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2 Identity in Speakers' Discourse

1 Introductory remarks

Identity, a concept introduced into the scientific debate by Erikson (1950; but see also Fearon 1999 and Molinelli, this volume), is related both to self and to language, from an internal as well as external point of view. This multifaceted topic is currently being widely discussed in the recent literature devoted to it, to the point that a general definition thereof can hardly be proposed.¹

Dealing with the topic of identity in speakers' discourse raises at least two preliminary questions: The first is related to the nature and the role of identity in relation to language, the second, strictly connected with the first one, is about the meaning of "discourse".

In a survey of contributions to this issue, two prototypically different positions on the nature of identity could be underlined, based on the different ways in which language is conceived. On the one hand, there is the line of thought that links the position of structuralism and Chomskyan formalism: According to these paradigms, language and its structures live outside the speaker and are ascribed to the speaker's mind, or to the over-individual level of "langue" (in Saussurean terms), respectively. In this way, considering language outside the speaker can be used to represent a pre-existent external world, which is independent of the speaker, according to the ideational function (Joseph 2004: 3–4).

On the other side, the viewpoint according to which language is strictly connected with the speaker and his/her communicative and relational needs can be envisaged.² As a consequence of this there is a twofold result: firstly, language is not a neutral and rational instrument separable from its speakers, insofar it is strictly connected to ideologies and to power relations; secondly, meaning is not an objective filling of language, because it results from speaker and his/her agency (Halliday and Martin 1993; Kilpert 2003). Taking this perspective implies an analysis of language as an activity manifesting itself in the form of speech acts and written documents as well, taking also into account speaker's com-

¹ Joseph (2004), Edwards (2009), Evans (2015).

² For a general overview see Consani (2016b).

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municative intentions, his/her social conditionings, each communicative situations, and his/her desire to behave towards a single speaker or groups either positively or negatively.

It must be observed, however, that there is, or could be in principle, a remarkable difference between the expression of identity in discourse and the manifestation of identity in the repertoire: the former is basically speaker-oriented, i.e. it tends to put the stress on the personal identity of the speaker, with a more or less high degree of juxtaposition to the other, whereas the latter is group-oriented, in that it particularly points out the difference among various groups that coexist within a community. Since the former is at a micro-level, the latter at a macro-level, usually the linguistic tools employed to express the different orientation vary to a certain extent. Obviously, between the two viewpoints there is continuity rather than a break and both of them are in any case inconceivable without the content in which they are located.

It is also obvious that, according to the first perspective, the speaker's performance of his/her own identity is analysed in relation to language structures (allocutives, person, subjectivity expression), while, according to the second one, identity acquires a totalising function, which realizes itself in language structures and in all strategies, at different linguistic levels, used to form the message, and in speaker's selection of the codes of his/her repertoire as well. Hence, according to the last perspective, speaker does not perform/exhibit a unique and "monolithic" identity, constructed only one time, but he builds multiple, complex and composite identities that are negotiated and re-negotiated according to the situations, to the addressees and their power relations.

The four contributions of this section could be all analysed on the base of the assumption that identity is expression of the speaker and his/her interlocutor in each discourse episode, through the resources offered by language and by each code of the speakers' repertoire. The various situations presented in these papers represent particular discourse typologies, such as that of the religious domain (Lorenzetti, this volume; Mazzon, this volume), the typology of private letters (Bruno, this volume) and the typology of imaginary speech used by authors such as Plautus and Goldoni (Fedriani, Ghezzi, and Talamo, this volume).

Despite the different situations portrayed, in cultural, social and chronological terms, these works are in fact strictly connected by the presence of a high degree of agency.³

³ For an overview on the concept of "agency" see Duranti (2004).

- (1) Agency is here understood as the property of those entities (i) that have some degree of control over their own behavior, (ii) whose actions in the world affect other entities' (and sometimes their own), and (iii) whose actions are the object of evaluation (e.g. in terms of their responsibility for a given outcome). (Duranti 2004: 453)

According to such a perspective, this factor could characterise in different ways and to different degrees various textual genres such as private epistolary, a comic *pièce* written to be received by a particular audience, and religious texts written to be played in particular religious situations, which sometimes have a precise performative value.

2 The case studies

As written above, it is difficult to talk about identity in a totally abstract way. Moreover, if we consider this topic related to speakers' discourse, is almost impossible to exclude the external perspective of each speech event, and the context in which each of them takes place.

Notwithstanding the difference in the situations analysed in the *case-studies* of the works present in this section, it is worth reflecting on a hypothetical link connecting them. Therefore, it could be possible to link a micro-sociolinguistic perspective, which is at the base of Bruno's work (this volume), with situations that involve wider parts of the speech community, and some time also to reflect on different degree of generalisation that each situation could acquire on the base of speakers' role. In other words, it is worth asking whether, together with the notion of situation, the notion of domain as well could be used;⁴ in this way, it could be possible to have a deeper degree of generalisation and of data projection from modern to past situations.⁵

Clearly most of the situations analysed in this section are part of the classical domains of modern sociolinguistics: those that could be hypothesised for Mazzon (this volume) and Lorenzetti (this volume) belong to the religious domain, while the private letters analysed by Bruno could belong to the family domain. Instead, it is more complex to define the case of the imaginary speech of comic authors analysed by Fedriani, Ghezzi, and Talamo (this volume).

⁴ "Domains are defined in terms of institutional contexts or socio-ecological co-occurrences. They attempt to designate the major clusters of interaction situations that occur in particular multilingual settings. Domains enable us to understand that language choice and topic ... are ... related to widespread socio-cultural norms and expectations." (Fishman 1972: 441).

⁵ For a general overview on the relationship between situation and domain as a possible link between micro- and macro-sociolinguistic level see Berruto ([1995] 2003: 78–79).

2.1 Ritual Feasts in Medieval Rome

Since analysing identity expressed in speaker's discourse implies the individuation both of actors interacting with the speaker in each speech/written situation and the related situations, in this section we will provide an in-depth analysis in this direction. Particularly complex is the analysis of the underlying context in the text investigated by Lorenzetti (this volume), for various reasons: first of all, because the text is part of a poem (*Liber Politicus*), which was written down for the first time almost a century later than the time when the episodes of this song were composed. The song was played by a group of youngsters (*Laudes puerorum*) in the ritual feasts to celebrate the passage from winter to Easter season (*Cornomannia*). Second, because even though the text is in Greek, it is written in Latin alphabet, a fact that approximately pictures the underlying linguistic reality. Finally, for the very nature of the language phenomena found in the text, which have an uncertain date and are ambiguous to interpret in relation to the linguistic development of medieval Greek.

Obviously, the external scenario and the linguistic data should be treated separately in order to avoid circularity in the line of reasoning.

Beginning with the external perspective, it is clear that this song refers to a reality that took place in the past, which is remembered and “updated” by its author, in the attempt of confirming the presence of Roman youngsters with Greek as L1 and attending schools for native speakers of Greek. However, by selecting the Latin alphabet it also becomes clear that the first one who wrote this poem was not able to master the writing system in Greek characters, and he could also possibly have a very poor competence in Greek. This sheds light on an important structural element, i.e. the clues that let people think about the reception of the text from an oral source, characterised by linguistic peculiarities referring to Medieval Greek spoken in Italy. For this reason, the orthographical form of the text seems to be an operation external to the group that used these songs with the intention of fixing a behaviour that was decreasing or even disappearing, or was (being) perceived in this way.

On the other way, the nature of the song refers to ritual forms related to important moments of individual and social life, such as those about the coming of the spring and the achievement of puberty. These events used to play an important role in the social cohesion, particularly in a situation where the community of speakers of Greek in Rome should have been recessive from a linguistic and cultural viewpoint, as also pointed out by Lorenzetti.⁶

⁶ Cf. Harris (2011: 32–40).

Consistent with the analysis of this context, there is almost no occurrence of either Latin or Romance lexical elements in the text. This circumstance allows us to suppose that the two linguistic and cultural worlds should be completely separated by now, particularly among clergy, with very rare cases of people competent in both codes, an indispensable requirement for interference phenomena also at the most vulnerable level, i.e. lexicon. Therefore everything confirms the fact that a text, with marked identity and cohesion values, is perceived and pictured from the outside with a setting analogous to that of several historical proofs on *lingua franca*, characterised by looks, definitions and quotes of witnesses external to the group that used this code.

2.2 Multilingualism in Medieval England

Opposite to the situation analysed by Lorenzetti is the context of Mazzon's work (this volume): the texts analysed by the author reveal the writer's deep competence in different codes both in the case of religious texts (1) and (3), and in the case of lyrical texts of erotic nature (2). In the first ones, the text in Latin has insertions and alternations with Middle English, while in the second type of texts there is the juxtaposition between Anglo-Norman, Middle English and Latin.

The most interesting data deduced by the analysis of the texts are that the use of different codes in a single text reveals the hierarchical organization of the codes in the repertoire of Medieval England, where a functional distribution of Latin, French and Middle English existed: Latin was used in religious and legal domains, French by aristocracy at court, while Middle English was the language used by ordinary people.⁷

The strict connection between particular values and particular codes of the repertoire put constraints on the choice of the codes by each of the characters (authority, stranger, religious role). In addition, the alternation of codes and the style shift could be used to obtain particular communicative functions, as in the case of the boasting speech from some characters as Erode, Pilate and the Devil, or in the case of irony and sarcasm, by which Christ was insulted during his crucifixion, an effect obtained through code-switching towards the prestigious languages which used to be used for parodic aims.

Besides the religious texts, Mazzon very well demonstrates that multilingualism and the use of different codes were characteristic of English and the Medieval European literature, and were frequently employed in some specific genres such as tragic operas and epistolaries.

⁷ See the references in Mazzon's chapter.

Moreover, it is interesting to note that a wider and metalinguistic use of multilingualism ceases during the Renaissance and shows up again only in the post-Colonial period, with more marked manifestations than in the Medieval age. This parallel, which is the focus of the last part of Mazzon's paper, is extremely interesting and it might be in connection with the imposition of Standard English starting from the end of the XV century, after the passing of the previous triglossia situation.

On the other side, the more and more extended use of English as a global language in the last decades creates the conditions for the emergence of language mixtures based on English and used in Hong Kong, Singapore, Philippines and Gibraltar. According to the author, these last mixed languages, originally exclusively spoken languages, thanks to computer-mediated communication could be used in the written form, a fact that allows us to analyse them in accordance with the methodology used for Medieval English texts. It is treated as an analogy that overcomes the simple superficial juxtaposition of the two situations, since the use of code-switching and of mixed-language does not reveal a deficit in competence in one of the code in contact. It rather reveals conscious choices and communicative norms which refer to the presence of different communities of practice: the more recent history shows that these mixed language forms mostly used in the speakers' discourse, at least in some cases are developing into a more stable code, even though they are not commonly used for inter-generational transmission.

2.3 The comic genre

Fedriani, Ghezzi, and Talamo's work (this volume) well shows how the creation of a purpose-build micro-corpus could overcome some limits of historical sociolinguistics both from a quantitative (restricted and casual preservation of texts) and qualitative point of view (lack of speech data, impossibility of direct data elicitation from the speakers). The choice to form a corpus of texts belonging to the comic genre (*DiSCIS*), which is notoriously closer to speech than other literary genres, since it reproduces discourse situations and dialogic exchanges, is particularly productive in order to investigate four analysis levels (discourse, pragmatic, sociolinguistic, contact level), on the base of which the collection and marking of data is done.

This first limited analysis is based on linguistic acts of directive typology (order/request, advice/suggestion, permission, prohibition) and it is applied to a sample based on eight Plautus' comedies and one Goldoni's play, with more than 100.000 tokens resulting. The obtained data have an important meaning

according to the discourse perspective, i.e. the main focus of the articles in this section.

In fact, among the different analysed functions at discourse level, Adjacent Subacts, in the type of modal and interpersonal ones, are particularly interesting, since they are direct expression of the speaker's position and behaviour towards his interlocutor and towards the content of the message. As is clear from the analysis carried out, this allows us to construct, at least partially, the role relations that characterize who takes part in the dialogues, also recovering in this way a typical aspect of speech.

Qualitative and quantitative data, resulting from this methodology, reveal the value that such a sample has: even though they belong to the same genre, they were composed in periods and in linguistic and sociolinguistic situations that were deeply different: comparing Latin situation with Italian one, a difference between the sociolinguistic and pragmatic result is particularly clear. From the viewpoint of sociolinguistics, in the case of Plautus, the parameter that turns out to be the most important in encoding directive acts is gender: orders are performed by male characters, mostly with a high social status; while, in Goldoni the same typology of acts is performed by high social status characters that are both males and females indifferently.

The social stratification is the factor that could explain the above-mentioned difference in configurations: it is clear that the macro social structures widely differ if we take into account parameters such as presence/absence of slaves or female status in Plautus' and Goldoni's works.

From the viewpoint of pragmatics, the use of discourse markers employed to change orders, to strengthen or weaken them, show a distribution that is comparable to that of Plautus' and Goldoni's texts: this fact confirms that accommodation strategies toward the interlocutor are elements that constantly remain permanent, independently of time passing and even though the social context changes.

Taking into consideration the issue of the applicability of internal and external language data of the modern situations to the past, it is clear that it does not need to be underlined (on the discussion about the Uniformitarianism Principle, see now the volume edited by Molinelli and Putzu 2015).

Finally, going beyond the particular situation examined, it is worth noticing that, analysing texts such as the comic ones or other imaginary speech texts, we always face literary fictions: this means that the social connotations of the characters could not be used to portrait the real social structures in a direct and mechanic way. A significant example from Plautus is the character of the *servus callidus* 'smart slave': from the limited percentage of linguistic acts of these type of characters aiming at comic effects, it is impossible to deduce

anything on slaves' social status and their real way of life in Rome during the III/II century BCE. The necessary distinction between data deduced from literary norms, which characterise the imaginary speech, and its relative structures is always valid as a general principle,⁸ although it should be always kept in mind that:

- (2) The identities of real and fictional individuals are actually not all that easy to distinguish. When it comes to the subject of a biography, it can be difficult to say whether it is a real or a fictional personage that we are dealing with. Real individuals occasionally assume 'false' identities [...] and more than occasionally misrepresent their own characteristics, for example when listing their leisure-time activities on a curriculum vitae.
(Joseph 2004: 4)

2.4 Private letters

In the field of historical sociolinguistics to deduce data from private letters is a well-known and reliable practice. Most of the works belonging to the Helsinki school and to historical sociolinguistics of English is based on materials collected in the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC);⁹ even though in the last decade several studies on "ego-documents" on other modern European languages have appeared,¹⁰ however a similar methodology has almost never been applied thus far to the two classical languages.¹¹

Bruno's work (this volume) is one of the first analysis in this field, focussing on Greek private letters written on papyri of the Ptolemaic period, in the perspective of the expression of subjectivity and the relations between speaker and receiver.

It is true that these letters are characterised by formulas and by repetition of peculiar creations, even though moderate stylistic variations and others literary techniques related to speaker and receiver social status could be found (Bruno 2015). However, the study of variation in the use of the first person singular and plural in the subject position could let us deduce interesting data. According to the analysis proposed, the use of *we* is associated with the more formulaic

⁸ Cf. Consani (2016b).

⁹ Cf. Bergs (2005); Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (1996); Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg (2003).

¹⁰ For a general overview see Elspass (2012).

¹¹ Obviously both documentary and linguistic research on letters of the Ancient World are present; on this regard see Pighi (1964) and Adams (1977) for Latin and Evans (2007) and Klauck (2006) for Greek.

parts of the letters and with the presence of modal and non-actual predicates, hence excluding an immediate reference to *hic et nunc* of the communication, which is crucially characterised by the use of the first singular person.

This conclusion is interesting from a twofold point of view: considering the strategies of representation of the speaker, the use of the plural seems to be a typical strategy of ego concealment and its downgrading to a secondary position of the communicative act; from a more general point of view, this type of behaviour and its correlations with the discourse structure confirms the value of some of E. Benveniste's theories on the person relations in the verb, on subjectivity and formal mechanisms of the communicative act.

These results, which well integrate in the field of the strategies to perform identity at discourse level that emerge in this section, are important premises for a detailed study from a quantitative and chronological, and qualitative point of view, also considering bilingualism Greek/Egyptian, a topic from which interesting and important conclusions are drawn.¹²

3 General remarks

On the base of both the considerations about the four articles of this section and from the results and conclusion of the works of this line of research related to the expression of identity in speaker's discourse, it is possible to make some general reflections.

3.1 Language domains and theoretical approaches

All the works of this section focus on situations of the past: in the first centuries B.C. and the following periods those in which Latin and Greek are involved; a situation of plurilingualism that existed also in Medieval England, where Middle English, French, Anglo-Norman and Latin coexisted.

However, several works belonging to this research line involve different modern situations, with particular reference to Romance diasystem (standard Italian, Italian dialects).¹³

In accordance with the general approach of the research pursued in this volume, in the survey of the different language situations analysed, two main

¹² On this regard, see Evans and Obbink (2010) and Vierros (2012).

¹³ See Consani (2015b), Molinelli and Putzu (2015), Marotta & Rovai (2015), Di Giovine and Gasbarra (2016).

approaches are privileged: the first one focusses on the interface between synchrony and diachrony, which stands out particularly in the development of the Romance diasystem, where, overcoming Saussure's dichotomy, language change dynamics and its motivations are analysed in different language periods.

The second one involves the study of contact situations and the role they played in language change, both in peripheral areas of the Romance diasystem, where contact situations with other languages had been long and deep (Sardinia: Latin/Sardinian/Catalan, Calabria: Latin/Romance/Greek), and in the same language domain characterised by bilingualism with or without diglossia (Greece and Egypt in the Hellenistic period), as well as in medieval England.

In these cases identity traits could be found mainly in the "official" contact aspects: what characterised language contact in the light of identity processes could be found in the official language aspects which often regard the lexical level and imply a language perspective, according to which language is considered as a social and cultural element. Language is considered the main result of culture, social and political structure, a result that is sometimes subordinate to those elements (cf. Cuzzolin 2015): a "conservative" identity, which contrasts with the "innovative" one, which is the basis of language aspects instead.

It is quite evident that the past and present situations considered are an important basis to try to analyse whether it is possible to project on a quite remote past, at least, some of the modern sociolinguistic paradigms.

Obviously, this does not mean to extend in an uncritical way the *uniformitarian principle* also in sociolinguistics: in fact, this would mean to apply to situations of the past an analysis schema used for modern settings. Such situations are deeply different from the ones of the past from different point of views (the limits and the paradoxes that are implied in this way of working were underlined by Baldi and Cuzzolin 2015).

In addition, this cannot and should not be an obstacle for those scholars who try to delineate the sociolinguistic and historical setting on the base of concrete data, independent of the language documentation: the paradoxes mentioned above would be avoided, keeping the reconstruction of the setting independent from the analysis of language data (cf. Consani 2015a).

3.2 Performing identity

In the research field at issue in this volume, the expression of the position or attitude of the speaker/writer towards the actors of the communicative act and, in the case of written documents, towards different types of receivers is obtained through different, even deeply different, ways.

The most immediate technique to express one's identity is the use of linguistic means that the codes used give to speaker/writer: as already pointed out, this regards both the selection of morpho-syntactic traits and lexical and phraseological choices; along this strategy, pragmatic and discourse elements are used to influence discourse structure. This second perspective is particularly interesting from a diachronic point of view as well, as is clear from the analysis of pragmatic markers in Latin, in Italian and in some of the other Romance varieties emerged from the evolution of Latin, in order to individuate particular processes of grammaticalisation and pragmaticalisation (Ghezzi and Molinelli 2013, 2014).

An aspect that is related to the one mentioned above is the expression of subjectivity, particularly in the epistolary genre, and the development of the pronominal systems of allocutives from Latin to the Romance diasystem and to Italian, overcoming the traditional barriers of the structuralism between discourse/language system and synchrony/diachrony.

The employment of this method of analysis to Latin (Molinelli *forthc.*) and to Greek (Consani 2014a) confirms the possibility to apply methods of sociolinguistics, of pragmatics and social psychology, i.e. the linguistic reflexes of positive and negative polite forms, to *corpus-Sprachen*.

Besides, this type of works can also meet the need to study the diaphasic dimension from a diachronic point of view, the only dimension that was not explicitly considered by Adams in his work on Latin. Moreover, this approach could open interesting perspectives on the study of deixis, and shed light on the evolution of the motion and exchange verbs from semantically fully verbs to discourse markers both in Latin and in Italian through a process of pragmaticalisation in both languages.

This is particularly interesting for its consequences on the relation between speech/writing and for the application of methods of language change used for modern languages to languages that are attested by written data only.

One of the most frequent strategies to express identity in discourse are speaker's language choices among the languages of the individual and social repertoire, choices that can be both marked or unmarked according to the values of the speech community under investigation. This type of strategy is particularly important since it could be adopted for the analysis of modern settings (e.g. Franco-Provençal communities in Apulia), and of different historical periods of the Romance languages (Sardinia of XV and XVI century, medieval England and so on) and of Classical and Hellenistic Greek diasystem.

If it is correct to claim that a particular language choice is in itself unmarked, but marked in comparison with another language choice only, this interpretation could be a valuable tool for the analysis and interpretation of written documents.

This enables us to reflect on the role that particular genres, i.e. the epistolary one, or particular forms of a language used in Celtic world could have had or still have.

Along with the choice among the languages, a fundamental aspect of multilingual situations, another strategy that is used in order to express a bilingual identity is the use of code-switching and code mixing both in the present (cf. the final part of Mazzon's work, this volume) and in the past (Consani 2014b).

4 Discussion

4.1 Repertoire vs. discourse

From a meta-theoretical point of view, looking at the studies comprised in this volume, the first element that could be underlined is a deep quantitative difference between the works about the expression of identity through the languages of the repertoire and those dealing with the expression of identity in speaker's discourse: the first ones are much more than the others are.

Hence, it is worth reflecting on the reasons of this research trend.

Overviewing the works focussing on language contact, at least since Trubeckoj's idea of the *Sprachbund* (1928), it is undoubtedly right that the study of contact between language systems plays a fascinating role in literature, despite Weinreich's revolution, according to which the place of language contact is the bilingual speaker. This claim has received several different demonstrations in the field of studies on *contact-induced grammatical changes* as well, among the others Heine and Kuteva' work (2005), which has been of great influence.

Moreover, the above mentioned quantitative difference, could also be due to the fact that the speaker's identity is often expressed by his/her choice of a language, through which he could identify himself and allows the others to identify him.

4.2 Textual typology

Considering the textual typology and the literary genres used in the works, an important premise of historical sociolinguistics is confirmed: the epistolary genre and imaginary speech texts play an important role for this kind of methodological research.

Indeed, both imaginary speech texts, particularly those related to previous periods of modern languages, and *corpus-Sprachen* with variously written documentation, are a valuable starting point to observe some accessory elements,

which are strictly related to speaker/writer identity, such as language attitudes and his/her opinions about linguistic facts (language varieties, dialects, uses and values attached to them). Indeed, attitudes and opinions present in plays reflect the author's language behaviour and, above all in comic genre, it might be thought that they mirror public attitudes the play was written for. As it was written, it represents an interesting glimmer on the value scales, that the pictured societies attributed to language and to its use as expression of values related to speaker's personality (Willi [2002] 2007).

Research in this direction shows the role played by the Comedy authors, starting from Aristophanes for the Greek world, and Plautus for the Latin one and it is shown how this genre could be usefully compared with data related to the history of the modern Romance and Germanic languages.

As epistolary genre, the extension of research besides works of *CEEC* is remarkable from a quantitative and qualitative point of view; in this perspective, works related to the letters of Greek and Latin world are particularly valuable, since they are characterised by multidisciplinary approaches (Bruno 2015, this volume; Molinelli 2014).

Indeed, starting from philological and textual data, on the one side, these works shed light on linguistic elements as deictics and on the ways to express subjectivity both in synchrony and diachrony; on the other side, they are analysed in a pragmatic perspective through which it is possible to underline all instruments that speaker/receiver use to mark her/his position and underline her/his attitudes towards receiver and towards context in general. It is clear that it is a favoured observatory to look at the expression of one's identity in particular discourse situations.

4.3 Oral and written plurilingualism

Another element that could be deduced is that all multilingual situations, even though there are some general opposite opinions (Sebba 2012), were characteristic of the past in the same way as of present.

In addition, the use of more than one code in a written document reveals that in Antiquity and Middle Age, such authors were deeply competent in both linguistic codes (Mazzon this volume; Murgia 2014; Consani 2015a, 2016a), whereas in analogous manifestations of the modern world (particularly phenomena of code-switching) the switch from a language to another is often due to speaker poor competence in one of the languages. Hence, in Antiquity and Medieval world, plurilingualism was used as the result of a conscious strategy, even a resource in order to use it for different aims, and among them, to express speaker's identity: the case study Mazzon (this volume) analysed is a clear example of this.

Since written texts are planned and have a high degree of implicit indexicality, on the one side, they are characterised by several limits concerning the possibility to reconstruct the diaphasic and diastratic context in which they were composed. However, on the other side, they are a powerful tool to detect and individuate authors' cultural and ideological attitudes (cf. Turchetta, this volume): from this point of view, and with reference to the expression of speaker/writer's identity, it could be claimed that written texts seem to be more valuable than the oral ones, characterised by their casualty and evanescence.

It is enough thinking that, beyond the linguistic aspects, from the choice of a particular writing system instead of another in a situation in which different systems exist, several writer's attitudes could be deduced (Turchetta, this volume; Consani 2015a), something that turns out difficult to deduce through speech.

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