Pragmatic: study of the interaction. How can we study interaction in the past?

Limitation of historical studies? How can we study language in the 13rd century? We study the written language.

What type of text is better to study interaction? In Drama, in plays. Problem of drama? It was written in verse, and it is not very natural. Which genre of drama do we use to observe everyday interactions? Comedy, as usually there are characters from different social scales.

Letters are also good.

Where do we find dialogue? In novels.

Pronouns of address:

**Comment on the use of terms and pronouns of address in the following Early Modern English texts.**

In middle English they have ‘usted’ (you) and ‘you’ (thou).

**Text 1. Hamlet ( I, ii)**

Queen: Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet, I pray thee stay with us, go not to Wittenberg.

Hamlet: I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King: Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply.

Thy + Thee = thou

You

The Queen using the “thou” and addressing Hamlet as “Hamlet”.

Then Hamlet addressing the Queen with “you” and “madam”.

In the case of the Queen, is the mother speaking: familiarity. We expect of Hamlet to be closer, for example instead of: “madam” use “mother”. So, Hamlet keeps the distance. This is an example of NON-RECIPROCALE.

RECIPRCABLE use would be: Thou ↔ Thou

Meeting in a parliament: You ↔ You, and probably at the corridor they would use “thou”.

5 types:

Thou ↔ Thou

Thou ↔ You

You ↔ Thou

You ↔ You

**Text 2. Henry Oxinden, Letter to his wife (1662)**

I read thy Letters over and over and over, for in them I see thee as well as I can. I am thine as much as possibly. I hope our Children are well. My service to all you think fitting to speak it to.

The husband addressing her wife. “You” was originally the plural pronoun: it could addressed not only to her wife but also to their children (just a theory, not true).

Fist he is more affectional, romantic, “thou” of EMOTION, INTIMACY… and then it sound more like in distance: it seems to be a formula.

Shift of mood: from affection to matter of fact. Also, textual shift, the textual function.

**Text 3. Hamlet (V,i)**

HAMLET : Whose grave's this, sirrah?

First Clown: Mine, sir. [...]

HAMLET: I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

First Clown: You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET: 'Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine: 'tis for the dead, *not for the* ***quick***; therefore thou liest.

Originally “quick” meant alive. Why do we use “quick” with the actual meaning? From paralysed, not moving. It suffered a semantic shift.

Quicksilver: mercury. It is a liquid and it moves.

Pronouns of address: you, thou.

Terms of address: sir, sirrah.

NON-RECIPROCAL use of the pronouns. A possibility could be social class, because Hamlet is a prince and the clown is different hierarchal.

**Text 4. Macbeth (V, iii)**

Enter a Servant

Macbeth: The devil damn thee black, thou cream-faced loon! Where got'st thou that goose look?

The pronoun “thou” requires a special form from the verb, that is the reason why there is a got’st.

Is using it to insult the servant, as we have some terms of address. The King is abusing the servant.

Further examples of semantic change:

• What does quick mean in Text 3? Which type of semantic change has affected this word?

• smirk: 'to smile' > 'to smile in a silly way'

• nice: 'foolish, ignorant' (cf. Latin nescius) > 'kind, considerate'

• fowl: 'bird' > 'barnyard fowl'

• pig: 'piglet' > 'pig'

• pig > 'an unpleasant person, especially one who is greedy or dirty

TEXTUAL CHANGES AND EMOTIONAL CHANGES