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Interjections and individual style: A study of restoration dramatic language

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Abstract

This paper examines the manifestation of individual style through the lens of a specific language category: the interjection. The analysis considers how interjections are used as a resource in the dramatic dialogue of three Restoration playwrights: Aphra Behn, John Dryden and Thomas D'Urfey, and how their preferences and practices of use compare to previously identified trends in the history of English. Using the concept of the repertoire as a frame for situated language use, the paper examines how genre, time, and characterisation shape the selection and frequency of interjections in the plays of each author. Corpus linguistic methods are used to provide a quantitative and qualitative overview of each author's interjection repertoire. The results suggest that whilst genre, time, and characterisation are influential in shaping the selection and implementation of interjection forms, the choice of expressive language in dramatic contexts is also distinctive and coherent at an authorial level.

Keywords

Characterization, genre, individual style, interjections, repertoire, restoration drama

1. Introduction

In her landmark monograph, *The Linguistic Individual* (1996), Barbara Johnstone provides an anecdote that illustrates the significance of individual variation for the study of language and style. She recounts her sister using *aaah*, uttered 'at a low and very falling pitch' which means 'I think I understand what you've just said, and if I've understood you correctly, I'm disappointed'. For Johnstone, this linguistic expression was remarkable

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because it was, until that point, a style marker typical of her father in the same way 'that short sentences with stative verbs are characteristic of Hemingway's voice' (Johnstone, 1996: 5). The individual use of *aaah* 'expresses a meaning not fully captured in any conventional English word or sound' (Johnstone, 1996: 5), but is (contextually) interpretable by interlocutors and familiar to those within that local network of speakers. For Johnstone, this example provides a notable illustration of distinctive, individual language, supporting her argument that linguistics has not sufficiently examined the relationship between individual utterances and variation and change within the speech community. Much linguistic (stylistic, sociolinguistic) research following Johnstone's publication has reaffirmed and developed many facets of her thesis around the individual speaker and the role of individual style in the construction of identity and social meaning (e.g. Eckert, 2000; Moore, 2012; Hall-Lew et al., 2021).

I introduce Johnstone's anecdote because it highlights two important dimensions of individual style that are addressed in this paper. Firstly, *aaah* is a type of interjection: a category of expressive language which marks 'emotions, attitudes, values and ideologies, which all have a strong element of subjectivity' (Bednarek, 2011: 10). Interjections have long been considered a problematic group for formal linguistic analysis. They lack a direct referential target, occur independently from co-textual clauses, are typically monomorphemic (excepting diminutive interjections (Lockyer, 2014)), and may use atypical phonological combinations, e.g., *psst* in English (Wilkins, 1992: 124). Their meanings are broad, spanning emotive, cognitive, conative and phatic functions (Ameka 1992), and, as Johnstone's example shows, they are contextually dependent.

In English, some interjections (e.g. *oh* and *ah*) are evident in the oldest extant texts through to the present day. Other interjections are continually being coined, repurposed, and becoming obsolete. For example, the euphemistic *zounds*, a contracted form of 'Christ's wounds' (OED Online, 2022), is first attested in the late sixteenth century, with a heyday in the seventeenth, before becoming specialised (literary and archaic) by the end of the eighteenth century. Interjections can therefore have currency within a restricted local network, be found in culturally-bound temporal and spatial settings, and/or have a wide transhistorical reach and longevity. The relationship between an individual's use of interjections and the development of the wider interjection system warrants further scrutiny.

The second important aspect of Johnstone's anecdote is the comparison between her family's language and the stylistic attributes of Hemingway. This rightly implies that questions of style cut across literary and everyday language, according with more recent work that situates literary language within an individual speaker's wider understanding of language resources and contexts of use.[1] Exploring literary language (in prose, film, verse, drama) provides a lens on how linguistic features are perceived and used, highlighting the complexity of stylistic choices and the connection between changing (or unchanging) style in literature and in other contexts (Bednarek, 2010, 2011; Evans, 2018; Reichelt and Durham, 2017).

The present investigation follows the spirit of Johnstone's work that '[v]ariation in language use is ultimately explicable only at the level of the individual speaker' (Johnstone, 1996: 8). This paper explores how that process of explication can operate when looking at individuals' language in a creative, literary marketplace; namely, the

English interjections used in the seventeenth-century dramatic dialogue of three Restoration playwrights: Aphra Behn, John Dryden and Thomas D'Urfey. Dramatic dialogue affords a particular perspective on how interjections are used, as the author must employ language forms to construct the voices of their characters, in ways that are (presumably intended to be) recognisable and meaningful to their audience, following generic conventions of that time and place.

The paper explores the following questions:

1. What similarities or differences are evident in the distribution and implementation of interjections in the plays of three Restoration dramatists?
2. To what extent does genre, time-period and characterization, as factors known to shape (literary) style, inform the selection and implementation of interjections in the historical texts for each individual?
3. Can interjections be aligned with distinctive authorial repertoires (at least in the case of Restoration dramatists)?

The discussion is organised as follows. Firstly, key concepts and findings relating to interjections (section 2), and the individual speaker and literary style (section 3) are introduced. In section 4, I explain the selection of authors and texts, and the method used to collect and categorise the interjections. The results are presented and discussed in sections 5–8, exploring authorial style, time, genre and character. I conclude by reflecting on the implications of the investigation.

2. Interjections

Interjections 'serve as windows into the speaker's mind; they express how the speaker feels or thinks in relation to the situation they are in' (Stange, 2009: 7). Other terminology has been used to describe these lexical expressions. Goffman (1981) describes 'responses cries' as items used to show an affective response to a situation. Labels such as 'response tokens' and 'change-of-state tokens' similarly define forms used to show 'how we understood prior talk and our current stance to said talk' (Linneweber, 2016: 186). The expressivity function can lead to 'descriptive ineffability' (Blakemore, 2011; Potts, 2007), in which users of interjections may find it difficult to explain the meaning of forms (e.g. *oh* or *wow*), especially without a clear context of use (Blakemore, 2011: 3539). Their expressive scope is also reflected in the fact that interjections can have the same semantic scope as a full clause (e.g. *yuck* = 'I feel disgusted' (Stange, 2009: 7)). Culpeper and Kytö's (2010) 'pragmatic noise' denotes forms that are used to convey an affective response only, rather than including items with other linguistic functions. This distinction reflects a widely-recognised difference between *primary* interjections – forms used only as interjections, e.g., *oh*, *ugh*, *oops* – and *secondary* interjections, which are borrowed from elsewhere in the language, typically from taboo domains such as religion and disease, e.g., *god-a-mercy, pox*; a categorisation initially proposed in Ameka's (1992) landmark paper.

Sociolinguistic and pragmatic analyses of interjections have increased in frequency, scope and theoretical and methodological sophistication in recent years, both

for present-day and historical language. This includes examinations of digital exchanges (Honkanen and Muller, 2021), animal communication (Smith, 2012), polyfunctionality in Q'eqchi' Maya (Kockelman, 2003), and borrowing and exchange across languages (Andersen, 2014; Mišić Ilić, 2017). Studies of English interjections include examinations of their L1 acquisition (Stange, 2009), variation across genres (Taavitsainen, 1995, 1998) and their properties in different historical periods (Łodej, 2010; Traugott, 2015).

Interjections are a core resource for linguistic affect in English (Taavitsainen, 1995, 1997), and the evolution of the forms and their functions acts as a barometer for stylistic, literary fashions in the expression of emotion (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010). As with other expressive language features, the capacity for innovation and replacement is continuous and 'the coexistence of different forms may mirror older and newer layers in the process of change' (Tagliamonte, 2008: 362). On the one hand, core (primary) interjections are maintained for generations (Dingemanse et al., 2013). On the other hand, the word class is 'potentially infinitely extendable' (Norrick, 2009: 866). This predilection for growth is connected to the importance of innovation for expressive language, whereby the forms' effectiveness are 'only as good as their novelty' (Roels and Enghels, 2020: 126). The emotive force of a form like *zounds*, for instance, is culturally and ideologically specific, and its impact will change as its community of users evolves.

As well as neologism and borrowing, interjections can also be recycled. This concept describes the process of lexical revivification, whereby many forms are available to a speaker, but they are not necessarily used – either at all, or in a sustained way, over time. Tagliamonte (2008) observes in her study of intensifiers in Toronto English, for example, that forms may remain dormant in a (partly) delexicalised state, ready 'to be co-opted back into the active system' when required. Thus, what may seem like a new development, such as the appropriation of *so* by Generation-X, may in fact have a much longer history (Tagliamonte, 2008: 390-1). The factors that cause a form to become dominant 'at a given point in time and space', however, are less clear (Tagliamonte, 2008: 392).

The individual speaker is a useful lens for exploring and understanding the chronological trajectory of specific interjections, and their evolution as a collective resource for verbal expressiveness. The sociolinguistic concept of 'repertoire' is valuable when thinking about interjections at this level. Repertoires denote an individual's knowledge of language as a situated practice. Each utterance reflects that individual's understanding of the forms available to them within a mediatised, situated context of communication (Blommaert and Backus, 2012: 4). Repertoires are dynamic, as an individual's language choices are shaped by the technologies and relationships involved in each interaction (Androutsopoulos, 2014: 7), and they evolve as a user experiences language and develops new competencies, such as the acquisition of single words or the recognition of the linguistic practices of others (Androutsopoulos, 2014: 6).[2]

Whilst studies of repertoires usually consider all levels of language holistically, I suggest that repertoires can be examined more restrictively, to identify how an individual uses a particular facet of language, such as interjections. This paper examines the interjection repertoires of three Restoration playwrights to better understand their distribution and role in their individual literary styles.

3. Interjections in restoration drama

Examining interjection repertoires using historical, literary evidence offers certain perspectives on the individual use of expressive language. Beneficially, historical evidence (literary or otherwise) makes it possible to study how an individual's interjection repertoire evolves over time. Literary texts, particularly drama, also provide ample examples for analysis. However, literary texts complicate the interpretation of individual style preferences, because a literary writer creates the voices of multiple characters. Interjections in character dialogue is, on one level, an example of their use in context (albeit fictional or constructed), whilst at the same time, it may or may not reflect the kinds of interjection used by that writer in other (non-literary) contexts. Speculatively, literary uses may be more inclined towards innovation, for the purposes of adhering to, or transgressing social conventions around genre, or in achieving particular aims in characterisation. The analysis of an individual's literary usage may therefore reveal a broader repertoire than that found in other contexts.

Restoration drama is a particularly suitable dataset for the analysis of English interjections. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) found that 'pragmatic noise' occurred with 'remarkable frequency' in early modern drama (5.5/1000 words), compared with other genres such as prose fiction (1.7/1000 words), or depositions (0.3/1000 words). There is also change over time, with 'something of a surge [in frequency] after 1680' (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 270). The authors hypothesise that this may reflect a shift in attitude that promotes the expression of emotion in dramatic domains (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010: 270). Their study does not consider secondary forms, such as *heavens*. These have the potential to be *more* local and transitional in their behaviour than primary interjections, because the borrowed forms bring with them explicit cultural baggage (see Łodej, 2010).

(Historical) dramatic language has advantages and limitations as a data source. The traditional sociolinguistic focus on the vernacular as the 'unconscious ideal' (Pentrel, 2017) has been firmly contested (e.g. Hall-Lew et al., 2021). Sociolinguistic analyses of fictional dialogue provide important perspectives compared with other kinds of language (Bednarek, 2012; Reichelt and Durham, 2017). Drama captures a writer's understanding of a broad set of interactional contexts (comic, tragic), making it a (typically) more diverse text-type than other historical sources (e.g. correspondence, diaries), with expressive language a key resource for characterisation (Bednarek, 2011: 4). Dramatic dialogue must serve both the interests of the characters – signalling their relationships, motivations, and feelings – but also attend to the audience, using the double articulation facility of language (Bednarek, 2012). Restoration playwrights like Behn, Dryden and D'Urfey would only be paid if the play reached its third night of performance, and every third night thereafter (Kewes, 1998: 18). The effectiveness of their writing was therefore paramount for their professional success, and the expressiveness of interjections plays a small but important contribution to their literary work.

The analysis of interjections in drama cannot simply consider them from the broad perspective of 'authorial style'. Individual language use is, as the concept of the repertoire emphasises, a situated practice. Two key dimensions are evaluated in the present study: genre and character.

Previous stylistic analysis has shown that language choices change according to dramatic genre (i.e. comedy, tragedy, tragi-comedy or history), although the boundaries between each sub-type are fuzzy rather than firm (Hope and Witmore, 2010). Interjections are closely keyed to generic conventions, likely because of their connection to the emotional and expressive situations experienced by the characters. Busse (2002: 199) suggests that early modern interjections are so stylistically marked, they can securely differentiate genres from each other – a suggestion that requires further validation. Previous research of early modern texts has shown that dramatic comedies tend to use interjections more frequently than other (non-dramatic) genres (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010; Taavitsainen, 1995). Culpeper and Oliver (2020), focussing on dramatic sub-genres, find that Shakespeare's tragedies contain more pragmatic noise forms (cf. primary interjections) than the comedies or histories. With the acknowledgement that the external labels of dramatic genre are in themselves rather artificial, the following analysis of three Restoration playwrights considers whether each author's interjection repertoires modulate, and how, across comedies and tragedies.

Language (alongside other semiotic modes) is vital for characterization (Culpeper, 2001). The multiple voicing of dramatic dialogue means that character utterances "speak" to an audience, as well as to the characters within the story-world. Audience interpretations of linguistic forms may draw on top-down models (social schemata, or more fine-grained impression), which enables them to construct potentially complex mental models of a character based on sparse or incomplete information (Culpeper and Fernandez-Quintanilla, 2017: 99). At the same time, interpretations of character involve bottom-up information, constructed from situation-specific language use (e.g. address forms, slang terms) that conveys, for instance, stance towards a specific event or person (Culpeper and Fernandex-Quintanilla, 2017: 104).

As expressive resources, interjections are particularly well suited to conveying to an audience the interior experience of a character, such as their fear, shock, surprise or elation. Computational stylistic analysis shows that, on the one hand, the linguistic style of one character is generally distinguishable from another; on the other, characters can be united by shared properties connected to the individual style of their author. Burrows and Craig (2012) show that early modern character idiolects are often identifiable using the most frequent words in a corpus (i.e. *a*, *and*), for instance. Interjections are a small but significant component of character dialogue, and warrant further scrutiny in terms of *how* they are used for the purposes of characterization, and the extent to which this stratifies by authorial style.

As a precedent, Culpeper and Oliver (2020) explore the social correlations between pragmatic noise and character demographics (e.g. sex, social status) in Shakespeare's plays. Using a list of 21 types, they find that female characters make a greater use of pragmatic noise than their male counterparts. The authors suggest this is not merely a reflection of female stereotyping (women = more emotional), but that Shakespeare uses his female characters, like Desdemona in *Othello*, to articulate the emotional resonance of the actions of their male counterparts (Culpeper and Oliver 2020: 25-6). When Shakespeare's use of pragmatic noise is explored by categories of social status, professional types and 'ordinary commoners' have the highest normalised frequencies (4.3 and 4.1/1000 words) (Culpeper and Oliver 2020: 23-5); a characteristic that is attributed to

the tendency for this social group to have 'colloquial interactions' and act 'as foils for the main characters' (Culpeper and Oliver 2020: 25). As will be shown, both explanations are relevant to the analysis and interpretation of interjections in Restoration drama, inflected by the authorially-distinctive practices of Behn, Dryden and D'Urfey.

4. Methodology

The three authors, Behn, Dryden and D'Urfey, have roughly contemporaneous careers spanning the 1670s to 1690s. Each author engages with the same broad literary and linguistic marketplace, providing comparable situated language practices. The analysis considers the composition of interjections in the plays, examining the distribution of forms as a complex system, sensitive to stylistic (genre), temporal (chronology) and situational (character) factors. Each playwright is represented by a corpus of 16 plays, comprising around 40,000 words per author (Table 1), The earliest play, written by Dryden, was first performed in 1663, and the latest play is a tragic opera by Durfey, first performed in 1696. The balance of dramatic genres is, unfortunately, not equal for each author: Behn and D'Urfey wrote mainly comedies, whereas Dryden preferred tragedies. The potential effects of this are considered at key points in the analysis. Most of the 48 play texts were obtained from EEBO-TCP, and prepared for analysis as part of a wider AHRC-funded project 'Editing Aphra Behn in the Digital Age' (AH/N007573/1).[3] A subset of texts for D'Urfey and Dryden were obtained from the 'Expanded Drama 1700' corpus, prepared for the 'Visualising English Print' (2016) project.

The identification of interjections combined top-down and bottom-up approaches. Firstly, a wordlist for the full corpus was manually analysed to identify all potential interjection forms. Identification was based on comparison with the 642 OED entries with the classification 'interjection', first attested between c.800 and 1750. The resultant shortlist was checked in context using AntConc (Anthony, 2021), and forms were added to a masterlist if they met one or more of the following criteria: clause-separate; phonologically atypical; independent word or phrase followed by an exclamation point (!), or marking affect (emotion, attitude, values and ideologies). Markers of agreement/disagreement (yes/no) were excluded (Taavitsainen, 1995; also Norrick 2011). Orthographic variants of these interjections were regularised to one form in all the plays, using VARD 2.0 (Baron, 2017): for example, *ads bud* and *ods bud* are regularised to *godsblood*, *adsheartlikins* to *godsheartlikins* and so on. The frequencies of each interjection were identified in each play using Intelligent Archive, a tool that extracts word/character frequencies according to pre-set properties (e.g. text, segments of text, a collection of texts), and makes them available in.csv format (Pascoe et al., 2020). All secondary forms were checked in context to correct for erroneous counts, such as *marry* used as a verb. Duplicative forms are counted as discrete units, to reflect their functional differences; for example, *ha* is exclamatory, whereas *ha ha* and *ha ha ha* mark laughter.

5. Individual interjection repertoires

In the 48 plays, there are 135 different interjections with over 10,000 tokens. There are differences in frequency between each sub-corpus, suggesting that the use, and

Table 1. Corpus details for each restoration playwright.

Play no.	Behn play	Date first performance	Genre	Dryden play	Date first performance	Genre	D'URFEY play	Date first performance	Genre
1	*The Forced Marriage*	1670	TC	*The Wild Gallant*	1663	C	*Madam Fickle*	1676	C
2	*Amorous Prince*	1671	C	*Secret Love*	1667	TC	*The Siege of Memphis, of The Ambitious Queen*	1676	T
3	*Dutch Lover*	1673	C	*Sir Martin Mar-all*	1667	C	*The Fool Turned Critic*	1676	C
4	*Abdelazar*	1676	TC	*An Evening's Love*	1668	C	*A Fond Husband*	1677	C
5	*The Town Fopp*	1676	C	*The Conquest of Granada Part 1*	1670	TC	*Trick for Trick*	1678	C
6	*The Rover*	1677	C	*The Conquest of Granada Part 2*	1670	TC	*Squire Oldsapp*	1678	C
7	*Sir Patient Fancy*	1678	C	*Marriage a la Mode*	1671	C	*The Royalist*	1682	C
8	*The Feigned Courtesans*	1679	C	*The Assignation*	1672	C	*The Injured Princess*	1682	TC
9	*Second Part of the Rover*	1681	C	*Oedipus: a tragedy (possibly co-authored)*	1678	T	*A Common-wealth of women*	1685	C
10	*City Heiress*	1682	C	*Amboyna*	1679	T	*The Fool's Preferment*	1688	C
11	*The Roundheads*	1682	C	*Spanish Friar*	1680	C	*Love for Money*	1691	C
12	*The False Count*	1682	C	*The Duke of Guise (possibly co-authored)*	1682	T	*The Marriage-Hater-Matched*	1692	C
13	*The Young King*	1683	TC	*Don Sebastian*	1689	T	*Richmond Heiress*	1693	C
14	*The Luckey Chance*	1686	C	*Amphitryon*	1690	C	*Don Quixote Part 1*	1694	C
15	*The Emperor of the Moon*	1687	C	*Cleomenes*	1692	T	*Don Quixote Part 2*	1694	C

(continued)

Table 1. (continued)

Play no.	Behn play	Date first performance	Genre	Dryden play	Date first performance	Genre	D'URFEY play	Date first performance	Genre
16	*The Widow Ranter*	1689	TC	*Love Triumphant*	1694	T	*Cinthia and Endimion, or the love of the deities* (opera)	1696	T
	Total word count: 426742			Total word count: 386062			Total word count: 398863		

C: comedy; T: tragedy; TC: tragi-comedy.

usefulness, of interjections as an expressive resource differs between authors (Table 2). D'Urfey has the largest interjection repertoire, 115 types, with a frequency of 12.4/1000 words. In speaking terms, that equates to roughly one interjection every 30 seconds. Behn's repertoire is slightly smaller than D'Urfey's (79 types), and forms occur slightly less frequently (9.9/1000 words). Dryden's repertoire is the smallest of the three authors considered here: 67 types, and a frequency of 4.1/1000 words.

The distribution of 'primary' and 'secondary' interjection types (Ameka, 1992) is not individually distinctive (Table 3). Primary types are less numerous than secondary types, which likely reflects the latter's greater capacity for innovation. However, for all three authors, primary tokens comprise over half of interjection occurrences: 60.6% tokens for D'Urfey, 65.9% for Behn, and 74.1% for Dryden. Looked at in terms of normalised frequencies, this means that there are roughly two primary interjections for every secondary token, indicating the primary forms' central expressive function within dramatic dialogue of the period. The frequencies of primary forms are similar to the period baseline represented by the Corpus of English Dialogues data (5.5/1000 words) (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010); in the present corpus the overall frequency for primary interjections is 5.7/1000 words, with secondary forms less frequent (3.1/1000 words).

The quantitative overview suggests that the size and implementation of an interjection repertoire likely correlate, with differences between authors. To understand what might shape those preferences, it is first helpful to look at each author's preferred interjection forms, given that each individual is producing a comparable kind of text, Restoration drama, for the same kind of audience. Table 4 shows the top-ten primary and secondary interjections, by normalised frequency, for each author. For comparison, Table 5 shows the top-ten interjections in the CED dramatic comedies sub-corpus, which includes seven interjection forms listed in Table 4

Table 2. Interjections by author (types and tokens).

	IJ types	IJ tokens	Tokens/1000 words
Behn	79	4267	9.9
Dryden	67	1586	4.1
D'Urfey	115	4985	12.4
Overall	135	10,838	8.9

Table 3. Interjections by author. Primary types and tokens (%) and primary and secondary tokens by normalised frequencies (per 1000 words).

	% Primary (types)	% Primary (tokens)	Primary/1000 words	Secondary/1000 words
Behn	39.2	65.9	6.6	3.4
Dryden	46.2	74.1	3	1
D'Urfey	44.3	60.6	7.5	4.9
Overall	43.7	64.7	5.7	3.1

Table 4. Top-ten most frequent interjections (primary and secondary) by author.

Behn				Dryden				D'Urfey			
Prim.	Frequency	Sec.	Frequency	Prim.	Frequency	Sec.	Frequency	Prim.	Frequency	Sec.	Frequency
oh	2.97 (1267)	how	0.60 (257)	o	1.44 (556)	prithee	0.24 (92)	oh	2.79 (1111)	Prithee	1.14 (453)
ha	1.19 (506)	prithee	0.50 (215)	oh	0.70 (272)	gad	0.14 (53)	ah	0.90 (359)	gad	0.59 (234)
ah	0.84 (359)	heavens	0.30 (126)	alas	0.27 (103)	how	0.13 (52)	ha	0.88 (350)	how-now	0.31 (124)
alas	0.44 (187)	pox on	0.22 (92)	ha	0.23 (89)	how-now	0.09 (35)	ha ha ha	0.78 (313)	godsdeath	0.27 (108)
whe	0.29 (123)	how-now	0.17 (74)	ah	0.20 (77)	heavens	0.08 (32)	o	0.45 (180)	**hey**	0.21 (84)
hum	0.28 (120)	gods	0.17 (73)	**ho**	0.03	pox on	0.05 (18)	alas	0.29 (114)	pox on	0.20 (81)
ha ha ha	0.17 (74)	**godsheartlikins**	0.14 (61)	ha ha ha	0.02 (7)	**hell**	0.04 (15)	**ha ha ha ha**	0.27 (109)	how	0.19 (76)
o	0.10 (44)	pox of	0.14 (60)	fie	0.02 (7)	gods	0.04 (14)	Fie	0.16 (64)	**zounds**	0.17 (69)
pshaw	0.05 (20)	pox	0.13 (54)	**lo**	0.02 (6)	marry	0.04 (14)	ha ha	0.13 (50)	**godsbud**	0.15 (59)
ha ha	0.04 (18)	**agad**	0.12 (50)	**umph**	0.02 (6)	pox of	0.03 (12)	**pish**	0.10 (40)	**godsheart**	0.14 (54)

Frequency/1000 words (number of tokens). Bold items are top-10 items for that author only.

Table 5. Top-ten pragmatic noise forms in the CED drama sub-corpus.

CED drama sub-corpus	Freq/1000 words
o	1.6
ha	1.3
oh	0.7
fie	0.2
ah	0.2
he[e]	0.2
alas	0.2
ay[e]	0.1
pshaw	0.1
tush	0.1
All primary forms	5.5

CED data adapted from Culpeper and Kytö (2010: 269).

Four interjections largely dominate the data: *oh*, *ha*, *ah* and *o*. The precise rankings show authorial differences: whilst *oh* is the most frequent interjection in the plays of Behn and D'Urfey, *o* is more frequent in Dryden's plays, and also the CED drama (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010: 269). The different preferences for *oh* or *o* reflect these interjections' status as a linguistic variable, and is discussed in more detail below. Top-ten interjections with lower frequencies are more likely to be characteristic of that individual's repertoire. Items in **bold** in Table 4 are interjections that occur only in the top ten of that author. For instance, *ho* is used more frequently by Dryden. Behn prefers primary interjections *hum* and *pshaw*. D'Urfey's favoured primary interjections show a more substantial overlap with the preferences of his contemporaries, with the exception of the duplicative *ha ha ha ha* and *ha ha*. The distinctiveness even within the top ten lists suggests that interjections may have diagnostic value as authorial style markers in queries of attribution, although verifying this hypothesis falls outside the scope of the present study.

Repertoire distinctiveness is predominantly one of degree rather than exclusivity. All the primary interjections in bold occur in at least one of the other author's repertoires, with the possible exception of *whe*. The fifth-ranking interjection in Behn's plays is not found with that spelling in Dryden or D'Urfey's dramatic dialogue, although a potential variant *wheigh* occurs once in Dryden's play, *The Conquest of Granada Part 1* (1670) and two tokens in D'Urfey's plays (*The Fool's Preferment* (1688) and *Don Quixote Part 1* (1694)). *Whe* is listed in the OED Online (2022) as a Middle English interjection, used for attention or to mark emphasis, and is not attested after the fifteenth century. Behn's *whe* could therefore be an example of lexical recycling (Tagliamonte, 2008). Its position in Behn's repertoire is considered further below.

The secondary interjections can be classified according to their semantic domains: religion, e.g., *heavens*; phatic, e.g., *prithee*; health, e.g., *pox*; foreign, e.g., *basta*; nature, e.g., *monstrous*; and miscellaneous, e.g., *good-lack*. Religious-derived interjections are the most frequent for all three authors, accounting collectively for 77% secondary types and 49% secondary tokens, and this is reflected in the top-ten list (Table 4). However, there are

possible register differences in individual preferences. Dryden mainly uses religious interjections with a long heritage in English, such as *marry* (from 'Mary', first attested 1375 (OED Online, 2022)). D'Urfey prefers interjections that are more recent coinages, and have a shorter span of active use in English: e.g., *godsbud* <ads bud>, first attested 1675. Behn's top ten shows a mixture, including the interjection *godsheartlikins* which, despite the prominence of *god's* + *N* interjections in his repertoire, is used infrequently by D'Urfey.

The top-ten lists provide a helpful perspective on the interjection repertoires of each author, demonstrating the convergence and distinctiveness of these expressive lexical items among individuals working within the same literary and linguistic marketplace. The descriptive comparative analysis of each playwright raises further questions about the factors underpinning the identified variation and similarity. As noted above, early modern interjections have stylistic associations that are thought to correlate with different kinds of dramatic work, and two such factors are explored in the following sections: genre and time.

6. Interjections, repertoires and genre

Whilst we know that dramatic comedies make greater use of interjections than other genres, including speech-like texts such as court depositions (e.g. Taavitsainen 1995: 442-444; Culpeper and Kytö 2010), studies have not focussed on potential differences between dramatic sub-genres.[4] Speculatively, the need to mark character expression through interjections may be high in tragedies, due to the intense and often negative emotional situations these plays depict. Compared with comedies, tragedy interjections may therefore be more frequent and also more negative, due to the severity of events in a tragic narrative (e.g. death, betrayal, loss). This section considers how genre informs the selection and frequency of interjections in the plays, and whether there is a shared understanding between authors in the expressive resources deemed appropriate for comedies and tragedies.

Table 6 shows the distribution of interjections by genre. Tragi-comedies are included in the 'tragedy' category, on the principle that there are potential 'comic' properties in all three dramatic genres, but that tragic plot features are more unique to tragedy and tragi-comedies. Ideally, the tragicomedies would be treated as their own genre but the word counts do not permit this for the three authors under analysis.

Table 6. Frequency of interjections in comedies and tragedies/tragi-comedies.

	Comedies		Tragedies	
	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency	Frequency
Behn	0.17 (73)	8.3 (3540)	0.36 (36)	7.34 (727)
Dryden	0.14 (54)	2.04 (789)	0.21 (44)	3.89 (797)
D'Urfey	0.28 (110)	11.51 (4590)	0.90 (48)	7.45 (395)
Overall	0.10 (127)	7.36 (8919)	0.19 (69)	5.37 (1919)

Frequency/1000 words (number of tokens)

Overall, dramatic comedies contain more interjections than tragedies: 7.36 interjections/1000 words compared to 5.37/1000 words. However, the number of interjection types is proportionally higher in tragedies than comedies. This means that interjections are more diverse in the tragedies and may suggest that a greater range of expressive functions are needed for this dramatic sub-genre. However, the amalgamation of the results flattens important inter-author differences. Dryden's plays show an inverse genre distribution to Behn and D'Urfey. Interjections occur more frequently in his tragedies (3.89/1000 words) than in his comedies (2.04/1000 words). This pattern is further complicated by the greater representation of tragedies in Dryden's 16-play corpus, which reflects his preference for this dramatic genre over the course of his career. That said, both genres reflect his dispreference for interjections in dramatic dialogue when compared with his two contemporaries. Dryden's approach to interjections thus appears different to that of his two contemporaries, at both a quantitative level and in their stylistic distribution.

D'Urfey uses interjections substantially more frequently in his comedies (11.51/1000 words) than his tragedies (7.45/1000 words. Behn's practice falls between the results for her male contemporaries, with comedic interjections (8.3/1000 words) only slightly more frequent than the number in her tragedy/tragi-comedies (7.34/1000 words). Consequently, the overall picture provided by the corpus is misleading, as the preferences of each author fall differently and distinctively across the stylistic spectrum.

Table 7 shows the top-ten interjections for each author when calculated by genre. Refining the data this way further confirms the place of a shared 'core' of interjection forms in these seventeenth-century English repertoires. *Oh*, *o*, *ha*, *ah*, *prithee*, *alas*, *heavens* are the most frequently used interjections in both genres for all three authors (*alas* and *heavens* fall outside the top-ten in D'Urfey's comedies, ranking 11th and 23rd, respectively). The majority of these forms are primary interjections, with their attested range of meaning likely promoting their use across a range of different contexts in comedies or tragedies.

Conversely, the items in bold in Table 7 are interjections that are preferred by that author in one genre specifically. These examples attest to the link between interjection selection and context of use. Thus, D'Urfey's comedies (perhaps unsurprisingly) make greater use of duplicative *ha* forms, marking laughter, than his tragedies, whereas religious-derived interjections are more characteristic of his tragedies. *Gods* in Behn and Dryden's plays is a product of a Classical setting (relatively infrequent in the corpus), reflecting the culturally-sensitive nature, and world-building role, of secondary interjection forms. Other religion-derived interjections appear to reflect negative contexts of interaction. Hence, *godszoors* and *godsdeath* in Behn's tragedies, and *fie* and *pish* in D'Urfey's tragedies have a similar function, as forms used to mark frustration and contempt.

To take a closer look at interjection choice and genre, the discussion now focusses on two interjections: *o* and *oh*. The orthographic difference reflects distinctive stylistic connotations. *O* represented a literary, rhetorical, high-register form 'of refined lineage', whereas *oh* was associated with everyday conversation (Freeman, 2015: 291). Consequently, *o* is more frequent in Jacobean tragedies, with *oh* preferred in comedies (Freeman, 2015: 291). Freeman appears to conceive of the two forms as a (partial)

Table 7. Top-ten interjections for each author by genre: frequency per 1000 words.

Behn comedy		Behn tragedy		Dryden comedy		Dryden tragedy		D'Urfey comedy		D'Urfey tragedy	
Interjection	Frequency	Interjection	Frequency	Interjection	Frequency	Interjection	Frequency	Interjection	Frequency	Interjection	Frequency
oh	3.13	oh	2.43	o	1.39	o	1.49	oh	2.83	oh	2.47
ha	1.33	ah	0.81	oh	0.59	oh	0.80	prithee	1.26	ha	0.64
ah	0.85	ha	0.72	prithee	0.32	ha	0.35	ah	0.96	ah	0.53
how	0.72	alas	0.56	**gad**	0.27	alas	0.30	ha	0.91	o	0.49
prithee	0.55	**gods**	0.50	ah	0.24	prithee	0.17	**ha ha ha**	0.90	alas	0.38
alas	0.40	prithee	0.35	alas	0.23	ah	0.16	**gad**	0.66	**hey**	**0.38**
whe	0.37	**Godszoors**	0.34	how	0.23	heavens	0.07	o	0.45	prithee	0.32
hum	0.34	how	0.22	how-now	0.14	how	0.05	how-now	0.34	**fie**	0.19
heavens	0.34	heavens	0.16	ha	0.10	**gods**	0.05	**ha ha ha ha**	0.32	**pish**	0.19
pox on	0.24	**godsdeath**	0.13	heavens	0.10	how-now	0.04	**godsdeath**	0.29	**heavens**	0.15

Frequency/1000 words. Forms with a top-ten position in only one of the two genres for that author are shown in bold.

linguistic variable, whereby they are functionally equivalent. Other research suggests that *O* is narrower in scope, used in vocative functions, with *oh* having a broader expressive remit. Culpeper and Kyto (2010: 238), for example, find that the functional behaviour of *oh* is more like *ah* than the alternative *o* form. Whilst for the audience, the orthographic forms had little relevance to their play-going experience, the selection of *o* and *oh* (as distinctive spellings) may have had meaning for the writers, and their positioning within the literary/linguistic market of the London stage. Freeman notes that Ben Jonson adjusted his practice to include more *o* examples, as a marker of his learnedness. That said, by the Restoration, *oh* was emerging as the preferred form overall, suggesting that the classical and colloquial meanings were decreasing in salience.

Table 7 shows authorial differences in the frequencies of *o* and *oh*. Dryden uses *o* more frequently than *oh* in both his tragedies and comedies. The higher number of *o* tokens occur in his tragedies, in-keeping with the distribution observed in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean drama (Freeman, 2015). D'Urfey prefers *oh* over *o* in both his comedies and tragedies, with the frequency of *oh* slightly higher (2.83 to 2.47) in the comic plays. *O* occurs less often, but at a similar rate (around 0.47; a fifth as frequently as *oh*) in both genres. Finally, in Behn's plays *oh* is the most frequent interjection in comedies and tragedies, with *o* far less frequent: 0.08/1000 words (34 tokens) in the comedies, and only slightly higher at 0.1/1000 words (10 tokens) in the tragedies.

The distribution of *o* and *oh*, at a quantitative level, suggests that the three authors' repertoires use *oh* and *o* in stylistically distinctive ways, with each author at a different stage in the orthographic and stylistic convergence of the two interjection forms. Adopting a sociolinguistic perspective, we might turn to the social background of each speaker to understand this distribution. Dryden is the oldest of the three individuals, he received a formal Classical education and was also the poet laureate from 1668 (Hammond, 2021). These factors might inform a conservative use of *oh* and *o*, due to his age shaping his perception of the two spellings, and in particular the social meaning of *o* and its correlate with literacy and learning (Nevalainen et al., 2011). Behn and D'Urfey participate in the generalisation of *oh*, which could be attributed to their younger age, and potentially their lack of Classical training. What is interesting is that D'Urfey uses *o* so much more frequently than Behn, and, in both comedies *and* tragedies. Whilst the potential for compositor interference is always a consideration, this could suggest that D'Urfey was more aware of, or receptive to, the literary market value of *o* than Behn. Behn's unusual position as a professional woman writer suggests that, were *o* socially beneficial to her, she would have implemented it more substantially, if linguistic capital was a similar resource in the seventeenth century as in subsequent centuries (cf. Trudgill, 1972). More work is needed on the sociolinguistic profile of individual style in historical literary contexts to verify these speculations.

Genre analysis indicates how each author uses interjections differently in comedies and tragedies, However, this picture does not acknowledge potential diachronic changes in individual repertoire, despite interjections as a resource showing changes in frequency and form over time (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010). The diachrony of individual style is considered in the next section.

7. Interjections and time

Linguistic analysis (quantitative and qualitative) attests to the flexibility of individual style over time. Sociolinguistic research has documented how specific forms (e.g. quotative *like* (Gardner et al., 2021)) can be acquired or lost by an individual across their lifespan (see discussions in Sankoff, 2018, Evans, 2013). Stylometric research (computational stylistics) has observed the capacity for similar shifts across a collection of features (e.g. most frequent words), not necessarily tied to a wider, societal level linguistic change. The present analysis of interjections considers the stability of how individuals conceive of and use interjections as a resource in their commercial drama.

Plotting the frequency by plays (numbered 1-16; see Table 1 for play titles), the frequency of interjections increases modestly over time in D'Urfey and Behn's plays, whereas the use of interjections declines over the course of Dryden's dramatic career. There is a shared increase in frequencies in the very late 1670s and early 1680s, including in Dryden's plays, before a decrease in the late 1680s and 1690s; a trend that contrasts with the general expansion in interjection frequencies observed in the CED from 1680 (Culpeper and Kytö, 2010).

As Figure 1 shows, each author has plays in which interjections are used at a frequency higher than the average, as well as a play (or two) where interjections are comparatively sparse. This can, in part, be linked to genre. The majority – although not all – of the plays with the lowest frequencies in Behn and D'Urfey's corpora are tragedies or tragi-comedies (marked T and TC, respectively). Dryden's plays do not show such a clear distinction, and the difference becomes less apparent over time. Whilst it could be proposed that the decline in interjections over time in his plays is a consequence *of* the greater number of tragedies in

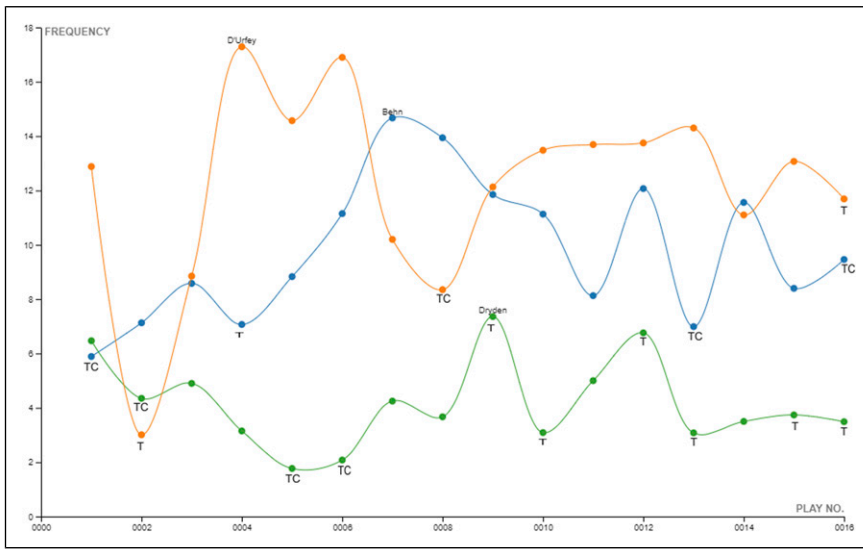

Figure 1. Interjection tokens (per 1000 words) for each author by play. Tragedies/tragi-comedies marked with T/TC.

his corpus, the similarity of interjection frequencies in the late comedy *Amphitryon* (play 14) with his tragedies, suggests that the trend may reflect more than corpus composition. Dryden's preference over time is to move away from the interjection as a dialogic device.

Focussing on the most frequent interjections in the earliest play in each author's corpus, it is possible to track the frequencies of these forms over time (Figure 2). This analysis reveals the longevity, or not, of interjections characteristic of the early style of the playwrights. To remove the confounding influence of genre, this analysis focusses on the

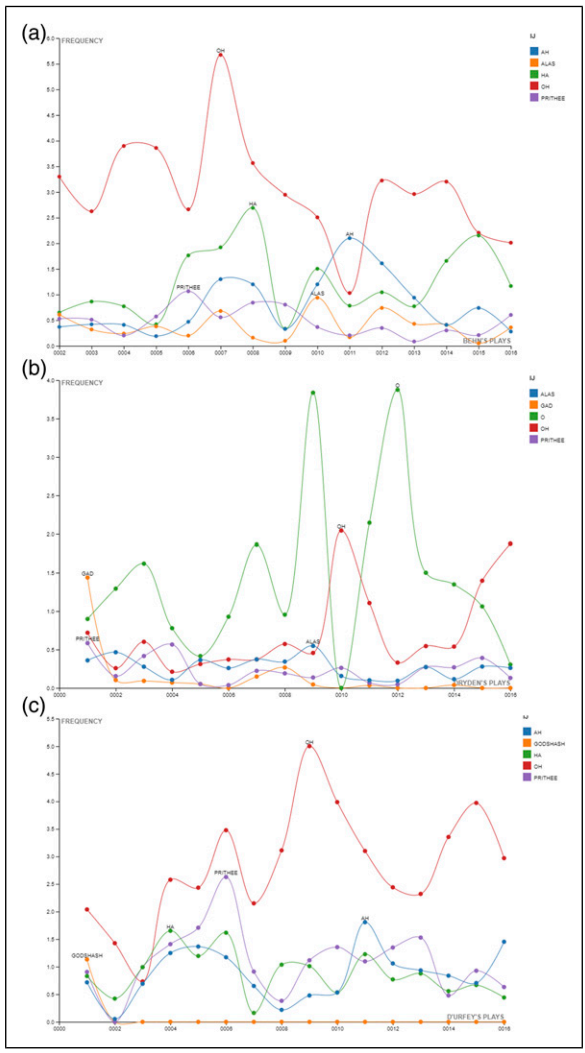

Figure 2. (a) Top five interjections in Behn's earliest comedy tracked over time (per 1000 words). (b) Top five interjections in Dryden's earliest comedy tracked over time (per 1000 words). (c) Top five interjections in D'Urfey's earliest comedy tracked over time (per 1000 words).

comedies of the three authors. The earliest play for Behn is therefore her second play, *The Amorous Prince* (1671), rather than her preceding tragedy, *The Forced Marriage* (1670).

Primary interjection *oh* occurs in all three lists, and the distribution over time indicates its core position within the English set of interjections in the latter-half of the seventeenth century, despite competition with *o*. *Prithee*, too, is prominent in the three authors' earliest plays. Irrespective of the dis-alignment of the dates of the sixteen plays between the three authorial corpora, there is a decrease in *prithee* over time. Behn and D'Urfey use *prithee* most often in their 1677 rake-featuring comedies, *The Rover* and *The Fond Husband*, respectively (section 8, below).

Ah shows a similar frequency profile in Behn and D'Urfey's plays, being higher in the 1670s than the 1680s. To get a better sense of what functions underpin the distribution of this interjection, I used the AntConc collocates tool to identify the top 40 collocates in the R1-3 position with a frequency >3 for each author's plays, ranked according to their MI score. Address terms feature prominently in the lists. 'Madam' ranks in the top twenty (MI scores between 4.3 and 5.8) in the lists of all three authors, and other words from the address term category, such as 'father', 'rogue', 'monsieur' and 'seignior', are used more restrictively in the plays indicative of the plot, the setting, and the characters' language(s) of specific works. Other collocates of *ah* include duplicative forms, and other interjections, e.g., 'heavens'. It is frequently used as a precursor to a question, directed either towards another character or as a rhetorical form towards the speaker themselves, reflected in the prominence of *wh-* forms in the collocates lists. *Wh-* collocates are proportionately most populous in Dryden's plays, comprising six of the twenty collocates that meet the criteria set for the AntConc collocate tool, compared with c.80 total collocates of *ah* identified in the plays of Behn and D'Urfey. In D'Urfey and Behn's plays, *ah* is also used to preface more general asseverations, such as the Dutch character Hanse, in Behn's *The Dutch Lover* (1673) 'Ah, ah, a pox of all sea voyages'. D'Urfey's play-texts also include explicit instructions for how *ah* was to be realised. His comedy *The Richmond Heiress* (1693) includes stage directions in which the actor 'shrieks out' following duplicative *ah* in the dialogue.

The particular combination of *ah* + address term highlights the fine-grained layers of interjection repertoires and their developments over time. In Behn's plays, the earliest uses of *ah* + name are limited to two kinds of interaction: the expression of heterosexual romantic love and desire (example 1); and antagonistic exchanges conveying disagreement and contempt between parties (example 2). From 1677, examples of *ah* + name are used in a more jocular fashion – what might be considered 'banter', and other contexts, including to attract attention, seek help, express pleasure, show deference and affection, seek confirmation of understanding, and express sorrow and fear. The early use as a marker of romantic discourse seems to have been superseded by its role as an indicator of sorrow, contempt and recognition/understanding.

1) Frederick: Ah Cloris! can you doubt that heart, / To whom such blessings you impart? (*Amorous Prince*, 1670)

2) Hippolyta: Ah Traitor, by how base a way / Thou would evade thy fate? (*Dutch Lover*, 1673)

The *ah* + name structure may also have indexed stereotypes of particular (Romantic language-speaking) nations. It occurs very frequently in the dialogue of Italian Petro in Behn's *Feigned Courtesans* (1679), and Frenchman Le Prate in D'Urfey's *Love for Money* (1691). Such examples testify to the important short-hand interjections provide in the process of characterisation in drama dialogue (Culpeper 2001), and the nature of individual repertoires as layered systems of micro- and macro-level stylistic choices.

The interjections also show temporal restrictions. *Godshash* appears restricted to D'Urfey's early play (although other *gods*+ forms are characteristic of his dramatic interjections throughout). The form is associated with a particular character, Toby, a 'cloddish country[man]' (Coppola, 2016: 52), and the religious interjection presumably indexes some kind of parochial foolishness, both through the form itself, but also by its frequency: 30 occurrences in the play, all in Toby's dialogue. Similarly, *gad* is a feature of the dialogue of Failer, the side kick of the protagonist in Dryden's *The Wild Gallant*. These examples highlight the potential for interjections to shape character idiolects, thus explaining their narrow timeframe of popularity within the authorial corpus. Yet not all interjections with a brief 'lifespan' are associated with specific characters. In Behn's plays, the form *whe* has a restricted temporal frame, found in five plays, performed between 1677 (starting with *The Rover*) and 1683 (her tragi-comedy, *The Young King*) – but is not limited to a particular character in each play.

Craig and Kinney suggest that '[w]riters tend to remain within a defined band of style, but this is a propensity, not an iron law' (Craig and Kinney, 2009: 24). This assertion leaves unspecified the factors that might make an author inclined, or not, to stick within the trammels of their stylistic preferences. The analysis of the interjection repertoire over time further highlights how, in dramatic writing, expressive language forms are sensitive to contexts of use. Such diachronic shifts may reflect broader stylistic changes in the authorial repertoire, or potentially more local differences as a writer responds to the topic, plot or character needs of their dramatic writing. To better understand the relationship between stylistic need and authorial interjection repertoire, the final section focusses on the possible relevance of character on the authors' interjection profiles.

8. Interjections and character dialogue

The analysis of character and interjections examines to what extent the differences between the repertoires of each author can be associated with the kinds of characters they create within their plays. Discussion focusses on the dialogue of a particular character type, the rake, which was especially popular in 1670s and 1680s comedies. The analysis considers how interjections are used in rake(-ish) dialogue to see whether there is an inter-authorial consensus in how interjections contribute to their characterisation.

The rake is a virile and licentious male character who, typically, engages sexually with the play's heroine(s) (often complicitly), ridiculing their old, misogynistic husbands in the process (Hume, 1977: 36). The rake's activities are generally a satirical commentary on wider Restoration culture, including a critique of marriage. During the latter-half of the seventeenth century, the rake, whilst inspired by the libidinous kingship of Charles II, undergoes a shift from a class to gendered character type, whose masculinity is integral to, and constructed by, their activities (Mackie, 2005). The rake is both gentlemanly and

amorous, a fraternal figure as well as one versed in romance. Language, and linguistic skill, is vital for the rake character and their negotiation of relationships in the progression of the plot. The character therefore provides an interesting focus for interjection use.

For reasons of space, the discussion focusses on a rake character's dialogue from one play by each author: Behn's *The Rover* (1677), Dryden's *Marriage a la Mode* (1671) and D'Urfey's *The Fond Husband* (1677). Further details are given in Table 8. Two of the three rake characters were performed by the same actor, William Smith, who acted the part of Willmore in *The Rover* and Rashley in *The Fond Husband*. Due to the tightly-knit theatrical network in London, the availability of the actors would often inform how a writer designed a particular role (Roach, 2000: 33). This analysis therefore takes this facet into consideration, although a fuller investigation of the intersection of intra- and extradiegetic influences on Restoration dialogue and style falls outside the scope of this paper.

Intelligent Archive was used to construct the interjection profile for each rake, noting any forms shared between the three authors. The function of the interjections was then assessed qualitatively by looking at their situated meanings and conducting an appraisal of forms with local significance.

Table 9 shows the overall frequencies of interjections in the dialogue of rake characters in the three plays, and the top five most frequent forms. A comparison character, either a foil or companion, is also shown in the right-hand column for each author, along with the overall interjection frequencies per play. Behn and Dryden's rake characters use interjections at or above the play average, a finding that suggests expressive language is an important resource for their characterization for these authors. Conversely, D'Urfey's two rake characters use interjections less than the play average. However, this can be explained by the role of interjections in the dialogue of another character type, the cuckolded husband, discussed below.

The top five interjections across the rake characters show similarities. For instance, *oh* is ranked first or second in the dialogue of Behn and D'Urfey's rake characters, and Dryden's rakes use the author's preferred *o*. Both interjections preface negative exclamations, implying anger or frustration (e.g. 'Oh insufferable stupidity!', 'O this subtle Devil!'). More positive expressions (e.g. 'oh happy minute!') appear only with *oh,* but the number of examples is too small to be conclusive. More specific to these characters is the religious interjection *godsdeath*, which ranks highly in three rake characters, and may be indicative, through its more colloquial, blasphemous register, of traits associated with 'rakeish' interaction, such as rebelliousness and willfulness. Also notable is the absence of *prithee* from the top-five rake-interjections in Behn's and D'Urfey's plays, despite the secondary interjection being in the top-ranked forms as a whole. The interjection is used by Dryden, however. The convergence of interjection forms observed in Behn and D'Urfey's rake's dialogue is further evidence of the stylistic similarities between their repertoires observed elsewhere in this investigation. It might also reflect the presence of Smith in the role of both Willmore and Rashley; a possibility that needs further research.

The rake dialogue includes interjections representative of their respective author's interjection repertoires. *Whe* appears in Willmore's dialogue often enough to be ranked fifth (although it is not a rake-specific interjection), and duplicative *ha ha ha* is the second-most frequent interjection in D'Urfey's dialogue for Rashley. These forms are

Table 8. Details of three plays with rake characters.

Author	Play	Date	Rake character	Rake plot	Characters analysed (word count)
Behn	*The Rover*	1677	Willmore (protagonist)	Willmore encounters a disguised Helena at a masked ball, and tries to find her again, whilst also meeting and pursuing the courtesan Angellia-Bianca, who he woos and persuades to negate her usual fee. At the end of the play, Willmore agrees to marry Helena.	Willmore (6912) Belville (3235) Blunt (3102)
Dryden	*Marriage a la Mode*	1673	Palamede (B-plot protagonist)	Palamede is betrothed to Melantha, and his friend Rhodophil is betrothed to Doralice but each prefers, and pursues, the other's fiance.	Palamede (3576) Rhodophil (2786)
D'Urfey	*The Fond Husband*	1677	Rashley and rival Ranger	Rashley is having an affair with Emilia, the wife of cuckolded Bubble. Ranger is in love with Emilia, and seeks to reveal her affair to her husband. Maria, Emilia's sister, also seeks to reveal their affair	Rashley (2706) Ranger (3030) Bubble (4129)

Table 9. Interjection profiles for rake characters and their foils/companions in three plays by Behn, Dryden and D'Urfey.

	Behn		Dryden		D'Urfey	
	Willmore	Belville	Palamede	Rhodophil	Rashley	Ranger
Freq/1000 for whole play	11.1		4.25		17.2	
Interjections (n.)	18	11	9	10	16	13
Freq/1000 words	16.7	11.1	4.7	6.4	14.7	15.8
Top five interjections	oh	ha	o	o	oh	godsdeath
	ha	oh	prithee	prithee	ha ha ha	Oh
	agad	prithee	alas	what	gad	Hell
	godsdeath	ah	heavens	ha	ha	O
	whe	how	gods	pox on	godsdeath	Ha

representative of their author's preferences as a whole, according with previous studies that show authorial preferences manifest within the idiolects of individual characters (Craig, 1999). To gain a clearer sense of how interjections contribute to the characterization of the rake characters, each play is now discussed in turn. The findings are

considered alongside the trends in genre and authorial style discussed in the preceding sections.

8.1. *Dryden's* Marriage a la Mode *(1671)*

The rake character, Palamede, and his friend/competitor, Rhodophil, use interjections above the average frequency for Dryden's plays, but at a rate comparatively lower than the other authors' plays discussed here. The most frequent interjections for these characters are those typical of dramatic dialogue in the corpus as a whole: *o*, *prithee*, *ah* and *oh*. However, the interjections found in the dialogue of Palamede and Rhodophil contain a great proportion of secondary interjections than those of their female counterparts, for instance, and also some less common interjections. *Basta* appears in an aside by Palamede, expressing his decision-making and determination, and can be read as an inflection of the play's Sicilian setting: 'But **Basta**, since I must marry her, I'll say nothing, because he shall not laugh at my misfortune'. The Spanish/Italian borrowed interjection, occurs only once elsewhere in the corpus, in Dryden's *The Assignation* (1672), possibly indicative of a brief active period in Dryden's repertoire.

In *Marriage a la Mode*, interactions often involve amorous exchanges. In the opening conversation between Palamede and Rhodophil's fiancé, Doralice, *o* is used to mark Palamede's frustration, although perhaps with a hint of affection and desire (example 3):

3) Doralice: Then, to strike you quite dead, know, that I am marry'd too.

Palame de: Art thou marry'd; **O** thou damnable vertuous Woman?

The rake-ish characters, when not pursuing their female targets, also engage in male-to-male conversation. In these interactions, the proportion of interjections increases (example 4), and are more likely to feature secondary interjections.

4) Rhodophil: **Alas**, dear Palamede, I have had no joy to write, nor indeed to do any thing in the World to please me: The greatest misfortune imaginable is fallen upon me.

Palamede: **Prithee**, what's the matter?

Rhodophil: In one word, I am married; wretchedly married; and have been above these two years. Yes, **faith**, the Devil has had power over me, in spite of my Vows and Resolutions to the contrary.

The collective, and more intensive, use of interjection forms, particularly secondary types that are more transient and sensitive to social (religious, political) change, may therefore denote a more informal, conversational register. Research suggests that other types of affective language, such as discourse markers, may index particular functions, e.g., the indexical field for *eh* signals a positive interpersonal stance in New Zealand English (Vine and Marsden, 2016), even if it is used for particular functions, such as signalling attentiveness, in any given context. In the case of these co-occurring (secondary) interjections, it is feasible that their clustering indicates a shared orientation, and a

shared means of expressing that orientation, by the characters towards ongoing events. In this reading, the clustering interjections construct solidarity between interlocutors, perhaps in a similar way to that observed between present-day users of teenage slang (Fajardo 2019). The Restoration stage permitted more emotive and blasphemous language than in the preceding or following dramatic eras, although this is not especially evident in Dryden's plays. However, his use of interjection clustering adds a colloquial dynamic to his character dialogue that is not as apparent in more singular examples.

Interjections are also a notable feature in dialogic asides, likely because of the expositional function of the forms, revealing a character's interior experiences. They can also be seen to contribute to comic satire, giving the audience access to information not available to the characters (example 5):

5) Melantha: Let me die, Philotis, but this is extremely French; but yet Count Rhodophil A Gentleman, Sir, that understands the Grand mond so well, who has hanted the best conversations, and who (in short) has voyaged, may pretend to the good graces of any Lady.

Palamede (aside): **Hey**! Grandmond! conversation! voyaged! and good graces! I find my Mistress is one of those that run mad in new French words.

The examples from *Marriage a la Mode* demonstrates the relative paucity of interjections in Dryden's rake-ish dialogue, suggesting that Dryden does not put aside his general preferences when creating this character type. Palamede and Rhodophil are egocentric, amorous, confident and humorous, as befits the Restoration rake, but their characterisation is not notably reliant on interjections. This contrasts with the creative strategies of D'Urfey and Behn.

8.2. *D'Urfey's* The Fond Husband

Hume's (1977) summary of D'Urfey's 'bed romp' suggests that the characters "talk the talk" of rake-ish and libertine behaviour, but that the play proceeds without any real critical substance. What constitutes rake-ish talk in *The Fond Husband*, from the perspective of interjections, are expressions of anger, frustration, and amorousness. Rashley uses 16 interjection types, Ranger uses 14 types, and overall frequencies are just under the play average (17.2/1000 words): Rashley (14.7/1000 words) and Ranger (15.8/1000 words). Their preferred forms include the core primary forms (*oh*, *o*, *ah*), and forms typical of D'Urfey's interjection repertoire (e.g. *ha ha ha*). The interjections reflect the characters' situation and orientation towards events.

Rashley's interjections align with the interpersonal, interactive activities of the character, particularly his amorous relationship with Emilia. The vocative 'Oh my Dearest!' (example 6) is typical of amorous *oh*. As discussed below in relation to *The Rover*, *oh* acts as a register marker for the language of love. In Rashley's dialogue, at least, it appears to be used un-ironically (or could be plausibly performed as such).

6) Emilia: Our Intrigue as yet goes well.

Rashly: I swear to admiration; and had I not seen each passage, I shou'd have thought 't had been impossible. **Oh** my Dearest! how shall I gratifie thee? My love's too poor, and my desert too mean ever to equal it.

The old husband, Bubble, is the butt of the joke in *The Fond Husband*, and interjections mark his foolishness, creating a character to be mocked by characters and the audience. Bubble's dialogue contains 25 different interjections, occurring 27.8/1000 words: a third more forms, occurring 30% more frequently, than in Rashley or Ranger's dialogue. The cumulative effect of these interjections is to create a character of affect (varied emotional reactions) with little cognitive or interpersonal substance; see example 7:

7) Bubble: Holloway? —a **Pox on't**,—what damn'd luck had I? if it had been High-Gate I should have met the Fool; for I have been there all this morning

Rashley: **Ah**! 'tis no matter, Sir his company can add little to anyone's credit; for he is but a kind of a soft-headed, a half-witted Fellow.—

Bubble: A Ninny, a Fool.—**Ha, ha, ha**.

Rashley: Ay, and the most credulous of all the Cuckolds I ever met with.

Bubble: Poor Animal! **Faith** I pity him, but there's a number of 'em about Town **ifaith**,—we men of wit should want diversion else.

Ranger, by and large, experiences endless frustrations in his attempts both to woo Emilia and reveal Rashley's cuckoldry to Emilia's husband, Bubble. This is quantitatively reflected in the most frequent interjection in his dialogue being *godsdeath*, used to convey frustration and anger, often as part of dialogic asides (also a preferred location for rake interjections in Dryden's *Marriage a la Mode*).

Interjections thus play an important role in characterisation. As in Dryden's plays, they indicate the speaker's stance towards their interlocutors and situation, but D'Urfey uses them more extensively for character (stereo-)typing. Over-expressiveness, marked by high frequency interjections, indexes Bubble's foolishness, for example. For the rake character Rashley, the interjections signal his confidence and amorous endeavours, both of which are part of the fabric of the rake character-type. D'Urfey does not use particular interjection types, however, to demarcate rake dialogue from other characters.

8.3. Behn's The Rover

Behn's most famous rake, Willmore, is active and amorous, and interjections are important for his characterisation. His first scripted word is *ha*. Quantitatively, Willmore has a diverse set of interjection forms (18 types; although also the largest word count in the play >6000 words), and their frequency (16.7/1000 words) is above the play average (11.1/1000 words). In context, interjections in Willmore's dialogue are more distinctive compared to the other rakes analysed here; not because he uses idiosyncratic or exclusive forms, but rather because of how forms are used differently across different contexts. As a

rake, Willmore's activities orient around amorous encounters, male-to-male 'banter', and more serious moments of strife. Some interjections are more prominent in specific situations, suggesting register-related choices. This is most apparent in his conversations with the female characters, Helena and the courtesan Angellica-Bianca, in which interjections such as *oh* and *agad* are used. As in D'Urfey's *The Fond Husband*, *oh* appears to index an amorous register.[5] In *The Rover*, however, this can be seen as satirical. Willmore is an extravagant rake, meaning the character is self-aware in his licentious behaviour (Hume, 1977). *Oh* is part of the self-conscious performance of wooing of Helena and Angellica, perhaps with one eye to the audience as he goes through the social script of heterosexual masculine desire (and conquest). In (8), Willmore and Helena's flirtatious exchanges include *oh* to signal his alignment and agreement, whilst heightening the affective intensity:

8) Hellena: Can you storm?

Willmore: **Oh** most furiously.

Hellena: What think you of a Nunnery Wall? for he that wins me, must gain that first.

Willmore: A Nun! **Oh** how I love thee for it!

Later in the play, Willmore makes his move on Angellica. In an extended speech designed to woo her, interjections are conspicuously absent: 'Yes, I am poor — but I'm a Gentleman', he begins, as his discourse of love draws on the language of finance. Later in the scene, interjections are used more frequently, but with a distinction observable between those used towards Angellica, and those in asides:

9) Willmore: *(Aside.)* **Godsdeath**, how she throws her Fire about my Soul! *[Aloud.]* — Take heed, fair Creature, how you raise my hopes, Which once assum'd pretends to all dominion. […]

Angellica: And will you pay me then the price I ask?

Willmore: **Oh** why dost thou draw me from an awful Worship, By shewing thou art no Divinity?

Later in the play, when his libertine activities are discovered by Angellica, the interjections key his stance towards different people and events. In example 10, amorous *oh* is used as he reflects on his desire for Helena, but *ha* and *pox* mark his anger and frustration with Angellica:

10) Willmore: Two Hundred Thousand Crowns! what Story's this? — what Trick? — what Woman? — **ha**!

Angellica: How strange you make it; have you forgot the Creature you entertain'd on the *Piazo* last Night?

> Willmore *(Aside.)*: **Ha**! my Gipsie worth Two Hundred Thousand Crowns! —**oh** how I long to be with her — **pox**, I knew she was of Quality.

What marks out Willmore's interjections therefore is how they are keyed to context, not just as a reflection of his situation, but as a facet of the character's self-awareness of how he can use language to shape his relationships and better negotiate his way through the circumstances in which he finds himself. As another example, *whe* appears most frequently in Willmore's (drunken) dialogue during and after his near-rape of Florinda. The form intermixes with other interjections (*ha*, *oh*) and indexes the character's agitation and confusion. Thus, whilst D'Urfey's Ranger and Rashley showed some register-sensitive interjection choices, it is much more pronounced in Willmore's language. As a rake, especially an extravagant rake, Willmore fulfils the brief as a man of rhetoric with a strong sense of linguistic appropriacy, as well as providing cues to the audience at moments of ridicule, satire and social commentary.

The analysis of the three rake characters reveals only modest similarities between the three dramatists' design, with nothing to suggest that specific interjection forms were (perceived as) indexical of this social identity. However, there is greater evidence of shared techniques in the creation of the foolish husband – or, in the case of *The Rover*, the foolish friend, Blunt. Like Bubble in D'Urfey's *The Fond Husband*, interjections occur most frequently in the dialogue of Blunt, a foolish country bumpkin, who is tricked by his amour, robbed of his clothing and possessions, and ends up drenched in sewage. Blunt's interjection profile includes distinctive forms *godsheartlikins* and *whe,* both of which occur more often in his dialogue than the period-dominant interjections *oh* and *ha*. Like Bubble, he only partly comprehends what takes place, with a misplaced understanding of his status and personal relationships. *Godsheartlikins* signals his emotional, rather garrulous nature, and occurs 13.8/1000 words, which is roughly equivalent to one occurrence every 17 seconds of dialogue. As an expressive language feature, the affective impact of interjections is sensitive to frequency of use. In Blunt's dialogue, the interjections are used so frequently their meaning is diluted (cf. bleaching – (Tagliamonte, 2008)), and their pragmatic force reduced. These high-volume, low value interjections are indexical, in a way, of Blunt's personality; a man lacking the substance, richness and creativity of his peers, like Willmore.

In summary, the analysis of the rake characters indicates that each author uses interjections in a way that reflects their overall style preferences. The low occurrence of interjections in Dryden's character, Palamede, or the high volume and range in Bubble's dialogue are strategies recognisable from the authorial-level findings discussed in the preceding sections. The results suggest that, rather than specific character types skewing the overall trend and distribution data at the level of genre or author, the authorial repertoire holds across the character dialogue. This findings supports the observations of Craig (1999) on the situating of character idiolects within the broader markers of authorial style. The current analysis has shown this to be applicable to a particular linguistic category, the interjection.

9. Conclusion

The investigation of interjections in the dramatic dialogue of three Restoration authors has demonstrated that their use is shaped by factors of genre, characterization, and time, but that inter-speaker preferences are also detectable in the selection and distribution of forms. The results support previous studies that have shown interjections to be a prominent feature in Restoration drama, and have further refined this view in indicating their stylistic sensitivity to genre, with a greater appreciation of their role in tragedy versus comedy.

The analysis of each authors' preferences over time highlights how the distinction between 'core' interjections and more culturally-aligned, fleeting forms was used in these dramatic texts, with some interjections associated with specific characters, or particular time-periods within an author's literary career (e.g. *whe* in Behn's plays). The analysis of character, moreover, indicated that interjections may have had register associations, which made them a valuable resource for characterisation. Not only can interjections provide insights into a character's emotional response to their situation, they can also contribute to the signalling of the interpersonal relationship between characters, or key in a particular kind of register, such as the amorous interactions of Rashley or Willmore.

The three authors use interjections in similar ways, in that quantity can index foolishness, or that certain forms can become idiosyncratic markers of a particular character's voice. However, the choice of specific forms, outside of a core set of primary interjections, is amenable to each individual's preferences. The dramatists' repertoires are distinctive and follow their own trajectory of forms and frequencies of use, and this individual profile can be traced across or within the other facets explored here, namely genre and characterisation. This includes the identified examples of revivification, of short-lived active usage, and of creativity and coinages; strategies presumably employed when the existing wordstock did not fulfil the requirements of a dramatic context. Of course, our knowledge of the three author's interjection repertoires is incomplete. This paper offers insight into their active use of interjections in dramatic literary contexts. Further work is needed to understand the relationship between the role of interjections, and other expressive language, in drama and other (literary and non-literary) communicative environments.

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Notes

1. I use the term 'individual speaker' to denote the individual language user, regardless of the mode of interaction.
2. There are similarities with the concept of idiolectal style which recognises preferential and contextual behaviour, and has been successfully applied in forensic and sociolinguistic contexts (Turell, 2011; Author, 2013).
3. Thanks to Georgia Priestly and Alan Hogarth for their assistance with text preparation.
4. Hope and Witmore (2010) include interjections in their linguistic analysis but do not discuss their specific distributions.
5. No examples of *o* are present in the 1677 published text of *The Rover*.

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