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OVERCOMING THE “BAD DATA” PROBLEM: EXAMPLES OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE IN ITALIAN EPISTOLARY DISCOURSE

Abstract

This research paper focuses on the “bad data” problem that exists in historical pragmatics and discusses whether epistolary discourse might help to overcome it. The “bad data” problem is defined as a problem encountered by researchers in historical pragmatics that have to rely on written data in order to research spoken language in past eras. The goal of this research is to examine if epistolary discourse is adequate in overcoming this problem. The corpus is based on the *Lettere di Levante* (Letters from the East), a collection of 88 letters written in the first half of the fifteenth century. In this research, we focus on one letter dated July 14, 1428. In order to determine the aspects of spoken language found in the letter, the frameworks devised by Jucker (2008), Koch and Oesterreicher (1985), and Culpeper and Kytö (2010) were applied. The results seem to suggest that this particular corpus contains examples of spoken language, albeit a particular subtype – diplomatic discourse.

Key words: historical pragmatics, corpora, Italian language, koiné, spoken language source, diplomatic discourse

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1. INTRODUCTION

This paper focuses on a specific problem in the field of historical pragmatics, the “bad data” problem, which deals with selecting an adequate corpus when conducting research on spoken language used in the past. It is suggested that an Italian epistolary corpus from the 15th century could serve as an adequate surrogate, given the lack of archival records. In order to prove this hypothesis, I provide a general outline of the “bad data” problem, and then share more about the analysis of one letter from the *Lettere di Levante* corpus in order to show the way in which such letters can reveal examples of spoken language from that historical period. The limitations of this corpus are also addressed.

2. DEFINING THE “BAD DATA” PROBLEM

Historical pragmatics is defined as a science that “focuses on language use in past contexts and examines how meaning is made. It is an empirical branch of linguistic study, with focus on authentic language use in the past” (Taavitsainen & Fitzmaurice, 2007: 13). In fact, it is a science that applies principles of both pragmatics and historical linguistics. The main scope of this science is concerned with linguistic usage from the past which offers examples of different language elements, such as implications, presuppositions, conversational maxims, politeness, or speech acts (Paternoster, 2015: 19). Historical pragmatics was born within the ambit of pragmatics as proposed by Andreas Jacobs and Andreas H. Jucker (1995), and over the past three decades it has managed to move from a marginal position to a more central one (Taavitsainen & Jucker, 2010: 4). Up until the 1990s, the reconciliation of pragmatics with historical linguistics seemed almost impossible because the latter was based on the philological analysis of written texts, predominantly literary texts. On the other hand, pragmatics was concerned with spontaneous, face-to-face interaction (Jucker, 2008: 895). Since pragmatics looks at both “live” and spoken language, it is clear that historical pragmatics should conduct research

on language that was spoken in the past. However, due to the paucity of records of spontaneous language from the past, historical pragmatics must rely on written corpora. This is what Labov (1994: 11) has termed the “bad data” problem.

Labov (1994: 11) identifies the problem of using written texts as corpora. He begins from the fact that written texts survive by happenstance, thanks to a mix of historical events and accidents. Secondly, the language used in these documents probably differs from the vernacular language used by the writers, who would presumably have expressed themselves in a manner that corresponded to the linguistic standards of their time. Many of the documents are filled with hypercorrect forms, a mix of dialects, and orthographic errors; and another problem is that we rarely know anything about the writer’s social status or the social structure of their community. Finally, even though one can read what was written, we can very rarely deduce what might have been understood by the reader. Due to all of these reasons, Labov states that historical pragmatics represents “the art of making the best use of bad data” (1994: 11).

Research conducted since Labov (1994) follows the same line of thinking. Recent research in the field of historical pragmatics, as shown in *The Historical Perspective in Pragmatics* by Jacobs and Jucker (1995), addresses the problem of corpus selection. Other research on the topic has been done by Culpeper and Kytö (2000), Jucker (1994, 2000, 2008), and Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007), all of whom echo the same sentiment: corpora in historical pragmatics are flawed, but there are ways in which they may be used when doing research. The following chapter outlines some of the ways in which the “bad data” problem might be overcome.

3. METHODOLOGY IN HISTORICAL LINGUISTICS – OVERCOMING THE “BAD DATA” PROBLEM

In this chapter, I focus on various strategies that might allow us to overcome the “bad data” problem, or to at least “make good use of” the material we have access to.

Thanks to the work of Koch and Oesterreicher (1985), which predates Labov's contributions by almost a decade, written language is no longer considered the polar opposite of spoken language. In fact, Koch and Oesterreicher (1985)¹ propose an alternative to the spoken language-written language dichotomy. They recommend the use of a graphic/phonic code dichotomy, which implies a range of possible communicative acts that might be identified on the continuum between immediate language use and distant language use. In short, this dichotomy would imply that, for example, funeral services (which are spoken) are distant, but correspondence (which is written) is immediate. Essentially, all communication can be placed on a continuum ranging from immediate to distant (Koch & Oesterreicher, 1985: 23). Thanks to this dichotomy, written texts may be used when researching spoken language as they are not texts of communicative distance. According to an interpretation by Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010:10), this model allows an analyst to define precise characteristics of communicative immediacy and distance, and to modify the crude dichotomy of simply distinguishing between written and spoken language.

Furthermore, Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010: 7) suggest two solutions to the problem:

1. The selection of a corpus should adequately represent the spoken language.
2. Even written language has communicative aspects and deserves to be the subject of research on historical pragmatics.

Essentially, the first solution implies that there are written records that approach spoken language, in that they mimic it and take on the same characteristics as spoken interaction. The second solution admits that there are limitations to using written corpora as sources when considering spoken language, but that, even though written language is also used for communication, its communicative

¹ See also Koch (1999).

mechanisms should be researched in their own right, even if they do not completely mirror spoken language.

When it comes to discussing the selection of corpora, much progress has been made by Culpeper and Kytö (1999, 2000, 2006, 2010), who propose a useful terminology that aims to distinguish between the various orality levels of written texts that approach spoken language (Culpeper & Kytö, 2010: 17). They call such texts “*speech-related*” and they identify three categories:

1. Speech-like – corpora that mimic the spoken language (for example, private correspondence) when the interlocutors are not in close physical proximity to one another;
2. Speech-based – corpora that are based on spoken language (for example, transcripts of judicial proceedings);
3. Speech-purposed – literary texts that mimic spoken language (for example, dialogues in literary or prose works, or theatrical pieces).

However, historical pragmatics must still rely on texts that do not completely capture the complexities and characteristics of spoken communication. Even though historical pragmatics faces substantial challenges, it is a flourishing field, and the existence of the *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* published by John Benjamins since the year 2000 testifies to this fact. Nevertheless, relatively little research has been done on the Italian language spoken in past eras, given that most of the research conducted so far has concerned itself with English or German.

Nonetheless, it is worth making special mention of some advances made in recent years. The importance of the topic has even been recognized by the *Associazione per la Storia della Lingua Italiana* (ASLI), which organized a conference on this very topic in 2018. The book of proceedings, *Pragmatica storica dell'italiano. Modelli e usi comunicativi del passato (Historical Pragmatics of the Italian Language. Models and communicative usage in the past²)*, was published

² All translations in the article are the author's.

in 2020 and edited by Gabriela Alfieri, Giovanna Alfonzetti and Daria Motta. Prior to that, Annick Paternoster (2015) researched examples of historical politeness in a corpus of classical Italian literary works in *Cortesi e scortesi. Percorsi di pragmatica storica da Castiglione a Collodi (Polite and Impolite. The Courses of Historical Pragmatics from Castiglione to Collodi)*. Furthermore, Margherita di Salvo and Cristina Muru (2014) edited the volume titled *Dragomanni, sovrani e mercanti. Pratiche linguistiche nelle relazioni politiche e commerciali del Mediterraneo moderno (Dragomans, Sovrans, and Merchants. Linguistic Practices in Political and Commercial Relations in the Modern Mediterranean)*, which deals entirely with the pragmatic problems encountered when researching Mediterranean languages. Even though research done by Enrico Testa (2014) does not deal with historical pragmatics in the true meaning of the concept, he does present findings on various spoken language varieties throughout the history of the Italian language in his work, *L'italiano nascosto (Hidden Italian)*. It is also worth noting that Held (2005, 2010), Colella (2012), Alfonzetti and Spampinato Beretta (2012), Ghezzi and Molinelli (2016), and Culpeper (2017) all research different phenomena that may be observed in the Italian language through a lens of historical pragmatics.

3.1. LETTERS AS SOURCES OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE

In this section, I outline some of the characteristics of epistolary correspondence that make it a suitable surrogate for spoken language. Taavitsainen and Jucker (2007) claim that letters represent a particular type of corpus because they function on two levels – the primary level and the incorporated level – which means that letters represent a communicative act in itself, but they may also contain records of past communication. Even though letters do not always accurately represent spoken language, they show characteristics of face-to-face interaction such as salutations, and politeness formulae; and they contain clearly recognizable speech acts such as questions, apologies, offers of thanks, requests, or promises (Jucker, 1994: 535).

The amount of research on letter writing as a means of communication is substantial, but only a few are cited here at this time (Fitzmaurice, 2002; Nevala, 2004; Hakanen & Koskinen, 2009; King, 2011). While most of the research focuses on personal letters, the focus of my research is on diplomatic discourse, and it is expected that such discourse will differ from personal letter writing in terms of the characteristics displayed and formats followed.

3.1.1. The structure of a letter

According to the *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*, letter writing belongs to the *ars dictaminis*, which is “the variety of medieval rhetoric that provided instruction in the composition of letters and other epistolary documents” (Camargo, 2006: 16). According to the same author (Camargo, 2006: 16), by the mid-twelfth century, most letters comprise the following parts:

1. *salutatio* – a greeting
2. *captatio benevolentiae* – securing “goodwill” (also called *exordium*, *arenga* or *proverbium*)
3. *narratio* – a statement of facts
4. *petitio* – a request
5. *conclusio* – a summary or complimentary close

I would also add a sixth part, the dating formula found at the end of a letter (Sarri, 2018: 121–122), sometimes called *datatio*.

As for the general structure of Ragusan diplomatic letters, Zovko (2014: 27–28) writes that letters contain conventional and recognizable parts, without specifying what they are. She also writes that the central part contains detailed instructions for the ambassadors on the attitudes they should adopt when dealing with a certain problem or question (Zovko, 2014: 27).

4. THE CORPUS – THE *LETTERE DI LEVANTE* COLLECTION

The corpus I have chosen for my study consists of 88 letters from the period 1402 to 1463. They were all addressed to ambassadors of the Republic of Ragusa who held posts in the Bosnian Kingdom. These letters are part of the *Lettere di Levante* (*Letters of the East*) collection, currently held in the Dubrovnik State Archives in Croatia. The letters were written in an Italian koiné³ – the official language used by members of the Ragusan chancellery. For the purpose of this paper, I have chosen the following letter: 14.7.1428, Lett. di Lev., X, 95v. (July 14, 1428, *Lettere di Levante*, X, 95v.). This letter is suitable for the analysis because it presents the typical structure without any deviations, because of historical significance, and presence of speech acts. Furthermore, due to its brevity, I can analyze it in its entirety. This 29-line letter congratulates King Tvrtko II Kotromanić and his future wife, Doroteja Gorjanska, on their wedding, and it will be demonstrated that even a short letter of this kind can contain examples of spoken language.

5. ANALYSIS OF THE LETTER AND ITS STRUCTURE

Italian original	English translation
Rector di Ragusa col suo consiglio alli nobili et saui ser Nicola Mat. de Georgi (et) ser Marin Ja. de Gondola ambascadori al re di Bosna dilecti cittadini nostri salute.	The Ragusan Rector – along with his council of noble and sage sirs – sends his greetings to Nicola Mat. de Georgi and Marin Ja. de Gondola, Ambassadors to the Bosnian king and our esteemed citizens.

³ *Koiné* is a term used to define a supraregional language in Italian chancelleries in use from the 13th century (Lubello, 2014: 229). This language variety abandons local language characteristics and gradually stabilizes a uniform model, comprehensible in Italian-language speaking areas (Tavoni, 1992: 47–48).

This excerpt is the opening of the letter. It states that the Republic of Ragusa sends greetings to ambassadors Nicola de Georgi and Marin de Gondola, and makes use of the following formulae: the *salutatio* and the *captatio benevolentiae*. It is evident from the use of the *syntagme* “*alli /.../ salute*” that it is a salutation to these gentlemen. I would also submit that the adjectives *nobili* (noble) and *sawi* (sage) represent the act of securing the goodwill of the ambassadors, to whom the letter is addressed, by complimenting them and praising their abilities.

Italian original	English translation
Per le letere vostre fatte di la adi VI luglio presente le qual adi XIII ^o del detto reciuessimo, ne scriuete che adi sei de questo per uno corier che mandassimo, scriuessimo alla signoria vostra le qual vostre lettere non abiamo ricevute et molto di nostro piacer seria stado auanti queste auer le ricevute per esser informati meglio. Et de piu ne auisate, come aueti cominzado a cortizare lo re per lo partir vostro di la secondo vi e scritto. Et anche come a mandato suo zentilomeni in contra la nouiza et se aparechia de far lo noze.	You wrote to us from there in your letters dated July 6, which we received on the fourteenth of the same month that you wrote to us, through a courier that we sent, but we never received your letters and it would have been our great pleasure to have received these letters earlier so that we could have been better informed. And, furthermore, you let us know that you began to court the king when you left, as you had been instructed. And also how the king sent his noblemen to meet the bride and how he is preparing for his wedding.

This excerpt is the *narratio*, where by the Republic of Ragusa refers to events which happened prior to the time that the letter was written. Namely, that the ambassadors had sent letters which were not received in time and that they had heard that the king was preparing for his wedding.

Italian original	English translation
<p>/.../ vogliamo che dobiate ritornar in drie ala maiesta del re. Et se ancora riceuando questa fosseno apreso de luy vogliamo pur che com esso re dobiate remanir e caualcar et andare allegrarui de la festa sua fazando scusa et digando che la signoria nostra di Ragusa non sapiando ne abiando di certo in che ancora volesse far la festa de la nouiza et noçe.</p>	<p>We would like for you to return to His Majesty the King. And if you are still with him when you receive this letter, we would like you to remain with this king, to ride with him and rejoice because of his celebration, and to apologize and say that our <i>signoria</i> of Ragusa did not know for certain that he was going to celebrate his wedding.</p>

This excerpt contains the *petitio*, or the expression of a request. In fact, in this section, the ambassadors are being commissioned to perform certain duties and behave in certain ways. Even though the entire central part describes the attitude the ambassadors are to adopt, I chose this paragraph in order to illustrate the official attitude of the Republic toward the Bosnian king – that his wedding celebrations bring joy to its neighboring country and that the ambassadors are to express this pleasure.

Italian original	English translation
<p>Et di la aspetate nostra risposta. Abbiamo accettato de pagar yperperos CC che vi a datto Vochaç Mora. Daremo modo che auereti altri denari di la.</p>	<p>And there you shall await our reply. We have agreed to pay the 100 perpers that were given to you by Vukac Mura. We shall find a way for you to receive more money.</p>

This is the *conclusio*, the final remarks which close the message and give an order to the ambassadors for them to perform the final task.

Italian original	English translation
<p>Datum Ragusii, die XIII jullii 1428</p>	<p>Dated July 14, 1428, in Ragusa.</p>

The final formula included in this letter is the *datatio*, which closes the document and states when and where the letter was written.

5.1. ANALYSIS OF SPOKEN LANGUAGE CHARACTERISTICS

In this section, I analyze the characteristics of spoken language, as contained within the letter. I looked for examples of the aforementioned speech acts⁴ that can be found in letters and serve as examples of spoken language, and I have identified the following:

– Greeting:

According to Searle (1969: 67) salutations mark the beginning and end of conversations, they are often ritualized, and are void of all propositional content. Such speech acts often involve the use of a limited number of crystallized formulae (Jucker, 2017: 40). This speech act can be identified in the following example:

- (1) Rector di Ragusa col suo consiglio alli nobili et saui ser Nicola Mat. de Georgi (et) ser Marin Ja. de Gondola ambascadori al re di Bosna dilecti cittadini nostri salute.

(The Ragusan Rector – along with his council of noble and sage sirs – sends his greetings to Nicola Mat. de Georgi and Marin Ja. de Gondola, Ambassadors to the Bosnian king and our esteemed citizens.)

In this example, the speech act of greeting is recognizable because of the use of the formula *salute a* (greetings to), as underlined in the text. It is also evident that the speech act is accompanied by appellatives, a common feature among greetings, since the ambassadors' names are used (Jucker, 2017).

– Reprimanding:

Reprimanding can be defined as an illocutionary speech act, whereby the speaker indicates disapproval with or a negative feeling

⁴ Since speech act theory and its application in diachrony is not the main focus of this paper, it is not discussed as a theoretical approach. However, the speech acts identified in the corpus will be considered briefly. For more on the topic of speech acts, see Austin (1962), and Searle (1969, 1976, 1979). For more on the application of speech act theory to historical pragmatics, see Jacobs and Jucker (1995), Arnovick (1999), Bertucelli Papi (2000), Kohnen (2008), and Lalić (2020).

toward the state of affairs described in the proposition, and for which they hold, either directly or indirectly, the hearer accountable (Trosborg, 1995: 311). According to House and Kasper (1981: 159–167), four criteria may be used to identify complaints: an action is mentioned explicitly or implicitly, the negative valuation of the action is explicitly stated, the hearer’s active involvement is stated explicitly or implicitly, and the negative valuation of the hearer is also expressed explicitly or implicitly. I identified one complaint in the letter:

(2) /.../ le qual vostre lettere non abiamo ricevute et molto di nostro piacer seria stado auanti queste auer le ricevute per esser informati meglio.

(/.../ but we never received your letters and it would have been our great pleasure to have received these letters earlier so that we could have been better informed.)

I would consider this excerpt a reprimand because it states the Republic of Ragusa’s displeasure with the behavior of its ambassadors. The action – the fact that the letters were not received – is explicitly stated; the negative valuation of the action is also explicitly stated (the consequences were negative because the Rector and Councils were not informed in time). The hearer is explicitly involved because the reprimand is directed at the ambassadors. I would also submit that the ambassadors are being held accountable because the complaint is being directed at them (explicitly) and the missing letters are referred to as “your letters” (*vostre lettere*).

– Apologizing:

According to Austin (1962), the speech act of apologizing consists of: 1) the speaker showing remorse for a past action, and 2) a promise to behave better in the future. It is easily recognizable because of the use of typical formulae. In order for a speech act to be classified as such, it must meet the following criteria: an act was committed by the speaker, the hearer suffers or the speaker believes that they are suffering because of the act, and the speaker feels remorse. An apology can be found in the following example:

- (3) /.../ fazando scusa et digando che la signoria nostra di Ragusa non sapiando ne abiando di certo in che ancora volesse far la festa de la nouiza et noçe.
(/.../and to apologize and say that our *signoria* of Ragusa did not know for certain that he was going to celebrate his wedding.)

The act in question is that the Republic of Ragusa did not know in time that the king was getting married and they fear that he may be offended. Such an offense, and the cause of the hearer's suffering, may be what the Republic is apologizing for. The apology issued by the Republic of Ragusa through the ambassadors is an expression of remorse for the offense. The speech act is recognizable because the typical formula for apologizing is used, in this case: *fare scusa* (*fazando scusa* in the text, *facendo scusa* in modern Italian). What can be noted is that, besides the apology to the Bosnian king, the Republic of Ragusa also offers some explanations for its past behavior.

– Making a request

Searle (1979: 13) defines requests as speech acts that get the hearer to do something. Flöck and Geluykens (2015: 16) describe three levels of requests: direct, conventionally indirect, unconventionally indirect (or only indirect). In this letter, I extrapolated requests belonging to the first level and they are recognizable because of typical forms, such as the imperative, which are often associated with requests (Flöck and Geluykens, 2015: 16). Here I draw attention to the following examples:

- (4) /.../ vogliamo che dobiate ritornar /.../
(/.../ we want you to return /.../)
- (5) Et ariuando la nouiza nello terreno di Bosna subito con presteza per vostre lettere ne auisate del suo ariuar.
(And when the bride arrives in Bosnia, we want you to let us know right away about her arrival in your letter.)
- (6) Et di la aspetate nostra risposta.
(And there you shall await our reply.)

In example number four (4), a request is recognizable because of the use of the verb *volere* (to want) in the first person plural, which indicates that the following action is an order given by the state. In the next two examples, (5) and (6), requests are recognizable in the use of the imperative mood, *avisate* (let someone know) and *aspetate* (wait), which indicate that an order is being given.

As was expected, requests are the most numerous type of speech acts found in the letter because they are, by definition, instructions to the ambassadors. Other types of requests may exist in this corpus, but they are not present in this particular letter and their presence and modalities will be the subject of further research.

– Congratulating

According to Searle (1969: 67), congratulations are expressed when there is a happy event that relates to the hearer, when the speaker believes that the event is happy for the hearer, and when the hearer is content with the event. Here, the offer of congratulations counts as an expression of the speaker's pleasure with a past event. The following may be identified as a congratulatory message:

(7) /.../ siando avisata de le noze et festa de la nouiza vostra /.../
dobbiamo esser con la maiesta vostra ad allegrarssi et far festa
con essa de la sua festa et noze si come cordiali zelatori et
amici de la vostra serenita.

(/.../ seeing as we were informed about your wedding and your
nuptial celebrations /.../ we must be with Your Majesty and
rejoice and celebrate with you your feast and your wedding
as cordial supporters and friends of your serenity.)

The event in question is the wedding between King Tvrtko II Kotromanić and his bride, Doroteja Gorjanska. Weddings and wedding celebrations are usually considered happy events for the people getting married, and it is only natural that congratulations are in order on such occasions. This excerpt demonstrates the pleasure of the speaker through the use of the verb *allegrarssi* (to rejoice), which is *allegrarsi* in modern Italian, and the expression *far festa* (to

celebrate), both of which demonstrate that the speaker is pleased with the event and wishes to share in the hearer's happiness.

6. CONCLUSION

It is clear that this letter follows the structure of written correspondence in the Middle Ages, as I demonstrated the use of all six of the essential elements of a typical medieval letter. Furthermore, even on the basis of one short letter from the sample, a number of speech acts could be identified: greeting, reprimanding, directing someone to do something, congratulating and apologizing. I also analyzed these speech acts using frameworks devised specifically for spoken language. This letter shows that directives are the predominant speech acts, which was also to be expected, since the letters contain directives issued to the ambassadors. The goal of future research will be to examine a larger corpus and determine the characteristics of the speech acts, their structures, and frequencies of use. It is expected that the use of speech acts will be in accordance with the structure and conventions of diplomatic correspondence.

Upon closer analysis, the structure of the letter clearly shows the limitations of the corpus. Diplomatic discourse follows specific rules and has certain structures, which implies that these letters do not necessarily, or at all, reflect the spoken vernacular, but rather a specific diplomatic register which is characterized by a certain set of particular rules that differ from the vernacular. Also, the rigid structure implies that the spontaneity of the writers' expression cannot be detected as readily as in personal letters. Given the fixed structure of a diplomatic letter, it is not possible to state that this particular corpus overcomes the problem fully. However, I would submit that the correspondence approaches the spoken language in such a way that it allows us to research the characteristics of diplomatic discourse during this period. Despite the lack of more suitable corpora, Italian diplomatic epistolary discourse may be considered a suitable surrogate.

Source

Državni arhiv u Dubrovniku, 14.7. 1428, *Lettere di Levante*, X, 95v.

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COME SORPASSARE IL PROBLEMA DEI “DATI ERRATI”. ESEMPI DELLA LINGUA PARLATA IN DISCORSO EPISTOLARE IN ITALIANO

Riassunto

In questa ricerca focalizziamo il problema dei “dati errati” nella pragmatica storica. Il problema dei “dati errati” è definito come il problema dei ricercatori nel seno della pragmatica storica che devono appoggiarsi sui dati scritti nelle ricerche della lingua parlata in prospettiva diacronica. Se prendiamo in considerazione che fonti registrate delle epoche passate non esistono, i ricercatori dipendono dalle fonti che si avvicinano alla lingua parlata. L'obiettivo della ricerca è esaminare se il discorso epistolare sia adeguato a sorpassare il problema dei dati errati. Il corpus consiste di 88 lettere dalla collezione *Lettere di Levante* della prima metà del Quattrocento. Tutte le lettere sono redatte dalla Repubblica di Ragusa e dirette agli ambasciatori nel Regno di Bosnia. Nel determinare le caratteristiche della lingua parlata, utilizziamo il quadro escogitato da Jucker (2008), Koch e Oesterreicher

(1985) e Culpeper e Kytö (2010). I risultati della ricerca implicano che questo particolare *corpus* si avvicina alla lingua parlata, ma a un sottotipo particolare – il discorso diplomatico.

Parole chiave: pragmatica storica, corpus, lingua italiana, koinè, fonte di lingua parlata, discorso diplomatico