

# Where authority, speech acts and modality meet: A pragmatic analysis of the trial record of King Charles I

Minako Nakayasu<sup>1</sup> and Michi Shiina<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Hamamatsu University School of Medicine, Japan; <sup>2</sup>Hosei University, Japan

## Abstract

This paper investigates how speakers perform speech acts coordinating with modality in the flux of power in Early Modern courtroom interactions along the lines of historical pragmatics. The text used for analysis is the trial record of King Charles I in the *Sociopragmatic corpus*, in which the King was put on trial on the charge of high treason.

First, examination of vocatives, noun phrases, verb phrases and grammatical subjects shows who has the authoritative power in interaction, the Lord President (the judge) or the King (the defendant). Next, quantitative and qualitative analyses of speech acts performed with the aid of modals demonstrate the tendency that the speech acts performed by the Lord President are highly relevant to deontic modality, while those performed by the King are closely related to dynamic modality. This reflects which authority the two parties depend upon: authority of the Court, and authority of the King/Kingdom, respectively.

The analysis of authority, speech acts and modality reveals that the King becomes less authoritative as the trial proceeds, particularly after the sentence has been pronounced. On the other hand, the authority of the Court, which is manifested in the Lord President's speech, stays the same throughout the course of the trial.

To summarise, this research shows how the judge and the defendant interacted with each other in a fluctuating power relationship in the courtroom, at the interfaces between authority, speech acts and modality, where their viewpoints and attitudes are reflected.

**Keywords:** authority; speech acts; modality; trial record; historical pragmatics

## 1. Introduction

In 1649, King Charles I was brought to trial in Westminster Hall, London, on the charge of high treason. The record of this trial provides an excellent opportunity to explore the pragmatic aspects of historical data, where the major participants, the Lord President (the judge) and the King (the defendant) interact with each other in the courtroom. This is an exceptional case where the social hierarchy with the King at the apex clashes with the jurisdictional system with the Lord President at the top. Who, then, has the authoritative power

in the interaction, the Lord President or the King? What speech acts do the speakers perform in this exceptional case? They skillfully utilise modals/modality and other devices where their attitudes are reflected. What roles does modality play in the courtroom interaction?

The purpose of this research is to investigate how speech acts are performed with the aid of modality in the flux of power in the trial record of King Charles I along the lines of historical pragmatics (Taavitsainen & Jucker, 2010, 2015). In other words, we explore the interfaces between authority, speech acts and modality in Early Modern courtroom interactions. These are the categories which the speakers' viewpoints and attitudes are strongly reflected upon. To interact with their interlocutors, the speakers exploit these categories not only solely but also in coordination. We have already investigated pragmatic aspects of this particular text, i.e. Shiina (2014, 2016) focused on vocatives and speech acts, respectively, and Shiina & Nakayasu (2022) expanded the analysis to pronouns. The present paper will perform an integrated analysis of authority, speech acts and modality. No other research has attempted such an analysis of historical data, not to mention this courtroom interaction, which offers an intriguing opportunity of pragmatic analysis.

The corpus used in this research is the trial record of King Charles I, taken from the *Sociopragmatic corpus* (1640-1760) (Archer & Culpeper, 2003), consisting of 7,660 words. The interaction is written in the form of dialogue. Courtroom interactions have certain characteristics which are different from everyday language (Archer, 2005; Culpeper & Archer, 2008; Kryk-Kastovsky, 2006). The style of language is simple and clear so that there may be no ambiguity and misunderstanding. Participants take turns – one speaks only when permitted. Courtroom discourse is public and formal, and decisions made are more binding than in community.

The theoretical framework this research is based upon is historical pragmatics, whose target is the language use in earlier periods, the development of language use, and the principles of such developments (Taavitsainen & Jucker, 2010, 2015). According to Jacobs & Jucker (1995), there are two directions of mapping assumed in historical pragmatics: form-to-function mapping and function-to-form mapping. The present research basically employs the former to see how certain forms perform pragmatic functions, while it exploits both directions when required, for example, for the analysis of speech acts. Moreover, we incorporate the methodology of critical stylistics (Jeffries, 2010) into analysis. In this field, analysing components of the sentence is the first step to investigate what the text is doing in relation to the text world. This paper examines noun phrases and verb phrases, which are two vital components in the sentence.

This study will focus on frequencies of vocatives, noun phrases, speech acts, grammatical subjects and modals observed in the *Sociopragmatic corpus*. In order to see whether the distribution of frequencies is statistically significant, we will conduct a Chi-square test and a residual analysis.

To explore where authority, speech acts and modality meet in the trial record of King Charles I, this paper will proceed in the following way. Section 2 will analyse vocatives to see the interpersonal power relationship between the judge and the defendant. The third section will examine noun phrases, which will tell us what issues are at stake in this trial. Section 4 will be devoted to speech acts performed by interlocutors, and the following section will examine

grammatical subjects to reveal who has the authoritative power in such speech acts. Paying special attention to modals and modality in Section 6 will support our findings so far and give us new insights. The final section is a conclusion.

## 2. Vocatives

Now we will start looking at each category which gives us some insights in the interfaces between authority, speech acts and modality. This section will conduct an analysis of vocatives along the lines of Shiina (2014).

The *Sociopragmatic corpus* consists of trial proceedings and drama (Archer & Culpeper, 2003). Shiina (2014) counted all the vocatives used in the *Sociopragmatic corpus* to see who uses which vocatives to whom. A comparison of vocatives in the trial proceedings with those in the drama reveals that vocatives are employed much less frequently in the trial proceedings than in the drama: the normalised figure per 10,000 words in the trial proceedings is 50, while the figure in the drama is 171 (Shiina, 2014, p. 82). Another difference is the range of vocative choices: both familiar types and deferential types are used in the drama, whereas in the trial text, only deferential types can be found. It is interesting to note that we can find unilateral and bilateral uses of vocatives in the corpus. *My Lord* is used only upwards by the defendant or examiner to address the judge, while the ‘title + surname’ pattern is employed downwards by the judge or examiner to address the defendant or witness. By contrast, *Sir* is a safe vocative used bilaterally, both upwards and downwards, regardless of the addressee’s social rank. The following example (1) is taken from our corpus, the trial record of King Charles I: the King (the defendant) is imploring the Lord President (the judge) to let him speak:

- (1) [King] If it please you Sir, I desire to be heard, and I shall not give any occasion of interruption, and it is only in a word, a sudden Judgment.  
[Lord President] Sir you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the Court first.<sup>1</sup> (p. 42)

Both of them employ *Sir* and continue to use it after this context. Although *Sir* is a safe vocative used both upwards and downwards, it is still an exceptional and contradictory case where the social hierarchy with the King at the top clashes with the jurisdictional hierarchical system in the courtroom where the judge is at the top. In other words, the social status of the King is cancelled as he is the defendant in the courtroom; meanwhile, the lower social status of the Lord President is elevated to the highest position in the jurisdictional system. This makes *Sir* possible for both parties.

Having confirmed that vocatives suggest the power relationship between the King and the Lord President, the following sections will analyse other linguistic features in order to know in what way both parties exert their own authoritative power.

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<sup>1</sup> The spellings of examples follow those in the corpus. Underlines are ours.

### 3. Noun phrases

This section investigates noun phrases to determine which side, the judge or the defendant, has the authority, following the analysis in Shiina (2016).

We have collected frequently used noun phrases and classified them into three categories: the court, the country and the power. Table 1 below shows the frequency of noun phrases used by major characters i.e. the Lord President and the King, and gives examples of each category which appear in the corpus:

**Table 1:** Noun Phrases Used by the Lord President and the King (after Shiina, 2016)

| Category | Lord President  | King  |
|----------|---|---|
| court    | 193<br>**+<br>(Court, answer, Jurisdiction, Justice, Charge, Sentence, reason(ing/s), Prisoner, Law(ful)s, Judgement, Judge(s), guilty) | 89<br>**_<br>(Law(ful/s), reason(ing/s), Sentence, Court, Judgement, Charge, Judge(s), Jurisdiction, Justice, Prisoner, answer) |
| country  | 47<br>**_<br>(People, England, Commons, Kingdom)  | 53<br>**+<br>(Kingdom, England, King, Treaty, People, Commons)  |
| power    | 28<br>**_<br>(Authority, Liberty, favo(u)r)   | 41<br>**+<br>(Authority, Liberty, favo(u)r, Power)  |

*Note.* We conducted a Chi-square test to see whether the distribution is statistically significant and also did a residual analysis to see which figures are significantly larger or smaller than the expected values.  $\chi^2(2) = 26.070$ ,  $p < .01$ , Cramer's  $V = 0.240$ , \*\*+: significantly greater at the level of 1%; \*\* -: significantly smaller at the level of 1%.

Statistically speaking, the Lord President uses noun phrases referring to the court significantly more frequently than the King, whereas the King resorts to those referring to the country and the power significantly more frequently than the Lord President. This difference shows that these main characters are more likely to mention the noun phrases in the category/-ies that provide the basis of their authority and power than the other category/-ies. It is reasonable to suppose that the Lord President believes in the jurisdiction and authority of the Court that he represents, negating the authority of the King. The King, by contrast, asserts his own authority as the King of the country, having doubts about the authority, lawfulness, and jurisdiction of the Court. They each represent the Court and the Kingdom, relying on their own authority and power over their interlocutor.

### 4. Speech acts

This section will identify speech acts performed by the major interlocutors by investigating verb phrases and classifying their activity types (Shiina, 2016). We will examine speech acts from both directions: from the Lord President to the King, and from the King to the Lord President.

These speakers perform different types of speech acts. The Lord President mainly performs orders, while the King performs requests and refusals (and an apology). Table 2

below is the list of major speech acts performed by both speakers and example utterances from the corpus:

**Table 2:** Speech Acts Performed by the Lord President and the King (after Shiina, 2016)

| Speaker        | Speech act                          | Example   |
|----------------|-------------------------------------|---|
| Lord President | Order to answer                     | ... it is prayed to the Court ... that you answer to your Charge. (p. 19)<br>The Court expects you should give them a final Answer, ... (p. 23)   |
|                | Order not to dispute                | ... Sir, you are not to dispute our Authority, ... (p. 29)<br>Sir, neither you nor any man are permitted to dispute that point, ... (p. 30)   |
|                | Order not to talk but to listen     | Sir you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the Court first. (p. 42)<br>Sir, You shall be heard before the Judgment be given, and in the mean time you may forbear. (p. 43) |
| King           | Request to explain                  | I would know by what power I am called hither: ... (p. 19)<br>Sir, I desire that you would give me, and all the world, satisfaction in this; ... (p. 22)                                |
|                | Request to give permission to speak | ... then I think is fit at this time for me to speak of; ... (p. 19)<br>... therefore resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me. (p. 20)   |
|                | Request not to interrupt            | By your favour, you ought not to interrupt me; ... (p. 38)<br>... I hope I shall give no occasion of interruption. (P. 42)  |
|                | Refusal to answer                   | ... I will not betray it to answer to a new unlawful Authority, ... (p. 20)<br>... I conceive I cannot answer this, ... (p. 28)   |
|                | Apology                             | Pray excuse me Sir, for my interruption, ... (p. 47)  |

First, the King makes strong requests to the Court to explain why he is being tried, to give permission to speak, and not to interrupt while he is talking. He refuses to answer. The Lord President, on the other hand, gives orders to answer, not to dispute, and not to talk but to listen. Our analysis of the trial record reveals that the tone of the King's speech acts changes in due course, becoming less authoritative, making appeals more earnestly, and making an apology in the end. The judge's illocutionary force, by contrast, stays the same throughout the trial.

## 5. Grammatical subjects

In relation to the speech acts the main characters perform, we will take a particular note of grammatical subjects and modals/modality. Looking back to examples in Table 2, we notice that these utterances often employ the first person and the second person subjects, and modals such as *shall*, *should*, *will* and *would*. This section will examine how grammatical subjects show where the authoritative power resides, and the next section will carry out an analysis of what role modals/modality play in the interaction to approach the interfaces of these speaker-oriented categories, i.e. authority, speech acts and modality.

Among the judge's orders with *you* as a grammatical subject, take a look at the examples of the Lord President's orders (in Table 2; repeated here for the sake of convenience):

- (2) [Lord President] Sir you shall be heard in due time, but you are to hear the Court first. (p. 42)

The pattern ‘you are to V’ is used as many as 7 times in the corpus. Although he takes a hearer-oriented viewpoint, this construction obscures the origin of the authority. The use of the passive voice below also makes the source of the authority vague, i.e. whether the authority comes from the judge or the Court:

- (3) [Lord President] Sir, neither you nor any man are permitted to dispute that point, ... (p. 30)

Although the judge gives orders to the defendant, the decision maker is left unmentioned, irrespective of the difference in strength of illocutionary force in these examples. It is hard to say, therefore, whether the judge as the speaker is exerting his discursive power over the defendant. The following example in (4), on the other hand, clearly shows the source of authority:

- (4) [Lord President] The Court desires to know whether this be all the Answer you will give, or no. (p. 22)

The subject is the Court, which is impersonal: from this it is clear that the Lord President himself is not the source of the authority but relies on the authoritative power of the Court. Examination of the Lord President’s utterances in (2)-(4) suggests that the judge is only a medium by which the authoritative power of the Court is exercised.

A conspicuous characteristic regarding the King’s choice of grammatical subjects is the first person pronouns. We have already seen in Section 4 that the King makes a variety of requests to the Lord President. In (5) (in Table 2; repeated here for the sake of convenience), the King asks him to explain why he is taken to the Court:

- (5) [King] I would know by what power I am called hither: ... (p. 19)

The King as the speaker is represented as the grammatical subject *I*. Here he takes a speaker-oriented viewpoint, expressing his strong intention in combination with the modal *would*, and holds an authoritative, sovereign power over his interlocutor.

Table 3 shows which viewpoint, speaker-oriented or hearer-oriented is likely to be taken by both speakers, based on Culpeper & Archer (2008) and Shiina & Nakayasu (2022):

**Table 3:** Grammatical Subjects by the Lord President and the King (after Shiina & Nakayasu, 2022)

| Viewpoint      | I/we<br>(speaker-oriented) | You<br>(hearer-oriented) | Other<br>(incl. impersonal) |
|----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Lord President | 10<br>**_                  | 37<br>**+                | 22<br>ns                    |
| King           | 38<br>**+                  | 18<br>**_                | 16<br>ns                    |

*Note.* We conducted a Chi-square test to see whether the distribution is statistically significant and also did a residual analysis to see which figures are significantly larger or smaller than the expected values.  $\chi^2(2) = 23.791$ ,  $p < .01$ , Cramer’s  $V = 0.411$ , \*\*+: significantly greater at the level of 1%; \*\* -: significantly smaller at the level of 1%; ns: non-significant.

The ‘other’ category includes the subjects which take an impersonal viewpoint such as ‘the Court’. The data in Table 3 demonstrate that the Lord President takes a hearer-oriented view

significantly more frequently, which could suggest that he respects the King's sovereign power. The King, by contrast, assumes a significantly frequent use of the speaker's viewpoint, according to his authority. As seen in (5), he employs *I*, avoiding *you* in his request. However, after the death sentence is pronounced, his requests shift to much more hearer-oriented:<sup>2</sup>

(6) [King] Will you hear me a word Sir? (p. 73)

Syntactically speaking, the utterance in (6) employs the subject *you* and the interrogative form. What this utterance further represents is that the King shows politeness to the Lord President and his authority as a King is now weak. He could not make such utterances until it is too late to show a respect to the authority of the court.

## 6. Modals and modality

We have so far examined vocatives, noun phrases, speech acts and grammatical subjects to explore the relationship between speech acts and authority in courtroom interactions. This final section analyses modals and modality to see how modality contributes to the interface between speech acts and authority.

We analyse proximal and distal forms of modals *shall/should*, *will/would*, *can/could*, *may/might*, *must*, the contracted form *'ll*, and *ought*. Figure 1 below shows the modals used in our corpus:

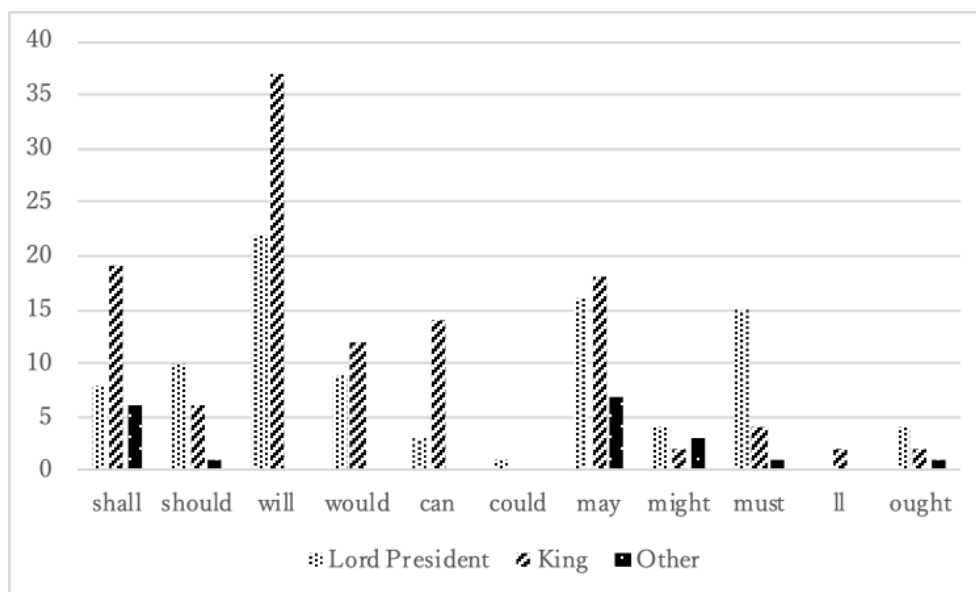


Figure 1: Modals in the Corpus

<sup>2</sup> Before the sentence is pronounced, the King makes a request using the subject *I*:

(i) [King] But I shall desire you will hear me a few words to you, ... (p. 70)

Note that he employs the subject *you* in the subordinate clause “you will hear me a few words to you”. This shows that he takes a more hearer-oriented view. After the sentence has been pronounced, however, he changes the declarative subordinate clause to an interrogative main clause as in (6), whose viewpoint is now much more hearer-oriented.

The Lord President employs *will*, *may* and *must* frequently, while the King makes use of *will*, *shall* and *may* frequently.

Since modals are closely related to the speaker's domain, the speaker's attitude is well reflected in the use of modals. Modality is a grammatical category which is typically represented by modals. Palmer (2001) defines it as concerned with the status of the proposition which expresses the event. We adopt a trichotomy for modality following Palmer (2001), Nakayasu (2009) and others: that is, epistemic, deontic and dynamic. The historical change in meaning can be considered to be realised in the polysemy of modals. First, epistemic modality describes the speaker's judgement of the factual status of the proposition or the state of affairs represented in the proposition. In (7), the speaker, the Lord President, makes a judgement of how probably the proposition 'you know more of the pleasure of the court' can be realised:

- (7) [Lord President] Sir, We shew it you here, the Commons of England; and the next time you are brought, you will know more of the pleasure of the Court, and, it may be, their final determination. (pp. 31-32)

Since the clause *the next time you are brought* signifies a point in the future, the meaning and function of the modal *will* is close to future tense here. Note that he also employs the modal *may* to express his judgement about the probability of the proposition 'it be their final determination'.

Second, deontic modality describes the state of affairs represented in the proposition which has not yet been actualised. The conditioning factor is outside the relevant individual. In (8), the King is asking for a permission from the Court:

- (8) [King] I do require that I may give in my Reasons why I do not answer, and give me time for that. (p. 31)

What is important here is that the conditioning factor is outside the subject *I*: that is, it comes from the Court.

Third, dynamic modality also describes the state of affairs not actualized yet, but for this modality, the conditioning factor is inside the relevant individual. In (9) (=5); repeated here for the sake of convenience), the King expresses his intention with the distal modal *would*:

- (9) [King] I would know by what power I am called hither: ... (p. 19)

Table 4 below shows how frequently these three types of modality are exploited by the Lord President, the King and other speakers (the solicitor and the clerk):

**Table 4: Modals and Modality**

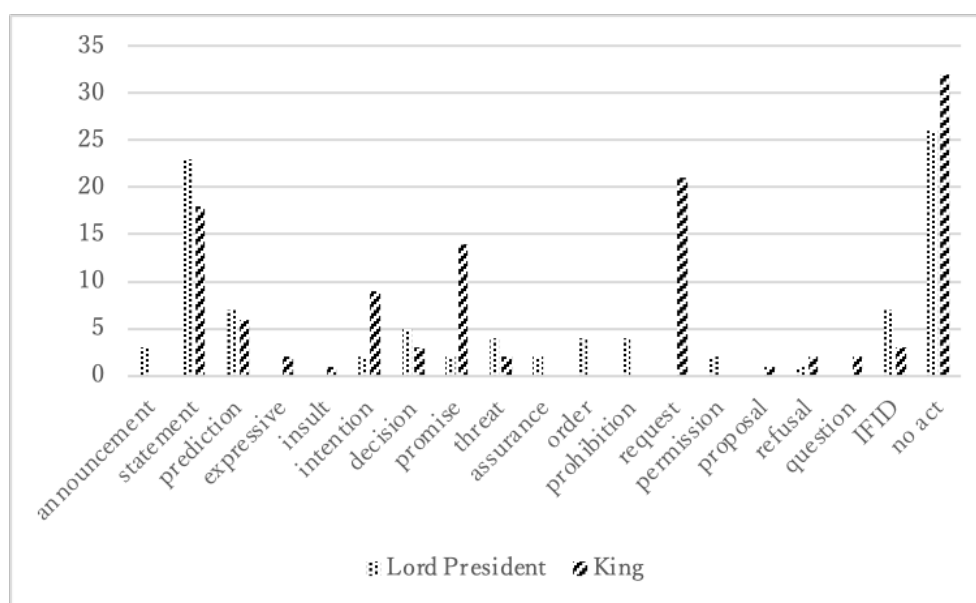
| Modality  | Lord President | King | Other |
|-----------|----------------|------|-------|
| epistemic | 31             | 28   | 6     |
|           | ns             | ns   | ns    |
| deontic   | 33             | 24   | 6     |
|           | *+             | *-   | ns    |
| dynamic   | 28             | 64   | 7     |
|           | **-            | **+  | ns    |

*Note.* We conducted a Chi-square test to see whether the distribution is statistically significant and also did a residual analysis to see which figures are significantly larger or smaller than the expected values.  $\chi^2(4) = 18.486$ ,  $p < .01$ , Cramer's  $V = 0.172$ , \*+: significantly greater at the level of 5%; \*-: smaller (5%); \*\*+: significantly greater at the level of 1%, \*\* -: smaller (1%); ns: non-significant.



The Lord President uses each of the three modalities almost equally frequently, while the King resorts to dynamic modality most frequently. Epistemic modality does not display a significant difference between the Lord President and the King. However, note that the Lord President uses deontic modality significantly more often than the King, while the King utilises dynamic modality significantly more often than the Lord President. Recall that the crucial difference between deontic and dynamic modality is whereabouts of the conditioning factor: from outside of the relevant individual or from inside, respectively. Their preferences for either modality therefore reflects where these speakers consider their authoritative power resides. The Lord President regards the authority as deriving from outside of him, i.e. from the Court, whereas the King believes that his authoritative power comes from inside himself as a king.

Now that we have examined modality, our next step is to analyse how speech acts are performed by the speakers with the aid of modals in the trial record corpus. Following the methodology of Nakayasu (2009), who carried out a pragmatic analysis of modals in Shakespeare, we examined all the utterances which contain a modal and analysed what speech act each utterance performs. The graph in Figure 2 shows an inventory of speech acts performed with the aid of modals by the major characters in the Court, i.e. the Lord President and the King:<sup>3</sup>



**Figure 2:** *Modals and Speech Acts*

Let us take a look at the speech acts performed by the Lord President with modals. The speech acts performed by him, not by the King, are the announcement, the assurance, the order, the prohibition (the negative counterpart of the order), and the permission. It should be noted that all these speech acts are strongly related to deontic modality, whose conditioning factor is

<sup>3</sup> The ‘IFID’ covers cases where a modal occurs in an illocutionary force indicating device, as in *I must interrupt you*. The ‘no act’ signifies that the modal is not related to a particular speech act mostly because it occurs in a subordinate clause.

outside the relevant individual (i.e. the subject). This is supported by the significantly high frequency of deontic modality as seen in Table 4,<sup>4</sup> and conforms to our finding that the authority resides in the Court rather than in the Lord President himself. The example in (10) shows that the Lord President gives an order to the King with the distal modal *should*:

- (10) [Lord President] The Court expects you should give them a final Answer, their purpose is to adjourn till Monday next, if you do not satisfie your self, though we do tell you our Authority; ... (p. 23)

Note also that the subject is the Court, not the Lord President himself, which means that the authority lies in the Court. In (11), the Lord President prohibits the King's demurring the jurisdiction of the Court:

- (11) [Lord President] Sir, neither you nor any man are permitted to dispute that point, you are concluded, you may not demur the Jurisdiction of the Court, ... (p. 30)

This is a negative counterpart of the order, which is performed with the aid of deontic modality.

On the other hand, the King performs the request most frequently. In (12) below, the King requests the Court to give a permission to speak by using the proximal modal *shall*:

- (12) [King] I shall desire a word to be heard a little, and I hope I shall give no occasion of interruption. (p. 42)

He employs the first person subject *I*, which his authority as a king comes from.<sup>5</sup> Other speech acts performed by the King, but not by the Lord President, are the proposal, the expressive (the 'regret' in our corpus), the insult, and the question. The promise is made more frequently by the King than the Lord President:

- (13) [King] Satisfie in me in that, and I will answer, ... (pp. 22-23)

The King takes the 'imperative + modal' pattern: if the condition is met, i.e. if the Lord President (*you*) tells him why he is called there, he (*I*) makes a promise that he will answer. Interestingly, all these speech acts, except for the question, are generally related to dynamic modality. Here again, the King's speech acts have a certain relevance to dynamic modality, whose conditioning factor facilitates the interpretation that the authoritative power locates in himself.

Turning our attention to discourse, we can observe some interesting alternations in modals in the King's speech. The following context in (14) is excerpted from the beginning of the trial, where the King, depending on his own authority as a king, requests the Court to explain why he was brought to the Court:

<sup>4</sup> Recall also that the Lord President employs *must* frequently as seen in Figure 1. This modal is closely related to deontic modality.

<sup>5</sup> Recall also example (9), where the King employs the first person pronoun *I* and the modal *would* to make a request to the Court.

- (14) [King] (...) but I would know by what Authority I was brought from thence, and carried from place to place, (and I know not what,) and when I know what lawful Authority, I shall answer: Remember I am your King, your lawful King, ...  
therefore let me know by what lawful Authority I am seated here, and I shall not be unwilling to answer, in the mean time I shall not betray my Trust: I have a Trust committed to me by God, by old and lawful descent, I will not betray it to answer to a new unlawful Authority, therefore resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me. (p. 20)

He utters *I shall* three times, expressing his strong intention. It is highly likely that he employs *shall* because he is the King, a public figure with authoritative power, as is clear from the phrase *Remember I am your King, your lawful King*. Recall that he employs *shall* frequently as seen in Figure 1. He then switches to *will* as in *I will not betray it* to express his strong personal intention.<sup>6</sup> The final *shall* is used because the ‘imperative + modal’ pattern, *resolve me that, and you shall hear more of me*, promotes the use of the second person subject, and this further promotes deontic modality. Here the conditioning factor is outside the subject *you*, i.e. the King (the speaker).

Another interesting change in his use of modals can be observed after the death sentence has been announced. Recall that the King makes a request employing the interrogative with the modal *will* and the second person subject in (15) (=6); repeated here for the sake of convenience):

- (15) [King] Will you hear me a word Sir? (p. 73)

Asking the intention of the Lord President (the hearer) with dynamic modality, he makes a polite request. It is a crucial change because the conditioning factor of the dynamic modality is now in the second person subject *you*, and he cannot rely on his own authority any more. This confirms our analysis that his authority as a king is extremely weak. By contrast, the authority of the Court, as represented by the Lord President, stays the same.

## 7. Concluding remarks

This paper has carried out a pragmatic analysis of the trial record of King Chares I to examine how the speakers performed a variety of speech acts with devices such as modals/modality in the flux of power relationship. Along the lines of historical pragmatics and critical stylistics, we have examined vocatives, noun phrases, speech acts, grammatical subjects and modals/modality, taking particular note on who has the authority, the Lord President or the King.

In trials in general, the judge has power over the defendant. In this text, however, the hierarchical social order contradicts with their social roles in the courtroom. It was confirmed that the authoritative power of the judge resides not in himself but in the Court as a jurisdictional system. The King, who started the trial by giving strong requests for explanations

<sup>6</sup> Nakayasu (2009, p. 227) observes the alternation between *shall* and *will* in Julius Caesar’s modal use in Act 2, Scene 2, and remarks that he switches to *will* when he wishes to express his strong personal intention.

of the accusation with the authoritative power of himself and the Kingdom, becomes less authoritative as the trial proceeds. In particular, after the sentence was announced, his authoritative power as a king was nullified. Speech acts related to dynamic modality play a significant role in the King's speech. By contrast, the authoritative power of the Court, not of the judge himself, seems rather stable and constant throughout the course of the trial. This relationship is supported by the Lord President's frequent performance of speech acts derived from deontic modality.

This research demonstrated how the judge and the defendant interacted with each other in a fluctuating power relationship, shedding new light on pragmatic aspects of Early Modern trial records. That is exactly where authority, speech acts and modality meet.

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