The poem “A Small Thought” depicts the gore that can occur amidst individuals on the grounds of religion. The writer cautiously exercises communicative behaviors and language registers to portray the influence of religion on the social peace between individual groups.

The persona in the poem employs two language registers being consultative and casual. Initially, the speaker clearly reminisces to himself, the stories of past religious wars he heard “told of…hacking their own”. At this point, he does not speak directly to the listener but makes use of the consultative register only providing information of the stories he heard. As the first stanza ends, the last line uses two rhetorical questions that question the audience in the consultative register. In the second stanza, there is a sudden change in register from consultative to casual. He speaks directly to the listener in the first line “Hey, that was…religions.” Furthermore, he establishes acquaintanceship with the audience when he uses the personal pronoun “our” in “…and so will our little fights…” There is now a direct communication between the audience and the speaker. The casual register compliments this communication.

Communicative behaviors are abundant in this poem, as the writer makes use of a combination of tone adjustments, and actions. He first expresses intense emotion in line 4 “How we thought that…lacked emotion!” at the mercilessness of his ancestors. This tone gradually decreases until it is truly mild in line 8 “When would they…commotion?” There is another tone shift in the second stanza when he uses the onomatopoeia “aah!” to imitate the death cries of the war casualties. To express the absence of blood, he uses “sniff” to signify the smelling for scent(s). This also attributes to an additional shift in tone, until it gradually declines till the last line that uses a tonally mild rhetorical question “don’t cha agree?”

Overall, the speaker gravitates toward socialism and highlights this using the outlined communicative behaviors and language registers. He advises that peace is only maintained when we can indifferently co-exist with each other.