy*. The difference in subjective meanings between ME and EModE is of 5.62 points, that is, 60%. However, the variation in the number of descriptive and subjective uses of *mortal* (adj.) in the two periods is not statistically significant.¹³ As was the case with the adjective and the adverb *deadly*, however, the corpus data does not provide any evidence for intensifying readings of *mortal*.

Table 6.19. Meaning types for *mortal* (adj.) in the HC

Period	D			S			I			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
ME	10	66.67	16.43	1	20.00	1.64	0	0.00	0	11	18.08
EModE	5	33.33	9.07	4	80.00	7.26	0	0.00	0	9	16.33

(6.101)-(6.103) below exemplify the types of meaning of the adjective in the corpus. (6.101) counts as a descriptive reading of *mortal*, whereas in (6.102) and (6.103) *mortal* is taken to be subjective. In the first example *mortal* thus opposes the divine, that is, the person in question is a human prince and not a god, and as a human he is subject to death. *Mortal prince* refers here to King Richard II, succeeded to the throne by Henry IV, the first king from the House of Lancaster. In turn, (6.103) is taken from a play by Farquhar, in particular from a scene in which Mrs. Sullen tells Archer, a beau, that she will hate him unless he obeys her orders. Bearing an implacable or intense hatred for someone does not by definition imply that one wishes his/her death, or, let alone, that any intention whatsoever of killing that person is manifested. However, in this particular collocation

¹³ Fisher's exact test = 0.310747 for descriptive uses and 0.197826 for subjective uses.

mortal is still relatively attached to its original meaning: we might not know the impact of this feeling of loathing for someone, but we may as well interpret that its intensity can certainly harm the other person, though only metaphorically. Finally, example (6.104) is taken from Richard Torkington's diary, in which he narrates his pilgrimage to Jerusalem in 1517. This event in particular refers to Tuesday, the 5th January, when the English priest and the rest of the crew decided to sail up and down the Gulf of Venice, which provided some shelter from the rough winds; the tempest was so strong that they were unable to hold the course of the boat and feared that they would end up in *Barbaria*, the land inhabited by the infidels, specifically the Turks, the Mamluks, and the Saracens, as he quotes. Similarly to *mortal hatred* in (6.103), a *mortal enemy* here does not imply that the enemy has the intrinsic ability or faculty of killing, in the same way as a mortal disease would do, for example. This explains why the meaning of *mortal* is not taken as literal or descriptive, but as subjective instead. The enemy is hence described as mortal because battles at that time would most often be fought to death. Moreover, this specific example must be read in its sociohistorical context. The Middle Ages were the time of the Crusades, the military campaigns which Christians led against Muslims, who were considered to be the enemy. The general feeling, therefore, was that Muslims were barbaric people and that they were occupying a land that did not belong to them: the Holy Land.

- (6.101) *Whan this mortall Prynce was thus dede and grauen ['buried'] Kyng Henry was in quyet possessyon of the Realme [...]* (CEHIST1B. 1516. Robert Fabyan. *The new chronicles of England and France*)
- (6.102) *Hold, Sir, build not upon that - For my most mortal hatred follows if you disobey what I command you now - leave me this Minute -* (CEPLAY3B. 1707. George Farquhar. *The beaux stratagem*)
- (6.103) *And sore we war offeryd to be dryff in to Barbaria, where Dwellyth ower Mortall Enimys, As Turkes, Mammoluks, Sarrazyns, and other infidelys.* (CETRAV1B. 1500-1570. Richard Torkington. *Ye oldest diarie of Englysshe travell*)

As mentioned above, *mortal* occurs in the data only as an adjective, on which account it is only attested as a noun modifier in the corpus, as shown in Table 6.20. In this regard, there is no change from the ME to EModE.

Table 6.20. Categories modified by *mortal* (adj.) in the HC

Period	N		Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw		
ME	11	18.08	11	18.08
EModE	9	16.33	9	16.33

The semantic prosody of *mortal* is similar to that of *deadly*, since there are no examples in the data in which it shows positive polarity. Instead, in all its occurrences in the HC, *mortal* seems to appear in combination with elements which have either negative or neutral semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.21). The differences between ME and EModE are hence conspicuous: there has been an increase of about 26% in the occurrence of *mortal* with negative elements over time (3.97 points), and, in turn, the percentage of neutral elements combining with *mortal* has decreased in about 26% (NF 5.72). Nevertheless, this difference is not statistically significant, in the light of Fisher's exact test values (0.432851 for the negative semantic prosody and 0.432034 for the neutral semantic prosody).

Table 6.21. The semantic prosody of *mortal* (adj.) in the HC

Period	Neg			Pos			Neu			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
ME	2	18.18	3.29	0	0.00	0	9	81.81	14.79	11	6.99
EModE	4	44.44	7.26	0	0.00	0	5	55.56	9.07	9	5.72

If we examine the semantic prosody more closely in combination with the collocations, then it becomes apparent that this growth in negative semantic prosody coincides with two subjective collocations which are inherently negative, namely *mortal enemy* and *mortal hatred*. The collocation *mortal enemy*, which appears three times in EModE, coincides with three different text types: a travelogue, a diary, and a chronicle. The travelogue is the travel diary written by Richard Torkington, which, as mentioned above, recounts the pilgrimage of this English priest to Jerusalem back in 1517. Considering the subject of this travelogue and his enterprise, it should come as no surprise that he refers to Muslims as *mortal enemies*. The second text in which this collocation is recorded is Edward VI's diary, in which he also informs of the current events of his lifetime. In this example in particular, he refers to the killing of Sir Walter Scott of Branxholme and Buccleuch, an ancestor of the famous writer, who was murdered in Edinburgh by some members of the Clan Kerrs in October 1552. As a punishment for their crime, they were dispatched to France to serve King Henry II against his *mortal enemies*, as captains of 500 light horsemen. The last text in which the collocation *mortal enemy* is recorded is Robert Fabyan's *The new chronicles of England and France*, in a passage in which he gives an account of Henry Bolingbroke's rise to the throne as Henry IV, after the imprisonment of King Richard II, his *mortal enemy*. The other collocation which

coincides with a rise in negative semantic prosody of *mortal* in the corpus is *mortal hatred*, which is documented in a play by Farquhar, *The beaux stratagem*, as given in example (6.103) above.

The results from the HC seem to confirm the preliminary evidence on the evolution of *mortal* provided by the historical dictionaries (cf. 6.1.3), even though, it should be remembered, there are no tokens of the adverb *mortal* in the corpus. The first occurrences of the adjective date to the third subperiod of ME (1350-1420), which coincides with the very first quotations in both the MED and the OED. In the HC the first examples of *mortal* are descriptive, corresponding to the collocations *mortal man*, *mortal folk*, and *mortal thing*. As shown in 6.1.3 above, when *mortal* was borrowed from Anglo-Norman and Middle French at the close of the fourteenth century, it could appear not only with descriptive meanings, but also in combination with nouns referring to feelings such as hatred or fear, hence showing incipient subjectivity. In the case of the HC, subjective meanings of *mortal* do not appear until the last subperiod of the corpus (1420-1500), though only in one collocation: *mortal enemy*. In the EModE period, however, such meanings become more frequent, accounting for 80% of the total of subjective readings in the corpus. By contrast, intensifying meanings are not attested in the HC, although, as suggested by the OED, these were possible from the eighteenth century. In sum, then, the adjective *mortal* appears to have developed more subjective readings over time, and to co-occur predominantly with elements which have either neutral or negative semantic prosody, hence retaining traces of its original negative meaning.

6.2.2.4. *Mortally*

As the form *mortal*, the adverb *mortally* also dates from the late fourteenth century (cf. 6.1.4). Nonetheless, in the corpus data there are no examples of the adverb until the EModE period. Even so, the total number of occurrences in the corpus amounts to three, as shown in Figure 6.9. The corpus evidence, therefore, is not very conclusive.

Figure 6.9. *Mortally* (adv.) in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	tion. The Duke of Grafton # mortally wounded: [[(dies)] Chui	wounded		D neg	P	E3		CEDIAR3B
2	ndship, where they hated mortally; their Oaths and Imprecati	hate		S neg	V	E3		CEBIO3
3	cause afore remembered, he mortally maligne) he was [ver	malign		S neg	V	E1	malign: 'to feel malice or ill will' (OED)	CEBIO1

Being an adverb, *mortally* admits a certain degree of variation in regard to the type of words modified. In the corpus it is found as a modifier of verbs (*hate* and *malign* ‘to injure, wrong’, ‘to feel malice or ill will’) and of participial forms (*wounded*), as shown in Table 6.22. As evinced by the scarce data available from the HC, *mortally* was only found with negative semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.23).

Table 6.22. Categories modified by *mortally* (adv.) in the HC

Period	P			V			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
EModE	1	33.33	1.81	2	66.67	3.63	3	5.44

Table 6.23. The semantic prosody of *mortally* (adv.) in the HC

Period	Neg			Pos			Neu			Total	NF pmw
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw		
EModE	3	100.00	5.44	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	3	5.44

Of the three examples recorded in the HC, two of them show subjective readings (66%, NF 3.63) and one is descriptive (33%, NF 1.81), as Table 6.24 shows.

Table 6.24. Meaning types for *mortally* (adv.) in the HC

Period	D			S			I			Total	NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF		
EModE	1	33.33	1.81	2	66.67	3.63	0	0.00	0	3	5.44

The collocation *mortally wounded* is counted as descriptive, as it indicates that the person is injured to death and will die as a result. Conversely, *mortally hate* and *mortally malign* are considered subjective collocations (cf. examples (6.104)-(6.105)). *Mortally hate* in (6.104) is slightly different to *mortal hatred* in (6.105), since the hatred in the latter context can also be towards things and not only towards persons, a change which

might have later triggered an interpretation of *mortally* as a degree modifier.¹⁴ Thus, hating a person might imply hurting him/her, whereas hating something *mortally* might already hint an extreme degree. Even so, *hate mortally* is still considered to be subjective, for death is still in the background and can still be easily evoked in (6.106). The cardinal referred to is Cardinal Wolsey, who was Henry VIII's almoner and cardinal of the Roman Catholic Church. After the death of Leo X in 1521, the see of Rome was vacant, and Wolsey wanted to become the next pope. However, Charles V, the Holy Roman Emperor, suggested Cardinal Adrian to the cardinals of Rome, and he eventually became the next pope: Pope Adrian VI. Wolsey was so 'wood ['angry'] therewith, that he studied to invent all waies of reuengment of his grief ['anger, spite'] against the Emperour [Charles V]'.¹⁵ Wolsey, considering that England's empire was not as powerful as those of Charles V or Francis I, the French king at the time, had in mind an Anglo-French alliance, to which end he wanted to marry Henry to one of the French king's sisters. In this way England would be able to stand up to Charles V, as explained in Roper's account of the *Lyfe of Sir Thomas Moore*. In this example *mortally* modifies the verb *malign*, which could mean either 'to attack (somebody or something), to injure' or 'to bear ill will, to be hostile' (MED, s.v. *malignen* v. 1). Considering the wider context, that is, Wolsey's failure to the see of Rome, and his hatred of the emperor for having put forward another candidate, it is more likely that the meaning of *malign* in this particular case is 'to bear ill will'. There is no mention, at least in this text, to the fact that Cardinal Wolsey was planning to physically attack Charles and wound him to death. On this account, *mortally* is considered to illustrate a subjective rather than a descriptive reading of the adverb here.

- (6.104) [...] *yet he confessed they cared not for it [morality], further than the reputation of it was necessary for their credit, and affairs: of which he gave me many Instances, as their professing and swearing Friendship, where they hated **mortally**; their Oaths and Imprecations in their Addresses to Women, [...]* (CEBIO3. 1680. Gilbert Burnet. *Some passages of the life and death of the right honourable John, Earl of Rochester*)
- (6.105) *This Cardinall therefore, not ignorant of the kings inconstante and mutable disposicion, [...] devised to allure the kinge [...] to cast fantasy to one of the Frenche kings Sisters: which thing, because of the Enmity and warre that was at that tyme betweene the French king and the Emperour (whom, for the cause afore remembred, he **mortally** maligned) he was [very] desirouse to procure;* (CEBIO1. 1500-1570. William Roper. *The lyfe of Sir Thomas Moore, Knighte*)

¹⁴ The use of the verb *hate* here is absolute, and the relativiser *where* refers back to the noun *instances*: 'instances in which they hated mortally'. Therefore, the absolute use of *hate* in this case allows for both a human and a non-human referent.

¹⁵ HC. William Roper. 1500-1570. *The lyfe of Sir Thomas Moore, Knighte*. CEBIO1, p. 31.

As was the case with the adverb *deadly*, the results for *mortally* in the HC are also insufficient to provide firm evidence of the behaviour of this adverb and its development over time. We can only claim that it was recorded in the data only with negative semantic prosody and as a modifier of verbs (2 tokens) and participial items (only 1 occurrence), and with both descriptive and subjective meanings (1 and 2 tokens, respectively). Adverbial forms, as we have seen so far with *dead*, *mortal*, and *mortally*, are rarely attested in the corpus.

6.2.2.5. *To death*

As indicated in 6.1.5 above, the prepositional phrase *to death* dates to the OE period, in which it could occur as a modifier of verbs which indicate a violent action, such as *beat*. The HC provides only six occurrences of *to death*, all of them dated to EModE, which actually makes it impossible to trace its diachrony (see Figure 6.10).

Figure 6.10. *To death* in the HC

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	man saith the man was bewitched to death. Who told him that? (*Sam*) H	bewitched		D/S neg	P	E2		CEHAND2A
2	# Sir? (*Lov.*) Why then he'll bleed to Death. Sir. (*Sar.*) Why, then I'll fet	bleed		D neg	V	E3		CEPLAY3A
3	oody; shall not he be condemned to death? My Lord (*Cobham*) hath, perh;	condemn		D neg	V	E2		CETRIZB
4	Je not so manye # rotte and perishe to deathe for lacke of helpe of Surgerye	perish		D neg	V	E1		CELAW1
5	such a Motion. Let me be pinched to death with hot Irons, if ever I knew the	pinch		D neg	V	E2		CETRIZB
6	Satan saith, the man was witched to death. (*Sam.*) Satan saith so, he is	witched		D/S neg	P	E2		CEHAND2A

As a prepositional phrase, *to death* was also more versatile than adjectives and behaved similarly to adverbs, and therefore could also modify participial items (*bewitched* and *witched*) and verbs (*bleed*, *condemn*, *perish*, and *pinch*), as shown in Table 6.25.

Table 6.25. Categories modified by *to death* in the HC

Period	P			V			Total	NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF		
EModE	4	66.67	7.26	2	33.33	3.63	6	10.89

As far as semantic prosody is concerned, it seems that *to death* invariably occurs in the HC in combination with elements which have negative semantic prosody (Table 6.26). Likewise, in the corpus data *to death* is not attested with intensifying meanings, although

this could have been possible, given that such uses emerged in the course of the sixteenth century (cf. 6.1.5 above). Instead, in roughly 66% of the occurrences, *to death* is found with descriptive meanings (4 tokens, NF 7.26), while 2 tokens are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective interpretations (33%, NF 3.63).

Table 6.26. The semantic prosody of *to death* in the HC

Period	Neg			Pos			Neu			Total	NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF		
EModE	6	100.00	10.89	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	6	10.89

Table 6.27. Meaning types for *to death* in the HC

Period	D			D/S			I			Total	NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Abs. Freq.	%	NF		
EModE	4	66.67	7.26	2	33.33	3.63	0	0.00	0	6	10.89

Examples (6.106)-(6.108) below exemplify some of the uses of *to death* in the HC. In (6.106) *to death* modifies the verb *perish*, reinforcing the end point or final result which is already present in the verb. The verb *rot*, applied here to people (*so manye* [people]), refers more specifically to the wounds or to certain parts of the body, which become gangrenous and ultimately bring about the demise of the person. This quote from the *Statutes of the Realm*, passed by the Parliament of England in 1542 under the reign of Henry VIII, specified that ‘that persones being no comen surgeons maie mynistr medicines owtwarde’, hence aiming to ‘the advoyding of sorceryes witchecraft and other inconveniences’. This measure was taken by the king in order to underpin the rights to practise to those who had been endowed with the knowledge of the nature of certain herbs, roots, and waters, since, as criticised in this passage, surgeons often left sick people to die, for they would not be able to afford the large sums which these physicians claimed. Another descriptive collocation of *to death* is presented in (6.107), namely *bleed to death*. In this case there is a man who has been seriously wounded, and it thus appears that if his wound is not properly attended to, he may die. Finally, (6.108) shows the collocation *witched to death*, whose reading is ambiguous between descriptive and subjective. In principle, being *witched* or *bewitched* to death has no fatal consequences, and means being affected by witchcraft or magic (see the OED, s. v. *bewitch*, v. 1) instead. Nonetheless, in this specific context the situation describes a man who is now dead, presumably killed by witchery. His widow was told by a cunning man [‘witch, wizard, conjurer’] that the witch’s cat killed her husband. Prior to this quotation we have an explanation on how this might have occurred, in a dialogue between two of the characters,

Daniel and Samuel. Daniel remarks that there are ‘naturall causes of tortures and grieffe, of lamenes, and of death in the bodies of men and beastes, which lie so hid and secrete, that the learneddest Physitians can not espie them, but the deuill seeth them, and can coniecture very neere the time, when they will take effect’. Immediately after, when Samuel asks him how it is possible then that the cat killed the man, Daniel answers that ‘the deuilles worke together, and can speedilie and most craftilie compasse thinges, which are farre beyond the reach of mans capacitie’. According to Daniel’s version, therefore, the devil reincarnated in the form of a cat and killed that poor man, acting pretty much in the same guise as a mortal disease. This could therefore be taken as a descriptive reading of the prepositional phrase. However, if we consider that being witched is just being affected by witchcraft or magic, generally injuriously, as defined in the OED, then it is not entirely clear how this collocation can be read descriptively, for the mere fact of being bewitched would not necessarily result in someone’s death. The other collocation which has been classified as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective is *bewitched to death*, which is in fact featured in the same text, immediately before the example given here in (6.108), and which poses exactly the same problem when it comes to tagging its meaning.

- (6.106) *and it is nowe well known that the surgeons admytted wooll doo no cure to any p~sone, but where they shall knowe to be rewarded with a greater soome or rewarde than the cure extendeth unto, for in cace they wolde mynistrre theyre coonning to sore people unrewarded, there shoulde not so manye rotte and perishe **to death** for lacke of helpe of Surgerye as dailie doo, (CELAW1. 1500-1570. *The Statutes of the realm*).*
- (6.107) ([^]Lov.[^]) *Prithee don't stand prating, but look upon his Wound. ([^]Ser.[^]) Why, what if I won't look upon his Wound this Hour, Sir? ([^]Lov.[^]) Why then he'll bleed **to Death**, Sir. (CEPLAY3A. 1640-1710. John Vanbrugh. *The relapse*).*
- (6.108) *The Deuill can turne himselfe into the likenes of an Angell of light. For they that doe thinke the cunning men and women deale with any other Spirite than Satan, haue no vnderstanding. Satan saith, the man was witched **to death**. ([^]Sam.[^]) Satan saith so, he is not to bee beleued, but the witch confesseth it was so. (CEHAND2A. 1593. George Gifford. *A handbook of witches and witchcraft*)*

6.2.3. ARCHER

As explained in section 6.2.1 above, and as was done for the HC (6.2.2), I have excluded from the analysis of ARCHER those examples in which the items under examination occurred in predicative position, were part of fixed expressions (e.g. *put to death*), or were formally nouns. In (6.109), for instance, *mortal* is a noun which refers to a human being, and in (6.110) it is an adjective which functions as a subjective predicative complement.

- (6.109) *Come hither, **mortal**, place thy self before me;* (1693powe_d2b. 1693. George Powell. *A very good wife*)
- (6.110) *But it must be sudden. The least delay is **mortal*** (1626mass_d1b. 1626. Philip Massinger. *The selected plays of Philip Massinger*).

In short, I have only taken into account those cases in which the items under analysis modify an adjacent form, as in (6.111) below, in which the adjective *dead* modifies the noun *friend*:

- (6.111) *When he is made his friend's executor, he defrays debts, pays legacies; and scorneth to gain by orphans or to ransack graves: and therefore will be true to a **dead** friend, because he sees him not.* (1608hall_p1b.txt. 1608. Joseph Hall. *Characters of Virtues and Vices*)

It should also be recalled that my dissertation focuses exclusively on the British English variety, and, therefore, the American component of ARCHER was discarded for the current analysis (cf. section 5.2.2.2).

6.2.3.1. *Dead*

ARCHER yields a total of 76 tokens of the adjective *dead* (cf. Figure 6.11), which occurs in 42 different collocations, as illustrated in Table 6.28 to Table 6.31 below. If we examine the occurrences of the adjective in the four different subperiods, we see that the number of instances is larger in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (30.26% and 26.32% of the total, respectively) than in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (22.37% and 21.05% of the total of examples). The normalised frequencies for each of the periods seem to confirm a drastic reduction in frequency from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century (roughly, from 66 to 37 points), a tendency which continues onto the twentieth century (31 and 30 points in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, respectively). This drop in the number of attestations of the adjective from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century is, however, not statistically significant. The same applies to the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century and from the nineteenth to the twentieth century.¹⁶

¹⁶ 17th > 18th c.: $\chi^2(1) = 3.008$; $p = 0.08285446$; 18th > 19th c.: $\chi^2(1) = 0.135$; $p = 0.71330317$; 19th c. > 20th c.: $\chi^2(1) = 0.004$; $p = 0.94957097$.

Figure 6.11. *Dead* (adj.) in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	my suffered enormously, 1,500 dead bodies of Sepoys having been c	body	D	neu	N	19.2		1859ae1_n6b.tx
2	remember me that I have been a dead man all this while, I humbly t	man	D	neu	N	17.1		1623donn_p1b.tx
3	oice instruct mee, that I am a dead man now, or remember mee that	man	D	neu	N	17.1		1623donn_p1b.tx
4	I stand in need of nothing." A dead silence followed this communicati	silence	S	neu	N	19.1		1848kava_f5b.tx
5	short time, delivered her of a dead male child, which, from its livid ap	child	D	neu	N	18.2		1775spie_m4b.tx
6	he appearance and feel of that of a dead person. He got very little rest	person	D	neu	N	18.2		1720dfoc_f3b.tx
7	anging about her shoulder, and a dead child in her arms; this I have se	child	D	neu	N	18.2		1720dfoc_f3b.tx
8	'adova, and they pronounced me a dead man (but it hath pleased God	man	D	neu	N	18.1		1653finc_x2b.tx
9	'ell dispatch him, fear not; A dead dog never bites. PARTHEWUS. Th	dog	D	neu	N	17.2		1626mass_d1b.tx
10	'your'd it. CAESAR. I then am a dead man, since all predictions Assu	man	D	neu	N	17.2		1626mass_d1b.tx
11	the smallest) for me to get a dead specimen, unless one should die I	specimen	D	neu	N	18.2		1775gard_s4b.tx
12	'e been hacked to pieces after a dead body had been left in front of hit	body	D	neu	N	20.2		1979stm1_n8b.tx
13	iffed -- oh, horror! -- against a dead body, one of the many that were	body	D	neu	N	19.2		1854dube_j6b.tx
14	surely; or if I could have had a dead specimen, as many things relat	specimen	D	neu	N	18.2		1775gard_s4b.tx
15	ir declarations. Mistrust and a dead melancholy seems insensibly to	melancholy	S	neg	N	18.2		1774lon1_n4b.tx
16	'adova, and they pronounced me a dead man (but it hath pleased God	man	D	neu	N	17.2		1653finc_x2b.tx
17	; and therefore will be true to a dead friend, because he sees him not	friend	D	neu	N	17.1		1609hall_p1b.tx
18	the Engineers, she came to a dead standstill, for there was no steam	standstill	S/N	neu	N	19.2		1853hall_j6b.tx
19	rospection of his objects, to a dead stand, you have not merely to em	stand	S/N	neu	N	19.1		18xxchal_n5b.tx
20	terrible war. Mr. Selous was a dead old man. He took me over his m	man	D	neu	N	20.1		1917stev_y7b.tx
21	kpot!" as if it was the name of a dead lover. And take a look at the Bi	lover	D	neu	N	20.2		1959fam_f8b.tx
22	ny rate, to enjoy the sight of a dead young lady, nay, two dead youn	lady	D	neu	N	19.1		1818aust_f5b.tx
23	ught to bed about 12 o'clock of a dead child. She was frightened the	child	D	neu	N	18.1		1716ryde_y3b.tx
24	s very ill and brought to bed of a dead child, I wentt downe to Tender	child	D	neu	N	17.2		168drek_y2b.tx
25	ur she had been delivered of a dead child, and upon examination the	child	D	neu	N	18.1		1720dfoc_f3b.tx

Table 6.28. *Dead* (adj.) in ARCHER in the 17th c.

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>dead body</i>	1	12.50	2.87	8
<i>dead brother</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead child</i>	2	33.33	5.74	6
<i>dead corpse</i>	2	100.00	5.74	2
<i>dead dog</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead father</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead friend</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead kinsman</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead lord</i>	2	100.00	6	2
<i>dead man</i>	6	50.00	17.22	12
<i>dead mother</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead palsy</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead person</i>	1	33.33	2.87	3
<i>dead thing</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>dead work</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
Total	23	30.26	66.02	76

Table 6.29. *Dead* (adj.) in ARCHER in the 18th c.

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>dead bough</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead branch</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead child</i>	4	66.67	7.47	6
<i>dead complexion</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead daughter</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead flesh</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead hog</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead language</i>	3	100.00	5.60	3
<i>dead man</i>	2	16.67	3.73	12
<i>dead melancholy</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>dead person</i>	2	66.67	3.73	3
<i>dead specimen</i>	2	100.00	3.73	2
Total	20	26.32	37.33	76

Table 6.30. *Dead* (adj.) in ARCHER in the 19th c.

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>dead body</i>	6	75.00	11.06	8
<i>dead figure</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>dead horse</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
<i>dead lady</i>	2	100.00	3.69	2
<i>dead man</i>	1	8.33	1.84	12
<i>dead Russian</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>dead silence</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>dead sister</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
<i>dead skin</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>dead stand</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>dead standstill</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
Total	17	22.37	31.33	76

Table 6.31. *Dead* (adj.) in ARCHER in the 20th c.

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF/ 1,000,000 w.	Total in ARCHER
<i>dead body</i>	1	12.5	1.88	8
<i>dead elephant</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead German</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead horse</i>	1	50.00	1.88	2
<i>dead lover</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead man</i>	3	25.00	5.65	12
<i>dead mayfly</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead pain</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead product</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead seagull</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>dead sister</i>	1	50.00	1.8	2
<i>dead tree</i>	2	100.00	3.77	2
<i>dead wood</i>	1	100	1.88	1
Total	16	21.05	30.14	76

As far as the collocations of *dead* are concerned, only five of its collocates occur at least three times in the corpus data, namely *body* (8 tokens), *child* (6 tokens), *language* (3 tokens), *man* (12 tokens), and *person* (3 tokens). The remaining collocations are attested less than three times in ARCHER, hence the wide variety of collocations of the adjective. If we consider the different statistical tests to measure the degree of collocational strength between *dead* and its collocates (cf. Table 6.32 below), it then transpires that these five collocations are statistically significant, and hence we can say that the co-occurrence of *dead* and these nouns is not due to chance. In the case of *deadly person*, however, the scores for the *MI* and the *LL* tests are slightly below the threshold values.

Table 6.32. Standardised scores for *dead* (adj.) in ARCHER

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead body</i>	19.435	5.620	11.620	46.734
<i>dead child</i>	13.083	4.931	10.100	29.439
<i>dead language</i>	14.771	6.223	9.393	20.006
<i>dead man</i>	12.766	3.956	11.126	43.386
<i>dead person</i>	3.929	2.808	5.978	6.537

With regard to the types of meaning (cf. Table 6.33 below), descriptive readings prevail in the corpus, accounting for 92.1% of the total, followed by subjective meanings (3.9%), and then by those examples which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (2.6%), on the one hand, or between descriptive and subjective (1.2%), on the other hand. The ARCHER data thus contrast with the results from the HC, since the types of meanings of the adjective are more varied in the former, although descriptive meanings still prevail.¹⁷ As will be seen in 6.5, ambiguous readings are critical for the ultimate development of unequivocal subjective and intensifying meanings of the adjective, for they open up the possibility of inferencing a non-literal and a degree reading, respectively.

Table 6.33. Meaning types for *dead* (adj.) in ARCHER

		D	D/S	S	S/I	Total
17 th c.	#	23	0	0	0	23
	%	32.86	0.00	0.00	0.00	30.26
	NF pmw	66.02	0	0	0	66.02
18 th c.	#	18	0	2	0	20
	%	25.71	0.00	66.67	0.00	26.36
	NF pmw	33.60	0	3.73	0	37.33
19 th c.	#	14	0	1	2	17
	%	20.00	0.00	33.33	100.00	22.37
	NF pmw	25.81	0	1.84	3.69	31.33
20 th c.	#	15	1	0	0	16
	%	21.43	100.00	0.00	0.00	21.05
	NF pmw	28.26	1.88	0	0	30.14
Total (#)		70	1	3	2	76

If we compare the normalised frequencies, it appears that descriptive meanings decrease considerably from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century (66.02 to 33.60). Although descriptive meanings are, on average, more frequent in the seventeenth than in the eighteenth century, this difference is not considered to be statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 4.112$; $p = 0.04257998$). If we contrast the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this

¹⁷ In the HC, however, only descriptive meanings were attested.

difference is not statistically significant either ($\chi^2 (1) = 0.32$; $p = 0.57160764$), and the same applies to the difference between the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ($\chi^2 (1) = 0.003$; $p = 0.9563199$). In the case of subjective meanings, although there is also a decrease from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century in terms both of absolute frequencies (2 tokens vs. 1 token) and normalised frequencies (3.73 vs. 1.84), the difference in the two periods is not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.622663). The ambiguous readings of *dead* are only attested at individual periods: in the twentieth (D/S) and in the nineteenth century (S/I), for which reason we cannot compare these results across time.

Illustrations of the different types of meanings are provided in (6.112)-(6.115) below.

- (6.112) *STEPHANOS. We'll dispatch him, fear not; A **dead** dog never bites.* (1626mass_d1b. 1626. Philip Massinger. *The selected plays of Philip Massinger*)
- (6.113) *The keen agony may gradually pass into a dull, **dead** pain; and after a time, the sensibility of the soul may seem to be wholly lost;* (18xxdale_h6b. 1850-1899. Robert W. Dale. "The argument from experience")
- (6.114) *Started at 4 a.m. but shortly after, thro' the forgetfulness of the Engineers, she came to a **dead** standstill, for there was no steam –* (1853hall_j6b. 1853. William King Hall. *The Diaries of William King Hall*)
- (6.115) *"Michel Mandrin died last night; his mother and all the children are very ill. Pray for us." [...] A **dead** silence followed this communication.* (1848kava_f5b. 1848. Madeleine: *A Tale of Auvergne*)

In (6.112), taken from Philip Massinger's play *The Roman actor*, *dead* has clearly a descriptive meaning, referring to a dog which is no longer alive and, hence, can no longer bite anyone. Conversely, the meaning of *dead* in (6.113) is ambiguous. The example is taken from a sermon by Robert William Dale, where he relates the perils of sins, which, in his view, can effectively inflict serious injuries and terrible pain on our souls. It is not clear, then, if the pain is so sharp and powerful as to devastate the soul or if it is more metaphorical. Given the vague meaning of the adjective here, in this case I have decided to classify it as indeterminate between a descriptive and a subjective reading. In a similar vein, *dead* in (6.114) can also be contextually read as ambiguous between a subjective and an intensifying meaning. *Dead* is referring here to a steamboat, which has come to a stop (*dead standstill*), that is, it is no longer navigating. Lack of movement and restfulness are states which can clearly call death to mind, even though in this particular example *dead standstill* can also be taken to be synonymous with 'complete stop' and would therefore allow for a degree interpretation. To minimise the risk of a biased analysis of

the data given the lack of formal, objective criteria for the semantic classification of this form, I have decided to categorise the meaning of *dead* here as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (S/I). Example (6.115), by contrast, is taken to be subjective, since silence, much like restfulness and lack of movement, is another state that is easily associated with death. The atmosphere described in the situation presented in (6.115) is glum and mournful, for a certain M. Dubois has just read a letter in which he informs the other people in the same room that Michel Mandrin, another character, has recently passed away.

As far as semantic prosody is concerned, the overwhelming majority of the occurrences of the adjective *dead* in ARCHER have neutral semantic prosody (93.4%), while the remaining examples have negative semantic prosody (6.6%). There are, therefore, no attestations of the adjective in the corpus as a modifier of nouns with positive semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.34). Moreover, the differences concerning the negative and the neutral semantic prosody among the four different centuries were not found to be statistically significant, according to Fisher's exact test and the chi-square test.¹⁸ Among those nouns which have negative semantic prosody in ARCHER we find *melancholy*, *palsy*, *pain*, and *corpse*, while the collocations of *dead* with the nouns *child*, *silence*, *stand*, *person*, *dog*, *body*, or *tree*, for instance, have neutral semantic prosody. Although in principle we could consider that the nouns *corpse* and *body* behave much alike, their semantic prosody is, to my mind, different: while *body* it is clearly neutral, a *corpse*, denoting a dead body, is always connected with death and, hence, negative in meaning.

Table 6.34. The semantic prosody of *dead* (adj.) in ARCHER

		Neg	Neu	Total
17 th c.	#	3	20	23
	%	60.00	28.17	30.26
	NFpmw	8.61	57.41	66.02
18 th c.	#	1	19	20
	%	20.00	26.76	26.32
	NFpmw	1.87	35.46	37.33
19 th c.	#	0	17	17
	%	0.00	23.94	22.37
	NFpmw	0	31.33	31.33
20 th c.	#	1	15	16
	%	20.00	21.13	21.05
	NFpmw	1.88	28.26	30.14
Total (#)		5	71	76

¹⁸ **Negative semantic prosody:** Fisher's exact test = 0.307224 (17th c. > 18th c.); **neutral semantic prosody:** χ^2 (1) = 1.834; p = 0.17565582 (17th c. > 18th c.); χ^2 (1) = 0.042; p = 0.83761977 (18th c. > 19th c.); χ^2 (1) = 0.013; p = 0.90922389 (19th c. > 20th c.).

Concerning the categories which are modified by adjectival *dead*, given that it is formally an adjective and since adjectives typically denote attributes of nouns, all the words modified by *dead* are nouns, as shown in Table 6.35.

Table 6.35. Categories modified by *dead* (adj.) in ARCHER

Period	N		
	Abs. Freq.	%	NF
17 th c.	23	30.26	66.02
18 th c.	20	26.32	37.33
19 th c.	17	22.37	31.33
20 th c.	16	21.05	30.14
Total	76	100.00	38.83

In regard to the adverb *dead* and unlike the HC, which contained no examples of the form, ARCHER yields one token in the twentieth century. This is example (6.116), which has clearly an intensifying meaning, for *dead serious* in this particular case is equivalent to being absolutely serious. As it is only attested in the very last period, it is impossible to track the evolution of this adverb over time, and thus discover the earliest subjective and intensifying uses, and whether the former are actually attested earlier than the latter. The corpus data are therefore very limited, and it can only be concluded that adverbial *dead* functions in ARCHER as an adjective modifier and has neutral semantic prosody. Being serious or grim is, in principle, neither positive nor negative, which explains why the collocation *dead serious* has been tagged as illustrative of neutral semantic prosody.

- (6.116) CAMERON. *Neither am I, Uncle Will. I'm d-d-dead serious. I've got to get to Glasgow by nine to-morrow.* (1934brid_d7b. 1934. James Bridie. *A sleeping clergyman and other plays*)

6.2.3.2. *Deadly*

In ARCHER there are a total of 18 tokens of the adjective *deadly* (cf. Figure 6.12), distributed along the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries; no occurrences of *deadly* (adj.) have been attested in the twentieth century material in the corpus.

Figure 6.12. *Deadly* (adj.) in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	I have a wicked tongue, a deadly pen, and a cold heart -- I	pen		S neu		N 19.2		1883shaw_x6f
2	d together in desperate and deadly conflict. Tugging an	conflict		D/S neg		N 19.1	just a fight	1847lefa_f5f
3	testing the subtle and deadly nature of the tinctures sor	nature		D neu		N 19.1		1837ains_f5f
4	ents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt t	thing		D neu		N 18.1		1741steb_h3f
5	ual going about London in deadly fear of a young man v	fear		S neg		N 19.2		1895mach_f6f
6	ce. For certain, my late deadly weakness was conjured	weakness		S neg		N 19.2		1856carl_y6f
7	hurch will receive no deadly wound from the attacks of s	wound		D neg		N 18.2		1752hami_h4f
8	is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." The deadliest poi	poison		D neg		N 19.1		1850robe_h6f
9	ture had received that deadly wound in Adam it would n	wound		D neg		N 18.1		17xowesl_h4f
10	in. As an instance of the deadly character of the blood-p	character		D neu		N 19.2		1864spe_n6f
11	deadly poison." The deadliest poisons are those for wf	poison		D neg		N 19.1		1850robe_h6f
12	panion's observing the deadly expression which lurked	expression		S neu		N 19.1		1847lefa_f5f
13	id the lungs draw in the deadly vapour. "Amongst other t	vapour		D neu		N 19.2		1851econ_a6f
14	t, and how many are the deadly sins, which she ought c	sin		D neg		N 17.2		1671cary_d2f
15	mind of Tisdal with the deadliest fears. "Let me pass, or	fear		S neg		N 19.1		1847lefa_f5f
16	ugged and tumbled in this deadly grapple in the flicker	grapple		D neg		N 19.1		1847lefa_f5f
17	o consume them. This deadly feud, this mutual and mort	feud		S neg		N 17.2		1678lamp_h2f
18	I am delievered of this deadly burden: prompt me that I	burden		S neg		N 17.1		1603dekk_p1f

As shown in Table 6.36 to Table 6.38 below, over half of the occurrences of *deadly* are found in the nineteenth century (about 66%), while the remaining examples are evenly distributed between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (16% each). In the light of the data presented in these tables, it also appears that the frequency of *deadly* has increased exponentially from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, in terms of both absolute (from 3 to 12 tokens) and normalised frequencies (5.60 vs. 22.12). This difference is in fact statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.035208). Moreover, there is not a clear pattern in the evolution of each of the collocates of the adjective *deadly* in the corpus, since the token frequency for all of them is actually very low, and they are only found at individual periods. By way of exemplification, *deadly burden* is only attested in the seventeenth century, *deadly thing* in the eighteenth century, and the collocations *deadly fear* and *deadly poison* only appear in the nineteenth century. Furthermore, since none of the collocates of *deadly* is attested a minimum of three times in the corpus, I have decided not to apply any of the statistical tests, given that some of these tests, such as the simple mutual information score (*MI*), would give too much weight to some of these low-frequency collocates.

Table 6.36. The collocates of *deadly* (adj.) in the 17th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>deadly burden</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>deadly feud</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>deadly sin</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
Total	3	16.67	8.61	18

Table 6.37. The collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in the 18th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>deadly thing</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>deadly wound</i>	2	100.00	3.73	2
Total	3	16.67	5.60	18

Table 6.38. The collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in the 19th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>deadly character</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly conflict</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly expression</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly fear</i>	2	100.00	3.69	2
<i>deadly grapple</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly nature</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly pen</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly poison</i>	2	100.00	3.69	2
<i>deadly vapour</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>deadly weakness</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
Total	12	66.67	22.12	18

Table 6.39 below shows the distribution of the different types of meanings of the adjective across time.

Table 6.39. Meaning types for *deadly* (adj.) in ARCHER

		D	D/S	S	Total
17 th c.	#	1	0	2	3
	%	10.00	0.00	28.57	16.67
	NFpmw	2.87	0	5.74	8.61
18 th c.	#	3	0	0	3
	%	30.00	0.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	5.60	0	0	5.60
19 th c.	#	6	1	5	12
	%	60.00	100.00	71.43	66.67
	NFpmw	11.06	1.84	9.22	22.12
Total (#)		10	1	7	18

The results show that about 55% of the occurrences of *deadly* (adj.) show descriptive or literal readings (cf. examples (6.117)-(6.118) below) and roughly 39% are subjective, as in (6.119)-(6.120).

- (6.117) *Unless all the partakers of human nature had received that **deadly** wound in Adam it would not have been needful for the Son of God to take our nature upon Him.* (17xxwesl_h4b. John Wesley. *God's Love to Fallen Man*)
- (6.118) *The **deadliest** poisons are those for which no test is known: there are poisons so destructive that a single drop insinuated into the veins produces death in three seconds, [...]* (1850robe_h6b. 1850. Frederick Robertson. *Sermons*)
- (6.119) *I heard the remark I heard you make was something about the oddity of an individual going about London in **deadly** fear of a young man with spectacles?' (1895mach_f6b. Arthur Machen. *The Three Imposters*)*

- (6.120) *This deadly feud, this mutual and mortal hatred, as it opened a way to the Jews War, in the days of Claudius the Emperor, [...] (1678lamp_h2b. 1678. Thomas Lamplugh. A sermon preached before the House of Lords on the fifth of November)*

Thus, the wounds and poison referred to in (6.117) and (6.118) are of a lethal nature, and hence these collocations have been labelled as descriptive or literal. By contrast, examples (6.119) and (6.120) are said to be subjective, since fear and enmity are not themselves fatal. Moreover, there is also one instance (5.55%) which has been classified as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, given here as (6.121).

- (6.121) *Tisdal rasped the ponderous brass candlestick, and hurled it at the head of his treacherous entertainer. Deveril, by quickly stooping, escaped the missile [...] and in the next moment the two companions were locked together in desperate and deadly conflict. (1847lefa_f5b. 1847. Joseph Le Fanu. The Fortunes of Colonel Torlogh O'Brien)*

This example relates a fight between two characters, Tisdal and Deveril, in which the former violently throws a brass candlestick to the latter. In this example, therefore, the noun *conflict* is equivalent to a fight; so, considering Tisdal's reaction, it would be no surprise if the final outcome of the struggle was fatal. If we read on to find out what happened next, we discover that none of the two characters is dead. However, the meaning of *deadly* here is ambiguous, because a fight can effectively end up in someone being killed as a result, even though this is not the case in the end. In other words, although it is true that we do have a struggle between two characters and that the violence is real, the fight has no further consequences. In view of this, I have opted for tagging this particular example as indeterminate between a descriptive or literal meaning and a more subjective meaning. Unlike the adjective *dead*, which was attested with meanings which were very close to those of intensifiers, and unlike the adverb *dead*, which occurred once in the corpus with an intensifying meaning (cf. 6.2.3.1), adjectival *deadly* does not show borderline or properly intensifying meanings in ARCHER. Even so, it should be noted that the percentage of subjective meanings of the adjective *deadly* in comparison with that of its zero counterpart *dead* in the same corpus is considerably higher: while in the case of *dead* the percentage of subjective readings amounted to roughly 4%, for *deadly* this percentage increases up to approximately 39%. Moreover, the difference between the three centuries in regard to both descriptive and subjective meanings is not statistically significant, according to the Fisher exact test values.¹⁹

¹⁹ **Descriptive meanings:** Fisher's exact test = 1 (17th c. > 18th c.) and Fisher's exact test = 0.507888 (18th c. > 19th c.);

In regard to the categories modified by the adjective *deadly* (cf. Table 6.40), all its collocates are nouns, as one would expect from any adjective in general.

Table 6.40. Categories modified by *deadly* (adj.) in ARCHER

Period	N		NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	
17th c.	3	16.67	8.61
18th c.	3	16.67	5.60
19th c.	12	66.67	22.12
Total	18	100.00	9.20

The last variable considered is semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.41). As shown here, about 67% of the collocations of *deadly* in ARCHER have negative semantic prosody, while in the remaining 33% of the cases *deadly*, in combination with its collocates, shows neutral semantic prosody. Collocations such as *deadly conflict*, *deadly fear*, *deadly weakness*, or *deadly wound* have been tagged as illustrative of negative semantic prosody. By contrast, collocations such as *deadly nature*, *deadly thing*, *deadly character*, or *deadly expression* are said to represent neutral semantic prosody. Moreover, although there is an increase in the absolute frequency of both the negative and the neutral semantic prosody of the adjective over time, most prominently from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, this difference is not statistically significant, as proved by Fisher's exact test values.²⁰

Table 6.41. The semantic prosody of *deadly* (adj.) in ARCHER

		Neg	Neu	Total
17th c.	#	3	0	3
	%	25.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	8.61	0	8.61
18th c.	#	2	1	3
	%	16.67	16.67	16.67
	NFpmw	3.73	1.87	5.60
19th c.	#	7	5	12
	%	58.33	83.33	66.67
	NFpmw	12.9	9.22	22.12
Total (#)		12	6	18

In line with its zero counterpart *dead* (cf. 6.2.3.1), the adverb *deadly* in ARCHER is not very frequent either, occurring only three times in the corpus, specifically in the collocations *deadly weary*, *deadly pale*, and *deadly dull*, given in (6.122)-(6.124). In the three collocations, *deadly* functions as a modifier of adjectives, as shown in Figure 6.13.

subjective meanings: Fisher's exact test = 0.712204 (17th c. > 19th c.).

²⁰ **Negative semantic prosody:** Fisher's exact test = 0.388876 (17th c. > 18th c.), 0.179763 (18th c. > 19th c.); **neutral semantic prosody:** 0.218804 (18th c. > 19th c.).

Table 6.42. Meaning types for *deadly* (adv.) in ARCHER

		S	I	Total
19 th c.	#	1	1	2
	%	50.00	100.00	66.67
	NF pmw	1.84	1.84	3.69
20 th c.	#	1	0	1
	%	50.00	0.00	33.33
	NF pmw	1.88	0	1.88
Total (#)		2	1	3

In regard to semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.43 below), *deadly* is attested in ARCHER mainly with negative semantic prosody (2 tokens, *deadly dull* and *deadly weary*, amounting to 66.67% of the total). The remaining example (33% of the total), showing the collocation *deadly pale*, shows neutral semantic prosody.

Table 6.43. The semantic prosody of *deadly* (adv.) in ARCHER

		Neg	Neu	Total
19 th c.	#	1	1	2
	%	50.00	100.00	66.67
	NF pmw	1.84	1.84	3.69
20 th c.	#	1	0	1
	%	50.00	0.00	33.33
	NF pmw	1.88	0	1.88
Total (#)		2	1	3

6.2.3.3. *Mortal*

The occurrences of the adjective *mortal* in ARCHER amount to 33 (cf. Figure 6.14), and are distributed along the seventeenth (21%), eighteenth (39%), nineteenth (27%), and twentieth centuries (12%). The difference in the absolute frequencies among these periods is, however, not statistically significant, according to the values resulting from Fisher's exact test and the chi-square test.²¹

²¹ 17th > 18th c.: $\chi^2(1) = 0.03$; $p = 0.86249023$; 18th > 19th c.: $\chi^2(1) = 0.448$; $p = 0.50328626$; 19th > 20th c.: Fisher's exact test = 0.267216.

Figure 6.14. *Mortal* (adj.) in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of	Period	Comments	File
1	ath, had protruded eyes, and a mortal inquietude. Ether, brandy, ar	inquietude	D neg			N 19.1	The person is about to die: The hands	1820sand_m5b
2	in of the Fibres, it produces a mortal Syncope; if smaller and not e	syncope	D neg			N 17.2	that a Polyplus is so far from being a	1684wmbc_m2b
3	LADY Flip. Ill! you have a mortal blackness under your eyes. SIR I	blackness	S neu			N 18.2	talking about paleness, in this case b	1785macn_d4b
4	us fans, as one of them is a mortal enemy of yours! Also I am care	enemy	S neg			N 20.2		1954whit_x0b
5	Rosa once told me that it was a mortal sin for a nun to cross her le	sin	D neg			N 20.2		1977ras_6b
6	usal. I consider myself, as a mortal man: I can die but once. Once	man	D neu			N 18.2		1753nich_44b
7	that time Lydaraxa bore me a mortal hatred, and solemnly swore	hatred	S neg			N 18.1		1702anon_83b
8	h equipped in mind and heart for the greatest work a mortal man ca	man	D neu			N 20.1		1928pyk2_h7b
9	is so far from an innocent drug, that it was a mortal poison, and hai	poison	D neg			N 18.2		1775bruc_44b
10	inexempt condition By which all mortal frailty must subsist, Refres	frailty	D neg			N 17.1	referring to mortals	1634mitt_d1b
11	deadly feud, this mutual and mortal hatred, as it opened a way to	hatred	S neg			N 17.2		1678lamp_h2b
12	e & more perswaded that every Mortal loss is an Immortal Gain. TI	loss	D neg			N 19.1		1800blak_x5b
13	oom, blessed by whose favour, mortal soles may soar From dust the	sole	D neu			N 19.1		1832spec_a5b
14	and denied with the body from Mortal parents. If I will aske, not a	parent	D neu			N 17.1		1623denn_p1b
15	el of perfection, exhibited in his mortal life for your example. To me	life	D neu			N 18.1		17xxarch_h4b
16	Jeracy with Lord Lyttleton, his mortal Enemy, and that tho' the Eng	enemy	S neg			N 18.2		1766hume_x4b
17	Physician of that Name, his mortal Enemy, lodged in the same hou	enemy	S neg			N 18.2		1766hume_x4b
18	d great Interest with his most mortal Majesty, had prevented any st	majesty	D neu			N 18.1		1743hel_83b
19	ay our Respects to his most mortal Majesty, (this being the Title v	majesty	D neu			N 18.1		1743hel_83b
20	h Emperors, to whom his most mortal Majesty seemed to express	majesty	D neu			N 18.1		1743hel_83b
21	Death, tho' he had been my mortal Enemy, having never in my whic	enemy	S neg			N 18.1		1715maul_x3b
22	but her's beheld the deed, no mortal tongue can tell it. Sure those	tongue	D neu			N 19.1		1819phtl_d5b
23	inty -- the death of Eloise. No mortal eye but her's beheld the deed,	eye	D neu			N 19.1		1819phtl_d5b
24	d himself, adding, 'no man of mortal mould, save one, perchance, i	mould	D neu			N 19.1		1873ains_65b
25	wee'try, how ist my man of mortall breeding? Cou: My man of wa	breeding	D neu			N 17.1		1641cave_d1b

Further to the collocations, their token frequency is actually very low, and there are only four collocations which are attested a minimum of three times in the data: *mortal enemy* (4 tokens), *mortal life* (3 tokens), *mortal majesty* (3 tokens), and *mortal man* (3 tokens). The occurrence of the collocations over the different centuries (cf. Table 6.44 to Table 6.47 below) is, however, not systematic, since some of them are not attested at a given century, which makes it impossible to track the development of any specific collocation.

Table 6.44. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in the 17th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortal battle</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>mortal breeding</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>mortal frailty</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>mortal hatred</i>	1	50.00	2.87	2
<i>mortal mould</i>	1	50.00	2.87	2
<i>mortal parent</i>	1	50.00	2.87	2
<i>mortal syncope</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
Total	7	21.21	20.09	33

Table 6.45. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in the 18th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortal blackness</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>mortal enemy</i>	3	75.00	5.60	4
<i>mortal hatred</i>	1	50.00	1.87	2
<i>mortal life</i>	3	100.00	5.60	3
<i>mortal majesty</i>	3	100.00	5.60	3
<i>mortal man</i>	1	33.33	1.87	3
<i>mortal poison</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
Total	13	39.39	24.26	33

Table 6.46. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in the 19th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortal eye</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal inquietude</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal loss</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal mould</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
<i>mortal parent</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
<i>mortal part</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal sole</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal state</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>mortal tongue</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
Total	9	27.27	16.59	33

Table 6.47. The collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in the 20th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortal enemy</i>	1	25.00	1.88	4
<i>mortal man</i>	2	66.67	3.77	3
<i>mortal sin</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
Total	4	12.12	7.54	33

Even so, those collocations which are recorded in the corpus with a threshold frequency of three or more have been tested to determine their collocational strength in the light of four different values, as was done for the different intensifiers in the HC (cf. 6.2.2). The results of the Mutual Information (*MI*), the log-likelihood test (*LL*), the *z*-score, and the *MI* formula taken to the power of three (*MI3*) indicate that the co-occurrence of *mortal* with the nouns *majesty*, *man*, *enemy*, and *life* is in fact highly significant and not to be attributed to chance (cf. Table 6.48 for the different values).

Table 6.48. Standardised scores for *mortal* (adj.) in ARCHER

Collocation	<i>z</i> -score	<i>MI</i>	<i>MI3</i>	<i>LL</i> -value
<i>mortal enemy</i>	39.810	8.637	12.637	39.959
<i>mortal life</i>	14.378	6.148	9.317	19.657
<i>mortal majesty</i>	30.416	8.278	11.448	28.471
<i>mortal man</i>	8.912	4.830	8.000	14.300

In regard to the types of meanings, about 78% of the total of the occurrences of *mortal* in ARCHER evince a descriptive or literal meaning, while the remaining 21% show subjective readings of the adjective. There are, therefore, no instances of intensifying *mortal* in the data. The distribution of the different meaning types of the adjective over the centuries is shown in Table 6.49 below. The difference in the number of tokens for

each of these meanings in the four periods turned out not to be statistically significant, in the light of the values from the chi-square test and Fisher's exact test.²²

Table 6.49. Meaning types for *mortal* (adj.) in ARCHER

		D	S	Total
17 th c.	#	6	1	7
	%	23.08	14.29	21.21
	NFpmw	17.22	2.87	20.09
18 th c.	#	8	5	13
	%	30.77	71.43	39.39
	NFpmw	14.93	9.33	24.26
19 th c.	#	9	0	9
	%	34.62	0.00	27.27
	NFpmw	16.59	0	16.59
20 th c.	#	3	1	4
	%	11.54	14.29	12.12
	NFpmw	5.65	1.88	7.54
Total (#)		26	7	33

Examples (6.125) and (6.126) below show descriptive readings of the adjective, *mortal* meaning in this case 'subject to death', which thus contrasts with the divine. Conversely, (6.127) and (6.128) illustrate subjective readings of *mortal*, for the adjective in this case is not interpreted literally, referring instead to qualities which are commonly related to death. In (6.127), for instance, Lord Lyttleton is described as a mortal enemy, that is, a person who is much hated by this character and with whom the character has argued, perhaps even fought to death. The same idea is present in example (6.128), since bearing a mortal hatred to someone is equivalent to being his/her mortal enemy.

- (6.125) *If thou art of mortal mould, thy valour shall meet its equal: and if thou art a true knight, thou wilt scorn to employ sorcery to carry thy point.* (1764walp_f4b. 1764. Horace Walpole. *The castle of Otranto*)
- (6.126) *He shewed me here two or three Turkish Emperors, to whom his most mortal Majesty seemed to express much Civility.* (1743fiel_f3b. Henry Fielding. *A journey from this world to the next*)
- (6.127) *He says, that I am in a close Confederacy with Lord Lyttleton, his mortal Enemy,* (1766hume_x4b. 1766. David Hume. *New letters of David Hume*)
- (6.128) *But from that time Lyndaraxa bore me a mortal hatred, and solemnly swore to Sabina to be revenged of me the first opportunity she could find.* (1702anon_f3b. 1702. Anonymous. *The adventures of Lindamira, a lady of quality*)

²² **Descriptive meanings:** 17th > 18th c. $\chi^2(1) = 0; p = 1$; 18th > 19th c. $\chi^2(1) = 0.001; p = 0.97477288$; 19th > 20th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.146281; **subjective meanings:** 17th > 18th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.41373; 18th > 20th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.218779.

Concerning semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.50), 40% of the occurrences of *mortal* in the corpus have negative semantic prosody, and 60% show neutral semantic prosody. The difference in the absolute frequencies for both the negative and the neutral semantic prosodies between the four centuries was not found to be statistically significant, in view of the results from Fisher's exact test and the chi-square test.²³

Table 6.50. The semantic prosody of *mortal* (adj.) in ARCHER

		D	S	Total
17 th c.	#	4	3	7
	%	30.77	15.00	21.21
	NFpmw	11.48	8.61	20.09
18 th c.	#	5	8	13
	%	38.46	40.00	39.39
	NFpmw	9.33	14.93	24.26
19 th c.	#	2	7	9
	%	15.38	35.00	27.27
	NFpmw	3.69	12.90	16.59
20 th c.	#	2	2	4
	%	15.38	10.00	12.12
	NFpmw	3.77	3.77	7.54
Total (#)		13	20	33

The last variable considered in the data was the category of word modified by the adjective. Considering that *mortal* is an adjective, and that adjectives chiefly denote qualities of nouns, it comes as no surprise that *mortal* is found as a modifier of nouns in all its occurrences in the corpus, as shown in Table 6.51.

Table 6.51. Categories modified by *mortal* (adj.)

Period	N		NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	
17 th c.	7	21.21	20.09
18 th c.	13	39.39	24.26
19 th c.	9	27.27	16.59
20 th c.	4	12.12	7.54

The evidence for the adverb *mortal* in ARCHER is extremely scarce (cf. Figure 6.15), since only one token is attested in the data, specifically in the twentieth century. In this example, (6.129) below, *mortal* functions as an intensifier and modifies the adjective *hard*, which has negative semantic prosody. On the basis of the data available, therefore, nothing can be concluded in regard to the evolution of this adverb over time.

²³ **Negative semantic prosody:** 17th c. > 18th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.745562; 18th c. > 19th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.286034; 19th c. > 20th c. Fisher's exact test = 1; **neutral semantic prosody:** 17th c. > 18th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.544067; 18th c. > 19th c. χ^2 (1) = 0.001; p = 0.97477288; 19th c. > 20th c. Fisher's exact test = 0.17992.

Figure 6.15. *Mortal* (adv.) in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	ouched a drop o' that whisky – It's mortal 'ard, sir, that a man o' my years s	hard		I neg	A	20.1		1911besi_d7b.txt

(6.129) *It's mortal 'ard, sir, that a man o' my years should be tole, 'e in liquor twice in one evenin'!* (1911besi_d7b. 1911. Rudolf Besier. *Lady Patricia Clare*)

6.2.3.4. *Mortally*

The adverb *mortally*, which was borrowed from Middle French in the late fourteenth century (cf. 6.1.4), is attested for the first time in the ARCHER material in the seventeenth century, as shown in example (6.130). Figure 6.16 shows the occurrences of the adverb in the different centuries, while Table 6.52 to Table 6.55 provide the absolute, relative, and normalised frequencies of *mortally* over the different periods. The difference is, however, not statistically significant, as indicated by Fisher's exact test values.²⁴

Figure 6.16. *Mortally* in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	er! Am afraid the article mortally offended both of them. I w	offend		I neg	V	20.1		1933agat_y7b
2	15 Men wounded, tho' none mortally. On the Spaniard Ship	wounded		D neg	P	18.1		1743phil_j3b
3	rderers was upon a party mortally wounded, yet could not di	wounded		D neg	P	17.2		1653merc_n2b
4	n short, defeated them, mortally wounding Lieutenant Browr	wound		D neg	V	18.2		1781jame_j4b
5	hful friendship, was thrown mortally wounded on the track to	wounded		D neg	P	19.2		1872gla2_n6b
6	d the Light Division, was mortally wounded. General Vande	wounded		D neg	P	19.1		1812simm_j5b

Concerning the collocations of *mortally* in the corpus, the frequencies are very low to make any conclusive remarks on their evolution over time. Moreover, only *mortally wounded* is recorded in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. The remaining collocations, namely *mortally wound* and *mortally offend*, are documented

²⁴ 17th c. > 18th c.: = 1; 18th c. > 19th c.: = 1; 19th c. > 20th c.: = 1.

only in one century, the eighteenth and the twentieth century, respectively. The only collocation which is recorded more than once is *mortally wounded*, which appears four times in ARCHER and which is, according to the different statistical measures, highly statistically significant (refer to the different values in Table 6.56 below).

Table 6.52. The collocations of *mortally* in the 17th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortally wounded</i>	1	25.00	2.87	4
Total	1	16.67	2.87	6

Table 6.53. The collocations of *mortally* in the 18th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortally wound</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>mortally wounded</i>	1	25.00	1.87	4
Total	2	33.33	3.73	6

Table 6.54. The collocations of *mortally* in the 19th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortally wounded</i>	2	50.00	3.69	4
Total	2	33.33	3.69	6

Table 6.55. The collocations of *mortally* in the 20th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>mortally offend</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
Total	1	16.67	1.88	6

Table 6.56. Standardised scores for *mortally* in ARCHER

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortally wounded</i>	222.949	13.601	17.601	67.577

As for the types of meaning (see Table 6.57 below), *mortally* is not attested with subjective readings in the data. Approximately 83% of the meanings in ARCHER are descriptive or literal, while the remaining 16.67% correspond to intensifying readings of the adverb. The low absolute frequencies also indicate that the results for each of these meanings comparing the different centuries are not statistically significant.²⁵ (6.130) and (6.131), for instance, show descriptive meanings of *mortally*, in particular its co-occurrence with the participial item *wounded* and the verb *wound*. The people referred to in these examples have died shortly after as a consequence of their wounds, so the adverb in this case clearly has a literal interpretation. (6.132), by contrast, illustrates an

²⁵ **Descriptive meanings:** 17th c. > 18th c. Fisher's exact test = 1; 18th c. > 19th c.: Fisher's exact test = 1.

intensifying meaning of the adverb, for its original meaning is no longer retrievable in this context. Instead, what is meant here is that the publication of an article has greatly offended or irritated two characters. *Mortally* in this context is therefore interpreted as a synonym for *immensely* or *greatly*.

- (6.130) *It fell out that shortly after, one of the Murderers was upon a party **mortally** wounded, yet could not die in a long time till he had to an Irish Protestant revealed the murder, and then died imediatly.* (1653merc_n2b. 1653. Anonymous. *Mercurius Politicus*)
- (6.131) *In this situation they were attacked by an inferior force of horse and foot well acquainted with the country, who, in short, defeated them, **mortally** wounding Lieutenant Brown (who died the following day) and nine marines,* (1781jame_j4b. 1781. James Bartholomew. *Journal of Rear-Admiral Bartholomew James*)
- (6.132) *Am afraid the article **mortally** offended both of them.* (1933agat_y7b. 1933. James Agate. *The autobiography of James Agate*)

Table 6.57. Meaning types for *mortally* in ARCHER

		D	I	Total
17 th c.	#	1	0	1
	%	20.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	2.87	0	2.87
18 th c.	#	2	0	2
	%	40.00	0.00	33.33
	NFpmw	3.73	0	3.73
19 th c.	#	2	0	2
	%	40.00	0.00	33.33
	NFpmw	3.69	0	3.73
20 th c.	#	0	1	1
	%	0.00	100.00	16.67
	NFpmw	0	1.88	1.88
Total (#)		5	1	6

The semantic prosody of *mortally* in ARCHER is invariably negative, as indicated in Table 6.58, since it is only attested with the verbs *wound* and *offend*, which are indubitably negative in meaning, and with the participial element *wounded*, which is negative as well. There are therefore no occurrences of *mortally* in combination with neutral or positive elements in the data.

Table 6.58. The semantic prosody of *mortally* in ARCHER

Period	Neg.		NF
	Abs. Freq.	%	
17 th c.	1	16.67	2.87
18 th c.	2	33.33	3.73
19 th c.	2	33.33	3.69
20 th c.	1	16.67	1.88

Finally, in regard to the type of word modified by the adverb, the data show that *mortally* is found as a modifier of participial forms in 66.67% of the cases, and as a

modifier of verbs in 33.33% of the occurrences (see Table 6.59 for the distribution of the figures over the different centuries). The individual frequencies of *mortally*, however, make it impossible to establish a diachronic comparison of this distribution, given the low rate of occurrence of the adverb. Even so, the difference in the number of tokens for each of these categories is not statistically significant.²⁶

Table 6.59. Categories modified by *mortally* in ARCHER

		P	Vb	Total
17 th c.	#	1	0	1
	%	25.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	2.87	0	2.87
18 th c.	#	1	1	2
	%	25.00	50.00	33.33
	NFpmw	1.87	1.87	3.73
19 th c.	#	2	0	2
	%	50.00	0.00	33.33
	NFpmw	3.69	0	3.73
20 th c.	#	0	1	1
	%	0.00	50.00	16.67
	NFpmw	0	1.88	1.88
Total (#)		4	2	6

6.2.3.5. To death

ARCHER yields a total of 18 occurrences of the prepositional phrase *to death* (cf. Figure 6.17), 16.67% of which are attested in the seventeenth century, 44.44% in the eighteenth century, 22.22% in the nineteenth century, and 16.67% in the twentieth century. The difference in the number of tokens between the four centuries is not statistically significant, considering the values of Fisher's exact test.²⁷

Figure 6.17. *To death* in ARCHER

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	proformed the animal to death. Post mortem Exami	chloroform	D neg	V		19.2	Make (someone) unconscious with c	1873ferr_s8b.txt
2	ce Her mother burned to death in fire. Across that w	burned	D neg	P		20.2		1968donl_f8b.txt
3	Prisoner condemned to Death ever begged so hea	condemned	D neg	P		18.1		1743fiel_f3b.txt
4	Three men, condemned to death at the last sessio	condemned	D neg	P		19.2		1872gla1_n6b.txt
5	me, with being frozen to death, buried in the snow, a	frozen	D neg	P		18.1		1717mmon_x3b.txt
6	would have been frozen to death before he made tl	frozen	D neg	P		18.2		1784walp_x4b.txt
7	o, lo, again! bite him to death, I prithee. STEPHAN	bite	D neg	V		17.1		1611shak_d1b.txt
8	besides I am hurried to death, and my head swims i	hurried	I neu	A		18.1		1718mmon_x3b.txt
9	, and almost josseld to death, never did any man ta	jostle	S neg	V		17.2	elbow, hustle' (OED)	1658lock_x2b.txt
10	ke, which stings me to death! Apart. PEREGRINE	sting	D neg	V		17.2		1671cary_d2b.txt
11	ning the paper-seller to death. They had tea togeth	condemn	D neg	V		20.2		1973trev_f8b.txt
12	ross world, and sick to death at the notion of things	sick	S neg	A		19.2		1891dows_x6b.txt
13	at I was almost squeezed to death. -- But if their op	squeeze	D neg	V		18.1		1716mmon_x3b.txt
14	of them were starv'd to Death, and their City remai	starve	D neg	V		18.1		1708cook_j3b.txt
15	my head was tickled to death, as my nurse used to	tickled	I pos	A		18.1		1720foc_f3b.txt
16	it all, and am tired to death, but as I know you expe	tired	S neg	A		18.2		1782len3_x4b.txt
17	vents, for I'm tired to death! Five and twenty miles f	tired	S neg	A		19.1		1839plan_d5b.txt
18	ndidates are worried to death with applicants for wo	worried	S neg	A		20.1		1907pall_n7b.txt

²⁶ Verbs: 17th c. > 18th c. = 1; 18th c. > 19th c. = 1.

²⁷ 17th c. > 18th c. = 0.544067; 18th c. > 19th c. = 0.263918; 19th c. > 20th c. = 1.

As was the case for *mortally*, the results for the different collocations of *to death* in ARCHER do not favour a diachronic collocational analysis, for the absolute frequencies for each of the collocates is very low. In fact, the only collocates which are recorded in two different periods are the infinitival and participial forms *condemn* and *condemned*, and the adjective *tired*, each of which is recorded two times (cf. Table 6.60 to Table 6.63 below for the distribution of the collocations over the centuries). Given the low token frequencies of these forms, I will not test the different collocations statistically, since, as was mentioned earlier (cf. 5.3.2), I have established a minimum threshold frequency of three, and this is not the case with any of the collocates of *to death*.

Table 6.60. The collocations of *to death* in the 17th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>bite to death</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>jostle to death</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
<i>sting to death</i>	1	100.00	2.87	1
Total	3	16.67	8.61	18

Table 6.61. The collocations of *to death* in the 18th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>condemned to death</i>	1	50.00	1.87	2
<i>frozen to death</i>	2	100.00	3.73	2
<i>hurried to death</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>squeeze to death</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>starve to death</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>tickled to death</i>	1	100.00	1.87	1
<i>tired to death</i>	1	50.00	1.87	2
Total	8	44.44	14.93	18

Table 6.62. The collocations of *to death* in the 19th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>chloroform to death</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>condemned to death</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
<i>sick to death</i>	1	100.00	1.84	1
<i>tired to death</i>	1	50.00	1.84	2
Total	4	22.22	7.37	18

Table 6.63. The collocations of *to death* in the 20th c. in ARCHER

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF	Total in ARCHER
<i>burned to death</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>condemn to death</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
<i>worried to death</i>	1	100.00	1.88	1
Total	3	16.67	5.65	18

As far as meanings are concerned, 61.11% of the occurrences in the corpus correspond to literal or descriptive readings of *to death*, followed by subjective readings, which make up 27.78%, and by intensifying readings, amounting to 11.11% of the total. The

individual figures for each of the centuries are provided in Table 6.64 below. The difference in the types of meanings across the four centuries is not statistically significant, according to the values of Fisher's exact test.²⁸

Table 6.64. Meaning types for *to death* in ARCHER

		D	S	I	Total in ARCHER
17 th c.	#	2	1	0	3
	%	18.18	20.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	5.74	2.87	0	8.61
18 th c.	#	5	1	2	8
	%	45.45	20.00	100.00	44.44
	NFpmw	9.33	1.87	3.73	14.93
19 th c.	#	2	2	0	4
	%	18.18	40.00	0.00	22.22
	NFpmw	3.69	3.69	0	7.37
20 th c.	#	2	1	0	3
	%	18.18	20.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	3.77	1.88	0	5.65
Total (#)		11	5	2	18

Examples (6.133)-(6.135) below illustrate the different meanings of *to death* in the corpus. (6.133), for instance, shows the collocation *condemned to death*, which is a literal or descriptive meaning, since the three men mentioned in the example have been sentenced to death and are going to die as a punishment for the crime they have committed. In (6.134) the character is complaining for having walked too much since breakfast and is now overtired as a result of the physical effort. Although he is not going to die as a consequence of the effort, the physical weariness and exhaustion are certainly reminiscent of death, and make this character have the feeling of being about to die. Given that death is still in the background and can be recalled relatively easily, I consider this collocation to be illustrative of a subjective meaning. Finally, (6.135) is said to represent an intensifying meaning, for being in a hurry has no relationship at all with death. Instead, here *to death* simply emphasises the idea of rapidity and speed present in the context. *I am hurried to death* could thus be paraphrased as *I am in a terrible haste*.

- (6.133) *Three men, condemned to death at the last sessions, were sent from here under escort to a village near Gongudgh, where the execution was to have taken place.* (1872gla1_n6b. 1872. Anonymous. *Glasgow Sentinel* 1/27/1872)
- (6.134) *Well, I must sit down, at all events, for I'm tired to death! Five and twenty miles I have walked this blessed day, and without eating since my breakfast.* (1839plan_d5b. 1839. James Planche. *The garrick fever*)

²⁸ **Descriptive meanings:** 17th c. > 18th c. = 0.711292; 18th c. > 19th c. = 0.286034; 19th c. > 20th c. = 1; **subjective meanings:** 17th c. > 18th c. = 1; 18th c. > 19th c. = 1; 19th c. > 20th c. = 1.

- (6.135) *I propose setting out soon from this place, so that you are to expect no more letters from this side of the water; besides I am hurried to death, and my head swims with that vast variety of objects which I am obliged to view with such rapidity, [...]* (1718mmon_x3b. 1718. Mary Montagu, Lady Wortley. *The correspondence of Alexander Pope*)

To death in ARCHER is attested with negative, neutral, and positive semantic prosody, although the overwhelming majority of the examples (88.89%) correspond to negative semantic prosody. The occurrences of *to death* with neutral (*hurried to death*) and positive semantic prosody (*tickled to death*) account for 5.55% each. The difference in the absolute frequencies for each of the centuries was not found to be statistically significant in the light of Fisher's exact test.²⁹ The distribution per centuries is given in Table 6.65 below.

Table 6.65. The semantic prosody of *to death* in ARCHER

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total in ARCHER
17 th c.	#	3	0	0	3
	%	18.75	0.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	8.61	0	0	8.61
18 th c.	#	6	1	1	8
	%	37.50	100.00	100.00	44.44
	NFpmw	11.20	1.87	1.87	14.93
19 th c.	#	4	0	0	4
	%	25.00	0.00	0.00	22.22
	NFpmw	7.37	0	0	7.37
20 th c.	#	3	0	0	3
	%	18.75	0.00	0.00	16.67
	NFpmw	5.65	0	0	5.65
Total (#)		16	1	1	18

The data from ARCHER also reveal that *to death* is attested mostly as a modifier of participial forms, in 72.22% of the occurrences. Next to participial elements, this prepositional phrase can equally function as a modifier of verbs (22.22% of the cases) and of adjectives (5.55%), as shown in Table 6.66 for each of the centuries. However, the rise in both the absolute and normalised frequencies of *to death* as a modifier of participial items is not statistically significant, in the light of Fisher's exact test.³⁰

²⁹ **Negative semantic prosody:** 17th c. > 18th c. = 1; 18th c. > 19th c. = 0.546328; 19th c. > 20th c. = 1.

³⁰ **Participial items:** 17th c. > 18th c. = 0.098386; 18th c. > 19th c. = 0.063823; 19th c. > 20th c. = 1.

Table 6.66. Categories modified by *to death* in ARCHER

		A	P	V	Total in ARCHER
17 th c.	#	0	1	2	3
	%	0.00	7.69	50.00	16.67
	NFpmw	0	2.87	5.74	8.61
18 th c.	#	0	8	0	8
	%	0.00	61.54	0.00	44.44
	NFpmw	0	14.93	0	14.93
19 th c.	#	1	2	1	4
	%	100.00	15.38	25.00	22.22
	NFpmw	1.84	3.69	1.84	7.37
20 th c.	#	0	2	1	3
	%	0.00	15.38	25.00	16.67
	NFpmw	0	3.77	1.88	5.65
Total (#)		1	13	4	18

6.3. EARLY AND LATE MODERN ENGLISH IN FOCUS

Having now provided a general overview of the evolution of death-related intensifiers over time by means of the analysis of the HC and ARCHER material (sections 6.2.2 and 6.2.3 above), I will focus in this section on the Early and Late Modern English periods specifically, which, as will be shown, are crucial in the development of intensifying meanings for the forms under analysis. Thus, section 6.3.1 presents the data from EEBOCorp 1.0 (see 5.2.2.3), that is, from EModE. Sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3, in turn, are concerned with LModE, specifically with the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, for which purposes data were retrieved from ECF and NCF (cf. 5.2.3), respectively.

6.3.1. EEBOCorp 1.0

Before actually looking into the corpus data, a few explanatory notes seem in order here concerning the analysis of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* in this corpus. Given the high token frequency of an item such as *dead* in EEBOCorp 1.0, which can be both an adjective and an adverb, I chose a 1,000-token random sample. Analysing the total number of occurrences of *dead* in the data would not only be unmanageable, for there are 146,834 attestations, but it would also result in a high number of instances which would have to be eventually discarded, as (6.136), in which the adjective *dead* occurs in predicative position, or (6.137), in which *dead* is a nominalised adjective.

- (6.136) *At the which murther trimling, he cast him in the teth as he laye **deade** with his defendinge of Phillip, and wyth the praise and commendation of his fathers warres* (D00000998537460000. 1564. Marcus Junianus Justinus. *Thabridgment of the histories of Trogus Pompeius*, [...])

(6.137) [...] *since as soon as he Dyeth, his right in the thing bequeathed is quite lost and extinguished; so that the **Dead** not having an interest in any thing, the Legatee cannot sustain the person of the Testator, whose Right ceases before that of the Legate can take place?* (D00000998312760000. 1694. James Tyrrell. *Bibliotheca politica: or An enquiry into the ancient constitution of the English government* [...])

Even so, these 1,000 occurrences had to be manually pruned, given that in a considerable number of examples the forms under study were attested in predicative position. This left a total of 201 analysable instances: 199 tokens (99%) corresponded to the adjective *dead* and just 2 tokens (1%) represented the adverb *dead*. In contrast to the procedure followed for the form *dead*, all the examples of *deadly*, *mortally*, and *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0 were included. Table 6.67 below gives the raw figures for the different intensifiers and the total analysed in the corpus.

Table 6.67. Raw figures and total number of examples analysed in EEBOCorp 1.0

	Raw figures	Total analysed
<i>dead</i>	146,834 (1,000 (random sample))	199 (adj.)
		2 (adv.)
<i>deadly</i>	14,515	8,062 (adj.)
		920 (adv.)
<i>mortal</i>	31,146	20,697 (adj.)
		6 (adv.)
<i>mortally</i>	1,680	1,414
<i>to death</i>	30,865	4,355

If we compare this table with Table 6.1 above (cf. section 6.2.1), which provided the same information for the HC and ARCHER, it is obvious that the figures for each of the forms are significantly much higher in EEBOCorp 1.0 than in the HC and ARCHER. EEBOCorp 1.0 hence becomes an invaluable source of information which can provide important insights into the use of these items during EModE. In the remainder of this section, I will discuss each of the forms individually in the light of the data provided by this corpus.

6.3.1.1. *Dead*

Table 6.68 and Table 6.69 below show the distribution of the different types of meanings for *dead* in the data. As seen here, descriptive readings account for almost 95% of the occurrences of the adjective *dead* in the corpus, while subjective interpretations barely amount to 5%. No instances of intensifying *dead* were attested in the random sample.

Table 6.68. Meaning types for *dead* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

	Abs. Freq.	%
D	189	94.97
S	10	5.03
Total	199	100.00

Table 6.69. Meaning types for *dead* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

	Abs. Freq.	%
S	2	100.00
Total	2	100.00

Example (6.138), featuring the collocation *dead lion*, shows a literal or descriptive meaning of the adjective. In turn, the collocation *dead paleness* in (6.139) is taken to be subjective, since a pallid skin is often associated with corpses and, by extension, with death in general terms. The subjective use of the adverb *dead*, which is only recorded in the collocation *dead drunk* in the random sample, is illustrated in (6.140). *Dead drunk* is here considered to be subjective: when one is under the intoxicating effects of alcohol, though not dead, our condition can certainly be reminiscent of that of a dead person, and death can therefore be easily evoked.

- (6.138) *Surelye whosoever is ioyned to all the liuing, there is hope: for it is better to a liuing dog, then to a **dead** lyon.* (D00000998565350000. 1561. William Whittingham. *The Bible and Holy Scriptures conteyned in the Olde and Newe Testament*)
- (6.139) *Soon from her bosom she this Emrauld took; If now (said she) my Lord my Heart deceives, This Stone will by **dead** paleness make me look Pale as the Snowy skin of Lilly Leaves.* (D00000129517360000. 1651. William D'Avenant. *Gondibert an heroick poem*)
- (6.140) [...] *yet at last recovering, after she hath made a small Speech to the People, her Companions lead her into the Temple, where she drinks her self **dead** Drunk; all which impudent debaucheries, as they say, are done to the honor of their gods, to grant them store of Rain, and a plentiful Harvest.* (D00000112834340000. 1671. Arnoldus Montanus. *Atlas Chinensis*)

In addition to the 1,000-word random sample, on the basis of the quotations found in the OED entry for *dead* (adjective and adverb) (cf. section 6.1.1), I also selected a number of collocations to be searched for specifically in the data. This search intends to complement the scarce evidence provided by the random sample, and to allow to go further into the semantic development of the adjective and adverb. The selected collocates of *dead* are given in Table 6.70 below.

Table 6.70. Selection of collocates for *dead* (adj. and adv.) in EBOCorp 1.0

<i>Dead</i> (adj.)		<i>Dead</i> (adv.)	
Collocate	Abs. Freq.	Collocate	Abs. Freq.
<i>calm</i> (n.)	38	<i>beat</i>	-
<i>flat</i> (n.)	1	<i>broke</i>	-
<i>pale</i>	4	<i>calm</i> (adj.)	3
		<i>certain</i>	-
		<i>cold</i> (adj.)	8
		<i>drunk</i>	143
		<i>dull</i>	-
		<i>easy</i>	-
		<i>handsome</i>	-
		<i>pale</i> (adj.)	1
		<i>pretty</i>	-
		<i>quiet</i>	-
		<i>right</i>	2
		<i>scared</i>	-
		<i>serious</i>	-
		<i>set</i>	-
		<i>sick</i>	10
		<i>simple</i>	-
		<i>slow</i>	2
		<i>sober</i>	1
		<i>still</i>	1
		<i>straight</i>	-
		<i>sure</i>	21
		<i>tired</i>	-
		<i>white</i>	-
		<i>wrong</i>	-

The information provided by this selection of collocations suggests that both subjective and intensifying meanings of *dead* are already attested early in the data, which is in keeping with the preliminary evidence provided by the OED and the MED (cf. section 6.1.1 above). Collocations such as *dead calm*, *dead cold*, *dead pale*, and *dead drunk* in (6.141)-(6.143) evince subjective readings of *dead*. Thus, calmness or tranquillity, coldness, and paleness are all qualities which can be metaphorically related to death and are therefore counted here as subjective. The case of the collocation *dead drunk* in (6.144) is slightly different. Although in many cases in the corpus the use of *dead* in this particular collocation emphasises the inebriated condition of a person, and could therefore be graded as an intensifier meaning ‘very, extremely’, death-related properties can still be very present. When suffering the after-effects of alcohol, our state might be reminiscent of that of a dead person, and alcohol poisoning might be very close to death itself. On this account, the collocation *dead drunk* was considered as subjective rather than intensifying in the data.

- (6.141) *When a Ship being at Sea, doth take in all her Sails, so that nothing but her Masts, Yards and Riging are abroad, she is said to lye a Hull, or to Hull; and this is done, sometimes in **dead** Calms, to preserve the Sails from beating (and so spoiling) against the Masts; (D00000122443940000. 1685. Nathaniel Boteler. Six dialogues about sea-services between an high-admiral and a captain at sea)*
- (6.142) *He is stark and **dead** cold who is not set on fire by the burning and shining flames of such a charity. (D00000132989100000. 1667. Jeremy Taylor. The worthy communicant).*
- (6.143) *And with that worde, the head beganne to shrincke, The face **dead** pale, and hollow grew the eies: (D00000998404920000. 1592. Nicholas Breton. The pilgrimage to paradise).*
- (6.144) *Fellowes there are that follow mee, who in déepe bowles shall drowne the Dutchman, and make him lie vnder the Table. At his owne weapon of Vpsie freeze will they dare him, and beat him with wine-pots till hée be **dead** drunke. (D00000998409720000. 1608. Thomas Dekker. The dead tearme)*

Instances of intensifying *dead* are also present in the corpus data. (6.145), for instance, illustrates an intensifying reading of the adjective, its use in the collocation *dead flat*. In this case the author is describing a part of the Netherlands called the Beemster, which is characterised by a very rich soil and by very flat lands.

- (6.145) *This makes that part of the Countrey called the Bemster, being now the richest Soil of the Province, lying upon a **dead** flat, divided with Canals, and the ways through it distinguist with ranges of Trees, which make the pleasantest Summer-Landschip of any Countrey I have seen of that sort. (D00000117669300000. 1673. Sir William Temple. Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands)*

Intensifying meanings of the adverb are shown in (6.146)-(6.148):

- (6.146) *That done, take with your Compas the first fift part of that second circle, being so deuided, and there make a pricke: at which prick, lay the one end of your Ruler, and lay the other end thereof at the first fift degree of the inner Quadrant, and so draw a **dead** right line, which will cut the second line of diuision belonging to the middle Quadrant, (D00000998526600000. 1602. Thomas Blundeville. The theoriques of the seuen planets)*
- (6.147) *And for that all things in your seruice shall be fulfilled in more ample manner, I will that the noble Brandimardo go with me in my companie, for that your defence shall bée the more certain. And although the attainment be neuer so difficult; yet hauing him in my companie, I hope to make all things **dead** sure. (D00000998488560000. 1583. Pedro de la Sierra. The second part of the Myrror of knighthood)*
- (6.148) *I knowe it is taken (as they say) to be **dead** sure that the party is a witch, if sundry such shewes of matters do concurre. But how easie a thing is it for crafty deuils to compasse such matters? (D00000998414160000. 1593. George Gifford. A dialogue concerning witches and witchcraftes)*

(6.146) is taken from an astronomy book by Blundeville, who in this excerpt informs the reader about how to calculate the latitude of any place and how, in order to do that, one needs to draw a completely straight line. The only interpretation possible here for *dead* is therefore the intensifying reading: ‘completely, totally’. (6.147) and (6.148) give two examples of the collocation *dead sure*, the very first collocation documented in the OED. In fact, example (6.147) even antedates the first OED record of the collocation (cf. (6.21) above), dated 1589, and which is also found in EEBOCorp 1.0. Moreover, the example is taken from a romance of chivalry, originally written in Spanish by Pedro de la Sierra (*Espejo de príncipes y caballeros*), which was first printed in 1580. Although the translator could have chosen another form to render the Spanish adverb *muy* ‘very’ into English, he uses the adverb *dead* instead.³¹ In (6.148) the author mentions that the only way to be absolutely sure that a group of people are witches is when certain signs concur. In this case *dead* does not admit a literal reading either, but can only be a synonym for *completely, totally*.

In sum, the overall picture provided by the random sample and the selection of collocations suggests that both the adjective and the adverb *dead* could already occur with intensifying meanings in EModE. The number of tokens for the adverb in the random sample was very limited, but the collocational search showed that this adverb is indeed attested in the corpus. More conspicuously, some of the examples of the intensifying adverb date to the late sixteenth century, precisely the time when *dead* is first recorded as an intensifier in the OED.

6.3.1.2. *Deadly* (adj.)

EEBOCorp 1.0 yielded a total of 8,062 instances of the adjective *deadly* (cf. Figure 6.18), which occurred in 485 different collocations. Table 6.71 below shows the distribution of the adjective over the different periods in the corpus. The absolute frequencies indicate a sharp increase in the use of the adjective, especially in the transition from the second to the third period, and from the third to the fourth period, and then a drop in its use which coincides with the second half of the seventeenth century. The difference in use between the different periods is also statistically significant.³²

³¹ The original Spanish reads as follows: ‘Y para más servicio vuestro, quiero que el señor Brandimardo vaya en mi compañía, para que tengáis más segura vuestra causa, pues teniéndole a mi lado no ay cosa, por dificultosa que sea, que no la haga **muy** segura’ (De la Sierra 2003 [1580]: 69).

³² **P. I** > **P. II** $\chi^2(1) = 111.864; p = 0$; **P. II** > **P. III** $\chi^2(1) = 11.787; p = 0.00059646$; **P. III** > **P. IV** $\chi^2(1) = 49.61; p = 0$; **P. IV** > **P. V** $\chi^2(1) = 1071.016; p = 0$.

Figure 6.18. *Deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meani	Semantic proso	Modifier	Peri	P.	Comments	File
1	tes / the fiers dragons / the dedely gr	griffon	D	neu	N	1470s	I		D00000998449
2	vp her neckes in ydle in the dedely y	yoke	D	neu	N	1470s	I		D00000998422
3	ema[...] that they may make a dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998457
4	econd degree. whiche may be a dede	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
5	suche a buffet that he had a dedely v	wound	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000221021
6	most vnarmed / he felle in a dedely s	swoon	S	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000221021
7	poken eyder to other & many a dedely	stroke	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000221021
8	s / and pryde is hede of alle dedely s	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000221021
9	ryrtuel whyche is emonge alle dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
10	crysten man hath / is ayenste dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
11	ynne in caas that the deed be dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
12	e consentynges concluded been dede	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
13	lesynges greuyng & noyeng ben dede	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
14	is synne. & the two fyrst ben dedely s	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
15	n forfete not his chartour by dedely s	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998457
16	hat it is seek to the deth by dedely sy	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
17	ly synne may loue god. For by dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
18	He that hath dyspleased god by dedely	sin	D	neg	N	1480s	I		D00000998447
19									

Table 6.71. *Deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0.

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
I (1470s-1490s)	224	2.78	76.53	
II (1500s-1540s)	320	3.97	31.25	
III (1550s-1590s)	1,859	23.06	25.35	8,062
IV (1600s-1640s)	3,125	38.76	20.62	
V (1650s-1690s)	2,534	31.43	8.82	

Given the vast number of collocations, 485 in total, and for the sake of convenience, I will not display each of these on a table. Instead, I will give only those collocates of *deadly* with a minimum of 100 occurrences in the corpus. This list of collocates is provided in Table 6.72 below.

Table 6.72. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocates of *deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocate	Abs. Freq.	NF (/1,000,000 words)
<i>deadly blow</i>	252	0.48
<i>deadly disease</i>	134	0.26
<i>deadly enemy</i>	775	1.47
<i>deadly feud</i>	212	0.40
<i>deadly foe</i>	176	0.33
<i>deadly hate</i>	114	0.22
<i>deadly hatred</i>	274	0.52
<i>deadly poison</i>	659	1.25
<i>deadly sin</i>	1,452	2.76
<i>deadly thing</i>	109	0.21
<i>deadly war</i>	100	0.19
<i>deadly wound</i>	818	1.56

As shown here, in all the occurrences in the data *deadly* is found as a modifier of nouns, which is only natural taking into account that it is an adjective.

In order to know if the co-occurrence of *deadly* with these collocates is statistically significant and not to be attributed to chance, we need to obtain the standardised values (the z-score, the Mutual Information, the *MI3*, and the Log-likelihood values), given here in Table 6.73, as was done for the different forms in the HC and ARCHER (cf. 6.2.2.2 and 6.2.3.2 above).

Table 6.73. Standardised scores for *deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>deadly blow</i>	208.222	7.443	23.398	2,101.486 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly disease</i>	75.066	5.460	19.593	752.726 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly enemy</i>	251.083	6.381	25.577	5,327.355 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly feud</i>	1,384.891	13.144	28.599	3,561.997 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly foe</i>	157.556	7.160	22.079	1,398.791 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly hate</i>	84.629	6.018	19.684	726.990 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly hatred</i>	244.981	7.788	23.984	2,415.935 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly poison</i>	1,085.205	10.805	29.533	8,618.170 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sin</i>	469.068	7.262	28.270	11,744.935 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly thing</i>	17.116	2.158	15.695	156.976 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly war</i>	30.003	3.448	16.735	296.314 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly wound</i>	524.372	8.401	27.753	7,910.653 (p < 0.0001)

Calculating these standardised values, however, implies a major drawback in the case of EEBOCorp 1.0, since in order to obtain them we need to know not only the token frequency of *deadly* in the corpus, but also the raw frequencies for each of its collocates. Computing the raw frequencies for any of the collocates of *deadly* should not be a problem with any concordancer and might seem, at first sight, rather straightforward, but this is, however, not the case here. *Blow*, *disease*, *hate*, *poison*, *sin*, *war*, and *wound* can also be verbs. Therefore, we would have to filter these raw frequencies and separate the verbal forms from the nominal counterparts. By way of illustration, *blow* (including alternative spellings and plural forms) occurs over 27,000 times in EEBOCorp 1.0; *disease* is found over 57,000 times; there are over 175,000 tokens of *enemy* (and variants) in the corpus, over 178,000 of *sin* and its variants, and over 45,000 of *wound* and variants. In the absence of a tagged version of the corpus, the only possible option would be to filter the results manually, which would be not only unfeasible, but also beyond the scope of the present dissertation. For this reason, the standardised values offered (cf. Table 6.73) must be taken very cautiously and always bearing this problem in mind. What can be gathered from these inexact statistics is that the association of *deadly* with these collocates

is not to be attributed to chance, for the standardised scores seem to indicate that these values are in fact statistically significant, and if we were to count only the nominal collocates of *deadly* the resulting picture would, in all probability, not differ much from the values given in Table 6.73.

As for the types of meanings, the number of tokens for each of these clearly increases over time, and it is always in the course of the fourth to the very final period that the number of occurrences decreases. Despite the conspicuous growth in the absolute figures (cf. Table 6.74) in relation to the four different types of meanings established here, the results are only statistically significant for all the periods as far as descriptive meanings are concerned.³³ In regard to those meanings which are halfway between descriptive and subjective, the difference turns out to be statistically significant only in the last period ($\chi^2(1) = 124.23$; $p = 0$). In relation to subjective meanings, the second half of the seventeenth century was also found to be statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 440.25$; $p = 0$). Finally, in regard to those meanings of *deadly* which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying and to those which are clearly intensifying, the results from the chi-square test indicate that they cannot be considered statistically significant.

Table 6.74. Meaning types for *deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		D	D/S	S	S/I	Total
1470-99	#	199	0	25	0	224
	%	3.81	0.00	1.12	0.00	2.78
	NF pmw	67.99	0	8.54	0	76.53
1500-49	#	276	8	36	0	320
	%	5.28	1.34	1.61	0.00	3.97
	NF pmw	26.95	0.78	3.52	0	31.25
1550-99	#	1,104	146	609	0	1,859
	%	21.13	24.46	27.24	0.00	23.06
	NF pmw	15.05	1.99	8.30	0	23.35
1600-49	#	1,920	265	936	4	3,125
	%	36.75	44.39	41.86	80.00	38.76
	NF pmw	12.67	1.75	6.18	0.03	20.62
1650-99	#	1,725	178	630	1	2,534
	%	33.02	29.82	28.18	20.00	31.43
	NF pmw	6.00	0.62	2.19	0.00	8.82
Total (#)		5,224	597	2,236	5	8,062

Examples (6.149)-(6.153) offer a selection of the different types of meanings for the adjective *deadly* in the corpus. The collocation *deadly charms* in (6.149) corresponds to a descriptive use of the adjective, in which it is equivalent to *mortal*, that is, these charms will eventually disappear. The collocation *deadly pain* in (6.150) illustrates a meaning

³³ P. I > P. II $\chi^2(1) = 105.12$; $p = 0$; P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 76.36$; $p = 0$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 20.71$; $p = 0.000005353942$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 530.14$; $p = 0$.

which is ambiguous between descriptive and subjective; although on many occasions a very sharp pain is concomitant with a major disease, in many of these examples this pain is not clearly associated to a fatal disease, and it is hence unclear if the person will pass away. In turn, *deadly anguish* in (6.151) is considered to be subjective, since mental distress and sorrow might lead to a situation of hopelessness and disheartenment, which might also be accompanied by physical discomfort, although, in general terms, this condition is not itself fatal. Similarly, *deadly rancour* in (6.152) is also taken to be subjective: bearing deep resentment towards someone does not entail a power to kill or harm that person, though it might lead one to plan to murder him/her. By contrast, example (6.153) shows the collocation *deadly envy*, whose meaning is ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. The intention of injuring or damaging somebody is less clear when someone feels a twinge of envy for another person; therefore, it could also be argued that *deadly envy* could be paraphrased here as *pure envy* and hence function as an intensifier. However, in the context of this example, it is said that Anabaptists tend to persecute other religious groups; since the intention of harming others is still present, it could be argued to be a subjective reading of the adjective. For this reason, this collocation was tagged as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying.

- (6.149) *And twixt the~ streams of streaming blod swift running With bloudles trunks, lop'd heads, legs, thighs, and armes, Vpon the riuer like dead fishes swimming; Ere Sol with Neptune sleept, slept their harmes; All beeing shooke with deaths all **deadly** charmes.* (D00000998378270000. 1600. Cyril Tourneur. *The transformed metamorphosis*)
- (6.150) *Ere whyle to whom the people would, Hir Fathers antique court restore, And Brothers wedlock once againe, Now wéeeping, wringing hands poore wretch, Unto hir cruell, **deadly** paine, The armed souldiours do hir fetch.* (D00000998463890000. 1566. *Octavia*. Translated out of Latine into English, by T.N., student in Cambridge)
- (6.151) *What shuld I speake of Helise, Hieremy and Hieu, to be short of ye greatest part of gods prophets, which were euer wrapped in wo, and **deadly** anguishe the worlde seldome or neuer ministringe any cause of gladnes, comferte, or solace.* (D00000998451290000. 1546. William Hugh. *The troubled mans medicine*).
- (6.152) *Your Words a specious Mildness only bear, I fear the **deadly** Rancour hid within.* (D00000118052650000. 1698. Richard Hakluyt. *Phaeton, or, The fatal divorce a tragedy*)
- (6.153) *we cannot herein but take notice of the persecuting Spirit, implacable and **deadly** Envy that is in some of these Anabaptists, tending to Persecution in the highest.* (D00000162047460000. 1674. William Penn. *The Christian-Quaker and his divine testimony*)

If we consider semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.75), *deadly* is attested with negative semantic prosody in the overwhelming majority of the examples in EEBOCorp 1.0 (86.91%), while neutral and positive semantic prosody amount to 12.99% and 0.10%, respectively. Despite the rise in the absolute frequencies for each of the semantic prosodies of the adjective, mainly in what concerns negative and neutral semantic prosody, this increase is only considered statistically significant for all the periods in regard to negative semantic prosody, and also in the course of the fourth to the fifth period for neutral semantic prosody.³⁴ Collocations showing negative semantic prosody include *deadly pain*, *deadly anguish*, *deadly rancour*, and *deadly envy* in (6.150)-(6.153) above, while *deadly charm* in (6.149) is positive in meaning. Finally, examples of collocates which have been labelled as neutral in the data include *knight*, *thing*, *man*, *life*, and *sign*, among others.

Table 6.75. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total
1470-99	#	208	16	0	224
	%	2.97	1.53	0.00	2.78
	NF pmw	71.07	5.47	0	76.53
1500-49	#	299	21	0	320
	%	4.27	2.01	0.00	3.97
	NF pmw	29.20	2.05	0	31.25
1550-99	#	1,627	230	2	1,859
	%	23.22	21.97	25.00	23.06
	NF pmw	22.18	3.14	0.03	23.35
1600-49	#	2,741	380	4	3,125
	%	39.12	36.29	50.00	38.76
	NF pmw	18.09	2.51	0.03	20.62
1650-99	#	2,132	400	2	2,534
	%	30.43	38.20	25.00	31.43
	NF pmw	7.42	1.39	0.01	8.82
Total (#)		7,007	1,047	8	8,062

6.3.1.3. *Deadly* (adv.)

There are 920 occurrences of the adverb *deadly* in the data, which is attested in 131 different collocations. Table 6.76 below shows the distribution of the adverb across the different periods in the corpus. As these results indicate, there is a gradual increase in the number of occurrences of the adverb from one period to the next, except for the transition from P. IV to P. V. The results are, however, not significant for all periods: it is only the increase from P. II to P. III (from 78 to 238 occurrences) and the decrease in the number

³⁴ **Negative semantic prosody:** P. I > P. II $\chi^2(1) = 102.52$; $p = 0$; P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 18.89$; $p = 0.0000138345$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 42.51$; $p = 0$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 1015.98$; $p = 0$; **neutral semantic prosody:** P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 68.84$; $p = 0$.

of tokens from P. IV to P. V (from 414 to 162 occurrences) that is considered as highly statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 44.284$; $p = 0$, and $\chi^2(1) = 353.73$; $p = 0$, respectively).

Table 6.76. *Deadly* (adv.) in EBOCorp 1.0

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
I (1470s-1490s)	28	3.04	9.57	920
II (1500s-1540s)	78	8.48	7.62	
III (1550s-1590s)	238	25.87	3.25	
IV (1600s-1640s)	414	45.00	2.73	
V (1650s-1690s)	162	17.61	0.56	

Table 6.77 to Table 6.81 below summarise the results for the collocations which are attested at least ten times in EBOCorp 1.0 in the five different periods: 1470s-1490s, 1500s-1540s, 1550s-1590s, 1600s-1640s, and 1650s to 1690s.

Table 6.77. The collocates of *deadly* (adv.) in EBOCorp 1.0 (1470s-1490s)

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
<i>deadly sin</i>	20	15.04	6.83	133

Table 6.78. The collocates of *deadly* (adv.) in EBOCorp 1.0 (1500s-1540s)

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
<i>deadly sin</i>	61	45.86	5.96	133

Table 6.79. The collocates of *deadly* (adv.) in EBOCorp 1.0 (1550s-1590s)

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
<i>deadly hate</i>	76	32.76	1.04	232
<i>deadly sin</i>	33	24.81	0.45	133
<i>deadly wound</i>	16	32.00	0.22	50
<i>deadly wounded</i>	30	21.43	0.41	140

Table 6.80. The collocates of *deadly* (adv.) from in EBOCorp 1.0 (1600s-1640s)

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
<i>deadly hate</i>	127	54.74	0.84	232
<i>deadly sick</i>	41	49.40	0.27	83
<i>deadly sin</i>	15	11.28	0.10	133
<i>deadly sting</i>	11	57.89	0.07	19
<i>deadly wound</i>	25	50.00	0.16	50
<i>deadly wounded</i>	80	57.14	0.53	140

Table 6.81. The collocates of *deadly* (adv.) from in EEBOCorp 1.0 (1650s-1690s)

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
<i>deadly hate</i>	21	9.05	0.07	232
<i>deadly sick</i>	33	39.76	0.11	83
<i>deadly wounded</i>	26	18.57	0.09	140

In order to know if the association of the adverb *deadly* with these collocates is not random, we need to obtain the standardised values. However, as happened with the adjective *deadly* (cf. 6.3.1.2), in the case of the adverb we also face an important problem. In order to retrieve these values, we need the raw frequencies for each of the collocates, in addition to those of *deadly*. Given the high token frequency of the collocates in the corpus, a statistical analysis would not be reliable unless we clearly separated the nominal collocates from the verbal ones. Though acknowledging this problem, I have still decided to include these values here (cf. Table 6.82 below), which indicate the close connection between *deadly* and these collocates.

Table 6.82. Standardised scores for *deadly* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>deadly hate</i>	84.629	6.018	19.684	726.990 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sick</i>	54.551	5.241	17.991	441.629 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sin</i>	469.068	7.262	28.270	11,744.935 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sting</i>	29.624	5.388	14.307	121.415 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly wound</i>	524.372	8.401	27.753	7,910.653 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly wounded</i>	129.411	6.926	21.185	1,067.432 (p < 0.0001)

In regard to the meaning types of the adverb (cf. Table 6.83 below), 56.74% of the occurrences correspond to descriptive meanings, followed by subjective meanings, which account for 35.43% of the cases. Intensifying readings of *deadly* amount to 3.70%, while those examples which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective and between subjective and intensifying represent 3.59% and 0.54%, respectively. Descriptive occurrences of *deadly* increase over time and only decrease in the second half of the seventeenth century. The variation in the absolute frequencies is, however, only significant in the transition from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 115.04$; $p = 0$) and from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 179.13$; $p = 0$). Those meanings which can be classified either as descriptive or subjective are first recorded in the sixteenth century, though their frequency gradually decreases over time. The difference in the number of tokens was not found to be statistically significant, with the exception of the transition from P. IV to P. V, which is significant at $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.00339). Subjective meanings of the adverb

deadly also increase conspicuously in the second half of the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, to decrease again at the turn of this century. However, only the transition from P. II to P. III (Fisher's exact test = 0.006342) and that from P. IV to P. V are statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 173.03$; $p = 0$). By contrast, the variation in the number of tokens for intensifying meanings is not statistically significant.

Table 6.83. Meaning types for *deadly* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		D	D/S	S	S/I	I	Total
1470-99	#	22	0	6	0	0	28
	%	4.21	0.00	1.84	0.00	0.00	3.04
	NF pmw	7.52	0	2.05	0	0	9.57
1500-49	#	73	0	4	1	0	78
	%	13.98	0.00	1.23	20.00	0.00	8.48
	NF pmw	7.13	0	0.39	0.10	0	7.62
1550-99	#	120	16	100	0	2	238
	%	22.99	48.48	30.67	0.00	5.88	25.87
	NF pmw	1.64	0.22	1.36	0	0.03	3.25
1600-49	#	218	12	167	4	13	414
	%	41.76	36.36	51.23	80.00	38.24	45.00
	NF pmw	1.44	0.08	1.10	0.03	0.09	2.73
1650-99	#	89	5	49	0	19	162
	%	17.05	15.15	15.03	0.00	55.88	17.61
	NF pmw	0.31	0.02	0.17	0	0.07	0.56
Total (#)		522	33	326	5	34	920

Examples (6.154)-(6.161) below present a selection of the different types of meanings of *deadly* (adv.) in the corpus. (6.154) shows the adverb in combination with the participial form *slain*, and has hence a descriptive or literal meaning, since it is mentioned that some men-at-arms are carrying a dead knight in a coffin. The collocation *deadly dangerous* in (6.155) is considered to be indeterminate between descriptive and subjective: on the one hand, being dangerous does not entail any mortal circumstances. On the other, the referents here are the bow and the arrows, which do have a lethal power. *Deadly dismayed* in (6.156) is a subjective collocation: being horrified or appalled by a particular event or circumstance is not fatal either, but one may be overwhelmed with fear and feel in a state close to death, for example, with heart pounding or a cold sweat. Examples (6.157) and (6.158), in turn, are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. To displease somebody *deadly* may be interpreted, on the one hand, as to annoy or upset somebody terrifically, so that *deadly* could hence be argued to function as an intensifier. On the other hand, it could be claimed that when someone is annoyed, in this example God, (s)he may take physical revenge. For this reason, the collocation *displease deadly* was tagged as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. The same ambiguity is present in the collocation *envy deadly*; on the one hand, it could be equivalent

to *envy greatly*, and hence function as an intensifier. On the other hand, it could be argued that bearing somebody a grudge implies taking revenge on that person, and hence the possibility of harming him/her is still in the background. A subjective reading, therefore, would also be possible. Finally, examples (6.159)-(6.161) present intensifying meanings of the adverb, in combination with the adjectives *unwelcome*, *lazy*, and *long*. In these examples, *deadly* does not admit a literal interpretation, allowing for any type of damage whatsoever. Instead, the adverb functions purely as a degree form here, similar to *extremely* or *very*. In (6.159), the use of the intensifier is further reinforced by the presence of the superlative adverb *most*, which clearly supports the idea of high or extreme degree: ‘very unwelcome’, ‘very lazy’, and ‘very long’, respectively.

- (6.154) *and he mette in a valey about a twenty men of armes whiche bare in a bere* [‘bier, coffin’] *a knyghte **dedely** slayne* / (D00000221021800000. 1485. Sir Thomas Malory. *Le morte darthur*)
- (6.155) *And in his hand a bended bow was seene, And many arrowes vnder his right side, All **deadly** daungerous, all cruell keene, Headed with flint, and feathers bloudie dide, Such as the Indians in their quiuers hide;* (D00000998529580000. 1596. Edmund Spenser. *The faerie qveene*)
- (6.156) ***Deadly** dismayd, with horror of that dint Pyrrhochles was, and griued eke entyre;* (D00000381606180000. 1590. Edmund Spenser. *The faerie qveene*)
- (6.157) *they wyll rather forbere the pleasours of theyr lyfe / and also rather dye then **dedely** to dysplease hym, by the doynge of any suche thyng as he wyll rather that they shall dye then do it.* (D00000998400120000. 1533. Sir Thomas More. *The second parte of the co[n]futacion of Tyndals answer*).
- (6.158) *verely he **deadly** enuieth at your honour and felicitie, and grudgeth in his heart, that you should set downe the lawes of peace and warre in HVNGARIE:* (D00000998481340000. 1603. Richard Knolles. *The generall historie of the Turkes*)
- (6.159) *And for vse of all this, let vs learne, seriously to haue all sinne in horror and detestation, yea euen then, when it puts on an harlots face, and hath most force to deceiue vs; lest that which we heare, strike and wound vs at the heart, when wee looke for no such thing, but shall find it most **deadly** vnwelcome vnto vs.* (D00000998515700000. 1615. Richard Rogers. *A commentary vpon the vvhole booke of Iudges*)
- (6.160) *Misoponos was put to a Trade, but a **deadly** lazy Boy he was, very dull at learning, and hardly brought to settle to any thing, or stay with any Master.* (D00000112731160000. 1669. Richard Brathwaite. *The history of moderation*)
- (6.161) *Here I want our Authors Accuracy, or must complain of a Fallacy; for methinks it's a **deadly** long stride, to step from Adam to after-Ages, without the Bridge of some Neat Transition;* (D00000161874680000. 1676. Vincent Alsop. *Anti-sozzo, sive, Sherlockismus enervatus in vindication of some great truths opposed, and opposition to some great errors maintained by Mr. William Sherlock*)

Concerning the variable semantic prosody, *deadly* collocates with elements which are inherently negative in 94.78% of the examples in EEBOCorp 1.0, followed by neutral semantic prosody in 4.67% of the cases, and positive semantic prosody in just 0.54% of the attestations in the corpus. The absolute, relative, and normalised frequencies for each of the semantic prosodies of the adverb in each period are given in Table 6.84 below. The variation in the total number of tokens per period is only significant in what concerns negative semantic prosody, and even so, it is only significant in the transition from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 47.76$; $p = 0$) and in the transition from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 358.52$; $p = 0$).

Table 6.84. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total
1470-99	#	28	0	0	28
	%	3.21	0.00	0.00	3.04
	NF pmw	9.57	0	0	9.57
1500-49	#	78	0	0	78
	%	8.94	0.00	0.00	8.48
	NF pmw	7.62	0	0	7.62
1550-99	#	230	7	1	238
	%	26.38	16.28	20.00	25.87
	NF pmw	3.14	0.10	0.01	3.25
1600-49	#	394	20	0	414
	%	45.18	46.51	0.00	45.00
	NF pmw	2.60	0.13	0	2.73
1650-99	#	142	16	4	162
	%	16.28	37.21	80.00	17.61
	NF pmw	0.49	0.06	0.01	0.56
Total (#)		872	43	5	920

As an adverb, *deadly* can modify different types of words. In the EEBOCorp 1.0 data, it is found predominantly as a modifier of verbs (55.54%), but also of participial forms (23.8%), adjectives (20.54%), and adverbs (0.11%), as shown in Table 6.85 below. The absolute frequencies generally increase over time for each of these categories, even though these figures are not statistically significant in all cases. As a modifier of verbs, the rise in the number of tokens of the adverb is not significant in the transition from P. I to P. II, but this change was found to be statistically significant in the remaining periods.³⁵ As a modifier of participial items, only the decrease in the number of tokens from P. IV to P. V can be regarded as statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 111.582$; $p = 0$). The variation in the frequencies of *deadly* as a modifier of adjectives is only statistically significant when we compare P. IV and P. V.³⁶

³⁵ P. II > P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 60.147$; $p = 0$); P. III > P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 14.722$; $p = 0.00009946$); P. IV > P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 277.56$; $p = 0$).

³⁶ **Adjectives:** P. II > P. III Fisher's exact test = 0.246141; P. III > P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 2.145$; $p = 0.14303504$); P. IV > P. V

Table 6.85. Categories modified by *deadly* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Adj	Adv	Part	Vb	Total
1470-99	#	0	0	1	27	28
	%	0.00	0.00	0.46	5.28	3.04
	NF pmw	0	0	0.34	9.22	9.57
1500-49	#	1	0	11	66	78
	%	0.53	0.00	5.02	12.92	8.48
	NF pmw	0.10	0	1.07	6.45	7.62
1550-99	#	27	0	53	158	238
	%	14.29	0.00	24.20	30.92	25.87
	NF pmw	0.37	0	0.72	2.15	3.25
1600-49	#	79	1	116	218	414
	%	41.80	100.00	52.97	42.66	45.00
	NF pmw	0.52	0.01	0.77	1.44	2.73
1650-99	#	82	0	38	42	162
	%	43.39	0.00	17.35	8.22	17.61
	NF pmw	0.29	0	0.13	0.15	0.56
Total (#)		189	1	219	511	920

6.3.1.4. *Mortal* (adj.)

EEBOCorp 1.0 records a total of 20,697 analysable tokens of the adjective *mortal* (cf. Figure 6.19), in a total of 728 collocations. As shown in Table 6.86 below, the absolute frequencies for the adjective increase exponentially over time. This rise in the number of tokens of the adjective is significant for all the periods, except for the difference between P. I and P. II.³⁷

Figure 6.19. *Mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

1	N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic proso	Modifier of	Period	P.	Comments
2	1	onstrayned by the rygour of a morta	judgement	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
3	2	tune. that ys vncertayn to al mortal	folk	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
4	3	blisfulnes as I haue sayd all mortal	folk	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
5	4	then the souerayn cure of all mortal	folk	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
6	5	hye sete / Then ^e comen alle mort	folk	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
7	6	languyssh. gyue me be cursid mort	knife	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
8	7	wed and brought hit agayn fro mort	encumbrance	S	neg	N	1470s	I	Encumbrance 'trouble, misfortune'; borde
9	8	prayers & request s that her mortal	enemy	S	neg	N	1470s	I	
10	9	e dau ^r gero[us] warre that her mortz	enemy	S	neg	N	1470s	I	
11	10	ie & honoure To the whiche no mort	man	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
12	11	thy self that the couetuse of mortal	thing	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
13	12	ulnes / that all the kinde of mortal t	thing	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
14	13	eyned the longe durabilite of mortal	thing	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
15	14	at wel nygh al thentencion of morta	folk	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
16	15	for to resseyue absolution or mortal	sentence	D	neu	N	1470s	I	
17	16	whether that I be a resonable morta	beast	D	neg	N	1470s	I	
18	17	vnder the couertour of right mortal	distress	S	neg	N	1470s	I	

Table 6.86. *Mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
I (1470s-1490s)	204	0.99	6.97	20,697
II (1500s-1540s)	853	4.12	83.30	
III (1550s-1590s)	4,628	22.36	63.10	
IV (1600s-1640s)	6,707	32.41	44.26	
V (1650s-1690s)	8,305	40.13	28.90	

$\chi^2(1) = 14.42; p = 0.00014624.$

³⁷ P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 55.606; p = 0;$ P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 347.862; p = 0;$ P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 683.554; p = 0.$

Considering the total number of collocates of the adjective, it would be impractical to provide all of them on a table. Hence, Table 6.87 lists the most frequent collocates of the adjective in the data, in particular those which are attested at least 100 times in the corpus. Table 6.88, in turn, provides the standardised values for the same collocations. In the light of these values, all the collocations are significant, even though there are negative significance values for *mortal nature*, *mortal part*, *mortal state*, and *mortal thing* according to the *MI*, and *mortal part* in regard to the *z*-score. Nonetheless, these figures must be interpreted cautiously, for certain collocates pose the same problem as with the adjective *deadly* (cf. 6.3.1.2). Thus, *battle*, *blow*, *disease*, *hate*, *sin*, *war*, and *wound* can be both nouns and verbs and are in fact highly frequent forms in EEBOCorp 1.0. To calculate the standardised values, it should be recalled, we need not only the raw frequencies of these forms and of the adjective *mortal* in isolation: we also need their token frequencies in combination with *deadly*. However, filtering out the verbal from the nominal occurrences of these forms would be impractical given their high token frequency in the corpus. Even so, I have decided to include the standardised values to illustrate the significance of these collocations, for the values themselves would probably not differ too much after a manual pruning, considering the high frequency of these words.

Table 6.87. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocates of *mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF (/1,000,000 words)
<i>mortal battle</i>	121	0.22
<i>mortal blow</i>	165	0.31
<i>mortal body</i>	1,554	0.00
<i>mortal creature</i>	561	1.07
<i>mortal disease</i>	226	0.43
<i>mortal enemy</i>	1,799	0.00
<i>mortal eye</i>	592	1.13
<i>mortal flesh</i>	247	0.47
<i>mortal foe</i>	340	0.65
<i>mortal hate</i>	115	0.22
<i>mortal hatred</i>	269	0.51
<i>mortal life</i>	1,255	0.00
<i>mortal man</i>	4,567	0.01
<i>mortal nature</i>	151	0.29
<i>mortal part</i>	102	0.19
<i>mortal sickness</i>	109	0.21
<i>mortal sin</i>	2,153	4.10
<i>mortal state</i>	244	0.46
<i>mortal thing</i>	381	0.73
<i>mortal war</i>	241	0.46
<i>mortal wight</i>	237	0.45
<i>mortal wound</i>	693	1.32

Table 6.88. Standardised scores for *mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortal battle</i>	85.360	5.959	19.797	763.219 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal blow</i>	89.784	5.668	20.400	973.885 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal body</i>	149.462	4.028	25.232	5,765.515 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal creature</i>	102.412	4.368	22.632	2,331.830 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal disease</i>	83.913	5.050	20.690	1,144.626 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal enemy</i>	389.440	6.431	28.057	12,500.699 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal eye</i>	77.174	3.582	22.001	1,856.163 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal flesh</i>	39.050	3.009	18.906	598.022 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal foe</i>	203.059	6.946	23.764	2,604.181 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal hate</i>	55.928	4.866	18.557	554.039 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal hatred</i>	159.700	6.597	22.740	1,930.682 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal life</i>	113.963	3.617	24.204	3,990.130 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal man</i>	195.884	3.365	27.680	13,068.975 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal nature</i>	7.863	0.908	15.385	49.035 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal part</i>	-2.755	-0.392	12.953	8.277 (p < 0.01)
<i>mortal sickness</i>	42.819	4.230	17.767	433.263 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal sin</i>	196.110	4.308	26.453	8,779.760 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal state</i>	28.043	2.329	18.190	397.061 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal thing</i>	8.626	0.632	17.780	63.617 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal war</i>	46.131	3.425	19.250	707.537 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal wight</i>	213.433	7.601	23.379	2,037.119 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal wound</i>	266.014	6.702	25.575	5,083.099 (p < 0.0001)

As can be gathered from the list of collocates in Table 6.87, the adjective *mortal* modifies nouns in all the occurrences in the corpus, given its adjectival nature.

As far as the types of meanings are concerned, descriptive meanings of adjectival *mortal* clearly prevail in the corpus, accounting for 83.28% of the occurrences, followed by subjective readings (14.82%), those occurrences which could be described as either descriptive or subjective (1.78%) and, finally, those which admit both a subjective and an intensifying reading (0.13%). The raw frequencies for each of the meanings of the adjective generally increase over time (cf. Table 6.89 below). However, this tendency is disrupted from P. I to P. II in regard to those instances which could be categorised as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, and also from P. III to P. IV in regard to those meanings which are indeterminate between subjective and intensifying. The variation in the number of occurrences between the different periods was found to be statistically significant for descriptive meanings.³⁸ The rise in frequency was only significant in the transition from P. I to P. II and from P. IV to P. V concerning those cases which were classified as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective ($\chi^2(1) = 25.568$; $p = 0.00000043$ for P. I and P. II; $\chi^2(1) = 20.88$; $p = 0.00000489$ for P. IV and P.

³⁸ P. I > P. II ($\chi^2(1) = 27.08$; $p = 0.0000002$; P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 78.42$; $p = 0$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 205.987$; $p = 0$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 658.08$; $p = 0$.

V). As far as subjective meanings are concerned, the variation is only not significant if we compare the frequencies of P. II and P. III.³⁹ Finally, the different frequencies for those meanings which can be rated as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying are only significant at $p < 0.05$ if we compare P. IV and P. V (Fisher's exact test = 0.019152).

Table 6.89. Meaning types for *mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		D	D/S	S	S/I	Total
1470-99	#	130	17	56	1	204
	%	0.75	4.62	1.83	3.85	0.99
	NF pmw	44.42	5.81	19.13	0.34	69.70
1500-49	#	745	9	98	1	853
	%	4.32	2.45	3.20	3.85	4.12
	NF pmw	72.75	0.88	9.57	0.10	83.30
1550-99	#	3,744	90	791	3	4,628
	%	21.72	24.46	25.79	11.54	22.36
	NF pmw	51.05	1.23	10.78	0.04	63.10
1600-49	#	5,727	122	856	2	6,707
	%	33.23	33.15	22.71	7.69	32.41
	NF pmw	37.79	0.81	5.65	0.01	44.26
1650-99	#	6,890	130	1,266	19	8,305
	%	39.97	35.33	41.28	73.08	40.13
	NF pmw	23.98	0.45	4.41	0.07	28.90
Total (#)		17,236	368	3,067	26	20,697

Illustrations of the different types of meanings of the adjective *mortal* are provided in examples (6.162)-(6.171) below. In (6.162), *mortal* has a descriptive or literal meaning, referring to humans, in contrast to gods. *Mortal vapour* in (6.163) denotes the contaminated air which has caused the death of many people in the city of Troy, bringing about a fatal epidemic disease. It is, therefore, another example of a descriptive meaning of the adjective, being here a synonym of *fatal*, *deadly*.

(6.162) *Then~e comen alle mortal folk of noble seed.* (D00000998422230000. 1478. Boethius. *Boecius de consolacione philosophie*)

(6.163) *Wherof roos a corrupte and a mortall vapour that Infectid alle the Cyte Wherof engendryd so grete a pestelence that the moste parte of the troians were smyten to deth by the grete Influence of the corrupt Ayer.* (D00000998449480000. 1473. Raoul Lefèvre. *The recuyell of the historyes of Troye*).

Conversely, examples (6.164)-(6.165) show subjective meanings of *mortal*. A mortal distress is a feeling of extreme anxiety and sorrow, which may as well be accompanied by physical discomfort, even if in principle it is not deadly. Bearing a mortal hate for somebody does not imply necessarily that one wants to kill him/her, although in example

³⁹ P.I > P. II ($\chi^2(1) = 16.99$; $p = 0.00003762322$; P. III > P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 177.37$; $p = 0$; P. IV > P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 31.44$; $p = 0.00000002$).

(6.165), for instance, the narrator explicitly mentions that Brutorus manifested his intention of killing Iason, the knight. This purpose, however, is not explicitly indicated in the overwhelming majority of the attested examples. (6.166) and (6.167) also evince subjective readings of *mortal*, in particular its combination with the nouns *ire* and *anger*. The context in both cases is violent. The first example mentions some tyrants who have an insatiable thirst for destruction and are very fond of burning and spoiling things in their bursts of anger. The second context is taken from the popular chivalric romance *Mirror of Knighthood*, a translation from an original in Spanish. This example in particular is a call for action, a letter written by the Emperor Alicandro addressed to Bradaman Campeon, lord of the Oriental Islands. Known as a fierce warrior and ‘so strong and mightie ouer all mortall creatures’, the emperor wants him to destroy his enemy, the Greek emperor Trebatio. This mortal anger, however, is not lethal either. What is deadly in this case is the power of the weapons used by this person, since we know that, as a matter of fact, blood ‘flowed with great abundance’.

- (6.164) *And then~e ought not I to haue the vysage banisshid fro alle consolacion and Ioye / & ought not my herte to lye on the bedde of tribulacion vnder the couertour of right mortal distresse & betwene the shetes of bewaylinges; (D00000998546500000. 1477. Raoul Lefèvre. [...] The historie of Iason)*
- (6.165) *Whan brutorus had vndersta~de thyse tidinges he was moche pensif / & {con}ceyued a mortal hate ayenst jason. and concluded in hym self that he wold murdre hym / (D00000998549240000. 1492. Raoul Lefèvre. The veray trew history of the valiau[n]t knight Iaso[n])*
- (6.166) *Where are become, these tirauntes great So insaciate, of their desyre Whose auin some time, no man could set So raged was, their mortal yre Who durst denay, what they did require To burne or spoyle, all was one thyng Suche was their vse, custome and liuyng. (D00000998558820000. 1578. Arthur Kelton. A chronycle with a genealogie declaryng that the Brittons and Welshemen are linealiye dyscended from Brute)*
- (6.167) *This daye was the death of the Gran Campion, vnto many verie deare and sorowfull, for that his sonne for to make cruell reuengement for the same, with furious wrath and mortal anger, doth destroy & ouerthrow all that commeth before him, wherewith he doth increase the streames of bloud in the fielde, that it flowed with great abundance. (D00000998488760000. 1586. Diego Ortúñez de Calahorra. The third part of the first booke, of the Mirrour of knighthood)*

Finally, the corpus also records some cases of collocations which pave the way for the later emergence of unambiguously intensifying meanings. This is the case of *mortal envy*, *mortal hatred*, and *mortal displeasure* in (6.168)-(6.171) below, which have been tagged as intermediate between subjective and intensifying. Feeling envy for someone does not automatically imply hating him/her or bearing him/her any ill will, but this is actually the

case in the context of (6.168), which describes the confrontation between gentlemen and citizens. The former are characterised by their reckless extravagance, in contrast to the latter, who live on trade. Both parties are said to have a grudge against each other, so that gentlemen call any citizen a ‘trimme merchaunt’, and citizens call any of these gentlemen a ‘ioly Gentleman’. What is more, they take revenge on each other, so in this particular example the collocation is more subjective than intensifying. Violence is not so clear in example (6.169), in which the mortal envy could also be read simply as an extreme or huge envy. Both a subjective and an intensifying reading would therefore be justifiable in this case. The same applies to the collocation *mortal hatred and displeasure* in example (6.170) and to *mortal displeasure* in (6.171). (6.170), for instance, mentions specifically a prince’s servant, who lost the prince’s favour after offending him. In this context, we might interpret that the prince might feel infuriated and consequently take revenge on the servant, so the collocations are more likely to have a subjective reading. Example (6.171), though showing the same collocation, presents a different context. The mortal displeasure here is not caused by anyone in particular, but it is rather a specific situation which is annoying, in this case for a citizen from Rouen to be deprived of his children and give them a pension. The mortal displeasure in this example is thus more likely to be interpreted as having an intensifying reading. Examples such as this one might in fact favour unequivocally intensifying readings of the adjective later on.

- (6.168) *And truely this **mortall** enuie betweene these two woorthie estates, was first engendred of the cruell vsage of couetous merchaunts, in hard bargaines gotten of Gentlemen, and nourished with malicious words and reuenges taken of both parties.* (D00000998394010000. 1586. George Whetstone. *The enemie to vnthryftinesse publishing, by lawes, documents and disciplines*)
- (6.169) *If two Sunnes cannot shine within one spheare, Then why should two arch-villaines? thou hast discovered Projects almost beyond me, and for which I haue ingrost a **mortall** enuy here, I will be sole, or none.* (D00000998397890000. 1632. Thomas Heywood. *The iron age* [...])
- (6.170) *Which, how great a losse it is, we may esteeme in part, by the state of a worldly princes seruant and fauorite, who being in highe grace and credit with his Soueraine, should by some one great offence lose al his fauour at one instant, and incurre his **mortal** hatred and displeasure.* (D00000998493970000. 1585. Robert Parsons. *A Christian directorie guiding men to their saluation*)
- (6.171) *where is there a father that can digest the **mortal** displeasure to see himself bereaved of the fruits of his Marriage, and to be condemned afterwards to pay them a Pension, as we have seen examples in diuers places, and particularly in Rouen in the person of one named Bindel Painter, whose Children are brought up in this manner.* (D00000135340670000. 1681. Edmund Everard. *The great pressures and grievances of the Protestants in France* [...])

Concerning the variable semantic prosody, the results from the data indicate that *mortal* occurs in 59.60% of the cases with neutral semantic prosody, followed by negative semantic prosody (39.09%) and by positive semantic prosody (1.31%). Table 6.90 displays the total number of tokens of the adjective per period for each of the three prosodies. Although the individual frequencies increase over time, these results are not statistically significant for positive semantic prosody. It is only the increase in the number of occurrences with neutral semantic prosody that is considered statistically significant in all periods.⁴⁰ As for the growth in the absolute frequency of negative semantic prosody, the results indicate that it is statistically significant in all periods except for the transition from P. I to P. II.⁴¹

Table 6.90. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adj.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total
1470-99	#	123	80	1	204
	%	1.52	0.65	0.37	0.99
	NF pmw	42.02	27.33	0.34	69.70
1500-49	#	386	461	6	853
	%	4.77	3.74	2.21	4.12
	NF pmw	37.70	45.02	0.59	83.30
1550-99	#	1,798	2,788	42	4,628
	%	22.22	22.60	15.50	22.36
	NF pmw	24.51	38.01	0.57	63.10
1600-49	#	2,440	4,193	74	6,707
	%	30.16	33.99	27.31	32.41
	NF pmw	16.10	27.67	0.49	44.26
1650-99	#	3,344	4,813	148	8,305
	%	41.33	39.02	54.61	40.13
	NF pmw	11.64	16.75	0.52	28.90
Total (#)		8,091	12,335	271	20,697

Examples of the collocates in the data with neutral semantic prosody include *folk* and *vapour*, as in examples (6.162) and (6.163) above, but also collocations such as *mortal judgement*, *mortal thing*, *mortal name*, *mortal engine*, *mortal life*, and *mortal body*, among many others. It is clear that these nouns cannot per se be neither negative nor positive, and have hence been classified as neutral. Instances of inherently negative nouns collocating with the adjective *mortal* are also numerous in the corpus data, including, by way of illustration, *encumbrance*, *adversary*, *battle*, *peril*, *sorrow*, *danger*, *pain*, *wretchedness*, *heaviness*, *pestilence*, etc. Conversely, the collocates of *mortal* which are positive in meaning are relatively few, and include, among others, *pleasure*, *amity*, *delight*, *fame*, *reward*, *love*, *majesty*, and *hope*.

⁴⁰ P. I > P. II $\chi^2(1) = 16.903$; $p = 0.00003142$; P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 11.17$; $p = 0.00075489$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 170.091$; $p = 0$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 575.09$; $p = 0$.

⁴¹ P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 59.24$; $p = 0$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 185.26$; $p = 0$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 149.67$; $p = 0$.

6.3.1.5. *Mortal* (adv.)

EEBOCorp 1.0 hardly yields any evidence of the adverb *mortal* (cf. Figure 6.20), since there are only four analysable tokens over three different periods, as shown in Table 6.91 below. The increase in one example from P. IV to P. V is not considered statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.999999).

Figure 6.20. *Mortal* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Period	Comments	File
1	s humour feeds: And maks them mortal	sick	D	neg	A	III		D00000998407130000.txt
2	aduerse Champion fights, Till mortall w	wounded	D	neg	P	IV		D00000255958460000.txt
3	happy man; I thought no pleasure was a	wounded	D	neg	P	V		D00000124048290000.txt
4	r you'd believe were hers, So mortal pal	pale	S	neu	A	V		D00000172430770000.txt

Table 6.91. *Mortal* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
III (1550s-1590s)	1	25.00	0.01	4
IV (1600s-1640s)	1	25.00	0.01	
V (1650s-1690s)	2	50.00	0.01	

Concerning the collocations of the adverb, *mortal* is attested in the data in combination with different elements: the participial element *wounded* (example (6.172) and the adjectives *sick* and *pale* ((6.173) and (6.174) below).

- (6.172) *Terry with louing thanks, his loue requites, And brings him to his foe, whom he defies: And valiant with the aduerse Champion fights, Till **mortall** wounded, at his feete he dyes, Yet 'twas a man suppos'd of matchlesse worth:* (D00000255958460000. 1620. Samuel Rowlands. *The famous history, of Guy Earle of Warwicke*)
- (6.173) *A sottell Snack of laet, with sopples sugred words Haeth sleely crept in brestes of men [...] And drawn the marchant from his traed, and plowman from the ploughe Disenshon is his name [...] And maks them **mortall** sick, and sway somtims a sied [...] (D00000998407130000. 1575. Thomas Churchyard. *The firste parte of Churchyardes chippes contayning twelue seuerall labours*)*
- (6.174) *His Blood, which rather you'd believe were hers, So **mortal** pale her lovely Face appears:* (D00000172430770000. 1693. Samuel Wesley. *The life of our blessed Lord & Saviour, Jesus Christ an heroic poem*)

The collocations *mortal wounded* and *mortal sick* are classified as descriptive, for they describe a literal meaning of the adverb. In (6.172), a character named Terry is wounded and dies as a consequence, while (6.173) mentions a snake which creeps in the breasts of

men and, as a consequence, they fall ill. By contrast, in (6.174) the collocation *mortal pale* is considered as subjective. Being pale or pallid does not imply by any means being dead, although the connections with death itself are self-evident: the woman resembles a corpse on account of her paleness. Descriptive meanings, therefore, account for the majority of the examples of the adverb *mortal* in the corpus (75%), whereas subjective meanings, represented only by this collocation, amount to 25% of the total (cf. Table 6.92).

Table 6.92. Meaning types for *mortal* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		D	S	Total
1550-99	#	1	0	1
	%	33.33	0.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0.01	0	0.01
1600-49	#	1	0	1
	%	33.33	0.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0.01	0	0.01
1650-99	#	1	1	2
	%	33.33	100.00	50.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0.01
Total (#)		3	1	4

The three different collocations of *mortal* in the data, namely *mortal wounded*, *mortal sick*, and *mortal pale*, also throw light on the semantic prosody of the adverb. Thus, *mortal* is mostly attested with negative semantic prosody (hence *mortal wounded* and *mortal sick*), which accounts for 75% of the total, while neutral semantic prosody (*mortal pale*) represents 25% of the total, as shown in Table 6.93 below for the different periods.

Table 6.93. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Total
1550-99	#	1	0	1
	%	33.00	0.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0.01	0	0.01
1600-49	#	1	0	1
	%	33.33	0.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0.01	0	0.01
1650-99	#	1	1	2
	%	33.33	100.00	50.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0.01
Total (#)		3	1	4

In regard to the types of words modified by the adverb, and despite the overall low frequencies, *mortal* likewise modifies adjectives and participial items, as shown in Table 6.94 below.

Table 6.94. Categories modified by *mortal* (adv.) in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Adj	Part	Total
1550-99	#	1	0	1
	%	50.00	0.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0.01	0	0.01
1600-49	#	0	1	1
	%	0.00	50.00	25.00
	NF pmw	0	0.01	0.01
1650-99	#	1	1	2
	%	50.00	50.00	50.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0.01
Total (#)		2	2	4

In sum, though the corpus evidence for the adverb *mortal* is very scarce, it functions as a modifier of both participial forms and adjectives, and is attested mainly with negative semantic prosody. Descriptive readings account also for the majority of the meanings in the data, since there are no intensifying examples of the adverb and subjective interpretations represent only 25% of the total.

6.3.1.6. *Mortally*

The total number of analysable examples of the adverb *mortally* in EEBOCorp 1.0 (cf. Figure 6.21 below), which occurs in 95 different collocations, amounts to 1,413. The majority of the attestations of the adverb are dated to the last period (55.34%), followed by the remaining periods in decreasing order (30.71% for P. IV, 7.22% for P. III, 5.59% for P. II, and, finally, 1.13% corresponding to P. I). Despite the rise in the absolute number of occurrences of the adverb over time (cf. Table 6.95), this increase was only found to be significant from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 163.05$; $p = 0$) and from P. III to P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 44.38$; $p = 0$). Table 6.96 shows the most frequent collocates of *mortally* in the corpus, those occurring at least ten times. The combination of the adverb with these collocates cannot be attributed to mere chance, but is statistically significant, as reflected by the different values given in Table 6.97.

Figure 6.21. Mortally in EBOCorp 1.0

N	Concordance	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier	Period	P.	Comments	File
1	flood Mayer of Austrasia, who mortally hated the Holy Bishop. Wit	hate	S neg	S neg	V	1680s	V		D00000121123090000.txt
2	hen I was become his enemy, mortally hating him, and to my utm	hate	S neg	S neg	V	1650s	V		D00000123810180000.txt
3	as Fairfax, was in its Defence mortally wounded. XXXI. Sir Richard	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1660s	V		D00000119836910000.txt
4	124 St. Bernard cures a man mortally wounded, by giving him cons	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1650s	V		D00000120998810000.txt
5	mpanions, blasphemeth, and mortally sinneth. Consider not such	sin	D neg	D neg	V	1640s	IV		D00000998317860000.txt
6	of an enemy, that hath so mortally offended me, and used me so	offend	D neg	D neg	V	1650s	V		D00000238234740000.txt
7	defiled with Sin. If one had mortally offended his Equal, he durst	offend	D neg	D neg	V	1690s	V		D00000128736400000.txt
8	r at Loctrum, wherein he was mortally wounded, understanding the	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1660s	V		D00000125679790000.txt
9	ilt himselfe grieuously and mortally wounded; and although he wer	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1600s	IV		D00000998478600000.txt
10	ght, bound him, and having mortally wounded him, left him to the r	wounded	D neg	D neg	V	1670s	V		D00000119814790000.txt
11	he breketh his othe & synned mortally / & more ouer is holden to r	sin	D neg	D neg	V	1500s	II		D00000998447080000.txt
12	ow of Continenzie, doe sinne mortally; yet doth their Marriage holc	sin	D neg	D neg	V	1610s	IV		D000009984489640000.txt
13	child of God doth not sinne mortally, (and thereby, according to Br	sin	D neg	D neg	V	1630s	IV		D00000998457390000.txt
14	, and the king euer after was mortally hated of all the GREECIANS	hated	S neg	S neg	P	1570s	III		D00000202431840000.txt
15	ne to the King, but with a heart mortally afflicted. Never had Husba	afflicted	S neg	S neg	P	1670s	V		D00000120920710000.txt
16	Lordsshippe, friends? Gough Mortally wounded, speechlesse, he c	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1600s	IV		D00000998420410000.txt
17	any field to fight in. I now mortally defie thee to an eternal combat	defy	D neg	D neg	V	1630s	IV		D00000998427890000.txt
18	it we should offend God more mortally, then in attributing to any ot	offend	D neg	D neg	V	1650s	V		D00000998676380000.txt
19	n, one of their Leaders was mortally wounded, and the other, whicl	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1660s	V		D00000120618810000.txt
20	st? When Dust and Ashes mortally offends, Can Dust and Ashes	offend	D neg	D neg	V	1620s	IV		D000009980506930000.txt
21	ce aright, they shall not be mortally wounded in the Battel, but gai	wounded	D neg	D neg	P	1670s	V		D00000122590860000.txt
22	mic, and infidelitie, which doe mortally torment you, and ouer in that	torment	S neg	S neg	V	1630s	IV		D00000998432060000.txt

Table 6.95. Mortally in EBOCorp 1.0

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
I (1470s-1490s)	16	1.13	5.47	
II (1500s-1540s)	79	5.59	7.71	
III (1550s-1590s)	102	7.22	1.39	1,413
IV (1600s-1640s)	434	30.71	2.86	
V (1650s-1690s)	782	55.34	2.72	

Table 6.96. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocates of *mortally* in EBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF (/1,000,000 words)
<i>mortally dangerous</i>	19	0.04
<i>mortally hate</i>	292	0.56
<i>mortally hated</i>	24	0.05
<i>mortally hurt</i>	34	0.06
<i>mortally offend</i>	32	0.06
<i>mortally offended</i>	12	0.02
<i>mortally sick</i>	45	0.09
<i>mortally sin</i>	220	0.42
<i>mortally wound</i>	146	0.28
<i>mortally wounded</i>	412	0.78

Table 6.97. Standardised scores for *mortally* in EBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortally dangerous</i>	35.022	6.056	14.552	122.094 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally hate</i>	574.914	10.147	26.527	3,526.170 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally hated</i>	83.281	8.185	17.355	224.526 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally hurt</i> (vb.)	8.873	4.145	8.789	19.296 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally hurt</i> (pp.)	54.359	6.699	16.415	211.888 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally offend</i>	84.663	7.820	17.820	283.241 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally offended</i>	30.912	6.351	13.521	81.949 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally sick</i>	86.579	7.397	18.381	372.045 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally sin</i>	163.200	6.943	22.506	1,681.310 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally wound</i>	277.777	9.051	23.431	1,540.995 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally wounded</i>	1,097.586	11.515	28.888	5,760.706 (p < 0.0001)

As for the types of meanings of *mortally* (cf. Table 6.98), the overwhelming majority of the examples present descriptive meanings (72.89%), while subjective meanings amount to 23.64%. Those readings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying and those between descriptive and subjective are much less numerous, accounting for 1.49% and 1.42% of the total, respectively. Intensifying meanings of *mortally* are, in turn, scarcely found in the corpus (0.57%). As for the significance of these results, both the chi-square test and Fisher's exact test indicate that the scores are statistically significant only for descriptive, subjective, and meanings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying in certain periods.⁴²

Table 6.98. Meaning types for *mortally* in EBOCorp 1.0

		D	D/S	S	S/I	I	Total
1470-99	#	16	0	0	0	0	16
	%	1.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.13
	NF pmw	5.47	0	0	0	0	5.47
1500-49	#	76	0	3	0	0	79
	%	7.38	0.00	0.90	0.00	0.00	5.59
	NF pmw	7.42	0	0.29	0	0	7.71
1550-99	#	68	0	31	3	0	102
	%	6.60	0.00	9.28	14.29	0.00	7.22
	NF pmw	0.93	0	0.42	0.04	0	1.39
1600-49	#	345	9	75	1	4	434
	%	33.50	45.00	22.46	4.76	50.00	30.71
	NF pmw	2.28	0.06	0.49	0.01	0.03	2.86
1650-99	#	525	11	225	17	4	782
	%	50.97	55.00	67.37	80.95	50.00	55.34
	NF pmw	1.83	0.04	0.78	0.06	0.01	2.72
Total (#)		1,030	20	334	21	8	1,413

A selection of the different types of meanings of *mortally* is provided in (6.175)-(6.184). (6.175) and (6.176) show descriptive or literal meanings of *mortally*, in particular its use with the verbs *smite* and *sin*. Beating or striking someone mortally implies wounding him/her to death. This is the case in the episode in (6.175), which narrates Hercules' defeat of King Antheon and the moors who supported him. Sinning mortally, as in (6.176), implies committing a mortal sin and, hence, destroying or severely wounding the soul, being therefore equivalent to inflicting a mortal wound on the body.

(6.175) *and there smote hem down with his clubbe so mortally that he maad hit reed with their blood and slewe hem all and putte hem to flyght so cruelly that antheon abode allone ayenst hercules and fought ayenst hym body to body by grete strength and gaf hym many strokes hard to bere / (D00000998449480000. 1473. Raoul Lefèvre. [...] The recuyell of the histories of Troye)*

⁴² **Descriptive meanings:** P. II > P. III $\chi^2(1) = 216.25; p = 0$; P. III > P. IV $\chi^2(1) = 48.27; p = 0$; P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 9.89; p = 0.00147067$; **subjective meanings:** P. IV > P. V $\chi^2(1) = 11.63; p = 0.00051848$; **subjective/intensifying meanings:** P. IV > P. V Fisher's exact test = 0.01057 (significant at $p < 0.05$).

(6.176) *If he hath not kept ye solemnyte requysyte / as wytnesses & of othes & these other thynges the whiche ben of ryght he breketh his othe & sy~ned **mortally** / (D00000998447080000. 1502. Andrew Chertsey. [...] *the Ordynarye of crystyanyte or of crysten men*)*

In (6.177) *mortally* modifies the adjective *dangerous* and is considered to be halfway between descriptive and subjective. This example relates how risky it is to enter a house in which a person is infected with the plague. Going into a house is not itself fatal, but the risk of contracting the disease is greatest when in contact with someone who is infected with the virus. On this account, this example was not tagged as properly descriptive, but as intermediate between descriptive and subjective, although it is ultimately referring to a highly infectious disease, and, therefore, closer to a literal meaning.

(6.177) *imagine with your selves, how **mortally** dangerous it is to enter an infected house; how fearfull would any one be of the state of his body, if hee should have one in his company who had the carbuncle or plaguesore running vpon him? (D00000998403690000. 1630. Richard Brathwaite. *The English gentleman* [...])*

Examples (6.178), (6.179), and (6.180) present the same collocation, *hate mortally*, but differ slightly. Thus, while (6.178) was marked as a subjective reading of *mortally*, (6.179) and (6.180) were considered to be ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. (6.178) presents the case of a person who hates another, and dislikes him so much as to treat him worse than he would treat a serpent or a dog. That does not mean necessarily that this person wishes his actual death or that he intends to kill him. For this reason *hate mortally* is regarded here as subjective rather than as literal or descriptive. Examples (6.179) and (6.180) differ from (6.178) in that what is hated is not a person, but a thing, and this paves the way for a subsequent degree or intensifying reading. In (6.179) what is hated is rebellion or the suspicion of it, which is said to be avoided at all costs. This excerpt is taken from a declaration by William I, Prince of Orange, against Fernando Álvarez de Toledo, the third Duke of Alba, whose actions in the Netherlands during the Eighty Years' War were reported to be extremely cruel and brutal. In this passage, Prince William is justifying the revolt against the aforementioned duke on account of his brutality and tyranny. Although William and his supporters have always avoided uprisings, in the end they were left with no option but to rise in rebellion against the duke. Similarly, the quotation in (6.180) describes Christina Alessandra, the Queen regnant of Sweden from 1632 to 1654, who was said to be an extremely educated woman that devoted her time to the study of books and to sleep only for a few hours ('She sleeps but

five hours, and studies for the most part'). Christina hence hated inactivity and laziness, as suggested in this excerpt. Therefore, the meaning of the adverb *mortally* here seems to be closer to that of an intensifier ('extremely, very'), and in this precise context it is the most likely interpretation, although the combination of *mortally* with the verb *hate* can still easily evoke death. Example (6.181) presents the same context although with a different collocate, namely the verb *dislike*. One may feel hostility towards a particular person and hence dislike him/her, which would be considered subjective, for there is always the possibility of damaging him/her or of bearing him/her ill will. However, disliking something is different, and much like in (6.180), the meaning of the adverb is here closer to that of an intensifier: 'very much'.

- (6.178) *He hatethe him wars than a dogge or a serpente: as who sayth, **mortally** without hope of reconcylynge.* (D00000998468240000. 1538. Sir Thomas Eliot. *The dictionary of syr Thomas Eliot knight*).
- (6.179) *Neuertheles we haue thought good, publikely to declare by these presents, the vnauoydable occasions, by which we with our Allies and frendes, haue bene co-strained and enforced to take in hand this our defence: principally to put away all suspicion of rebellion, which we haue fled, & **mortally** hated all the dayes of our life.* (D00000998376540000. 1568. William I, Prince of Orange. *A declaration and publication of the most worthy Prince of Orange*)
- (6.180) *She hates **mortally** idleness, and is adorned with so many vertues, that every Queen may easily envie her, but very hardly imitate her.* (D00000998719860000. 1658. Gualdo Priorato. *The history of the sacred and Royal Majesty of Christina Alessandra Queen of Swedland*)
- (6.181) *I **Mortally** dislike a damning Face: Pleas'd or displeas'd; no matter now, 'tis past.* (D00000135065200000. 1696. George Granville Lansdowne. *The she-gallants, a comedy*)

Finally, examples (6.182)-(6.184) show purely intensifying meanings of *mortally*. More conspicuously, *mortally* is found in (6.182) and (6.183) as a modifier of items which are positive in nature: the *-ed* form *enamoured* and the prepositional phrase *in love*. A descriptive or literal meaning here is completely ruled out, and the only possible interpretation is that of an intensifier: 'totally enamoured' and 'totally in love', respectively. The adverb *mortally* is also found as an intensifier in combination with elements which are inherently negative, as the adjective *tedious* in (6.184). In this example, a character is describing a tempest, and the description is said to be very boring, but the fact that something is uninteresting does not imply in any case that it can be fatal. Again, *mortally tedious* here can only be read as an intensifier: 'extremely tedious'.

- (6.182) *For Brohars became **mortally** inamored with Basina, the wife of Croisant, insomuch as he made a vow to his owne sule, that vnlesse Destiny it selfe preuented him, he would that forbidden fruit, which Nature, and the custome of diuine Lawes most vehemently prohibiteth.* (D00000998478650000. 1612. Gervase Markham. *The most famous and renowned historie, of that woorthie and illustrious knight Meruine* [...])
- (6.183) *I can endure no more, Diablo, he is **mortally** in love With Catalina.* (D00000998524600000. 1640. James Shirley. *The maides revenge A tragedy*)
- (6.184) *But Mr. Blackmore, after he has wearied us with the Description of a Tempest, which is **mortally** tedious, gives us the solemn Entertainment of a sententious Harangue, and anon proceeds to desribe Persecution, after such a Manner, that as Longi says of the Goddess Discord of Hesiod, he has render'd the Image nauseous which he designed terrible.* (D00000155097250000. 1696. John Dennis. *Remarks on a book entituled Prince Arthur*)

The adverb *mortally* occurs in the corpus as a whole mostly with elements which are inherently negative (99.65%). Those elements modified by *mortally* with positive semantic prosody only amount to 0.28% of the total, and those with neutral semantic prosody represent 0.07% of the total of examples, as shown in Table 6.99.

Table 6.99. Semantic prosody for *mortally* in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total
1470-99	#	16	0	0	16
	%	1.14	0.00	0.00	1.13
	NF pmw	5.47	0	0	5.47
1500-49	#	79	0	0	79
	%	5.61	0.00	0.00	5.59
	NF pmw	7.71	0	0	7.71
1550-99	#	102	0	0	102
	%	7.24	0.00	0.00	7.22
	NF pmw	1.39	0	0	1.39
1600-49	#	432	0	2	434
	%	30.68	0.00	50.00	30.71
	NF pmw	2.85	0	0.01	2.86
1650-99	#	779	1	2	782
	%	55.33	100.00	50.00	55.34
	NF pmw	2.71	0	0.01	2.72
Total (#)		1,408	1	4	1,413

Thus, only the collocates *enamoured* and *in love* in examples (6.182) and (6.183), in addition to the adjective *happy* and the participial form *surprised*, were classified as representing positive semantic prosody. The adjective *strong* was the only collocate of *mortally* which was tagged as having neutral semantic prosody, for *strong* can be regarded as both a positive and a negative quality. The remaining collocates of the adverb all had negative semantic prosody, including, among many others, *wounded*, *afflicted*, *torment*, *sin*, *sick*, *pursue*, *stab*, and *infect*. Moreover, although the absolute frequencies for negative semantic prosody rise exponentially over time, the results from the chi-square

test show that these figures can only be considered as statistically significant if we compare P. II and P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 163.046; p = 0$) and P. III and P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 43.744; p = 0$).

Given its adverbial nature, *mortally* can modify a relatively wide variety of word classes, although it shows a strong preference for verbs (55.70%) and participial items (38.36%). Even so, it was also found as a modifier of adjectives (5.87%) and of prepositional phrases (0.07%). The individual distribution as a modifier of each of these categories over the different periods in the corpus is given in Table 6.100.

Table 6.100. Categories modified by *mortally* in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Adj	Part	PP	Vb	Total
1470-99	#	0	10	0	6	16
	%	0.00	1.84	0.00	0.76	1.13
	NF pmw	0	3.42	0	2.05	5.47
1500-49	#	0	2	0	77	79
	%	0.00	0.37	0.00	9.78	5.59
	NF pmw	0	0.20	0	7.52	7.71
1550-99	#	0	27	0	75	102
	%	0.00	4.97	0.00	9.53	7.22
	NF pmw	0	0.37	0	1.02	1.39
1600-49	#	31	185	1	217	434
	%	37.80	34.07	100.00	27.57	30.71
	NF pmw	0.20	1.22	0.01	1.43	2.86
1650-99	#	52	318	0	412	782
	%	63.41	58.56	0.00	52.35	55.34
	NF pmw	0.18	1.11	0	1.43	2.72
Total (#)		83	542	1	787	1,413

The statistical tests show that the variation over the different periods is only significant in regard to verbs and participial elements. As for verbs, the difference was found to be slightly significant if we compare P. I with P. II ($\chi^2(1) = 9.96; p = 0.00160587$) and highly significant in the transition from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 205.006; p = 0$). As for participial items, the difference is significant from P. I to P. II (Fisher's exact test = 0.000012) and from P. III to P. IV ($\chi^2(1) = 37.212; p = 0$).

6.3.1.7. *To death*

EEBOCorp 1.0 records a total of 8,500 examples of the prepositional phrase *to death*, which occurs in 341 different collocations (cf. Figure 6.22). As shown in Table 6.101 below, there are no instances of *to death* in the late fifteenth century, and the first attestations in the corpus date to the early sixteenth century. From that time onwards, the frequency of *to death* increases dramatically from P. II to P. III, and then it is doubled from P. III to P. IV, and also from P. IV to P. V. This overall increase is considered as

statistically significant only from the P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 43.07; p = 0$) and from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 131.86; p = 0$).

Figure 6.22. *To death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

N	Concordance	Collocat	Type of mean	Semantic pros	Modifier	Period	Comments	File	P.
1	grau'te that those were greuous	wound	D	neg	N	1530s		D00000998412330000.txt	II
2	hemies hu'te for my soule, they be	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998548110000.txt	II
3	lorde shall beholde therthe euen fr	judged	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998412330000.txt	II
4	wayte for hym / and in co'cluyon.	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D00000998375140000.txt	II
5	wayte for hym / and in co'cluyon.	judged	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D00000998375140000.txt	II
6	the laste. This is it writen / Esaye th	haried	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D00000998412330000.txt	II
7	the laste. This is it writen / Esaye th	tugged	D	neg	P	1530s	double	D00000998412330000.txt	II
8	be oure spere and shyde. For yf we	wound	D	neg	V	1530s		D00000998399980000.txt	II
9	in hym, and in his worde. We ede o	judged	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998430500000.txt	II
10	to haue their children / their heires	beaten	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998431390000.txt	II
11	o his departynge / when ludas se hi	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998412330000.txt	II
12	that here wyll remytte the synne o	condemn	D	neg	V	1530s		D00000998394690000.txt	II
13	dges, wher he was deryded, accuse	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998394690000.txt	II
14	rowned with thorne: blyndfelded, c	condemned	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000998394690000.txt	II
15	ynoges seate, he that forsware hym	whipped	D	neg	P	1530s		D00000231849730000.txt	II
16	: but eyther one slue another to dea	slay	D	neg	V	1540s		D00000998566770000.txt	II
17	every man hunteth hys brother to d	hunt	D	neg	V	1540s		D00000998566770000.txt	II
18	e prestes stoned the captayne to de	stone	D	neg	V	1540s		D00000998566770000.txt	II
19	? he persecudt the christians to dea	persecute	D	neg	V	1540s		D00000998436390000.txt	II
20	his man maye not be condemned to	condemned	D	neg	P	1540s		D00000998566770000.txt	II

Table 6.101. *To death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

Period	Abs. Freq.	%	NF (/1,000,000 words)	Total
I (1470s-1490s)	0	0.00	0	
II (1500s-1540s)	97	1.14	9.47	
III (1550s-1590s)	1,372	16.14	18.71	8,500
IV (1600s-1640s)	2,886	33.95	19.04	
V (1650s-1690s)	4,145	48.76	14.42	

Given the high number of collocations of *to death*, it would be impractical to provide a comprehensive list of these on a table. Hence, Table 6.102 records the most frequent collocates in the data, that is, those which were attested at least 100 times in the corpus. Table 6.103 provides the standardised values for the same collocates. If we consider the different values, the association of all these collocates with *to death* is significant in all cases. However, these figures must be interpreted cautiously, for certain collocates pose the same problem as with *deadly* and *mortal* (cf. 6.3.1.2 and 6.3.1.4). *Sentence*, *shot*, *stone*, and *wound*, in addition to being highly frequent forms, can be both verbs and nouns, and in the case of *stone*, we would have to discard the nominal occurrences, as there are no stones to death, though it is possible to stone somebody to death. Even so, I have decided to include these values to illustrate the significance of these collocations, for the values would probably not differ too much after a manual pruning, in the light of the high frequency of these forms.

Table 6.102. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocates of *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF (/1,000,000 words)
<i>adjudge to death</i>	109	0.21
<i>adjudged to death</i>	113	0.22
<i>bleed to death</i>	235	0.45
<i>burnt to death</i>	168	0.32
<i>condemn to death</i>	541	1.03
<i>condemned to death</i>	588	1.12
<i>frozen to death</i>	135	0.26
<i>persecute to death</i>	136	0.26
<i>pressed to death</i>	172	0.33
<i>sentence to death</i>	116	0.22
<i>sentenced to death</i>	144	0.27
<i>shot to death</i>	252	0.48
<i>sick to death</i>	143	0.27
<i>starve to death</i>	146	0.28
<i>starved to death</i>	197	0.37
<i>sting to death</i>	156	0.30
<i>stone to death</i>	288	0.55
<i>stoned to death</i>	656	1.25
<i>trodden to death</i>	109	0.21
<i>wound to death</i>	161	0.31
<i>wounded to death</i>	292	0.56

Table 6.103. Standardised scores for *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>adjudge to death</i>	296.122	9.655	23.192	1,251.799 (p < 0.0001)
<i>adjudged to death</i>	137.769	7.409	21.049	938.190 (p < 0.0001)
<i>bleed to death</i>	208.409	7.546	23.299	1,995.772 (p < 0.0001)
<i>burnt to death</i>	94.573	5.787	20.572	1,018.936 (p < 0.0001)
<i>condemn to death</i>	337.132	7.728	25.887	4,732.678 (p < 0.0001)
<i>condemned to death</i>	143.167	5.203	23.602	3,099.384 (p < 0.0001)
<i>frozen to death</i>	209.124	8.348	22.502	1,298.392 (p < 0.0001)
<i>persecute to death</i>	111.283	6.540	20.715	965.375 (p < 0.0001)
<i>pressed to death</i>	152.330	7.097	21.950	1,353.450 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sentence to death</i>	42.251	4.115	17.831	443.379 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sentenced to death</i>	309.680	9.384	23.724	1,597.104 (p < 0.0001)
<i>shot to death</i>	158.731	6.672	22.627	1,834.730 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sick to death</i>	62.722	4.881	19.201	691.869 (p < 0.0001)
<i>starve to death</i>	198.412	8.086	22.465	1,350.202 (p < 0.0001)
<i>starved to death</i>	346.272	9.254	24.498	2,148.245 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sting to death</i>	141.772	7.032	21.602	1,213.400 (p < 0.0001)
<i>stone to death</i>	82.367	4.673	21.013	1,313.236 (p < 0.0001)
<i>stoned to death</i>	1,195.857	11.091	29.807	8,957.612 (p < 0.0001)
<i>trodden to death</i>	130.965	7.316	20.852	890.874 (p < 0.0001)
<i>wound to death</i>	69.754	5.009	19.670	806.441 (p < 0.0001)
<i>wounded to death</i>	180.940	6.834	23.214	2,191.453 (p < 0.0001)

Turning now to the types of meanings of *to death* in the corpus (cf. Table 6.104 below), descriptive readings clearly prevail in the data, accounting for 93.39% of the cases, followed by subjective interpretations (2.98%), those instances which have been

tagged as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective (2.09%), the intensifying attestations of *to death* (1.44%), and, finally, those meanings which are intermediate between subjective and intensifying (0.11%). Although the individual token frequencies rise for all types of meanings over the different periods, this increase is more conspicuous for descriptive readings. However, these frequencies are only statistically significant for descriptive interpretations if we compare P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 36.59; p = 0$) and P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 146.80; p = 0$). The increase from P. III to P. IV was also found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.05$ in relation to those examples which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (Fisher's exact test = 0), while the results for the other meanings of *to death* are not statistically significant.

Table 6.104. Meaning types for *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

		D	D/S	S	S/I	I	Total
1470-99	#	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0	0	0	0
1500-49	#	97	0	0	0	0	97
	%	1.22	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.14
	NF pmw	9.47	0	0	0	0	9.47
1550-99	#	1,305	43	21	1	2	1,372
	%	16.44	24.16	8.30	11.11	1.64	16.14
	NF pmw	17.79	0.59	0.29	0.01	0.03	18.71
1600-49	#	2,723	63	63	0	37	2,886
	%	34.30	35.39	24.90	0.00	30.33	33.95
	NF pmw	17.97	0.42	0.42	0	0.24	19.04
1650-99	#	3,813	72	169	8	83	4,145
	%	48.03	40.45	66.80	88.89	68.03	48.76
	NF pmw	13.27	0.25	0.59	0.03	0.29	14.42
Total (#)		7,938	178	253	9	122	8,500

Examples (6.185)-(6.194) below provide a selection of the different types of meanings for *to death* found in the corpus. (6.185) and (6.186) correspond to descriptive or literal readings of *to death*; the first shows the collocation *wound to death*, that is, wound somebody till (s)he dies as a result. The second example features the collocation *stone to death*, which was a common type of punishment at this period, consisting in throwing stones at someone till (s)he died as a consequence.

- (6.185) *For yf we so do, then shall suche poysoned arowes eyther not hytte vs at all, or els not wounde vs to death.* (D00000998399980000. 1537. Andreas Osiander. *How and whither a Christen man ought to flye the horrible plague of the pestilence*)
- (6.186) *Wherfore they wer so sore vexed with heate and malice against him, that they violently thrust him out of the cytie, and then cruelly stoned him to death:* (D00000998432980000. 1546. Polydore Vergil. *An abridgement of the notable woorke of Polidore Vergile*)

(6.187), in turn, is more ambiguous. Thus, the effects of being affected by witchcraft are less clear: it is not so evident that the person will suffer any physical damage and pass away as a result of sorcery. Much like this example, (6.188) was also tagged as intermediate between descriptive and subjective, since putting someone in a dangerous situation does not necessarily imply that (s)he is going to die eventually. Instead, this person may just be (slightly) injured or not injured at all, as is actually the case in many of the examples of the collocation *hazard to death* in the corpus.

- (6.187) *Ursley Kempe alias Grey bewitched to death Kempes Wife. (D00000998376240000. 1582. W. W. A true and iust recorde, of the information, examination and confession of all the witches)*
- (6.188) *So that it was a maruelous pleasure, & likewise a dredfull fight, to see the whole battell marche together in order, at the sound of the pipes, and neuer to breake their pace, nor confounde their ranckes, nor to be dismayde nor amazed themselues, but to goe on quietly & ioyfully at the sounde of these pipes, to hazard themselues euen to death. (D00000202431840000. 1579. Plutarch. The lives of the noble Grecians and Romanes)*

Examples (6.189) and (6.190), by contrast, illustrate subjective meanings of *to death*, its use with the participial form *afflicted* and the noun *sorrow*. In both cases, the general condition of someone who is suffering from mental distress, anguish, and extreme sadness may be very poor and often accompanied by other physical symptoms, so that his/her general state of dispiritedness may as well make him/her think that (s)he is going to pass away. On this account, these examples are regarded as subjective.

- (6.189) *Co~sider O noble Eugland that thou hast enimes that hate thee deadly, that go about as much as in them is to work thy destruction, Consider how the professors of the word of God els wher in Europe, far hence, and those that dwell next almost vnto vs be manaced, vexed, and persecuted, & with all rigor and crueltie from time to time afflicted, euen to death: (D00000998486030000. 1589. Christopher Ocland. The fountaine and vvelspring of all variance, sedition, and deadlie hate)*
- (6.190) *For first these words, My soule is full of sorrowes euen to death, are not in S. Lukes Gospell, whence you would seeme to cite them, as presently sayd after Christes bloudie sweat. (D00000998427750000. 1604. Thomas Bilson. The suruey of Christs sufferings for mans redemption and of his descent to Hades or Hel for our deliuerance)*

(6.191) represents a turning point before purely intensifying meanings (examples (6.192)-(6.193) below). In this case, *to death* modifies the noun *jealousy*, and this collocation is ambiguous between a subjective and an intensifying meaning. It could be argued, on the one hand, that being jealous to death is a synonym of being extremely jealous of someone; on the other hand, when someone envies another person, it is

possible, though not necessarily the case, that (s)he wishes (in)directly him/her some kind of damage. For this reason, this collocation is probably closer to a subjective meaning. Given this ambiguity, I have decided to tag it as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying.

(6.191) [...] *he no sooner was told the approaching of his fate, but he caused Hortensius to be call'd, who being come, jealousie remaining in his heart, even **to death**, he constrained him to promise him, never to deliver the Prince of Cyparissa, [...]* (D00000120436130000. 1678. Madeleine de Scudéry. *Clelia*)

Finally, examples (6.192)-(6.194) show intensifying meanings of *to death*. The prepositional phrase in combination with the verbs *laugh* and *blush* and with the adjective *impatient* can no longer be interpreted literally, and the degree meaning is the only one possible in such cases. The degree reading of *to death* in (6.192) is further supported by the presence of the adverb *exceedingly* in the immediately preceding context: *laugh so exceedingly*. In other words, *laugh to death* in this example can only be read as ‘laugh very much’. The degree reading is applicable to (6.193) and (6.194), for *impatient to death* can only be read as ‘extremely impatient’, and *blush to death* in this context simply means ‘to blush exceedingly’.

(6.192) [...] *it hath some time so mad a countenaunce, that it wyll make fooles to ioye and laugh so excéedinglie, as they laugh the~selues **to death**.* (D00000998377480000. 1587. John Ryckes. *The true image of Christian love*)

(6.193) *MAdam, my evill Fortune gives one common beginning to all my Letters: I am impatient even **to death**, to have the honour to come and see you: but now that I am well, the ayre is sicke, and all the Country drowned: There is no land to be seene between this and Lymousin; and the mischiefe is, that there is no navigation yet found out, for so dangerous a voyage.* (D00000998680080000. 1654. Jean-Louis Guez, seigneur de Balzac. *Letters of Mounsieur de Balzac*)

(6.194) *I shall blush **to death**, if you speak thus again.* (D00000182081950000. 1665. William Killigrew. *Three playes written by Sir William Killigrew*)

Concerning semantic prosody, the results from the corpus (cf. Table 6.105 below) clearly reveal a preference for *to death* to be combined with elements which have inherently negative semantic prosodies. This accounts for 99.09% of the attestations of *to death* in EBOCorp 1.0, while neutral semantic prosody is found in 0.11% of the examples, and positive semantic prosody represents only 0.8% of the total. Moreover, although there is an obvious increase in the absolute figures for all the different semantic prosodies, most conspicuously for negative semantic prosodies, the results were only

statistically significant for negative and positive semantic prosody. Thus, for negative prosody we can only consider as statistically significant the rise in token frequency from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 42.869$; $p = 0$) and the rise from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 130.328$; $p = 0$). For positive semantic prosody, it is only the rise in the number of attestations from P. III to P. IV which was found to be significant at $p < 0.05$ (Fisher's exact test value = 0.000631). Examples (6.185)-(6.194) above all illustrate negative semantic prosodies, except for the collocation *laugh to death*, which is positive. Further instances of *to death* combined with inherently positive elements are *tickled to death*, *in love to death*, *enamoured to death*, *defend to death*, *resolved to death*, and *adore to death*. Examples of *to death* as a modifier of elements which can be considered neutral, way less numerous in the corpus, are *constant to death*, *amazed to death*, and *drink to death*.

Table 6.105. Semantic prosody for *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Neg	Neu	Pos	Total
1470-99	#	0	0	0	0
	%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0	0
1500-49	#	97	0	0	97
	%	1.15	0.00	0.00	1.14
	NF pmw	9.47	0	0	9.47
1550-99	#	1,370	1	1	1,372
	%	16.26	11.11	1.47	16.14
	NF pmw	18.68	0.01	0.01	18.71
1600-49	#	2,855	5	26	2,886
	%	33.90	55.26	38.24	33.95
	NF pmw	18.84	0.03	0.17	19.04
1650-99	#	4,101	3	41	4,145
	%	48.69	33.33	60.29	48.76
	NF pmw	14.27	0.01	0.14	14.42
Total (#)		8,423	9	68	8,500

Finally, the last variable considered in the data is the word class modified by *to death*. The results from EEBOCorp 1.0, shown in Table 6.106, clearly indicate that it functions predominantly as a modifier of participial forms (50.69%) and of verbs (44.8%), although it is also found to a lesser extent as a modifier of nouns (2.61%), adjectives (1.88%), and prepositional phrases (0.01%). These figures, therefore, indicate the versatile nature of this prepositional modifier, in contrast to the limitations of other word categories, such as the adjectives *deadly* or *mortal*, which only modify nouns. If we consider the raw frequencies and their variation along the different periods, the results are statistically significant for the participial and the verbal forms, the two major categories modified by *to death*, but also for nouns if we consider P. IV and P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 15.584$; $p = 0.00007892$). As for participial elements, the increase in the number of instances was

found to be significant from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 13.169$; $p = 0.00028462$) and also from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 64.266$; $p = 0$). The same periods were considered statistically significant for verbs: the transition from P. II to P. III ($\chi^2(1) = 29.15$; $p = 0.00000007$) and from P. IV to P. V ($\chi^2(1) = 39.496$; $p = 0$).

Table 6.106. Categories modified by *to death* in EEBOCorp 1.0

		Adj	N	Part	PP	Vb	Total
1470-99	#	0	0	0	0	0	0
	%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	NF pmw	0	0	0	0	0	0
1500-49	#	0	4	59	0	34	97
	%	0.00	1.80	1.37	0.00	0.89	1.14
	NF pmw	0	0.39	5.76	0	3.32	9.47
1550-99	#	11	52	693	0	616	1,372
	%	6.79	23.42	16.09	0.00	16.18	16.14
	NF pmw	0.15	0.71	9.45	0	8.40	18.71
1600-49	#	51	82	1,456	0	1,297	2,886
	%	31.88	36.94	33.79	0.00	34.06	33.95
	NF pmw	0.34	0.54	9.61	0	8.56	19.04
1650-99	#	98	84	2,101	1	1,861	4,145
	%	61.25	37.84	48.76	100.00	48.87	48.76
	NF pmw	0.34	0.29	7.31	0	6.48	14.42
Total (#)		160	222	4,309	1	3,808	8,500

6.3.2. ECF

In comparison with the EEBOCorp 1.0 data (cf. 6.3.1), the results from ECF are much less numerous. Even so, they provide a valuable source of information as to the behaviour of the forms under study in this specific period of time. As done for EEBOCorp 1.0 above, in the remainder of this section I discuss the results for the different items individually in the ECF data.

6.3.2.1. *Dead* (adj.)

ECF yields a total of 290 analysable tokens of the adjective *dead* (cf. Figure 6.23), in a total of 77 different collocations. The number of collocations is relatively high considering the number of examples of *dead*, which owes to the fact that many collocates of the adjective are recorded only once. Table 6.107 below presents the individual frequencies for the most common collocations in the data (those occurring at least five times in ECF). As shown in this table, all the collocates of *dead* are nouns, so that adjectival *dead* behaves in this regard in exactly the same way as other adjectives like *mortal* (6.3.1.4) or *deadly* (6.3.1.2). Table 6.108 shows the standardised scores for the most frequent collocates of *dead*. The results indicate that in many cases there is a significant correlation between the adjective and these collocates, and that their co-

occurrence cannot be attributed to chance. This is the case of the collocations *dead body*, *dead dog*, *dead husband*, *dead language*, *dead man*, *dead rat*, and *dead silence*, which are highly significant, and of *dead child*, which is also statistically significant. However, the collocations *dead father*, *dead friend*, *dead lord*, and *dead woman* were not found to be statistically significant. In these cases, therefore, there is not a strong link between the node and the collocate.

Figure 6.23. *Dead* (adj.) in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	id under pretence of extolling substance		D	neu	N	
2	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	If it should be asked,---why w matter		D	neu	N	
3	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	When I want to make a skeletc creature		D	neu	N	
4	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	As to the dead flea, it was ope flea		D	neu	N	
5	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	[...] and we took the dead body/body		D	neu	N	
6	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	At least I am sure there is muclman		D	neu	N	
7	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	Near it, at last, about break of man		D	neu	N	
8	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	A decent and proper tribute of woman		D	neu	N	
9	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	His hair is fallen off, and his na pale		S	neu	N	
10	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	But my answer is, that a dead v woman		D	neu	N	
11	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	Because, Sir, I would not reduc woman		D	neu	N	
12	1756-1766	II	John Bunclce	Having mentioned the sleepin silence		S	neu	N	
13	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	I have long waited an Opportu friend		D	neu	N	
14	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	He continually visited her, and child		D	neu	N	
15	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	The rich Vests and Turbants yo bone		D	neu	N	
16	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	Your generous Soul, tho' yet a lord		D	neu	N	
17	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	in short, he loaded her with bi husband		D	neu	N	
18	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	it was easy to guess the Cause lord		D	neu	N	
19	1739	I	Charlotta du Pont	I therefore resolved to break i mother		D	neu	N	
20	1739	I	Count Albertus	All this traick Action was a Se husband		D	neu	N	

Table 6.107. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *dead* (adj.) in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>dead body</i>	74	7.63
<i>dead child</i>	7	0.72
<i>dead dog</i>	6	0.62
<i>dead father</i>	5	0.52
<i>dead friend</i>	6	0.62
<i>dead husband</i>	8	0.82
<i>dead language</i>	8	0.82
<i>dead lord</i>	6	0.62
<i>dead man</i>	51	5.26
<i>dead rat</i>	8	0.82
<i>dead silence</i>	6	0.62
<i>dead woman</i>	5	0.52

Table 6.108. Standardised scores for *dead* (adj.) in ECF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead body</i>	48.696	5.088	17.507	379.199 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead child</i>	2.756	1.442	7.057	5.148 (p < 0.05)
<i>dead dog</i>	10.612	4.373	9.543	24.995 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead father</i>	0.366	0.236	4.879	0.126 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead friend</i>	0.602	0.354	5.524	0.333 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead husband</i>	4.625	2.153	8.153	11.486 (p < 0.001)
<i>dead language</i>	10.683	4.018	10.018	29.595 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead lord</i>	1.148	0.670	5.840	1.116 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead man</i>	11.770	2.168	13.513	74.024 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead rat</i>	53.115	8.470	14.470	79.076 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead silence</i>	8.523	3.811	8.981	20.581 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead woman</i>	0.116	0.075	4.718	0.013 (p > 0.05)

With regard to the types of meanings (cf. Table 6.109 below), the adjective *dead* shows a preference for descriptive or literal meanings in the eighteenth-century data. These represent 90.00% of the total, subjective meanings amount to 7.59%, while intensifying meanings of *dead* are the least frequent, making up 2.41%.

Table 6.109. Meaning types for *dead* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	261	90.00	26.90
S	22	7.59	2.27
I	7	2.41	0.72
Total	290	100.00	29.89

Examples (6.195)–(6.200) illustrate the different types of meanings of the adjective in the data. (6.195) and (6.196) show descriptive meanings, in particular the combination of the adjective with the nouns *tree* and *languages*, respectively. These readings are undoubtedly descriptive or literal, for a dead tree is a tree which is not alive any more, and a dead language is a language which has not survived and has no speakers alive. Examples (6.197) and (6.198), by contrast, illustrate subjective meanings of *dead*, in combination with the nouns *pale* and *calm*. A pallid or wan colour may recall the paleness of a corpse, as in (6.197), in which the narrator describes a certain Richmond, sick with a fatal disease and with a very livid face. Peacefulness or tranquillity, as in (6.198), may also signal or be related to death. Conversely, the collocations *dead loss* in (6.199) and *dead bargain* in (6.200) are no longer associated with death, and instead the adjective is simply boosting the noun in question. These collocations can be paraphrased as *complete*, *pure loss* and *complete*, *pure bargain*, respectively, and are hence considered as intensifying.

- (6.195) *In a Word, he shew'd them the Necessity of it so plainly, that they all came into it; so they went to work immediately with the Boats, and getting some dry Wood together from a **dead** Tree, they try'd to set some on them on Fire, but they were so wet, that they would not burn;* (1719. Daniel Defoe. *The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*)
- (6.196) *In all ancient or **dead** Languages we have no Term, any way adequate, whereby we may express it.* (1765-1770. Henry Brooke. *The Fool of Quality*)
- (6.197) *His countenance, you observe, is Hippocratical, the very image of death: his face a **dead** pale, his eyes sunk, his nose sharp, his cheeks hollow, his temples fallen, and his whole body thin like a skeleton.* (1756-1766. Thomas Amory. *John Bunclie*)
- (6.198) *Your happiness, child, is in the still life. I love not a **dead** calm: Now a tempest, now a refreshing breeze, I shall know how to enjoy the difference---* (1754. Samuel Richardson. *Sir Charles Grandison*)

- (6.199) *O! says he, I shou'd not been tir'd of you; but besides having the Satisfaction of your Company, it had sav'd me that unlucky Blow at Paris, which was a **dead** Loss to me, of above 8000 Pistoles, and all the Fatigues of so many Years Hurry and Business; and then he added, but I'll make you pay for it all, now I have you: (1724. Daniel Defoe. Roxana)*
- (6.200) *---"Dear mother," cried the boy, "why won't you listen to reason? I had them a **dead** bargain, or I should not have bought them. (1766. Oliver Goldsmith. The Vicar of Wakefield)*

As far as semantic prosody is concerned (see Table 6.110), the adjective *dead* occurs predominantly with neutral semantic prosody in the data (97.58%), while negative semantic prosody accounts for 2.42% of the cases. There are no instances of the adjective as a modifier of nouns which are inherently positive in ECF. By way of illustration, nouns which are considered neutral include *body, bone, child, creature, friend, husband, lord, matter, mother, person, and substance*. As for nouns modified by *dead* which have negative connotations, consider *loss, insensibility, slave, or palsy*.

Table 6.110. Semantic prosody for *dead* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	7	2.42	0.72
neu	283	97.58	29.17
Total	290	100.00	29.89

6.3.2.2. *Dead* (adv.)

The adverb *dead* is not very frequent in ECF (cf. Figure 6.24), since there are only 16 occurrences and four different collocations, namely *dead asleep, dead coloured, dead drunk, and dead still*, as shown in Table 6.111.

Figure 6.24. *Dead* (adv.) in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meanin	Semantic prosod	Modifier of	Comments
1	1756-1766	II	John Buncl	His hair is fallen off, and his nails you see e coloured		S	neu	P	
2	1756-1766	II	John Buncl	Or, as the learned Master of Peter-house, I asleep		S	neu	A	
3	1739	I	Count Albertus	When they rose from Table, they fell again drunk		S	neg	P	
4	1739	I	Count Albertus	But when Lord Albertus and his Friends fox drunk		S	neg	P	
5	1749	II	Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure	Violent passions seldom last long, and tho still		S	neu	A	
6	1751	II	Pompey the Little	As soon as the Ceremony was over at the F drunk		S	neg	P	
7	1723	I	Colonel Jack	We set out, as I said, in the Evening by Mox asleep		S	neu	A	
8	1719	I	Robinson Crusoe	I was so dead asleep at first, being fatigu'd asleep		S	neu	A	
9	1752	II	Amelia	As to the remaining Part of the Ship's Crew drunk		S	neg	P	
10	1743	II	Jonathan Wild	Our Crew were all dead drunk with the Bra drunk		S	neg	P	
11	1749	II	Tom Jones	An antient Heathen would perhaps have ir drunk		S	neg	P	
12	1749	II	Tom Jones	This was no other than the Arrival of young drunk		S	neg	P	
13	1760	II	Chrysal	Quatern followed quatern, till every sens drunk		S	neg	P	
14	1741-1742	II	Pamela	Do you think Nan could hear me talk of my asleep		S	neu	A	
15	1742	II	Pamela	Do you think Nan could hear me talk of my asleep		S	neu	A	
16	1754	II	Sir Charles Grandison	The fellows were made almost dead drunk drunk		S	neg	P	

Given that *dead coloured* and *dead still* are attested only once in the corpus, these collocations were not considered for statistical testing. For the other two collocations,

dead asleep and *dead drunk*, the scores from the different tests indicate that the association of the adverb and the collocates *sleep* and *drunk* is strong and not random (cf. Table 6.112).

Table 6.111. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocates of *dead* (adv.) in ECF.

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>dead asleep</i>	5	0.52
<i>dead coloured</i>	1	0.10
<i>dead drunk</i>	9	0.93
<i>dead still</i>	1	0.10

Table 6.112. Standardised scores for *dead* (adv.) in ECF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead asleep</i>	13.518	5.268	9.911	26.840 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead drunk</i>	39.186	7.431	13.771	75.403 (p < 0.0001)

As far as the types of meanings are concerned, it is remarkable that the adverb *dead* is only attested with subjective meanings in the data, no descriptive or intensifying readings of the adverb being attested in ECF. Two such instances are given in (6.201) and (6.202), corresponding to the collocations *dead asleep* and *dead drunk*, respectively. These collocations have been tagged as subjective because, although not literal, their meaning can still be relatively attached to the original. When asleep or under the effects of alcohol, our state, position, and general condition may somehow resemble that of a dead person; since death can be recalled metaphorically, these collocations are not regarded as properly intensifying yet.

- (6.201) *I was so **dead** asleep at first, being fatigu'd with Rowing, or Paddling, as it is call'd, the first Part of the Day, and with Walking the latter Part, that I did not wake thoroughly; but dozing between sleeping and waking, thought I dream'd that some body spoke to me:* (1719. Daniel Defoe. *Robinson Crusoe*)
- (6.202) *But when Lord Albertus and his Friends found they were out of Danger of the Infidels, they smiled upon one another; and Night coming on, and Mustapha **dead** drunk with Wine, they secured him on a Bed, and mounting on the Deck, gave Wine to the Mariners below.* (1739. Penelope Aubin. *Count Albertus*)

As shown in Table 6.113, the adverb *dead* is preferred with elements which have negative semantic prosody, such as *dead drunk*, which represent 56.25% of the total. Neutral semantic prosody, as in *dead asleep*, *dead coloured*, and *dead still*, accounts for the remaining 43.75%, and there are no occurrences of the adverb combined with elements which have positive semantic prosody.

Table 6.113. Semantic prosody for *dead* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	9	56.25	0.93
neu	7	43.75	0.72
Total	16	100.00	1.65

Finally, *dead* is found in the database as both a modifier of adjectives and of participial forms (cf. Table 6.114), showing a stronger preference for the latter items (62.50%) over the former (37.50%).

Table 6.114. Categories modified by *dead* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	6	37.50	0.62
Part.	10	62.50	1.03
Total	16	100.00	1.65

6.3.2.3. *Deadly* (adj.)

ECF yielded 39 tokens of the adjective *deadly* (see Figure 6.25), occurring in 33 different collocations. In view of the low frequency of the collocations, with only one or two occurrences each, they have been discarded for a statistical collocational analysis. Table 6.115 displays instead the absolute and normalised frequencies for all the collocations in the data. Given its adjectival nature, and in contrast to adverbs, which can modify a wide range of word categories, *deadly* occurs only as a modifier of nouns in ECF, as was also the case in the other sources consulted for the previous periods described heretofore.

Figure 6.25. *Deadly* (adj.) in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	This he proved to her satisfacto consequence		D	neu	N	
2	1739	I	The Noble Slaves	Whilst the Prince and his Favou poison		D	neg	N	
3	1739	I	The Noble Slaves	Dalinda failed not to execute her potion		D	neu	N	
4	1719	I	Bosvil and Galesia	Remember (Madam) how after pang		D	neg	N	
5	1719	I	Exilius	Then die, Exilius, for Shame die, anxiety		S	neg	N	DOUBLE
6	1719	I	Exilius	Then die, Exilius, for Shame die, despair		S	neg	N	DOUBLE
7	1723	I	A Patch-Work Screen	To consecrate thy first-born Sig' sin		D	neg	N	
8	1765-1770	II	The Fool of Quality	The Ideas of an Apparition, on tl aspect		S	neg	N	
9	1765-1771	II	The Fool of Quality	We started up at the Instant. Mi crisis		S	neg	N	
10	1765-1772	II	The Fool of Quality	During this deadly Consultation, consultation		S	neu	N	
11	1765-1773	II	The Fool of Quality	I therefore entered, without Scri sin		D	neg	N	
12	1765-1774	II	The Fool of Quality	With this deadly Determination, determination		I	pos	N	
13	1722	I	Moll Flanders	These are the Men of whom Sol contagion		D	neg	N	
14	1749	II	Tom Jones	The Landlady therefore had no s instrument		D	neu	N	
15	1749	II	Tom Jones	First, from two lovely blue Eyes, sigh		S	neu	N	
16	1759	II	The Countess of	A Complication of Incidents afte poison		D	neg	N	
17	1725	I	The British Recluse	Sometimes, despairing, chill'd w horror		S	neg	N	
18	1725	I	Lassella	She continued for some time in : melancholy		S	neg	N	
19	1725	I	Love in Excess	What shall I do to shake off App cold		S	neg	N	
20	1727	II	Julia de Roubiené	Arrentier, from the habit of lool content		D	neu	N	the person has swallowed s

Table 6.115. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the collocates of *deadly* (adj.) in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>deadly anxiety</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly aspect</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly bitter</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly cold</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly composition</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly consequence</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly consultation</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly contagion</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly content</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly crisis</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly determination</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly despair</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly enemy</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly enmity</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly fear</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly gum</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly hole</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly horror</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly instrument</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly malice</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly melancholy</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly oath</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly odd</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly paleness</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly pang</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly passion</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly poison</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly potion</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly schism</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly sigh</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly sin</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly slap</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly sound</i>	1	0.10
Total	39	4.02

As shown in Table 6.116, *deadly* is found in the data mostly with subjective meanings, which represent over half of the total (56.42%), and also with descriptive meanings, amounting to a third of the examples (33.33%). Intensifying readings of the adjective are far less numerous (7.69%), and there is also one instance (see (6.208) below) which has been tagged as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective (2.56% of the total number of occurrences).

Table 6.116. Meaning types for *deadly* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	13	33.33	1.34
D/S	1	2.56	0.10
S	22	56.42	2.27
I	3	7.69	0.31
Total	39	100.00	4.02

The instances in (6.203)-(6.208) below exemplify the different types of meanings of the adjective in the data. A deadly contagion in (6.203) refers to a contagious disease, which eventually results in someone's death, and (6.204) refers to a deadly concoction which has been prepared to poison two characters. These are, therefore, literal or descriptive meanings of the adjective *deadly*. By contrast, in (6.205) the collocation *deadly malice* was marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, for being spiteful or malicious does not automatically imply hurting or killing somebody, and, therefore, the malice is not necessarily taken literally. In turn, *deadly paleness* and *deadly horror* in (6.206) and (6.207) describe qualities which in some way recall death features. A pale colour thus suggests ill health and also the colour of a dead person, and terror and dread are often related to death. Therefore, due to the semantic closeness of these collocates with death itself, the collocations have been classified as subjective. Finally, (6.208) evinces a meaning which is in no way related to the original sense of the adjective, and which can only be read as expressing a high degree. Having a deadly determination is equivalent to having a strong resolution or will power, and, on this account, the collocation *deadly determination* was counted as intensifying.

- (6.203) *These are the Men of whom Solomon says, they go like an Ox to the slaughter, till a Dart strikes through their Liver; an admirable Description, by the way, of the foul Disease, which is a poisonous **deadly** Contagion mingling with the Blood, whose Center or Fountain is in the Liver; (1722. Daniel Defoe. *Moll Flanders*)*
- (6.204) *Dalinda failed not to execute her Mistress's Orders, and having mixed the **deadly** Potion, left the Bowl upon a Table in the next Room, designing to carry it up to the Ladies as a Present from the Prince, whilst Ximene detained him with her, which she resolved to do that Night, knowing the Ladies would not live till the next Morning after drinking that fatal Draught. (1739. Penelope Aubin. *The Noble Slaves*)*
- (6.205) *But, dear Lucy, have you any spite in you? Are you capable of malice--- **deadly** malice? (1754. Samuel Richardson. *Sir Charles Grandison*)*

- (6.206) *Her eyes were black, but had little of their lustre left: her cheeks had some paint on it, laid on without art, and productive of no advantage to her complexion, which exhibited on the other parts of her face a **deadly** paleness.* (1771. Henry Mackenzie. *The man of feeling*)
- (6.207) *----Sometimes, despairing, chill'd with **deadly** Horror, I fancy you regardless of my Woe, and easy under this Restraint! ----* (Eliza Fowler Haywood. *The British recluse*)
- (6.208) *With this **deadly** Determination, I went Post, from Paris to Flanders, and traced the Colonel from Place to Place, till I found him in a Village, on the Road to Amsterdam.* (1765-1770. Henry Brooke. *The Fool of Quality*)

A look at the list of collocates provided in Table 6.115 above suggests that the adjective *deadly* is found in the data predominantly with elements which have negative semantic prosody (56.41%), such as *poison*, *pang*, and *anxiety*, but is also attested with neutral (35.90%) (e.g. *consequence*, *instrument*, and *sound*) and positive nouns (7.69%) (e.g. *passion* and *determination*). Table 6.117 summarises the distribution of the instances according to semantic prosody.

Table 6.117. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	22	56.41	2.27
neu	14	35.90	1.44
pos	3	7.69	0.31
Total	39	100.00	4.02

6.3.2.4. *Deadly* (adv.)

Only 8 results for the adverb *deadly* have been identified in ECF (cf. Figure 6.26), in a total of five different collocations. As was the case for the homonymous adjective (cf. 6.3.2.3), the token frequency of the collocations in the database is very low, so they have been excluded from a statistical collocational analysis. Nonetheless, Table 6.118 below gives the overall frequencies for each of these collocations of the adverb. As shown in this table, unlike the adverbs *mortal* and *mortally* in EBOCorp 1.0 (cf. 6.3.1.5 and 6.3.1.6), which show greater variety in regard to the types of words modified, *deadly* in ECF modifies adjectives exclusively.

Figure 6.26. *Deadly* (adv.) in NCF

id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1741-1742 II		Pamela (1st ed)	I dare say she drinks! ---She has a hoar strong		I	neu	A	
2	1741-1742 II		Pamela (1st ed)	Tis well for her she can sleep so purely sore		S	neg	A	
3	1741-1742 II		Pamela (1st ed)	But two of her Servants appearing at h fierce		I	neu	A	
4	1742 II		Pamela (6th ed)	I dare say she drinks:---She has a hoar:strong		I	neu	A	
5	1742 II		Pamela (6th ed)	Tis well for her she can sleep so purely sore		S	neg	A	
6	1742 II		Pamela (6th ed)	But two of her Servants appearing at h fierce		I	neu	A	
7	1751 II		Peregrine Pickle	This name inflamed the husband's chc comfortable		I	pos	A	
8	1760 II		Tristram Shandy	When shall we get to land? captain ---I sick		D/S	neg	A	

Table 6.118. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the collocates of *deadly* (adv.) in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>deadly comfortable</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly fierce</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly sick</i>	1	0.10
<i>deadly sore</i>	2	0.21
<i>deadly strong</i>	2	0.21
Total	8	0.82

Concerning the types of meanings of the adverb (cf. Table 6.119), and in contrast to the adjective *deadly* (cf. section 6.3.2.3), the data records primarily intensifying readings (62.50%), followed by subjective *deadly* (25.00%), and one isolated instance (see (6.209) below) of a meaning which is ambiguous between descriptive and subjective (12.50% of the total).

Table 6.119. Meaning types for *deadly* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D/S	1	12.50	0.10
S	2	25.00	0.21
I	5	62.50	0.52
Total	8	100.00	0.82

Examples (6.209)-(6.212) are provided here in order to illustrate the three types of meanings found in the database. The collocation *deadly sick* in (6.209) differs from other examples of the same collocation in previous stages of the language (cf. 6.3.1.3) in which it actually had a literal meaning. In this passage, taken from *Tristram Shandy*, Tristram feels indisposed and as if he was going to die, although he is just suffering from seasickness and nausea. As it is not a fatal disease and it is just short-term discomfort, the collocation *deadly sick* was marked here as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective. By contrast, *deadly sore* in (6.210) is considered as subjective, since in this passage there are no signs of any problems which may lead to a fatal outcome: here Pamela, the protagonist, simply feels fatigued and exhausted after a long journey. The

remaining two examples, (6.211) and (6.212), show intensifying readings of the adverb, which can be paraphrased as ‘extremely strong’ and ‘extremely comfortable’, respectively. A literal interpretation of the adverb *deadly*, as something or somebody endowed with a lethal power, is not plausible in this case; rather, an intensifying or degree reading of *deadly* seems the most likely.

- (6.209) *When shall we get to land? captain ---they have hearts like stones---O I am **deadly** sick!--reach me that thing, boy---'tis the most discomfiting sickness ---I wish I was at the bottom---* (1760. Laurence Sterne. *Tristram Shandy*)
- (6.210) *I am **deadly** sore all over, as if I had been soundly beaten. Yet I did not think I could have liv'd under such Fatigue.* (1742. Samuel Richardson. *Pamela*)
- (6.211) *I dare say she drinks:---She has a hoarse, man-like Voice, and is as thick as she's long; and yet looks so **deadly** strong, that I am afraid she would dash me at her Foot in an Instant, if I was to vex her.* (1742. Samuel Richardson. *Pamela*)
- (6.212) *This name inflamed the husband's choler anew, and forgetting all his complaisance for his spouse, he replied with a rancorous grin, "Add rabbit him! I doubt not but you found his admonitions **deadly** comfortable!"* (1751. Tobias Smollett. *Peregrine Pickle*)

As for the semantic prosody of the adverb (cf. Table 6.120), negative semantic prosody does no longer account for the majority of the examples, as was the case for the adjective *deadly* (cf. section 6.3.2.3). Half of the occurrences of the adverb correspond to neutral semantic prosody (50.00%), while negative semantic prosody represents 37.50% of the total and positive semantic prosody amounts to 12.50%. The collocations representing negative semantic prosody in the data are *deadly sore* and *deadly sick*; *deadly strong* and *deadly fierce* were marked as neutral, since they can be interpreted both positively and negatively depending on the context; finally, *deadly comfortable* was marked as positive.

Table 6.120. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	3	37.50	0.31
neu	4	50.00	0.41
pos	1	12.50	0.10
Total	8	100.00	0.82

6.3.2.5. *Mortal* (adj.)

ECF records a total of 286 tokens of the adjective *mortal* (cf. Figure 6.27), which appear in 106 collocations. For convenience, and in view of the impracticality of displaying all these collocates of *mortal* on a table, only those which are attested at least ten times are given in Table 6.121 below. Table 6.122 additionally gives the standardised scores for

these collocates, so as to determine their degree of collocational strength with the node *mortal*. As suggested by these scores, the five most frequent collocations, namely *mortal man*, *mortal enemy*, *mortal life*, *mortal wound*, and *mortal offence*, are all highly statistically significant. Their association, therefore, is not random, as there is a close link between the adjective and its collocates. Moreover, in line with the results for the adjective *mortal* in the other sources consulted, and as was the case with the adjectives *dead* or *deadly*, *mortal* is only recorded as a modifier of nouns in this database.

Figure 6.27. *Mortal* (adj.) in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	in discharge of our duty; as an ear state		D	neu	N	
2	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	When I thought myself within a f man		D	neu	N	
3	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	And if Christ be in you, the body /body		D	neu	N	
4	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	It filled the house. Moses saw its eye		D	neu	N	
5	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	Away then with a worldly heart : life		D	neu	N	
6	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	Else wherefore burns "In mortal I bosom		D	neu	N	
7	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	But all his daughter said was in vs enemy		S	neg	N	
8	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	My dearest Atimetus, cease to trace		D	neu	N	
9	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	If we act otherwise, in respect of life		D	neu	N	
10	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	From frozen Poles to th' line that wight		D	neu	N	
11	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	For place and power, how many i hate		S	neg	N	DOUBLE
12	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	For place and power, how many i envy		S/I	neg	N	
13	1756-1766	II	John Buncke	While gently with one sigh this m frame		D	neu	N	
14	1739	I	Charlotta Du Pont	And if Women were not infatuat enemy		S	neg	N	
15	1739	I	Charlotta Du Pont	I am the Son of Don Alvares de A hatred		S	neg	N	
16	1739	I	Charlotta Du Pont	Elvira's Father and Family, and m aversion		S	neg	N	
17	1739	I	Count Albertus	Well then, said he, know that I ar foe		S	neg	N	
18	1739	I	Count Albertus	Thus I grew up to Manhood, grei foe		S	neg	N	
19	1739	I	Lady Lucy	O that such a Spirit of Goodness, wound		D	neu	N	
20	1739	I	Lucinda	. I knew the Effect and Resentme hatred		S	neg	N	
21	1739	I	Madam de Beaumont	Here she again embraced and kis' thing		D	neu	N	
22	1756-1766	II	The Noble Slaves	How have I distrusted God, how man		D	neu	N	

Table 6.121. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortal enemy</i>	17	1.75
<i>mortal life</i>	16	1.65
<i>mortal man</i>	37	3.81
<i>mortal offence</i>	11	1.13
<i>mortal wound</i>	15	1.55

Table 6.122. Standardised scores for *mortal* (adj.) in ECF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortal enemy</i>	33.876	6.119	14.294	110.827 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal life</i>	13.276	3.694	11.694	52.422 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal man</i>	17.493	3.347	13.765	104.963 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal offence</i>	33.429	6.695	13.613	80.433 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal wound</i>	46.123	7.168	14.982	119.518 (p < 0.0001)

In what concerns the types of meanings of the adjective (cf. Table 6.123), *mortal* is documented in the majority of the cases in ECF with descriptive meanings (72.03%), followed by subjective meanings (24.13%). To a lesser extent, *mortal* is also found with meanings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective (2.45%) and with those between subjective and intensifying (1.05%). Purely intensifying meanings of the adjective are not attested in the data.

Table 6.123. Meaning types for *mortal* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	207	72.38	21.33
D/S	7	2.45	0.72
S	69	24.13	7.11
S/I	3	1.05	0.31
Total	286	100.00	29.48

A selection of the different types of meanings in ECF is provided in (6.213)-(6.218) below. (6.213) and (6.214) present descriptive or literal meanings. In the first example *mortal* is equivalent to ‘human’, in this case ‘human understanding’, while in (6.214) *mortal wound* refers to a fatal wound that the character has received. By contrast, the collocation *mortal danger* in (6.215) was marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, for it is not completely literal, as is the case of a disease or a wound. Something may be dangerous and imply a certain risk, but it may not necessarily have a fatal result. In turn, *mortal agony* in (6.216) and *mortal inquietude* in (6.217) were marked as subjective, since being in a state of restlessness or anguish can make one feel in such a poor general condition, both physically and psychologically, as to think himself or herself on the verge of dying. However, these collocations are not considered as descriptive, as feeling distressed or sorrowful does not mean that one is going to perish. *Mortal displeasure* in (6.218) is instead regarded as a meaning which is ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. In this case, the female protagonist of the story has been offended and is angry with the male protagonist. Considering that she is now angry and displeased with the male character, she might decide to take some kind of revenge on him. However, given the context, it is also possible to interpret the collocation *mortal displeasure* here as ‘great displeasure’, being therefore closer to an intensifying reading. Both interpretations seem to be possible here.

- (6.213) *But as I cannot say that he gave me any very intelligible ideas, and as I had a very high opinion of his understanding, I concluded there was a mystery in religion above mortal comprehension, or at least that it was perfectly incommunicable to another.* (1754. Sarah Fielding. *The cry*)
- (6.214) *He was borne on mens shoulders, pale and almost breathless, just returned from an attack, whereby his too great rashness, he had received a mortal wound.* (1762. Sarah Scott. *Millenium Hall*)
- (6.215) *Somewhat, perhaps, may be attributed to the skill with which the doctor conducted himself: for let a person be but a little indisposed, and at the same time under a violent depression of spirits, (which was our case) and a judicious physician shall be able, at any time, to persuade them that they are in mortal danger.* (1770. Frances Chamberlaine Sheridan. *Conclusion of the Memoirs of Miss Sidney Bidulph*)

- (6.216) *She seem'd surpriz'd at seeing me so early, and with her wonted good Humour, asking me the reason of it, put me into a **mortal** Agony how to answer her; for I must assure you, Brother, that the Fears of her Displeasure were a thousand times more dreadful to me, than any other Apprehensions;* (1725. Eliza Fowler Haywood. *Love in excess*)
- (6.217) *How strange, then, is it, that the letter in which she tells me she is the happiest of human beings, should give me the most **mortal** inquietude!* (1778-1788. Fanny Burney. *Evelina*)
- (6.218) *To this was owing the ready offence you took at my four friends; and at the unavailing attempt I made to see a dropt Letter; little imagining from what two such Ladies could write to each other, that there could be room for **mortal** displeasure. ---To this was owing the week's distance you held me at, till you knew the issue of another application.* (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)

As for semantic prosody, in the data *mortal* is found mainly with collocates which are either neutral in meaning (48.60%) or negative (46.15%), while positive collocates are much more rarely attested, accounting only for 5.24% of the total (cf. Table 6.124).

Table 6.124. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adj.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	132	46.15	13.60
neu	139	48.60	14.33
pos	15	5.24	1.55
Total	286	100.00	29.48

Among the collocates with neutral semantic prosody we find the nouns *man*, *body*, *race*, *nature*, *mould*, and *state*, and among the negative collocates *enemy*, *hate*, *envy*, *aversion*, *suffering*, *wound*, and *inquietude*. Concerning the collocates with positive semantic prosody, *mortal* modifies nouns such as *fame*, *majesty*, *courage*, *perfection*, *charm*, and *beauty*.

6.3.2.6. *Mortal* (adv.)

ECF yields a total of seven examples of the adverb *mortal* (cf. Figure 6.28), which appear in five different collocations. Since their individual frequency is extremely low, occurring a maximum of two times, I will not measure the degree of collocational strength between the node and its collocates by means of statistical tests, but just provide the absolute and normalised frequencies of such collocates (cf. Table 6.125). Moreover, its adverbial nature would in principle entail the possibility of modifying a wide range of word classes. However, the adverb *mortal* is only found as a modifier of adjectives in the data. The same adverb, it should be recalled, was attested as a modifier of both participial

elements and adjectives with very similar low frequencies in the EModE data from EEBOCorp 1.0 (cf. 6.3.1.5).

Figure 6.28. *Mortal* (adv.) in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meanin	Semantic pros	Modifier of	Comments
1	1773	II	The Spiritual Quixote	It is no longer ago than last October, we h	sick D/S		neu	A	
2	1748	II	Clarissa (1st ed.)	Will told them, before I came, 'That his la	jealous S/I		neg	A	
3	1748	II	Clarissa (1st ed.)	By my soul, Jack, if I had not been taken t	ill D/S		neg	A	
4	1751	II	Clarissa (3rd ed.)	Will. told them, before I came, 'That his L	jealous S/I		neg	A	
5	1751	II	Clarissa (3rd ed.)	By my Soul, Jack, if I had not been taken t	ill D/S		neg	A	
6	1762	II	Sir Launcelot Greaves	"Aye, aye, (answered Timothy) your hono	good I		pos	A	
7	1778-1788	II	Evelina	to look at. Howsomever, I should be glad t	dear I		pos	A	

Table 6.125. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the collocations of *mortal* (adv.) in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortal dear</i>	1	0.10
<i>mortal good</i>	1	0.10
<i>mortal ill</i>	2	0.21
<i>mortal jealous</i>	2	0.21
<i>mortal sick</i>	1	0.10

The picture for the adverb *mortal* in the eighteenth-century data in regard to the types of meanings differs from that provided by the EModE material analysed in section 6.3.1.5 above. Thus, in EEBOCorp 1.0 descriptive meanings prevailed, while, as shown in Table 6.126, in ECF those meanings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective are the most frequent (42.86%), followed by those which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (28.57%) and by intensifying readings of the adverb (28.57%).

Table 6.126. Meaning types for *mortal* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D/S	3	42.86	0.31
S/I	2	28.57	0.21
I	2	28.57	0.21
Total	7	100.00	0.72

Example (6.219) is taken to be ambiguous between descriptive and subjective. In this case, the protagonist has overindulged in drink and, as a result, he suffered from colic and thought he was going to die, until he was afterwards given some *higry-pigry*⁴³ or laxative

⁴³ Vulgar perversion of *hiera picra* (n.) 'A purgative drug composed of aloes and canella bark, sometimes mixed with honey and other ingredients'. Also corruptly *hickery-pickery*, *hicra picra*, *higry-pigry* (OED, s.v. *hiera picra* n.)

and recovered from the intoxicating effects of cider. The mortal sickness cannot be taken literally in this particular example, for it just means that the person is indisposed, although he may feel so unwell that he thinks he is going to pass away. Example (6.220), in turn, was counted as ambiguous between a subjective and a purely intensifying reading, such as that present in (6.221) and (6.222). In (6.220) *mortal jealous* can be regarded as subjective, since the woman who is distrustful of her husband might eventually decide to wreak revenge on him or damage him in some way. On the other hand, *mortal* can also be considered to have an intensifying meaning here, simply meaning ‘very, extremely jealous’. The latter seems to be the most likely interpretation. By contrast, in the examples presented in (6.221) and (6.222) *mortal* clearly functions as an intensifier, boosting the adjectives *good* and *dear*. The former instance mentions a character who is very skilled or has a very good hand at reprimanding people. *Mortal* here does not modify the noun *hand*, but is instead a modifier of the adjective *good*, which has positive semantic prosody (see below). This, therefore, rules out the possibility of a literal interpretation of the adverb. The same applies in (6.222), in which *mortal* modifies the adjective *dear*, which is also positive ‘precious, valuable’, and for which a literal reading is not possible either.

- (6.219) *It is no longer ago than last October, we had been grinding apples, and making cyder, for Madam Wildgoose, your Worship's mother; and all the next day I was mortal sick, and troubled with the gripes and the belly-ach; and I thought I should have sounded away.* (1773. Richard Graves. *The spiritual Quixote*)
- (6.220) *Will told them, before I came, 'That his lady was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen in the world. But that, he being very gay and lively, she was mortal jealous of him; and in a fit of that sort, had eloped from him.* (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)
- (6.221) *"Aye, aye, (answered Timothy) your honour has a mortal good hand at giving a slap with a fox's tail, as the saying is---'tis a wonderment you did not try your hand on that there wiseacre that stole your honour's harness, and wants to be an arrant with a murrain to 'un---Lord help his fool's head!* (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)
- (6.222) *"They'd need be goddesses with a vengeance," said the Captain, "for they're mortal dear to look at. Howsomever, I should be glad to know what you can see in e'er a face among them that's worth half a guinea for a sight."* (1778-1788. Fanny Burney. *Evelina*)

As for the semantic prosody of the adverb (cf. Table 6.127), *mortal* modifies mostly elements which are inherently negative (71.43%), as is the case of the adjectives *sick*, *ill*, and *jealous*. However, it is also attested as a modifier of collocates which are positive in meaning, such as the adjectives *dear* and *good*, although to a much lesser extent (28.57%).

Table 6.127. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adv.) in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	4	71.43	0.52
pos	2	28.57	0.21
Total	7	100.00	0.72

6.3.2.7. *Mortally*

There are a total of 73 occurrences of the adverb *mortally* in ECF, in 18 different collocations (cf. Figure 6.29), only three of which occur over ten times in the database and were therefore considered for statistical testing (cf. Table 6.128 and Table 6.129). The results from the different tests show that in fact the association of *mortally* with its most frequent collocates, the verbs *hate* and *offend*, and the participial form *wounded*, is to be considered highly statistically significant (cf. Table 6.129).

Figure 6.29. *Mortally* in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1739	I	Count Albertus	Lorme could rise to c wound		D	neg	V	
2	1719	I	Exilius	k with me speedily. wounded		D	neg	P	
3	1749	II	Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure	liberty that I led it. hate		S/I	neg	V	
4	1727	I	The Accomplish'd Rake	Mortally wounded: wounded		D	neg	P	
5	1723	I	Colonel Jack	uld own who it was; wounded		D	neg	P	
6	1719	I	The Farther Adventures of Robinson Crusoe	ld help them to do; wounded		D	neg	P	
7	1722	I	A Journal of the Plague Year	requently the Case. infected		D	neg	P	
8	1720	I	Memoirs of a Cavalier	red than drowned. wounded		D	neg	P	
9	1722	I	Moll Flanders	to me in the World; hate		S	neg	V	
10	1752	II	Amelia	er than Falsehood.' hate		S/I	neg	V	
11	1752	II	Amelia	rtally detest Cards.' detest		S/I	neg	V	
12	1743	II	Jonathan Wild	ounded by the Blow: wounded		D	neg	P	
13	1749	II	Tom Jones	:s happen by them.' hate		S/I	neg	V	
14	1773	II	The Spiritual Quixote	ronounce it so." hate		S/I	neg	V	
15	1773	II	The Spiritual Quixote	nd and for himself. wounded		D	neg	P	
16	1725	I	Love in Excess	rdful View was this? wounded		D	neg	P	
17	1752	II	The Female Quixote	rtally offended me. offend		S/I	neg	V	

Table 6.128. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the collocations of *mortally* in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortally hate</i>	14	1.44
<i>mortally offend</i>	15	1.55
<i>mortally wounded</i>	17	1.75

Table 6.129. Standardised scores for *mortally* in ECF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortally hate</i>	91.670	9.234	16.849	151.394 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally offend</i>	119.198	9.891	17.704	175.918 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally wounded</i>	184.010	10.961	19.136	224.863 (p < 0.0001)

Concerning the types of meanings of *mortally* in the data (see Table 6.130), the adverb seems to favour those readings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (46.58%), as well as descriptive readings, which make up 30.14% of the total. Much less frequently, however, *mortally* is also attested in ECF with subjective (17.81%) and with intensifying meanings (5.48%).

Table 6.130. Meaning types for *mortally* in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	22	30.14	2.27
S	13	17.81	1.34
S/I	34	46.58	3.50
I	4	5.48	0.41
Total	73	100.00	7.52

Mortally wounded in (6.223) is a clear example of a descriptive or literal meaning, for the character, a captain, has been injured to death.

(6.223) *The Evening before the Day appointed for our Marriage, the Captain of the Guard, our Roman Friend, sent one to let me know, that he was **mortally** wounded in a Rencounter, and desir'd to speak with me speedily.* (1719. Jane Barker. *Exilius*)

(6.224) and (6.225), in turn, illustrate subjective meanings of the adverb, specifically its use with the verb *hate* and the adjective *afraid*, respectively.

(6.224) *Her Lord has what he wanted, an Heir, to deprive the next Successor, whom he **mortally** hates, and thinks it high time, by banishment, to put an end to her publick Indiscretions.* (1709. Mary de la Rivière. *The New Atalantis*)

(6.225) *I retired to mine [bed], where I found Strap **mortally** afraid, he having got away in the dark, while the captain and his lady were at logger-heads.* (1748. Tobias George Smollett. *Roderick Random*)

In (6.224) we see how one of the characters hates another and, on account of his loathing for him, he tries to exclude him and take revenge on him. However, this vengeance does not involve any physical punishment causing his eventual death. For this reason, the collocation cannot be taken as having a literal or descriptive meaning, although *mortally* is not totally detached either from its original meaning to be counted as an intensifier. It is, therefore, considered to be a subjective reading. The same holds for *mortally afraid* in (6.225), since when somebody feels frightened or terrified due to a specific situation, (s)he may have the feeling that his/her heart is racing, and may even experience other physical symptoms such as shortness of breath and sweating. The discomfort caused by anxiety and panic attacks may as well make this person think that (s)he is at death's door. The connections of the collocation *mortally afraid* with death, and, hence, with its original meaning, seem logical, and it is for this reason that *mortally* is considered here as subjective, rather than as purely intensifying.

(6.226) presents again the collocation *hate mortally*, although its meaning is different from that in (6.224).

(6.226) *Hating, as I mortally do, all long unnecessary prefaces, I shall give you good quarter in this, and use no farther apology, than to prepare you for seeing the loose part of my life, wrote with the same liberty that I led it.* (1749. John Cleland. *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*)

As was the case with the very same collocation in EEBOCorp 1.0 (cf. 6.3.1.6), in this example the object of hatred is not a person, as in (6.224), but a thing. This leaves room for the interpretation of *mortally* as a degree adverb, ‘very much, extremely’. This is also the case in example (6.227), with the collocation *mortally detest*, which could also contextually allow for a degree reading.

(6.227) *'I have scarce seen my Children Today,' answered Amelia. 'Besides, I mortally detest Cards.'* (1752. Henry Fielding. *Amelia*)

Nonetheless, as *hate* and *detest* can still be linked to death when the referent is human, I have marked these collocates as intermediate between subjective and intensifying, even though the latter interpretation is the most likely. (6.228) presents a similar case. In the examples from earlier periods (cf. 6.3.1.6), the collocation *mortally offend* was taken to be a sin against God and hence taken as descriptive. In (6.228), by contrast, the collocation is considered as indeterminate between subjective and intensifying. Here the person who is offended is rather upset about someone’s behaviour and perhaps even displeased or annoyed with him/her. The degree of anger cannot be measured, and it is not known if the person offended has any intention of actually hurting the other or taking any form of (physical) revenge. The possibility is open, and, therefore, the collocation could be taken as subjective in this regard. On the other hand, *mortally offended* can equally be taken as an intensifier with a degree reading, which could be reworded as *terribly offended*.

(6.228) [...] *but know, presumptuous, that I am mortally offended with your Master, for his daring to suppose I would read this Proof at once of his Insolence and Infidelity; and was you worth my Resentment, I would haply make you suffer for your Want of Respect to me.* (1752. Charlotte Lennox. *The Female Quixote*)

Conversely, *mortally* in examples (6.229) and (6.230) has an intensifying meaning. *Chagrined* in (6.229) means ‘disappointed’, and feeling disenchanted with something does not relate any longer to the original meaning of *mortally*. *Mortally chagrined* here means rather ‘terribly disappointed’. In a similar fashion, *mortally obstropolous* in (6.230) is also detached from the earliest literal meaning of the adverb; *obstropolous* means ‘noisy’ and refers to a patient who is in hospital and who has been rather noisy. As a result, the meaning of *mortally* here can only be taken as that of an intensifier.

- (6.229) *I am **mortally** chagrin'd at the triumph you have furnished to that rascally citizen. By the lard! the judge must have been in the terrors of cuckoldom, to influence the decision; and the jury, a meer herd of horned beasts, to bring in such a barbarous virdect.* (1753. Tobias George Smollett. *Ferdinand Count Fathom*)
- (6.230) *Good lack! a'has been **mortally** obstropolous, and out of his senses all this blessed day.* (1762. Tobias George Smollett. *Sir Launcelot Greaves*)

In ECF *mortally* modifies three word categories, namely adjectives, participial forms, and verbs. Although it occurs in about half of the examples as a modifier of verbs (54.79%), it is also found as a modifier of participial elements (38.36%) and, less frequently, of adjectives (6.85%) (cf. Table 6.131). In the eighteenth-century data *mortally* does not modify prepositional phrases, as was the case in the EModE material from EEBOCorp 1.0 (section 6.3.1.6 above).

Table 6.131. Categories modified by *mortally* in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	5	6.85	0.52
Part.	28	38.36	2.89
Vb.	40	54.79	4.12
Total	73	100.00	7.52

As for the other variable considered in the collocational analysis, namely semantic prosody, while in the EModE data from EEBOCorp 1.0 *mortally* was attested with neutral, negative, and even positive semantic prosody (cf. 6.3.1.6), in the eighteenth-century data the adverb is only recorded as a modifier of elements which are inherently negative.

6.3.2.8. *To death*

ECF records 249 tokens of the prepositional phrase *to death* (cf. Figure 6.30), distributed across 86 different collocations. In view of the high number of collocations, Table 6.132 displays only the most frequent collocates of *to death*, in this case those which appear at least ten times in the database. As indicated by the various values in Table 6.133, the collocations *bleed to death*, *condemn to death*, *frighted to death*, and *starve to death*, the most frequent in ECF, are all highly statistically significant. It can be concluded therefore that the association between *to death* and these collocates is very strong and in no way attributed to chance.

Figure 6.30. *To death* in ECF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of	Comments
1	1756-1766	II	John Bunce	All my crimson crimes were held as drink	S	neg		V	
2	1756-1766	II	John Bunce	In the double reflecting telescope, a fight	D	neg		V	spiders, so literal here
3	1756-1766	II	John Bunce	What a surprising incident is idolatr wounded	D	neg		P	
4	1756-1766	II	John Bunce	This great man, Andrew Vesal, was famished	D	neg		P	
5	1756-1766	II	John Bunce	It is a religion formed in hell by dev rack	D	neg		V	
6	1739	I	Lady Lucy	Gertrude cried out to him to stay, a frighted	S	neg		P	
7	1719	I	Bosvil and Galesia	With many Thiugs more I utter'd of sting	D	neg		V	
8	1723	I	The Lining of the Patch-W	What stuck with her some time, w; persecuted	D	neg		P	
9	1769	II	Emily Montague	My father is setting every engine at frighted	S	neg		P	
10	1763	II	Lady Julia Mandeville	I am persecuted to death amongst i persecuted	D	neg		P	
11	1663	II	Lady Julia Mandeville	The poor fellow is frighted to death frighted	S	neg		P	
12	1763	II	Lady Julia Mandeville	You have no notion how Harry's vaiquied	I	neg		P	'offended'
13	1763	II	Lady Julia Mandeville	She sings and dances angelically, bu blush	I	neu		V	
14	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	You think you have sentenced Six o sentence	D	neg		V	
15	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	I should droop to Death, if the Prog; droop	S	neg		V	
16	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	You amaze me, Sir, said I, you terrif terrify	S	neg		V	
17	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	Our little Mary, in the while, being f frighted	S	neg		P	
18	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	Immediately the black Champion st crushed	D	neg		P	
19	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	The Question then occurs, by what appoint	D	neg		V	
20	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	Terrified almost to Death, I did not i terrified	S	neg		P	
21	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	He tells You that, if a Woman was s burnt	D	neg		P	
22	1765-1770	II	The fool of quality	But I beheld, said Meekly, when, w; crush	D	neg		V	

Table 6.132. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *to death* in ECF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>bleed to death</i>	11	1.13
<i>condemn to death</i>	10	1.03
<i>frighted to death</i>	21	2.16
<i>starve to death</i>	16	1.65

Table 6.133. Standardised scores for *to death* in ECF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>bleed to death</i>	71.060	8.849	15.768	113.387 (p < 0.0001)
<i>condemn to death</i>	46.743	7.785	14.428	88.180 (p < 0.0001)
<i>frighted to death</i>	108.312	9.064	17.983	233.459 (p < 0.0001)
<i>starve to death</i>	104.473	9.418	17.418	177.825 (p < 0.0001)

As for the types of meanings of *to death* in the data (cf. Table 6.134), this prepositional phrase occurs chiefly with descriptive and subjective meanings, which together account for about 90% of the total (55.82% and 34.54%, respectively). Nevertheless, *to death* is also attested with intensifying readings (6.43%) and with readings which are indeterminate between subjective and intensifying (2.41%) and between descriptive and subjective (0.80%).

Table 6.134. Meaning types for *to death* in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	139	55.82	14.33
D/S	2	0.80	0.21
S	86	34.54	8.86
S/I	6	2.41	0.62
I	16	6.43	1.65
Total	249	100.00	25.66

Examples (6.231)-(6.238) below illustrate these different meanings of *to death*. The collocations *shot to death* and *burnt to death* in (6.231) and (6.232) clearly evince descriptive meanings of the prepositional phrase. In the first passage, one of the characters

warns the other against deserting, as he will be punished for his actions and the punishment will imply shooting him down. The second excerpt accounts an episode of a character who had the plague and apparently committed suicide by burning himself. In both cases it is clear that the meaning of *to death* is literal.

(6.231) *Why, says I, you will be shot to Death for Deserters if you are taken; and they will send out Scouts for you in the Morning all over the Country, so that you will certainly fall into their Hands;* (1723. Daniel Defoe. *Colonel Jack*)

(6.232) *There was also One Man in or about Whitecross-street, burnt himself to Death in his Bed; some said it was done by himself, others that it was by the Treachery of the Nurse that attended him; but that he had the Plague upon him was agreed by all.* (1722. Daniel Defoe. *A Journal of the Plague Year*)

In (6.233) the meaning of *to death* cannot be taken literally as in the previous two examples, and is hence considered as transitory to a subjective meaning, for the context does not specify if the nuns mentioned had eventually died. The nuns are said to suffer physical torture recurrently and to live in very poor conditions. As their suffering is not metaphorical, but real, in this particular example *to death* is taken to be intermediate between descriptive and subjective, although the former reading is the most likely one.

(6.233) *The penitentiaries of the third order of saint Francis [...] were still in a worse condition than the abbess of Quedlingberg ---by tumbling and tossing, and tossing and tumbling from one side of their beds to the other the whole night long---the several sisterhoods had scratch'd and mawl'd themselves all to death---* (1760. Laurence Sterne. *Tristram Shandy*)

By contrast, the collocations *tormented to death* and *frighted to death* in (6.234) and (6.235) are considered as subjective. Feeling distressed or anguished and feeling scared are not fatal circumstances, although a mental situation of affliction and anguish may concur with physical discomfort. For this reason, these collocations are considered to represent a stage further ahead along the grammaticalisation cline of the prepositional phrase *to death*.

(6.234) *"You have tormented me to death; you have forced me from my friends, and intruded yourself upon me, against my will, for a partner."* (1778-1788. Fanny Burney. *Evelina*)

(6.235) *The poor fellow is frighted to death about him, for he is idolized by his servants, and this man has been with him from his child-hood.* (1763. Frances Brooke. *Lady Julia Mandeville*)

The meaning of *to death* in (6.236) is taken to be between subjective and purely intensifying. Roxana, the protagonist, sorrows over the death of her lover, and her sadness

makes her cry constantly. Sorrow, grief, and mental distress are states which may recall death-related properties, for the person who suffers them may feel both physically and mentally in a state that approximates death itself. In this particular example, however, a degree reading would also be possible. In fact, the adverb *almost* and the prepositional phrase *to a degree inexpressible* seem to point to a degree interpretation of *to death* here. Hence, *cry to death* could also be contextually read as ‘I extremely cried for him’. Owing to this ambiguity, I have marked this collocation as intermediate between a subjective and an intensifying reading.

(6.236) *I think I almost cry'd myself to Death for him; for I abandon'd myself to all the Excesses of Grief; and indeed, I lov'd him to a Degree inexpressible; and considering what Kindness he had shewn me at first, and how tenderly he had us'd me to the last, what cou'd I do less?* (1724. Daniel Defoe. *Roxana*)

In contrast, (6.237) and (6.238) can only be read as intensifiers. Blushing to death and puzzling to death therefore mean ‘blush tremendously’ and ‘puzzle someone hugely’. In both cases, a literal interpretation of *to death* is utterly excluded.

(6.237) *'Thank Heaven I have no daughters, resumed he; formerly a young maid was ready to blush to death at being told a man was in love with her; but now, forsooth, the girls are as proud of a new lover as they are of a new suit of cloaths, and want as much to shew it;* (1753. Eliza Fowler Haywood. *Jemmy and Jenny Jessamy*)

(6.238) *---You puzzle me to death, cried my uncle Toby.---'Tis owing to this, replied my father, that in our computations of time, we are so used to minutes, hours, weeks, and months,-----and of clocks (I wish there was not a clock in the kingdom) to measure out their several portions to us, and to those who belong to us,-----that 'twill be well, if in time to come, the succession of our ideas be of any use or service to us at all.* (1760. Laurence Sterne. *Tristram Shandy*)

As far as semantic prosody is concerned (cf. Table 6.135), *to death* is found in the overwhelming majority of the instances in ECF with negative semantic prosody (e.g. *wounded*, *torture*, and *crush*), although there are also a few occurrences in which it appears with elements which are neutral (e.g. *blush* or *long*). There are no instances in the database in which *to death* modifies positive elements, as was the case with the EModE data (cf. 6.3.1.7 above).

Table 6.135. Semantic prosody for *to death* in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	246	98.80	25.35
neu	3	1.20	0.31
Total	249	100.00	25.66

Finally, as for the types of words modified by the prepositional phrase *to death* in ECF, it is preferred as a modifier of verbs (77.11%), although it also occurs as a modifier of participial forms (21.29%) and, to a much lesser extent, of adjectives such as *pale* or *sick* (1.20%) and of the noun *sickness* (0.40%), as shown in Table 6.136.

Table 6.136. Categories modified by *to death* in ECF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	3	1.20	0.31
N.	1	0.40	0.10
Part.	53	21.29	5.46
Vb.	192	77.11	19.79
Total	249	100.00	25.66

6.3.3. NCF

As was the case with the data from ECF for the eighteenth century (cf. 6.3.2), NCF also provides important insights into the use and behaviour of the different forms under analysis in the course of the nineteenth century. The remainder of this section, therefore, discusses the individual results for *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* over this period.

6.3.3.1. *Dead* (adj.)

NCF yields 2,074 tokens of the adjective *dead* (cf. Figure 6.31) in a total of 360 collocations. Given its adjectival nature, *dead* is found as a modifier of nouns in all its occurrences in NCF, which considerably reduces the possibility of modification of other word categories.

Figure 6.31. *Dead* (adj.) in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of	Comments
1	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	word you shall remain unmolested." man	D	neu	N		
2	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	ran the previous roaring of the blast. calm	S	neu	N		
3	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	nd the wind again burst its bondage. calm	S	neu	N		
4	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	vered, "a vow to my dead husband." husband	D	neu	N		
5	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	dead body of his unfortunate sister. body	D	neu	N		
6	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	orandum, which I forgot to remove. man	D	neu	N		
7	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	er that time, nothing shall save you." man	D	neu	N		
8	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	ainst him, and struck him in the face. dog	D	neu	N		
9	1895 II		The woman who did	matter of that, with Lambeth Palace. level	I	neu	N		'absolutely uniform & contin
10	1895 II		The woman who did	pped over to his dead son's bedside. son	D	neu	N		
11	1895 II		The woman who did	old dead ashes of a past existence. ash	D	neu	N		
12	1895 II		The woman who did	oused as to her dead father's family. father	D	neu	N		
13	1895 II		The woman who did	er's breast, my Dolly may kiss them.' mother	D	neu	N		
14	1814 I		Mansfield Park	i this very room, for his amusement. body	D	neu	N		
15	1814 I		Mansfield Park	ust wish his own daughters to feel." silence	S	neu	N		
16	1818 I		Northanger Abbey	dy Frasers were not in the country." time	S	neg	N		as if everything was dead
17	1818 I		Persuasion	oved twice as fine as the first report. lady	D	neu	N		
18	1818 I		Persuasion	oved twice as fine as the first report. lady	D	neu	N		
19	1811 I		Sense and sensibility	ks thickly covered with dead leaves." leaf	D	neu	N		
20	1811 I		Sense and sensibility	o has your passion for dead leaves." leaf	D	neu	N		
21	1858 II		The coral island	h, which he pointed at the two ends. branch	D	neu	N		
22	1858 II		The coral island	supposing that it would be satisfied. fish	D	neu	N		

Many collocates are recorded less than three times in the database in combination with the adjective, which explains the larger number of collocations. Table 6.137 presents the most frequent collocations of the adjective *dead* in the data, while Table 6.138 shows the

standardised scores for the most frequent collocations, that is, those which were attested at least ten times. The individual standardised scores for these combinations (Table 6.138 below) show that only certain collocations can be considered as highly statistically significant: *dead body*, *dead branch*, *dead calm*, *dead certainty*, *dead corpse*, *dead dog*, *dead language*, *dead leaf*, *dead lock*, *dead pause*, *dead shot*, *dead silence*, *dead stick*, and *dead stop*.

Table 6.137. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *dead* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>dead body</i>	201	5.35
<i>dead boy</i>	12	0.32
<i>dead branch</i>	11	0.29
<i>dead brother</i>	15	0.40
<i>dead calm</i>	34	0.90
<i>dead certainty</i>	13	0.35
<i>dead child</i>	36	0.96
<i>dead corpse</i>	11	0.29
<i>dead dog</i>	18	0.48
<i>dead face</i>	32	0.85
<i>dead father</i>	44	1.17
<i>dead friend</i>	40	1.06
<i>dead hand</i>	18	0.48
<i>dead horse</i>	14	0.37
<i>dead hour</i>	18	0.48
<i>dead husband</i>	19	0.51
<i>dead language</i>	21	0.56
<i>dead leaf</i>	78	2.08
<i>dead lock</i>	22	0.59
<i>dead loss</i>	12	0.32
<i>dead love</i>	11	0.29
<i>dead man</i>	376	10.00
<i>dead mother</i>	32	0.85
<i>dead parent</i>	11	0.29
<i>dead pause</i>	23	0.61
<i>dead people</i>	13	0.35
<i>dead shot</i>	11	0.29
<i>dead silence</i>	181	4.82
<i>dead son</i>	12	0.32
<i>dead stick</i>	10	0.27
<i>dead stop</i>	22	0.59
<i>dead thing</i>	16	0.43
<i>dead wife</i>	14	0.37
<i>dead woman</i>	31	0.82

Table 6.138. Standardised scores for *dead* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead body</i>	94.857	5.547	20.849	1,156.583 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead boy</i>	1.185	0.491	7.661	1.245 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead branch</i>	11.106	3.716	10.634	36.395 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead brother</i>	2.901	1.057	8.871	6.400 (p < 0.05)
<i>dead calm</i>	26.184	4.467	14.642	145.967 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead certainty</i>	16.849	4.573	11.973	57.638 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead child</i>	7.546	1.671	12.167	35.924 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead corpse</i>	18.180	5.001	11.920	55.105 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead dog</i>	10.165	2.928	11.268	41.837 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead face</i>	4.566	1.135	11.135	15.503 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead father</i>	6.281	1.320	12.238	27.767 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead friend</i>	4.860	1.083	11.727	17.830 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead hand</i>	-1.575	-0.532	7.807	2.784 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead horse</i>	3.083	1.157	8.772	7.021 (p < 0.01)
<i>dead hour</i>	2.403	0.807	9.147	4.713 (p < 0.05)
<i>dead husband</i>	5.217	1.637	10.133	17.355 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead language</i>	13.985	3.489	12.273	63.396 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead leaf</i>	128.065	7.730	20.300	688.840 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead lock</i>	20.590	4.408	13.326	92.704 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead loss</i>	8.128	2.882	10.052	27.226 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead love</i>	-0.641	-0.278	6.640	0.438 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead man</i>	45.860	2.899	20.008	860.957 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead mother</i>	4.915	1.217	11.217	17.532 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead parent</i>	7.669	2.850	9.769	24.537 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead pause</i>	16.569	3.793	12.840	78.399 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead people</i>	0.788	0.315	7.716	0.576 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead shot</i>	8.650	3.119	10.038	28.131 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead silence</i>	89.025	5.516	20.516	1,033.918 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead son</i>	1.674	0.690	7.860	2.359 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead stick</i>	8.052	3.064	9.708	24.903 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead stop</i>	13.869	3.413	12.331	64.306 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead thing</i>	-1.082	-0.389	7.611	1.277 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead wife</i>	1.219	0.468	8.083	1.326 (p > 0.05)
<i>dead woman</i>	3.581	0.913	10.821	10.160 (p < 0.01)

The most prominent collocations of *dead* in the data are the ones mentioned above, in the light of the measures from the z-score, the Mutual Information (*MI*) and its version to the power of three (*MI3*), and the log-likelihood tests. In turn, the association of *dead* with other collocates was not found to be so strong. In the case of *dead boy*, *dead hand*, *dead love*, *dead people*, and *dead son*, for instance, only the *MI3* value reached the cut-off point, while the other statistical tests gave negative results. For the remaining collocations the results also seemed contradictory. For *dead brother*, for example, the log-likelihood test is significant only at $p < 0.05$, and the *MI* value indicates that it is not a significant collocation. *MI* is also the only value which differs from the other three in regard to the collocations *dead child*, *dead face*, *dead father*, *dead friend*, *dead horse*, *dead husband*,

dead loss, dead man, dead mother, dead parent, and dead woman, as this score suggests a non-significant correlation between the node and the collocate. The discrepancies between these four values owe to the weight that each of them attributes to individual frequencies. Thus, as suggested in 5.3.2, the main drawback of the *MI* test is that it tends to give too much weight to low-frequency items. In the case of the current data, the highest *MI* score (*dead leaf*) coincides with the collocate of *dead* with the lowest token frequency, the noun *leaf*, which occurs 754 times in NCF. In turn, the lowest *MI* scores coincide with nouns such as *hand* or *friend*, which have high token frequencies (53,459 and 38,742 occurrences in NCF, respectively). In this respect, the *MI3* test is regarded as a more reliable test in a collocational analysis.

As for the types of meanings of the adjective *dead* in the database (cf. Table 6.139), descriptive readings account for the overwhelming majority of the examples (76.16%), followed by subjective (16.47%) and intensifying meanings (7.37%).

Table 6.139. Meaning types for *dead* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	1,581	76.23	42.06
S	342	16.49	9.10
I	151	7.28	4.02
Total	2,074	100.00	55.17

A selection of these different meanings is given in (6.239)-(6.244). *Dead coral* in (6.239) illustrates a descriptive or literal reading of the adjective, since *dead* in this case alludes to the state of corals, which die over time and eventually give way to coral sand.

(6.239) *Again, in other spots the ceaseless lashing of the sea had broken the **dead** coral in pieces, and cast it up in the form of sand.* (1858. Robert Michael Ballantyne. *The coral island*)

Conversely, the meanings in (6.240)-(6.241) are subjective. The town described in (6.240) is said to be dead, that is, it is a town which is not prosperous, lacks business activities, and is uninteresting and uneventful. A literal meaning is not entirely appropriate in this case, for the place in question may still be inhabited. However, the absence of activity or the very scarce commercial life in the town may remind of death-related properties. On this account, this specific collocation was marked as subjective, for it somehow implies the speaker's negative affect. Death-related features, specifically tranquillity and peacefulness, may also be attributed to the example in (6.241). It is said

here that the storm broke as soon as Rowland helmed the boat, since before that moment the sea conditions had not been choppy at all.

- (6.240) "God!" said James, gripping the table with both hands in his excitement, "God, if that's so, what a chance there's in Barbie! It has been a **dead** town for twenty year, and twenty to the end o't. (1901. George Douglas Brown. *The House with the Green Shutters*)
- (6.241) *During the foregoing occurrences a **dead** calm prevailed. But as Rowland sprang to the helm, and gave the signal for pursuit, a roar like a volley of ordnance was heard aloft, and the wind again burst its bondage.* (1839-1840. William Harrison Ainsworth. *Jack Sheppard. A romance*)

Examples (6.242) to (6.244), by contrast, show intensifying meanings, in which *dead* is understood as expressive of high or maximum degree. *Dead certainty*, *dead stop*, and *dead flat* are hence equivalent to 'complete certainty', 'complete stop', and 'complete flatness'.

- (6.242) *The host of the Saracen's Head opportunely appeared at this moment, to confirm Mr. Weller's statement relative to the accommodations of the establishment, and to back his entreaties with a variety of dismal conjectures regarding the state of the roads, the doubt of fresh horses being to be had at the next stage, the **dead** certainty of its raining all night, the equally mortal certainty of its clearing up in the morning, and other topics of inducement familiar to innkeepers.* (1837. Charles Dickens. *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*)
- (6.243) "No," said Ralph, coming to a **dead** stop, and clasping his hands more tightly behind him. "I can't say it." (1839. Charles Dickens. *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*)
- (6.244) *The house is situated on a **dead** flat, and seems to be shut in---almost suffocated, to my north-country notions, by trees.* (1860. Wilkie Collins. *The woman in white*)

In what concerns semantic prosody (see Table 6.140), *dead* is recorded as a modifier of nouns with neutral semantic prosody in the vast majority of its attestations in the data (96.09%), while negative and positive semantic prosody are scarce, amounting only to 2.60% and 1.30%, respectively. Collocations with neutral semantic prosody include, for instance, *dead calm*, *dead hand*, *dead machine*, *dead animal*, *dead face*, *dead leaf*, and *dead stop*. *Dead obstinacy*, *dead palsy*, *dead faint*, *dead loss*, *dead malefactor*, and *dead knave* have been marked as showing negative semantic prosody, while the nouns *glory*, *love*, *passion*, *hero*, and *majesty* were tagged as illustrative of positive semantic prosody.

Table 6.140. Semantic prosody for *dead* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	54	2.60	1.44
neu	2,000	96.09	53.02
pos	20	1.30	0.72
Total	2,074	100.00	55.17

6.3.3.2. *Dead* (adv.)

There are 185 tokens of the adverb *dead* in NCF (see Figure 6.32), which is attested in 37 different collocations, many of which occur less than three times in the data. For this reason, and for convenience purposes, Table 6.141 below displays exclusively those collocations of the adverb which occur at least five times, and Table 6.142 gives the standardised scores for these collocations.⁴⁴ As suggested by these results, *dead beat*, *dead drunk*, *dead lame*, *dead sleepy*, and *dead tired* are all highly statistically significant according to the four values. For *dead silent*, however, the log-likelihood test indicates that the collocation is statistically significant, though at $p < 0.05$, and the *MI* test shows a non-significant value. The *MI* also differs from the other scores in the case of the collocations *dead against*, *dead asleep*, and *dead sick*, for which it yields a low level of significance (slightly lower than the cut-off point, 3).

Figure 6.32. *Dead* (adv.) in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1892	II	In the roar of the sea	thers, and which is the man, Noll?" drunk		S	neg	P	
2	1887	II	The New Antigone	ime words beneath my window--- tired		S	neg	P	
3	1850	II	The ladder of gold	l, and hardly slept a wink all night." beat		S	neg	P	
4	1849	I	Shirley	is of your life to stir up dissension. drunk		S	neg	P	
5	1903	II	The way of all flesh	pick him up, for he was dead beat. beat		S	neg	P	
6	1866	II	Armadales	-you see what I mean, don't you?" against		I	neu	PREP	
7	1866	II	Armadales	the chances are dead against me.' against		I	neu	PREP	
8	1870	II	Man and wife	xious---and with good reason too. against		I	neu	PREP	
9	1870	II	Man and wife	ns---which tells dead against you . against		I	neu	PREP	
10	1870	II	Man and wife	n was all he wanted for that night. beat		S	neg	P	
11	1868	II	The moonstone	r, when you have once chosen it." against		I	neu	PREP	
12	1868	II	The moonstone	o leave you, with my best respects. against		I	neu	PREP	
13	1868	II	The moonstone	iewed by the light of later events." against		I	neu	PREP	
14	1868	II	The moonstone	of them, to tell dead against you." against		I	neu	PREP	
15	1862	II	No name	lagdalen, on the other, mad to act. against		I	neu	PREP	
16	1860	II	The woman in white	et him no further than the stable." beat		S	neg	P	
17	1840	I	Barnaby Rudge	could do at times to keep my legs. against		I	neu	PREP	
18	1840	I	Barnaby Rudge	rink here. Hand over, one of you." scared		S	neg	P	
19	1853	II	Bleak House	spirits, and are dearly knocked up. beat		S	neg	P	
20	1843	I	A Christmas charol	nths presented dead against you? against		I	neu	PREP	
21	1861	II	Great expectations	st any fatal weakness of that sort. against		I	neu	PREP	
22	1854	II	Hard Times	ave drawn up from the premises. against		I	neu	PREP	

⁴⁴ The collocation *dead still*, which also occurred five times in NCF, was not counted for statistical purposes, given that the collocate *still* can also be an adverb, in addition to an adjective, the relevant function of *still* here. As a consequence, the absolute frequency for the collocation *dead still* is very high in the data (31,640 occurrences), and it is beyond the scope of the present research to separate the adverbial from the adjectival uses of *still*.

Table 6.141. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *dead* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>dead against</i>	48	1.28
<i>dead asleep</i>	9	0.24
<i>dead beat</i>	26	0.69
<i>dead drunk</i>	16	0.43
<i>dead lame</i>	5	0.13
<i>dead sick</i>	8	0.21
<i>dead silent</i>	8	0.21
<i>dead sleepy</i>	6	0.16
<i>dead tired</i>	13	0.35

Table 6.142. Standardised scores for *dead* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>dead against</i>	11.836	2.234	13.404	73.154 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead asleep</i>	7.358	2.980	9.320	21.485 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead beat</i>	24.358	4.631	14.032	117.308 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead drunk</i>	20.818	4.861	12.861	77.125 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead lame</i>	11.622	4.857	9.501	24.078 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead sick</i>	5.983	2.659	8.659	16.040 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead silent</i>	2.707	1.333	7.333	5.136 (p < 0.05)
<i>dead sleepy</i>	13.705	5.056	10.226	30.510 (p < 0.0001)
<i>dead tired</i>	10.020	3.266	10.667	35.610 (p < 0.0001)

As shown in Table 6.143, the adverb *dead* occurs predominantly with subjective and intensifying meanings, while those meanings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective amount only to about 1%.

Table 6.143. Meaning types for *dead* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D/S	2	1.08	0.05
S	98	52.97	2.61
I	85	45.95	2.26
Total	185	100.00	4.92

An illustrative selection of these meanings types is provided in examples (6.245)-(6.250). *Dead sick* in (6.245) was marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, for it is unclear whether the character fell ill afterwards or was only momentarily indisposed. By contrast, in *dead drunk* (6.246) and *dead tired* (6.247) the original meaning of the adverb can still be traced. Being dead drunk or dead tired, although not necessarily leading to one's death, may certainly recall states close to death, which explains why these collocations were labelled as subjective. The collocation *dead sick* in (6.248) clearly differs from that in (6.245). The persons referred to here are not feeling unwell, but rather tired of each other. In other words, husband and wife had

enough of each other and they split up. Therefore, a literal meaning of *dead sick* in this case is not possible. Instead *dead* functions in this instance as an intensifier with a more general meaning: ‘very, extremely tired of him’. The same reading applies to the adverb in (6.249) and (6.250), in which *dead against* could be read as ‘completely opposed to’ and *dead trivial* as ‘extremely, very trivial’.

- (6.245) *But Grimsby had much skill and little scruple, and whether he took advantage of the other's trembling, blinded eagerness to deal unfairly by him, I cannot undertake to say; but Lowborough lost again, and fell **dead** sick.* (1848. Anne Brontë. *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*)
- (6.246) *I saw you one night a week ago laid **dead**-drunk by the roadside, as I returned from Stilbro' market; and while you preach peace, you make it the business of your life to stir up dissension.* (1849. Charlotte Brontë. *Shirley*)
- (6.247) *'Thank the kind fates that have suffered me to write this. I am **dead** tired. I shall sleep now; and perhaps never waken. But this letter, at all events, will reach you.* (1887. William Francis Barry. *The New Antigone*)
- (6.248) *"How do you know there was anything wrong? Men always think bad of women." "No, it was right enough; she had got **dead** sick of me, and I had got **dead** sick of her. It never did seem natural like.* (1894. George Moore. *Esther Waters*)
- (6.249) *But I know Mr. Brock. If I can't satisfy him about her family when I write to tell him of this (which of course I must do), he will be **dead** against the whole thing.* (1866. Wilkie Collins. *Armadale*)
- (6.250) *"He was an honest fellow enough; but not perfect; he would not go to bed, and would sit on the edge of it telling the wretched Gerard by force, and at length, the events of the day, and alternately laughing and crying at the same circumstances, which were not in the smallest degree pathetic or humorous, but only **dead** trivial.* (1861. Charles Hearsh. *The Cloister and the Hearth*)

In the light of the nineteenth-century data, the adverb *dead* is preferred with neutral and negative semantic prosody (55.68% and 41.08%, respectively), although it is also found as a modifier of elements with positive semantic prosody (3.24%) (cf. Table 6.144 below). *Cold, asleep, still, silent, and set* feature among the collocates with neutral semantic prosody, whereas the collocations *dead drunk, dead tired, dead beat, dead trivial, and dead sick* were counted as illustrative of negative semantic prosody. Finally, only the collocates *good* and *lame* were found to have positive semantic prosody in NCF.

Table 6.144. Semantic prosody for *dead* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	76	41.08	2.02
neu	103	55.68	2.74
pos	6	3.24	0.16
Total	185	100.00	4.92

In what concerns the categories modified by *dead* (see Table 6.145), the results show that the adverb can modify a wide variety of elements, including adjectives, other adverbs (*dead astern, dead aback*), participial elements (*dead drunk*) and even prepositions (*dead against*) and prepositional phrases (*dead in earnest, dead on end*).

Table 6.145. Categories modified by *dead* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	71	38.38	1.89
Adv.	6	3.24	0.16
Part.	60	32.43	1.60
Prep.	48	25.95	1.28
Total	185	100.00	4.92

6.3.3.3. *Deadly* (adj.)

The total number of occurrences of the adjective *deadly* in NCF (cf. Figure 6.33) amounts to 479, and the number of collocations is 192. In view of its adjectival nature, *deadly* modifies nouns in all the examples in the data. Table 6.146 shows the most frequent collocations in the data, in this particular case those tokens with a minimum of five occurrences, while Table 6.147 provides the standardised scores for the corresponding collocations. As indicated by the four measures here, all the collocations are highly statistically significant.

Figure 6.33. *Deadly* (adj.) in NCF

id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meanin	Semantic prosody	Modifier of	Comments
1	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	ind had not felled him to the ground.	purpose	D/S	neu	N	
2	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	ized him, and a struggle commenced.	assault	D/S	neg	N	
3	1895 II		The woman who did	hecked through unsanitated Europe.	disease	D	neg	N	
4	1895 II		The woman who did	irton, the same as poor grandpapa's.	thrill	S	neu	N	
5	1895 II		The woman who did	tle touch. 'You have always heard it.'	white	S	neu	N	
6	1796 I		Hermesprung	us convenient on certain occasions."	sin	D	neg	N	
7	1858 II		The coral island	een a shark, and he is gone for ever!"	paleness	S	neu	N	
8	1858 II		The coral island	ying to conceal himself behind a tree.	weapon	D	neu	N	
9	1858 II		The coral island	dependent of more deadly weapons.	weapon	D	neu	N	
10	1858 II		The coral island	readful set of men I have never seen.	struggle	D	neg	N	
11	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	r, and would therefore strike herself.	animosity	S	neg	N	
12	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	might turn her aunt out of his house.	animosity	S	neu	N	
13	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	desolation of heart and deadly fear.	fear	S	neg	N	
14	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	---and bring me some skins shortly."	poison	D	neg	N	
15	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	ie in the hands of his deadly enemies.	enemy	S	neg	N	
16	1813 I		The heroine	red a deadly potion to me last night."	potion	D	neu	N	
17	1813 I		The heroine	atrice, Duchess of Cleves, flourished.	foe	S	neg	N	
18	1887 II		The New Antigone	on the altar like a conquering demon.	terror	S	neg	N	
19	1887 II		The New Antigone	athe such a moral atmosphere long.'	poison	D	neg	N	
20	1887 II		The New Antigone	uture lord deliver his maiden speech.	struggle	D/S	neg	N	
22	1887 II		The New Antigone	hing on the spear. The hours fled on.	wound	D	neg	N	
23	1887 II		The New Antigone	ng the revolutionists that had dealt it.	shock	S	neg	N	

Table 6.146. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *deadly* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>deadly blow</i>	13	0.35
<i>deadly chill</i>	7	0.19
<i>deadly earnest</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly enemy</i>	14	0.37
<i>deadly faintness</i>	6	0.16
<i>deadly fear</i>	10	0.27
<i>deadly feud</i>	21	0.56
<i>deadly hatred</i>	16	0.43
<i>deadly hue</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly paleness</i>	14	0.37
<i>deadly pallor</i>	6	0.16
<i>deadly peril</i>	8	0.21
<i>deadly poison</i>	10	0.27
<i>deadly purpose</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly sickness</i>	10	0.27
<i>deadly sin</i>	27	0.72
<i>deadly struggle</i>	8	0.21
<i>deadly vengeance</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly venom</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly weapon</i>	9	0.24
<i>deadly whiteness</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly wound</i>	11	0.29

Table 6.147. Standardised scores for *deadly* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>deadly blow</i>	37.468	6.781	14.182	96.504 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly chill</i>	40.897	7.913	13.527	62.914 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly earnest</i>	14.686	5.495	10.139	28.323 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly enemy</i>	28.051	5.966	13.367	81.968 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly faintness</i>	71.726	9.747	14.917	69.315 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly fear</i>	14.277	4.481	11.125	43.030 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly feud</i>	197.603	10.932	19.576	264.876 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly hatred</i>	68.778	8.310	16.124	143.101 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly hue</i>	25.668	7.064	11.707	39.064 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly paleness</i>	127.401	10.182	17.796	170.346 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly pallor</i>	74.315	9.849	15.019	70.180 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly peril</i>	35.919	7.351	13.351	65.680 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly poison</i>	51.530	8.064	14.707	91.975 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly purpose</i>	7.821	3.824	8.468	17.214 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sickness</i>	58.897	8.447	15.090	97.303 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sin</i>	78.610	7.851	17.361	240.363 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly struggle</i>	23.270	6.122	12.122	52.154 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly vengeance</i>	20.863	6.476	11.120	35.022 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly venom</i>	68.671	9.884	14.528	58.731 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly weapon</i>	38.331	7.368	13.708	74.107 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly whiteness</i>	48.506	8.884	13.528	51.706 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly wound</i>	32.179	6.587	13.506	78.718 (p < 0.0001)

In addition to descriptive (29.65%), subjective (50.31%), and intensifying meanings (4.59%), *deadly* is also attested in NCF with readings which range between descriptive and subjective (15.24%) and between subjective and intensifying (0.21%) (cf. Table 6.148).

Table 6.148. Meaning types for *deadly* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	142	29.65	3.78
D/S	73	15.24	1.94
S	241	50.31	6.41
S/I	1	0.21	0.03
I	22	4.59	0.59
Total	479	100.00	12.74

Thus, *deadly* in (6.251) has a descriptive or literal meaning, for a person is said to be ill with a fatal disease. The fatal outcome is, nevertheless, doubtful in (6.252), which describes a scene in which there has been an attack with a knife and a subsequent struggle. For this reason, the collocation *deadly assault* was marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective here.

(6.251) *Some real emotion---perhaps the fear which healthy young people experience at the sight of **deadly** disease---made Harry touch her arm with the softness of a child's touch.* (1861. George Meredith. *Evan Harrington*)

(6.252) *"Fly, captain---fly!" Aroused to a sense of the possibility of escape, Jack, who had viewed the **deadly** assault with savage satisfaction, burst from his captors and made for the door.* (1839-1840. William Harrison Ainsworth. *Jack Sheppard. A romance*)

(6.253), in turn, presents a subjective meaning, since Mrs. Milroy feels terrified at the thought of another character having discovered the contents of a letter. This dread and concern is, however, not going to kill her eventually, although it can consume her, and hence harm her, both psychologically and physically. By contrast, the collocation *deadly jealousy* in (6.254) is considered to illustrate a meaning which is ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. This example narrates the rivalry between the two wives of a man, and apparently the quarrels between them in the zenana.⁴⁵ This jealousy can then be understood as an extreme and intense jealousy, so that *deadly* here would function as an intensifier. However, the situation could also invite a subjective reading, since given this context, harm and damage between the two characters is not to be ruled out.

⁴⁵ 'In Islamic South Asia and Iran: that part of a dwelling-house in which the women of a family are secluded; a harem' (OED, s.v. *zenana*, n. 1).

- (6.253) *There were plain signs of disturbance and distress in her daughter's face. A **deadly** thrill of terror ran through Mrs. Milroy on the instant.* (1866. Wilkie Collins. *Armadale*)
- (6.254) *He proposes marriage; it is accepted; the bride comes home, and a **deadly** jealousy ensues between the rival wives.* (1839. Captain Meadows Taylor. *Confessions of a thug*)

Conversely, in (6.255) and (6.256) *deadly* can only have an intensifying or degree reading: ‘complete/total accuracy’ and ‘complete/total commonplace’. Since there is no way in which something being accurate or ordinary is fatal, *deadly* is hence considered as an intensifier in such instances.

- (6.255) *Yes, then, his coldness was desireable; it encouraged an ideal of him. It suggested and seemed to propose to Clara's mind the divineness of separation instead of the **deadly** accuracy of an intimate perusal.* (1879. George Meredith. *The egoist*)
- (6.256) *It's **deadly** commonplace, but, after all, the commonplaces are the great poetic truths.* (1896. Robert Louis Stevenson. *Weir of Hermiston*)

As for semantic prosody, *deadly* occurs in NCF mostly with negative elements (64.93%), but it is also found as a modifier of neutral items (34.03%) and even of positive ones (1.04%), as Table 6.149 shows. *Assault, disease, sin, struggle, animosity, and wound*, for instance, were counted as negative collocates of the adjective; *purpose, pallor, night, weapon, and look* were marked as neutral; finally, *determination, passion, vantange, and joy* were tagged as positive collocates of *deadly* in the NCF material.

Table 6.149. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	311	64.93	8.27
neu	163	34.03	4.34
pos	5	1.04	0.13
Total	479	100.00	12.74

6.3.3.4. *Deadly* (adv.)

The number of occurrences of the adverb *deadly* in NCF totals 153 (see Figure 6.34) in 21 different collocations (see Table 6.150). Table 6.151 provides the different standardised scores for the most frequent collocations, in this case those occurring a minimum of five times in the data. The strongest association between the node and the collocate is shown by the collocation *deadly pale*, but in fact all the collocations in this table are statistically significant.

Figure 6.34. *Deadly* (adv.) in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1858 II		The coral island	was torn and soiled with mud.	pale	S	neu	A	
2	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	the wall, and was deadly pale.	pale	S	neu	A	
3	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	; letter. Yours was an answer."	white	S	neu	A	
4	1892 II		In the roar of the sea	father's days, been the pantry.	pale	S	neu	A	
5	1813 I		The heroine	id in Bedlam," said the Doctor.	pale	S	neu	A	
6	1813 I		The heroine	istle is my house," answered I.	long	I	neu	A	
7	1813 I		The heroine	oblique eye of pretty dignity.	pale	S	neu	A	
8	1887 II		The New Antigone	he bestow a thought on Ivor?	white	S	neu	A	
9	1887 II		The New Antigone	irmed her worst expectations.	pale	S	neu	A	
10	1887 II		The New Antigone	ndres had gone to the village.	still	S	neu	A	
11	1850 II		The ladder of gold	attered, and grew deadly pale.	pale	S	neu	A	
12	1850 II		The ladder of gold	uard, and turning deadly pale.	pale	S	neu	A	
13	1869 II		Lorna Doone	ig her to our own farm-house.	cold	S	neu	A	
14	1851 II		Lavengro	ore I relapsed into my swoon.	sick	D/S	neg	A	
15	1862 II		Lady Audley's secret	s upon the table near the bed.	pale	S	neu	A	
16	1848 I		The tenant of Wildfell Hall	ible; and those were far away.	calm	S	neu	A	
17	1848 I		The tenant of Wildfell Hall	, and her face was deadly pale.	pale	S	neu	A	
18	1847 I		Jane Eyre	when the deluge was gone by.	sad	S	neg	A	
19	1853 II		Vilette	or, beckoning them to follow.	pale	S	neu	A	
20	1853 II		Vilette	ned deadly pale, as if in terror.	pale	S	neu	A	
21	1847 I		Wuthering Heights	f a chair, and covered his face.	pale	S	neu	A	
22	1847 I		Wuthering Heights	the table, I commenced alone.	sick	D/S	neg	A	

Table 6.150. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the collocations of *deadly* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>deadly black</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly calm</i>	2	0.05
<i>deadly cold</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly conservative</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly curious</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly economical</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly faint</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly frightened</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly hate</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly ill</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly long</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly natural</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly necessary</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly pale</i>	106	2.82
<i>deadly patient</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly quiet</i>	2	0.05
<i>deadly sad</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly sick</i>	5	0.13
<i>deadly still</i>	1	0.11
<i>deadly tired</i>	1	0.03
<i>deadly white</i>	14	0.37

Table 6.151. Standardised scores for *deadly* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>deadly cold</i>	8.324	3.981	8.625	18.232 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly pale</i>	225.687	8.956	22.329	1,075.406 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly sick</i>	14.558	5.471	10.115	28.159 (p < 0.0001)
<i>deadly white</i>	22.837	5.199	13.013	78.956 (p < 0.0001)

Concerning the types of meaning of the adverb (cf. Table 6.152), *deadly* is found with subjective readings in the overwhelming majority of the cases (90.85%), though it is also attested with intensifying meanings (5.23%) and with meanings which are intermediate between descriptive and subjective (3.27%), in addition to one isolated instance which

was marked as descriptive, corresponding to the collocation *deadly ill* (0.65% of the total).

Table 6.152. Meaning types for *deadly* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	1	0.65	0.03
D/S	5	3.27	0.13
S	139	90.85	3.70
I	8	5.23	0.21
Total	153	100.00	4.07

Deadly sick, as in (6.257), is ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, for in this example, as in many instances of this collocation in the data, the context does not make it clear whether the person is critically ill or not. The prevalence of subjective meanings in the data owes to the fact that the collocation *deadly pale* alone already accounts for 69.28% of the total of examples (106 out of 153 tokens). (6.258) is one of such instances. The paleness of the character is accompanied in this case by a dishevelled and untidy appearance, since he is additionally covered in blood, which reinforces the negative atmosphere. With the use of the adverb *deadly*, therefore, the narrator evokes negative affect or his negative appreciation of the situation, for the circumstances are not fatal at any moment to be taken literally. *Deadly* in examples (6.259), (6.260), and (6.261), by contrast, is clearly intensifying. Though *deadly tired* could also be taken to be a subjective reading when applied to a person, in (6.259) it is used to refer to a scholarly lecture, which is said to be extremely boring and tires the character in excess. Likewise, *deadly* in *deadly curious* and *deadly conservative* can be paraphrased as *extremely*, *excessively*, and as such only admits a degree or intensifying interpretation.

- (6.257) *This morning, when I came down, about half-an-hour before noon, Mr. Earnshaw was sitting by the fire, **deadly** sick; his evil geniùs almost as guant and ghastly, leant against the chimney.* (1847. Emily Brontë. *Wuthering heights*)
- (6.258) *He was **deadly** pale, and his hair, which hung in dishevelled locks over his face, was clotted with blood.* (1858. Robert Michael Ballantyne. *The coral island*).
- (6.259) *He looked at young Hexam as if he were waiting for a scholar to go on with a lesson that he knew by heart and was **deadly** tired of. But he had said his last word to him.* (1865. Charles Dickens. *Our mutual friend*)
- (6.260) *But I can't for my life make out why you don't take to one or t'other of them, and put yourself at your ease. I'm **deadly** curious to know what keeps you from coming to a finish.* (1814. Fanny Burney. *The wanderer*)
- (6.261) *As it was, she had no cause. Her father's political views were very mild. Lady Macleod's were **deadly** conservative.* (1864. Anthony Trollope. *Can you forgive her*)

In regard to the variable semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.153), the adverb *deadly* occurs mostly with neutral prosody. This owes to the fact that the collocation *deadly pale* already makes up almost 70% of the total of examples, and this collocation is considered to represent neutral semantic prosody, for paleness can admit both a positive and a negative reading, being highly contextually dependent. Further neutral collocates of the adverb in the data are *white*, *curious*, *cold*, *economical*, *long*, and *conservative*. NCF also provides examples of *deadly* as a modifier of elements with negative semantic prosody (consider the collocations *deadly sick*, *deadly tired*, and *deadly sad*) and even one instance in which it modifies an inherently positive adjective: *patient*.

Table 6.153. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	9	5.88	0.24
neu	143	93.46	3.80
pos	1	0.65	0.03
Total	153	100.00	4.07

Unlike its zero counterpart *dead* (cf. 6.3.3.2), which could also modify other adverbs and even prepositions, the adverb *deadly* clearly shows a strong preference for adjectives in the nineteenth-century data, as shown in Table 6.154. However, there are also examples in which *deadly* modifies participial elements and one verb, namely *to hate*.

Table 6.154. Categories modified by *deadly* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	149	97.39	3.96
Part.	3	1.96	0.08
Vb.	1	0.65	0.03
Total	153	100.00	4.07

6.3.3.5. *Mortal* (adj.)

NCF yielded 1,009 tokens of the adjective *mortal* (see Figure 6.35 below), which is attested in a total of 342 collocations. In all these occurrences *mortal* is found as a modifier of nouns. Given the large number of collocates, Table 6.155 only shows the absolute and normalised frequencies for those which occurred at least five times in the data. Table 6.156 additionally provides their standardised scores.

Figure 6.35. *Mortal* (adj.) in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1839	I	Jack Sheppard	The arrest of this persone	enemy	S	neg	N	
2	1839	I	Jack Sheppard	The knight staggered as wound		D	neg	N	
3	1796	I	Hermesprong	"But such a good young miss		I	neu	N	
4	1796	I	Hermesprong	This sad and awful spec	power	D	neu	N	
5	1796	I	Hermesprong	"This was too much for endurance		D	neu	N	
6	1796	I	Hermesprong	All ladies know,---for all man		D	neu	N	
7	1796	I	Hermesprong	"You are a most sublim	man	D	neu	N	
8	1792	I	Man as he is	"Too great for mortal	mman	D	neu	N	
9	1792	I	Man as he is	She even left Lord Aus	life	D	neu	N	
10	1792	I	Man as he is	He died, and left me fo	life	D	neu	N	
11	1792	I	Man as he is	He allowed that the Ma	eye	D	neu	N	
12	1792	I	Man as he is	It is true, I am a mortal	e	S	neg	N	
13	1792	I	Man as he is	"You---you offend him, vanity		D	neg	N	
14	1792	I	Man as he is	It is now well known, th	quality	D	neu	N	
15	1858	II	The coral island	Now we were almost as	man	D	neu	N	
16	1858	II	The coral island	Why, in some of the isla	man	D	neu	N	
17	1813	I	The heroine	Know, that the mome	n	D	neu	N	
18	1813	I	The heroine	Was it that mortal	man	D	neu	N	
19	1813	I	The heroine	"Oh, ecstasy!" exclaime	pencil	D	neu	N	
20	1813	I	The heroine	"Thank you, my genero	foe	S	neg	N	
21	1813	I	The heroine	The spectre shook its h	act	D	neu	N	
22	1887	II	The New Antigone	Sweet tears began to fl	frame	D	neu	N	

Table 6.155. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortal agony</i>	17	0.45
<i>mortal anguish</i>	6	0.16
<i>mortal being</i>	10	0.27
<i>mortal blow</i>	15	0.40
<i>mortal combat</i>	17	0.45
<i>mortal creature</i>	17	0.45
<i>mortal danger</i>	6	0.16
<i>mortal disease</i>	19	0.51
<i>mortal dread</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal ear</i>	14	0.37
<i>mortal enemy</i>	37	0.98
<i>mortal existence</i>	11	0.29
<i>mortal eye</i>	29	0.77
<i>mortal fear</i>	20	0.53
<i>mortal foe</i>	11	0.29
<i>mortal frame</i>	14	0.37
<i>mortal hand</i>	10	0.27
<i>mortal illness</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal injury</i>	10	0.27
<i>mortal life</i>	28	0.74
<i>mortal man</i>	96	2.55
<i>mortal nature</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal offence</i>	17	0.45
<i>mortal paleness</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal peril</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal power</i>	7	0.19
<i>mortal quarrel</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortal remains</i>	17	0.45
<i>mortal sin</i>	12	0.32
<i>mortal soul</i>	8	0.21
<i>mortal struggle</i>	9	0.24
<i>mortal terror</i>	11	0.29
<i>mortal thing</i>	13	0.35
<i>mortal woman</i>	22	0.59
<i>mortal wound</i>	18	0.48

Table 6.156. Standardised scores for the most frequent collocations of *mortal* (adj.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortal agony</i>	37.514	6.406	14.580	117.479 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal anguish</i>	15.777	5.442	10.612	33.559 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal being</i>	3.946	1.700	8.344	9.727 (p < 0.01)
<i>mortal blow</i>	2.7223	5.683	13.497	88.828 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal combat</i>	70.811	8.214	16.389	160.123 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal creature</i>	21.034	4.807	12.982	80.535 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal danger</i>	7.874	3.615	8.785	19.052 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal disease</i>	65.830	7.846	16.342	169.194 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal dread</i>	10.844	4.671	9.315	22.781 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal ear</i>	17.046	4.505	12.120	60.696 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal enemy</i>	57.506	6.514	16.932	261.191 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal existence</i>	20.141	5.280	12.199	59.116 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal eye</i>	13.519	3.032	12.748	71.002 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal fear</i>	18.393	4.237	12.881	79.634 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal foe</i>	42.386	7.369	14.288	90.659 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal frame</i>	31.626	6.198	13.813	92.763 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal hand</i>	2.582	1.148	7.791	4.937 (p < 0.05)
<i>mortal illness</i>	12.870	5.133	9.777	25.881 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal injury</i>	26.728	6.198	12.842	66.257 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal life</i>	14.568	3.244	12.859	75.850 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal man</i>	29.530	3.458	16.628	285.807 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal nature</i>	3.898	2.273	6.916	7.823 (p < 0.01)
<i>mortal offence</i>	42.385	6.750	14.925	125.554 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal paleness</i>	32.481	7.735	12.379	43.750 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal peril</i>	15.878	5.712	10.355	29.802 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal power</i>	5.669	2.686	8.301	14.243 (p < 0.001)
<i>mortal quarrel</i>	10.325	4.541	9.185	21.913 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal remains</i>	4.9136	7.170	15.345	135.418 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal sin</i>	24.669	5.720	12.890	71.655 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal soul</i>	7.506	3.159	9.159	20.827 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal struggle</i>	18.560	5.331	11.671	48.989 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal terror</i>	19.069	5.130	12.049	56.895 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal thing</i>	4.917	1.840	9.241	14.429 (p < 0.001)
<i>mortal woman</i>	11.335	2.947	11.866	51.590 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortal wound</i>	3.7660	6.336	14.676	122.667 (p < 0.0001)

As indicated by the standardised scores, the association between the node *mortal* and the accompanying nouns turned out to be highly statistically significant for the overwhelming majority of the collocations. The only differences found concerned the *MI* value for the collocations *mortal being*, *mortal hand*, *mortal nature*, *mortal power*, *mortal thing*, and *mortal woman*, which have low *MI* scores. This owes to the fact that the nouns *being*, *hand*, *nature*, *power*, *thing*, and *woman* are highly frequent items on their own in the database, and the *MI* test tends to give much less weight to high-frequency items. However, the cubed version of the *MI* test, *MI3*, indicates that the association between *mortal* and these nouns is to be taken as significant. The other values also confirm the significance of this connection between the node and these collocates, although in the

case of the log-likelihood value, the level of significance for *mortal being*, *mortal nature*, and *mortal hand* decreases in comparison with all the other collocations (from $p < 0.0001$ to $p < 0.01$ for *mortal being* and *mortal nature*, and to $p < 0.05$ for *mortal hand*).

In what concerns the types of meanings of the adjective in NCF (see Table 6.157), *mortal* seems to be still relatively attached to its original sense, since 77.11% of the examples in the data correspond to descriptive or literal readings of the adjective. Those occurrences which show incipient subjectivity, that is, subjective meanings, represent 17.15% of the total, and those uses of the adjective in which *mortal* is taken to be a grammaticalised intensifier account for 2.58%. Ambiguous examples which can be graded as either descriptive or subjective (2.97%) and those which can be considered to be either subjective or intensifying (0.20%) are also attested in the data.

Table 6.157. Meaning types for *mortal* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	778	77.11	20.70
D/S	30	2.97	0.80
S	173	17.15	4.60
S/I	2	0.20	0.05
I	26	2.58	0.69
Total	1,009	100.00	26.84

Examples (6.262)-(6.269) illustrate the different readings of the adjective in NCF. (6.262) and (6.263) show descriptive or literal meanings of *mortal*; the first refers to a fatal wound which a character has received and the second to worldly existence, which is temporary and ephemeral.

(6.262) *I was at the taking of the Pique, and carried him down below after he had received his mortal wound.* (1832. Frederick Marryat. *Peter Simple*)

(6.263) *He could no longer doubt that she had reached the last stage of mortal existence.* (1836. Mrs. Gore, Catherine Grace Frances. *Mrs. Armytage; or, Female Domination*)

Mortal peril in (6.264) was marked as indeterminate between descriptive and subjective. This example refers to the danger for one of the characters of being recognised by another. Regardless of whether the character eventually passed away or not, for which outcome we would need to read on, a risk or danger per se does not kill anyone, as it may well be the case that a person is in serious danger and (s)he does not die in the end. On this account, the collocation was not marked as purely descriptive or literal.

(6.264) *If I could get speech of him that night, if I could show him that I, too, knew of the mortal peril in which he stood, what result would follow?* (1860. Wilkie Collins. *The woman in white*)

In turn, (6.265) and (6.266) are considered to show subjective readings of *mortal*, given that they refer to qualities which are negatively construed and may somehow recall death. Bearing deep resentment against someone, as is the case between the two characters mentioned in (6.265), may also imply hurting him/her, perhaps even to death. Suffering from a phobia about beetles and cockroaches, which is the case of the protagonist in (6.266), may also trigger a panic attack, as a result of which the character might have breathing difficulties and feel faint. In sum, (s)he might feel in a state which is relatively close to death.

(6.265) *There were stronger differences between him and her, than there had been between him and his father, and it is suspected that he cherished a deep and mortal grudge against her, as having influenced the father's anger.* (1861. Charles Dickens. *Great Expectations*)

(6.266) [...] *and being seated, commenced the acquisition of my task; while I learned, not forgetting to keep a sharp look-out on the black beetles and cockroaches, of which, more even, I believe, than of the rats, I sat in mortal dread.* (1853. Charlotte Brontë. *Villette*)

The collocation *mortal daring* in (6.267) was marked as intermediate between subjective and intensifying. On the one hand, the context clearly indicates the determination of the character, hence the *resolute ferocity* of his expression, and in this light *mortal* could be considered an intensifier; *mortal daring* could then be paraphrased as *extreme boldness* or *extreme courage*. On the other hand, a subjective reading cannot be totally discarded here, since we do not exactly know the consequences of the character's boldness, mainly because there is a fight.

(6.267) *"What is it you intend, my lord?" cried Halbert, viewing with increased alarm the resolute ferocity which now blazed from every part of his countenance, and seemed to dilate his figure with more than mortal daring, "what can you do?"* (1810. Jane Porter. *The Scottish chiefs*)

Finally, in (6.268) and (6.269) *mortal* has an unequivocal intensifying or degree value. The mortal aversion referred to in (6.268) is not towards a person, but towards a thing, in particular to the word *business*, which Mrs. Skewton is said to hate in the extreme. The degree interpretation also applies to (6.269), which describes a gentleman in a terrible haste to find somebody to take care of his companion's luggage, and for which a literal interpretation or a subjective reading of the adjective *mortal* are not possible.

(6.268) *Mrs. Skewton reposing on her sofa, and sipping her chocolate, had heard nothing but the low word business, for which she had a mortal aversion, insomuch that she had long banished it from her vocabulary, [...]* (1848. Charles Dickens. *Dombey and son*)

- (6.269) *The gentleman was in a **mortal** hurry about the lady's luggage; and he give me a handsome present for looking sharp and getting the boxes.*" (1860. Wilkie Collins. *The woman in white*)

As far as semantic prosody is concerned (cf. Table 6.158), *mortal* is mainly attested with neutral and negative nouns (57.88% and 39.05% of the cases, respectively), though it also occurs as a modifier of nouns which are inherently positive (3.07%). By way of illustration, *mortal* modifies neutral nouns such as (wo)man, creature, comprehension, body, thing, and condition. Negative collocates of *mortal* in the data include, among others, enemy, wound, vanity, combat, pang, and depravity. Finally, happiness, fortitude, harmony, beauty, magnificence, excellence, and love feature among the positive collocates of the adjective in NCF.

Table 6.158. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adj.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	394	39.01	10.48
neu	584	57.88	15.54
pos	31	3.07	0.82
Total	1,009	100.00	26.84

6.3.3.6. *Mortal* (adv.)

The total number of tokens of the adverb *mortal* in the NCF database amounts to 41 (see Figure 6.36), occurring in combination with 32 different collocates. Nevertheless, only the collocations *mortal angry*, *mortal cold*, *mortal hard*, *mortal high*, *mortal hungry*, *mortal long*, and *mortal still* occur two or three times in NCF. Owing to these low frequencies, Table 6.159 provides the absolute and normalised frequencies for these collocations, and Table 6.160 gives the standardised scores only for those which are attested a minimum of three times. Except for the *MI* test, all the values indicate that both *mortal angry* and *mortal cold* are statistically significant, although in the case of the latter collocation the log likelihood test also shows that it is only significant at $p < 0.05$.

Figure 6.36. *Mortal* (adv.) in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1862	II	Lady Audley's Secret	"It's a mortal dull p dull		I	neg	A	
2	1810	I	Self-control	"You may rement:angry		S/I	neg	A	
3	1792	I	Camilla	"O yes, I shall. It wispitiful		S/I	neg	A	
4	1853	II	Ruth	"Here's the nurse, i bad		I	neg	A	
5	1792	I	Camilla	"Them young gent unconvenient		I	neg	A	
6	1792	I	Camilla	"And she's mortal i fond		I	pos	A	
7	1792	I	Camilla	"Yes, yes, he's pret cunning		I	pos	A	
8	1792	I	Camilla	Then, advancing tc kind		I	pos	A	
9	1858	II	The Three Clerks	"Oh, you may trus' long		I	neu	A	
10	1862	II	No name	"Put your apron o cold		I	neu	A	the atmosphere it mortal cold,
11	1840	II	Barnaby Rudge	I put as good a face cold		I	neu	A	the atmosphere it mortal cold,
12	1840	II	Barnaby Rudge	"Oh, you're here, a lazy		I	neg	A	
13	1853	I	Bleak House	"O no, sir!" said thi high		I	neu	A	
14	1853	I	Bleak House	"O no, sir!" said thi passionate		I	pos	A	DOUBLE
15	1838	I	Oliver Twist	Mr. Chitling would long		I	neu	A	
16	1850	II	The Personal History of Da	"Sit ye down by thi cold		S/I	neu	A	the hands are cold
17	1826	I	Vivian Grey	"I'm sure your hon feared		S/I	neg	A	
18	1878	II	The return of the native	I ha'n't been these poor		I	neg	A	mortal poor chance
19	1857	II	Tom Brown's school days	"What! be thee pai sorry		I	neu	A	
20	1857	II	Tom Brown's school days	Savs Giles: "Tic moi hard		I	neg	A	

Table 6.159. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *mortal* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortal angry</i>	3	0.08
<i>mortal cold</i>	3	0.08
<i>mortal hard</i>	2	0.05
<i>mortal high</i>	2	0.05
<i>mortal hungry</i>	2	0.05
<i>mortal long</i>	2	0.05
<i>mortal still</i>	2	0.05

Table 6.160. Standardised scores for the most frequent collocations of *mortal* (adv.) in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortal angry</i>	4.246	2.979	6.149	7.151 (p < 0.01)
<i>mortal cold</i>	3.036	2.283	5.453	4.728 (p < 0.05)

In regard to the types of meanings of the adverb (cf. Table 6.161), *mortal* occurs mostly with intensifying meanings (68.29% of the cases) and with meanings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (19.51%). Subjective and descriptive meanings are, by contrast, far less numerous (7.32% and 4.88% each).

Table 6.161. Meaning types for *mortal* (adv.)

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	2	4.88	0.05
S	3	7.32	0.08
S/I	8	19.51	0.21
I	28	68.29	0.74
Total	41	100.00	1.09

An illustrative selection of the different readings of the adverb *mortal* is provided in examples (6.270)-(6.275) below. *Mortal sick* in (6.270) is a literal or descriptive meaning, alluding to a person who is seriously ill and will presumably die as a consequence. *Mortal still* in (6.271), on the one hand, represents a subjective reading, for quietness and

peacefulness may foretell and be figuratively linked to death. (6.272) is on the borderline between subjective and intensifying, although in this case *mortal* is most likely close to the intensifying function. Being angry with somebody may imply taking revenge on him/her, and it could therefore be argued to be subjective rather than purely intensifying. Even so, *mortal angry* here could also be taken to be a synonym of *terribly, extremely angry*. Finally, *mortal* in (6.273), (6.274), and (6.275) has a purely intensifying meaning. The floor in (6.273) is said to be extremely cold and the character is accordingly recommended to wear an apron on the head. In (6.274) and (6.275) *mortal* modifies adjectives which have positive semantic prosody (see below), *fond (of something)* and *fine*, and it undoubtedly has an intensifying or degree meaning.

- (6.270) *As he came nearer, queering me pretty curious (because of the fight, I suppose), I saw he looked mortal sick, for the truth was he had a fever on, and had just had a chill in the boat.* (1893. Robert Louis Stevenson. *The beach of Falesa*)
- (6.271) *It was mortal still and solemn and chilly, and the light of the dawn on the lagoon was like the shining of a fire.* (1893. Robert Louis Stevenson. *The beach of Falesa*)
- (6.272) [...] *that morning Mary took you out and left you; for which I was mortal angry with her, for my mind misgave me that some mischief would come of it.* (1810. Mary Brunton. *Self-control*)
- (6.273) *"Put your apron over your head," said old Mazey. "We are coming to the Banketing Hall, now. The floor's mortal cold, and the damp sticks to the place like cockroaches to a collier."* (1862. Wilkie Collins. *No name*)
- (6.274) *"And she's mortal fond of him, that's true," said Mary, "for when they was both here, I always see her a running to the window, to see who was a coming into the park, when he was rode out; and when he was in the house, she never so much as went to peep, if there come six horses, one after t'other.* (1796. Fanny Burney. *Camilla*)
- (6.275) *"La, sir, how can you? why, like our squire, Sir John, who rides in such a mortal fine gold coach; or, at least, like the parson, Doctor Dobbs---that's he in the black gown, walking with Madame Dobbs in red."* (1839. William Makepeace Thackeray. *Catherine*)

As for the semantic prosody of the adverb *mortal* in NCF, it occurs mostly with neutral and negative elements (41.46% each), although it is also recorded as a modifier of elements with positive semantic prosody (17.07%), as shown in Table 6.162. The adjectives *long, cold, high, still, or stout* feature among the neutral collocates of *mortal*; *angry, spiteful, bad, sick, and inconvenient* count as negative collocates, while the collocations *mortal passionate, mortal good, mortal kind, and mortal fine* were marked as illustrative of positive semantic prosody.

Table 6.162. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adv.)

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	17	41.46	0.45
neu	17	41.46	0.45
pos	7	17.07	0.19
Total	41	100.00	1.09

Unlike other adverbs such as *dead* (cf. 6.3.3.2), *mortal* does not modify a wide variety of categories. In fact, in NCF it is only recorded as a modifier of adjectives and participial items, as indicated in Table 6.163, showing a clear strong preference for the former category.

Table 6.163. Categories modified by *mortal* (adv.) in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	39	95.12	1.04
Part.	2	4.88	0.05
Total	41	100.00	1.09

6.3.3.7. *Mortally*

NCF records 122 instances of the adverb *mortally* (see Figure 6.37). The total number of collocations amounts to 42. Table 6.164 below provides the most frequent collocations, while Table 6.165 records the standardised scores for the most common combinations, that is, those occurring at least five times in the data. As these scores reveal, all these collocations are highly statistically significant.

Figure 6.37. *Mortally* in NCF

Id	Date	Period	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosody	Modifier of	Comments
1	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	perate effort to regain the boat. wounded		D	neg	P	
2	1839 I		Jack Sheppard	other, Blueskin rushed up stairs. wounded		D	neg	P	
3	1792 I		Man as he is	gentleman was in love, it is he." surprised		I	neu	P	
4	1887 II		The New Antigone	u will suffer the consequences." offended		I	neu	P	
5	1847 II		Jane Eyre	j in Bessie's fire-side chronicles. apprehensive		S	neg	A	
6	1847 II		Jane Eyre	me time, and at last he laughed. afraid		S	neg	A	
7	1857 II		The professor	sd little hope or comfort for her. offend		I	neg	V	
8	1849 II		Shirley	at the approach of Whitsuntide. fear		S	neg	V	
9	1853 II		Villette	ss, brainless dissipation of time. hate		I	neg	V	hated work
10	1853 II		Villette	h and all, take it your own way. fear		S	neg	V	
11	1853 II		Villette	ears were exchanged for smiles. hate		I	neg	V	these implements
12	1853 II		Villette	ars yet. So. Are they engaged?" fear		S	neg	V	
13	1847 II		Wuthering Heights	are not worth knocking down!" sorry		I	neu	A	
14	1814 I		The wanderer	who was down in the country." changed		I	neu	P	
15	1814 I		The wanderer	urney before her grandfather." hate		I	neg	V	a secret
16	1866 II		Armdale	net together alone, face to face. injure		D	neg	V	
17	1866 II		Armdale	the devotion of my whole life? injure		D	neg	V	
18	1866 II		Armdale	≥ for the present strictly private. offended		I	neg	P	
19	1870 II		Man and wife	r so at that auspicious moment. offended		I	neg	P	
20	1870 II		Man and wife	mortally offended Lady Lundie. offend		I	neg	V	
21	1870 II		Man and wife	; mortally offended with me." offend		I	neg	P	
22	1870 II		Man and wife	ed--she is only deeply grieved. offended		I	neg	P	

Table 6.164. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *mortally* in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>mortally afraid</i>	5	0.13
<i>mortally hate</i>	6	0.16
<i>mortally offend</i>	20	0.53
<i>mortally offended</i>	12	0.32
<i>mortally wounded</i>	9	0.24
<i>mortally wounded</i>	24	0.64

Table 6.165. Standardised scores for the most frequent collocations of *mortally* in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>mortally afraid</i>	23.727	6.840	11.484	37.504 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally hate</i>	35.314	7.713	12.883	52.221 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally offend</i>	249.993	11.684	20.180	270.190 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally offended</i>	119.929	10.230	17.399	146.288 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally wounded</i>	66.682	8.954	15.294	93.786 (p < 0.0001)
<i>mortally wounded</i>	215.271	10.917	20.086	315.537 (p < 0.0001)

In the data, *mortally* occurs mostly with descriptive and intensifying meanings (40.98% and 42.62%, respectively), even though subjective meanings are also attested (11.48% of the total), as well as readings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective and between subjective and intensifying (2.46% each) (cf. Table 6.166).

Table 6.166. Meaning types for *mortally*

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	50	40.98	1.33
D/S	3	2.46	0.08
S	14	11.48	0.37
S/I	3	2.46	0.08
I	52	42.62	1.38
Total	122	100.00	3.25

Examples (6.276)-(6.281) serve to illustrate the different meanings of the adverb *mortally* present in the NCF data. *Mortally hurt* in (6.276) conveys a literal meaning. *Mortally quarrelled* in (6.277) is ambiguous between descriptive and subjective, for it is unclear whether the women mentioned in the passage simply had a row or whether they ended up fighting and injuring each other. In turn, *mortally apprehensive* in (6.278) is considered to be subjective, since when someone is afraid of something, physical symptoms, such as anxiety, panic attacks, or breathing difficulties, may arise and for this reason, (s)he may feel in a state which is relatively close to death, even if that is not eventually the case. As regards *mortally envious* in (6.279), this was marked as indeterminate between subjective and intensifying. On the one hand, *mortal* may function here as a mere intensifier, ‘exceedingly envious, envious to the extreme’. On the other hand, the fact of being jealous

might also imply further consequences, in the sense that the teachers who are reported to envy Miss Monflathers may have a desire for vengeance, and we do not know the far-reaching implications of their envy. By contrast, (6.280) and (6.281) present two unambiguously intensifying examples, where *mortally* can only be interpreted as expressive of high or utmost degree: ‘extremely or very changed’ and ‘extremely or very unpleasant’.

- (6.276) *The Regent, having with difficulty interrupted the fierce attack which the enemies and friends of Wallace made on each other, saw with satisfaction [...] that none were **mortally** hurt.* (1810. Jane Porter. *The Scottish chiefs*)
- (6.277) *Mrs. Glenarm and Lady Lundie looked at each other in mute amazement. Here was a difference about which two women would have **mortally** quarrelled; and here were two men settling it in the friendliest possible manner.* (1870. Wilkie Collins. *Man and wife*)
- (6.278) *Here I walked about for a long time, feeling very strange, and **mortally** apprehensive of some one coming in and kidnapping me: for I believed in kidnappers; their exploits having frequently figured in Bessie's fire-side chronicles.* (1847. Charlotte Brontë. *Jane Eyre*)
- (6.279) *And last of the goodly procession came Miss Monflathers, bearing herself a parasol of lilac silk, and supported by two smiling teachers, each **mortally** envious of the other, and devoted unto Miss Monflathers.* (1840. Charles Dickens. *The old curiosity shop*)
- (6.280) *I found her so **mortally** changed, that I took her for her own mother! who I had left to the full as well looking twenty years before; for, after my first voyage, by ill luck, I had not seen Jenny, who was down in the country."* (1814. Fanny Burney. *The wanderer*)
- (6.281) *"I've been to I-don't-know-where ---No man's land---and a **mortally** unpleasant country it is."* (1876. George Eliot. *Daniel Deronda*)

As for semantic prosody (see Table 6.167 below), the results from NCF reveal that *mortally* is still considerably attached to its original meaning in the nineteenth century, given that in the overwhelming majority of the examples (94.26%) it is found as a modifier of elements which are inherently negative, such as *apprehensive*, *fear*, and *offended*. There are, however, occasional examples in the data in which *mortally* modifies items which have neutral (e.g. *changed*, *sensible*, and *certain*) or positive (e.g. *beautiful*) semantic prosody.

Table 6.167. Semantic prosody for *mortally* in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	115	94.26	3.06
neu	6	4.92	0.16
pos	1	0.82	0.03
Total	122	100.00	3.25

In what concerns the types of words modified by *mortally*, the *-ly* counterpart of the adverb *mortal* allows for modification of a wide variety of word types, not just adjectives and participial forms, as was the case of the adverb *mortal*, but also of verbs (*offend*, *strike*, *wound*, etc.) and prepositional phrases (*at feud*). Table 6.168 shows the distribution for each of these categories in NCF. It seems that *mortally* shows a clear preference for verbs and participial elements, with about 40% each, next to adjectives, which account for about the remaining 20%. There is only one example in which *mortally* modifies a prepositional phrase, namely *at feud*.

Table 6.168. Categories modified by *mortally* in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	21	17.21	0.56
Part.	51	41.80	1.36
PP	1	0.82	0.03
Vb.	49	40.16	1.30
Total	122	100.00	3.25

6.3.3.8. *To death*

NCF records a total of 536 occurrences of the prepositional phrase *to death* (cf. Figure 6.38), in a total of 137 collocations. The most frequent collocations of *to death* are provided in Table 6.169, and the normalised scores for the combinations of these collocates with *to death* are given in Table 6.170. These values evince that all the combinations are to be considered as highly statistically significant.

Figure 6.38. *To death* in NCF

Id	Date	Work	Example	Collocation	Type of meaning	Semantic prosod	Modifier of?	Comments
1	1839-40	Jack Sheppard	"To be sure I have," replied Wood, angrily: f	crush	D	neg	V	
2	1839-40	Jack Sheppard	As it is not, however, our intention to furnit	condemn	D	neg	V	
3	1839-40	Jack Sheppard	The first of these, the Press Room, a dark cl	press	D	neg	V	
4	1839-40	Jack Sheppard	On that morning the dead warrant had arri	sentence	D	neg	V	
5	1816	Emma	Every letter from her is read forty times ove	tire	I	neg	V	
6	1816	Emma	"Me! I should be quite in the way. But, perf	fidget	S	neg	V	
7	1816	Emma"The best fruit in England---every body's	tired	S	neg	P	
8	1814	Mansfield Park	When he had told of his horse, he took a ne	tired	S	neg	P	
9	1818	Northanger Abbey	We are sadly off in the country; not but wh	tired	S	neg	P	
10	1818	Northanger Abbey	"Do not you intend it? I thought it was all se	plague	I	neg	V	
11	1818	Northanger Abbey	"I do not wonder at your surprize; and I am	fatigued	S	neg	P	
12	1818	Persuasion	He had even refused one regular invitation i	study	I	neu	V	studying himself to death
13	1796	Hermesprong	These were never more to set foot in his na	hurt	D/S	neg	P	in this case not literal: 'offended'
14	1792	Man as he is	It was evening when they came on shore. C	terrify	S	neg	V	
15	1792	Man as he is	Miss Deborah had entered at the beginning	terrify	S	neg	V	
16	1858	The Coral Island	For my part I cannot say that my reflections	starved	D	neg	P	
17	1858	The Coral Island	In fact they stick at nothing; and one o' thei	stamp	D	neg	V	
18	1858	The Coral Island	"You did that a-purpose, you villain!" he sai	crushed	D	neg	P	
19	1892	In the roar of the sea	"Pshaw! She shall do what I will. Now see--	wearied	S	neg	P	
20	1892	In the roar of the sea	She prayed lone and often, sometimes by h	nerve	S	neg	V	

Table 6.169. Absolute and normalised frequencies for the most frequent collocations of *to death* in NCF

Collocation	Abs. Freq.	NF pmw
<i>beat to death</i>	6	0.16
<i>beaten to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>bleed to death</i>	19	0.51
<i>bored to death</i>	10	0.27
<i>burnt to death</i>	10	0.27
<i>condemn to death</i>	12	0.32
<i>condemned to death</i>	22	0.59
<i>crushed to death</i>	9	0.24
<i>doomed to death</i>	8	0.21
<i>drink to death</i>	13	0.35
<i>fret to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>frighten to death</i>	17	0.45
<i>frightened to death</i>	13	0.35
<i>frozen to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>hunt to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>moped to death</i>	7	0.19
<i>plague to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>press to death</i>	6	0.16
<i>sentenced to death</i>	9	0.24
<i>sick to death</i>	18	0.48
<i>starve to death</i>	18	0.48
<i>starved to death</i>	28	0.74
<i>terrified to death</i>	9	0.24
<i>terrify to death</i>	6	0.16
<i>tired to death</i>	34	0.90
<i>torture to death</i>	5	0.13
<i>trample to death</i>	7	0.19
<i>wearied to death</i>	6	0.16
<i>weary to death</i>	9	0.24
<i>work to death</i>	17	0.45
<i>worked to death</i>	6	0.16
<i>worry to death</i>	10	0.27
<i>wounded to death</i>	5	0.13

Table 6.170. Standardised scores for the most frequent collocations of *to death* in NCF

Collocation	z-score	MI	MI3	LL-value
<i>beat to death</i>	14.878	5.280	10.450	32.240 (p < 0.0001)
<i>beaten to death</i>	23.050	6.758	11.402	36.962 (p < 0.0001)
<i>bleed to death</i>	90.418	8.756	17.252	193.105 (p < 0.0001)
<i>bored to death</i>	96.505	9.866	16.510	117.247 (p < 0.0001)
<i>burnt to death</i>	46.803	7.788	14.432	88.163 (p < 0.0001)
<i>condemn to death</i>	76.175	8.923	16.093	124.775 (p < 0.0001)
<i>condemned to death</i>	114.328	9.219	18.138	237.882 (p < 0.0001)
<i>crushed to death</i>	48.902	8.064	14.404	82.799 (p < 0.0001)
<i>doomed to death</i>	46.769	8.105	14.105	74.055 (p < 0.0001)
<i>drink to death</i>	25.490	5.699	13.100	77.244 (p < 0.0001)
<i>fret to death</i>	35.299	7.973	12.617	45.362 (p < 0.0001)
<i>frighten to death</i>	92.797	8.990	17.165	178.353 (p < 0.0001)
<i>frightened to death</i>	38.805	6.880	14.281	98.292 (p < 0.0001)
<i>frozen to death</i>	38.380	8.212	12.856	47.028 (p < 0.0001)
<i>hunt to death</i>	14.701	5.498	10.142	28.343 (p < 0.0001)
<i>moped to death</i>	169.024	11.996	17.610	103.867 (p < 0.0001)
<i>plague to death</i>	29.436	7.454	12.097	41.763 (p < 0.0001)
<i>press to death</i>	15.217	5.342	10.512	32.742 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sentenced to death</i>	131.010	10.899	17.239	118.832 (p < 0.0001)
<i>sick to death</i>	50.814	7.184	15.524	143.642 (p < 0.0001)
<i>starve to death</i>	97.709	9.056	17.396	190.512 (p < 0.0001)
<i>starved to death</i>	213.426	10.670	20.284	360.415 (p < 0.0001)
<i>terrified to death</i>	42.192	7.642	13.982	77.526 (p < 0.0001)
<i>terrify to death</i>	71.146	9.724	14.894	69.140 (p < 0.0001)
<i>tired to death</i>	93.201	8.008	18.183	310.144 (p < 0.0001)
<i>torture to death</i>	15.906	5.716	10.360	29.825 (p < 0.0001)
<i>trample to death</i>	54.485	8.735	14.350	70.940 (p < 0.0001)
<i>wearied to death</i>	35.447	7.724	12.894	52.362 (p < 0.0001)
<i>weary to death</i>	27.579	6.435	12.774	62.527 (p < 0.0001)
<i>work to death</i>	17.688	4.347	12.522	70.139 (p < 0.0001)
<i>worked to death</i>	20.318	6.145	6.145	39.305 (p < 0.0001)
<i>worry to death</i>	66.837	8.810	15.454	102.387 (p < 0.0001)
<i>wounded to death</i>	16.403	5.802	10.446	30.408 (p < 0.0001)

In what concerns the different types of meanings of *to death*, descriptive readings account for half of the examples (54.48%), followed by subjective and intensifying meanings (31.90% and 11.94%, respectively). Those readings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective and those between subjective and intensifying are far less numerous in the data, accounting for only 0.75% and 0.93% of the total, as shown in Table 6.171.

Table 6.171. Meaning types for *to death* in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
D	292	54.48	7.77
D/S	4	0.75	0.11
S	171	31.90	4.55
S/I	5	0.93	0.13
I	64	11.94	1.70
Total	536	100.00	14.26

A selection of the different meanings of *to death* in NCF is given in (6.283)-(6.291). To start with, *burnt to death* in (6.282) is a descriptive or literal collocation, describing a torturous and painful type of death. By contrast, *sick to death* in (6.283) has been tagged as indeterminate between descriptive and subjective, thus differing from other examples of the same collocation in the data, in which someone has a fatal disease. Here the meaning is not properly descriptive, but tends more towards a subjective reading: the character feels unwell and indisposed, as if she was going to die, but she does not pass away; it is simply a death-like feeling.

(6.282) *And I find (Mr. M'Choakumchild said) that in a given time a hundred thousand persons went to sea on long voyages, and only five hundred of them were drowned or burnt to death.* (1854. Charles Dickens. *Hard times*)

(6.283) *Poor Miss Thorne. She heard all this and yet did not quite swoon. She made her way through the crowd as best she could, sick herself almost to death.* (1857. Anthony Trollope. *Barchester Towers*)

(6.284) and (6.285), on the other hand, are regarded as subjective, for being scared and tired does not imply anybody's death. However, death-related properties can actually be recalled: when somebody is very scared of something, (s)he may feel symptoms similar to those of a heart attack, and extreme exhaustion and a poor physical condition may evoke illness symptoms.

(6.284) *"Oh! Molly," said the first maid, "Miss Jane is just frightened to death by a monster above stairs, half man, half woman, and covered all over with hair!"* (1813. Eaton Stannard Barrett. *The Heroine, Or Adventures Of Cherubina*)

(6.285) *We are sadly off in the country; not but what we have very good shops in Salisbury, but it is so far to go;---eight miles is a long way; Mr. Allen says it is nine, measured nine; but I am sure it cannot be more than eight; and it is such a fag---I come back tired to death.* (1818. Jane Austen. *Northanger Abbey*)

In turn, the collocation *shocked to death* in (6.286) is ambiguous between subjective and intensifying. On the one hand, being shocked may be regarded as subjective, and although we ignore the consequences of that feeling of shock, it may be the case that the person

mentioned in the example has suffered a nervous breakdown or some kind of crisis as a result. On the other hand, note that the *-ed* form *shocked* is repeated twice in the example, so *to death* in this context is more likely to play the role of an intensifier, used for emphatic purposes ('very, extremely shocked').

(6.286) *And I trust lady Dashfort will reward me by the assurance, that, however playfully she may have just now spoken, she seriously disapproves and is shocked." "Oh, shocked! shocked to death! if that will satisfy you, my dear count." (1812. Maria Edgeworth. The absentee)*

Finally, examples (6.287)-(6.290) all present clear intensifying meanings. Note in particular (6.287) and (6.288), featuring the collocations *tired to death* and *sick to death*. In previous occurrences of the same collocations in the earlier data, they were marked as subjective and descriptive, respectively. Nonetheless, in these specific examples I argue that they illustrate intensifying meanings. The reason for this is that here they refer to things rather than to people. *Tired to death* in this context means 'bored in extreme', in this case of the rooms, and *sick to death* means 'bored with or fed up with friends'. The collocation *bored to death* is also present in the data, as shown in (6.289). Finally, *ashamed to death* in (6.290) can also be paraphrased as *being extremely ashamed*. In all these cases, therefore, the degree or intensifying reading is the only possible interpretation for the prepositional phrase *to death*.

(6.287) *She immediately declared herself tired to death of the rooms, and calling upon Miss Dennel and Camilla, abruptly made her exit. (1796. Fanny Burney. Camilla)*

(6.288) *"O no! to be worn out by seeing always the same faces!--one is sick to death of friends; nothing makes one so melancholy." (1866. Wilkie Collins. Armadale)*

(6.289) *Sooth to say, they cannot go away too fast; for, even here, my Lady Dedlock has been bored to death. Concert, assembly, opera, theatre, drive, nothing is new to my Lady, under the worn-out heavens. (1853. Charles Dickens. Bleak House)*

(6.290) *Then she felt ashamed to death that she was crying, and for one long instant her happiness was all gone. (1859. George Eliot. Adam Bede)*

In regard to semantic prosody, the results from NCF reveal that in the overwhelming majority of the occurrences *to death* is recorded as a modifier of elements which are inherently negative, although it is also found as a modifier of items with either neutral or positive semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.172 below). *Tired, plague, terrify, frightened, fatigue, or torture*, among many others, were marked as having negative semantic

prosody; *study*, *tinkle*, and *yawn* were tagged as showing neutral semantic prosody, and only *kiss* was marked as a positive collocate of *to death*.

Table 6.172. Semantic prosody for *to death* in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
neg	528	98.51	14.05
neu	7	1.31	0.19
pos	1	0.19	0.03
Total	536	100.00	14.26

The results from NCF additionally reveal that *to death* can modify word categories other than participial items and adjectives (cf. Table 6.173). It modifies verbs in half of the tokens in the data (50%), but it is also found as a modifier of participial forms (44.96%) and, to a much lesser extent, of adjectives (3.73%) and nouns (1.31%). In that regard, it shows a rather versatile nature.

Table 6.173. Categories modified by *to death* in NCF

	Abs. Freq.	%	NF pmw
Adj.	20	3.73	0.53
N.	7	1.31	0.19
Part.	241	44.96	6.41
Vb.	268	50.00	7.13
Total	536	100.00	14.26

6.4. DEATH-RELATED INTENSIFIERS ACROSS TIME

In sections 6.2 and 6.3 above I discussed the corpus results for *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* for the different periods individually. In turn, this section summarises the results for each of the variables (type of meaning, semantic prosody, and type of word modified by each form) in the different materials, with the aim of providing a comprehensive picture of the evolution of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* across time. The types of words modified by the adjectival forms, however, will not be discussed here: given its nature as adjectives, *deadly* and *mortal* always modify nouns, and in that regard there is no variation across time. In order to trace the diachronic timeline, each of the corpora and sources consulted was taken as representative of a given period: the ME component of the HC was considered to be illustrative of ME; EEBOCorp 1.0 was selected for EModE; ECF and NCF were used for LModE, in particular for the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; finally, the twentieth-century British data from ARCHER served to illustrate the behaviour of the forms under analysis in Present-day English.

It should be recalled at this point that the analysis of the adjective and the adverb *dead* in the EModE data from EEBOCorp 1.0 differed methodologically from the study of the

remaining forms in the other periods: due to its high token frequency (146,834 occurrences in EEBOCorp 1.0), a random sample was required for the analysis of *dead* in EModE, which was completed with an additional search of specific collocations (cf. section 6.3.1.1). For this reason, in section 6.4.1 below I merely give a summary of the main results for the adjective and adverb *dead* in the different materials consulted and the data will not be subject to statistical testing, as is done for the other forms in 6.4.2 to 6.4.7.

6.4.1. *Dead* (adj. and adv.)

The preliminary evidence from the OED and MED discussed in section 6.1.1 above suggested that the adjective *dead* had in origin descriptive or literal meanings ('that has ceased to live; deprived of life'). This sense did not only apply to living organisms, but since ME could also refer to the soul, as in example (6.3) above. It is also from this period onwards that *dead* showed incipient subjectivity, with more metaphorical uses, for which a literal interpretation was no longer possible. In these early subjective occurrences, the adjective *dead* was typically found in contexts describing the pale countenance of a person, quiet or still settings, or hatred towards someone. In such cases, therefore, *dead* did not have a literal meaning, but expressed instead death-reminiscent values (cf. examples (6.8) to (6.12) above). In the light of the dictionary data, intensifying meanings of the adjective did not emerge until the second half of the seventeenth century, as in the collocation *dead ripeness* in (6.13) above.

In view of the preliminary information provided by the OED and MED, therefore, the semantic development of the adjective *dead* seems to conform to Adamson's (2000: 55) cline of evolution for intensifiers (descriptive > affective/subjective > intensifying) (cf. 4.1.1.2), growing in subjectivity in the ME period and becoming reanalysed as an intensifier in the seventeenth century. The data from the other materials consulted for the adjective *dead* (cf. Table 6.174) corroborate this diachronic evolution only in part, as there are no subjective uses of the adjective *dead* in the earliest data from the HC and subjective *dead* only amounts to 5% of the total in the random sample from EEBOCorp 1.0 (10 occurrences). Furthermore, even though there are no intensifying occurrences in the random sample from EEBOCorp 1.0, this corpus provides one early instance of intensifying *dead*, its use in combination with the noun *flat*. This is example (6.145) above, reproduced below as (6.291) for convenience. Here the adjective *dead* does no longer admit a literal interpretation, but is used instead to describe a region in the Netherlands which has very flat lands.

- (6.291) *This makes that part of the Countrey called the Bemster, being now the richest Soil of the Province, lying upon a **dead** flat, divided with Canals, and the ways through it distinguisht with ranges of Trees, which make the pleasantest Summer-Landschip of any Countrey I have seen of that sort. (D00000117669300000. 1673. Sir William Temple. Observations upon the United Provinces of the Netherlands)*

Table 6.174. Types of meanings for *dead* (adj.) in the data (absolute frequencies)

	HC	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER
D	45	189	261	1,581	70
D/S	0	0	0	0	1
S	0	10	22	342	3
S/I	0	0	0	0	2
I	0	0	7	151	0

In the light of the dictionary evidence (cf. section 6.1.1 above), the adverb *dead* seems to have followed a similar path of evolution as its adjectival counterpart, originating in descriptive or literal senses, developing increasingly subjectified uses over time, and becoming grammaticalised as a marker of degree in the late sixteenth century. The different corpora and electronic collections consulted to trace the diachrony of the adverb, however, provide limited evidence and, therefore, confirm this semantic cline of evolution only partially. As shown by the raw frequencies in Table 6.175, there are no occurrences of the adverb in the early data from the HC, and the results from the random sample from EEBOCorp 1.0 gave only 2 tokens of the collocation *dead drunk*, with a subjective meaning. The process of subjectification of *dead* over time, therefore, cannot be fully supported with these scanty data. However, the additional search of collocations carried out in EEBOCorp 1.0 revealed some early uses of intensifying *dead*, as proved by the collocations *dead sure* and *dead right*, in examples (6.146)-(6.148) above. Interestingly, one of such instances is dated earlier than the first alleged occurrence given by the OED. This is example (6.21) above, repeated here as (6.292), in which *dead sure* can be paraphrased by *completely sure* or *very sure*.

- (6.292) *And for that all things in your seruice shall be fulfilled in more ample manner, I will that the noble Brandimardo go with me in my companie, for that your defence shall bee the more certain. And although the attainment be neuer so difficult; yet hauing him in my companie, I hope to make all things **dead** sure. (D00000998488560000. 1583. Pedro de la Sierra. The second part of the Myrror of knighthood)*

Table 6.175. Types of meanings for *dead* (adv.) in the data (absolute frequencies)

	HC	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER
D	0	0	0	0	0
D/S	0	0	0	2	0
S	0	2	16	98	0
S/I	0	0	0	0	0
I	0	0	0	85	1

In the eighteenth-century data from ECF, *dead* only shows subjective uses (e.g. in collocations such as *dead drunk*, *dead coloured*, and *dead still*), while in NCF subjective uses of *dead* amount to 52.97%, and intensifying *dead* represents 45.95% of the total. The data from ARCHER is extremely scarce, with just one occurrence of the collocation *dead serious*. All in all, in spite of the limited amount of examples yielded by the different materials, these have provided clear evidence of the grammaticalised status of the adverb *dead*, as shown by its use in collocations such as *dead astern*, *dead aback*, *dead trivial*, *dead against*, *dead sure*, or *dead right*, among others.

6.4.2. *Deadly* (adj.)

The evolution of the different types of meanings for the adjective *deadly* over time is illustrated in Figure 6.39.⁴⁶ Table 6.176, in turn, provides both the absolute and normalised frequencies for this form in the different corpora and electronic collections.

Figure 6.39. Types of meanings for *deadly* (adj.)

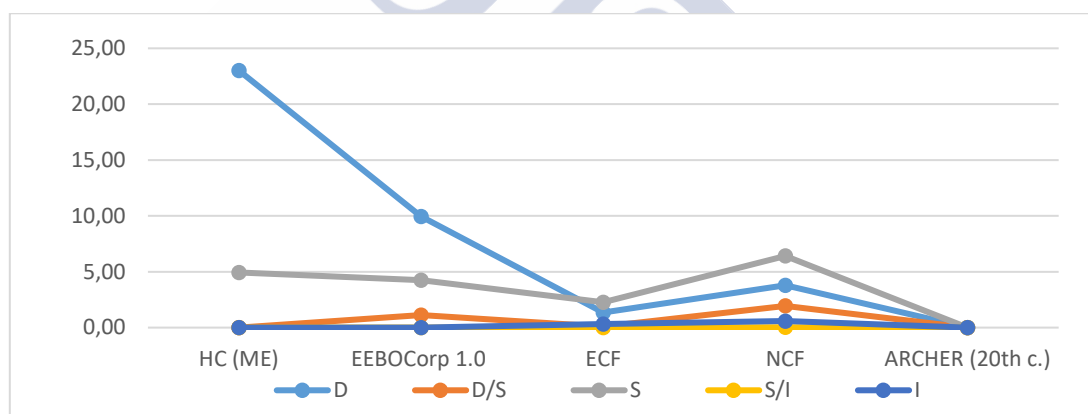


Table 6.176. Types of meanings for *deadly* (adj.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)⁴⁷

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	14/23.00	5,224/9.94	13/1.34	141/3.75	0
D/S	0	597/1.14	1/0.10	70/1.86	0
S	3/4.93	2,236/4.26	22/2.27	238/6.33	0
S/I	0	5/0.01	0	1/0.03	0
I	0	0	3/0.31	22/0.59	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

⁴⁶ All the figures in this section provide normalised frequencies per one million words (NF/1,000,000).

⁴⁷ Note that Fisher's exact test and the chi-square test, the two statistical tests applied in this section, are based on absolute frequencies (cf. section 5.3.2). Even though I shall be referring to normalised frequencies for comparative uses of the forms under analysis across the different materials, the values which are required to verify the statistical significance of the results are the token or absolute frequencies. Moreover, statistical testing cannot be considered in those cases in which there is a zero value in one of the periods, as is the case, for example, of the readings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying in the HC, ECF, and ARCHER.

The normalised figures evince a sharp decrease in the use of descriptive meanings from the ME period to the start of the eighteenth century, a point in time when these uses slightly increase, to fall again from the nineteenth century onwards. Moreover, the variation in the absolute frequencies for descriptive uses in the different periods was found to be statistically significant, except if we compare the HC and EEBOCorp 1.0.⁴⁸ Those readings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective are less numerous in all the sources, as shown in Table 6.176 above. The first attestations date to EModE (597 exx.; NF pmw 1.14). One isolated occurrence is found in the eighteenth-century material analysed, and then the token frequency of such ambiguous examples increases again in the nineteenth century (70 exx.; NF pmw 1.86). As was the case with the HC, there are no attestations in the twentieth-century data from ARCHER. The difference in the number of tokens over the different periods for these ambiguous readings is statistically significant.⁴⁹ As far as subjective meanings are concerned, the normalised figures remain rather constant throughout ME and EModE (4.93 and 4.26, respectively), this frequency being reduced to about a half in the transition to the eighteenth century (2.27). None of these changes, however, is statistically significant.⁵⁰ By contrast, the rise in subjective uses from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (NF pmw 6.33) is statistically significant.⁵¹ Finally, the increase in the number of occurrences of intensifying uses from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, both in terms of absolute and of normalised frequencies (ECF: 3 exx.; NF pmw 0.31 > NCF: 22 exx.; NF pmw 0.59), is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's value = 0.455646).

With regard to semantic prosody (see Figure 6.40), the data reveal a clear preference of the adjective *deadly* to combine with elements with negative prosody (cf. Table 6.177).

Table 6.177. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adj.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

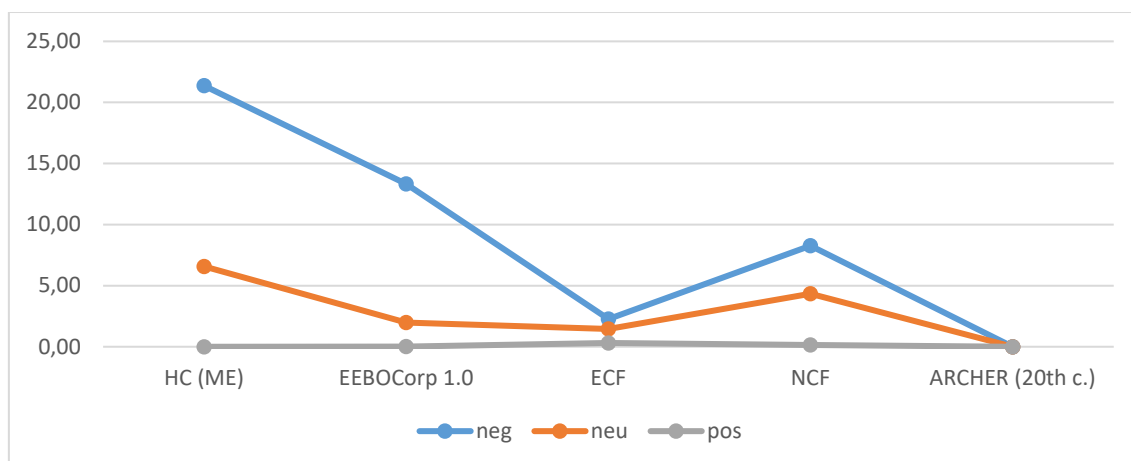
	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	13/21.36	7,007/13.34	22/2.27	301/8.27	0
neu	4/6.57	1,047/1.99	14/1.44	166/4.34	0
pos	0	8/0.02	3/0.31	5/0.13	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

⁴⁸ HC (ME) > EEBOCorp 1.0: $\chi^2(1) = 9.146$; $p = 0.00249262$; EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 71.163$; $p = 0$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 13.038$; $p = 0.00030523$.

⁴⁹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's value = 0.000542 (significant at $p < 0.01$); ECF > NCF: Fisher's value = 0.000002 (significant at $p < 0.01$).

⁵⁰ HC > EEBOCorp 1.0: Fisher's exact test = 0.748302; EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 8.459$; $p = 0.00363242$.

⁵¹ ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 22.436$; $p = 0.00000217$.

Figure 6.40. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adj.)

The normalised frequencies show that the use of *deadly* with negative collocates decreases dramatically from ME to the eighteenth century (from 21.36 to 2.27), to rise again at the turn of the nineteenth century (8.27). These figures, however, were not found to be statistically significant.⁵² The collocates of *deadly* which have neutral semantic prosody behave similarly to their negative counterparts: the normalised figures are reduced from ME to the eighteenth century (from 6.57 to 1.44) and also increase slightly in the nineteenth century (4.34). Nevertheless, the difference in the number of attestations over the periods is statistically significant only in what concerns the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁵³ Combinations of *deadly* with nouns with positive semantic prosody are relatively infrequent in the data, as shown in Table 6.177, and the normalised figures remain low in all periods. The variation in the number of occurrences was found to be statistically significant only for the EModE and eighteenth-century data.⁵⁴

In view of the diachronic data from the different corpora and electronic collections discussed above, the adjective *deadly* seems to be relatively attached to its original negative meaning. As suggested by the OED (cf. 6.1.2 above), *deadly* first developed intensifying meanings in the seventeenth century, in collocations such as *deadly drinker* ('a terrible drinker'). The first instances of intensifying *deadly* in my data are attested in the ECF material. However, some earlier occurrences admit both a subjective and an intensifying interpretation. This is the case of the collocation *deadly envy* in (6.153) above, reproduced here for convenience as (6.293).

⁵² HC > EEBOCorp 1.0: $\chi^2(1) = 2.363$; $p = 0.12424305$; EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 88.013$; $p = 0.12424305$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 36.369$; $p = 0.12424305$.

⁵³ HC > EEBOCorp 1.0: Fisher's exact test = 0.035072 (not significant at $p < 0.01$); EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 1.188$; $p = 0.27573335$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 17.139$; $p = 0.00003474$.

⁵⁴ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.000882 (significant at $p < 0.01$); ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.21456 (not significant at $p < 0.01$).

- (6.293) *we cannot herein but take notice of the persecuting Spirit, implacable and **deadly** Envy that is in some of these Anabaptists, tending to Persecution in the highest.* (D00000162047460000. 1674. William Penn. *The Christian-Quaker and his divine testimony*)

As explained in section 6.3.1.2 above, for this particular example I claim two possible readings: on the one hand, *deadly envy* can be reworded as *pure envy*, in which case *deadly* would function as an intensifier. On the other, a subjective meaning would also be acceptable in this context, given that Anabaptists are said to persecute other religious groups and, therefore, there is still an implicit intention of hurting others. Along the lines of the collocation *deadly envy* in (6.293), other examples admitting both a subjective and an intensifying reading were also attested in EEBOCorp 1.0, in particular in the combinations of the adjective *deadly* with the nouns *jealousy*, *contempt*, and *displeasure*. (6.294) illustrates another of such instances, featuring the collocation *deadly displeasure*.

- (6.294) *when she had stripped her selfe out of her clothes, ready to go to bed, having discovered those parts (mistrusting nothing) which modestie and shame would have kept secret, Gyges sheweth himselfe to her: whom when she had espied, and perceived the treachery, she was in a great agony, and conceived a **deadly** displeasure against the king her husband.* (D00000998366120000. 1631. Sir Richard Barckley. *The felicitie of man, or, his summum bonum*)

This episode relates the moment in which the Lydian king Candaules convinces his bodyguard Gyges to stand secretly behind a cloth in the queen's chamber in order to fully admire her beauty, as Candaules considered his wife the most beautiful woman on earth. Gyges obeyed the king and spied the queen, but right after that he showed himself to her and informed her of her husband's proposal. The queen, offended by the shameful behaviour of her spouse, called Gyges secretly and informed him of her intent: either he should kill the king, marrying her and becoming king himself, or he would die. *Displeasure* in this case means a disagreement or unfriendly relation (OED, s.v. *displeasure* n. 4) and, therefore, *deadly displeasure* can be interpreted here as a serious disagreement between the couple, which allows a degree reading of the adjective. However, a subjective interpretation is also highly likely, since we are told that the queen is ready to wreak vengeance on the king, her husband.

Meanings such as the ones illustrated in examples (6.293) and (6.294) above, which allow a contextualised degree reading, may well have favoured a generalised degree interpretation for the adjective *deadly*, in collocations such as *deadly drinker*, given by the OED (cf. 6.1.2), but also in the collocations *deadly accuracy*, *deadly commonplace*,

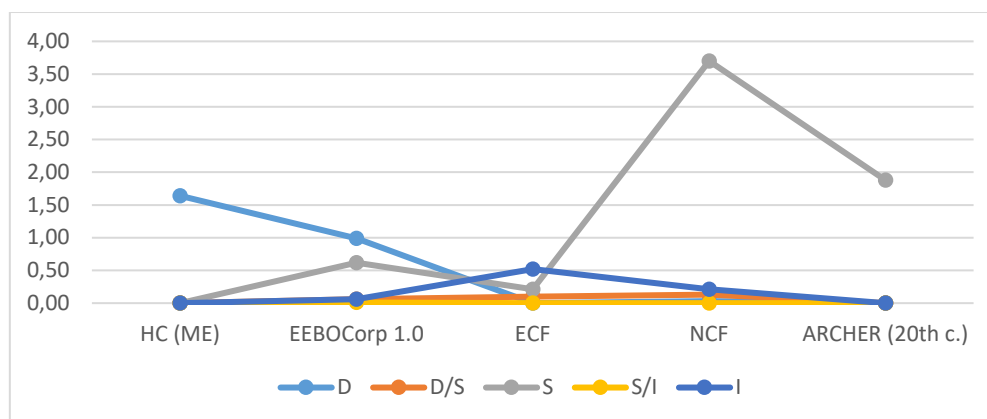
and *deadly determination*, sporadically attested in ECF and NCF (cf. sections 6.3.2 and 6.3.3).

Another unmistakable sign of the bond between *deadly* and its original death-related meaning is semantic prosody. Despite the low frequency of the adjective *deadly* as an intensifier in the material analysed (25 examples in all, most of them from NCF), the data clearly indicate that, in accord with its earliest sense ('mortal, fatal'), in most cases *deadly* modifies inherently negative nouns, such as *sin*, *poison*, *assault*, and *animosity*. Nonetheless, nouns with positive semantic prosody are also attested as collocates of *deadly*, which in the most recent materials correlate with intensifying meanings, as is the case of the collocations *deadly joy* and *deadly determination*.

Considering the variables type of meaning and semantic prosody, it can therefore be concluded that over time the adjective *deadly* progressively developed more subjective meanings, which later evolved into intensifying readings, possibly favoured by some ambiguous contexts which allowed a double interpretation as both subjective and intensifying, as in (6.294). The cline of semantic evolution for intensifiers suggested by Adamson (2000) is therefore fully supported by the data analysed for the adjective *deadly* in the present piece of research. From its original meaning 'subject to death, mortal', *deadly* first underwent a process of subjectification, the earliest attestations of subjective meanings tracing back to the ME period. Once subjectified, it was further semantically bleached and reanalysed as an intensifier from the seventeenth century onwards. Intensifying uses of *deadly* coexist side by side with both literal and subjective uses of the adjective, as predicted by Hopper's principles of layering and divergence (see section 3.2). Moreover, the fact that *deadly* is attested by and large with inherently negative collocates is in keeping with another of Hopper's principles, namely persistence. In view of all this, the degree of grammaticalisation of the adjective is not very advanced.

6.4.3. *Deadly* (adv.)

As shown in Figure 6.41, the adverb *deadly* occurs mostly with descriptive and subjective uses in the data. The timeline for the different types of meanings is given in this figure, while Table 6.178 additionally provides the absolute and normalised frequencies for each of the readings over time in the different sources.

Figure 6.41. Types of meanings for *deadly* (adv.)Table 6.178. Types of meanings for *deadly* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	1/1.64	522/0.99	0	0	0
D/S	0	33/0.06	1/0.10	5/0.13	0
S	0	326/0.62	2/0.21	136/3.62	1/1.88
S/I	0	5/0.01	0	0	0
I	0	34/0.06	5/0.52	7/0.19	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

As can be gathered from the figures in Table 6.178, most of the occurrences of the adverb *deadly* date to EModE. The normalised frequencies for the five meanings attested in the data remain low over time. Thus, there is only a slight decrease in regard to descriptive meanings from ME to EModE, but this is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.454148). The normalised frequencies for those readings of *deadly* which are indeterminate between descriptive and subjective remain relatively stable over time, and the variation among the different periods in regard to these uses is not statistically significant either.⁵⁵ Subjective occurrences of *deadly* are reduced in the transition from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF, but this reduction cannot be considered as statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.141176). By contrast, if we compare the figures obtained for the eighteenth century with the nineteenth-century data, we witness a considerable increase, which is highly statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0). The comparison of the data from NCF and ARCHER reveals that subjective readings of *deadly* clearly drop in terms of both absolute and normalised figures. This difference is, however, not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 1). Finally, the very first occurrences of intensifying uses of the adverb are dated to the 1580s. Given the overall

⁵⁵ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.463196 (not significant at $p < 0.01$); ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 1 (not significant at $p < 0.01$).

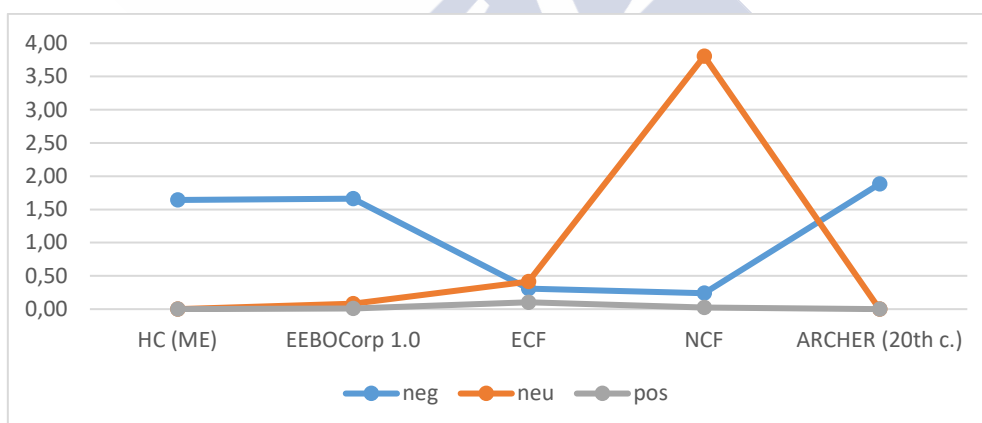
low token frequencies of intensifier *deadly*, the normalised figures for this use of the adverb remain rather low over time, and the statistical tests indicate that it is only the difference from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF that is to be considered as statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.000675). On the contrary, the comparison of the eighteenth-century data with those from the nineteenth century reveal a negative result at the $p < 0.01$ level (Fisher's exact test = 0.079616).

As far as semantic prosody is concerned, and in line with its adjectival counterpart (cf. section 6.4.2), the adverb *deadly* tends to occur with items which are inherently negative (cf. Table 6.179 and Figure 6.42 below).

Table 6.179. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	1/1.64	872/1.66	3/0.31	7/0.19	1/1.88
neu	0	43/0.08	4/0.41	141/3.75	0
pos	0	5/0.01	1/0.10	0	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.42. Semantic prosody for *deadly* (adv.)



The normalised figures indicate that the values for negative semantic prosody remain fairly constant from ME to EModE (1.64 and 1.66), and then drop considerably at the close of EModE and the beginning of the eighteenth century (1.66 and 0.31). It is only this reduction in the number of attestations which is regarded as statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.000189), while the comparison of the HC data with that from EEBOCorp 1.0 is not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 1.000002). Moreover, the comparison of the ECF results with those from NCF, on the one hand, and of NCF and ARCHER, on the other, also yields non-significant values.⁵⁶ The values for

⁵⁶ ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.438482 (not significant at $p < 0.01$); NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test =

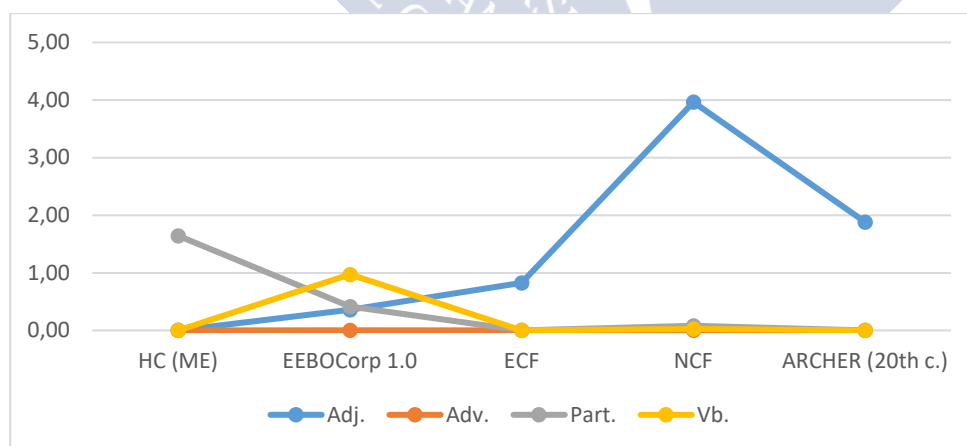
neutral semantic prosody of the collocates of *deadly* also indicate a slight increase from EModE to the eighteenth century, if we compare the normalised frequencies (from 0.08 to 0.41), an increment which is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.010372). However, from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century we witness a dramatic increase in the uses of *deadly* with neutral semantic prosody, both in terms of the absolute and the normalised frequencies (NF pmw 3.75). This increase is, by contrast, highly statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0). As for positive semantic prosody, though hardly attested, the results suggest that the difference between EModE and the eighteenth century is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.103974).

The last variable considered is the type of word modified by the adverb *deadly*, whose results are summarised in Table 6.180 and Figure 6.43.

Table 6.180. Categories modified by *deadly* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
Adj.	0	192/0.36	8/0.82	145/3.86	1/1.88
Adv.	0	1/0.001	0	0	0
Part.	1/1.64	216/0.41	0	3/0.08	0
Vb.	0	511/0.97	0	0	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.43. Categories modified by *deadly* (adv.)



The results indicate that *deadly* functions predominantly as a modifier of verbs, participial elements, and adjectives, although there is also one occurrence in the data in which *deadly* modifies another adverb (*deadly near*). As a modifier of adjectives, the normalised frequencies evince a progressive rise in frequency of the adverb over time, an increase

0.10612 (not significant at $p < 0.01$).

which is most conspicuous in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (from 0.82 to 3.86), followed by a decline from the nineteenth to the twentieth century (from 3.86 to 1.88). The statistical tests suggest that the difference in the number of occurrences from EBOCorp 1.0 to ECF and from NCF to ARCHER is not statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 4.215$; $p = 0.04006807$ and Fisher's exact test = 0.727532, respectively). The comparison between ECF and NCF is, by contrast, statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 21$; $p = 0.00000459$). Finally, if we compare the ME results with the EModE ones for those examples in which *deadly* is a modifier of participial elements, even though there is an actual increase of its token frequency (from 1 to 216 occurrences), the normalised figures evince an actual decrease in frequency (from 1.64 to 0.41), which is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ either (Fisher's exact test = 0.222126).

In the light of the variables type of meaning and semantic prosody, the adverb *deadly* behaves similarly to its homonymous adjective (cf. section 6.4.2). Although the adverb is more frequently attested with intensifying meanings than the adjective *deadly* (4.27% vs. 0.29% of the total of occurrences in all the sources), these are clearly marginal. Despite the dearth of intensifying examples in the data (46 in all) and even though they appear for the first time in the 1580s, it should be recalled that the adverb was already found with an unambiguous degree meaning in the fifteenth century (cf. section 6.1.2 above). As was the case with the adjective *deadly*, the material analysed also contains some examples which admit a double interpretation, as subjective or as intensifying, in virtually the same context. This was the case of examples (6.157) and (6.158) above, involving the collocations *displease deadly* and *envy deadly*. They are repeated here as (6.295) and (6.296) for convenience.

(6.295) *they wyll rather forbere the pleasours of theyr lyfe / and also rather dye then **dedely** to dysplease hym, by the doynge of any suche thyng as he wyll rather that they shall dye then do it.* (D00000998400120000. 1533. Sir Thomas More. *The second parte of the co[n]futacion of Tyndals answer*).

(6.296) *verely he **deadly** enuieth at your honour and felicitie, and grudgeth in his heart, that you should set downe the lawes of peace and warre in HVNGARIE:* (D00000998481340000. 1603. Richard Knolles. *The generall historie of the Turkes*)

As regards (6.295), it could be argued that to displease someone deadly is equivalent to infuriating somebody to the extreme. At the same time, when someone is terribly annoyed, an actual revenge cannot be discarded, on which account a subjective interpretation is also likely here. Likewise, a degree reading of *deadly* is possible in

(6.296) ('to be extremely jealous'). However, the character is argued to bear a grudge in his heart, and for this reason he may decide to take some form of vengeance, and hence a subjective meaning is also admitted.

These examples could in principle be considered as bridging contexts towards clearly intensifying readings of the adverb, those which were found in the data in collocations such as *deadly conservative*, *deadly curious*, *deadly unwelcome*, *deadly handsome*, and *deadly long*, among others. Nevertheless, most of the instances which are marked as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying in EEBOCorp 1.0 (5 in total) date from the same period as intensifying *deadly*, i.e. the first half of the seventeenth century. The only exception is *deadly displease* in (6.295) above, which is dated 1533, while the first intensifying collocation in the corpus goes back to the 1580s. The influence of such potential bridging contexts on the rise of intensifying *deadly*, though tempting, cannot therefore be taken for granted here in the light of such limited evidence.

If semantic prosody is taken into account, the behaviour of the adverb *deadly* is also much alike that of its adjectival counterpart, since the combinations of *deadly* with positive collocates amount to less than 1% of the total. In this regard, *deadly* is still very closely attached to its original negative meaning, even though positive collocates are sporadically found, such as *love*, *handsome*, *patient*, and *comfortable*. Most interestingly, these collocates are associated with intensifying meanings in all the sources consulted.

Considering the types of meanings and semantic prosody, therefore, the adverb *deadly* is not very advanced in the grammaticalisation cline and is, on the contrary, still fairly attached to its original, death-related meaning. Nonetheless, in view of the data analysed, it can also be argued that the adverb has undergone a process of subjectification over time. Subjectification is more conspicuous in the case of the adverb than for the adjective (section 6.4.2), since subjective readings of the adverb amount to 43.14%, while those of the adjective represent 29.09% of the total. In addition to increased subjectivity, the adverb *deadly* has also been semantically bleached in the course of time, progressively developing a more abstract and general meaning ('very, extremely'), hence its use in combinations such as *deadly patient* or *deadly comfortable*, for which the original death-related meaning of the adverb is no longer possible. The adverb was then semantically reanalysed as an intensifier expressing a degree value. Therefore, the semantic cline proposed by Adamson (2000) for intensifiers (descriptive > affective/subjective > intensifying) is also relevant to the development of the adverb *deadly*. Adamson suggests that the semantic evolution of *lovely* as an intensifier correlates with different syntactic

positions (cf. section 4.1.1.2): when conveying a literal or descriptive meaning, the adjective is placed closer to the head noun because it describes inherent properties of that noun (e.g. *long lovely legs*). Conversely, when used as an intensifier, *lovely* occupies the leftmost position in the noun phrase (e.g. *lovely long legs*). Interestingly, some of the examples analysed in the data for the adverb *deadly* would apparently illustrate the correlation of function and syntactic position. This is the case of (6.160) and (6.161) above, repeated here for convenience as (6.297) and (6.298), which show the strings *deadly lazy boy* and *deadly long stride*. Here, the most inherent qualities of the nouns *boy* and *stride* are *lazy* and *long*, whereas *deadly* is simply boosting that specific property. Therefore, the function of *deadly* as an intensifier could, in principle, be linked here to the leftmost position, as Adamson claimed for *lovely*. However, the development of the adverb *deadly* is independent from that of its adjectival counterpart, whereas the development of the intensifying adverb *lovely* is argued to have risen after an initial subjectification process and a syntactic reordering to the leftmost position, which provided the necessary conditions for the reanalysis of the adjective *lovely* as an intensifier.

- (6.297) *Misoponos was put to a Trade, but a **deadly** lazy Boy he was, very dull at learning, and hardly brought to settle to any thing, or stay with any Master.* (D00000112731160000. 1669. Richard Brathwaite. *The history of moderation*)
- (6.298) *Here I want our Authors Accuracy, or must complain of a Fallacy; for methinks it's a **deadly** long stride, to step from Adam to after-Ages, without the Bridge of some Neat Transition;* (D00000161874680000. 1676. Vincent Alsop. *Anti-sozzo, sive, Sherlocismus enervatus in vindication of some great truths opposed, and opposition to some great errors maintained by Mr. William Sherlock*)

Much alike the adjective (cf. 6.4.2), the adverb *deadly* also meets some of Hopper's principles (cf. section 3.2), specifically those of layering, divergence, persistence, and fixation. Thus, in EModE, for instance, intensifying *deadly* (adv.) coexists, side by side, with the other four types of meanings identified, which are independent of each other: descriptive, descriptive/subjective, subjective, and subjective/intensifying. This represents a case of layering and divergence. At the same time, it was shown that *deadly* collocates mainly with negative items, which is in keeping with its original meaning, thus serving to illustrate Hopper's principle of persistence.

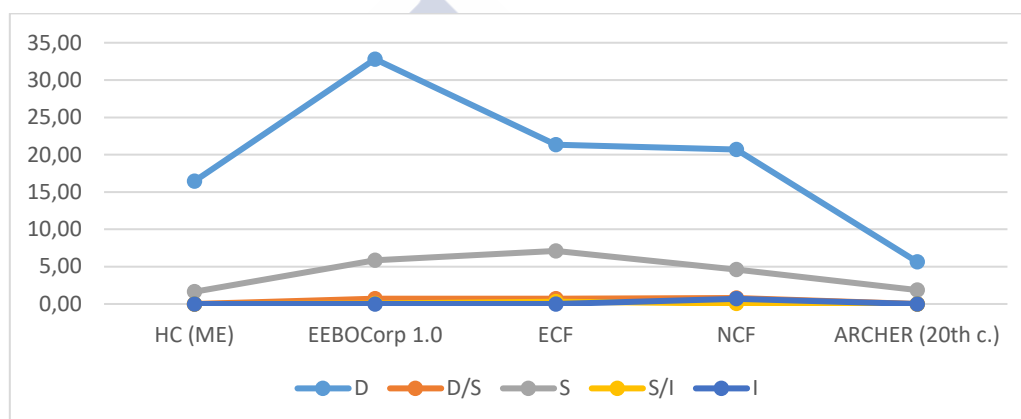
6.4.4. *Mortal* (adj.)

As shown by the individual figures in Table 6.181 and also by the graph in Figure 6.44, the adjective *mortal* is clearly most frequent with descriptive meanings in the overall data.

Table 6.181. Types of meanings for *mortal* (adj.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	10/16.43	17,236/32.80	207/21.33	778/20.7	3/5.65
D/S	0	368/0.70	7/0.72	30/0.8	0
S	1/1.64	3,067/5.84	69/7.11	174/4.63	1/1.88
S/I	0	26/0.05	3/0.31	2/0.05	0
I	0	0	0	26/0.69	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.44. Types of meanings for *mortal* (adj.)



The normalised frequencies evince a dramatic rise in the number of descriptive uses of *mortal* from the HC to EEBOCorp 1.0 (HC: 10 exx.; NF pmw 16.43 > EEBOCorp 1.0: 17,236 exx.; NF pmw 32.80), which was not found to be statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 4.483$; $p = 0.03423358$). After EModE, however, the frequency of descriptive examples of the adjective is considerably reduced, most conspicuously from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF (EEBOCorp 1.0: 17,236 exx.; NF pmw 32.80 > ECF: 20 exx.; NF pmw 21.33) and then again from NCF to ARCHER (NCF: 778 exx.; NF pmw 20.7 > ARCHER: 3 exx.; NF pmw 5.65). The difference between EModE and the eighteenth century, as well as that between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, is not statistically significant either ($\chi^2(1) = 38.094$; $p = 0.03423358$ and $\chi^2(1) = 0.121$; $p = 0.72795243$, respectively). By contrast, the drastic reduction in the frequency of *mortal* from NCF to ARCHER is statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.009042). The normalised frequencies for those readings of the adjective which are indeterminate between descriptive and subjective indicate that these instances of *mortal*, though not frequent,

remain relatively constant over time. A statistical comparison of these values yielded negative significance results.⁵⁷ In turn, subjective meanings of *mortal* increase substantially from the HC to EEBOCorp 1.0 (HC: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.64 > EEBOCorp 1.0: 3,067 exx.; NF pmw 5.84) and less pronouncedly from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF (ECF: 69 exx.; NF pmw 7.11). From the eighteenth century onwards, the frequency of subjective *mortal* decreases (NCF: 174 exx.; NF pmw 4.63 > ARCHER: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88). These results, however, are only statistically significant when the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century data are contrasted ($\chi^2(1) = 8.773$; $p = 0.00305722$). For the remaining periods, however, these figures are not significant.⁵⁸ Those readings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying also remain relatively stable over time, as shown by the normalised figures, and the results from the statistical tests indicate negative significance values.⁵⁹

In regard to semantic prosody (cf. Table 6.182 and Figure 6.45 below), the adjective *mortal* is attested mainly with nouns which have neutral prosody (e.g. *man, thing, life, creature*), although it also occurs as a modifier of nouns which are inherently negative (e.g. *accident, battle, detestation*) and positive (e.g. *glory, joy, fame*). The frequency of *mortal* with neutral collocates grows substantially from ME to EModE (HC: 9 exx.; NF pmw 14.79 > EEBOCorp 1.0: 12,335 exx.; NF pmw 23.48), to be dropped from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF (ECF: 139 exx.; NF pmw 14.33). There is then a slight increase in the normalised figures from ECF to NCF (NCF: 585 exx.; NF pmw 15.56), and again a rapid decrease at the turn of the twentieth century (2 exx.; NF pmw 3.77). Despite these differences, the only value which is statistically significant is that between EModE and the eighteenth-century data ($\chi^2(1) = 33.825$; $p = 0.00000001$).⁶⁰ Combinations of *mortal* with negative collocates proliferate in the transition of ME to EModE (HC: 2 exx.; NF pmw 3.29 > EEBOCorp 1.0: 8,091 exx.; NF pmw 15.40), a growth which is statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.008301). However, from EModE onwards, the uses of *mortal* with negative elements decrease, most notably from the nineteenth to the twentieth century (NCF: 394 exx.; NF pmw 10.48 > ARCHER: 2 exx.; NF pmw 3.77), although this difference is not statistically significant.⁶¹ Instances of the adjective *mortal* as a

⁵⁷ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 0.013$; $p = 0.90922389$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 0.001$; $p = 0.97477288$.

⁵⁸ HC > EEBOCorp 1.0: Fisher's exact test = 0.279476; EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 2.427$; $p = 0.11926094$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.526532.

⁵⁹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.11926094; ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.061962.

⁶⁰ HC > EEBOCorp 1.0: $\chi^2(1) = 1.602$; $p = 0.20562001$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 0.692$; $p = 0.40548494$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.021032.

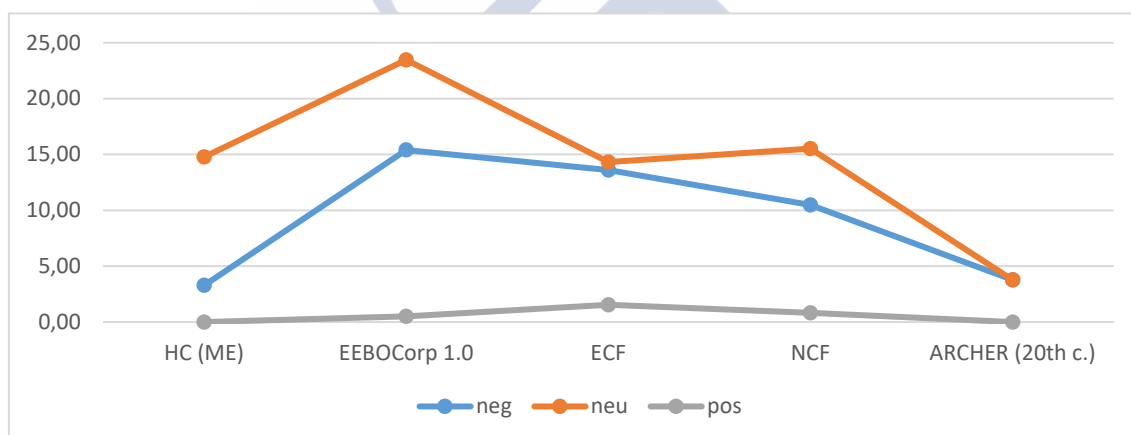
⁶¹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 1.881$; $p = 0.17022053$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 6.484$; $p = 0.01088498$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.191363.

modifier of positive nouns are not frequent in the data in comparison with the other types of prosody, and the normalised frequencies remain low over time. Nevertheless, the increase from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF (EEBOCorp 1.0: 271 exx.; NF pmw 0.51 > ECF: 15 exx.; NF pmw 1.55) was found to be highly statistically significant ($\chi^2(1) = 17.04$; $p = 0.0000366$), while the difference is not significant when the eighteenth and the nineteenth-century data (ECF: 15 exx.; NF pmw 1.55 > NCF: 31 exx.; NF pmw 0.82) are compared ($\chi^2(1) = 3.417$; $p = 0.06452818$).

Table 6.182. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adj.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	2/3.29	8,091/15.40	132/13.6	394/10.48	2/3.77
neu	9/14.79	12,335/23.48	139/14.33	585/15.56	2/3.77
pos	0	271/0.51	15/1.55	31/0.82	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.45. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adj.)



In view of the results from the types of meanings and semantic prosody discussed in the preceding paragraphs, the adjective *mortal* seems to behave much alike its Germanic counterpart *deadly* (cf. 6.4.2). In this case, too, the percentage of intensifying uses of *mortal* does not reach 1% either, and combinations of *mortal* with positive nouns are also scarcely attested (1.44% of the total). As mentioned in section 6.1.3 above, the OED describes the adjective *mortal* as a borrowing from Anglo-Norman, dating to the late fourteenth century. Subjective readings are recorded in my data from EModE onwards, thus bearing out the information provided by the OED, where *mortal* is shown to have subjective meanings from the very beginning. Intensifying uses of *mortal* emerged, according to the OED, in the eighteenth century. The first attestations of intensifying *mortal* in the corpora and databases consulted are found in NCF, a century later than the

first records claimed by the OED (cf. 6.1.3). Prior to these intensifying uses, however, there are some eighteenth-century instances of the adjective which are indeterminate between subjective and intensifying. As was the case for *deadly* (cf. 6.4.2), these examples may well have favoured a subsequent degree reading for the adjective *mortal*. Also in line with the results of the adjective *deadly*, these contexts implied situations of annoyance, anger, and envy. One such example is the collocation *mortal displeasure* in (6.218) above, given here again as (6.299), where the circumstances described resemble closely those involved in the instances of *deadly*. In this particular case, although a degree reading can be argued for *mortal* ('extreme displeasure'), there are also signs in the preceding and following context that Clarissa may seek some form of vengeance, and hence the intention of harming, whether physically or psychologically, is still in the background. For this reason, a subjective account of *mortal* here cannot be completely ruled out.

(6.299) *To this was owing the ready offence you took at my four friends; and at the unavailing attempt I made to see a dropt Letter; little imagining from what two such Ladies could write to each other, that there could be room for **mortal** displeasure. ---To this was owing the week's distance you held me at, till you knew the issue of another application. (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)*

Even though the intensifying meanings of *mortal* are rare in the data (26 exx., 0.12%, all of them recorded in NCF), the adjective has developed an increasingly abstract meaning over time, until its eventual grammaticalisation as an intensifier. Collocations such as *mortal certainty*, *mortal disappointment*, *mortal degree*, or *mortal hurry* effectively attest to the intensifying uses of the adjective. The cline of evolution argued above (cf. 4.1.1.2) for the adjective *deadly* (descriptive > subjective > intensifying), however, does not fully apply in this case, since, as suggested before, the adjective *mortal* could already occur from its first records with subjective meanings. As was the case with *deadly*, the paucity of intensifying uses suggests that the degree of grammaticalisation of this adjective is not very advanced. Moreover, the intensifying uses of *mortal* do not correlate with positive semantic prosody in any of the materials analysed. Nevertheless, along the lines of adjectival *deadly* (cf. 6.4.2 above), *mortal* (adj.) also serves to illustrate some of Hopper's grammaticalisation principles (see section 3.2). In the nineteenth-century data, for instance, *mortal* is attested with the five different meanings (D, D/S, S, S/I, and I). In other words, these different meanings or 'layers' of the adjective coexist synchronically and though *mortal* had a new, grammaticalised meaning by the nineteenth

century, it was still possible to find it with its original, literal sense. These features are characteristic of the principles of layering and divergence. In addition, the adjective *mortal* shows signs of persistence by collocating with negative nouns. Nonetheless, unlike the adjective *deadly* (cf. 6.4.2), *mortal* is more frequent with neutral collocates (59.39%), followed by negative (39.17%) and positive ones (1.44%).

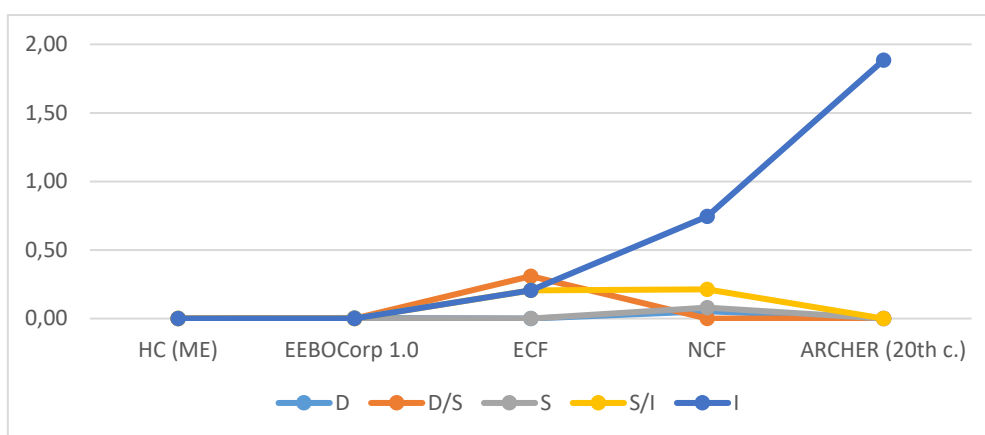
6.4.5. *Mortal* (adv.)

In comparison with its adjectival counterpart (cf. 6.4.4), the adverb *mortal* is hardly attested in the different sources consulted (only 52 examples). Interestingly, most of these occurrences correspond to intensifying meanings (59.61%), as shown in Table 6.183 and Figure 6.46. These readings, in fact, grow moderately from the eighteenth to the twentieth century (ECF: 2 exx.; NF pmw 0.21 > NCF: 28 exx.; NF pmw 0.74 > ARCHER: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88). Even so, none of these values is judged as statistically significant at $p < 0.01$.⁶² As for the meanings of *mortal* which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying, there is no variation in the normalised frequencies from ECF to NCF (NF pmw 0.21). The results from Fisher's exact test also reveal that the difference in frequency between the two collections is not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.334133).

Table 6.183. Types of meanings for *mortal* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	0	3/0.01	0	2/0.05	0
D/S	0	0	3/0.31	0	0
S	0	1/0.002	0	2/0.05	0
S/I	0	0	2/0.21	8/0.21	0
I	0	0	2/0.21	28/0.74	1/1.88
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

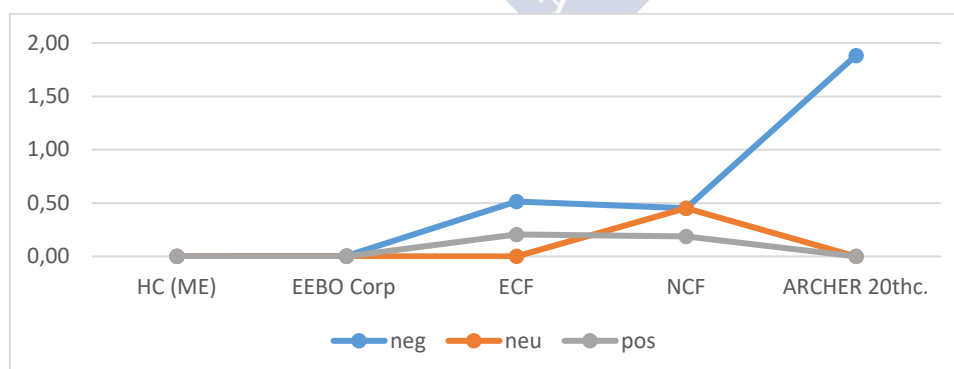
⁶² ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.068971; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.334133.

Figure 6.46. Types of meanings for *mortal* (adv.)

In regard to semantic prosody (see Table 6.184), *mortal* is attested mainly with negative (e.g. *sick*, *dull*, *bad*) and neutral elements (e.g. *pale*, *high*, *long*), although positive collocates of *mortal* are also found (e.g. *kind*, *passionate*, *good*). In what concerns negative semantic prosody, the biggest growth is seen from the nineteenth- to the twentieth-century data (NCF: 17 exx.; NF pmw 0.45 > ARCHER: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88), as shown in Figure 6.47.

Table 6.184. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	0	3/0.01	5/0.52	17/0.45	1/1.88
neu	0	1/0.002	0	16/0.43	0
pos	0	0	2/0.21	7/0.19	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.47. Semantic prosody for *mortal* (adv.)

However, this increase in the normalised frequency of *mortal* (adv.) from NCF to ARCHER cannot be regarded as statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.223076). The difference in frequency between ECF and NCF is not significant either

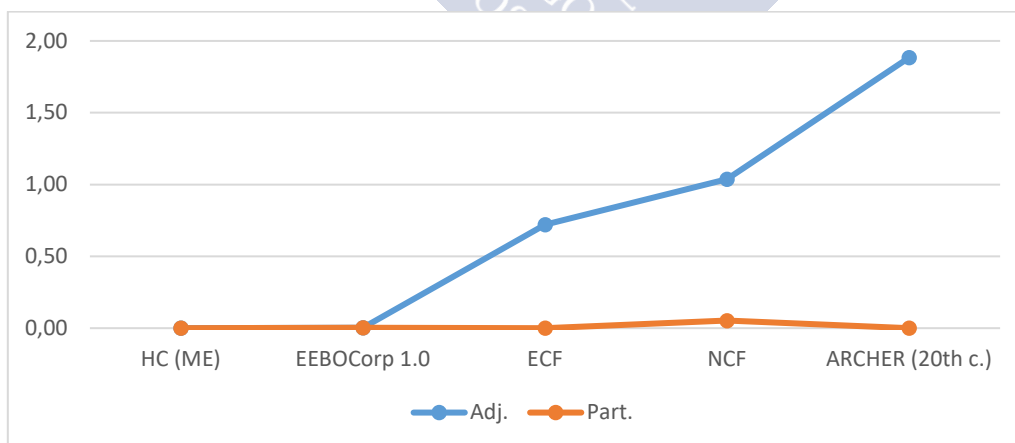
(Fisher's exact test = 0.792214). In turn, the difference between the EEBOCorp 1.0 data and ECF is statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0). The values for neutral semantic prosody could not be statistically tested, since there are zero values in the pairs which should be considered for analysis. Finally, the frequency of *mortal* in combination with positive elements decreases slightly from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (ECF: 2 exx.; NF pmw 0.21 > NCF: 7 exx.; NF pmw 0.19), but this difference is not statistically significant either (Fisher's exact test = 1).

Being an adverb, *mortal* can in principle modify a wider range of words than the homonymous adjective. In practice, however, it is only found in the data as a modifier of adjectives and participial forms, showing a much stronger preference for the former (see Table 6.185). This tendency is confirmed by the graph in Figure 6.48, which clearly shows that the combinations of *mortal* with adjectives gradually increase over time. Despite the tendency for *mortal* to be on the rise with adjectives, these values are only statistically significant if we consider the EModE and eighteenth-century data (Fisher's exact test = 0).⁶³

Table 6.185. Categories modified by *mortal* (adv.) in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
Adj.	0	2/0.004	7/0.72	38/1.01	1/1.88
Part.	0	2/0.004	0	2/0.05	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.48. Categories modified by *mortal* (adv.)



In view of the data presented in this section, the adverb *mortal* occurs mostly with intensifying readings (59.61%), followed by descriptive uses (9.62%), those which are

⁶³ ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 0.409$; $p = 0.5224775$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.421256.

indeterminate between descriptive and subjective (5.77%), subjective uses (5.77%), and those instances of the adverb which allow a double interpretation, either as subjective or as intensifying (1.92%). Positive semantic prosody, though the least common, amounts to 17.31% of the total, which clearly outnumbers the percentages obtained for negative prosody for the adjective and adverb *deadly* as well as for the adjective *mortal* (cf. 6.4.2, 6.4.3, and 6.4.4 above).

Despite the overall low figures for the adverb, the data provide convincing evidence for the intensifying readings of *mortal*, attested with such meanings in both NCF and ARCHER. As in the case of the adjectives *deadly* and *mortal* discussed above (cf. 6.4.2 and 6.4.4), some earlier examples could have worked as bridging contexts, facilitating its eventual reinterpretation as a marker of degree, in collocations such as *mortal inconvenient*, *mortal cunning*, *mortal passionate*, and *mortal good*. One of such potential bridging contexts is illustrated in (6.220) above, provided here again as (6.300), which features the collocation *mortal jealous*. Consequences of jealousy and resentment are again far from clear in this context, so that *mortal* can be read either as an intensifier or as having a subjective meaning.

(6.300) *Will told them, before I came, 'That his lady was but lately married to one of the finest gentlemen in the world. But that, he being very gay and lively, she was mortal jealous of him; and in a fit of that sort, had eloped from him.* (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)

However, the earliest examples which were marked as indeterminate between subjective and intensifying in the data date back to the 1750s, more precisely to Richardson's novel *Clarissa*, which is also the source of (6.300). In turn, the first documented instances of intensifying *mortal* in my data are from the 1760s and 1780s. Attributing a clear influence to these ambiguous occurrences of *mortal* is therefore too speculative, in view of the co-occurrence of these alleged bridging examples and the first unequivocal intensifying meanings of the adverb. However, given that most occurrences of intensifying *mortal* are attested in the nineteenth century, contexts such as the ones provided by these 'bridging contexts' may have contributed to the reinforcement of a degree interpretation of the adverb.

Adamson's (2000) cline for the evolution of intensifiers, which was taken as a model in this dissertation, does not fully apply to the development of the adverb *mortal*. As explained above, *mortal* could be found with subjective meanings already from the moment in which it was borrowed, at the end of the fourteenth century, so that the first

step in Adamson's descriptive > subjective > intensifying cline cannot be tested. Furthermore, the low number of examples in the sources consulted is clearly insufficient to draw any tentative conclusions on the diachronic development of the adverb *mortal*. By contrast, it can safely be claimed that it has developed increasingly grammaticalised meanings over time, being semantically reanalysed as an intensifier equivalent to *very* or *terribly*. Furthermore, the data examined have also provided some interesting examples which could, in principle, prove the relationship between the intensifying function and the left periphery, as in example (6.221) above, repeated here for convenience as (6.301). However, the development of the intensifying function of the adverb *mortal* is independent to that of its homonymous adjective. Therefore, as an adverb modifying an adjectival element, as in (6.301), *mortal* has to occur in the leftmost position. In this example *mortal* is clearly not an adjective describing the fatal power of a hand: *mortal* is instead an adverb which reinforces the adjective *good* ('very good').

(6.301) "Aye, aye, (answered Timothy) your honour has a *mortal* good hand at giving a slap with a fox's tail, as the saying is---'tis a wonderment you did not try your hand on that there wiseacre that stole your honour's harness, and wants to be an arrant with a murrain to 'un---Lord help his fool's head! (1748. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*)

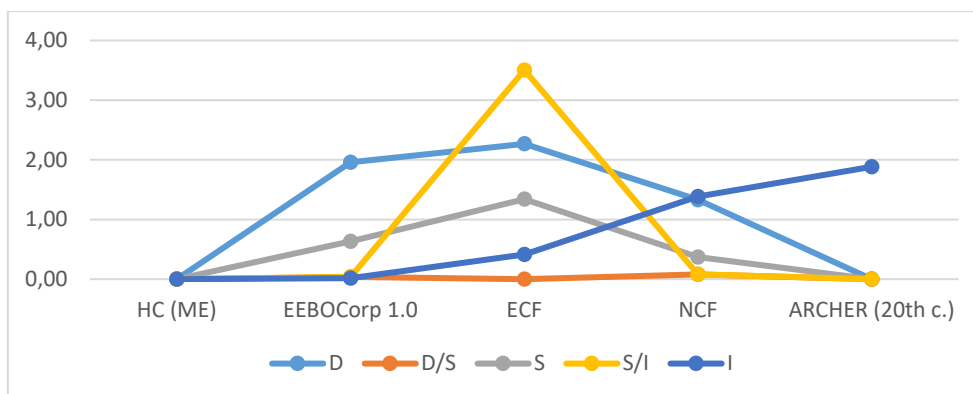
In spite of the limited number of examples, and as was the case for *deadly* (cf. 6.4.2, and 6.4.3), it can also be argued that the different meanings of the adverb *mortal* (descriptive, subjective, and intensifying) coexist at a given point in time, as shown in Table 6.183 above. This, together with the fact that each of these senses of the adverb can be used independently of each other, proves Hopper's principles of layering and divergence. Moreover, *mortal* modifies negative elements in half of its occurrences in the data, while neutral and positive semantic prosody account for 32.69% and 17.31%, respectively. The predisposition of the adverb towards combinations with negative elements is, therefore, in keeping with the principle of persistence. Moreover, the collocations of *mortal* which are marked as positive show in all cases an intensifying meaning.

6.4.6. *Mortally*

As shown in Table 6.186, the first examples of the adverb *mortally* in the different sources date from EModE, which is attested mainly with descriptive and subjective meanings. The evolution for each of the readings of the adverb is illustrated in Figure 6.49.

Table 6.186. Types of meanings for *mortally* in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	0	1,030/1.96	22/2.27	50/1.33	0
D/S	0	20/0.04	0	3/0.08	0
S	0	334/0.64	13/1.34	14/0.37	0
S/I	0	21/0.04	34/3.50	3/0.08	0
I	0	8/0.02	4/0.41	50/1.33	1/1.88
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.49. Types of meanings for *mortally*

Descriptive uses of *mortally*, amounting to 68.57%, increase slightly from EMode to the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 1,030 exx.; NF pmw 1.96 > ECF: 22 exx.; NF pmw 2.27), and are since then reduced again (NCF: 50 exx.; NF pmw 1.33). These differences are, however, not statistically significant.⁶⁴ Subjective examples of *mortally*, the second most common after the descriptive uses (22.46%), are also more frequent in ECF than in EEBOCorp 1.0 (13 exx.; NF pmw 1.34 vs. 334 exx.; NF pmw 0.64), but then drop again in the transition to the nineteenth century (from NF pmw 1.34 to NF pmw 0.37). The only difference which was found to be statistically significant is the one which concerns ECF and NCF ($\chi^2(1) = 11.004$; $p = 0.00090915$).⁶⁵ The normalised frequencies for those meanings of *mortally* which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying increase considerably from EEBOCorp 1.0 to the ECF data (EEBOCorp 1.0: 21 exx.; NF pmw 0.04 > ECF: 34 exx.; NF pmw 3.50), to fall then substantially from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (NCF: 3 exx.; NF pmw 0.08). The difference for both periods is in fact statistically significant.⁶⁶ Further to the intensifying uses of *mortally*, although the normalised frequencies of the adverb actually increase over time, the only difference

⁶⁴ EEBO > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 0.314$; $p = 0.57523594$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 3.856$; $p = 0.04956837$.

⁶⁵ EEBO > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 6.24$; $p = 0.01248965$.

⁶⁶ EEBO > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 1078.932$; $p = 0$; ECF > NCF: Fisher's value = 0.

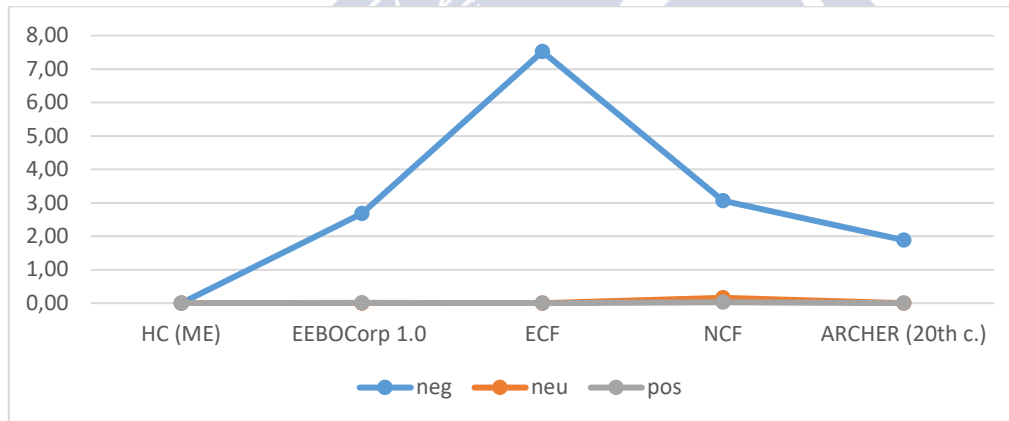
which is considered statistically significant is that between EModE and the eighteenth century (Fisher's exact test = 0.000048).⁶⁷

The data from the different materials consulted for the analysis also reveal the tendency for *mortally* to occur with inherently negative elements (see Table 6.187 and Figure 6.50), which account for 99.25% of the examples. The normalised frequencies show a sharp rise in the combinations of *mortally* with negative elements from EModE to the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 1,408 exx.; NF pmw 2.68 > ECF: 73 exx.; NF pmw 7.52), when these uses start to decrease. Moreover, while the growth in frequency from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF and the subsequent decline from ECF to NCF are statistically significant, the drop in the number of attestations of *mortally* with negative items from NCF to ARCHER was not found to be statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 1).⁶⁸

Table 6.187. Semantic prosody for *mortally* (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	0	1,408/2.68	73/7.52	113/3.01	1/1.88
neu	0	1/0.002	0	6/0.16	0
pos	0	4/0.01	0	1/0.03	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.50. Semantic prosody for *mortally*



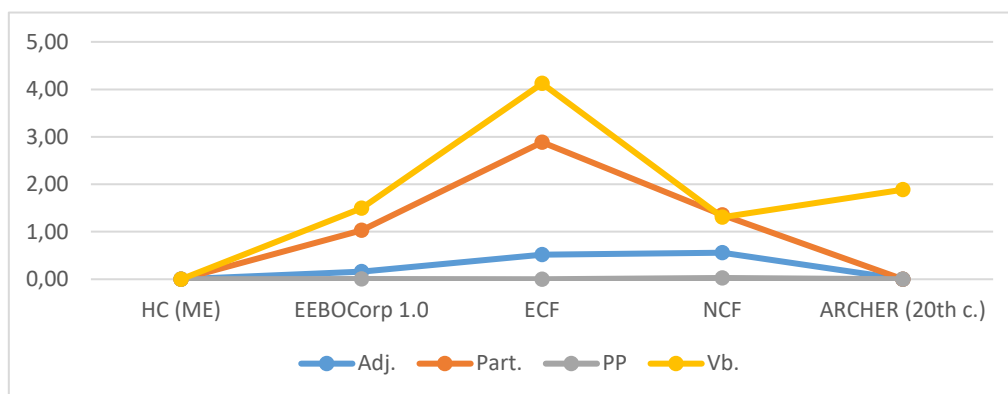
The results from the individual frequencies of *mortally* in the data suggest that the adverb occurs mainly as a modifier of verbal (54.57%) and participial elements (38.39%) (see Table 6.188). An overall picture for each of the categories over time is provided in Figure 6.51.

⁶⁷ ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.016853; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.510891.

⁶⁸ EEBO > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 79.03$; $p = 0$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 38.877$; $p = 0$.

Table 6.188. Categories modified by *mortally* in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
Adj.	0	83/0.16	5/0.52	23/0.61	0
Part.	0	542/1.03	28/2.89	47/1.25	0
PP	0	1/0.002	0	1/0.03	0
Vb.	0	787/1.50	40/4.12	49/1.30	1/1.88
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.51. Categories modified by *mortally*

With regard to verbal elements, the normalised frequencies clearly increase from EModE to the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 787 exx.; NF pmw 1.50 > ECF: 40 exx.; NF pmw 4.12). There is then a drop in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (NCF: 49 exx.; NF pmw 1.30), followed by another rise in the twentieth century (1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88). However, the only differences which can be regarded as significant are that between EModE and the eighteenth-century data ($\chi^2(1) = 40.788$; $p = 0$), and that between the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century data ($\chi^2(1) = 31.086$; $p = 0.00000002$). The difference between the nineteenth and the twentieth century is, by contrast, not statistically significant at $p < 0.01$ (Fisher's exact test = 0.503984). The combinations of *mortally* with participial elements in the data follow the same trend as those with verbs, gradually increasing until the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 542 exx.; NF pmw 1.03 > ECF: 28 exx.; NF pmw 2.89), and decreasing again in the nineteenth century (47 exx.; NF pmw 1.25). The difference between the periods is significant in all cases.⁶⁹ Finally, in regard to the modification of adjectives the variation over time by *mortally* was not found to be statistically significant in any case.⁷⁰

Unlike its zero counterpart *mortal*, for which intensifying meanings prevailed (cf. section 6.4.5), *mortally* is most often found with descriptive readings in my data.

⁶⁹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2(1) = 29.036$; $p = 0.00000008$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2(1) = 11.996$; $p = 0.00053315$.

⁷⁰ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.021286; ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 1.

According to the OED (cf. section 6.1.4), *mortally* first developed an intensifying function in the eighteenth century. The corpus evidence, however, provided earlier occurrences, as in the case of the collocations *mortally in love*, *mortally tedious*, and *mortally desperate* in EEBOCorp 1.0, all dating to the seventeenth century. Furthermore, as in the case of the forms *deadly* and *mortal*, some collocations of *mortally* such as *hate mortally* or *dislike mortally*, when referring to things rather than to people, could have contributed to the development of unequivocal intensifying readings, as in *mortally changed*, *mortally obstropolous*, and *mortally unpleasant*. This is the case, for instance, of (6.179), given here again as (6.302), which dates from the sixteenth century. In this passage William I is said to detest rebellions, rather than someone in particular.

(6.302) *Neuertheles we haue thought good, publikely to declare by these presents, the vnauoydable occasions, by which we with our Allies and frendes, haue bene co-strained and enforced to take in hand this our defence: principally to put away all suspicion of rebellion, which we haue fled, & mortally hated all the dayes of our life.* (D00000998376540000. 1568. William I, Prince of Orange. *A declaration and publication of the most worthy Prince of Orange*)

In view of the data discussed in this section, *mortally* has come to acquire intensifying meanings over time. In line with its zero counterpart, which was borrowed from Anglo-Norman, *mortally* was also attested with subjective meanings from its first records. For this reason, Adamson's (2000) cline of evolution descriptive > subjective > intensifying cannot be fully applied in this case either. Nonetheless, *mortally* was semantically reanalysed as an intensifier, acquiring a more grammaticalised status over time. The degree of grammaticalisation of *mortally*, however, is not very advanced, considering that intensifying *mortally* amounts to just 3.92% of the total of occurrences and that it is found with negative items in 99.25% of the cases. Even so, positive collocates are also documented, as is the case of *enamoured*, *in love*, or *happy*, which are consistent with an intensifying reading of the adverb. The predisposition of *mortally* towards negative collocates is, however, closely related to Hopper's principle of persistence, which was also applicable to the adjectival and adverbial forms *deadly* and *mortal* discussed above (cf. 6.4.2, 6.4.3, 6.4.4, and 6.4.5). The data analysis has also shown that the different readings of the adverb coexisted synchronically. This, again, illustrates Hopper's principles of layering and divergence (cf. 3.2).

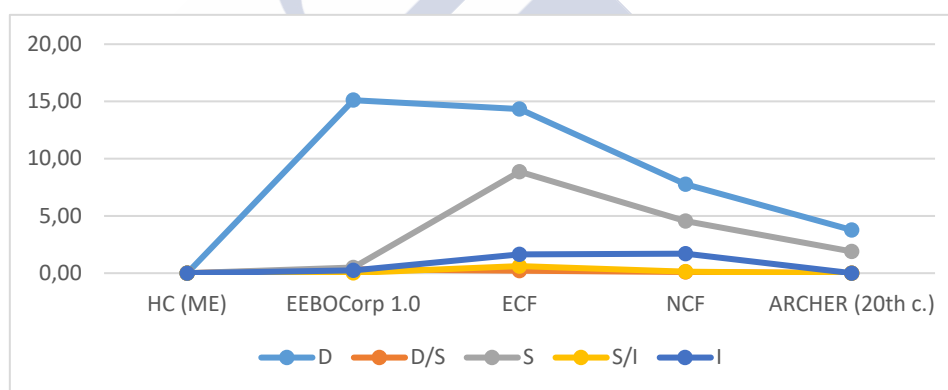
6.4.7. To death

As shown by the individual frequencies in Table 6.189, in my data *to death* is attested primarily with descriptive meanings, which appear for the first time in EEBOCorp 1.0. Figure 6.52, in turn, provides an overview of the evolution of the different types of meanings of *to death*.

Table 6.189. Types of meanings for *to death* in the data (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
D	0	7,938/15.11	139/14.33	292/7.77	2/3.77
D/S	0	178/0.34	2/0.21	4/0.11	0
S	0	253/0.48	86/8.86	171/4.55	1/1.88
S/I	0	9/0.02	6/0.62	5/0.13	0
I	0	122/0.23	16/1.65	64/1.70	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.52. Types of meanings for *to death*



Descriptive uses of *to death* experience a gradual decrease from EModE to the twentieth-century data, which is most pronounced from ECF to NCF (ECF: 139 exx.; NF pmw 14.33 > NCF: 292 exx.; NF pmw 7.77). This steep fall from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century is regarded as statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 35.676$; $p = 0$), while this is not the case for the remaining periods.⁷¹ The frequencies for those readings which were marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective remain low over time and the difference between the periods is not statistically significant.⁷² In turn, subjective instances of *to death* experience a remarkable growth from EModE to the eighteenth century in the light of the normalised figures (EEBOCorp 1.0: 253 exx.; NF pmw 0.48 > ECF: 86 exx.; NF pmw 8.86), and then are progressively reduced until the twentieth

⁷¹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF = $\chi^2 = 0.336$; $p = 0.56214725$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.451307.

⁷² EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.776576; ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.357328.

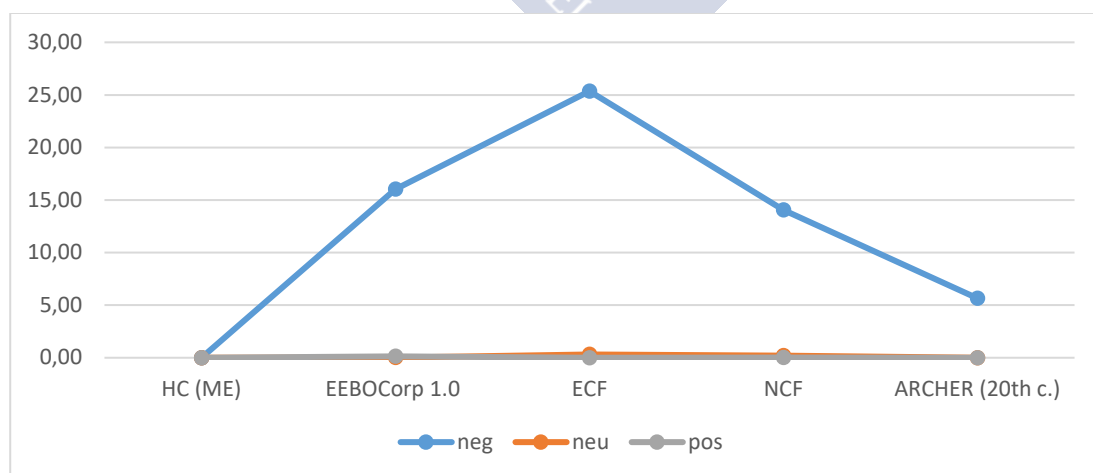
century (NCF: 171 exx.; NF pmw 4.55 > ARCHER: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88). The difference between the periods is only significant in what concerns the EEBOCorp 1.0 and ECF data, on the one hand, and ECF and NCF, on the other ($\chi^2 = 1043.388$; $p = 0$, and $\chi^2 = 25.628$; $p = 0.00000041$, respectively).⁷³ Examples of *to death* which are indeterminate between subjective and intensifying have also remained rather stable over time. Nevertheless, the difference in regard to these uses from EModE to the eighteenth century is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 102.353$; $p = 0$), whereas that between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century is not (Fisher's exact test = 0.013229). Finally, as regards the intensifying uses of *to death*, there is a gradual rise in frequency from EEBOCorp 1.0 to NCF (EEBOCorp 1.0: 122 exx.; NF pmw 0.23 > ECF: 16 exx.; NF pmw 1.65 > NCF: 64 exx.; NF pmw 1.70). The difference in frequency between EEBOCorp 1.0 and ECF was found to be statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 68.767$; $p = 0$), while that between ECF and NCF is not ($\chi^2 = 0.001$; $p = 0.97477288$).

As shown in Table 6.190 and Figure 6.53, *to death* shows a strong preference for elements with inherently negative prosody, although it is also recorded with collocates which are neutral (e.g. *study, yawn, amazed*) and positive (e.g. *laugh, passionate, in love*).

Table 6.190. Semantic prosody for *to death* (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER (20 th c.)
neg	0	8,423/16.03	246/25.35	528/14.05	3/5.65
neu	0	9/0.02	3/0.31	7/0.19	0
pos	0	68/0.13	0	1/0.03	0
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.53. Semantic prosody for *to death*



⁷³ NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.737108.

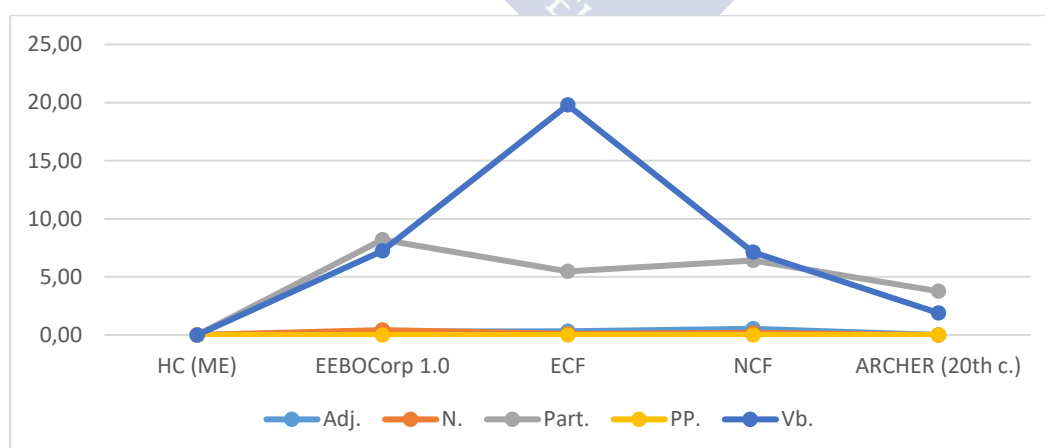
The normalised figures reveal an exponential growth in the occurrences of *to death* with negative elements from EModE to the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 8,423 exx.; NF pmw 16.03 > ECF: 246 exx; NF pmw 25.35), which is statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 50.542$; $p = 0$). Combinations of *to death* with negative elements decline continually until the twentieth century (NCF: 528 exx.; NF pmw 14.05 > ARCHER: 3 exx.; NF pmw 5.65), although the variation is only significant when we compare the ECF with the NCF data ($\chi^2 = 59.559$; $p = 0$).⁷⁴ By contrast, the values for neutral semantic prosody remain rather low in the different sources and do not vary greatly from one to the other period, as suggested by the normalised figures. The difference between EEBOCorp 1.0 and ECF is, however, statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.00116).⁷⁵

With regard to the last variable considered, the type of element modified by *to death*, the data indicate that this prepositional phrase functions mainly as a modifier of participial forms and of verbs (49.58% and 45.96%, respectively), as shown in Table 6.191 and Figure 6.54.

Table 6.191. Categories modified by *to death* (absolute/normalised frequencies)

	HC (ME)	EEBOCorp 1.0	ECF	NCF	ARCHER 20 th c.
Adj.	0	160/0.30	3/0.31	20/0.53	0
N.	0	222/0.42	1/0.10	7/0.19	0
Part.	0	4,309/8.20	53/5.46	241/6.41	2/3.77
PP	0	1/0.002	0	0	0
Vb.	0	3,808/7.25	192/19.79	268/7.13	1/1.88
N. of words	608,570	525,432,293	9,702,699	37,589,837	530,832

Figure 6.54. Categories modified by *to death*



⁷⁴ **NCF > ARCHER**: Fisher's exact test = 0.133919.

⁷⁵ The difference between ECF and NCF, in turn, is not statistically significant (Fisher's exact test = 0.438482).

As indicated by the normalised frequencies, the uses of *to death* with participial items are reduced from EModE to the eighteenth century (EEBOCorp 1.0: 4,309 exx.; NF pmw 8.20 > ECF: 53 exx.; NF pmw 5.46), as indicated by the normalised frequencies, although this difference is not statistically significant ($\chi^2 = 8.432$; $p = 0.00368675$). They then increase in the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century (NCF: 241 exx.; NF pmw 6.41), to decrease again in the twentieth-century data from ARCHER (2 exx.; NF pmw 3.77). None of these results, however, turned out to be statistically significant.⁷⁶ The uses of *to death* with verbal elements, the second most common type after participial collocates, increase considerably from EEBOCorp 1.0 to ECF (from NF pmw 7.25 to NF pmw 19.79). From the eighteenth century onwards, the occurrences of *to death* as a modifier of verbal elements are progressively reduced (NCF: 268 exx.; NF pmw 7.13 > ARCHER: 1 ex.; NF pmw 1.88). These figures were found to be significant for the difference between EEBOCorp 1.0 and ECF, on the one hand, and for that between ECF and NCF, on the other.⁷⁷ Conversely, the drop in the number of occurrences from the nineteenth to the twentieth century is not statistically significant (Fisher's value = 0.194852). As regards those cases in which *to death* modifies adjectives in the data, the normalised values seem to remain rather constant over time until the nineteenth century, when there is a slight increase in frequency. The difference between the periods in regard to the adjectival collocates of *to death* is, however, not statistically significant in any of the cases.⁷⁸ Finally, with regard to the nominal collocates of *to death*, for which there is no conspicuous variation in frequency across the different periods, the figures show statistically negative results.⁷⁹

Given the results from the type of meaning and semantic prosody discussed above, *to death* functions much alike the other forms examined in the previous sections, with a predominance of descriptive (90.13% of the total) over intensifying readings (2.17%), and of negative (99.05%) over positive collocates (0.74%). In addition, there is a correspondence in the data between these positive collocates and the intensifying uses of *to death*. According to the OED (cf. section 6.1.5), the first intensifying examples of the prepositional phrase go back to the late sixteenth century, and in fact EEBOCorp 1.0 provides evidence for these early uses, in collocations such as *laugh to death*, *amazed to death*, or *resolute to death*. Moreover, in the light of the OED evidence, *to death* showed

⁷⁶ ECF > NCF: $\chi^2 = 0.97$; $p = 0.32468018$; NCF > ARCHER: Fisher's exact test = 0.779676.

⁷⁷ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: $\chi^2 = 198.774$; $p = 0$; ECF > NCF: $\chi^2 = 125.753$; $p = 0$.

⁷⁸ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.771897; ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 0.603977.

⁷⁹ EEBOCorp 1.0 > ECF: Fisher's exact test = 0.19981; ECF > NCF: Fisher's exact test = 1.

signs of incipient subjectivity since very early; some of the collocations in OE could already be counted as subjective (e.g. *afraid to death*). Unfortunately, the HC yields no examples of *to death*; there are, therefore, no records of subjective uses in my data until EModE. All the possible readings of *to death* are actually found in EEBOCorp 1.0, which makes it difficult to establish an actual cline of evolution in the light of these data. While descriptive and subjective meanings are attested in the first half of the sixteenth century, with the first records of *to death* in the corpus, those instances which were marked as either ambiguous between subjective and intensifying or as clearly intensifying partially coincide in time. In fact, there is only one occurrence in the 1590s which was counted as indeterminate and which predates most intensifying readings, mainly attested in the seventeenth century. On the basis of the EModE data, therefore, it cannot be argued that some kind of bridging context may have favoured a degree meaning of *to death*, although it could have been the case. Despite this somehow limited information, *to death* has become increasingly grammaticalised over time, being reanalysed as an intensifier expressing high degree. The process of subjectification is assumed to have taken place earlier, but it cannot be confirmed with the corpus data. Like *dead(ly)* and *mortal(ly)*, *to death* is another paradigmatic case of Hopper's principle of persistence, since it occurs principally in combination with negative elements, as well as of the principles of layering and divergence. If we examine Table 6.189 again, the different types of meanings of the adverb are available at the same point in time, and these readings are completely independent of each other.

The data analysed in this chapter for *to death* only partially confirm Margerie's (2011) results for this prepositional phrase. As seen in section 4.1.1.1, Margerie argues that the first occurrences of *to death* as a degree modifier date to the second half of the sixteenth century and are very scarce. These early examples involve the verb *hate* and apply to things rather than to people (e.g. *the which Castell the king hated to the death*). Before developing its intensifying meaning, however, *to death* occurs in a number of transitional constructions which facilitate a degree interpretation. A construction which, according to Margerie, is crucial for the inference of a degree reading of *to death* also involves the verb *hate*, but applied to people rather than to things. This construction, which suggests an indirect relationship between death and the feeling of hating someone, represents a clear case of subjectification, and constitutes, in Margerie's view, a bridging context for the subsequent emergence of an unequivocal degree meaning of *to death*. However, as seen above, no evidence of such bridging contexts for the development of intensifying *to*

death has been found in my data. In the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century examples from EEBOCorp 1.0 *to death* is attested already with an intensifying meaning in collocations such as *laugh to death*, *tickle to death*, *impatient to death*, and *enamoured to death*. These early intensifying occurrences coincide synchronically with those for the collocation *hate to death*, which is claimed by Margerie to have functioned as a trigger for the degree interpretation of the prepositional phrase. Therefore, this gradual cline of evolution cannot, unfortunately, be confirmed in the light of the data examined in this dissertation.

6.5. DEATH-RELATED INTENSIFIERS: GRAMMATICALISATION AND RELATED PROCESSES

Sections 6.1 to 6.4 above discussed the rise and development of different intensifiers from the semantic field of death, in particular *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*, in the light of several sources of data, specifically historical dictionaries (6.1), corpora (6.2 and 6.3.1), and electronic collections (6.3.2 and 6.3.3). Section 6.5, by contrast, is intended to connect, in a more explicit way, the corpus-based study carried out in this section with the theoretical discussions on intensifiers and grammaticalisation provided in chapters 2-4, hence setting the current study within the specific theoretical framework of grammaticalisation.

The data analysis in the preceding sections has clearly shown that the forms under study in this piece of research, all of which belong to the semantic field of death and, therefore, refer to a crucial human experience, came to develop hyperbolic uses over time ('very, extremely'). As suggested in chapter 2, intensification and exaggeration are prevalent in language, where they serve a crucial function, namely to highlight or maximise the relevance of our message. The remainder of this section thus looks into the rise of the degree meanings of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*, which goes hand in hand with subjectification and grammaticalisation.

The usage-based study presented in this chapter revealed that subjective uses of the forms under analysis developed after originally literal or descriptive uses, and before their intensifying meanings, thus conforming to the cline proposed by Adamson (2000: 55) descriptive > subjective > intensifying (cf. 4.1.1.2 above). An exception to this is *mortal(ly)*, which, being a borrowing from Anglo-Norman and Middle French, was adopted in English already with subjective readings from the start. The subjective meanings of the forms analysed implied a semantic transfer of death-related properties or

qualities, thus involving the speaker's/writer's negative affect or appreciation of the situation. Death was hence metaphorically evoked by means of specific properties or circumstances, such as the paleness of a person, gloom and darkness, silence and quietness, etc., all of which recall death-related features. Most importantly, by metaphorical extension, these subjective uses of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* paved the way for later unequivocal intensifying uses. In other words, a degree reading of extreme paleness or extreme silence was initially possible only as a pragmatic implicature in context, since 'pragmatic implicatures arising in context are crucial for interpreting how each new meaning comes into being' (Traugott 2006: 354). It was only later that such implicatures became conventionalised and the new degree meaning was coded. These subjective meanings of the different death-related forms can be compared to what Traugott (1989) calls *weakly subjective uses*, i.e. those which at a further stage prompt purely intensifying readings or *strongly subjective meanings* in Traugott's (1989) terms.

As explained in 5.4.2, with the aim of minimising the risk of a biased interpretation of dubious examples I added two further intermediate stages to Adamson's original cline: one for those meanings which are ambiguous between descriptive and subjective and another for those readings which are indeterminate between subjective and intensifying. The materials analysed yielded numerous cases of such ambiguous meanings. Some occurrences, for instance, showed contexts in which someone was sick, in agony or sharp physical pain, but his/her eventual death was not explicitly mentioned. Likewise, other instances involved cases which could be categorised as either subjective or intensifying, describing situations in which somebody was very angry or jealous. In such contexts, it was unclear whether such feelings would have further consequences (e.g. a violent reaction of the character) or whether, by contrast, the form in question was simply emphasising the degree of the character's anger or jealousy. However, the addition of these two further stages to Adamson's cline to account for intermediate types of meanings did not correlate in all cases with the long diachrony for these forms in my data. Thus, many of the examples of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* which were marked as ambiguous between descriptive and subjective were documented at the same or at a later period than clear subjective examples. Likewise, some occurrences which could be counted as both subjective and intensifying appeared later than the first intensifying attestations of some of the forms, except in the case of the adjectives *deadly* and *mortal* and of the adverb *mortally*. In other words, although the diachronic cline of evolution descriptive (D) > descriptive/subjective (D/S) > subjective (S) > subjective/intensifying

(S/I) > intensifying (I) could have been possible and is certainly appealing, it cannot be effectively confirmed in the light of the materials analysed. This, however, may be a by-product of the data included in the materials analysed: for instance, the HC, which was used to obtain data for the ME period, yielded very few attestations of the forms at issue here, so that there is no corpus evidence for any descriptive/subjective use of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*. Moreover, EBOCorp 1.0 also records very few examples of these forms with meanings which are ambiguous between subjective and intensifying and which clearly antedate the first intensifying examples. In fact, this is only the case for *mortally*, *deadly* (adj.) and *mortal* (adj.). Whether ambiguous attestations could have predated intensifying occurrences of *to death* and of the adverbs *deadly* and *mortal*, therefore acting as triggers for a subsequent degree reading, is something which, unfortunately, cannot be empirically confirmed.

From the corpus-based analysis presented in this dissertation it can safely be concluded that all the death-related forms examined here reveal grammaticalised uses as intensifiers and have already placed themselves down the grammaticalisation cline, although to different degrees. In what follows, the different grammaticalisation features shown by these forms are summarised.

- *Semantic bleaching or desemanticisation*: the forms studied here evolved from literal or descriptive meanings, gradually increasing in subjectivity (subjective uses), and eventually becoming grammaticalised as intensifiers, hence the possibility for their co-occurrence with collocates which are inherently positive. Thus, from collocations such as *dead wounded*, *mortally sick*, or *deadly sin*, via a process of grammaticalisation, we find, at a later stage, collocations such as *blush to death*, *mortal fine*, *dead sure*, or *deadly determination*, among many others. This is related to the parameter of semantic attrition referred to by Lehmann (1985) (cf. section 3.2), since these forms gradually lost semantic substance, developing a much more abstract degree meaning, from an originally concrete literal meaning. The only exception to the cline descriptive > subjective > intensifying is *mortal(ly)*, which was borrowed already with subjective uses.
- *Subjectification*: the semantic development of death-related intensifiers clearly indicates that their meanings came to be increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude towards the proposition (Traugott 1989: 35) (cf. 3.3.3). Death-related qualities such as paleness, silence, etc. implied in all cases the speaker's/writer's negative judgement of the situation and hence a subjective

view of the situation. In that sense, being deadly pale could be read, for instance, as ‘being pale to a degree that (s)he reminds me of a corpse’. Furthermore, it was also hypothesised that these subjective uses eventually favoured a contextualised reading of these forms as intensifiers. Although the intensifying meaning was only initially available as a contextualised pragmatic inference, these invited inferences (cf. Traugott and Dasher 2002) then turned into conventionalised degree meanings. Subjective meanings could therefore be argued to have functioned in the current data as bridging contexts (cf. Heine 2002: 84-85), eventually giving rise to intensifying readings. In sum, the development of the forms under analysis in this dissertation, which implied in all cases a gradual increase in subjectivity, can be summarised as follows: ‘characteristic of death’ > ‘reminiscent of the negative aspects of death’ > ‘to a degree which I consider very/extremely high’.

- *Reanalysis*: the semantic development of the death-related forms examined clearly shows that they all came to be semantically reanalysed as intensifiers over time. *Dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* originally indicated a literal meaning (‘fatal(ly)’), death being the ultimate consequence. Nonetheless, as explained above, they came to be used with meanings which gradually deviated from the originally literal reading, to later express meanings which implied more subjective views on the part of the speaker/writer, with an obvious increase in subjectivity. Finally, they were eventually reinterpreted as markers of degree.
- *Layering*: the synchronic coexistence of different types of meanings for these forms represents a clear case of layering, i.e., the ‘persistence of older forms and meanings alongside newer forms and meanings’ (Hopper and Traugott 2003: 124) (cf. section 3.2). Thus, *blush to death* or *mortal lazy*, clearly intensifying, coexisted in the data side by side with literal senses such as *press to death* or *mortal sick*. In other words, although descriptive readings were the oldest ones recorded for these forms, they are still possible in the most recent stages of the language. Therefore, the emergence of a new layer, in this case a new meaning, did not automatically imply the disappearance of an older layer.
- *Divergence*: closely related to layering is the principle of divergence; i.e., ‘when a form undergoes grammaticalization and the original form continues to be used as an autonomous element so that the grammaticalized and the ungrammaticalized forms coexist side by side’ (Heine 2003: 589) (cf. 3.2). The data show that, for instance, descriptive meanings for the adjective *dead* (e.g. *dead man*) were

the British National Corpus (BNC) for more recent data (cf. Blanco-Suárez 2014b),⁸⁰ the picture turns out to be completely different, since the adverb *dead* would be the most advanced of all these forms in the grammaticalisation cline, given its occurrence as a modifier of relatively recent forms in the language, such as the adjectives *chuffed*, *sexy*, *naff*, *ace*, *spooky*, and *choosy*⁸¹ This clearly attests to its productivity as an intensifier in the contemporary language.

As suggested by the cline in Figure 6.55 above, the adverbial forms are more advanced in the grammaticalisation process and are more widely used as intensifiers than the corresponding adjectival forms, which are found at the opposite end of the cline. In view of the data, therefore, adverbs tend to specialise in the intensifying function. Interestingly, zero forms outnumber *-ly* forms as intensifiers in the material analysed in this dissertation. As noted by Nevalainen (1999: 429-430), zero forms were frequently employed as intensifiers in EModE, but towards the end of this period the suffixed counterparts were clearly on the rise. In the case of death-related intensifiers, however, zero adverbs such as *dead* and *mortal* are the preferred forms overall in the intensifying function.

To conclude, taking into account the results from all the sources consulted in the current piece of research, as well as the grammaticalisation cline suggested for these intensifiers in Figure 6.55 above, it can be argued that *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* all show grammaticalised uses. Clear indicators of their grammaticalisation are their semantic bleaching and increased subjectivity, their reanalysis as expressive of a high/extreme degree, their occurrence with positive collocates, as well as the principles of layering and divergence. It was also shown that despite their high token frequency (consider the large number of examples yielded by the different corpora and electronic collections), the type frequency of these items as intensifiers is, by contrast, comparatively small. Their intensifying function is not, therefore, a high-frequency phenomenon. Finally, although *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* do not illustrate other features often associated with grammaticalisation, such as phonological attrition or intersubjectification, the results presented in this chapter provide convincing evidence of their grammaticalised status.

⁸⁰ Blanco-Suárez (2014b) analyses the distribution of *dead* in four varieties of PDE: British English, Scottish English, Irish English, and American English.

⁸¹ Spooky and choosy date to the nineteenth century. Sexy, with the meaning 'sexually attractive', ace 'very good, excellent', and naff, by contrast, were first recorded in the twentieth century, according to the OED.

7. Concluding remarks and suggestions for future research

In view of the significance of an all-important experience such as death, this thesis explored its use for intensification purposes in language. The overarching aim of the dissertation was to offer a comprehensive diachronic corpus-based analysis of the origin and development of different intensifiers from the semantic field of death in English, in particular *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death*. Drawing on data from different historical dictionaries, corpora, and electronic collections, the study covered from the ME period to the twentieth century. The present piece of research thus set out to fill a gap in the extensive literature on English intensifiers.

Chapter 1 served as an introduction to this piece of research, contextualising the topic, presenting the main aims pursued in the thesis, and offering an outline of the different chapters and sections into which it is divided. The theoretical foundations of the dissertation were then set forth in the literature review section, comprising chapter 2 ('Intensification and intensifiers in language'), chapter 3 ('Grammaticalisation'), and chapter 4 ('English intensifiers: a historical overview'). The methodology used in the empirical part of the dissertation was the focus of chapter 5, while chapter 6, the core of the thesis, corresponded to the analysis of the data. A more detailed description of the contents of each chapter is provided in the following paragraphs / what follows.

As stated above, the theoretical background of the thesis was established in chapters 2, 3, and 4. Chapter 2 opened with some preliminary remarks about intensification, which appears to be a very successful strategy used for persuasive purposes. In fact, in a given speech event speakers do not only transmit content or information, but time and again intrude into that speech event to express opinions, attitudes, etc. This chapter additionally presented a number of ways through which intensification can be achieved in language. An overview of various intensification strategies or intensifiers was introduced in section 2.1, among others the use of superlatives, word order, repetition, and intonation. The second part of the chapter, section 2.2, focused on the main features of intensifiers and different proposals for their classification. It was suggested that the label *intensifier* was used here in a wide sense to refer to those items which can have either a lowering or a heightening effect (e.g. *scarcely* or *extremely*, respectively). This label was chosen at the expense of alternative denominations such as *degree words* or *degree modifiers*, since the term *intensifier* highlights the most immediate function of

these forms, i.e., that of giving prominence to a specific quality or feature, whether up or down on the degree scale. It must be noted, however, that *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *death*, the intensifiers under analysis in this dissertation, can only indicate a high or extreme degree on an imaginary degree scale. These preliminary terminological considerations were followed by a review of the different models which have been put forward in the literature for the classification of intensifiers (cf. section 2.2.1), from the earliest studies at the beginning of the twentieth century to much more recent proposals, such as the ones included in the comprehensive grammars of English (Quirk et al. 1985; Biber et al. 1999; Huddleston and Pullum et al. 2002). Given that these models of classification share some commonalities, I decided to group them thematically rather than presenting them in chronological order, and I paid special attention to their shared features as well as to their idiosyncrasies. Broadly speaking, these proposals can be classified into two main groups: on the one hand, those models which establish degree scales (2.2.1.1) and, on the other, those which consider different semantic categories (2.2.1.2). The suitability of these models of classification of intensifiers was the focus of section 2.2.2, while some remarks in the guise of conclusion were provided in 2.3.

Chapter 3, the second of the literature review part, was concerned with the theory of grammaticalisation, since the analysis presented in this dissertation hinges precisely upon this approach. The chapter opened with some introductory comments on the history of grammaticalisation, a term which goes back to 1912, when it was coined by Antoine Meillet, although already in the tenth century Chinese writers had discussed the origin of grammatical words (Heine, Claudi, and Hünemeyer 1991: 5). Despite the popularity of historical linguistics in the nineteenth century and the coinage of the term *grammaticalisation* in the early twentieth century, grammaticalisation studies were by and large neglected until virtually the 1980s. From that time on, grammaticalisation has consolidated itself, not only as a type of linguistic change, but also as a theoretical approach. Most importantly, grammaticalisation has been shown to be both universal and ‘cross-componential’ (McMahon 1994: 161), affecting the domains of syntax, morphology, phonology, and semantics.

After these preliminary remarks on the history of grammaticalisation and on its most basic features, section 3.2 was devoted to the parameters and principles of grammaticalisation, as defined by Lehmann (1985) and Hopper (1991), respectively. Lehmann postulated that the degree of grammaticalisation of an item can be measured against three different aspects, namely weight, cohesion, and variability, which can be

viewed both paradigmatically and syntagmatically, resulting in a set of parameters (cf. Table 3.1 in chapter 3). If grammaticalisation is considered diachronically, a number of processes arise, namely i) attrition, ii) paradigmaticisation, iii) obligatorification, iv) condensation, v) coalescence, and vi) fixation. These processes, together with Hopper's principles of grammaticalisation (see below), were later examined in relation to the corpus data in sections 6.4 and 6.5.

Attrition can be of two types: semantic and phonological. Semantic attrition, also known as bleaching or desemanticisation, implies a gradual generalisation of meaning, so that the forms which undergo grammaticalisation become increasingly grammatical over time. Prototypical cases of semantic attrition in grammaticalisation are the English suffix *-ly*, which has its origin in the OE noun *līc* 'body', and concessive markers such as *while*, which had a temporal meaning prior to developing a concessive reading. Phonological attrition or erosion, also goes hand in hand with grammaticalisation, as shown in the history of the *going to*-construction, which is very often reduced to ['gənə], and in the development of the modals *wanna* and *gotta*, reduced to ['wɒnə] and ['gɒtə].

Another of the processes discussed by Lehmann is paradigmaticisation. Grammaticalised items tend to increase in homogeneity and to be set in more uniform paradigms. This is the case, for instance, of the French prepositions *de* and *à*, which form a more homogeneous category than their Latin counterparts *dē* and *ad*, as these prepositions could perform further functions in Latin, whereas French *à* and *de* came to form the paradigm of oblique cases. Paradigmaticisation is closely related to another process identified by Lehmann, namely coalescence, which implies 'an increase in bondedness or tightness of combination' (Haspelmath 2011: 346). Thus, through coalescence formerly independent words become clitics and, occasionally, affixes (Haspelmath 2011: 346). For instance, the aforementioned French prepositions *de* and *à* can be fused with the definite article *le*, giving *du* and *au*, respectively.

The remaining processes considered by Lehmann are fixation, obligatorification, and condensation, which are closely interrelated. Grammaticalised forms lose syntagmatic variability, that is, they tend to lose syntactic freedom and occupy fixed slots. This process is known as fixation. This is the case, for instance, of the Romance adverbs ending in *-mente*, which could appear preposed and postposed to adjectives in Latin, but were fixed to post-adjectival position in the Romance languages. Grammaticalised items do not only lose syntactic freedom, but also reduce their scope. This process is

referred to as condensation. Resorting again to the example of the French prepositions *de* and *à*, while in Latin they took a noun in the ablative case, in French they take a caseless noun. In addition to their limited syntactic freedom and to the reduction in their scope, grammaticalised forms tend to become obligatory in specific contexts, a process which Lehmann names obligatorification. A prototypical case of obligatorification is found in the paradigm of French negators, where the adverb *pas*, a noun meaning ‘step’ in origin, became over time the only obligatory element in negative clauses.

In addition to Lehmann’s parameters, a number of principles are often suggested as characteristic of grammaticalisation processes. Unlike Lehmann’s parameters, however, Hopper’s principles apply at the early stages of grammaticalisation. These principles are (i) decategorialisation, (ii) specialisation, (iii) layering, (iv) divergence, and (v) persistence (Hopper 1991: 22-31).

Decategorialisation refers to the process whereby items gradually adopt features of secondary classes, and, in turn, lose or neutralise features of their original class. For instance, French *pas* can take determiners and modifiers when it is a noun, but this is not possible when it functions as a negative particle. *Pas* also serves to illustrate another of Hopper’s principles, namely specialisation, which is equivalent to Lehmann’s obligatorification. Thus, in addition to losing characteristics of its original noun class, *pas* has specialised as a negator in contemporary French, so that it is now the only compulsory particle in negative clauses.

Two further principles distinguished by Hopper are layering and divergence, which are very closely connected. Layering implies the coexistence of a given set of forms within the same functional domain. When this occurs, both the old and the new layers may specialise or even develop new meanings. By way of illustration, futurity can be expressed in numerous ways in the Romance languages, typically by means of the morphological future (e.g. *chanterai* in French) and the *going to*-construction. The coexistence of these layers or forms, however, implies different nuances and contexts of use. Divergence also implies the coexistence of different layers, but in this case the layers perform different functions. French *pas* serves again as a case in point, since it exists in the contemporary language both as a noun and as a negative particle. The same form, therefore, performs two separate functions.

The last of Hopper’s principles is persistence, according to which grammaticalised forms may retain traces of their original meaning, as is the case, for instance, of the English auxiliary *will*. Going back to OE *willan* ‘wish, desire, be willing to’, its original

volitional meaning can still be identified in certain contexts in PDE (e.g. *will you marry me?*).

After presenting the parameters and principles of grammaticalisation in section 3.2, section 3.3 discussed some of the phenomena which are often related to this process of change, specifically (i) unidirectionality and grammaticalisation clines, (ii) reanalysis, (iii) (inter)subjectification, and (iv) frequency. Given that these are crucial in the semantic changes undergone by the death-related intensifiers under analysis in this dissertation, they were tackled again in the discussion of the data provided in chapter 6.

A controversial topic often discussed in relation to grammaticalisation is the issue of unidirectionality. As shown in section 3.3.1, grammaticalisation is a cross-linguistic and widely attested phenomenon which typically proceeds in the direction from less to more grammatical. Some grammaticalisation clines often proposed in the literature were mentioned in this section, including, on the semantic level, the following: lexical > grammatical; less subjective > more subjective > intersubjective; and concrete > abstract and general meanings. Other clines commonly discussed in the literature operate on the syntactic (major > minor categories) and phonological levels (full > reduced phonological forms).

Another phenomenon related to grammaticalisation is reanalysis (cf. section 3.3.2), which implies a redefinition of constituent boundaries, turning an original structure (A, B) C into a new one, reinterpreted as A (B, C) (cf. Heine et al. 1991). There are manifold examples of reanalysis understood in terms of grammaticalisation, such as, for instance, the expression of the inflectional future in the Romance languages (e.g. Spanish and Catalan *cantaré*, Galician and Portuguese *cantarei*), going back to a construction in Latin with the verb *habeo* ('have to') postposed to an infinitive. However, reanalysis can also occur outside grammaticalisation, as in the case of *hamburger*, originally [*Hamburg*] + [*er*], 'item (of food) from Hamburg', later reinterpreted as [*ham*] + [*burger*] (cf. Hopper and Traugott 2003: 50).

The notion of subjectivity is also frequently mentioned in connection with grammaticalisation (cf. section 3.3.3). This concept, related to the subjective component of language and, hence, to its expressive function, refers to the fact that communicative events do not exclusively involve the exchange of information and of purely objective meanings, since with language we also transmit our beliefs, attitudes, and points of view. Moreover, in any communicative event we also pay attention to our interlocutor(s), both in regard to their possible reactions to the contents which are being

conveyed, and also with respect to their social stance, hence the use of certain forms of address such as *madam* and *sir*, or the use of V-pronouns in the Romance languages. These meanings whereby the speaker or writer shows his/her attention to the addressee are known as intersubjective. The diachronic processes giving rise to these subjective and intersubjective meanings are known as subjectification and intersubjectification, both of which play a major role in semantic change.

Broadly speaking, two main trends can be distinguished in the research on (inter)subjectivity, namely the Traugottian and the Langackerian views. Subjectification is fundamental in Traugott's theory of semantic change. According to her, meanings tend to be increasingly based in the speaker's subjective belief state/attitude toward the proposition (1989: 35), so that the following cline of evolution can be observed cross-linguistically: propositional > (textual) > (expressive) (1989: 31). These expressive or subjective meanings may additionally be used to code the speaker's attention to the addressee. In fact, in her theory of semantic change the following cline of subjectivity has also been noted: non-/less subjective > subjective > intersubjective (cf. Traugott and Dasher 2002: 225; Traugott 2003: 134). In sum, meanings tend to become more subjective over time, and these subjective meanings may eventually turn into intersubjective meanings. An example of this development is provided by the discourse marker *kind of* and *kinda*, discussed by Margerie (2010), which goes back to a construction with the noun *kind* as head (e.g. *the kind of college*), which later developed an approximation reading, involving a rise in subjectivity (e.g. *a kind of reddish-brown colour*), before being used with a pragmatic meaning (e.g. *it's kind of fucking important*). This gradual increase in subjectivity undoubtedly relates to grammaticalisation, for grammaticalisation is gradient, and implies the development of forms with originally concrete and objective meanings into forms serving 'increasingly abstract, pragmatic, interpersonal, and speaker-based functions' (Traugott 1995: 32). Nonetheless, subjectification can also occur outside grammaticalisation, as is the case of the verb *insist*, from Latin *insistere*, which from an originally objective meaning ('to stand upon') gradually developed readings which implied a much more subjective evaluation ('to dwell at length or with emphasis on or upon a matter').

The second major view of (inter)subjectivity is that by Langacker, which is based on Cognitive Grammar. In his model, the meaning of a given expression is determined by a number of factors, such as the relevance we attribute to certain elements, the perspective taken on the scene, or background assumptions (1990: 315). This is most obvious in the

use of directional adverbs such as *up* or *down*, *right* or *left*, which are clearly dependent on the speaker's/writer's perspective. For Langacker, a meaning is objective when there is no need to mention the participants in the speech event, since the element referred to is placed onstage. Conversely, when this element is implicit and in the offstage region, the meaning is argued to be subjective.

Of the two views of subjectivity discussed in the preceding paragraphs, in this dissertation I have followed Traugott's model, which is crucial in the account of the semantic development of death-related intensifiers (cf. sections 6.4 and 6.5).

Frequency is also mentioned in grammaticalisation studies as one of the concomitants of grammaticalisation, and the effects of frequency on grammaticalisation are duly discussed in section 3.3.4, which presents some paradigmatic case studies. Before actually going into how frequency impacts upon grammaticalising items, some terminological issues seemed in order, specifically key concepts in the literature on frequency, such as habituation, automatisisation, and entrenchment (see 3.3.4.1). Repetition or habituation is what renders an item more semantically opaque and results in its ultimate bleaching. Repetition of a given form can also affect its processing, so that over time certain formerly separate elements may become single chunks. The adverbs *quizá(s)* in Spanish and *peut-être* in French, for instance, now forming single units, are derived from *qui sapit* 'who knows' and *puet cel estre* 'that can exist', respectively. This ties in well with yet another fundamental concept in the discussions of grammaticalisation and frequency, namely entrenchment. Thus, with usage, a given structure gains progressively more weight, to the point of becoming a single unit, as in the case of *quizá(s)* and *peut-être*.

The section on the interrelationship between grammaticalisation and frequency also introduced a distinction which is now widely used in the literature on the topic, namely that between token and type frequency (cf. 3.3.4.2), a distinction which is also made in connection with the analysis of the data in chapter 6. Token frequency refers to the raw frequency of a given element in a written/oral text, while type frequency indicates the different lexical items to which a particular pattern or construction is applicable (Bybee and Thompson 1997: 378), i.e., its dictionary frequency. For instance, plurality in English can be expressed in different ways, as with *-(e)n* plurals (e.g. *oxen*) and *i*-mutated plurals (e.g. *mice*), but the plural marker with the highest type frequency is, of course, the *-(e)s* plural. Frequency has also been associated with two opposite effects: the so-called Conserving and Reduction Effects, which seem to render constructions

resistant to change, on the one hand, owing to their level of entrenchment (e.g. strong forms of verbs), and to induce change (e.g. the *going to*-construction, often reduced to *gonna*), on the other.

To close this chapter on grammaticalisation, I described some recent trends in grammaticalisation studies (3.4), specifically its relationship with domains such as pragmatics, Construction Grammar, and language acquisition.

The last chapter from the literature review section, chapter 4, provided an account of English intensifiers from the perspectives of grammaticalisation (section 4.1.) and variation (section 4.2). Section 4.1.1 summarised the history of English reinforcers, both maximisers (4.1.1.1) and boosters (4.1.1.2). It was shown that reinforcers originate in words and expressions with literal meanings (e.g. *really* and *very*), mostly manner adverbs, which came to develop over time intensifying or degree readings via a grammaticalisation process. The evidence provided by the literature reviewed in this section confirms the fevered invention and competition of intensifiers noted by Bolinger (1972: 18), as well as their constant recycling (Tagliamonte 2008). Many PDE intensifiers, including *absolutely*, *downright*, *right*, *utterly*, or *very*, have a long history, going back to the ME period. Some other forms, by contrast, were rather short-lived, as is the case of *throughout* and *þwert-out*, and were soon ousted by other rival forms. The competition within the domain of intensifiers was also discussed in section 4.1.1.3 in the light of data from two textual genres, namely medical texts, and business and personal correspondence (Méndez-Naya and Pahta 2010; Peters 1994, respectively). Peters' study documents some innovations in the paradigm of boosters, led by the youngest writers, including *excessively*, *fervently*, *terribly*, and *very*. The oldest members of the family, in turn, resorted to less novel intensifiers, such as *right*, *well*, or *full*. Méndez-Naya and Pahta (2010) note that *right* and *full(ly)* underwent a reduction in the number of collocates and adjectives types with which they could occur, whereas *very* showed the opposite trend, being a more recent or innovative use in the language.

The second part of the chapter, section 4.2, reviewed the use of intensifiers among different social groups, both diachronically and synchronically (4.2.1), and across different varieties of English (4.2.2). Nevalainen's (2008) diachronic study, for instance, is concerned with the use of several dual-form (zero vs. *-ly*) intensifiers by speakers belonging to different social ranks in letters from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century. Though she found differences in use among the various social groups, none of the intensifiers was restricted to a given rank. For instance, *extreme(ly)* appeared to be

popular among women, while *fully* was at first more frequently used by the nobility and the merchants, but eventually came to be used by all ranks alike. Synchronic research on intensifiers, in turn, has focused mainly on the differences in use among teenagers and adult speakers, the former being more innovative (cf., for instance, their use of *fucking*, *bloody*, *enough*, or *pure*). As regards the geographical distribution of intensifiers, the studies examined in this chapter show that while many intensifiers are common to different varieties (e.g. *totally*, *absolutely*, or *quite*), others seem to be closely linked to a given geographical area. This is the case, for instance, of *pure* in Tyneside and Glaswegian English, or of *gey* and *unco* in Scots.

The methodology adopted in the present piece of research was the focus of chapter 5, which opened with some preliminary remarks about the formalist and functionalist paradigms in the history of linguistics, which dominated, in very general terms, the first and second half of the twentieth century, respectively. The renewed interest in actual uses of language and in the exploitation of authentic materials in linguistic studies was characteristic of the functionalist paradigm and of usage-based approaches to language. The methodology adopted in this dissertation was also corpus-based, since the overwhelming majority of the data were extracted from corpora. Before actually looking into the sources of the data selected for the analysis, however, chapter 5 provided a brief review of the origins and the development of corpus linguistics as a discipline (cf. section 5.1).

Section 5.2 presented the different sources of data in detail, specifically dictionaries (5.2.1), corpora (5.2.2), and electronic collections (5.2.3). The two historical dictionaries consulted, the OED and the MED, proved to be invaluable, for they provided a preliminary overview of the evolution of the death-related intensifiers under analysis. Thanks to these sources, for instance, it was possible to obtain an estimation of the first attestations of subjective and intensifying uses for these forms, as well as of their earliest collocations. In the first part of this section, therefore, I summarised the history of these two dictionaries and illustrated their most relevant features by resorting to screenshots for different death-related intensifiers. The second part of section 5.2 described the different corpora used in the dissertation. For the long diachrony, the HC and ARCHER were selected. Both corpora have now become classic references in the field of English (historical) corpus linguistics, and details about their compilation and composition were given here (5.2.2.1 and 5.2.2.2, respectively). EEBOCorp 1.0 was chosen for the EModE period (cf. section 5.2.2.3). The information provided by this

corpus turned out to be vital, for EModE represents a turning point in the rise of intensifying meanings for the forms analysed in this dissertation. Finally, for the LModE period, two electronic collections were consulted, namely ECF and NCF (see 5.2.3). The main drawback of these collections is precisely that they are not corpora, and, as such, cannot be used with concordance programmes, which clearly constrains and delays the searches and, therefore, the data analysis.

The computer and statistical tools used in this piece of research were the focus of section 5.3. The software which was selected for the retrieval of examples from the different corpora was WordSmith 6.0 (cf. 5.3.1), in particular its Concordance function. In this section I also introduced some preliminary notes about the collocational analysis carried out in chapter 6, presenting the different tests used to measure the statistical significance of the results, in particular the *z*-score, the *mutual information (MI)*, the cubed version of the *mutual information (MI³)*, and the *log-likelihood* (5.3.2).

Section 5.4 was concerned with the database (5.4.1) and the variables considered for the analysis (5.4.2). All the tokens from the corpora consulted were saved as concordance files, and then exported to an Excel spreadsheet. In the case of the electronic collections, however, it was not possible to follow this procedure. The individual results had instead to be copied manually, which turned out to be very time-consuming given the high number of occurrences for each of the forms examined. Each Excel file contained two types of information: extralinguistic information, on the one hand, and linguistic information, on the other. In the case of corpora (HC, ARCHER, and EEBOCorp1.0), the extralinguistic information was limited to the period and the file name, while in the case of ECF and NCF the information included the date, the author, and the specific work. As for the linguistic variables in my Excel database, I looked at the specific collocation in which the token in question was attested, the type of meaning of the collocation, its semantic prosody, and also the word category modified by each intensifier.

The results of the corpus-based study were presented in chapter 6, which opened with an overview of the evolution of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* in the light of the evidence from the historical dictionaries (cf. section 6.1). This was followed by a close examination of the data from the corpora and databases both for the long diachrony (section 6.2) and for the EModE and LModE periods in focus (section 6.3). Section 6.4, in turn, traced the semantic development of the death-related forms considering the overall results obtained from the different sources consulted. What follows is a

summary of the most relevant conclusions drawn from the analysis.

Dead (adjective and adverb) shows signs of incipient subjectivity already from the ME period, in collocations such as *dead slow* or *dead still*. However, purely intensifying meanings of *dead* are not attested until the close of the sixteenth century in the case of the adverb (e.g. *dead sure*) and the second half of the seventeenth century for the adjective (e.g. *dead ripeness*). Though the data from the HC and ARCHER for the intensifying adjective and adverb *dead* were very scarce (just one instance of the collocation *dead serious* in ARCHER), EEBOCorp 1.0 provided evidence of early intensifying readings of these forms, as shown by the collocations *dead sure* and *dead sober* for the adverb, and by *dead flat* for the adjective. The results from ECF and NCF served to throw more light on the degree function of *dead*, with collocations which were not attested in the earlier data, such as *dead loss*, *dead bargain*, *dead against*, *dead trivial*, and *dead sick (of something)*.

The results for the adjective and the adverb *deadly* went much along the same lines as for the adjective and adverb *dead*. As suggested by the OED and MED, subjective uses of the adjective *deadly* were first recorded in the ME period, while its intensifying function was not attested until centuries later, in the second half of the seventeenth century (e.g. *deadly drinker*). Its adverbial counterpart, however, developed intensifying uses considerably earlier, already in the fifteenth century, as in the collocation *deadly dill* ('stupid'). The data from the HC and ARCHER for the long diachrony of *deadly* turned out to be very limited, with very few examples of subjective meanings for the adjective (e.g. *deadly feud*, *deadly enemy*, or *deadly grief*) and no instances of intensifying *deadly* (adjective and adverb). Although EEBOCorp 1.0 recorded a vast number of examples of the adjectival and adverbial forms, the corpus actually yielded very few occurrences of the intensifying function, all of them corresponding to the adverb. Subjective collocations of the adjective *deadly* in EEBOCorp 1.0 include *deadly woe*, *deadly sorrow*, *deadly swoon*, *deadly fear*, and *deadly darkness*. Some other collocations such as *deadly jealousy* and *deadly envy* were argued to allow both a subjective and an intensifying reading. Moreover, in the overwhelming majority of the examples in the corpus, adjectival *deadly* showed negative or neutral semantic prosody, although it occasionally modified positive nouns as well, such as *glory*, *treasure*, *care*, or *charm*. Nonetheless, in all these examples *deadly* still had a descriptive or literal meaning. Therefore, positive semantic prosody did not correlate with intensifying meanings and, hence, with a high degree of grammaticalisation of the adjective *deadly*

at this stage. In contrast to its adjectival counterpart, the adverb *deadly* showed a grammaticalised status in the EEBOCorp 1.0 data, as it was attested with readings which were intermediate between subjective and intensifying from the early sixteenth century (e.g. *envy deadly*) and with intensifying meanings from the late sixteenth century (e.g. *deadly set*). Most importantly, in its intensifying function it was found as a modifier of positive elements (e.g. in the collocations *deadly handsome*, *deadly witty*, *love deadly*), though not exclusively, as it also collocated with neutral (*set*, *sure*, *deep*) and negative items (e.g. *dull*, *lazy*, *unfortunate*). The adverb *deadly* could also modify a wider range of forms than its homonymous adjective, and although it functioned predominantly as a modifier of verbs, participles, and adjectives, it was also attested with an intensifying meaning as a modifier of the adverb *near* (*deadly near*). The evidence from ECF and NCF served to confirm the results provided by the corpora. Examples of the adverb with subjective readings were also present in these collections, as was the case of *deadly pale*, *deadly still*, *deadly white*, and *deadly faint*. ECF and NCF also yielded more grammaticalised uses for the adverb than for the adjective *deadly*, with novel intensifying collocations such as *deadly strong*, *deadly fierce*, *deadly comfortable*, *deadly long*, or *deadly curious*.

As seen in section 6.1.3, the adjective and adverb *mortal* is a borrowing from Anglo-Norman and Middle French. This conditioned its development, since at the date of its adoption in English in the late fourteenth century, both literal and subjective uses coexisted. According to the OED, it took several centuries for the adjective and the adverb *mortal* to develop purely intensifying meanings, which arose only in the eighteenth century, as in the collocation *mortal pains* for the adjective (e.g. *to take mortal pains to do something*) and *mortal fond* for the adverb. As far as the adjective *mortal* is concerned, the data for the long diachrony from the HC and ARCHER provided mostly occurrences of its descriptive function, as in the case of the collocations *mortal life*, *mortal man*, and *mortal thing*, though occasionally subjective uses were also found, as in *mortal hatred* or *mortal enemy*. However, no examples of the intensifying adjective *mortal* were attested in these two corpora. The data from EEBOCorp 1.0 went much along the same lines as those from the HC and ARCHER. *Mortal* (adjective) thus behaved much alike its Germanic counterpart *deadly*, showing descriptive uses in the vast majority of the attestations (e.g. *mortal judgement*, *mortal folk*, *mortal venom*, etc.). Subjective meanings were also present (e.g. *mortal adversary*, *mortal hate*, *mortal foe*, and *mortal sorrow*), and although no purely intensifying

readings of the adjective were found in EEBOCorp 1.0, some examples could be interpreted as either subjective or intensifying. This was the case of the collocations *mortal jealousy*, *mortal ire*, and *mortal envy*, some of which dated to the late fifteenth century. *Mortal* could also occur with positive elements (*love*, *fame*, *praise*, and *honour*). Positive prosody, however, was not in harmony with a high degree of grammaticalisation, as most of the positive collocates of *mortal* had literal or descriptive meanings rather than intensifying meanings, except for a few examples in which *mortal* was ambiguous between descriptive and subjective. In the LModE data from ECF and NCF subjective uses of the adjective *mortal* were also widely documented, hence collocations such as *mortal enemy*, *mortal hatred*, *mortal inquietude*, *mortal agony*, and *mortal fear*. Furthermore, although intensifying readings were by no means the most frequent for *mortal* (adjective) in these two electronic collections, intensifying collocations such as *mortal disappointment*, *mortal hurry*, *mortal speed*, *mortal certainty*, and *mortal repugnance* were attested. It must be noted that those collocates of *mortal* which were positive (e.g. *charm*, *majesty*, *jealousy*, *perfection*, and *happiness*) corresponded to literal uses of the adjective: positive semantic prosody, therefore, was not found to be in agreement with intensifying readings of the adjective and hence with a high degree of grammaticalisation. In contrast to the adjective *mortal*, the evidence provided by the different sources for its adverbial counterpart was very scarce. Thus, there were no instances of *mortal* (adverb) in the HC, and just one occurrence from the early twentieth century was attested in ARCHER, corresponding to the intensifying collocation *mortal hard*. Even in a megacorpus such as EEBOCorp 1.0 the adverb was found only sporadically, with four attestations, corresponding to the collocations *mortal wounded*, *mortal sick*, and *mortal pale*. All of these but for *mortal pale* illustrated descriptive or literal meanings and were inherently negative. In contrast to the EEBOCorp 1.0 data, ECF and NCF provided a larger amount of tokens. What is more, the overwhelming majority of the attestations of the adverb in these collections corresponded to intensifying meanings (e.g. *mortal cunning*, *mortal fond*, *mortal inconvenient*, *mortal sorry*, and *mortal fine*). Moreover, positive semantic prosody (as in the combination of the adverb with adjectives such as *sly*, *cunning*, *good*, or *passionate*) matched an intensifying function, which indicates a higher degree of grammaticalisation. As for the types of elements modified by the adverb *mortal*, though it showed a strong preference for adjectives, it could also modify participial items.

In the light of the information provided by the OED, the adverb *mortally*, the *-ly*

counterpart of *mortal*, was also attested from the very beginning with both literal and subjective uses, just as the zero form (see above). Likewise, its intensifying function also emerged in the eighteenth century (e.g. *mortally ugly*). The HC yielded only three attestations of this adverb, all dated to EModE: the collocations *mortally wounded*, which illustrates a descriptive or literal reading, *mortally hate*, and *mortally malign* ('feel malice or ill will against someone'), which were interpreted as subjective. The information provided by ARCHER for the long diachrony was also rather scarce, with only six instances featuring the collocations *mortally wounded*, *mortally wound*, and *mortally offend*. Only the latter, from the early twentieth century, shows an intensifying meaning, referring to the fact that someone has been greatly displeased by the publication of an article. In contrast to the HC and ARCHER, EEBOCorp 1.0 returned a considerable number of tokens *mortally* (1,413 in total), most of which corresponded to descriptive or literal readings (e.g. *mortally sick*, *mortally wounded*, and *sin mortally*). Subjective examples were also found in the data, though less frequently, as in the collocations *hate mortally*, *mortally afflicted*, and *mortally grieved*. Interestingly, intensifying uses of *mortally* also occurred in the material (e.g. *mortally in love*, *mortally tedious*, *mortally surprised*), as well occurrences which were counted as ambiguous between subjective and intensifying (e.g. *mortally perplexed*, *mortally displeased*). Moreover, although negative semantic prosody prevailed, instances of *mortally* as a modifier of positive elements were also recorded in EEBOCorp 1.0 (e.g. *in love*, *happy*, and *enamoured*). As can be gathered from these collocates, the adverb *mortally* could modify a wide range of elements at this stage, predominantly verbs and participial forms, but also adjectives and prepositional phrases. As regards the ECF and NCF data, intensifying collocations were not rare, hence *mortally chagrined* ('disappointed'), *mortally obstropolous*, *mortally changed*, *mortally surprised*, *mortally certain*, *mortally unpleasant*, and *mortally dull*. By the nineteenth century, however, descriptive readings of the adverb (e.g. *mortally wounded* or *mortally infected*) were the second most frequent after intensifying *mortally*. Furthermore, in line with its original meaning, *mortally* was mostly attested with negative semantic prosody, though neutral (e.g. *changed* or *sensible*) and positive collocates (*beautiful*) also occur. Finally, as in the case of the EEBOCorp 1.0 data, in ECF and NCF *mortally* is also found as a modifier of various categories, including verbs, participles, adjectives, and prepositional phrases (*at feud*).

Finally, as shown by the OED, the prepositional phrase *to death*, dating to OE, could

already occur in this period with non-literal meanings, thus showing incipient subjectivity, as in the collocation *to deaðe afærede* ('troubled, disturbed to death'). Intensifying readings emerged relatively early, since collocations such *enamoured to death*, for instance, can be traced back to the sixteenth century. The HC returned very few occurrences of *to death*, all of them dating to EModE, mostly corresponding to descriptive uses (e.g. *condemned* or *pinched to death*), together with occasional instances in which the reading was unclear between descriptive and subjective, in particular with the collocations *bewitched to death* and *witched to death*. A similar picture emerges from the ARCHER data, which shows mostly descriptive uses of the form (e.g. *burn to death* and *chloroform to death* 'make someone unconscious with chloroform'). In contrast, the much larger EEBOCorp 1.0 recorded ample evidence of subjective (*languish to death*, *afraid to death*, or *sorrow to death*) and intensifying (*tickle to death*, *laugh to death*, or *blush to death*) uses, in addition to examples in which *to death* could be interpreted as either subjective or intensifying (e.g. *angry to death* or *oppose to death*). Interestingly, the overwhelming majority of the occurrences in which *to death* modified items with positive semantic prosody (e.g. *laugh*, *tickle*, *adore*, or *enamoured*) showed intensifying meanings, so that positive prosody can be said to correlate with more grammaticalised meanings of the form. As was the case with *mortally* (see above), *to death* mostly modified participles and verbs, but also occurred as a modifier of nouns, adjectives, and the prepositional phrase *in love*. ECF and NCF also provided a good number of subjective (e.g. *frighted to death*, *terrified to death*, and *torment to death*) and intensifying collocations of *to death* (e.g. *blush to death*, *mortify to death*, *tease to death*, *bored to death*, or *ashamed to death*). In these collections, however, intensifying uses did not correlate with positive meanings, as *to death* collocated instead with negative or neutral elements. As for the categories modified by *to death* in the ECF and NCF material, these comprised mainly verbs, participles, and adjectives, but nouns were also found, though to a lesser extent.

Chapter 6 closed with a qualitative discussion on the semantic evolution of the selected death-related intensifiers from the perspective of grammaticalisation (section 6.5). The results from the dictionaries, corpora, and electronic collections consulted here all indicate that the intensifying meanings of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* did not emerge instantaneously. On the contrary, their grammaticalisation as intensifiers was a gradual process. The cline proposed by Adamson (2000: 55) for the semantic evolution of intensifiers, descriptive > affective (subjective) > intensifying meanings, seemed to

be suitable to describe the development of the death-related intensifiers examined in the current piece of research. Even so, I decided to adapt Adamson's cline by adding to it two intermediate stages: one between descriptive and affective (subjective), for those cases which could be ambiguous between these two meanings, and a further stage between affective (subjective) and intensifying, for those occurrences which could be read in either way. This addition was intended to minimise a biased interpretation of the data. Despite the prodigious amount of occurrences of the death-related forms at issue in the different sources (241,875 in total, of which 40,976 were eventually considered for analysis), and hence the serious challenges posed by a corpus-based semantic analysis of this kind, this cline of evolution proved to be extremely valuable to account for their semantic development over the history of English. The analysis carried out in chapter 6 also showed that, notwithstanding the vast number of tokens considered, their type frequency as intensifiers was not particularly high.

This study has also proved that *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* illustrate a number of features typically associated with grammaticalisation (cf. section 6.5). For example, it was shown that these forms evince semantic bleaching or desemanticisation, progressively developing more grammatical and abstract meanings, in the light of collocations with intensifying meanings, such as *dead sure*, *dead right*, *deadly determination*, *deadly lazy*, *mortal hurry*, *mortal fine*, *mortally ugly*, and *blush to death*. In such cases, *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* can no longer be interpreted literally, a degree meaning being the only one possible.

In addition to semantic bleaching, the corpus-based analysis carried out in this dissertation also revealed a progressive increase in subjectivity for these forms. In some examples a literal reading was not completely straightforward, especially in those cases in which a character was described as being very ill or in terrible pain. In all likelihood these unclear instances favoured the emergence of subsequent subjective or more metaphorical uses of the forms, implying the semantic transfer of death-related properties such as paleness or tranquillity, for example. Metaphorical uses of *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* all involve the speaker's/writer's subjective assessment of the situation (for instance, referring to an ominous silence, as if death or a fatal outcome was being presaged). These more subjective meanings, typically denoting paleness, enmity, silence, etc., contextually invited a degree inference, and thus acted as bridging contexts for the later emergence and eventual conventionalisation of unambiguously intensifying meanings. Therefore, what first arose as a pragmatic inference in context

was finally reanalysed as a conventionalised degree meaning ('very, extremely').

Dead(ly), *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* were also claimed to illustrate layering, which implies that descriptive, subjective, and intensifying meanings (e.g. *wounded to death*, *terrified to death*, and *enamoured to death*, respectively) may coexist synchronically. This is also closely related to the principle of divergence: the different meanings are autonomous and may occur independently in the data. It was hence possible to find, for instance, the collocation *stone to death*, referring to someone who had been punished in this way, side by side with the collocation *laugh to death*, in which the prepositional phrase just boosts the action expressed by the verb *laugh*.

The forms under analysis also show a further feature which often goes hand in hand with grammaticalisation, namely persistence. The data revealed that although there was ample evidence of death-related intensifiers occurring in combination with positive collocates, they exhibited a clear preference in the data to modify elements with negative semantic prosody. This is undoubtedly in keeping with their original death-related meaning, and is also associated with the so-called Conserving Effect in frequency. Thus, the semantic prosody which was most entrenched in the meanings of these forms was negative prosody, in accordance with their source negative meaning.

In sum, the comprehensive corpus-based study carried out in this PhD thesis confirms that *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)*, and *to death* can be regarded as grammaticalised forms, notwithstanding their low type frequency as intensifiers and despite the obvious difficulties entailed by a semantic analysis like the one conducted here, which required examining a vast number of examples and discriminating between closely related meanings.

The study of death-related intensifiers presented in this dissertation hence fills a gap in the literature on intensifiers in English, covering a semantic field which had hitherto not been explored in detail. The results of this corpus-based analysis could, however, be complemented with further work on intensifiers originating in the same semantic domain. Some suggestions on possible future lines of research follow here:

- to examine other constructions from the semantic field of death, such as *fatal* (e.g. *fatal experience*), *die for* (e.g. *I'm dying for a cuppa*), and *die to* (e.g. *I was dying to finish this thesis*), which have been left out from the present analysis. It would be worth exploring whether these forms also fit into the cline of grammaticalisation suggested here or whether, on the contrary, this model is not suitable to account for their semantic evolution.

- to expand the analysis of the death-related forms to the more recent history of English, so as to gain an understanding of their behaviour in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries and their degree of (un)productivity in the contemporary language. It should be recalled at this point that the twentieth-century evidence presented here was restricted to ARCHER, which proved to be insufficient in view of the low token frequency of these forms in the corpus.
- to consider the behaviour and rates of use of all these forms in different varieties of English worldwide.
- to explore the uses of the suffixed *-ly* forms as opposed to their zero counterparts, as well as the factors which may lie behind the more apparent productivity of zero forms as intensifiers.
- to look into the evolution of death-related intensifiers from the perspective of Construction Grammar, which could reveal whether they build up interrelated networks and reinforce each other.
- to carry out a cross-linguistic diachronic corpus-based study of death-related intensifiers in order to identify potential trends and possible semantic fields which are emphasised across languages, such as basic needs like hunger or thirst, and common feelings or states, including tiredness, fright, drunkenness, coldness, or paleness (cf. Blanco-Suárez 2013).

All of these issues remain, however, to be discussed in future works.

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EEBOCorp 1.0: = *Early English Books Online Corpus* 1.0, compiled by Peter Petré. 2013. Available at <https://lirias.kuleuven.be/handle/123456789/416330/>.

HC = The Helsinki Corpus of English Texts. 1991. Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki. Compiled by Matti Rissanen (Project leader), Merja Kytö (Project secretary); Leena Kahlas-Tarkka, Matti Kilpiö (Old English); Saara Nevanlinna, Irma Taavitsainen (Middle English); Terttu Nevalainen, Helena Raumolin-Brunberg (Early Modern English).

MED = *Middle English Dictionary*. Hans Kurath et al., (eds). 1952-2001. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. Available at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/>.

NCF = *Nineteenth Century Fiction*. Chadwyck Healey. 2000-2017. Available at: http://collections.chadwyck.co.uk/home/home_c19f.jsp.

OED = *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Oxford University Press. Available at <http://www.oed.com/>.

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BROWN = *A Standard Corpus of Present-Day Edited American English, for use with Digital Computers*. 1964, 1971, 1979. Compiled by W. N. Francis and Henry Kučera. Brown University. Providence, Rhode Island.

BYU-BNC = *Brigham Young University-British National Corpus*. (Based on the British National Corpus from Oxford University Press), compiled by Mark Davies. 2004–. Available at: <http://corpus.byu.edu/bnc/>.

- CC = *The Coruña Corpus of English Scientific Writing*, compiled by the Research Group for Multidimensional Corpus-based Studies in English (MuStE) based at the University of A Coruña.
- CED = *A Corpus of English Dialogues 1560–1760*. 2006. Compiled under the supervision of Merja Kytö (Uppsala University) and Jonathan Culpeper (Lancaster University).
- CEEC = *Corpus of Early English Correspondence*. 1998. Compiled by Terttu Nevalainen, Helena Raumolin-Brunberg, Jukka Keränen, Minna Nevala, Arja Nurmi and Minna Palander-Collin at the Department of Modern Languages, University of Helsinki.
- CEEM = *Corpus of Early English Medical Writing*, comprising three diachronic subcorpora: the *Middle English Medical Texts* (MEMT), the *Early Modern English Medical Texts* (EMEMT), and the *Late Modern English Medical Texts* (LMEMT). 1995-2017. Project leaders: Irma Taavitsainen and Päivi Pahta.
- CIE = *A Corpus of Irish English*. Compiled by Raymond Hickey and contained in: Raymond Hickey 2003. *Corpus Presenter. Software for language analysis*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- CLMET = *The Corpus of Late Modern English Texts (Extended Version)*. 2006. Compiled by Hendrik De Smet. Department of Linguistics, University of Leuven.
- CMEPV = *The Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse*. Copyright institution : The Humanities Text Initiative, University of Michigan. Available at: <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/cme/>.
- COCA = *Corpus of Contemporary American English*. Compiled by Mark Davies. 2008-2017. Available at: <http://corpus.byu.edu/coca/>.
- COHA = *Corpus of Historical American English*, compiled by M. Davies. 2010-2017. Available at: <http://corpus.byu.edu/coha/>.
- ECCO = *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*
- EEBO = *Early English Books Online*. Chadwyck Healey. 2003-2017. Available at: <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>.
- eLALME = *A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediæval English*. 2013-2017. M. Benskin, M. Laing, V. Karaiskos and K. Williamson. Available at: <http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html>.
- LAEME = *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English* (version 3.2), 1150-1325. Compiled by Margaret Laing. Available at: <http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/laeme2.html>.
- LAOS = *A Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots* (phase 1), 1380 to 1500. Compiled by Keith Williamson. 2013-2017. Available at: <http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laos1/laos1.html>.

LOB = *The Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus*, original version (1970–1978). Compiled by Geoffrey Leech, Lancaster University, Stig Johansson, University of Oslo (project leaders), and Knut Hofland, University of Bergen (head of computing).

PPCME2 = The Penn-Helsinki Parsed Corpus of Middle English, second edition. Compiled by Anthony Kroch and Ann Taylor. 2000. Available at: <http://www.ling.upenn.edu/hist-corpora/PPCME2-RELEASE-4/index.html>.

SC = *The Salamanca Corpus. Digital Archive of English Dialect Texts*. 2011. Compiled by María Fuencisla García-Bermejo Giner, Maria Pilar Sánchez-García, and Javier Ruano-García at the University of Salamanca.

SEU = *Survey of English Usage*. Based at the Department of English Language and Literature University College London. 1959-2017. Available at: <http://www.ucl.ac.uk/english-usage/>.

WordSmith 6.0 = WordSmith 6.0 for Windows. 1996-2017. Lexical Analysis Software and Oxford University Press. Available at: <http://lexically.net/wordsmith/>.

ZEN = *Zurich English Newspaper Corpus* (Version 1.0). English Department of the University of Zurich. Available at: <http://es-zen.unizh.ch>.





Resumo en galego

A nosa aparente inclinación pola esaxeración e as expresións hiperbólicas (Peters 1994: 271) garda unha estreita relación coa función emotiva ou expresiva da linguaxe descrita por Jakobson (1960). A lingua, lonxe de empregarse puramente para transmitir contidos, serve tamén para expresarmos opinións, estados de ánimo e actitudes ao respecto da nosa mensaxe e convencer nos así ao(s) noso(s) interlocutor(es). A modo de exemplo, a expresión *ter cartos como a area* emprégase en determinadas zonas de Galicia, como é o caso de Fisterra, para destacar o feito de que alguén posúe diñeiro en abundancia. Con todo, a propia expresión *como a area* ten en si un sentido superlativo e o seu uso confírelle á mensaxe un certo ton de importancia que se perdería cunha expresión neutra conceptualmente equivalente como *ten moitos cartos*. Do mesmo xeito, se queremos subliñar a importancia de algo, non diremos simplemente que algo é importante, senón que probablemente indicaremos que iso é *extremadamente importante*, destacando tamén mediante a entoación o adverbio *extremadamente*. Polo tanto, canto máis destaquemos a transcendencia da nosa mensaxe, máis contundente será a mesma, de aí que a esaxeración e a hipérbole sexan recorrentes na linguaxe humana.

Esta tendencia á esaxeración ten como consecuencia inmediata a proliferación dunha gran variedade de mecanismos de intensificación nas linguas. Aquelas estratexias lingüísticas que serven, pois, para resaltar o noso discurso e conferirlle relevancia ao mesmo denomínanse *intensificadores* ou *estratexias de intensificación* (Bolinger 1972) e constitúen o obxecto de estudo da presente tese de doutoramento. Estes mecanismos ou estratexias son variados e inclúen, entre outros, adverbios intensificadores (*extremadamente* ou *terriblemente*), prefixos intensificadores como *super-* ou *mega-* (por exemplo, en *super cute* ‘súper riquiño’ and *mega rich* ‘súper rico’), a repetición de palabras e o uso da entoación ou de formas superlativas, como no caso de *como a area* mencionado anteriormente. Seguindo a Bolinger (1972: 17), na presente investigación denomínanse *intensificadores* a todas aquelas formas que indican o grao preciso dunha calidade nunha escala imaxinaria de grao. Esta escala imaxinaria abrangue dende o grao mínimo ata o grao máximo. Así, no exemplo (1.1) *absolutely* indica un grao máximo (‘absolutamente claro’), mentres que *at all* no exemplo (1.2) expresa o grao mínimo (‘sorprendente apenas’).

- (1.1) *He made his reasons for resigning **absolutely** clear.* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, s. v. *absolutely* adv. 1)

- (1.2) *It's **hardly** surprising that she won't answer his calls after the way he's treated her* (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, s. v. *hardly* adv. 2)

Dende o punto de vista antropolóxico, a morte constitúe unha experiencia de inquietude e preocupación máximas, en tanto que é a que marca a propia fin da nosa existencia. En consecuencia, non resulta sorprendente que esta se poida empregar como fonte de intensificación lingüística, mesmo acaso de forma universal. De feito, a ocorrencia de formas coincidentes dentro dos mesmos campos semánticos en linguas tipoloxicamente diferentes constitúe unha proba inequívoca da existencia de universais lingüísticos (Claridge 2011: 176).

Esta investigación pretende, xa que logo, afondar no uso da morte como fonte de intensificación lingüística. Especificamente, persegue trazar a evolución diacrónica de certas formas do campo semántico da morte na lingua inglesa e dar conta de como estas evolucionaron ata convertérense en intensificadores en inglés contemporáneo. Nos seguintes exemplos as formas *dead*, *deadly*, *mortal*, *mortally* e *to death*, destacadas en letra grosa, son equivalentes, respectivamente, a ‘moi fácil’, ‘moi serio’, ‘moita présa’, ‘moita vergoña’ e ‘moi feliz’:

- (1.3) *Like quinoa, freekeh is chock-full of protein, slightly nutty, and **dead** easy to cook.* (07/03/2013. The Independent)
- (1.4) *He wasn't joking. I could tell he meant it. He was **deadly** serious and I knew it.* (1991. Malcolm Hammer. *Sudden death*. BYU-BNC)
- (1.5) *'Southwest,' amended the young man Martin.' And in a **mortal** hurry by all the signs.* (1992. Ellis Peters. The holy thief. BYU-BNC)
- (1.6) *Th-- this impression that I got or er erm (pause) that incident at school, played such a big part in my life after that, I was **mortally** embarrassed for the rest of my school life.* (1987. Gwynedd County Council tape 5: interview for oral history project (Leisure). BYU-BNC)
- (1.7) *Four and a half thousand pounds! [...] She's chuffed **to death**. Only thing she weren't chuffed about is she couldn't cash cheque, it had to go all through bank and everything.* (1992. 25 convs rec. by 'Kathleen2' (PS1FC). BYU-BNC).

Aínda que algunhas destas formas destacadas nos exemplos (1.3) a (1.7) foron exploradas con anterioridade desde unha perspectiva histórica (véxase Claridge 2011: 197-207 e Margerie 2011), non existe a día de hoxe un estudo diacrónico pormenorizado dos diferentes intensificadores do campo semántico da morte en lingua inglesa. A presente tese busca, por tanto, cubrir ese oco e investigar o comportamento semántico e sintáctico de ditas formas ao longo da súa historia, cubrindo desde o inglés medieval ata

o século XX. Para este fin empregáronse diversos corpus diacrónicos da lingua inglesa e tomouse como punto de referencia o modelo de evolución semántica para os intensificadores proposto inicialmente por Adamson (2000). Segundo esta autora, as formas que na actualidade expresan cantidade ou grao teñen en orixe un significado literal. Este é o caso, por exemplo, do adverbio inglés *awfully*, que orixinalmente tiña un significado literal ou descritivo, é dicir, puramente obxectivo, posto que se aplicaba a algo que podía causar terror. Non obstante, co tempo *awfully* adquiriu valores máis subxectivos, aplicándose a substantivos aos que o falante/escritor lles outorgaba un certo compoñente terrorífico. Finalmente, *awfully* pasou a expresar simplemente o grao máximo dunha calidade. A evolución semántica dos intensificadores pode resumirse, segundo Adamson (2000: 55), na seguinte cadea: significado descritivo/literal > significado afectivo/subxectivo > significado intensificador. No caso de *awfully*, en inglés contemporáneo é posible atoparmos colocacións¹ como *awfully good*, claramente incompatibles co seu significado orixinal, e que dan conta da súa evolución semántica. Á luz do modelo semántico de Adamson (2000) xorden unha serie de preguntas ás que esta tese pretender dar resposta, nomeadamente:

- i. É apropiada a teoría de Adamson para a análise semántica dos intensificadores do campo semántico da morte?
- ii. Cando teñen lugar os primeiros usos de *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* como intensificadores propiamente ditos?
- iii. Existen contextos semánticos que sirvan de ponte ou propicien a aparición destes primeiros usos como intensificadores?
- iv. Existen paralelismos nas colocacións destas formas?

Estas e outras cuestións son, en consecuencia, o obxecto de discusión desta investigación diacrónica.

Esta tese de doutoramento está estruturada como segue. O primeiro capítulo ten un carácter introdutorio e nel preséntase o obxecto de estudo e mais a súa estrutura xeral, destacando a relevancia que ten un estudo de corpus como o presente para a lingüística diacrónica. Os capítulos segundo, terceiro e cuarto constitúen o marco teórico da obra e o eixe sobre o que vertebra a mesma. Abordan, en particular, a intensificación como fenómeno lingüístico e as propostas de clasificación dos intensificadores (capítulo 2), o fenómeno da gramaticalización (capítulo 3), proceso clave na evolución semántica das

¹ Segundo Sinclair (1991: 170), *collocation* refírese á ‘occurrence of two or more words within a short space of each other in a text’.

formas estudadas e os intensificadores desde unha perspectiva histórica (capítulo 4). O quinto capítulo está dedicado á metodoloxía e detalla, xa que logo, as ferramentas que se empregaron para a análise dos datos e as diferentes variables que se tiveron en conta na mesma. Por último, o capítulo 6 mostra o estudo lingüístico froito da análise dos diferentes corpus e bases de datos analizados. Finalmente, no capítulo 7 ofrécense as conclusións a modo de síntese da obra, así como suxestións para futuras liñas de investigación.

Como se acaba de indicar, o capítulo 2 é o primeiro do marco teórico e aborda o concepto de intensificación e as diferentes formas nas que esta se reflicte na lingua, entre outras mediante a orde de palabras, a entoación, a repetición de palabras ou o uso de formas superlativas. A esta primeira aproximación á noción de intensificación e á súa expresión lingüística séguelle unha sección sobre as distintas propostas que se atopan na literatura para a clasificación dos intensificadores, dende as clásicas gramáticas de referencia da lingua (Quirk et al. 1985; Biber et al. 1999, entre outras) ata monográficos sobre intensificadores (Bolinger 1972). A grandes liñas, os modelos de clasificación dos intensificadores poden dividirse en dous grandes grupos: os modelos que se basean nunha escala de grao e os modelos que toman como referencia criterios semánticos. A revisión crítica destas clasificacións permitiu constatar un maior compoñente de subxectividade nos modelos baseados na semántica (ver sección 2.2.1.2). Pola contra, ofrecen un maior índice de fiabilidade aqueles modelos que clasifican estas formas en función do grao que estas expresan nunha escala imaxinaria, posto que grao alto, grao medio, ou grao baixo son, en termos xerais, conceptos máis facilmente clasificables (ver sección 2.2.1.1). As vantaxes e inconvenientes destes modelos constitúen o obxecto de discusión da sección 2.2.2.

O terceiro capítulo tamén forma parte da revisión teórica inicial da tese. Este capítulo aborda en concreto a teoría da gramaticalización, que resulta fundamental para comprender como evolucionaron semanticamente as formas que aquí se tratan. A primeira sección do capítulo, a 3.1, describe a historia da gramaticalización, termo que foi acuñado por Antoine Meillet en 1912. Este concepto ten dous sentidos diferenciados. Por unha banda, refírese a un tipo de cambio lingüístico universal por medio do cal certas formas léxicas ou gramaticais se convirten en formas cada vez máis gramaticais. Por outra banda, gramaticalización refírese tamén á metodoloxía ou aproximación teórica que dá conta deste tipo de cambio. O adverbio de negación *pas* en francés constitúe un exemplo clásico de gramaticalización. Esta forma era en orixe un substantivo (‘paso’) que

simplemente viña a reforzar a negación, posto que se empregaba con verbos de movemento, mais hoxe en día converteuse nunha partícula negativa obrigatoria. Así, nunha oración negativa como *je ne mange pas de viande* ('eu non como carne'), *pas* é o único elemento obrigatorio da negación, xa que *ne*, o outro adverbio de negación, omítese a miúdo na lingua oral.

Logo destas consideracións históricas iniciais preséntanse os parámetros e principios definitorios deste fenómeno (3.2), tal e como foron descritos por Lehman (1985) e Hopper (1991). Lehmann (1985) defendeu que a gramaticalización se asocia cunha serie de procesos relevantes, en particular i) *attrition*, ii) *paradigmaticisation*, iii) *obligatorification*, iv) *condensation*, v) *coalescence* e vi) *fixation*. As formas en proceso de gramaticalización sofren, polo xeral, unha debilitación semántica (tamén coñecida como *bleaching* ou *desemanticisation*) e fonética. No caso da forma *pas* mencionada anteriormente, esta pasou de designar un concepto concreto, como un paso ou a distancia entre dous pés ao andar, a indicar simplemente negación, que é un concepto considerablemente máis abstracto. A debilitación fonética, por outra banda, tamén é típica, aínda que non exclusiva, dos procesos de gramaticalización. Así, a forma *going to* + infinitivo, que en inglés se emprega para indicar futuridade ('*ir* + infinitivo'), queda reducida con frecuencia a *gonna* ['gənə]. Do mesmo xeito, as formas suxeitas a procesos de gramaticalización tenden a conformar categorías cada vez máis homoxéneas, algunhas das cales poden chegar incluso a fusionarse. Por exemplo, as preposicións francesas forman unha categoría moito máis unitaria con respecto aos seus equivalentes en latín e poden mesmo contraer co artigo en francés contemporáneo. Estes procesos son os referidos como paradigmaticización e coalescencia. A gramaticalización conéctase tamén con procesos de fixación e obrigatorificación. Así, os adverbios rematados en *-mente* derivan do nome *mente* no latín. Con todo, en latín *mente* podía aparecer posposto e anteposto, o cal non é posible nos usos de *-mente* como formante de adverbios nas linguas románicas. Nestas, pola contra, a posición posnominal é a que se fixou e se converteu en obrigatoria. Este mesmo exemplo serve tamén para ilustrar o último proceso descrito por Lehman, a condensación. Así pois, as formas que se gramaticalizan tamén se volven estruturalmente máis simples. No caso destes adverbios, a forma non sofre variación, pero na lingua latina o substantivo *mente* declinábase e, en consecuencia, si podía ter varias formas.

Ademais dos principios e parámetros definidos por Lehmann e Hopper, a gramaticalización tamén se ten asociado cunha serie de fenómenos, como son a

unidireccionalidade, a reanálise, a (inter)subxectivización e a frecuencia. Todos eles constitúen o obxecto de discusión da sección 3.3.

Na literatura especializada o concepto de gramaticalización aparece ligado con frecuencia ao de unidireccionalidade (véxase sección 3.3.1). Así, a gramaticalización é un proceso lingüístico universal e ben documentado. Proba diso son os denominados *gramaticalisation clines* ou cadeas de evolución que se teñen documentadas en linguas tipoloxicamente diferentes. Estas cadeas poden darse a nivel semántico: elemento léxico > elemento gramatical; elemento pouco subxectivo > elemento máis subxectivo > elemento intersubxectivo, a nivel sintáctico (categoría maior > categoría menor) e a nivel fonolóxico (forma plena > forma reducida). Todas estas tendencias de evolución nas diferentes linguas son ilustradas con exemplos clásicos nos estudos sobre a gramaticalización. Tamén se dá conta nesta sección de algúns exemplos que parecen non seguir esta tendencia universal.

Outro fenómeno que se asocia con frecuencia á gramaticalización é a reanálise (3.3.2), que implica a reestruturación dos límites orixinais dunha construción (A, B) C como A (B, C). Así, por exemplo, a construción *willan* ‘querer’ + infinitivo en inglés antigo evolucionou ata dar lugar ao auxiliar de futuro *will* + infinitivo. É dicir, *willan* (verbo) > *will* (auxiliar de futuro) (Heine e Kuteva 2002: 310). Na mesma liña, o auxiliar para o futuro *va* en romanés deriva do verbo volitivo *volere* ‘querer’.

Na sección 3.3.3 trátase outra das cuestións chave na teoría da gramaticalización: a (inter)subxectivización. Na primeira parte abórdanse o concepto de subxectividade e os dous grandes modelos de subxectividade, nomeadamente os de Traugott e Langacker. Subxectividade alude, xaora, ao compoñente subxectivo da lingua e á súa función expresiva, xa que nun acto comunicativo non só se produce un intercambio de información, é dicir, de significados puramente obxectivos. Ao contrario, calquera intercambio comunicativo implica a transmisión de sentimentos, crenzas e puntos de vista. Alén diso, nun intercambio comunicativo tamén temos en conta ao(s) noso(s) interlocutor(es), tanto pola posible actitude deles cara a nosa mensaxe, como pola súa posición social, de aí que empreguemos certas formas de tratamento como *madam* ou *sir* en inglés ou pronomes de cortesía. Aos significados mediante os cales o falante/escritor mostra a súa deferencia cara o(s) seu(s) interlocutor(es) denomínanse *intersubxectivos* e o proceso diacrónico que dá lugar a significados subxectivos e intersubxectivos coñécese como *subxectivización* e *intersubxectivización*. Ambos resultan fundamentais en procesos de cambio semántico.

O rol da frecuencia ocupou tamén un papel moi destacado nos estudos sobre gramaticalización e, en consecuencia, os efectos lingüísticos da mesma na gramaticalización son tratados tamén nunha sección desta tese (3.3.4). A frecuencia provoca, por exemplo, que co uso estruturas previamente independentes se acaben fusionando nunha soa unidade e que esas estruturas se acaben fosilizando. Este é o caso do adverbio *quizais*, que procede do latín *qui sapit* ‘quen sabe’ ou o adverbio francés *peut-être*, derivado de *puet cel ester* ‘iso pode existir’. A frecuencia tamén se ten asociado a dous efectos opostos: o *conserving* e o *reduction effect*. O primeiro é o que provoca que as construcións se volvan resistentes ao cambio e o que provoca un maior nivel de fosilización ou *entrenchment* (por exemplo, no caso das formas verbais irregulares). O segundo é o que provoca o cambio e dá lugar á redución de formas. No exemplo mencionado anteriormente da construción *going to* para indicar futuridade en inglés, *going to*, en virtude da súa alta frecuencia, queda adoito reducida a *gonna*.

Para rematar este capítulo teórico sobre a gramaticalización, a sección 3.4 da conta da relación da gramaticalización con outros campos da lingüística como a pragmática, a gramática de construcións e a adquisición da linguaxe.

O capítulo 4 ofrece unha revisión dos estudos sobre intensificadores desde a perspectiva da gramaticalización, por unha banda (4.1) e desde a perspectiva da variación lingüística (4.2). Como se comentou máis arriba, os intensificadores constitúen un dos epicentros do cambio lingüístico, xa que son formas que se volven obsoletas en breves períodos de tempo. Neste sentido, a literatura sobre estas formas proporciona innúmeros exemplos sobre a competición de intensificadores nun período de tempo determinado, en distintas variedades xeográficas ou mesmo en distintos sectores da poboación. Este capítulo pretende, por tanto, dar conta da proliferación de investigacións teóricas e aplicadas que teñen xurdido neste campo de investigación no último século, centrándose na evolución semántica e gramaticalización de intensificadores (4.1), así como na variación no uso destas formas por parte de distintos grupos de idade (4.2.1) e en distintas variedades xeográficas (4.2.2).

O capítulo 5 está dedicado á metodoloxía. Tras unhas consideracións previas sobre o enfoque funcionalista, baseado nos usos lingüísticos, preséntanse, a modo de contextualización, as orixes da lingüística de corpus, metodoloxía e pedra angular do presente traballo (5.1). A continuación detállanse as fontes que se consultaron para o estudo semántico dos intensificadores en cuestión (5.2): dicionarios, bases de datos en liña e corpus. Seguidamente introdúcense as ferramentas informáticas e estatísticas que

se empregaron para a análise lingüística (5.3) e, finalmente, na sección 5.4 detállanse as características da base de datos e as variables lingüísticas contempladas.

No que concirne aos dicionarios, nesta investigación diacrónica consultáronse as dúas obras de referencia para calquera estudo sobre a historia da lingua inglesa, nomeadamente o *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) e o *Middle English Dictionary* (MED). Ambas fontes resultaron ser dun valor incalculable, xa que grazas a elas foi posible obter unha primeira estimación da aparición dos primeiros usos como intensificadores das formas obxecto de análise, así como das súas colocacións máis temperás.

Ademais do OED e do MED, o estudo semántico das formas analizadas tomou como referencia os datos procedentes dunha serie de corpus e bases de datos electrónicos. Para trazar unha primeira evolución diacrónica xeral de *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* recorrín a dous corpus clásicos nos estudos de corpus diacrónicos en lingua inglesa: o HC (Helsinki Corpus of English Texts) e o ARCHER (A Representative Corpus of Historical English Registers). O HC cobre desde o período coñecido como Inglés Antigo (desde os primeiros rexistros da lingua ata o ano 1100, aproximadamente) ata comezos do século XVIII. Por outra banda, o corpus ARCHER contén unha colección de textos extensa desde o ano 1600 ata 1999. Ambos corpus inclúen unha colección de textos de diferentes xéneros: textos legais, médicos, históricos, diarios de viaxes, cartas e textos de ficción, entre outros. As dúas son coleccións moi valiosas, por tanto, para observar en liñas xerais a evolución semántica dos intensificadores. Logo desta primeira evolución diacrónica xeral, quixen examinar en detalle a historia máis recente destas formas, desde o período coñecido como o Inglés Moderno Temperán (1485-1700) ata a actualidade. Para este fin utilicei outro corpus, Early English Books Online Corpus 1.0 (EEBOCorp 1.0), xunto con dúas bases de datos, Eighteenth Century Fiction (ECF) e Nineteenth Century Fiction (NCF), que resultaron ser dun valor incalculable. Ao igual que o HC e ARCHER, EEBO Corp 1.0 tamén contén textos de diferentes rexistros. Pola contra, ECF e NCF, como o seu nome indica, só inclúen textos de ficción dos séculos XVIII e XIX, tanto de autores ben coñecidos da literatura inglesa como Austen, Defoe ou Dickens, como de autores menos coñecidos. Nesta sección dáse conta, por tanto, das principais características e limitacións de cada unha destas fontes de datos.

Logo de presentar as fontes consultadas para a análise, detállanse as ferramentas informáticas e estatísticas, en particular o programa de concordancias e mais os tests estatísticos empregados. O soporte lóxico que se empregou para extraer os exemplos dos distintos corpus de forma automática é o programa de concordancias WordSmith 6.0. Por

outra banda, co fin de comprobar se os datos obtidos da análise eran significativos desde o punto de vista estatístico, realizáronse unha serie de probas habituais en estudos semánticos destas características: o *z*-score, o *Mutual Information (MI)*, a versión ao cubo da *Mutual Information (MI³)* e o *Log-Likelihood* (véxase Cantos Gómez 2013).

Para finalizar o capítulo da metodoloxía deuse conta da estruturación da base de datos e das variables lingüísticas. Os datos extraídos dos diferentes corpus e bases de datos foron gardados nunha folla de cálculo de Excel para a súa posterior análise lingüística. A extracción automática foi posible só no caso dos corpus, xa que as bases de datos electrónicas non permiten a exportación directa dos exemplos a Excel. No seu lugar foi preciso copiar cada un dos exemplos manualmente e gardalos na base de datos de Excel para logo proceder á súa análise, proceso que, por suposto, supón un claro inconveniente. A base de datos de Excel contén tanto información lingüística como extralingüística de relevancia para a posterior análise. Así, anotouse información extralingüística sobre o período do que data o exemplo e o arquivo do corpus para a súa localización, se fose necesario consultar máis contexto, e sobre o autor e a obra no caso das bases de datos en liña, polo mesmo motivo. Con respecto aos criterios lingüísticos, tiven en conta na miña análise parámetros como a colocación específica que ilustra o exemplo (o intensificador en cuestión e a palabra que este modifica), o seu significado, o tipo de palabra que modificaba a forma analizada e a súa prosodia semántica (Stubbs 1995; Smith e Nordquist 2012). Este último concepto refírese ao patrón de colocacións nos que a forma en cuestión (*dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* ou *to death*) selecciona lexemas cuxo significado inherente é positivo ou negativo. Por exemplo, diremos que unha colocación como *dead good* ten prosodia semántica positiva porque o adverbio *dead* aparece asociado co adxectivo *good*, cuxo significado é positivo. Pola contra, diremos que unha colocación como *mortally tired* ten prosodia semántica negativa, posto que *mortally* modifica a *tired*, forma de participio con connotacións negativas.

Logo do marco teórico, recollido nos capítulos 2, 3 e 4, e do marco metodolóxico (capítulo 5), a tese céntrase no estudo de corpus levado a cabo na presente investigación e cuxos resultados se explican en detalle no capítulo 6. Nas seguintes liñas paso a detallar de xeito pormenorizado os principais achados derivados da análise de datos.

A procura de datos nos corpus e coleccións en liña tomados como punto de partida para a análise semántica de *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* deu un total de 241.875 ocorrencias destas formas. Con todo, e a pesar da inmensidade destas cifras, tan só 40,976 exemplos puideron ser finalmente analizados. Estas cifras seguen sendo

cuantitativamente esixentes e supoñen, en calquera caso, un obstáculo considerable para calquera análise semántica baseada en corpus que pretenda ser rigorosa. Cómpre destacarmos, igualmente, que a análise semántica diacrónica que se presenta non ten precedentes ata o de agora non só na cantidade inxente de datos lingüísticos manexados, senón tamén pola dificultade inherente aos mesmos datos. Así pois, a semántica é un terreo moito máis esvaradío que a sintaxe e a categorización de moitos dos exemplos supuxo un claro reto na presente análise debido á imposibilidade de recorrer a criterios sintácticos, polo xeral máis obxectivos.

Da análise dos resultados dos dicionarios de referencia, o OED e o MED, despréndese que os primeiros significados subxectivos das formas estudadas se rexistran no período coñecido como Inglés Medio (1100-1500, aproximadamente). Este é o caso das formas *dead* e *deadly* e, en certa medida, tamén de *mortal* e *mortally*. Estas últimas, non obstante, foron tomadas como préstamos do francés no Inglés Medio e este feito condicionou substancialmente a súa evolución, xa que foron tomadas con significados e colocacións subxectivas desde un primeiro momento. *Mortal*, por exemplo, podía aparecer con significados literais ou descritivos en colocacións como *mortal wound*, pero tamén en colocacións como *mortal enemy*, de carácter subxectivo. No caso da locución *to death*, esta xa mostraba signos dunha subxectividade incipiente en Inglés Antigo, como amosa a colocación *to deaðe afærede* ('profundamente aflixido'). No caso dos significados intensificadores, o primeiro en adquirir connotacións de grao alto ou máximo foi o adverbio *deadly*, do que existen datos con este significado desde o século XV (por exemplo na colocación *deadly dill* ('tremendamente estúpido')). Xa no século XVI aparecen os significados intensificadores do adverbio *dead* e da frase preposicional *to death* e no século XVII é cando se ten constancia dos primeiros usos como intensificadores dos adxectivos *dead* e *deadly*. Finalmente, o adxectivo e mais o adverbio *mortal* comezaron a usarse con significados intensificadores desde o século XVIII (por exemplo, en *take mortal pains to do something* e en *mortal fond*).

Os resultados do HC e ARCHER para a evolución diacrónica preliminar son moi escasos e proporcionaron moi poucos datos acerca dos significados subxectivos e intensificadores destas formas. Así, a búsqueda no corpus ARCHER tan só devolveu un resultado dos adverbios *mortal* e *mortally* no século XX (*mortal hard* e *offend mortally*, respectivamente). Na mesma liña, os significados subxectivos tamén foron limitados, xa que en Inglés Medio só se dan casos para os adxectivos *deadly* e *mortally*.

Esta insuficiencia de datos contrasta cos resultados proporcionados por EEBOCorp

1.0, ECF e NCF. En concreto, a cantidade de exemplos destas formas en EEBOCorp 1.0 é desproporcionada, agás no caso do adverbio *mortal*, para o cal se rexistraron só catro exemplos. Este corpus tamén devolveu exemplos suficientes de significados subxectivos e intensificadores, así como de exemplos que se poderían considerar ambiguos entre uns e outros.

Con respecto ao adxectivo *deadly*, EEBOCorp 1.0 deu conta dunha ampla gama de significados subxectivos, como evidencian colocacións como *deadly fear*, *deadly darkness* e *deadly sorrow*, entre outras. Outras colocacións como *deadly jealousy* ou *deadly envy* poderían admitir, á luz dos numerosos exemplos, tanto unha lectura con significado subxectivo como unha lectura con significado intensificador. Ademais, en liña co seu significado primitivo, *deadly* aparece maioritariamente con prosodia semántica negativa, aínda que tamén hai casos de prosodia semántica neutra e mesmo positiva, coma no caso de *deadly glory* ou *deadly charm*. Así e todo, nos casos nos que *deadly* modifica nomes positivos, o significado é literal ou descritivo, para referirse á natureza mortal destes substantivos. Neste caso, polo tanto, a prosodia semántica positiva non garda relación cun maior grao de gramaticalización. No caso do adverbio homónimo *deadly*, os datos indican que está claramente máis gramaticalizado que a forma adxectiva, pois neste caso si se dan exemplos de colocacións con significado intensificador desde finais do século XVI. Nestas colocacións, o adverbio *deadly* modifica adxectivos con prosodia semántica positiva (*deadly handsome* ou *deadly witty*, por exemplo), neutra (*deadly sure* e *deadly deep*) e negativa (*deadly unfortunate*, *deadly lazy*). Ademais, o adverbio *deadly*, aínda que modifica fundamentalmente verbos, formas participiais e adxectivos, tamén pode modificar outros adverbios, como no caso da colocación *deadly near*.

A forma *mortal*, que pode ser adxectivo e adverbio, é un préstamo do anglonormando. Ao igual que o seu equivalente xermánico, *deadly*, o adxectivo *mortal* aparece na maioría dos casos con significados descritivos (*mortal judgement*, *mortal venom*, etc.), aínda que en EEBOCorp 1.0 tamén se documentan colocacións subxectivas, como *mortal adversary*, *mortal sorrow* ou *mortal foe*. Non se rexistran significados puramente intensificadores, mais si colocacións que admiten unha dobre interpretación segundo o contexto, subxectiva ou intensificadora (por exemplo, *mortal ire*, *mortal envy* e *mortal jealousy*). Como o seu equivalente xermánico *deadly*, *mortal* tamén pode modificar elementos positivos (*mortal love*, *mortal fame* ou *mortal honour*), mais isto non garda correlación cun alto grao de gramaticalización, xa que mesmo nestes casos o significado de *mortal* é descritivo ou literal. Os datos para o adverbio *mortal* son escasos, ao contrario

que para o seu adxectivo homónimo, mesmo nun megacorpus coma este. Así, só se documentan catro casos, que se corresponden coas colocación *mortal wounded* e *mortal sick*, con significados descritivos, e con *mortal pale*, de significado subxectivo. A diferenza do adverbio *mortal*, *mortally*, forma sufixada equivalente, si que se documenta amplamente en EEBOCorp 1.0, mesmo con significados intensificadores (*mortally in love*, *mortally surprised* e *mortally tedious*). A análise das diferentes colocacións de *mortally* revelou unha tendencia cara a modificación de elementos con prosodia semántica negativa, mais tamén se dan casos nos que modifica elementos positivos, como os adxectivos *happy* e *enamoured*. En canto aos elementos modificados por *mortally*, este non só modifica adxectivos e formas verbais, senón que tamén pode modificar frases preposicionais, como o caso de *in love*.

Os datos de EEBOCorp 1.0 para a última das formas estudadas, *to death*, evidencian usos reiterados da mesma con significados subxectivos e intensificadores. Colocacións como *languish to death*, *afraid to death* ou *sorrow to death* contan como significados subxectivos e *tickle to death*, *laugh to death* e *blush to death* amosan significados intensificadores. É significativo tamén que no caso de *to death* si existe correlación entre prosodia semántica positiva e grao de gramaticalización, dado que nos casos en que *to death* modifica a elementos positivos, a frase preposicional ten un significado puramente intensificador. Así, *laugh to death* ou *blush to death* simplemente expresan grao máximo, é dicir, que se poden traducir como *morrer coa risa* e *poñerse moi encarnado*. Amais diso, en tanto que frase preposicional, *to death* pode modificar un número maior de formas. Deste xeito, nos datos do corpus *to death* modifica nomes, verbos, formas participiais, adxectivos e mesmo frases preposicionais (*in love to death*).

Os datos para os séculos XVIII e XIX, procedentes das coleccións ECF e NCF, tamén botan luz sobre os usos intensificadores das formas obxecto de estudo nesta tese. De feito, documéntanse numerosos casos con estes significados, que apenas se daban no HC e no ARCHER, corpus consultados para unha primeira panorámica diacrónica. En liña cos datos derivados de EEBOCorp 1.0, os datos destas fontes tamén indican un maior grao de gramaticalización das formas adverbiais con respectos das formas adxectivas equivalentes.

Os datos de ECF e NCF para o adxectivo *deadly* demostran variedade tanto de usos subxectivos como de usos intensificadores, de aí colocacións subxectivas como *deadly fear*, *deadly cold* ou *deadly despair* e intensificadoras, como é o caso de *deadly earnest*, *deadly determination* e *deadly commonplace*. No que concirne á prosodia semántica,

tamén cabe salientar que naqueles casos en que o adxectivo *deadly* modifica substantivos positivos (*deadly joy*), o seu significado é puramente intensificador. É dicir, que nestes casos a prosodia semántica positiva si garda relación cun alto grao de gramaticalización. En canto aos usos adverbiais de *deadly*, tamén se documentan casos de usos subxectivos e intensificadores nestas coleccións en liña. *Deadly pale*, *deadly still* e *deadly white* son exemplos de colocacións subxectivas, e *deadly comfortable*, *deadly long* e *deadly curious* ilustran usos intensificadores do adverbio.

Con respecto á forma *mortal*, a consulta de ECF e NCF deu como resultado un gran número de ocorrencias para o adverbio *mortal*, mentres que EEBOCorp 1.0, como se comentou máis arriba, rexistraba moi poucos casos da forma adverbial. O adxectivo *mortal* documéntase en ECF e NCF con usos intensificadores, aínda que estes non son os máis frecuentes. Proba destes usos son colocacións como *mortal disappointment*, *mortal hurry*, *mortal speed* ou *mortal certainty*. Con todo, a diferenza de *deadly*, nos casos nos que o adxectivo *mortal* modifica substantivos de carácter positivo, como en *mortal charm*, *mortal majesty* e *mortal happiness*, entre outros, *mortal* ten un significado descritivo ou literal. No caso de *mortal*, xa que logo, a prosodia semántica positiva non é sinónimo de gramaticalización. Amais destes usos intensificadores, tamén se dan numerosos casos nos que *mortal* ten un significado subxectivo, de aí colocacións como *mortal hatred*, *mortal enemy* e *mortal agony*. En canto á forma adverbial, cabe destacar que na maior parte dos casos *mortal* ten significado intensificador, como en *mortal cunning*, *mortal sorry* e *mortal fine*, entre outras colocacións. A prosodia semántica positiva no caso deste adverbio está en estreita relación coa gramaticalización, na medida en que en todos os casos nos que modifica formas positivas, o seu significado é puramente intensificador. *Mortal* modifica na maior parte dos casos outros adxectivos, aínda que tamén se dan casos nos que modifica elementos participiais.

Ao contrario que o adverbio *mortal*, *mortally*, a forma equivalente sufixada, dáse maioritariamente como modificador de formas con prosodia semántica negativa, aínda que tamén pode modificar elementos neutros (*mortally changed*) e positivos (*mortally beautiful*). Tamén se documentan en ECF e NCF numerosos casos de significados intensificadores: *mortally surprised*, *mortally unpleasant* e *mortally dull*, por exemplo. O adverbio *mortally* tamén pode modificar máis categorías do que *mortal*, xa que nos datos non só aparece como modificador de adxectivos e formas participiais, senón tamén de verbos e mesmo dunha frase preposicional (*at feud*).

En liña cos datos de EEBOCorp 1.0, ECF e NCF tamén proporcionan un número

considerable de exemplos de colocacións con significado subxectivo e intensificador para *to death*: *torment to death* e *frighted to death* como colocacións subxectivas e *blush to death*, *mortify to death* ou *bored to death* como colocacións con significado intensificador. No caso destas últimas, cabe destacar que todas teñen prosodia semántica negativa ou neutra, mais non se dan casos de colocacións positivas de *to death* con significado intensificador. En canto ao tipo de palabras, *to death* modifica verbos, adxectivos, elementos participiais e nomes.

Unha vez presentados os resultados derivados dos corpus e bases de datos consultados, a segunda parte do capítulo pon en relación esta parte eminentemente cuantitativa coa teoría da gramaticalización, sobre a que xira a evolución semántica de *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death*. A análise cuantitativa dos datos dos dicionarios, bases de datos e corpus estudados indica, por tanto, que os significados destas formas non apareceron de forma inmediata, senón que, polo contrario, a súa gramaticalización tivo lugar de forma gradual. Neste sentido, o modelo de evolución para os intensificadores proposto por Adamson (significado descritivo/literal > significado afectivo/subxectivo > significado intensificador) demostrou ser un marco ideal para trazar a evolución semántica dos intensificadores derivados do campo semántico da morte. Con todo, nesta tese engadíronse dous estadios máis a dita escala, para deste xeito poder dar conta de certos exemplos máis problemáticos que están a medio camiño entre un significado e outro, xa que, en efecto, hai moitos exemplos cuxa semántica é pouco clara e admiten dobres lecturas.

A análise destas formas no marco da gramaticalización permitiu constatar que estas formas sufriron unha debilitación semántica (*semantic bleaching*) e se converteron, co paso do tempo, en formas cada vez máis abstractas. É dicir, que estas formas se gramaticalizaron, de aí que sexa posible termos colocacións como *dead sure*, *dead right*, *deadly determination*, *deadly lazy*, *mortal hurry*, *mortal fine* e *blush to death*, entre moitas outras. En todos estes casos o significado de *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* é claramente intensificador, xa que a forma indica simplemente grao alto ou máximo. Ademais desta debilitación semántica *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* tamén gañaron en subxectividade co paso do tempo. Á luz dos datos presentados, os significados orixinais destas formas eran descritivos ou literais, pero foron desenvolvendo significados cada vez máis subxectivos, nos cales o falante/escritor expresaba a súa visión persoal sobre unha situación concreta. Estas situacións que implican polo xeral contextos como palidez, silencio, inimidade, etc., invitan a unha inferencia de grao e actúan como contextos ponte

para a posterior aparición e codificación lingüística de significados puramente intensificadores. Estas posibles lecturas de grao emerxeron primeiro como inferencias pragmáticas contextuais, pero posteriormente pasaron a codificarse lingüisticamente.

Ademais de desemantización e subxectivización, as formas analizadas amosan outras características típicas de procesos de gramaticalización. Coa excepción de *to death*, todas estas formas sufriron condensación ou *scope reduction*, posto que na súa nova función de intensificadores ocupan posicións sintácticas máis fixas. *To death*, non obstante, amosou máis flexibilidade neste sentido. Outra das características destas formas é a de *layering*, que nesta investigación implica a coexistencia nun mesmo período sincrónico de tres significados distintos: descritivos, subxectivos e intensificadores (por exemplo, en *wounded to death*, *terrified to death* e *enamoured to death*). Este proceso tamén está estreitamente relacionado co de diverxencia: estes significados teñen autonomía de por si e poden ocorrer de forma independente e simultánea. Outra das características destas formas que vai parella á gramaticalización é a da persistencia. Así, malia que existen datos suficientes que indican que os intensificadores do campo semántico da morte modifican elementos de carácter positivo, a análise semántica evidencia que estas formas manifestan unha clara predisposición cara elementos negativos, en liña co seu significado orixinal. Esta tendencia está relacionada co denominado *conserving effect* descrito anteriormente.

En conclusión, en base ao estudo semántico levado a cabo na presente tese de doutoramento podemos concluír que as formas *dead(ly)*, *mortal(ly)* e *to death* sufriron un proceso de gramaticalización e desenvolveron, co paso do tempo, significados puramente intensificadores. A pesar de que os usos como intensificadores propiamente ditos non son os predominantes en ningunha das etapas estudadas e para ningunha das formas, os resultados da análise si evidencian este grao de gramaticalización. A pesar da novidade dun estudo de corpus semántico deste calibre, esta investigación dista de estar completa. Neste sentido, ábrese unha serie de futuras liñas de investigación. En primeiro lugar, poderían explorarse outras formas do campo semántico da morte como son *fatal*, *die for* e *die to* e comprobar se estas encaixan dentro do modelo de evolución semántica proposto por Adamson. En segundo lugar, sería interesante expandir a análise destas formas ata o momento presente con outros corpus e bases de datos, para verificar deste xeito o seu uso e grao de produtividade actual. En terceiro lugar, poderían explorarse outras variedades da lingua inglesa, xa que esta investigación se centrou no inglés británico e un estudo variacionista podería botar luz sobre posibles usos dialectais diacrónicos e sincrónicos.

Unha cuarta liña de investigación podería darse coa investigación da variación entre as formas cero (*dead* e *mortal*) e as formas sufixadas (*deadly* e *mortally*). Para rematar, unha ampliación do estudo levado a cabo podería comprender unha investigación destas formas no marco da denominada gramática de construcións, dado que é probable que estas formas creen redes semánticas e se retroalimenten, así como unha investigación contrastiva. Un estudo comparativo sobre formas do mesmo campo semántico en distintas linguas permitiría detectar posibles tendencias e coincidencias en colocacións, que poidan manifestar, pois, a tendencia a enfatizarmos lingüisticamente necesidades básicas como a fame, o frío ou o cansazo. Estas liñas, con todo, constitúen meras reflexións iniciais sobre posibles aspectos nos cales indagar en futuros traballos.

