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Joseph Priestley and the French Connection

A Study in Eighteenth-Century Grammaticography

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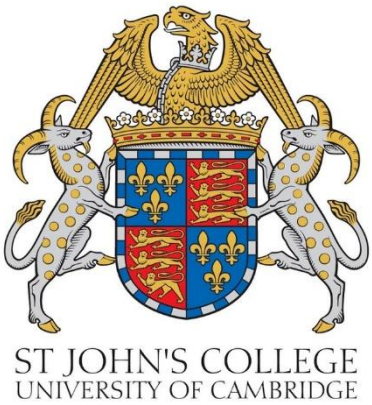

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Preface

This thesis is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Acknowledgments and specified in the text. It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Acknowledgments and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my thesis has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Acknowledgments and specified in the text. It does not exceed the prescribed word limit for the relevant Degree Committee.

Abstract

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This thesis investigates the transformation of Joseph Priestley's *Rudiments of English Grammar* between 1761 and 1769. The later editions of Priestley's grammar have long attracted the interest of historians of linguistic thought for their innovative features, in particular the large appendix of 'Notes and Observations' on usage. However, the introduction of these changes has generally been accounted for by presenting Priestley's work as either a reaction to the success of Robert Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), or a 'descriptive' counterpart to the perceived 'prescriptivism' of Lowth's approach to grammar. The central aim of this thesis is to challenge these narratives by providing new insights into the evolution of Priestley's thinking and practice as a grammar writer. I identify key factors shaping this evolution which have received little or no attention: the notions of genius and idiom of the language, attitudes towards language contact, pedagogical concerns, the legacy of Samuel Johnson's lexicography, and the influence of Lewis Chambaud (d. 1776) and Abbé Girard (1677–1748). I argue that the defining features of Priestley's work are connected to the French language and the French grammatical tradition.

The only previous full-length study of Priestley's grammar (Straaijer 2011) focused on the socio-historical context of its publication and the descriptive adequacy of his grammatical analysis. By contrast, the present study examines Priestley's work as a grammaticographic project, the attempt to design a

grammar best suited to the language on which it focuses. In the first chapter, I use the methodology of attribution studies to establish that Priestley is the author of a 1765 grammar hitherto attributed to John Baskerville (1707–1775). This major finding leads me, in Chapter 2, to challenge previous accounts of the evolution of Priestley's thinking on grammar. I argue that Priestley's project is better understood by taking him out of the shadow of Lowth and focusing on his own view of his achievements. Chapters 3 and 4 therefore consider Priestley's introduction of the notions of genius and idiom of the language after 1761, and show how they affected the design of his grammatical works. Finally, Chapter 5 traces these changes back to Priestley's appointment as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at the Warrington Academy in 1761, where he developed concerns about the effectiveness of grammar teaching and became familiar with influential French grammarians and language masters.

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On a personal level, I am grateful to friends and family for their benevolence throughout the PhD, and to my colleagues for their understanding and patience.

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Introduction

Challenging the 'prescriptive vs. descriptive' framework in eighteenth-century grammars

In the introduction to a volume of essays on eighteenth-century English, its editor laments that the 'most prevalent standard wisdom about the eighteenth century is that it is the period in which prescriptivism in English established itself' (Hickey 2010: 1). The association between this period and the emergence of prescriptive grammars is so strong that it is sometimes dubbed the 'Age of Prescriptivism' (Auer 2009). Joan Beal points to the influential role played by S.A. Leonard's seminal *Doctrine of Correctness in English Usage* 1700–1800 (1929) in this characterisation: '[...] the iconicity of the phrase "doctrine of correctness" was to prove damaging to eighteenth-century studies. In an age when 'prescriptive' had become a term of abuse amongst linguists, the eighteenth century was seen as a period fit only to be trawled for instances of malpractice' (Beal 2004: 89). Typical of this twentieth-century tendency to follow Leonard's negative view of eighteenth-century writings on language is Baugh and Cable's *History of the English Language*. This staple of English studies was first published by Baugh in 1935, and re-edited several times, with revisions by Cable from 1951 until the sixth edition in 2012. Remarkably, the tableau of the eighteenth century originally painted by Baugh in 1935 remained unchanged over these seventy-seven years. In the section entitled 'The beginnings of Prescriptive Grammar', eighteenth-century grammarians are depicted as the original sinners: 'To prescribe and to proscribe seem to have been coordinate aims of the grammarians. Many of the conventions now accepted and held up as preferable in our handbooks were first stated in this

period' (2012: 272). Prime target amongst these prescriptivists is Robert Lowth (1710–87) whose *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762) was one of the most popular and most frequently re-printed grammars in the eighteenth century (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2012: 34). In the preface, Lowth identifies the goal of grammars as 'to teach us to express ourselves with propriety [...]; and to enable us to judge of every phrase and form of construction, whether it be right or not', and goes on to add that '[t]he plain way of doing this is, to lay down the rules, and to illustrate them by examples. But, beside shewing what is right, the matter may be further explained by pointing out what is wrong' (1762: x). To Baugh and Cable, this definition of grammar, ridden with value-laden terms, encapsulates prescriptivism.

> The last-named procedure [pointing out what is wrong] is a prominent feature of his [Lowth's] and other contemporary grammars. Indeed, one may question whether it is not too prominent. One grows weary in following the endless bickering over trivialities. However grammarians might justify the treatment of errors pedagogically, one cannot escape the feeling that many of them took delight in detecting supposed flaws in the grammar of 'our most esteemed writers' and exhibiting them with self-satisfaction. (Baugh and Cable 2012: 272)

Out of this dark age of ostensibly perverse grammarians, one man emerges as a counterexample and the historians' champion: Joseph Priestley (1733–1804), author of the *Rudiments of English Grammar*, first published in 1761. By contrast with what Leonard called the 'doctrine of correctness', Baugh and Cable present Priestley as the advocate of a 'doctrine of usage': 'Of all the grammarians of this period only Priestley seems to have doubted the propriety of *ex cathedra* utterances and to have been truly humble before the facts of usage' (Baugh and Cable 2012: 272). The purpose of the present thesis is to challenge our current understanding of eighteenth-century grammar writing and introduce new tools for its analysis. It will focus on Joseph Priestley's grammatical works, as a case

study, precisely because of the special status which he has been granted by the likes of Baugh and Cable in twentieth-century historiography.

Although he is now famous as a figure of the Enlightenment for his scientific achievements – he famously discovered 'dephlogisticated air', i.e. oxygen – and for his radical political views, Priestley was first trained as a dissenting minister. It was in his first post, for a small congregation in Needham Market (1755–58), that he came to take on the role of an educator, out of necessity. Soon enough he began a career as a fully-fledged tutor by accepting a post in a school at Nantwich (1758–61) and then at the Warrington Academy (1761–67). Upon leaving Warrington, he returned to the ministry in Leeds (1767–73), and pursued the interests for which he became famous.[1] The present study focuses on the period of about ten years when, as a tutor in Nantwich and Warrington, Priestley developed his ideas on language and grammar, and produced his works on the subject:

- *The Rudiments of English Grammar; Adapted to the Use of Schools with Observations on Style* (1761)
- *A Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar* (1762)
- *The Rudiments of English Grammar, Adapted to the Use of Schools; with Notes and Observations for the Use of Those who have made some Proficiency in the Language* (1768)

Although Priestley's *Rudiments of English Grammar* was not reprinted and re-edited as often as the most popular grammars of the time, such as Ash's, Fisher's, or Lowth's, it still enjoyed considerable reputation. Anita Auer (2008: 72) established that his and Lowth's grammars were the two most frequently listed in eighteenth-century English library and sale catalogues. He was also influential on subsequent

[1] For a full account of this period of Priestley's life, see the first volume of Robert E. Schofield's biography *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley* (1997).

grammarians, including Lindley Murray (1745–1826), whose *English Grammar* (1795) – the most popular and most referenced grammar in the nineteenth century (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2012: 34-35) – cited Priestley approvingly and borrowed observations and examples from him aplenty (Schofield 1997: 99; Vorlat 1996: 169). In post-1768 editions of his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, Lowth himself borrowed many remarks made by Priestley in the 'Notes and Observations for the Use of Those who have made some Proficiency in the Language' appended to the second edition of the *Rudiments of English Grammar* (1768).[2] This appendix of observations on usage – making up three quarters of this second edition – has come to characterise Priestley's contribution to English grammar and to epitomise the originality of his approach in the historiography. Thus, Ivan Poldauf, otherwise more critical of Priestley's achievements, observed:

> The discussion of a number of varieties of usage with Priestley's personal estimate of the merits and demerits of each, in his *Observations and Notes* attached to later editions of the *Rudiments*, makes up a great part of Lowth's material, and it was here that Priestley had at least some influence upon future English grammarians. (Poldauf 1948: 138)

More often than not, however, the scope and value of Priestley's contribution to English grammar has been assessed in the light of his later achievements, rather than through a textual analysis of his works, as I propose to do in the present study. Poldauf characterised these 'Notes and Observations' by 'the scientific character of [Priestley's] attitude towards language' (1948: 135) and went on to pit him as a man of Enlightenment against the arbitrariness of Lowth's judgment.

> The prescriptive grammar of Bishop Lowth was greeted as a counterpart of the *Dictionary* [Johnson's]. Lowth set up arbitrary rules of correct usage which the

[2] This point will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

> public found more acceptable than the enlightened norm bowing to general usage, such as that advocated by Priestley. (Poldauf 1948: 135)[3]

From Jespersen (1933) to van Gelderen (2014), depictions of the eighteenth century in histories of the English language have generally been dominated by this narrative opposing prescriptivism – of which Robert Lowth became the 'icon' (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2010, 2011) – and descriptivism, embodied in the figure of Joseph Priestley. In Baugh and Cable's lionising terms, Priestley has therefore been hailed as the forerunner of modern-day linguistics.

> Thus Priestley stands alone in his unwavering loyalty to usage. After the perpetual dogmatizing of other eighteenth-century grammarians, it is refreshing to find almost on every page of his grammar statements like 'This may be said to be ungrammatical; or, at least, a very harsh ellipsis; but custom authorizes it, and many more departures from strict grammar, particularly in conversation.' [...] One must come down almost to our own day to find an attitude so tolerant and so liberal. And the doctrine of usage is so fundamental to all sound discussion of linguistic matters that it is important to recognize the man in whom it first found real expression. (Baugh and Cable 2012: 278-79)[4]

Over the past fifteen years, however, a number of scholars have undertaken to re-examine this view of the so-called 'Age of Prescriptivism' and revise the damning narrative of the eighteenth-century constructed in general histories of English. A first colloquium on 'Histories of Prescriptivism' was organised in Sheffield in 2003, aiming to 'challenge this monolithic view of 18th-century writers on the English language' (Beal and Sturiale 2008:10). It was

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[3] Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2006a: 541) has also convincingly demonstrated that depictions of Lowth as an arbitrary grammarian owed much to his later consecration as a Bishop (1766), which was readily associated by historians of English with the authoritarianism befitting their views of prescriptivism.

[4] Baugh and Cable (2012: 278) also name the rhetorician George Campbell (1719–96) as another descriptivist. But they point out that he was inspired by Priestley and argue that, unlike Priestley who remained faithful to his principles, Campbell violated the doctrine of usage which he advocated.

followed by 'Language History from Below – Linguistic Variation in the Germanic Languages from 1700–2000', in Bristol in 2005, and 'Perspectives on Prescriptivism', at the University of Catania in Ragusa, in 2006. In parallel, the VICI project 'The Codifiers and the English Language: tracing the Norms of Standard English' led by Ingrid Tieken-Boon van Ostade in Leiden, Netherlands (2005–10) produced a considerable output on the subject. Of particular significance are the collection of essays *Grammars, Grammarians and Grammar-Writing in Eighteenth-Century England* (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2008), Tieken-Boon van Ostade's monograph *The Bishop's Grammar* (2011) on the key figure of Robert Lowth, and Robin Straaijer's doctoral dissertation *Joseph Priestley*, *Grammarian*: *Late Modern English Normativism and Usage in a Sociohistorical Context* (2011).[5]

This recent reassessment has gone a long way towards qualifying the opposition between prescriptivist and descriptivist grammarians which, as Yusef Azad first pointed out, is 'seriously misleading and has frequently produced incorrect interpretation of texts' (1989: 2). Tieken-Boon van Ostade, for instance, has demonstrated that many of the most common strictures found in modern-day usage guides – such as double negatives, preposition stranding,[6] or split infinitives – have been wrongly attributed to Lowth due to his iconic status as arch-prescriptivist (2010: 73-88; 2011: 1-23). Jane Hodson has also shown, in 'The Problem with Joseph Priestley's (1733-1804) Descriptivism' (2006), that 'Priestley's writings contain such apparently contradictory statements [...] that it

[5] Although the project has now ended, its members are still producing material on prescriptivism, such as Tieken-Boon van Ostade's latest publication: *Prescription and Tradition in Language Establishing Standards across Time and Space* (2016).

[6] Although the condemnation of preposition stranding had already been traced back to Dryden by Bately (1964), its origin was still attributed to Lowth for many years after due to his iconic status (Tieken Boon van Ostade 2010): see for instance Jean Aitchison's *Language Change: Progress or Decay?* up until the third edition (2001: 10-11).

is possible to find quotations that make him sound like an elitist prescriptivist, as well as quotations that make him sound like an egalitarian descriptivist' (2006: 65). His status as an exception in the 'Age of Prescriptivism' and the supposed forerunner of modern linguistics is, therefore, problematic. Likewise, in his analysis of 'Deontic and Epistemic Modals as Indicators of Prescriptive and Descriptive Language in the Grammars by Joseph Priestley and Robert Lowth' (2009), Straaijer argues that if we quantify the two men's use of these stance indicators in different editions of their grammars, it appears that '[s]tatistically speaking, none of them is actually significantly different from the other *[sic]*' (2009: 68). By challenging previous characterisations of the two grammarians, these scholars have sparked new interest in eighteenth-century grammarians amongst historians of linguistic thought and historical sociolinguists. They have also been successful in breaking up what Beal and Sturiale called 'the monolithic view of 18th-century writers on the English language' (2008:10). They have introduced new actors in the narrative – in particular female grammarians (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 2000, Rodríguez-Gil 2002); they have added new items to the corpus of eighteenth-century writings on language, and determined the social and intellectual contexts of their production and reception; and, by using new methods – quantitative ones in particular – they have offered new insights into the practices of grammar-writers, their respective interests, goals, and beliefs, their reliance on each other's practice, and the impact of their works on usage, or their conformity to actual usage, be it their own or that of their society as a whole. The present study very much builds upon this essential groundwork.

However, while the debate about eighteenth-century grammars has become richer and more nuanced, it has not been essentially reframed: it still revolves around the problematic categories of prescriptivism and descriptivism.

When a grammarian's supposed prescriptivism is challenged or reassessed, scholars will be demonstrating that he or she was also a descriptivist, and vice-versa. A case in point is María E. Rodríguez-Gil's article 'Ann Fisher, Descriptive or Prescriptive Grammarian?' (2003), which analyses the work of a hitherto overlooked eighteenth-century grammarian. Thus, Rodríguez-Gil first lists a number of 'prescriptive remarks' in Fisher's grammar, based on an analysis of stance indicators such as modal verbs, and value-laden adjectives and adverbs such as 'correctly', 'elegantly', 'right', etc. Her conclusion is that 'it is clear that Fisher's grammar was prescriptive' (2003: 194). Rodríguez-Gil then turns to considering a number of 'descriptive remarks' by comparing the forms included in the grammar and recent research about actual eighteenth-century English usage. She concludes that Fisher 'seems to have recorded actual usage' (2003: 195). The logical interpretation of these results is that Fisher's grammar is both prescriptive and descriptive. Rodríguez-Gil goes on to observe in her closing remarks that the twentieth-century narrative according to which all eighteenth-century grammarians were prescriptivists apart from Priestley is 'not well-founded, since there seems to be a blend of prescriptive and descriptive language accounts in eighteenth-century English grammars, as I have tried to demonstrate through the analysis of Fisher's text' (2003: 199). This article perfectly exemplifies Hodson's aforementioned remark that, depending on what observations one picks, a grammarian can easily be described as either a prescriptivist or a descriptivist, or indeed both at the same time.

Scholars generally offer two types of explanations to resolve this apparent contradiction. Rodríguez-Gil first suggests that instead of seeing prescriptivism and descriptivism as separate categories, we should consider them as the two ends of a continuum, on which such and such a grammarian will be 'more or less

prescriptive, or more or less descriptive' (2003: 199).[7] Her second proposition is to suggest that Fisher's work is representative of a third category labelled 'normative grammars'. This view is inspired by Vorlat's examination of seventeenth-century grammars:

> I, therefore, propose three categories: (1) descriptive registration of language without value judgments and including ideally – as a very strong claim – all language varieties; (2) normative grammar, still based on language use, but favouring the language of one or more social or regional groups and more than one written with a pedagogical purpose; (3) prescriptive grammar, not based on usage but on a set of logical (or other) criteria. (Vorlat 1998: 485-486)

In other words, normative grammars do record usage but only that of some of speakers, considered as the norm to aspire to in the pedagogical context in which the grammar is used. Tieken-Boon van Ostade also opts for the phrase 'normative grammar' in her analysis of Lowth's grammar as promoting the language of a class above his own as target variety (2006b: 240-73, 2011: 286-88). The phrase recurs in Straaijer's comparison between Lowth's and Priestley's attitudes towards language. Having found that there is no significant difference in the use of descriptive and prescriptive stance indicators between Lowth and Priestley, Straaijer resorts to Vorlat's model as a solution to the inconclusiveness of his results and therefore labels them both 'normative'. He goes on to make this final observation:

> As Hodson (2006: 68) argues, the concepts of prescriptivism and descriptivism had little meaning in an eighteenth-century context and would appear alien to grammarians of that time. This idea provides an insight to why we find no clear-cut differences in the grammars of Priestley and Lowth when it comes to prescriptive and descriptive language. The results presented in section 7.4 show that these grammars are neither completely prescriptive, nor completely

[7] See also Beal (2004: 90) on the 'prescriptive-descriptive continuum'.

> descriptive. Rather than being a dead end, this observation is a starting point which allows us to begin to explain their similarities. (Straaijer 2011: 257)

This conclusion shows the limitations in the 'descriptive versus prescriptive' framework. There is a deductive fallacy in Straaijer's conclusion, as indeed in Rodríguez-Gil, which consists in using a flaw in the premise as the explanation for the results of the study. The inconclusiveness of the results stem from the 'descriptive versus prescriptive' framework itself rather than from the grammars studied. Hodson's point about the problematics of the 'descriptive versus prescriptive' framework builds on Azad's unpublished doctoral dissertation.

> Priestley's concept of usage is not that of modern descriptive linguistics but quite consistent with that of his contemporaries. Moreover, grammarians never advocated a modern view of authoritative usage only to ignore it and 'prescribe' instead. To prescribe correctness was to describe usage [...] the two concepts were inextricably linked in a complex and subtle model of linguistic identity and progress. (Azad 1989: 3, cited in Hodson 2006: 68)

Azad's and Hodson's point is therefore not that eighteenth-century grammars were a mix-match of descriptiveness and prescriptiveness which, as illustrated by the results of Straaijer's quantitative analysis, are near impossible to disentangle. Their point is that these twentieth-century categories did not frame the grammarians' approach to grammar writing or teaching. Unlike Straaijer, I would therefore argue that this kind of study is indeed a dead end, and its results should lead us to reject the 'prescriptive versus descriptive' framework, not only as an anachronism but also as what Anne Curzan calls 'an unproductive binary' (Curzan 2014: 47).

Vorlat's characterisation of seventeenth-century grammars already gives us a clue as to why the two categories constitute a false dichotomy. No grammar can 'describe all language varieties', i.e. all the forms spoken by all speakers of a

language at all times. By nature, a grammar is a finite object, and, because of the nature of their work and their own limitations and awareness, grammarians will make a number of choices. These choices will be informed – consciously or unconsciously – by their own values, beliefs, ideologies, or by their own social circumstances, which, in turn, will inform the grammar and make it overtly or covertly prescriptive. Likewise, all prescriptive grammars will be to some extent 'based on usage' and will accurately describe at least one kind of usage, if only the usage of speakers conforming to the norms prescribed by the grammar. By way of example, Tieken-Boon van Ostade argues that, in spite of the arbitrary judgments on language displayed by Lowth, his grammar had an empirical basis: 'Lowth used such examples of grammatical mistakes as basis for his chapter on syntax. He had collected them, intentionally as it transpired, in a way comparable to that in which modern corpora are set up' (2011: 13). Consequently, all grammars will be, by nature, both prescriptive and descriptive, before one even attempts to pick apart descriptive and prescriptive stance indicators or remarks.[8] The concept of a continuum – implying that there is 'a blend of prescriptive and descriptive language' in all eighteenth-century grammars as Rodríguez-Gil has it – and the addition a third half-way category of 'normative grammars' have helped question the received wisdom about eighteenth-century grammar writing, but they have not effectively provided a better framework to analyse their composition, features, and purpose, nor have they provided new tools to understand the grammarians' practice.

[8] For a comprehensive examination of the false dichotomy inherent in the 'descriptive versus prescriptive' framework see Finnegan (1998: 545); Lehmann and Maslova (2004: 1860), Linn (2006: 72-92), Michael (1970: 189), Payne (2005: 367-83), and Wilton (2014: 38-47).

Adopting a grammaticographic approach

In the present thesis, I will therefore argue with Hodson that eighteenth-century grammarians 'must be understood in their own terms, not graded for their apparent "descriptivism" or "prescriptivism"' (2006: 73). I will apply this approach to Joseph Priestley's works on language with a view to finding in his own texts the hermeneutic tools which can help us understand the nature and evolution of the grammaticographic project underpinning the production of his grammars. The term 'grammaticography' has recently come into use to fill a gap in the metalinguistic terminology. Indeed, the word 'grammar' is ambiguous in that it refers both to an object of study and to the mediated representation of that object of study, either in the form of a book or as a discipline. Coupled with 'grammar', the term 'grammaticography' allows us to distinguish two connected but separate aspects in the works of grammarians: the study of the grammatical forms in a language and the compiling and composing of the grammar book. The mediation between the two has often been overlooked in the history of linguistic thought, as it is too readily assumed that the latter naturally stems from the former. The distinction between grammar and grammaticography mirrors that which prevails in the study of the lexicon between lexicology, which analyses the lexicon itself – in its formation, historical development, quantitative composition, etc. – and lexicography, which studies the compiling and composing of dictionaries. As such, the establishment of grammaticography as a subdiscipline, alongside lexicography, is an integral part of the development of linguistic thought as a fully-fledged discipline. In his article 'History and Historical Linguistics: Two Types of Cognitive Reconstruction?', Patrick Honeybone notes that '[...] historians do have the useful term historiography, to refer to the study of the writing of history as an academic discipline. There is no

equivalent linguisticography, but this is simply a lexical gap, as the linguistic equivalent has long been studied' (2012: 17). If we filled this gap, lexicography and grammaticography would be subfields of linguisticography.

In recent literature, grammaticography is generally defined as 'the art and craft of writing grammars' (Mosel 2006: 41). Alternatively, Andrew Linn uses the term 'grammaticology' (2006: 73-74) to refer to the study of grammar writing (conforming to previous usage from the 1980s such as Gerhard Leitner's), while confining 'grammaticography' to the characterisation of various types of grammars, such as 'scholarly' or 'reference' grammars. Finally, Christian Lehmann and Elena Maslova (2004: 1860) draw a distinction between grammaticography: '(the practice – experience or art – of) grammar writing', and metagrammaticography: 'the investigation of methodological principles that reconcile this practice with linguistic theorizing' (Lehmann and Maslova 2004: 1860). In the present study, I will be using 'grammaticography' to refer to the grammarians' discourse on and practice of compiling and composing their grammars. I will thereby argue that one aspect of Priestley's work which the 'prescriptivist versus descriptivist' framework has obfuscated is his search for the most fitting model in which to present the grammar of English. In the few studies in which the term 'grammaticography' has been used so far, scholars tend to focus on the writing of grammars documenting newly discovered or endangered languages. Scholarly articles on grammaticography therefore examine the modes of selecting and organising information in these grammars, i.e. their object, purpose, intended users, structure, terminology, etc. (Lehmann and Maslova 2004, Mosel 2006). But, in the sense that they too were concerned with 'catching language', as Evans and Dench (2006: 10) have put it, I contend that the undertakings of eighteenth-century grammarians such as Priestley can be

analysed from a similar perspective, for Priestley and his contemporaries too were selecting and organising information in their treatment of the language. In fact, Evans and Dench define the task of the so-called 'descriptive grammar' – in the modern sense of a grammar documenting previously undescribed or endangered languages – in terms strikingly reminiscent of Priestley's.

> The writing of a descriptive grammar is a major intellectual and creative challenge, often taking decades to complete. It calls on the grammarian to balance a respect for the distinctive genius of the language with an awareness of how other languages work, to combine rigour, with readability, to depict elegant structural regularities while respecting a corpus of real and sometimes messy material, and to represent the native speaker's competence while recognising the patterns of variation inherent in any speech community. (Evans and Dench 2008: 1)

In the prefaces to his grammars, Priestley constantly addresses these formal issues, and the question of how to fit a changing and unfixed language into a fixed model. Commenting on his approach to grammar writing in the preface to the 1768 edition of the *Rudiments of English Grammar*, he too invokes the notion of genius of the language: 'I cannot help flattering myself, that future grammarians will owe me some obligation, for introducing this uniform simplicity, so well suited to the genius of our language, into the English grammar' (1768: viii-ix). I will be discussing Priestley's use of 'the genius of the language' in Chapter 3, but it is already apparent in this passage that he was not simply concerned with the grammatical task of laying out rules for the language – which is the sole dimension implied in the 'prescriptive versus descriptive' framework –, he was also interested in the grammaticographic task involved in mapping out the English language, i.e. finding the most suitable organisation for the grammar, what he called the 'true symmetry' of the grammar (1768: viii). The composition, features, and purpose of the grammar are interlinked with the grammatical

description and analysis involved in the act of 'catching language'. It has sometimes been overlooked that following what Percival called the 'vernacular turn' (1999: 11) in the early-modern period – and broadly speaking from Wallis's *Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae* (1653) up until Murray's *English Grammar* (1795) – grammarians did not solely undertake to write grammars of English – i.e. lay down the rules of the English language – but also aspired to produce 'the English grammar', with a definite article, as Priestley has it in the last quotation, somehow suggesting that it was for him and his contemporaries a work of collective intelligence.[9] The vernacularisation of grammar writing raised grammatical questions about the rules of the English language and the various options available to its speakers, but also grammaticographic ones about the plan and metalinguistic tools inherited from previous traditions. In that sense, *the* English grammar is also a grammar which would catch the forms and structures specific to English – its *genius*? – as comprehensively as Samuel Johnson had hoped to capture the English lexicon in his *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755). There is a sense at the time that although grammars of English have been written for almost two centuries, the grammar of English remains, if not non-descript, at

[9] Modern scholarship tends to describe the eighteenth-century grammarians' reliance on one another as 'plagiarism' (Tieken-Boon van Ostade 1992, 1996; Navest 2008). Defenses against the accusation of plagiarism such as the one Priestley included in the preface to the 1768 *Rudiments* seem to invite us to do so. Yet, Priestley's expressed desire to leave a legacy for future grammarians in that same preface suggests that there is more to these mutual borrowings than the self-serving dishonesty associated with the term 'plagiarism', viewed through the prism of competition on the marketplace. Whilst the grammar writers' enterprise may not be that of a 'community of practice' as demonstrated by Richard J. Watts (2008), Priestley's words suggest that it goes beyond the mere 'discourse community' (Watts: 1999), and constitutes what could be called an incremental work of collective intelligence. In this sense too, it seems legitimate to consider grammar writing as the field of grammaticography, to draw further parallels with lexicography where the art of writing a dictionary is often described as 'compiling', leaving room for a different interpretation of what Fredric Dolezal called 'textual affinity' (1996: 207). On revisiting plagiarism in lexicography, see Dolezal 2007 and McConchie 2013.

least not fully elucidated as Johnson has it in the preface to his *Dictionary*. Pointing out that words in his dictionary are 'grammatically considered', he goes on to add that they are 'illustrated by observations, not indeed of great or striking importance, separately considered, but necessary to the elucidation of our language, and hitherto neglected or forgotten by *English* grammarians' (1755: n.p.). Priestley shared this sense that parts of the grammar of English remained unelucidated and, lamenting the lack of a grammatical equivalent to *Dictionary of the English Language*, called for a Johnsonian grammar in the preface to the 1768 edition of his *Rudiments of English Grammar*.

> I must not conclude this preface, without making my acknowledgements to *Mr. Johnson*, whose admirable dictionary has been of the greatest use to me in the study of our language. It is pity he had not formed as just, and as extensive an idea of English grammar. Perhaps this very useful work may still be reserved for his distinguished abilities in this way. (Priestley 1768: xxii)

The 'prescriptive versus descriptive' framework has reduced scholars to examine Priestley's grammatical work with constant reference to Lowth's ubiquitous influence and as its supposed counterpoint. But, as shown by this last quotation, other connections and influences informed Priestley's grammaticographic undertakings. The aim of the present study is also to take Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth and investigate these other connections.

Examining Joseph Priestley's grammars in his own terms: plan of the thesis

Examining Priestley's grammaticography in his own terms requires us to start from the corpus of his texts on grammar, and gradually tease out the evolution of his reflections and practices, either within his own texts or from his sources. As a result, the sequence of chapters will follow the trajectory of an evolving investigation in which the findings of each chapter prompt the direction of

enquiry pursued in the next. In the first chapter, 'A New Grammar by Joseph Priestley', I use methodologies from authorship studies in order to establish that Joseph Priestley is the author of an anonymous grammar prefixed to the 1765 *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary*, generally attributed to John Baskerville. Looking at external evidence in eighteenth-century sources, I show that Baskerville is very unlikely to be the author of the anonymous 1765 grammar, whilst Priestley fits the part. Subsequently, I examine internal evidence using plagiarism software to compare this grammar prefixed to the *Vocabulary* (henceforth 1765 *Grammar*) with Priestley's grammatical writings – namely the first and second editions of the *Rudiments of English Grammar* (henceforth 1761 *Rudiments* and 1768 *Rudiments*) and the *Course of Lectures on Universal Grammar and the Theory of Language* (henceforth 1762 *Course*). Textual parallels and a close analysis of the organisation of the grammars, their metalanguage, and illustrative examples show that the 1765 *Grammar* anticipates the most unique and original features of the 1768 *Rudiments.* This evidence allows me to conclude that the grammar generally attributed to Baskerville was in fact authored by Joseph Priestley.

In chapter 2, I look at the significance of this new attribution to our understanding of the evolution of Priestley's practice as a grammar writer. The received view so far had been that Priestley introduced substantial changes between the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments* in response to the success of Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, published in 1762. This chapter is concerned with revisiting three such narratives – Smith (1998), Hodson (2006, 2008) and Straaijer (2009, 2011) – which claim to have identified textual, philosophical or moral influence from Lowth in Priestley's grammar writing. Using findings from Chapter 1, textual parallels with Lowth's text, and evidence from Priestley's biography and publication history, I demonstrate that although Lowth's grammar

was one of Priestley's sources in 1768, its influence on the 1768 changes has been considerably overstated. By contrast, too little attention has been paid to Priestley's own pedagogical concerns and to the continuity of his own thinking which now appear more clearly with the introduction of the 1765 *Grammar*. Taking Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth, I then propose to go back to the text of the *Rudiments* to gain a new understanding of his grammaticographic practice. In particular, I identify two key notions on which Priestley put emphasis in the 1768 preface, and which previous commentators have ignored – being faithful to 'the genius of the language' and preserving 'the idiom of the language'. The next two chapters explore the meaning of these phrases and show how they framed Priestley's grammaticography.

In chapter 3, I look at the first goal which Priestley sets himself in the 1768 *Rudiments*: to be more faithful to the 'genius of the language'. In order to elucidate the meaning of the phrase, I first give a historical overview of its uses in the European and English grammatical traditions. This allows me to shed light on the three different meanings the phrase is given in Priestley's grammars – 'changes whereby words pass from one class to another', 'the methods of expressing the relations of words to words', 'a general propensity' – and to show that despite its manifold signification, the notion plays an operative part in Priestley's grammaticographic practice. Tracing these three meanings back to Samuel Johnson's work, eighteenth-century French grammarians, and the 1762 *Course*, I demonstrate that the introduction of the genius of the language in Priestley's grammars after 1761 is not an attempt to show the superiority of the English language, as it had been for some of his predecessors in the English tradition, but a way of challenging established practices in English grammar writing. As can be observed in the transformation of the structure and re-organisation of the

material in his grammars between 1761 and 1768, the notion of genius of the language allows Priestley to 'take a more extensive view of the English language', breaking away from the Latin mould of grammar, and to answer his educator's concern for improving the teaching of English grammar.

Chapter 4 then focusses on Priestley's second claimed achievement in the 1768 *Rudiments*: detecting 'Gallicisms' which 'injure the true idiom of the English tongue'. I first analyse the linguistic purism underpinning this claim by putting it into the context of eighteenth-century representations of France and the French language, and showing its lineage with Samuel Johnson's own attitude towards French. Using a survey of Priestley's metalanguage, of his examples of Gallicisms, and of his sources, I then demonstrate that this purist discourse is not quite reflected in his practice as a grammarian. References to the French language play a more ambivalent role as the 'linguistic Other' – both different and similar as another modern language breaking away from the Latin mould of grammar. I conclude that, by introducing language contact into his grammars, Priestley attempts to give shape to the of 'idiom of the English language'. Examining Priestley's uses of the phrase 'idiom of the language', I argue that this notion serves the grammaticographic purpose of mapping out the English language and catching forms in the 'Notes and Observations' which, while belonging to the language, do not fit within the 'rudiments' properly so-called. In this respect, the idiom of the language appears as a counterpart to the genius of the language in Priestley's ambition to take 'a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v) and is instrumental in the transformation of his grammars after 1761.

The findings from Chapters 3 and 4 lead me to posit, in the fifth and final chapter, that Priestley's appointment as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at the Warrington Academy in 1761 marked a key stage in the evolution of his thinking about grammar. This chapter focuses on the impact that these new teaching duties, and in particular foreign language teaching, had on Priestley's approach to pedagogy and grammar writing. Using textual archives and biographical evidence, I show that French, as a modern language, occupied a central place in the curriculum of this dissenting Academy in which the majority of students were preparing for trade or civil life, rather than the learned professions. I then explore the various French connections which Priestley established in this new capacity, and identify the French grammarians and language commentators whom he relied on. One grammarian and French language master, Lewis Chambaud (d.1776), stands out as particularly influential. My research shows that the notions of genius and idiom of the language, framed by the reflections on language of Abbé Girard (1677–1748) and the seventeenth-century French *Remarqueurs'* practice of observations on usage, are the foundation of the teaching philosophy and pedagogical method which Chambaud laid out in the prefatory essay of his *Grammar of the French Tongue* (1750). I argue that Chambaud's material sheds new light on Priestley's adoption and use of the notions of genius and idiom of the language in his own works, and that reading and using Chambaud's material played a key part in Priestley's transformation of his grammar, his redrawing the boundaries between lexicography and grammaticography, and his introduction of 'Notes and Observations' in later editions of his grammar.

In a brief conclusion, I will summarise and evaluate my findings and consider the prospects for further development of this work in future research projects.

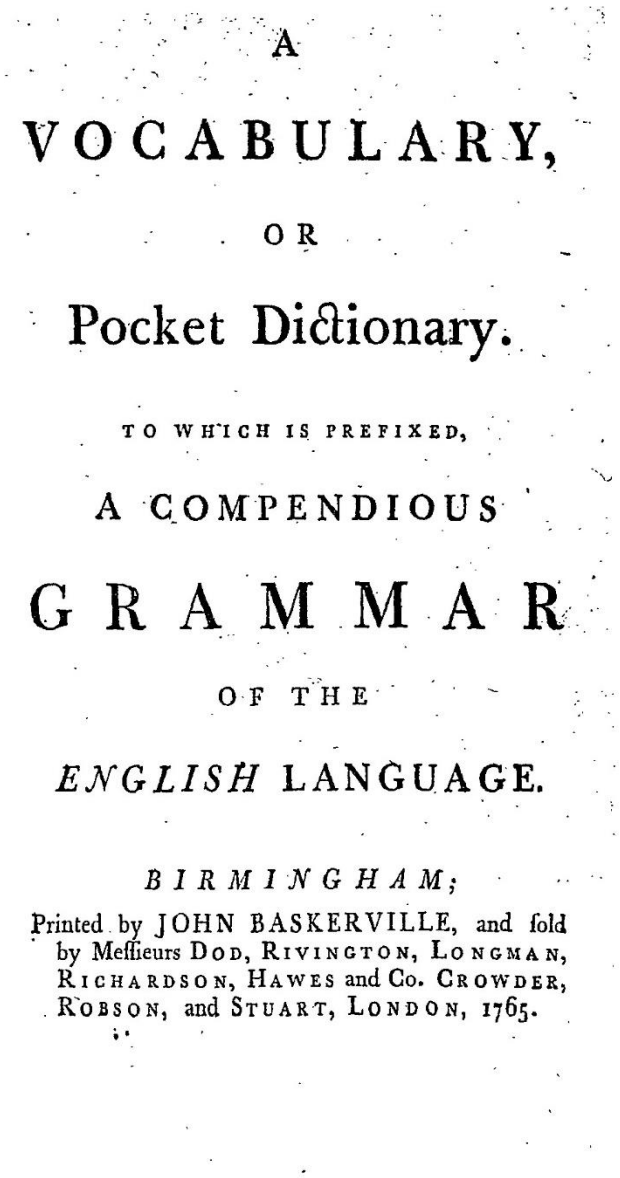
1. A new grammar by Joseph Priestley

1.1 Introduction

This first chapter acts as prelude to the rest of the thesis. The findings presented here triggered the enquiry which is pursued in the remaining four chapters. I am introducing a new item into the known corpus of Priestley's grammatical works. This is an important discovery because the recent reassessment of Priestley's grammatical thinking by Hodson (2006, 2008) and Straaijer (2009, 2011), which I discussed in the Introduction, rests on a close examination of the transformation of his *Rudiments of English Grammar* between 1761 and 1768. Both of these scholars attribute, albeit in different ways, these substantial changes to the influence of Lowth's very successful *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, published in 1762 just after the 1761 *Rudiments*. The new grammar which I am introducing in this chapter was also composed and published between the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments*. Its discovery alters the chronology of Priestley's undertakings as it has so far been known and challenges aspects of the narratives proposed by Hodson and Straaijer to explain the evolution of Priestley's grammaticographic thinking. I start by introducing the grammar in question and the uncertainties surrounding its authorship and publication. I then outline the methods drawn from authorship studies which I used to identify Priestley as the author of the grammar. In the main part of the chapter, I present the results of this investigation, looking at external and internal evidence. In conclusion, I discuss how this new find affects our understanding of Priestley's grammatical work.

1.2 Presentation of the grammar

The grammar in question was published as part of the anonymous *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary*, which is dated 1765 and was printed by John Baskerville (1706–75), in Birmingham. The full title of the work is 'A VOCABULARY, OR Pocket Dictionary. TO WHICH IS PREFIXED A COMPENDIOUS GRAMMAR OF THE *ENGLISH* LANGUAGE.' The grammar itself is thirty-nine pages long, whilst the dictionary extends over 150 pages; they are preceded by a short two-page preface.



A

VOCABULARY,

OR

Pocket Dictionary.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A COMPENDIOUS

GRAMMAR

OF THE

ENGLISH LANGUAGE.

BIRMINGHAM;

Printed by JOHN BASKERVILLE, and ſold by Meſſieurs DOD, RIVINGTON, LONGMAN, RICHARDSON, HAWES and Co. CROWDER, ROBSON, and STUART, LONDON, 1765.

Figure 1.1 Title page of the *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary* (1765) [(c) The British Library Board, *ECCO*, microfilm reel 2121, no. 1]

The first uncertainty about the *Vocabulary* is the date of publication. The title page (Figure 1.1) indicates that the volume was published in 1765. According to William Bennett (1939: II.11) and Frank E. Pardoe (1975: 94-95), however, a contemporary newspaper advertisement published in *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* suggests that it came out a year later. Indeed, in the issue of the *Gazette* dated 21st April 1766,[10] the following advertisement can be found:

> This Day is Published
>
> A SECOND EDITION OF DODSLEY'S FABLES
>
> Printed for J. Dodsley, in Pall Mall, by J. Baskerville[11]
>
> And in a few Days will be published, a new Edition of Virgil *in 12mo*, in the same Letter and Size of Baskerville's Horace, and by the same Editor, John Livie, A. M.
>
> This day is also published, a VOCABULARY, or POCKET DICTIONARY (to which is prefixed a Compendious Grammer *[sic]*) containing only such difficult Words as occur in genteel Company, and in those Authors which Ladies and Gentlemen may wish to form an Acquaintance with. It is presumed it may be of singular Use in Academies and Boarding Schools, as the Young Scholars may learn the whole in a short Time by Way of Lesson.
>
> All printed by J. Baskerville and sold by Mess. Dodsley, Robson, Rivington, Johnson, Hawes, and Co., [...].

The text used to advertise the *Vocabulary* here is extracted from its preface. Although such advertisements may not be entirely reliable, and the discrepancy between the two dates may seem inconsequential at this stage, this detail will be important to bear in mind when I come to my conclusions about the chronology of Priestley's publications.

---

[10] I was able to consult it as microfilm at the Seeley Historical Library in Cambridge.

[11] Note that, like the *Vocabulary*, the second edition of Dodsley's *Fables* is dated 1765 on its title page.

The second and most significant uncertainty about the *Vocabulary* is its authorship. The book was published anonymously, yet it has somehow come to be taken for granted that it was authored by the printer John Baskerville himself. Whilst earlier scholars such as Ian Michael (1970: 231) still referred to it as an anonymous work, recent studies focussing either on the dictionary itself, such as Lynda Mugglestone (2011), or on the prefixed grammar, such as Straaijer (2011), have been less cautious; the latter even asserting that 'we now know [it to have] been authored by the printer and type founder John Baskerville' (2011: 126). However, neither Ralph Straus and Robert K. Dent's biography of Baskerville (1907) nor Philip Gaskell's bibliography of his works (1973) mention him as the author of the book. The source upon which recent scholars have relied is the *English Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC) notice which, until very recently, attributed the volume to Baskerville.[12] According to information which I acquired in personal communication with staff at the British Library, this notice was created in 1982 by cataloguers whose source was Robin C. Alston's *Bibliography of the English Language from the Invention of Printing to the Year 1800* (1974) where the entry for 'author' reads '[John Baskerville?]'. Unfortunately, Alston did not give any indication as to why the book could potentially be attributed to Baskerville himself. There appears to have been an unjustified leap from Alston's tentative attribution to the ESTC's definite attribution to Baskerville.

By contrast, two scholars have put forward the name of Joseph Priestley in relation to the authorship of the *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary*. In his study of

[12] The following note 'Attribution disputed. No mention of Baskerville as author in Gaskell, or in Straus and Dent's 'John Baskerville a memoir', 1907' was added to the notice in April 2012, when my own research findings were communicated to the British Library. [http://estc.bl.uk/T137595, last accessed 09.12.2019].

eighteenth-century English grammars, Poldauf (1948) first pointed out striking similarities between the grammar prefixed to the *Vocabulary* and the second edition of Joseph Priestley's *Rudiments of English Grammar* (1768), particularly in its newly added 'Notes and Observations':

> Priestley's hand seems to have been at work at the anonymous *Vocabulary or Pocket Dictionary published at Birmingham* in 1765. At least many ideas, distinctively liberal, which we first find in *Priestley's Observations* (1768) are already hinted at there. (Poldauf 1948: 116)

A second source, more recent and more compelling, but so far never cited in the literature about Priestley, is a review of Ronald E. Crook's *Bibliography of Joseph Priestley 1733–1804* (1966). The review, published in *The Book Collector*, vol. 16 (1967), was authored by John L. Marks, who pointed out a certain number of errors in Crook's work, including missing references:

> Nor is any mention made of the possibility that Priestley was responsible for the *Vocabulary* or *Pocket Dictionary*, printed by John Baskerville (Gaskell 31) in 1765. The evidence is scanty but warranted a note at least, and it might even have been possible to compare it with some of his similar works and thus arrive at a definite conclusion. (Marks 1967: 393)

In what follows I will take up Marks's suggestion and undertake such a comparative study to arrive at a definite conclusion regarding the authorship of the grammar prefixed to the *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary*. I will show that, whilst there is little evidence to support Baskerville's authorship, the evidence supporting Priestley's is not 'scanty' but plentiful since, as I will demonstrate, the ideas he developed in the 1768 *Rudiments* are not simply 'hinted at' in 1765, as Poldauf put it, but fully anticipated.

1.3 Establishing Priestley's authorship: methodology

In order to establish whether Priestley was the author of the 1765 *Grammar*, I will use methods developed in authorship studies. In his 2002 introduction to the field, Harold Love distinguishes six kinds of evidence which may be divided between external evidence, for the first three, and internal evidence, for the last three:

- Contemporary attributions contained in incipits, explicits, titles, and from documents purporting to impart information about the circumstances of composition – especially diaries, correspondence, publishers' records, and records of legal proceedings;
- Biographical evidence, which would include information about a putative author's allegiances, whereabouts, dates, personal ties, and political and religious affiliations;
- The history of earlier attributions of the work and the circumstances under which they were made;
- Stylistic evidence;
- Self-reference and self-presentation within the work;
- Evidence from the themes, ideas, beliefs and conceptions of genre manifested in the work. (Love 2002: 51)

These criteria are tailored to apply to studies based on literary works, such as Shakespeare's plays, and speculative pieces, like the *Federalist Papers*. When it comes to the more tightly codified genre of grammars with its pre-defined subject matter, identifying stylistic idiosyncrasies and authorial invariants is less straightforward than with imaginative writings which allow for greater personal expression and creative freedom. However, by the same token, the choices made by grammarians in the imposed topics and compulsory sections are all the more meaningful and can reveal to a large extent their own ideas, beliefs and conceptions of the genre. Three such recurring features of grammars have been more specifically examined by historians of linguistic ideas: the division of the grammar, the grammatical categories – see Michael (1970) for both –, and the

examples used by the grammarians in support of their judgements – see Tieken-Boon van Ostade (1990) and Sundby et al. (1991). For the present study, I have therefore adapted Love's categories as follows:

- Contemporary attributions;
- Biographical evidence;
- The history of earlier attributions;
- Textual evidence, i.e. textual matches, division of the grammar, definitions of the parts of speech, and sourced examples;
- Intertextual evidence, i.e. cross-referencing between works by Priestley.

1.4 Establishing Priestley's authorship: results and analysis

1.4.1 Contemporary attributions

I found seven references to the *Vocabulary or Pocket Dictionary* in the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (*ECCO*),[13] all in book and sale catalogues published between 1771 and 1800. Two of them make no mention whatsoever of any author or printer. Two others mention Baskerville as the printer: 'A vocabulary, or pocket dictionary, elegantly printed by Baskerville, new, 2s --- 1765" (Robson 1771: 169) and 'Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary, with a Grammar of the English Language, 1s --- 1765' (Shepperson and Reynolds 1788: 233). These are in line with the advertisement from *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* dated 21st April 1766, which refers to Baskerville as the printer of the volume, not the author. In two further occurrences the book is listed as 'Baskerville's Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary, with an English Grammar, 1s 6d --- 1765' (Sharp 1791: 80) and 'Baskerville's Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary, with a Compendious Grammar --- 1765' (anon. 1794: 29). This presentation could imply that Baskerville was the author, but it was not uncommon at the time for a book to be identified from its publisher. Such

[13] Last accessed 09.12.2019.

was the case, for instance, of Dodsley's *Fables* (1761), whose actual authors were Aesop and other fabulists; Dodsley was only responsible for collecting and publishing them. The seventh and last reference returned by *ECCO* contains two mentions of the *Vocabulary*. The first one is located in the sale catalogue proper and is as inconclusive as to Baskerville's authorship as the other six references: 'Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary, with Baskerville's Types, *new and neat*, 2s --- 1765' (Pearson and Rollason 1788: 218). But the second mention is located in the few pages of advertisement of 'books lately published by Pearson and Rollason' at the end of the catalogue. As can be seen in Figure 1.2., Baskerville is once again mentioned as the printer, but for the first time there is a mention of Joseph Priestley – 'the Rev. Dr. Priestley' – as the author (Pearson and Rollason 1788: n.p.). It is unclear from the punctuation and the font size whether the attribution applies to the compendious grammar only or to the *Vocabulary* as a whole. This attribution by Pearson and Rollason is fairly reliable because they printed or published a large number of Priestley's works, letters, pamphlets, etc. after his move to Birmingham in the 1780s, and must have known him well. This is significant evidence – not previously discussed or even noted – that Joseph Priestley could be the author of at least the grammar prefixed to the *Vocabulary*, and possibly of the volume as a whole.

BOOKS lately publiſhed

Price 5s. *neatly bound* (printed with Mr. Baſkerville's Letter)

MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS

Among the Tombs, on a Flower Garden, on the Night, and the Starry Heavens, with a Deſcant on Creation, and a Winter Piece.

By JAMES HERVEY, Rector of Weſton-Favel.

Price 2s. *neatly bound*,

A VOCABULARY, or POCKET DICTIONARY.

To which is prefixed, a COMPENDIOUS GRAMMAR of the Engliſh Language,

By the Rev. Dr. PRIESTLEY.

This Book was printed by Mr. Baſkerville, in his uſual Stile of Elegance, and but few Copies remain of it.

Price 4s. *in Boards*,

A NEW TREATISE UPON FARRIERY,

Pointing out the Errors now in Practice for the Prevention of Diſeaſes in Horſes; giving an Account of the various Symptoms of their approaching Diſorders, and the beſt Methods of treating them during their Illneſs, with general Rules to be obſerved in Bleeding and Purging, and the moſt expeditious Means of curing all Wounds, Bruiſes, &c.

By WILLIAM PERKS, FARRIER.

The whole being the Reſult of upwards of Forty Years Practice and Experience.

Price 3s. *ſewed*, 4to.

A NOMENCLATURE;

Or, Dictionary in Engliſh, French, Spaniſh, and German, Of the principal Articles manufactured in this Kingdom, more particularly thoſe in the Hardware and Cutlery Trades. The exported and imported and nautical Terms interſperſed with Phraſes peculiar to Trade and Commerce in general,

By DANIEL LOBO,

Notary Public and Tranſlator of the modern Languages.

Price 5s. *ſewed*, 8vo.

The Birmingham READY CALCULATOR,

Shewing in Twenty Tables the Sums neceſſary from One Shilling to Fifty Pounds, to produce real Profits from 2½ to 50 per Cent. in the ſelling Prices.

By C. BERNECKER.

Price

Figure 1.2 Advertisement for the *Vocabulary, or Pocket Dictionary* in Rollason and Pearson's sale catalogue (1788: n.p.) [(c) The British Library Board, *ECCO*, microfilms reel 11612]

1.4.2 Biographical evidence

Baskerville was mostly a printer and a type-founder. Whilst he was a prominent figure in the printing industry, he was not known to be an author by any means. There are only two records which feature him as an author: a one-leaf specimen of his types, first published in 1757, and a preface on 'printing & letter founding',

first published in *Proposals for printing by subscription the poetical works of John Milton* in 1757, and subsequently in his 1758 edition of Milton's *Paradise Lost*. He did not write anything substantial and, in any case, nothing related to either grammar or lexicography. Even amongst the books which he printed, there is no other item in these two fields; most of them are classics, such as Virgil, Milton, Horace, Addison, the Holy Bible, Ariosto, etc. As regards Baskerville's correspondence, a little less than forty letters written by him have been retrieved. A few letters written to him are also available (see Pardoe 1975). These epistolary exchanges primarily involved Boulton, Dodsley, and Franklin but also the likes of Walpole and Voltaire. They mostly deal with printing matters and, the later ones, with the sale of Baskerville's printing-house. In none of this correspondence can any mention of the *Vocabulary* nor any interest in either lexicography or grammar be found.

Several biographers have noted that, during the mid-1760s, Baskerville went through a difficult period. He was disappointed that he had not been met with the success he was hoping for after the publication of his *Holy Bible* in 1763. Another reason why he may have been at a low point in his life is the death of his infant son in 1764, which is recorded by Straus and Dent (1907: 40). It is reported that Baskerville hardly printed anything until '[h]e published another version of the *Holy Bible* in 1769, in response to the publication of a Bible by another Birmingham printer who had advertised it as being superior to Baskerville's' (Pardoe and Christmas 1994: n.p.). As observed by Pardoe (1975: 94-95), in 1765, apart from the *Vocabulary*, only one other book came out of his press: Robert Barclay's *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*. The following year, Paul Morgan comments, 'Baskerville became so dispirited that [...] he handed over the management of his Press to his foreman, Robert Martin, who produced some

inferior books' (1955: 9). At that time, he also 'made an attempt to sell his "whole Apparatus of Letter founding, printing &c. to the Court of France"' (Pardoe 1994: n.p.), as attested by his correspondence with Franklin. All this adds up to suggest that, around 1765–66, Baskerville was not in the frame of mind of a man who is ready to write his own material in order to print more. He may not even have printed the *Vocabulary* himself, since Robert Martin is said to have taken over at that time.

By contrast, Priestley was actively involved in linguistic and educational matters at the time. In addition to the *Rudiments of English Grammar* (1761), he had also written *A Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar*, printed in 1762 for private use at the Warrington Academy, where he had been Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres since 1761, following a similar position in Nantwich (1758–61). In 1765, he was particularly active: both his *Chart of Biography* and *An Essay on a Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life* were published. Consequently, as far as biographical evidence is concerned, Priestley looks like a more suitable candidate.[14]

1.4.3 The history of earlier attributions

I have already partly covered the history of earlier attributions above in discussing the uncertainty surrounding the authorship of the *Vocabulary.* I have

[14] It must be noted here that Priestley, like Baskerville, was a member of the Lunar Society (see Uglow 2002), which could suggest that they were in contact at some point. However, the two men were not members at the same time, since Baskerville died in 1775 and Priestley was not invited to join the society until March 1781, following his move to Birmingham (Schofield 2004: 151). A possible link between the two men may be Dodsley, who contemporaneously published some of Priestley's scientific works and whose material was also printed by Baskerville, as revealed by the advertisement from the *Birmingham Gazette* quoted above. Further research on this particular point would be desirable.

shown that no valid explanation had been given in the ESTC for the attribution to Baskerville. There is however one source in the literature about Baskerville which gives a rationale for that attribution: Paul Morgan, who prepared the catalogue and short bibliographical notice for a 1955 exhibition in Birmingham entitled 'John Baskerville, printer'.

> This small work is believed to have been composed by Baskerville himself and may have been inspired by his experience as a writing-master with little education. The preface hopes the work 'will not be unacceptable to Young Ladies, and to Gentlemen too, who have not had the Advantage of a Liberal or learned Education; and who are peculiarly liable to make such Mistakes in the Use of Words as are attended with disagreeable Consequences'. (Morgan 1955: 16-17)

Although Morgan's statement cites no evidence, the facts on which his speculation is based seem to be accurate according to other biographical resources. The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* confirms that Baskerville once assisted in the education of the youth and was a writing master:

> According to a story gathered at second hand after his death, Baskerville was a footman to 'a clergyman of King's Norton, near Birmingham, who used to instruct the poor youths of his parish in writing', a task in which Baskerville assisted him (Noble, 362). In 1726 he moved to Birmingham, where he became a writing-master in a little court near the upper part of High Street. (Mosley 2004)

However, this episode in Baskerville's life occurred almost 40 years before the publication of the *Vocabulary*, and nothing suggests that he pursued this interest in education in any way until 1765. What is more, Morgan quotes from the preface to the *Vocabulary* in order to support his argument, but the preface only refers to the dictionary itself and ignores the prefixed grammar. There is, therefore, a lack of solid evidence to support the assumption that Baskerville was the author of the 1765 *Grammar*. Overall, the three kinds of external evidence examined suggest that Baskerville is very unlikely to have authored the grammar itself, and

probably the volume as a whole too. I will, therefore, now turn to internal evidence – textual and intertextual – in order to demonstrate that the author of the 1765 *Grammar* was Joseph Priestley.

1.4.4 Textual evidence

1.4.4.1 Parallel passages

A cursory reading of the 1765 *Grammar* and 1768 *Rudiments* is sufficient to realise that the resemblance between the two texts spotted by Poldauf and Marks is an obvious one. But the extent to which they are similar remains to be determined quantitatively. For that purpose, I used an open-source software program called *WCopyfind* which was originally designed for plagiarism detection. It is freely available and, since Brian Vickers introduced it in authorship studies, has been used by several scholars for similar purposes.[15] The program compares two text documents to determine if they share similar sequences of words. It yields two types of results: the 'Perfect Match' gives the number and percentage of words in strictly matching phrases of at least 6 words, and the 'Overall Match' gives the number and percentage of words in matching phrases of at least 6 words allowing for up to 3 non-matching words within these 6-word phrases. In other words, the former result is a little too strict and the latter a little too loose so that if it were possible to obtain an accurate and definitive quantitative result for such a phenomenon as plagiarism it would be somewhere between these two results. The digitised corpus of Priestley's grammars used for this analysis is my own compilation. I downloaded the texts from Google Books and meticulously corrected the errors contained in these digitised transcriptions by checking them

[15] See works on Shakespeare such as Dahl, Tarlinskaya, and Vickers (2010) or more recently McCarthy and Schlueter (2018).

against the editions cited in the bibliography. The comparison between the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments* thus yielded the results in Table 1.1.

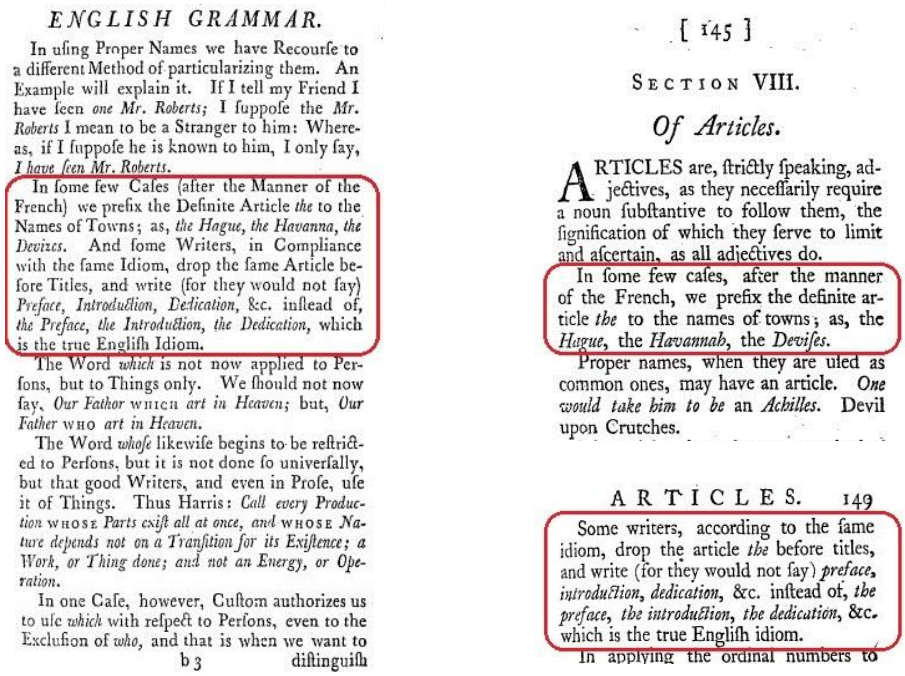
	Perfect Match		Overall Match	
1765 *Grammar* (8,448 words)	3,481 words	**41%**	3,911 words	**46%**
1768 *Rudiments* (38,354 words)	3,481 words	9%	3,921 words	10%

Table 1.1 Comparison between the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments* with *WCopyfind*.

The 'Perfect Match' rate shows that 3,481 words belonged to perfectly matching strings of 6 words or more in both documents, which accounts for 41% of the 1765 *Grammar* and 9% of the *Rudiments*. The 'Overall Match' rate (allowing for up to 3 imperfections) is naturally higher: 46% of the 1765 *Grammar* and 10% of the 1768 *Rudiments*. In other words, *WCopyfind* reveals that almost half of the 1765 *Grammar* matches word for word the text of Priestley's 1768 *Rudiments*. By way of illustration, Figures 1.3 to 1.6 show examples of such matching passages in sections on articles and relative pronouns respectively. In red are the perfect matches, in green the allowed imperfections bridging matching strings.

In some few Cases (after the Manner of the French) we prefix the Definite Article the to the Names of Towns; as, the Hague, the *Havanna,* the Devizes. And some Writers, *in Compliance with* the same Idiom drop the *same* Article before Titles, and write (for they would not say) Preface, Introduction, Dedication, &c. instead of, the Preface, the Introduction, the Dedication, which is the true English Idiom. (1765: b3)	In some few cases, after the manner of the French, we prefix the definite article the to the names of towns; as, the Hague, the *Havannah,* the Devises. (1768: 145) Some writers, *according to* the same idiom, drop the article *the* before titles; and write (for they would not say) preface, introduction, dedication, &c. instead of, the preface, the introduction, the dedication, *&c.* which is the true English idiom. (1768: 149)

Figure 1.3 Visualisation of matching passages on articles as detected by *WCopyfind*.



ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

In uſing Proper Names we have Recourſe to a different Method of particularizing them. An Example will explain it. If I tell my Friend I have ſeen *one Mr. Roberts;* I ſuppoſe the *Mr. Roberts* I mean to be a Stranger to him: Whereas, if I ſuppoſe he is known to him, I only ſay, *I have ſeen Mr. Roberts.*

In ſome few Caſes (after the Manner of the French) we prefix the Definite Article *the* to the Names of Towns; as, *the Hague, the Havanna, the Devizes.* And ſome Writers, in Compliance with the ſame Idiom, drop the ſame Article before Titles, and write (for they would not ſay) *Preface, Introduction, Dedication,* &c. inſtead of, *the Preface, the Introduction, the Dedication,* which is the true Engliſh Idiom.

The Word *which* is not now applied to Perſons, but to Things only. We ſhould not now ſay, *Our Father* WHICH *art in Heaven;* but, *Our Father* WHO *art in Heaven.*

The Word *whoſe* likewiſe begins to be reſtricted to Perſons, but it is not done ſo univerſally, but that good Writers, and even in Proſe, uſe it of Things. Thus Harris: *Call every Production* WHOSE *Parts exiſt all at once, and* WHOSE *Nature depends not on a Tranſition for its Exiſtence; a Work, or Thing done; and not an Energy, or Operation.*

In one Caſe, however, Cuſtom authorizes us to uſe *which* with reſpect to Perſons, even to the Excluſion of *who,* and that is when we want to

b 3 diſtinguiſh

[145]

SECTION VIII.

Of Articles.

ARTICLES are, ſtrictly ſpeaking, adjectives, as they neceſſarily require a noun ſubſtantive to follow them, the ſignification of which they ſerve to limit and aſcertain, as all adjectives do.

In ſome few caſes, after the manner of the French, we prefix the definite article *the* to the names of towns; as, the *Hague*, the *Havannah*, the *Deviſes*.

Proper names, when they are uſed as common ones, may have an article. *One would take him to be* an *Achilles*. Devil upon Crutches.

ARTICLES. 149

Some writers, according to the ſame idiom, drop the article *the* before titles, and write (for they would not ſay) *preface, introduction, dedication,* &c. inſtead of, *the preface, the introduction, the dedication,* &c. which is the true Engliſh idiom.

In applying the ordinal numbers to

Figure 1.4 Matching passages on articles from Figure 1.3 as seen in the actual texts, [(c) The British Library Board, *ECCO*, microfilms reel 2121, no. 1 & reel 2589, no. 5]

The Word whose Likewise *begins* to be restricted to Persons but it is not done so *universally*, but that good Writers, and even in Prose, use it of Things. Thus Harris: Call every Production WHOSE parts exist all at once, and WHOSE Nature depends not on a Transition for its Existence; a Work, or Thing done; and not an Energy, or Operation. (1765: b3)	The word whose *begins* likewise to be restricted to persons, but it is not done so *generally* but that good writers, and even in prose, use it when speaking of things. I do not think, however, that the construction is generally pleasing. Pleasure, whose nature. Hume. Call every production, whose parts exist all at once, and whose nature depends not on a transition for its existence, a work or thing done, and not an energy, or operation. Harris's Hermes. A true critic in the perusal of a book, is like a dog at a feast; whose thought and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away. Swift's Tale of a Tub, p. (1768: 99)

Figure 1.5 Visualisation of matching passages on relative pronouns as detected by *WCopyfind*.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

In uſing Proper Names we have Recourſe to a different Method of particularizing them. An Example will explain it. If I tell my Friend I have ſeen *one Mr. Roberts;* I ſuppoſe the *Mr. Roberts* I mean to be a Stranger to him: Whereas, if I ſuppoſe he is known to him, I only ſay, *I have ſeen Mr. Roberts.*

In ſome few Caſes (after the Manner of the French) we prefix the Definite Article *the* to the Names of Towns; as, *the Hague, the Havanna, the Devizes.* And ſome Writers, in Compliance with the ſame Idiom, drop the ſame Article before Titles, and write (for they would not ſay) *Preface, Introduction, Dedication,* &c. inſtead of, *the Preface, the Introduction, the Dedication,* which is the true Engliſh Idiom.

The Word *which* is not now applied to Perſons, but to Things only. We ſhould not now ſay, *Our Father* WHICH *art in Heaven;* but, *Our Father* WHO *art in Heaven.*

The Word *whoſe* likewiſe begins to be reſtricted to Perſons, but it is not done ſo univerſally, but that good Writers, and even in Proſe, uſe it of Things. Thus Harris: *Call every Production* WHOSE *Parts exiſt all at once, and* WHOSE *Nature depends not on a Tranſition for its Exiſtence; a Work, or Thing done; and not an Energy, or Operation.*

In one Caſe, however, Cuſtom authorizes us to uſe *which* with reſpect to Perſons, even to the Excluſion of *who,* and that is when we want to

b 3 diſtinguiſh

PRONOUNS. 99

in this caſe, ſeems to be harſh. *A child, who.* Cadogan.

It is ſtill more improperly applied to animals. *A lake, frequented by that* fowl, whom *nature has taught to dip the wing in water.* Raſſilas, vol. 1. p. 4.

When the name of a perſon is uſed merely as a name, and does not refer to the perſon; the pronoun *which* ought to be uſed, and not *who. It is no wonder if a man, made up of ſuch contrarieties, did not ſhine at the court of Queen* Elizabeth, who *was but another name for prudence, and economy.*

The word *whoſe* begins likewiſe to be reſtricted to perſons, but it is not done ſo generally but that good writers, and even in proſe, uſe it when ſpeaking of things. I do not think, however, that the conſtruction is generally pleaſing. *Pleaſure, whoſe nature.* Hume. *Call every* production, whoſe *parts exiſt all at once, and* whoſe *nature depends not on a tranſition for its exiſtance, a work or thing done, and not an energy, or operation.* Harris's Hermes. *A true critic in the peruſal of a book, is like a* dog *at a feaſt*; whoſe *thought and ſtomach are wholly ſet upon what the gueſts fling away.* Swift's Tale of a Tub, p. 63.

F 2 In

Figure 1.6 Matching passages on relative pronouns from Figure 1.5 as seen in the actual texts, [(c) The British Library Board, *ECCO*, microfilms reel 2121, no. 1 & reel 2589, no. 5]

The 1768 *Rudiments* is more elaborate and contains more examples, but the similarity between the two texts is unmistakable. They sometimes differ only in spelling ('Havanna' vs. 'Havannah'), order of words ('Likewise begins' vs. 'begins likewise') or choice of synonyms ('universally' vs. 'generally'; 'in Compliance with' vs. 'according to'). The visualisations in Figures 1.3 and 1.5 also show that, despite the fairly loose parameters I opted to use, there are still flaws in the detection of textual parallels operated by *WCopyfind*: spelling differences such 'Devizes' vs. 'Devises' are considered as non-matching, and resembling phrases such as 'use it of Things' and 'use it when speaking of things' are not matched by the program even when allowing for up to three imperfections. All this tends to suggest that the 41-46% rate of matches detected by *WCopyfind* in the 1765 *Grammar* is a conservative estimate.

A possible interpretation of these results is that the similarities between the two texts arise because the author of the 1765 *Grammar* plagiarised the 1761

Rudiments. Plagiarism between grammarians was common in the eighteenth century, as has been well documented by Tieken-Boon van Ostade (1992, 1996) for instance. The practice was a concern for the grammarians themselves, to the extent that Priestley felt the need to pre-empt possible accusations in the preface to the 1761 *Rudiments*:

> It is not denied that use hath been made of other Grammars, and particularly of Mr. *Johnson*'s, in compiling this: But it is apprehended, that there is so much that is properly original, both in the materials and the disposition of them in this, as is more than sufficient to clear a work of such a nature from the charge of plagiarism. (Priestley 1761: iv)

If the similarities between the 1765 and the 1768 texts resulted from the fact that they were both rooted in the 1761 text, *WCopyfind* should find a high rate of matches between the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1761 *Rudiments* too.[16]

	Perfect Match		Overall Match	
1765 *Grammar* (8,448 words)	598 words	**7%**	740 words	**9%**
1761 *Rudiments* (9,633 words)	598 words	6%	747 words	8%

Table 1.2 Comparison between the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1761 *Rudiments* with *WCopyfind*.

As shown by Table 1.2, however, the 1765 *Grammar* is very much (91-93%) unlike the first edition of the *Rudiments*. By contrast, Table 1.3 shows that the 1761 *Rudiments* are almost entirely duplicated in the 1768 *Rudiments.*

	Perfect Match		Overall Match	
1761 *Rudiments* (9,633 words)	6,964 words	**72%**	7258 words	**75%**
1768 *Rudiments* (38,354 words)	6,964 words	18%	7220 words	19%

Table 1.3 Comparison between the 1761 and the 1768 *Rudiments* with *WCopyfind*

[16] The digitised text of the 1761 *Rudiments* used for the purpose of running comparisons with *WCopyfind* excludes the 'Observations on style' because, unlike the appendices found in the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments*, it deals neither with grammar nor with usage remarks.

The matches with the 1761 *Rudiments* detected by the software are almost exclusively located in the first part of the 1768 *Rudiments,* i.e. the actual 'rudiments' where the parts of speech and syntax are discussed in a question-and-answer format. There is a small proportion of matches in the 1768 'Notes and Observations'. By contrast, the matching phrases found by the program are disseminated throughout the different sections of the 1765 *Grammar*, but they are more particularly located in the last section – the 'Account of the most usual mistakes in English Grammar' –, which greatly anticipates the 1768 'Notes and Observations'. A comparison between these two sections only, both specifically dedicated to usage remarks in their respective grammars, yields particularly striking results:

	Perfect Match		**Overall Match**	
1765 'Account of the most usual mistakes' (3,468 words)	1,963 words	57%	2,094 words	60%
1768 'Notes and Observations' (28,006 words)	1,963 words	7%	2,101 words	8%

Table 1.4 Comparison between the sections dedicated to usage remarks in the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments* with *WCopyfind*.

Between 57% and 60% of the text contained in the 'Account of the most usual mistakes' can be found in the 1768 'Notes and Observations'. In other words, the 1765 *Grammar* not only shows a high rate of similarity with the 1768 *Rudiments*, it also anticipates the most innovative and original part of the 1768 *Rudiments*: the 'Notes and Observations', which did not feature in the 1761 *Rudiments* and which Priestley introduced in this second edition as a major novelty. To summarise, the 1761 *Rudiments* and the 1765 *Grammar* are measurably closer to the 1768 *Rudiments* than they are to each other. The possibility that the 1765 *Grammar* was simply plagiarising the 1761 *Rudiments* can therefore be ruled out.

1.4.4.2 *The parts of speech*

In his comprehensive classification of early-modern English grammars according to the way they deal with parts of speech, Ian Michael (1970: 231) classifies the *Vocabulary* and the *Rudiments* together under System 15, whose specificity is the treatment of the article and the participle.

SYSTEM 15					
SUBSTANTIVE				ADVERB	
ADJECTIVE (incl. article)				CONJUNCTION	
PRONOUN				PREPOSITION	
VERB (incl. participle)				INTERJECTION	
Priestley	1761[17]	Elphinston	1765	Binns	1798
Priestley	1762	*A Vocabulary*	1765	Salmon	1798

Figure 1.7 System 15 of parts of speech in Michael (1970: 231).

Michael actually comments on the uncertainty of the classification of the article in both Priestley's work and the 1765 *Grammar* prefixed to the *Vocabulary*, yet, surprisingly, he does not seem to have noticed the great similarity between the latter and the 1768 *Rudiments.* The reason for this oversight is probably that, because he considered that there was no change of system in later editions of the *Rudiments,* he focussed only on the first edition which bears far less resemblance to the 1765 *Grammar* than the second edition. In fact, there are important changes in the organisation of the grammar between the first and the second edition of the *Rudiments*, which become particularly interesting when they are set alongside the 1765 *Grammar*.

[17] Michael only cites the first edition when he considers that there is no change regarding the classification of the parts of speech in later editions.

1761 *Rudiments*	1765 *Grammar*	1768 *Rudiments*
SECT. I. GENERAL DISTRIBUTION. SECT. II. OF NOUNS. SECT. III. OF ADJECTIVES. SECT. IV. OF PRONOUNS. SECT. V. OF VERBS. SECT. VI. OF ADVERBS, &c. SECT. VII. OF DERIVATION. SECT. VIII. OF SYNTAX. SECT. IX. OF PROSODY. SECT. X. OF FIGURES.	A GENERAL VIEW OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR. **SECTION I. Of the Kinds and Inflections of Words.** **SECTION II. Of the Signification and Use of certain Words.** **SECTION III. Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.**	The GENERAL DISTRIBUTION. **PART I. Of the Inflections of Words.** SECTION I. Of the Inflections of Nouns. SECTION II. Of the Inflections of Adjectives. SECTION III. Of the Inflections of Pronouns. SECTION IV. Of the Inflections of Verbs. SECTION V. Of the Derivation and Composition of Words. **PART II. Of the grammatical Use and Signification of certain Words**, especially such as the paucity of our inflections obliges us to make use of, in order to express what, in other languages, is effected by a change of Termination. SECTION I. Of the Articles. SECTION II. Of the Use of the Auxiliary Verbs. **PART III. Of** Syntax; comprising **the Order of Words in a Sentence**, and the Correspondence of one Word to another. PART IV. Of Prosody. PART V. Of Figures.

Figure 1.8 Comparison of the division of the grammar in the 1761 *Rudiments*, the 1765 *Grammar*, and the 1768 *Rudiments* (my highlights).

Whilst the division of the 1761 *Rudiments* faithfully reflects the system of parts of speech adopted by Priestley, following a tradition inherited from grammars of ancient languages, the 1768 *Rudiments* shows a different approach, based on grammatical notions (inflection, signification and order) that cut across the various parts of speech. This is an important development in Priestley's approach to language description which I will be discussing in Chapter 3. But what is striking in Figure 1.8 is that this reorganisation in three parts adopted in the 1768 *Rudiments* is fully anticipated in the 1765 *Grammar*, as shown by the highlighted headings.

The definitions of the parts of speech themselves are also very similar in the 1765 and 1768 texts. Table 1.5 shows the definition of the eight main parts of speech – noun, adjective, pronoun, verb, adverb, preposition, conjunction – provided in both grammars.

1765 *Grammar*	1768 *Rudiments*
'[..] the Words, which are used as Names of Things and Persons [...] Grammarians have termed NOUNS or SUBSTANTIVES [...]' (1765: a1^{v})	'A NOUN or (as it is sometimes called) a SUBSTANTIVE, is the name of any thing; as *a Horse*, *a Tree*; *John*; *Thomas*.' (1768: 4)
'ADJECTIVES, or Words denoting the Properties or Qualities of Things [...].' (1765: a3)	'ADJECTIVES are words that denote the properties or qualities of things; as, *good*, *tall*, *swift*.' (1768: 8)
'OF PRONOUNS, some are Substitutes for the Names of Persons, and others for the same with particular Properties, or rather in particular Circumstances.' (1765: a3^{v})	'PRONOUNS are words that are used as substitutes for nouns, to prevent the too frequent and tiresome repetition of them; as *He did this or that*, instead of expressly naming the person doing, and the thing done, every time there is occasion to speak of them.' (1768: 10)

1765 *Grammar*	1768 *Rudiments*
'VERBS are those Words whereby we express what we affirm concerning any Person or Thing; as *he speaks*, *we hear*.' (1765: a4[v])	'A Verb is a word that expresseth what is affirmed of, or attributed to a thing; as *I love*; *the horse neighs*.' (1768: 13)
'ADVERBS are Contractions of Sentences, or Clauses of a Sentence, serving generally to denote the Manner and Circumstances of an Action, particularly those of Time and Place. Thus we say, *He acted wisely*; i.e. in *a wise manner*; *now*, is, *at this Time? here, at this Place.*' (1765: b2)	'ADVERBS are contractions of sentences, or of clauses of a sentence, generally serving to denote the *manner*, and other *circumstances* of an action; as *wisely*, i. e. in a wise manner; *now*, i. e. at this time; *here*, in this place.' (1768: 28)
'CONJUNCTIONS are Words which connect Sentences, or Clauses of a Sentence together, and show the Manner of their Dependance on one another; as, *Cesar subdued the Gauls*, AND *enslaved his Country*; BUT *was himself killed by Brutus*.' (1765: b2)	'CONJUNCTIONS are words that join sentences together, and shew the manner of their dependance upon one another; as *and*, *if*, *but*, &c.' (1768: 28-29)
'PREPOSITIONS express the Relation which one Word has to another; such as, *of*, *with*, *from*, *to*, &c. as, *He bought the Book* WITH *money*: *He went* FROM *York* TO *London*.' (1765:b2)	'A PREPOSITION is a word that expresseth the relation that one word hath to another; such as *of*, *with*, *from*, *to*: as, *He bought it* with *money*, *He went* to *London*.' (1768: 28)
'INTERJECTIONS are broken or imperfect Words, expressive of some Emotion or Passion of the Mind; as, *ah*, *oh*, *phy*, &c.' (1765: b2)	'INTERJECTIONS are broken or imperfect words, denoting some emotion or passion of the mind; as, *ah*, *oh*, *phy*.' (1768: 29)

Table 1.5 Definitions of the parts of speech in the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments*.

Table 1.5 is a good illustration of how the two texts can be very similar in terms of their content and still show differences in their respective wording. It confirms that the quantitative analysis provided by *WCopyfind* underestimates the resemblance between the two texts. The spelling ('Contractions' vs. 'contractions'), the choice of synonyms ('connect' vs. 'join', 'expressive of' vs. 'denoting'), the order of the words ('serving generally' vs. 'generally serving'), the voice ('what we affirm' vs. 'what is affirmed'), etc. are different, but the definitions

of the parts of speech themselves are identical in the two texts, focussing on the same key criteria for every one of them. The differences in wording may simply be the result of stylistic adjustments, but they are also probably due to the fact that the 1765 *Grammar* – as an accompanying piece to the dictionary – was designed to be shorter and simpler than the 1768 *Rudiments*.[18] By way of comparison, and to emphasise how Priestleyan the 1765 definitions are, here is how Lowth defines the verb for instance: 'A verb is a word which signifies to be, to do, or to suffer' (1762: 44); a definition which Michael (1970: 44) calls 'the traditional formula' and 'by far the commonest criterion in the English tradition'.

The comparative text in Table 1.5 is all the more interesting in light of the evolution of these definitions from the 1761 to the 1768 *Rudiments*. Seven of the definitions given in the 1768 *Rudiments* are indeed word for word the same as in the 1761 *Rudiments*. But there is one exception: the definition of the adverb. In 1761 Priestley stated that 'ADVERBS are words that denote the *manner*, and other *circumstances* of an action; as *swiftly*, *slowly*, *here*, *there*, *now*, *yesterday*' (1761: 27). It agrees with the canonical definition of adverbs in eighteenth-century grammars, such as Lowth's: 'The ADVERB, added to verbs, and also to adjectives and other adverbs, to express some circumstances belonging to them' (1762: 8). Unlike the 1765 and 1768 definitions, the 1761 definition of the adverb contains no mention of the notion of contraction. This notion was first used by Priestley in his *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar* where adverbs are defined as 'contractions for other words, or rather cluster of words' (1762: 64). It

[18] The material constraints which framed the composition of the 'compendious' 1765 *Grammar* are explicitly referred to here and there in the text, e.g. 'To mention only the Variety of Cases respecting this Subject, would carry me beyond the Bounds assigned to this Grammatical Essay' (anon. 1765: b5).

is likely that Priestley introduced it after reading the Port-Royal *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (1660), or its recent translation into English (Arnauld and Lancelot 1753), in preparation for the 1762 *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar*, where the French grammar is referenced as one of his sources. Indeed, in the *Grammaire générale et raisonnée*, the notion of abridgment is key to the definition of the adverb.

> Le desir que les hommes ont d'abreger le discours, est ce qui a donné lieu aux Adverbes. Car la pluspart de ces particules ne sont que pour signifier en un seul mot, ce qu'on ne pourroit marquer que par une preposition & un nom: comme *sapienter*, sagement, pour *cum sapientia*, avec sagesse : *hodie* pour *in hoc die*, aujourd'huy. (Arnauld and Lancelot 1660: 88)

The notion of contraction is not only suggested by the word *abreger* but also implied by the idea that adverbs are 'particles' with which one can signify in one word what could otherwise be expressed in two. Also supporting the hypothesis that Priestley was influenced by Arnauld and Lancelot is the fact that his illustrative examples are almost exactly the same as in the Port-Royal grammar. This change in the definition of the adverb after the 1761 *Rudiments* is all the more crucial because, as pointed out by Michael, Priestley's phrasing is unprecedented: 'This way of putting it appears in *A Vocabulary*, 1765; Barlow, 1772; Harrison, 1777; Gentleman, 1788, and Fogg, 1796' (1970: 450). It does not occur before the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments*, only later grammarians used it, probably influenced in turn by Priestley. In other words, with respect to the definitions of the parts of speech in general, the 1765 *Grammar* does not simply bear a close resemblance to the 1768 *Rudiments*, it once again anticipates some important conceptual changes introduced by Priestley in the second edition of his *Rudiments* as a result of the views he had developed in the 1762 *Course*.

1.4.4.3 Exemplification

The third type of textual evidence is the collection of examples used by grammarians to illustrate their rules and judgments. Crucially, the examples used by Priestley in the 1768 *Rudiments* are supposed to be original. He emphasised the fact that he collected them all himself, from more or less rigorously identified sources.

> I think there will be an advantage in my having collected examples from modern writings, rather than from those of Swift, Addison, and others, who wrote about half a century ago, in what is generally called the classical period of our tongue. By this means we may see what is the real character and turn of the language at present [...].
>
> It may excite a smile in some of my readers, to see what books passed through my hands at the time I was making these collections, and I might very easily have suppressed their names; but I am not ashamed of its being known, that I sometimes read for amusement, and even anything that may fall in my way. (Priestley 1768: xi-xii)

Only a very small number of his examples are recycled from other grammars. Referring to Lowth's grammar (1762), he acknowledges that he has taken 'a few of his examples (though generally for a purpose different from his) to make my own more complete' (1768: xxiii).[19] Again, he gives a justification for not relying on previous language commentators: 'It is not from the writings of grammarians and critics that we can form a judgement of the real present state of any language, even as it is spoken in polite conversation' (1768: 12). If we accept that the examples used by Priestley in the 1768 *Rudiments* are, in their vast majority, his own original findings, then any meaningful similarity with the 1765 *Grammar* will be compelling evidence that Priestley authored both.

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[19] Priestley's reliance on Lowth will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2.

I recorded 156 examples in the 1765 *Grammar*. Unlike Sundby et al. (1991), whose survey was restricted to examples of what grammarians considered as incorrect English, I collected examples of both good and bad usage. The only criterion was that all examples should be contextualised, even in the smallest of contexts. For instance, in 'the Hague' (1765: b3), the use of the definite article is contextualised by the reference to a specific proper noun. Following this rule, I excluded paradigms of morphological variation for number, gender and tense, such as 'Book, Books' (1765: a1^{v}), and lists of parts of speech such as 'The former are called Personal Pronouns, and are, *I*, *thou*, *he*, and *she* [...]' (1765: a3^{v}). The remaining examples therefore ranged from simple noun phrases ('The *King's* Power'; 1765: a2^{v}) and verb phrases ('averse *from* a thing'; 1765: b5) through to full sentences ('Alexander conquered the Persians'; 1765: b5^{v}) and sourced quotations ('All of them had great Authority indeed, but NONE of them WERE Sovereign Princes. Smollet[t]'; 1765: c5^{v}).

The results of this survey are particularly compelling: out of the 156 examples used in the 1765 *Grammar,* 106 (68%) also occur in the 1768 *Rudiments*. I also found that 7 of the remaining 50 examples occur in other works by Priestley. A few can be found in the 1761 *Rudiments*: 'Hail Bard divine, short is the Life of Man, righteous are thy Judgments' (1765: b6), and 'We will give this Business over. What the Nature is of those Parties, is one of the most difficult Questions that can be met with. Hume' (1768: b6). Likewise, 'Jesus did these Things' and 'These Things did Jesus' (1765: b5^{v}) – used to illustrate the relative flexibility of word order in English when the agent is obvious – also occur in the 1762 *Course* (1762: 255), to illustrate the same point. With respect to exemplification, the 1765 *Grammar* therefore appears to be standing at the crossroads of a network of three texts, all authored by Joseph Priestley. There does not appear to be one single reason why

the remaining 50 examples do not occur in the 1768 *Rudiments.* Some belong to the few paragraphs which are entirely absent from the 1768 *Rudiments* – possibly because Priestley found them weaker or irrelevant, or because he changed his mind about these points. But most of them are made-up examples illustrating very basic points such as the genitive ('*Salomon's* Wisdom; The *King's* Power', 1765: a2^{v}) or the formation of the past participle ('The Letter is written; the Battle is fought', 1765: b^{v}), which were replaced in 1768 by other made-up examples or sometimes by sourced examples. In other words, their absence from the 1768 *Rudiments* is not particularly meaningful.

Looking more specifically at sourced examples which Priestley claimed to have spent much time collecting, the ratio of similarity goes even higher: 58 of the 69 examples with a clear attribution in 1765 also occur in the 1768 *Rudiments* (84%). By and large, Hume is the most quoted author, with 34 occurrences – almost 50%. This is another characteristic which the 1765 *Grammar* shares with the 1768 *Rudiments*. Indeed, in the preface to the latter, Priestley acknowledges that he relied heavily on Hume's English:

> I make no apology for the freedom I have taken with the works of living authors in my collections. Except a very few pages in Swift, I read nothing with an immediate view to them. This was always a secondary consideration ; but if any thing of this kind struck me in the course of my reading I did not fail to note it. If I be thought to have borne harder upon Mr. Hume than upon any other living author, he is obliged for it to the great reputation his writings have justly gained him, and to my happening to read them at the time that I did; and I would not pay any man, for whom I have the least esteem, so ill a compliment, as to suppose, that exactness in the punctilios of grammar was an object capable of giving him the least disturbance [...]. (Priestley 1768: xiii)

Overall, the evidence based on exemplification is, quantitatively and qualitatively, the most compelling of the three types of textual evidence, because the 1768 corpus of examples is mostly unique to Priestley's work.

1.4.5 Intertextual evidence

In this section, I will look at how the 1765 *Grammar* and Priestley's grammatical works echo each other. The preface to the 1768 *Rudiments* mentions the 1761 edition and the changes which have been introduced since, but it makes no explicit reference to the 1765 *Grammar*. In turn, the 1765 *Grammar* contains no reference to any edition of the *Rudiments*. On the face of it, there seems to be no intertextual link between the three grammars. However, on several occasions, the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments* appear to be engaged in some sort of dialogue. There are passages where the two grammars seem to be implicitly referring to each other, as if they had been produced in the same creative movement. One such passage comes at the end of Part II on 'the grammatical use and signification of certain words' in the 1768 *Rudiments*. Having dealt with articles and auxiliary verbs, Priestley observes that

> One of the greatest difficulties in the English language, relates to the subject of this part; as it consists in the use of the conjunctive particles and prepositions, particularly *of*, *to*, *for*, *with*, and *in*, with a few others. Indeed, there is nothing in which the practice of our best authors is more variable or capricious: but I thought it would be best, to throw all the remarks I have made on this subject, into the *Additional Observations*. (Priestley 1768: 39-40)

As shown in Figure 1.8, this section did not exist in the 1761 *Rudiments* but it appears in similar terms in the 1765 *Grammar*: it discusses articles and auxiliaries too and contains the same text as in this quotation, down to the word 'capricious' – adding one extra sentence: 'and but little Assistance is to be had in this Case

from Any Grammar or Dictionary' (1765: b4^{v}). After that, the 1765 *Grammar* goes on to discuss the said particles and prepositions in remarks and examples which, in the 1768 *Rudiments*, feature in the 'Notes and Observations' (1768: 156-57). The section then ends on the following remark: 'To mention only the Variety of Cases respecting this Subject, would carry me beyond the Bounds assigned to this Grammatical Essay (1765: b5). The 1765 text laments a lack of space in Section II to discuss prepositions at length and the 1768 reads like an answer to that final remark. Priestley decided 'to throw' – a verb possibly indicating a change from a previous version – those observations into the longer section on 'Notes and Observations'. In other words, when examining the narrative voices and subtexts in the two texts, one can see emerging a plausible process in the evolution of a single authorship. The fact that the same formal issue arises at this point in both text is significant in itself.

A second example of intertextuality can be found at the very end of the 1765 *Grammar*. The final words echo word for word the full title of a work by Priestley: the 1762 *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar*.

2. Taking Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth

2.1 Introduction

Robert Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762) came out shortly after the first edition of Priestley's grammar and proved immediately very popular. Because this success intervened between the publications of the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments*, the latter is often seen as a response to Lowth, and the 1768 changes interpreted in the context of this perceived competition. This chapter revisits three narratives in which the success of the *Short Introduction to English Grammar* is presented as the main catalyst in the evolution of Priestley's grammaticographic practice. This will lead me to then offer an alternative narrative which takes Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth. Indeed, in demonstrating that Priestley had authored the 1765 *Grammar*, I have shown that, while the 1768 changes may look radical, they do not mark a complete change of direction from Priestley's earlier work. The evidence examined in Chapter 1 has revealed continuities from the 1761 *Rudiments* through to the 1768 *Rudiments*, via the 1762 *Course* and the 1765 *Grammar*, which have generally been left out in the three narratives in question. The supposed influence of Lowth's grammar on the evolution of Priestley's work therefore needs to be re-examined in the light of the findings from Chapter 1.

Between 1761 and 1768, Priestley almost doubled the length of the preface to the *Rudiments* (from 1,829 words to 3,504 words), introducing important grammaticographic reflections. He also re-organised the core part of the grammar – the eponymous 'rudiments' laying out definitions of parts of speech

and rules of grammar – by removing footnotes or moving them up to the body of the text, dividing up the material into new sections, and introducing new metalinguistic tools. This core part, presented in a question-and-answer format, shrank from 7,763 words to 6,643 words (excluding the appendix on irregular verbs in both cases). This cut reflects what Priestley calls the simplification of his grammar since its first edition – 'I have also been so far from departing from the simplicity of the plan of that short grammar, that I have made it, in some respects, still more simple' (1768: vi). But it mostly results from the addition of a new appendix of usage remarks, where a number of the footnotes from the original 'rudiments' were relocated. Indeed, the most substantial change was that Priestley removed the nineteen-page 'Observations on style' and twenty-eight-page 'Examples of English Composition', which were appended to the first edition, and replaced them with 144 pages of 'Notes and Observations' on usage, organised in twelve sections, and now making up almost three-quarters of the volume with 28,006 words. Beyond the formal aspect of this transformation, the nature and scope of the *Rudiments* was also altered, with usage remarks now far outweighing the actual grammar, a configuration which was instrumental in the historiographic portrayal of Priestley as the forerunner of modern-day descriptive linguistics and the polar opposite of Lowth.

Until recently, this radical transformation of the *Rudiments* had been little studied. Previous scholars tended to look either at the 1768 *Rudiments* (Baugh and Cable 2012 [1935], Leonard 1929, Poldauf 1948) or at the 1761 *Rudiments* (Michael 1970, Barrel 1983) in isolation, overlooking the fact that the grammar went through several editions. But, as part of the recent historiographic reassessment of eighteenth-century grammar-writing, three narratives have been put forward to account for the development of Priestley's grammaticographic practice: Smith

(1998), Hodson (2006, 2008) and Straaijer (2009, 2011). Strikingly, although they aim to break away from the old dichotomy between prescriptivist Lowth and descriptivist Priestley, these narratives still invoke the overshadowing figure of Robert Lowth, and attribute the evolution of Priestley's grammatical texts to Lowth's textual, philosophical or moral influence. It is the persistence of references to Lowth in account of Priestley's grammaticography which this chapters aims to question. In the first section, I examine the claim that Priestley plagiarised Lowth as early as in the 1761 *Rudiments,* by comparing their texts quantitatively and qualitatively in order to determine how much Priestley owed to Lowth's work. In the next two sections, I look at how the attribution of the 1765 *Grammar* to Priestley challenges Straaijer's view that Lowth's grammar made Priestley more proscriptive in his grammatical judgment, and Hodson's view that it caused Priestley to go through a crisis of faith in the teaching of English grammar. Finally, I propose an alternative narrative of the development of Priestley's thinking which emphasises the continuities in his work between 1761 and 1768, thereby opening new avenues of investigation which take Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth.

2.2 A case of plagiarism?

There is no doubt that Priestley was familiar with Lowth's grammar when he wrote the 1768 *Rudiments*, since he acknowledged his debt himself in the preface.

> I must, also, acknowledge my obligations to *Dr. Lowth*, whose *short introduction to English grammar* was first published about a month after the former edition of mine. Though our plans, definitions of terms, and opinions differ very considerably, I have taken a few of his examples (though generally for a purpose different from his) to make my own more complete. (Priestley 1768: xxiii)

Robin D. Smith (1998) picks this up and develops it into the charge that Priestley is here retrospectively attempting to cover up his plagiarism. Indeed, Smith suggests that Priestley plagiarised Lowth not specifically for the 1768 *Rudiments,* but as early as in the 1761 *Rudiments*. He argues that, publication dates for that time period being generally inaccurate, 'there is room for suspicion' and that 'the timing of his publications more than once raises doubts about the extent of his authorship' (1998: 438). However, Smith's case rests on little evidence. In his short development, he mostly draws on a separate and posterior controversy to portray Priestley as a 'diligent opportunist', asserting that 'Priestley's scholarly integrity among continental scientists will always be slightly suspect since the famous long wrangle between him and Lavoisier over who first isolated, and described, antiphlogistine or oxygen' (1998: 438). In her analysis of plagiarism amongst eighteenth-century grammarians, Tieken-Boon van Ostade rejects Smith's accusation, arguing that, in acknowledging his debt to Lowth, Priestley was in fact more 'concerned with establishing that his grammar had entered the market first, before the more popular one by Lowth' (2008a: 103-04), and not so much with clearing himself of the charge of plagiarism.

In order to settle this question, it is necessary to assess the accuracy of Priestley's statement on his reliance on Lowth more rigorously than has been done so far in the literature. For that purpose, I used the plagiarism software *WCopyfind* to identify and quantify correspondences between the *Rudiments* and Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar*. For Priestley's text, I only used the 1768 *Rudiments*, since it contains almost the entirety of the 1761 *Rudiments*, and will also show earlier plagiarism. For Lowth's grammar, I tested the first edition (1762), and two editions which, according to Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2010: 70), contain the main additions in the period before 1768: the much revised second

edition, which came out in April 1763, and 'A new edition, corrected' published in 1764.[20] *WCopyfind* returned just 3% of perfect match and 4% of overall match between the 1768 *Rudiments* and the 1764 edition of Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* – the last one that Priestley could have consulted by 1768 – and marginally less with the 1762 and 1763 editions. This is very little, especially for very codified texts like grammars, which necessarily contain overlapping metalanguage and paradigms of conjugations, declensions, etc. From a quantitative point of view, the evidence suggests that Priestley made few textual borrowings from Lowth. For a more qualitative perspective on these borrowings, I will now look more closely at the seventeen passages highlighted by *WCopyfind* for showing correspondences between the 1768 *Rudiments* and Lowth's work.

2.2.1 Priestley explicitly refers to Lowth's grammar

To start with, the most obvious evidence of Lowth's influence is to be found in Priestley's explicit references to Lowth's grammar. There are four such cases where Priestley adduces Lowth's grammatical judgment to complement his own analysis (Table 2.1).

The fact that Priestley engages with Lowth's judgements is testament to Lowth's authority on the contemporary grammatical scene. Nevertheless, in all four cases, the alternative favoured by Lowth is rejected by Priestley. Lowth is also presented by Priestley as choosing forms which follow 'analogy' and the 'rules of grammar'. By contrast, he portrays himself as an advocate of custom,

[20] Robin C. Alston (1965) lists another edition in 1767, but it contains no revision and is more of a reprint in a different format. I therefore followed Navest who also focussed on these first three editions in her 2006 article 'Index of Names to *Lowth's Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), (1763), (1764)'. For more details on the publication history of Lowth's grammar and other pirated editions and reprints published during that period, see Tieken Boon van Ostade (2010: 52-90).

euphony (the 'ear'), and the common and familiar usage of 'conversation'. Priestley's framing of his disagreements with Lowth in these passages seems to highlight and publicise the value of his grammar by contrasting it with that of the leading figure on the market-place. As such, this first category of intertextual references may support Tieken-Boon van Ostade's analysis that Priestley's prefatory statement served a commercial purpose rather more than Smith's view that it covers up plagiarism. The third remark also seems to undermine Smith's narrative. Although Priestley is only making his preference for *oblique case* explicit in 1768, he was already using it in the 1761 *Rudiments*, which is evidence that he was unlikely to have opportunistically plagiarised Lowth in the first edition. But further to this very limited number of explicit references to Lowth's judgments, *WCopyfind* also revealed covert borrowings from Lowth's work.

Lowth's *Short Introduction* (1762, 1763, 1764)	**Priestley's *Rudiments* (1768)**
'By *this means* thou shalt have no portion on this side the river.' Ezra, iv. 16. 'It renders us careless of approving ourselves to God by religious duties, and by *that means* securing the continuance of his goodness.' Atterbury, Sermons. Ought it not to be, by *these means*, by *those means*? or by *this mean*, by *that mean*, in the singular number? as it is used by Hooker, Sidney, Shakespear, &c. [...]. (1762: 120 fn5)	The word *means* belongs to the class of words which do not change their termination on account of number; for it is used alike in both numbers. *Lest* this means *should fail.* Hume's History, vol. 8. p. 65. Some persons, however, use the singular of this word, and would say, *lest* this mean *should fail*, and **Dr. Lowth pleads for it**; but custom has so formed our ears, that they do not easily admit this form of the word, notwithstanding it is more agreeable to the general analogy of the language. (1768: 64)
The Double Superlatives *most highest* is a Phrase Peculiar to the Old Vulgar Translation of the Psalms, where it acquires a singular propriety from the Subject to which it is applied, the Supreme Being, who is *higher than the highest*. (1762: 42 fn7)	There is still a greater impropriety in a double comparative, or a double superlative. **Dr. Lowth thinks there is a singular propriety in the phrase *most highest*, which is peculiar to the old translation of the psalms**. But I own it offends my ears, which may, perhaps, be owing to my not having been accustomed to that translation. (1768: 78)

Lowth's *Short Introduction* (1762, 1763, 1764)	Priestley's *Rudiments* (1768)
Pronouns have Three Cases, the Nominative, the Genitive, or Possessive, like Nouns; and moreover a Case, which follows the Verb Active, or the Preposition, expressing the Object of an Action, or of a Relation. It answers to the Oblique Cases in Latin; and may be properly enough called the Objective Case. (1762: 32-33)	I prefer the term *oblique case* of Dr. Johnson to *objective case*, **which Dr. Lowth uses**. By the old grammarians, the nominative case was called *rectus*, being compared to a line standing upright ; and all the other cases, being formed by *inflections* or *bending* from it, were called *oblique*. Now the *objective* case can only stand for the accusative, in which the object of an affirmative sentence *is* put; but *oblique* comprehends other relations, and other cases, in which this form of the pronoun is used; as, *of me, to me, from me*. (1768: 102)
[...] the thing acted upon is in the Objective [9] Case; as, it appears plainly when it is expressed by the Pronoun, which has a proper termination for that Case; 'Alexander conquered *them*;' and the Verb is said to govern the Objective Case.' [9] [...] '*Who* should I *meet* the other night, but my old friend?' Spect. N°32. [...] It ought in all these places to be *whom*. (1762: 99-100)	When the pronoun precedes the verb, or the participle by which its case is determined, it is very common, especially in conversation, to use the nominative case where the rules of grammar require the oblique. As, *Who is this for? Who should I meet the other day but my old friend.* Spectator No. 32. This form of speaking is so familiar, that I question whether grammarians should not admit it as an exception to the general rule. **Dr. Lowth says, that grammar requires us to say, *Whom do you think me to be.*** But in conversation we always hear, *Who do you think me to be.* (1768: 107).

Table 2.1 Mentions of Lowth's grammatical judgments in the 1768 *Rudiments* and corresponding passages in Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762, my highlights).

2.2.2 Priestley borrows examples from Lowth's work 'for a purpose different'

In acknowledging his debt to Lowth in the 1768 preface, Priestley records that he has borrowed a few of Lowth's examples and rushes to add 'though generally for a purpose different from his' (Priestley 1768: xxiii). I only identified one such example, a line from Pope's *Messiah*: 'Rapt into future times the bard begun' (Lowth 1762: 87 fn4; Priestley 1768: 113). Lowth quotes this line to comment on the form *begun* used as a preterit while Priestley focusses on the spelling of the past participle *rapt*. To this category of borrowings one might add two sentences

taken from Lowth's own prose, which Priestley collected to exemplify observations of his own. In the first one Priestley corrects a sentence for its problematic use of coordination in relation to number: 'An endeavour to comprize a great deal in one sentence is often the occasion of a confusion in numbers. *Words consist of* one *or more* syllables; *syllables, of* one *or more* letters' (Priestley 1768: 191-92). Priestley does not source this example but a search in *ECCO* and *Google Books* revealed that it comes from Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar*: 'Sentences consist of Words; Words, of one or more Syllables; Syllables, of one or more Letters' (Lowth 1762: 2), as no other author had used this phrasing prior to Lowth. Priestley's correction was ignored by Lowth who did not change the sentence in subsequent editions of his grammar. The second example taken from Lowth's prose is extracted from his polemical correspondence with William Warburton: 'We have one word, which is used as a verb in one single construction, but which is very unlike a verb in other respects; *I had as* lief *say a thing after him as after another*. Lowth's Answer to Warburton. i.e. *I should as soon chuse to say.* This is a colloquial and familiar phrase, and is not often found in writing' (Priestley 1768: 110). Priestley's judgment on Lowth's prose is rather negative in both cases again. Even in this category of examples used for a different purpose, which Priestley had fully acknowledged, the number of borrowings is extremely limited.

2.2.3 Priestley covertly borrows from Lowth

Finally, *WCopyfind* highlighted only nine passages in the 1768 *Rudiments* which were neither acknowledged nor used for 'a purpose different'. Table 2.2 shows these potential covert borrowings in parallel with the original text in the earliest edition of Lowth's *Short Introduction*.

Lowth's *Short Introduction* (1762, 1763, 1764)	Priestley's *Rudiments* (1768)
The rest of the letters are consonants; which cannot be sounded alone: some not at all, and these are called Mutes, *b, c, d, g, k, p, q, t*: others very imperfectly, making a kind of obscure sound, and these are called Semi-vowels, or Half-vowels, *l, m, n, r, f, s*; the first four of which are also distinguished by the name of Liquids. (1762: 4-5)[21]	The rest of the letters are called *consonants*, being sounded in conjunction with vowels. Of these, however, *l, m, n, r, f, s*, are called *semi-vowels*, giving an imperfect sound without the help of a vowel; and *l, m, n, r*, are, moreover, called *liquids*. But *b, c, d, g, k, p, q, t*, are called *mutes*, yielding no sound at all without the help of a vowel. (1768: 2)
To before a Verb, is the sign of the Infinitive Mode: but there are some few verbs, which have other Verbs following them in the Infinitive Mode, without the sign *to*: as, bid, dare, need, make, see, hear; and let, have, not used as Auxiliaries: as, 'I bade him do it: you dare not do it; I saw him do it; I heard him say it.' (1763:117-18)[22]	Q. Are there no other verbs, besides those which are called *auxiliary*, that are joined in construction with other verbs; without being followed by the preposition *to*? A. The verbs *bid, dare, read [sic], make, see, hear, feel*, and also *act*, are used in the same construction as, *He saw me write it. I heard him say it.* (1768: 39)
His self and *their selves* were formerly in use, even in the Objective Case after a Preposition: 'Every of us *[sic]*, each for his self, laboured how to recover him.' Sidney. 'That they would willingly and of *their selves* endeavour to keep a perpetual chastity.' Stat. 2 and 3. Ed. vi. ch. 21. (1764: 37 fn10)[23]	*Hisself*, and *theirselves*, were formerly used for *himself* and *themselves*. *Every one of us, each for hisself, laboured how to recover him*. Sydney. (1768: 96)

[21] Although this passage was highlighted by *WCopyfind*, it discusses fairly consensual points on spelling, and uses widespread metalanguage which can be found in other influential grammars, such as Brightland and Gildon (1710) or Greenwood (1711). It is nonetheless striking that Priestley inserted this passage in 1768, while the 1761 edition did not discuss spelling at all and referred the reader to '*Dr Watt's Art of reading and writing English*' (1761: 1fn). Besides, Priestley's text is closer to Lowth's than to Watts's, which uses the term 'Half Vowels' instead of semi-vowel, and does not distinguish a group of liquids among the half-vowels, which do not include letter *f* either (see Watts 1721: 3).

[22] This observation already featured in the first edition (1762: 108-109), but *feel*, which Priestley lists in his remark, was not included by Lowth until the 1763 edition. Searching through *ECCO* and *Google Books* (last accessed 27.04.2019), I have found no earlier grammar listing the verbs in this order which could have inspired one or both of them.

[23] This footnote did not appear in the first edition of the *Short Introduction*. It was added in 1763 but only featuring 'his self' and the quotation from Sidney (1763: 38 fn9). The reference to 'their selves' appeared in 1764.

Lowth's *Short Introduction* (1762, 1763, 1764)	Priestley's *Rudiments* (1768)
The Nominative Case following the Auxiliary, or the Verb itself, sometimes supplies the place of the Conjunctions *if* and *tho'*: as, 'Had he done this, he had escaped:' 'Charm he never so wisely:' that is, '*if* he had done this;' '*tho'* he charm.' (1762: 147)	*Never so* was formerly used where we now say *ever so*. This form is generally to be found in the works of Mr. Addison, and others of his age. It is constantly used in our translation of the Bible. *Charm he* never so *wisely*. (1768: 99)
In a few instances the Active Present Participle hath been vulgarly used in a Passive Sense; as, *beholding* for *beholden*; *owing* for *owed*. And some of our writers are not quite free from this mistake: 'I would not be *beholding* to fortune for any part of the victory.' Sidney. 'I'll teach you all, what's *owing* to your Queen.' Dryden. (1763: 124 fn4)	In some very familiar forms of speech, the active seems to be put for the passive form of verbs and participles. *I'll teach you all what's* owing *to your Queen.* Dryden. *The books continue selling*, i. e. *upon the sale*, or *to be sold*. (1768: 111)
'Being mechanical, you *ought* not walk, Upon a labouring day, without the sign. Of your profession?' Shakespear, Jul. Caes. Both grammar and custom require, '*ought* not to walk.' *Ought* is not one of the Auxiliary Verbs, tho' often reckoned among them: that it cannot be such, is plain from this consideration; that it never admits of another Verb immediately following it, without the Preposition *to*. (1763: 118 fn8)	The verb *ought* is not enumerated among the auxiliary verbs, because it does not connect with the other verbs, without the intervention of the particle *to*. It is an imperfect verb, for it has no other modification besides this one. (1768: 113)
Verbs ending in *e* omit the *e* in the Present Participle: as, *love, loving*. Verbs ending with a single Consonant preceded by a single Vowel, and, if of more than one syllable, having the accent in the last Syllable, double the Consonant in the Present Participle, as well as in every other part of the Verb in which a Syllable is added: as, *put, putting, putteth*; *forget, forgetting, forgetteth*, *abet, abetting, abetted*. (1763: 94-95)	To avoid a collision of vowels, the *e* is omitted before *i* in participles of the present tense; as, *love, loving*. On the other hand, the final consonant is doubled in the same case; and indeed before any other addition to the termination, when it is preceded by a single vowel, and when, if it consist *[sic]* of two syllables, the accent would be upon the latter of them; as, *get, getting, getteth*; *forget, forgetting, forgetteth*. (1768: 121)
They [Auxiliaries] sometimes also supply the place of another Verb, and make the repetition of it, in the same or a subsequent sentence, unnecessary: as, 'He *loves* not plays, As thou *dost*, Anthony.' Shakspear, Jul. Caes. (1763: 62)	It is often unnecessary to repeat the principal verb after an auxiliary, when it has been used before in the same sentence, and the same construction. *I have read that author, but you have not. He loves not plays, as thou dost, Anthony.* Shakespeare. (1768: 126)

Lowth's *Short Introduction* (1762, 1763, 1764)	Priestley's *Rudiments* (1768)
And the Nominative Case is sometimes placed after a Verb Neuter: as, 'Upon thy right hand *did stand the Queen*:' 'On a sudden appeared the King.' And frequently with the Adverbs *there* and *then*: as, 'There *was a man*:' 'Then *came* unto him *the Pharisees*.' The reason of it is plain: the Neuter Verb not admitting of an Objective Case after it, no ambiguity of Case can arise from such a position of the Noun. (1762: 103)	Whenever no ambiguity will be occasioned by putting the nominative case after the verb, this construction makes an elegant variety in English style. This is particularly the case in verbs neuter, which admit of no object of the affirmation. *Upon thy right hand stands the Queen.* The nominative case has always this place when a sentence begins with the particle *there*. *There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.* And generally after *then*. *Then came into him the Pharisees*. (1768: 174-75)

Table 2.2 Unacknowledged borrowings in the 1768 *Rudiments* and corresponding passages in Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762, 1763, 1764, highlights as per *WCopyfind*).

None of these nine passages featured in the 1761 *Rudiments*, not even the first two which are located in the 'rudiments' proper. This is compelling evidence that contrary to Smith's claim, Priestley did not plagiarise Lowth for the 1761 *Rudiments* and that he probably had not read him by then. Five of these nine passages were only added by Lowth in the 1763 edition of his *Short Introduction to English Grammar*, and a sixth one in the 1764 edition. This suggests that Priestley's most likely source was the latter, or at least that he had consulted that edition before writing the 1768 *Rudiments*. In five of these passages, mostly those containing a sourced quotation – from Sidney, Shakespeare, Dryden, or the Bible –, Priestley more or less follows Lowth's judgment, which contradicts his prefatory claim that he mostly re-used Lowth's examples 'for a purpose different'. The other four passages were probably borrowed from Lowth too, but they deal with more generic aspects of the language such as spelling, metalanguage, or categorisation, which are less likely to differ from grammar to grammar. Given how commonplace borrowings were between eighteenth-century grammarians as shown by Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2008b), it is fair to say that these 9 cases of covert borrowing look minimal, and hardly back up Smith's charge against

Priestley. At any rate, they fully disprove the claim that he plagiarised Lowth as early as in 1761.

2.2.4 Lowth: one source among others

Overall, results from *WCopyfind* comparing Lowth's and Priestley's texts show that Priestley's prefatory statement was accurate and that their grammars do differ considerably more, both quantitatively and qualitatively, than suggested by Smith. Ironically, *WCopyfind* also enabled me to discover that as early as in the 1769 edition of the *Short Introduction to English Grammar,* Lowth himself was already borrowing a few examples from Priestley's 1768 *Rudiments* to complement his critical notes. I found four such instances: 'The people of England may congratulate *to* themselves, that' Dryden, on Dram. Poesy. 'Something like this has been reproached *to* Tacitus.' Bolingbroke, on History, Vol. I. p. 136. (Priestley 1768: 162; Lowth 1769: 164 fn6); 'A man may see a metaphor, *or* an allegory, in a picture, as well as read *them* [it] in a description.' Addison, Dial. I. on Medals. (Priestley 1768: 190; Lowth 1769: 129 fn1); 'I fancy *they are these kind* of Gods, which Horace mentions in his allegorical vessel.' Addison, Dial. II. on Medals. (Priestley 1768: 190-91; Lowth 1769: 149 fn9); 'This is another use, that, in my opinion, contributes rather to make a man learned than wise, and is *neither* capable of pleasing the understanding, *or* imagination,' Addison, Dial. I. on Medals. (Priestley 1768: 199; Lowth 1769:186 fn8). Not only is this evidence of the originality of Priestley's work, but it also shows that influence went both ways.

To further put these findings into perspective, it must be added that, in terms of acknowledged borrowings in the 1768 *Rudiments*, Lowth actually comes second to Samuel Johnson. The *Dictionary of the English Language* (1755) is explicitly referred to eight times, and Johnson's prose is quoted three times in illustrative

examples. Unfortunately, it is not possible to compare the bulky *Dictionary* with the *Rudiments* via *WCopyfind*, but it is likely that Priestley's grammar also contains a number of covert borrowings from Johnson. By way of example, Priestley's distinction between *shall* and *will* (1761: 22; 1768: 37) can be found word for word in the grammar prefixed to Johnson's *Compleat Introduction to the Art of Writing Letters*: 'when we only simply foretel, we use *shall* in the first Person, and *will* in the rest; but when we promise, threaten or engage, we use *will* in the first Person, and *shall* in the others' (1758: 6). Interestingly, Johnson himself is likely to have borrowed this observation since it appears *verbatim* earlier in John Newbury's *Easy Introduction to the English Language* (1745: 87) and Daniel Turner's *Abstract of English Grammar and Rhetoric* (1739: 17).[24] Furthermore, of the eleven explicit references to Johnson in the 1768 *Rudiments,* only four already featured in the 1761 *Rudiments.* This seems to indicate that, in revising his grammar for the second edition, Priestley was not so much acting as 'a diligent opportunist' pilfering from a more successful grammar, as he was seeking to improve his work, by drawing on a broad range of sources, including less recent ones than Lowth, such as Johnson – or Harris who is also mentioned in the preface. This archaeology of Priestley's grammaticography is further evidence that it may be more fruitful to consider the grammarians building on each other's work either as polyphonic texts as suggested by Wales (2006), or, as I proposed to call it in the Introduction to this thesis, a work of collective intelligence.[25]

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[24] Although he did not use this exact phrasing, the basic principles behind this distribution in use between *shall* and *will* can be traced back to John Wallis's *Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae* (1653).

[25] For a discussion of Priestley's sources, from a socio-historical perspective, see also Straaijer (2016). Straaijer examines Priestley's reliance on Lowth and Johnson, among others, but his investigation is limited to overt references to these authors in Priestley's texts.

In conclusion, using plagiarism software to compare the 1768 *Rudiments* with Lowth's grammar has enabled me to ascertain in a more quantifiable and conclusive way the extent to which Priestley used Lowth's work when he introduced substantial changes to his grammar. Although textual borrowings from and critical engagement with Lowth's work did contribute to Priestley's revision of the *Rudiments*, the results of this investigation do not suggest that Lowth's success was a decisive influence in making these changes. Firstly, because Priestley rejects Lowth's grammatical choices almost as much as he adopts them. Secondly, because the influence of other sources such as Johnson, and Priestley's own effort to come up with original observations, as discussed in Chapter 1, were no less decisive in the grammaticographic evolution of the *Rudiments*.

However, while the more tangible kind of influence evidenced by textual borrowings has proved to be less substantial than Smith (1996) had argued, Lowth may nevertheless have had a more elusive influence on Priestley. This is the assumption of two more recent studies carried out by Hodson (2008) and Straaijer (2009, 2011) who have argued that the publication of Lowth's grammar brought about a change of approach in Priestley's grammar writing, and a transformation of the *Rudiments* which goes beyond the textual level analysed by plagiarism software. I will start by examining Straaijer's thesis in light of my own findings.

2.3 A more proscriptive approach?

Robin Straaijer dedicated two chapters of his doctoral dissertation (2011) to examining Priestley's grammaticographic practice. His objective was to provide quantifiable evidence to support the revision of the old opposition between prescriptivist Lowth and descriptivist Priestley which Azad (1989) and Hodson (2006) had initiated in more qualitative fashion. Unlike previous studies of

prescriptive metalanguage, such as Sundby *et al.* (1991), Straaijer's does not focus on lexical items denoting negative attitudes towards certain constructions (e.g. *barbarism*, *solecism, harsh*, *improper*, etc.), but on modalities and stance markers. It looks at Lowth's and Priestley's respective use of what he called 'prescriptive, proscriptive, and descriptive judgments' in Chapter 6, and at their use of epistemic and deontic modalities as markers of, respectively, descriptive and prescriptive attitudes in Chapter 7. Straaijer argues that his data show no significant difference between Priestley and Lowth in terms of the amount of prescriptive and descriptive metalanguage they used. His results therefore confirm Azad's and Hodson's earlier intuitions that the 'descriptive vs. prescriptive' framework was, to a large extent, a false dichotomy, and that it does not capture a meaningful difference in grammaticographic practice between the two grammarians. With this study, however, Straaijer was able to make a new claim on the evolution of the *Rudiments* between 1761 and 1768. In Chapter 6, he introduces another dichotomy, this time between *pre*scriptive and *pro*scriptive judgments, which allows him to observe that between 1761 and 1768 Priestley became more proscriptive, and to posit that this is where Lowth's influence can be located in Priestley's revision of his work. I will now examine this claim and assess the extent to which it effectively changes our understanding of Priestley's grammaticographic evolution.

2.3.1 Prescription vs. proscription: methodological issues

Straaijer's study rests on the following distinction between prescriptions and proscriptions: '[t]he former indicates that which is correct and ought to be adhered to, the latter that which is incorrect and ought not to be used' (2011: 214). With these definitions in mind, he collected all the prescriptions and

proscriptions in the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments* and obtained the results shown in Table 2.3.

	1st edition (1761) 92 pages		**2nd edition (1768) 200 pages**	
	N	*N/# pages*	*N*	*N/# pages*
proscriptions	13	0.14	79	0.40
prescriptions	13	0.14	23	0.12
Total	26	0.28	102	0.51

Table 2.3 Pro- and prescriptions in the *Rudiments of English Grammar* (1761, 1768), as per Table 6.5.1 in Straaijer (2011: 215)

Using a per-page ratio, Straaijer argues that, by contrast with the relative ratio of prescriptions which remained stable between 1761 and 1768, the ratio of proscriptive judgments sharply increased over the same period – almost trebling from 0.14/page to 0.40/page. He concludes that these results confirm Hodson's intuition that 'it is not the case that the 1768 edition represents a move towards a more prescriptive position' (2006: 78). But he goes on to add that by distinguishing between prescriptions and proscriptions he has been able to identify another evolution which she had missed: 'the number of proscriptive comments greatly increased from the 1761 edition to the 1768 edition. Hence, Priestley's position definitely became more proscriptive' (2011: 219-20).

The methodology used by Straaijer to make this claim raises concerns about the reliability of the results. To begin with, the raw figures in his analysis are very low, especially for the 1761 edition, with only 13 occurrences of each type of judgments. This makes the ratio per page rather unreliable. Using a ratio per page is in itself a disputable choice, due to obvious formatting contingencies; this is why I have used a ratio per number of words in my own studies. But, when comparing the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments*, it is even more problematic because Straaijer puts on a par two texts of sometimes diverging genres, and with different discursive contexts. In the 1761 text, for instance, he counts 92 pages,

which means that he included the 29 pages of 'Examples of English Composition' (1761: 64-92), which are long excerpts from famous authors containing no metalinguistic comment from Priestley whatsoever. He also included the 20 pages of 'Observations on Style' (1761: 44-63) which Priestley removed in the 1768 *Rudiments,* and which have no equivalent in Lowth's grammar, thereby making comparisons between the two texts problematic. One of the 1761 prescriptions listed in Straaijer's Appendix 7 (2011: 419) is 'we ought rather to aim at perspicuity and strength of expression, than exactness in the punctilios of composition' (Priestley 1761: 61). This type of general stylistic advice does not feature at all in the 1768 *Rudiments*, where the newly-added 144 pages of 'Notes and Observations' are focused on specific grammatical usage remarks pertaining to a different genre. If one compares only the parts which are common to both grammars – namely the preface and the actual 'rudiments' in question-and-answer format – the number of proscriptions goes from 10 in 1761 to 3 in 1768 and the number of prescriptions from 10 to 6: they actually decrease in both cases. The increasing figures in Straaijer's table are therefore mostly a reflection of the fact that Priestley added a substantial amount of new material in 1768. And the flawed ratio-per-page methodology makes it look like a proportionate increase, when it is primarily a raw increase.

The second problem in Straaijer's methodology is his understanding of what constitutes a prescription and a proscription. The distinction between 'what ought to' and 'what ought not to' be used seems straightforward in theory but, as his choice of illustrative examples shows, in practice it is not so clear-cut:

> The following two are examples of proscriptive comments from the grammar:
>
> (20) As the article [a] always implies *one*, it can **never** be used with words in the *plural number* (Priestley 1761a: 7f).

> (21) The preposition *among* always implies a number of things; and, therefore, **cannot** be used in conjunction with the word *every*, which is in the singular number (Priestley 1768a: 168).

And the following two comments, one with and one without a modal auxiliary, are examples of prescriptive ones:

> (22) [W]hen we simply *foretel*, **we use** *shall* in the first person, and *will* in the rest [...] but when we promise, threaten, or engage, we use *will* in the first person, and *shall* in the rest (Priestley 1761a: 22).
>
> (23) Q. What is the correspondence of a verb and its subject? A. They **must** have the same number, and person (Priestley 1768a: 41–42). (Straaijer 2011: 214, his highlights)

As a preliminary point, it is worth reiterating that example (22) is a remark which Priestley borrowed *verbatim* from Johnson (see 2.2.4). Whether this judgment reflects 'Priestley's position' is disputable; and if its inclusion makes Priestley's text more proscriptive, it is as a result of Johnson's influence not Lowth's. Looking at the words highlighted by Straaijer, it appears that what he counts as proscriptive comments is recommendations in the negative – *never* (20) or *not* (21) – and what he counts as prescriptive is recommendations in the affirmative (22, 23). The problem is that this purely formal criterion disregards the semantics of the sentences, which leads to inconsistencies in Straaijer's classification.[26] By way of example, he lists the following passage among the 1761 prescriptions (2011: 419): 'Every writer, therefore, must carefully avoid the too frequent recurrence of the same word, the same syllable, and the same manner of closing a sentence [...]' (1761: 49). Note that this is again the type of stylistic comment which would not belong in the 1768 *Rudiments*. The use of the modal *must* in the affirmative here is similar to that of example (23) above, which is probably why it counts as a prescription. Yet, despite the absence of negative particle, the verb *avoid* gives

[26] Here is not the place to go into such developments, but there are also issues, in the studies carried out in Chapters 6 and 7, with the manner in which Straaijer considers modal verbs to express only one modality – *may* as solely epistemic and *must* as solely deontic.

this recommendation a negative meaning. Priestley deems the feature in question 'incorrect' and therefore recommends that it 'ought not to be used', to quote Straaijer's definition. It should therefore be counted as a proscription. This is where Straaijer's study reaches its inherent aporia: when two alternatives are in competition – which is the case in the large majority of the examples he examined – any prescription to use one is a proscription to use the other, and vice versa. Example (22) is a good example of that: if Priestley is prescribing the use of *shall* in the first person, and *will* in the rest when we simply foretell, it follows that he is proscribing the use of *will* in the first person, and *shall* in the rest when we simply foretell. This problem is made even more evident when Priestley spells out the two alternatives as in the following example: 'if possible, make a *participle* different from the *preterite* of a verb; as, a book is *written*, not *wrote*; the ships are *taken* not *took*' (1761: 17fn). It must be assumed that Straaijer counted this observation as a prescription because the imperative *make* is in the affirmative. Yet, Priestley *pre*scribes the use of *written* and *taken* as the preferable participial forms as much as he *pro*scribes that of *wrote* and *took*. Consequently, in a large number of cases, Straaijer's decision to list a judgment as either a prescription or a proscription is highly disputable, not to say arbitrary, which makes the results in Table 2.3 too unreliable to be interpreted in the definitive way he did.[27]

2.3.2 The result of Lowth's influence

The second problem with Straaijer's study is that in addition to contending that 'Priestley's position definitely became more proscriptive' (2011: 219-20), he also

[27] To Straaijer's credit, he does show awareness of these methodological issues, but falls short of fixing them: '[w]hether the two types of comments, prescriptive and proscriptive, can actually be seen as two separate types of comments is a question to which there does not appear to be a straightforward answer' (2011: 216).

attributes this change to Lowth's influence. Relying on Tieken-Boon van Ostade's study of Lowth's normative language and her conclusion that 'Lowth's approach was essentially proscriptive' (2006a: 544), Straaijer draws the following conclusion:

> Lowth's influence therefore went beyond the borrowing of only 'a few examples' and may explain the much greater number of proscriptions in the second edition of Priestley's grammar. In order to ascertain this, I checked which proscriptions also occur in the first edition of Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), which are twenty in all. They are marked with an asterisk in Appendix 6. Compared to the total number of proscriptions in the 1768 edition, a relatively small number of them coincide with those in Lowth's, where Priestley may have found them. So rather than blindly incorporating Lowth's normative strictures into his own grammar, it is more likely that Lowth's grammar encouraged Priestley to be more critical towards his own work, and to his attitude towards grammar in a more general sense. As a result, the second edition of his grammar saw a great increase in proscriptive comments compared to the first. (Straaijer 2011: 219)

In Table 2.4, I have matched the list of 'proscriptions' in the 1768 *Rudiments* marked with an asterisk by Straaijer in his Appendix 6 (2011: 414-18) together with Tieken-Boon van Ostade's list of Lowth's proscriptive comments (2006a: 553-55). As Straaijer points out himself, 20 corresponding proscriptions out of the 79 he has collected is a small number to posit that what he thinks of as a sharp increase in the number of proscriptive comments between 1761 and 1768 (from 13 to 79) is due to Lowth's influence. When looking at the list of features themselves, it appears that the correspondence is also exaggerated.

I have already discussed 3 of these features – *means*, double superlative, *who/whom* – and shown that Priestley explicitly referred to Lowth's comments to disagree with them. But, strikingly, Table 2.4 shows that 14 out of the 20 proscriptions actually correspond to one factor: the choice of preposition.

Lowth's footnote on prepositions (1762: 129-31) lists faulty examples together with the correct preposition in brackets. I assume that this presentation is what signals a 'proscriptive comment' to Straaijer's mind, for the footnote contains almost no commentary apart from the first sentence – 'Examples of impropriety in the use in of Preposition in Phrases of this kind' (1762: 129) – and one other sentence which, according to Straaijer's definition, is actually a prescription – 'Observe also that the Noun generally requires after it the same Preposition as the Verb from which it is formed' (1762: 130). This footnote can hardly be put on a par with Priestley's 15 pages of detailed comments on the use of prepositions. I also found that only 4 out of the 14 examples from Priestley listed by Straaijer had a direct equivalent in Lowth – they are in bold in Table 2.4. On close scrutiny, the correspondences established by Straaijer with this list of 'proscriptions' fall short of proving that Priestley's grammaticographic approach changed because Lowth's proscriptive approach rubbed off on him. Once boiled down to its most reliable elements, Straaijer's study does not uncover further influence from Lowth than the passages highlighted by *WCopyfind* in Section 2.2. As suggested by Straaijer's assumption that 'Lowth's grammar encouraged Priestley to be more critical towards his own work', I believe that the proscriptive parallels are overplayed in his study to fit in with the received view that Lowth must have had some kind of influence on Priestley. In Straaijer's case, this assumption is based on his reading of Schofield's biography of Joseph Priestley (1997) and of Hodson's interpretation of some of Schofield's findings from Priestley's correspondence (2008). Hodson argues that the letters presented by Schofield show that the success of Lowth's grammar caused Priestley to experience a crisis of faith in the teaching of English grammar, which explains the nature of the 1768 changes. I will now examine Hodson's claim and the narrative which comes with it.

‘1768 proscriptions’ marked with an asterisk in Straaijer’s Appendix 6 (2011)	‘Lowth’s proscriptive comments’ in Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2006a)
* *mean* instead of *means* as singular noun (p.64)	*This means/these means/this mean* (p.120)
* double comparative / superlative (p.78)	Double comparatives – *lesser* (p.43)
* adjectives for adverbs (p.80)	Adjectives used as adverbs (pp.124-5)
* nominative case for oblique: ‘the chaplain intreated my comrade and I’ for ‘...and me’(p.102)	Who – *Who* for *whom* in object position (pp.99, 127)[28]
* preterite for past participle (p.125)	Past participle forms (pp. 86-88)
*** improper use of *of* instead of other prepositions (pp.158–160)**	Various – ‘Improper’ use of prepositions (pp. 129-31).
* superfluous use of *of* (p.160)	
* omission of *of* (p.161)	
*** *to* for other prepositions: *for, of, against, upon* (p.163)**	
*** *for* instead of other prepositions (pp.163–164)**	
* superfluous use of *for* (p.164)	
* *with* instead of other prepositions (pp.164–165)	
*** improper use of *on / upon* (p.166)**	
* *in* instead of other prepositions (p.167)	
* ellipsis of *in* (p.168)	
* improper use of *from* (p.168)	
* superfluous use of *from*: ‘forbear from’ (p.168)	
* use of *among* in conjunction with *every* (p.168)	
* use of ‘known *under* the general name of’(p.169)	
* plural verb form with collective noun (p.186)	Nouns of multitude with plural finite (p.104)

Table 2.4 Straaijer’s list of ‘proscriptions’ in the 1768 *Rudiments* which have a match in Tieken-Boon van Ostade’s list of Lowth’s proscriptive comments (my highlights).

[28] It is unclear which, to Straaijer’s mind, is the corresponding comment in Lowth’s proscriptions, but the one on the form of pronoun *who* is the only one which strictly answers to the definition of ‘nominative case for oblique’.

2.4 A crisis of faith in the teaching of English grammar?

2.4.1 The chronology of events

In her paper 'Joseph Priestley's Two *Rudiments of English Grammar*: 1761 and 1768' (2008), Hodson attempts to construct a coherent narrative of the evolution of the *Rudiments* by building on Schofield's psychological account of Priestley's time at Warrington, and in particular on his remark that 'there is some ambiguity in his later references to his task' there (1997: 97). Thus, Hodson argues that 'Priestley's tone in the 1761 Preface is markedly upbeat, both with regard to the state of the English language, and, in particular, with regard to the quality of his own text' (2008: 180) and, by contrast, '[t]he Preface of 1768 does not share this breezy optimism' (2008: 181). Her claim is that this evolution is also reflected in Priestley's grammar writing and that the 1768 *Rudiments* is more experimental and less assertive than the 1761 *Rudiments*. Hodson attributes this perceived change of tone and the grammar's more tentative style to 'the crisis of faith about the teaching of English grammar that Priestley expressed in his 1766 letter to Rotheram' (2008: 177). This letter, unearthed by Schofield to illustrate the aforementioned 'ambiguity' of Priestley towards teaching (1997: 97-98), specifically mentions Lowth.

> My *English Grammar* was not ready time enough [while at Nantwich] for me to make trial of it. It has been out of print two or three years, and I shall not consent to its being reprinted. *Lowth*'s is much better, but I question whether it will signify much to teach any English Grammar. (Priestley 18 May 1766; cited in Hodson 2008: 177)

Hodson goes on to add that '[a]lthough he evidently recovered his confidence in the endeavour sufficiently to publish a revised edition, he was not able to recover the optimistic tone of the 1761 edition' (2008: 181). Like Straaijer's, Hodson's narrative (Table 2.5), makes the publication of Lowth's grammar the turning point in the evolution of Priestley's grammaticographic approach.

1758–61	Priestley first taught English as a schoolmaster in Nantwich, where he wrote the *Rudiments of English Grammar*, but '[it] was not ready time enough for [him] to make trial of it' there.
1761	The *Rudiments* was first published shortly after his arrival at the Warrington Academy, where he had just been appointed Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres.
1762	Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* was published.
1766	Priestley 'expressed some doubts about the value of teaching English grammar' in a letter to Rotheram dated 18 May, and felt Lowth's grammar had superseded his.
1766–68	Priestley had another change of heart and mustered up the strength to work on a new edition of his grammar.
1767	Priestley left Warrington for Leeds.
1768	The second edition of the *Rudiments of English Grammar* was published.

Table 2.5 Chronology of events between the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments* according to Hodson (2008).

Although the reasons why Priestley must have changed his mind about the value of his grammar between 1766 and 1768 remain to be clarified, Hodson's attempt to establish a coherent narrative is a helpful contribution towards explaining the 1768 changes. However, the chronology of events proposed in Table 2.5 has now been undermined by my own findings in Chapter 1. I have established that before 1765, or until 21st April 1766 at the latest (see Section 1.2), Priestley was already at work on a grammar which very much resembles the revised and expanded version of the *Rudiments* published in 1768 and which, crucially, anticipates most of its innovations. Consequently, by the time he wrote his letter to Rotheram on 18 May 1766, Priestley had already collected a large part of his new material and he had already formed the ideas – in the 1762 *Course* in particular – which would lead to the grammaticographic changes of 1768. This new chronology forces us to revisit Hodson's argument that the 1768 changes were informed by Priestley's 'doubts about the value of teaching English grammar'.

2.4.2 *Priestley's letter to Caleb Rotheram (1766)*

Since it plays a crucial role in Hodson's narrative, it is worth reading the letter to Rotheram in full, so as to understand the context in which the passage both she and Schofield highlighted in their works is set.

TO REV. CALEB ROTHERAM.

DEAR SIR, *Warrington*, *May* 18, 1766.

You pay me a compliment in consulting me upon the subjects mentioned in your letter. I wish I had any thing to communicate to you worth your notice, but your own reflection, and a very little experience, will soon render every thing of that nature needless. I made use of Holmes' Latin Grammar, not because I altogether liked it, but because I thought it easy for beginners. I used the London Vocabulary, a few of Clarke's Translations, then a few of Sterling's editions, and lastly made my scholars read their authors without any help at all, except the Dictionary. Several of the collections for the use of Eton school are excellent; as are their four books of *Exercises*, beginning with *Exempla minora*, and ending with historical examples.

My English Grammar was not ready time enough for me to make trial of it. It has been out of print two or three years, and I shall not consent to its being reprinted. Lowth's is much better, but I question whether it will signify much to teach any English Grammar. Making the scholars compose dialogues, themes, &c., &c., &c., correcting their bad English, and making occasional remarks, I always found of most real use. Let them write fair copies of the English of many of their lessons, and omit no opportunity of making them write in their own language. This you will find pleasant to yourself, and of prodigious service to your pupils. Do not fail to teach geography along with the classics, for by this means your pupils will indirectly acquire much real knowledge. I had a little school library, consisting chiefly of books of natural and civil history, with books of travels, which I made them read (as a favour) with the maps before them.

All my experience in teaching school was very small, for I was schoolmaster only three years; but if that will enable me to be of any service to you, I shall be very glad, and you may depend upon my best advice upon any occasion.

Table 2.6 Priestley's letter to Caleb Rotheram dated 18 May 1766 in full (Rutt 1999: I. 64-65).

Priestley is answering questions from his friend Caleb Rotheram (1738–1796), a minister at Kendal, about the teaching material he used when he was a schoolmaster at Nantwich. This is a recurring topic of conversation between the two: in another letter dated 7 January 1767, Priestley gives him advice on geography manuals and reading material for younger pupils (Rutt 1999: I.67).[29] Leaving the disclaimer of the first two sentences aside, Priestley reads like a self-assured tutor, confident in his methods and with clear recommendations. It is difficult to infer from this that he is going through a crisis of faith in the value of what he does. With the full context of the letter, it appears that the focus of the conversation is on manuals and handbooks. Therefore, when Priestley writes 'but I question whether it will signify much to teach any English Grammar', it is more likely that he is questioning the benefit of relying on one specific manual of English grammar, rather than fundamentally 'express[ing] some doubts about the value of teaching English grammar' in general, as suggested by Hodson (2008: 177). Priestley's concern is a pedagogical one: instead of rote learning from a handbook – the 1761 *Rudiments* were written in the canonical question-and-answer format going back to Donatus's *Ars Minor* – he now prefers to impart grammar in a more inductive and practical manner: 'Making the scholars compose dialogues, themes, &c., &c., &c., correcting their bad English, and making occasional remarks.' Innovative pedagogical methods were the trademark of dissenting academies such as Priestley's and Rotheram's. Consequently, I believe that the letter to Rotheram testifies to Priestley's confidence and to the greater expertise he has gained about the teaching of

[29] For more information on the place of Dissenting Academies in the English educational system at the time, their history, courses, students, and resources, see Parker (1914) in particular, but also McLachlan (1931), and, more recently, White (2011).

English grammar, more than self-doubt and insecurity vis-à-vis Lowth's grammar. It also shows that his views on language evolved and developed through the practice of teaching. The transformation of his grammar after the first edition – addition of the appendices 'Account of the most usual Mistakes in English Grammar' in 1765 and 'Notes and Observations' in 1768 – appear to result from pedagogical concerns in the first instance.

In fact, I would argue that Priestley's awareness of the pedagogical shortcomings of his grammar, and its later remediation, are already hinted at in the 1761 *Rudiments.* In section VIII 'Of Syntax', he defines syntax as 'that part of grammar which teaches the proper construction of words, or the method of joining them together in sentences' (1761: 32) and adds the following footnote:

> As but few of the relations of words and sentences in construction are expressed by a change of termination in English, but generally by conjunctive particles, the art of English Syntax must consist chiefly, in the proper application of the *conjunctive particles*; and the accurate use of these can only be learned from *observation* and *a dictionary.* (Priestley 1761: 32fn)

Priestley is here acknowledging that in its canonical format, the *Rudiments* does not provide all the tools necessary to learn or teach grammar, and that it does not fully 'catch language', as Evans and Dench (2006) have it. In the 1768 *Rudiments*, Priestley raised this footnote to the body of the text, at the very end of the section and added: 'What I have observed on this subject will be found among the *Additional Observations*' (1768: 42), i.e. the appended 144 pages of 'Notes and Observations'. This sentence is evidence that the material placed in the 1768 'Notes and Observations' (and in the 1765 *Grammar*) was collected to remedy the shortcomings already acknowledged in the 1761 *Rudiments*, and that 1768 changes grew out of pedagogical concerns: teaching grammar in a more comprehensive

and effective way than the 'rudiments' in their question-and-answer format, and imparting procedural rather than declarative knowledge,[30] as do the practical exercises which he suggested to Rotheram. Having established Priestley's authorship of the 1765 *Grammar* in Chapter 1 even allows us to conjecture that he might have originally wanted the 1768 *Rudiments* to look like a scaled-up version of the 1765 *Grammar*, with observations integrated into the 'rudiments' and no question-and-answer framework. It must be noted that the evolution of this passage between 1761 and 1768 also testifies to Priestley's cross-genre innovativeness in bringing into a grammar material which would otherwise be found in a dictionary. I will say more on Priestley's efforts to bridge the gap between grammar and dictionary and the pedagogical concerns behind this in Chapter 5.

2.4.3 The tone of the 1768 Rudiments

Hodson's reading of the 1766 letter to Rotheram is framed by Schofield's suggestion that Priestley showed 'ambiguity in his later references to [his] task' as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at the Warrington Academy (1997: 97). To further support this view, Schofield adduces a statement made by Priestley in his memoirs: 'at the time of my removal to Warrington, I had no particular fondness for my profession' (cited in Schofield 1997: 97). But Schofield's cut of this quotation can be misleading, as the original passage in the memoirs is more nuanced.

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[30] In epistemology, the terms 'procedural' and 'declarative' knowledge were introduced by Gilbert Ryle to distinguish between 'knowing how' and 'knowing that' (see *The Concept of the Mind*, 1949). I am using them here as didactic concepts, to distinguish between teaching methods emphasising the description of grammar (often through a Q&A format) and methods focusing on the use of grammar in context.

> Though at the time of my removal to Warrington, I had no particular fondness for the studies relating to my profession then, I applied to them with great assiduity; and besides composing courses of 'Lectures on the Theory of Language,' and on 'Oratory and Criticism,' on which my predecessor had lectured, I introduced lectures on 'History and General Policy,' on the 'Laws and Constitutions of England,' and on the 'History of England.' (Priestley's memoirs in Rutt 1999: I.50)

The word 'then', cut out by Schofield, suggests that his disposition towards these studies changed. And the whole passage shows no reluctance to carry out his duties; on the contrary, Priestley emphasises his dedication to the task. The fact that we know, retrospectively, that Priestley later turned to other interests with great success probably coloured Schofield's reading of this passage and of the letter to Rotheram. Thus, Hodson's 2008 article builds upon the debateable suggestion from Schofield that Priestley felt disheartened about his work on language and grammar during his time at Warrington. Hodson's article seeks to validate this view by demonstrating that Priestley's pessimism manifests itself in the preface to the 1768 *Rudiments* and that it framed the 1768 changes. I will now re-examine the evidence used in Hodson's article to offer alternative interpretations.

One important piece of evidence adduced by Hodson to show Priestley's pessimism is the last paragraph of the 1768 preface. She finds that the humble note on which the preface ends is 'recognition that error is inevitable' (2008: 183), thereby implying a form of vulnerability which ties in with the crisis-of-faith narrative.

> The candid critic will, I hope, excuse, and point out to me, any mistakes he may think I have fallen into in this performance. In such a number of observations, most of them (with respect to myself, at least) original, it would be very extraordinary, if none of them should prove hasty or injudicious. (Priestley 1768: xxiii)

I would argue that, without Schofield's narrative in mind, this paragraph appears fairly rhetorical and constitutes a commonplace way of ending a preface. It is not out of the ordinary for eighteenth-century authors to pre-empt negative reviews. For instance, the last paragraph in Lowth's preface to his *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762) displays the same self-deprecation.

> The following short System is proposed only as an Essay, upon a Subject, tho' of little esteem, yet of no small importance; and in which the want of something better adapted to real use and practice, than what we have at present, seems to be generally acknowledged. If those, who are qualified to judge of such matters, and do not look upon them as beneath their notice, shall so far approve of it, as to think it worth a revisal, and capable of being approved into something really useful; their remarks and assistance, communicated through the hands of the Bookseller, shall be received with all proper deference and acknowledgement. (Lowth 1762: xv)

Hodson also focuses on the first paragraph of the preface, where Priestley gives his own account of why he revised the 1761 *Rudiments*, and she argues that he presents the resulting 1768 *Rudiments* as the 'unsatisfactory amalgamation of two proposed projects' (2008: 182).

> In the first composition of *the Rudiments of English Grammar*, I had no farther views than to the use of schools; and, therefore, contented myself with explaining the fundamental principles of the language, in as plain and familiar a manner as I could. Afterwards, taking a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular, I began to collect materials for a much larger work upon this subject; and did not chuse to republish the former work, till I had executed the other; as I imagined, that this could not fail to suggest several improvements in the plan of it. However, being frequently importuned to republish the former grammar, and being so much employed in studies of a very different nature, that I cannot accomplish what I had proposed, I have, in this treatise, republished that work, with improvements, and so much of the materials I had collected for the larger, as may be of practical use to those who write the language. These materials, therefore, I have reduced into as good an order as I can, and have subjoined them to the former grammar, under the title of *Notes and*

> *Observations, for the Use of those who have made some Proficiency in the Language*. (Priestley 1768: v-vi)

Whilst there certainly seems to be frustration in these lines, it appears to have been caused by the material constraints which forced him to publish the grammar before he could complete his project, and not by pessimism or doubt about the meaningfulness of this project. In retrospect, it is the 1761 *Rudiments* which appears as a work with limited scope – 'no farther views', 'contented myself', 'the fundamental principles', 'as plain and familiar as I could'. Further to my previous suggestion that Priestley may have wanted the second edition of the *Rudiments* to look like a scaled-up version of the 1765 *Grammar*, the frustration expressed in the 1768 preface may have come from his having to return – due to time, financial, publishing or other constraints – to the question-and-answer format and throw his extra material into an appendix rather than complete a reformatted and integrated grammar. The terms he uses to describe the project which he undertook after 1761 – 'a more extensive view of language in general', 'a much larger work upon this subject' – depict a confident author, not lacking in ambition. They do not suggest that Priestley felt he had been surpassed by Lowth. In fact, Hodson herself points that out when she comments on the passage where Priestley acknowledges his debt to his predecessors.

> [Priestley's] emphasis on the differences between the two approaches in the grammars would also appear to suggest that by 1768 Priestley was dissatisfied with Lowth's grammar [...]. Indeed I would argue that acknowledging a few borrowed 'examples', rather than suggesting that Lowth had any new ideas worth borrowing, is a case of damning with faint acknowledgment. Furthermore, the fact that Lowth's grammar is mentioned immediately *after* the wish for a Johnsonian grammar implies that Priestley does not consider Lowth to have offered the last word on the subject. (Hodson 2008: 185)

In conclusion, the role of Lowth's success in prompting Priestley to alter his own grammar seems to have been overplayed. As pointed out by Hodson, the scale and ambition of Johnson's lexicographic project may well have been as influential. By Priestley's own account, the turning point in his evolution was the moment after writing the 1761 *Rudiments* when he '[took] a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v). As will be shown in the remaining three chapters (Chapter 5 in particular), Priestley is alluding to the new teaching duties he took on once appointed at Warrington and the reflections contained in the *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar*, which, although written in 1762 and printed for the benefit of his students, had not been published by 1768. It may therefore be more productive to understand the 1768 changes as continuity in the development of Priestley's grammaticographic thinking, rather than as the result of a change of direction caused by Lowth.

2.5 Towards an alternative narrative

My alternative narrative of the history of Priestley's thinking will be developed across the following three chapters. In this section, I establish the premises of this narrative: it requires a recognition of the evolution rather than discontinuity between his grammars (2.5.1) and a willingness to take seriously the terms in which he describes and evaluates his own achievements (2.5.2).

2.5.1 Continuity in the development of Priestley's grammaticography

In the first volume of his biography – *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley: A Study of His Life and Works from 1733 to 1773* (1997) – Schofield also argues that the reference to 'a more extensive view of language in general' in the 1768 preface links the 1768 changes to the 1762 *Course*. He avers that '[t]he significant change

is in the preface, now twice as long as in the first edition, and containing a shortened version, with specific application to English, of some of the discussion of the *Lectures on … Language and Universal Grammar*' (1997: 102). Schofield identifies three aspects of the 1762 *Lectures* which, he believes, constituted the theoretical foundation of the 1768 preface. Firstly,

> [t]he relationship between the Lectures and the new preface to the *Rudiments* is […] best seen in a declaration of the latter that 'It must be allowed that custom of speaking, is the original, and only just standard of any language. We see in all grammars that this is sufficient to establish a rule, even contrary to the strongest analogies of the language itself' (ix). The *Lectures* systematically portray languages as an evolutionary development from sounds to letters, to combinations of sounds (and letters) into words, to the functional combinations of words into simple and then complex sentences. In such a theory of language development, spoken language must be prior (and superior) to written, in determination of its forms. However 'philosophical' the *Lectures* might be, it is clear from this and earlier examples, that Priestley's philosophy of language was social and utilitarian and that universal grammar would not derive from theological or scientific absolutisms. (Schofield 1997: 104)

Schofield accurately summarises Priestley's philosophy: language arises from communicative needs and is therefore social by nature. This Aristotelian view of mankind – *zōon politikon* and *zōon logon ekhon* – is made clear from the outset in the *Lectures*. The first sentence describes language as 'an art of unspeakable importance to mankind; as beings who, from the commencement to the close of this mortal life, can hardly subsist but as members of some particular community, and are, moreover, capable of the most extensive social connections' (1762: iii). The 'custom of speaking' is therefore a central tenet in Priestley's philosophy. However, Schofield – who is not a linguist but a historian of science by training – seems to misconstrue Priestley's emphasis on the notion when he infers that, to Priestley, 'spoken language must be prior (and superior) to written'. The key word

is not 'speaking', for Priestley seldom explores the differences between written and spoken language in the *Rudiments*, and he concentrates almost exclusively on analysing written language and written examples from authors. The key word is 'custom', to be opposed to 'analogy', explicitly named as its competitor for authority in establishing grammatical rules. Having clarified this point, it must be remarked that Priestley's focus on custom is not a novelty in the 1762 *Course*. Already, the 1761 preface compared grammar to 'a treatise of *Natural Philosophy*' (1761: vi), emphasising observation over what Schofield called 'theological or scientific absolutisms'. And, crucially, it already recognised the ultimate authority of 'all-governing custom':

> [...] the best and the most numerous authorities have been carefully followed. Where they have been contradictory, recourse hath been had to analogy, as the last resource: For if this should decide for neither of two contrary practices, the thing must remain undecided, till all-governing custom shall declare in favour of the one or the other. (Priestley 1761: vii)

This leads directly to Schofield's second point: Priestley's theory of the perfectibility of language (1997: 103-04).[31] Schofield compares a passage from Lecture XII (1762: 178-79) and one from the 1768 preface (1768: xv-xvi), and points out that in both Priestley maintains that the best forms of speech establish themselves in time. However, again, this view was already expressed in the preface to the 1761 *Rudiments*:

> We need make no doubt but that the best forms of speech will, in time, establish themselves by their own superior excellence: and, in all controversies, it is better to wait the decisions of *Time*, which are slow and sure, than to take those of *Synods*, which are often hasty and injudicious. A *manufacture* for which there is a great demand, and a *language* which many persons have leisure to read and write, are

[31] See Barrell (1983) and Hodson (2006) for further discussions on this topic.

> both sure to be brought, in time, to all the perfection of which they are capable. (Priestley 1761: vii-viii)

Finally, Schofield's third parallel between the two texts is what he calls the 'anti-Latin theme', i.e. 'Priestley's conviction that 'Northern' languages owe little in their structure to Latin' (1997: 103), on which he elaborates in Lectures XIII-XIV (1762: 187-218). Schofield then points to a new passage in the 1768 preface, which illustrates this anti-Latin theme, with regard to metalanguage and the description of the verb tenses:

> I own I am surprised to see so much of the distribution, and technical terms of the Latin grammar, retained in the grammar of our tongue; where they are exceedingly aukward, and absolutely superfluous; being such as could not possibly have entered into the head of any man, who had not been previously acquainted with Latin.
>
> [...] A little reflection may, I think, suffice to convince any person, that we have no more business with a future tense in our language, than we have with the whole system of Latin moods and tenses; because we have no modification of our verbs to correspond to it; and if we had never heard of a future tense in some other language, we should no more have given a particular name to the combination of the verb with the auxiliary *shall* or *will*, than to those that are made with the auxiliaries *do, have, can, must*, or any other. (Priestley 1768: vi-vii)

This view is not as fully developed in 1761 *Rudiments*, but it is already hinted at. The idea that English and other 'Northern' languages owe little to Latin is implied in Priestley's description of the simplicity of the English tongue:

> For this simplicity in the grammar of our language (arising chiefly from the paucity of our inflections of words) we are indebted to the long continued barbarism of the people from whom we received it; the severity of whose climate and difficulty of subsistence, left them little leisure for polishing, or indeed using, their language: Whereas the inhabitants of the more benign southern climates were, from the earliest antiquity, led by nature into luxury and refinement in every thing. (Priestley 1761: v)

The paucity of inflections in English is further developed in 1762, 1765 and 1768, as I will show in Chapter 3. As for the rejection of a formal future tense in the English language, it is already implied in the 1761 description of the English tense system: 'Verbs have two Tenses, the Present Tense, denoting the time present; and the Preter Tense, which expresseth the time past' (1761: 13). In other words, the three key themes which Schofield highlights as reflections elaborated in the 1762 *Lectures* and causing 1768 changes already featured in more or less embryonic form in the 1761 *Rudiments.* There is more continuity in the development of Priestley's grammaticographic thinking between 1761 and 1768 than the three narratives focussing on Lowth's supposed influence would suggest. Having demonstrated why these narratives are unsatisfactory, I will now put forward an alternative narrative which takes Priestley out of the shadow of Lowth. For this purpose, my contention is that we need to return to the text of the grammar, and follow Priestley's own vision of what he thinks he has achieved.

2.5.2 Priestley's evaluation of his achievements between 1761 and 1768

Although Schofield misidentified what was new in the 1768 preface, he was right in pointing out that it contains key novelties. Two in particular have received surprisingly little attention in the literature, given that Priestley himself presents them as his main achievements in the overhaul of the 1768 *Rudiments*. In the two passages in question Priestley highlights what he thinks of as his legacy in English grammaticography, and sheds light on the rationale behind the 1768 changes. In the first one, Priestley asserts that, although he has kept part of the format of the 1761 *Rudiments,* the second edition shows greater faithfulness to what he calls 'the genius' of the English language:

> I have retained the method of *question and answer* in the rudiments, because I am still persuaded, it is both the most convenient for the master, and the most intelligible to the scholar. I have also been so far from departing from the simplicity of the plan of that short grammar, that I have made it, in some respects, still more simple; and I think it, on that account, more suitable to the genius of the English language. [...] I cannot help flattering myself, that **future grammarians will owe me some obligation**, for introducing this uniform simplicity, so well suited to **the genius of our language**, into the English grammar. (Priestley 1768: vi-ix, my highlights)

It is worth noting, by the by, his use of 'retain' and 'still' in the first sentence, which confirms that he had reconsidered the question-and-answer format, and may have planned to discard it originally. In the second statement, Priestley emphasises his endeavour to respect what he now calls 'the true idiom' of the English language, in particular, by purging it of French influence:

> **If I have done any essential service** to my native tongue, I think it will arise from my detecting in time a very great number of *gallicisms,* which have insinuated themselves into the style of many of our most justly admired writers; and which, in my opinion, tend greatly to injure **the true idiom of the English language**, being contrary to its most established analogies. (1768: x, my highlights)

Terms such as 'obligation' and 'service' indicate that he did see grammaticography as a work of collective intelligence, and that he considered these two achievements as his unique contribution. Unlike the three themes highlighted by Schofield, neither the genius of the language nor the idiom of the language featured in the 1761 *Rudiments*: they constitute genuine novelties and, yet, they have never been discussed in the literature on Priestley. This is what I propose to do in the remainder of this thesis.

2.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have looked at previous attempts to understand why and how Priestley introduced the substantial changes to the 1768 *Rudiments* which have given this grammar and its author their unique place in English historiography. The three narratives in question present these changes as a response to Lowth's success. However, thanks to plagiarism software, I was able to demonstrate that, although Priestley undoubtedly became familiar with Lowth's grammar after 1762, his actual borrowings from the bishop's grammar were far too limited to support accusations of plagiarism. Likewise, I have demonstrated that narratives which had attributed the 1768 changes to Lowth's influence on Priestley's philosophy or his morale were methodologically flawed or contradicted by new evidence. My contention is that too much emphasis has been put on Lowth in the interpretation of Priestley's evolution, and too little on his own pedagogical concerns and the continuity of his own grammaticographic reflections. In order to gain new insights into Priestley's development, I therefore propose to go back to the text of the *Rudiments* and examine two notions introduced in 1768 on which Priestley himself puts the emphasis: the genius of the language and idiom of the language. In the next two chapters, I will explore their meaning and show how they framed Priestley's grammaticography.

3. Priestley and the genius of the language

3.1 Introduction

'On demande souvent ce que c'est que le génie d'une langue, et il est difficile de le dire. Ce mot tient à des idées très-composées ; il a l'inconvénient des idées abstraites et générales ; on craint, en le définissant, de le généraliser encore,' Antoine de Rivarol observed in his notorious eulogy of the French language *Discours sur l'universalité de la langue française* (1784: 19fn). There is a double meaning to this remark: it is difficult to say both what the *génie de la langue* refers to in terms of linguistic observables, and what the phrase signifies as a metalinguistic concept. Paradoxically, the main known about the signification of the phrase is precisely the elusiveness of its referent, to the point that the genius of the language has sometimes been likened to a *je ne sais quoi* (Siouffi 2010: 61). Questions about the meaning of the phrase arose at the time of Rivarol's essay in part due to its increasing popularity, in France and in the rest of Europe (Schlaps 2004, Haßler 2012). This was as much the case in English as it was in French or German. Figure 3.1 shows that occurrences of the phrases 'genius of the language', 'genius of the English language' and 'genius of the English tongue' peaked around the 1760s and 1770s, precisely at the time when Priestley was writing his works on grammar and language.

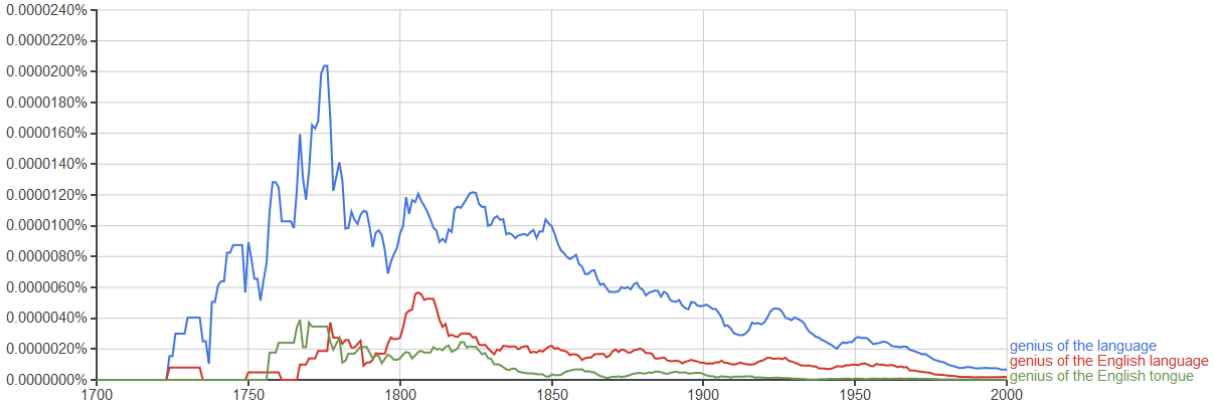

Figure 3.1 *Google Books* Ngram view for the phrases 'genius of the language', 'genius of the English language' and 'genius of the English tongue' (1700–2000)[32]

However, Figure 3.1 also shows that these occurrences steadily decreased from the first half of the nineteenth century onwards. It is possible to interpret this decline as a corollary to the development of linguistics as a scientific field, in the wake of William Jones's work on Sanskrit (1788) and Franz Bopp's comparative studies (1833-52). The first attestation of the word 'linguistics' in the *OED* dates from 1837 and a first occurrence of 'linguistic science' is recorded in 1825. Indeed, for many present-day linguists, the phrase 'genius of the language' belongs to what is dismissively referred to as 'folklinguistics', or 'language myths' (Trudgill and Bauer 1998), if not to an altogether different field, such as poetry or literature (Meschonnic 2000).

[32]https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=genius+of+the+language%2Cgenius+of+the+English+language%2Cgenius+of+the+English+tongue&year_start=1700&year_end=2000&corpus=15&smoothing=5&share=&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cgenius%20of%20the%20language%3B%2Cc0%3B.t1%3B%2Cgenius%20of%20the%20English%20language%3B%2Cc0%3B.t1%3B%2Cgenius%20of%20the%20English%20tongue%3B%2Cc0
[last accessed 09.12.2019] Although, frequencies based on *Google Books* Ngrams have become more and more common in linguistic research, they cannot be considered as entirely accurate, due to the necessarily uneven quality of the automatic digitisation of such a large-scale corpus. However, because of its sheer volume and temporal range, the corpus remains a unique tool. Its limitations have a stronger impact on diachronic investigations of competing variants or of syntactic change. But for the clearly identified set phrases in question here, the plots in Figure 3.1 constitute sufficient indication of the evolution of their use for the purpose of this introduction.

In this chapter, I will demonstrate that, although Priestley's 'genius of the language' is in many ways as elusive as in Rivarol's observation, it is nevertheless an operative notion in his work on language and grammar. In particular, I will examine how Priestley's reflections on the genius of the language informed the evolution of his grammaticographic practice. The phrase gradually entered the metalanguage of Priestley's grammars as he revisited his approach to grammar writing. Indeed, there is no occurrence of 'genius of the language' in the 1761 *Rudiments*, and the phrase first appears, as a single occurrence, in the 1765 *Grammar*. On turning to derivational morphology – or, in his own words, '[c]hanges, whereby Words pass from one Class to another' (1765: a6^{v}) – Priestley remarks that

> because only some of the Words of any Class admit of similar Change for the same Use, they are not usually reckoned among the Grammatical Changes of Termination; tho' the Genius of a Language appears in nothing more than in such Changes, and were they constant and regular, would have the same Right to be enumerated with the others. (Priestley 1765: a6^{v}-b)

In this first occurrence, the phrase comes up in a digression about the legitimacy ('have the same right') of discussing derivational morphology in this part of the grammar. It is surprising that such reflections should feature in a very short grammar appended to a dictionary. It is testament to the importance of grammaticographic considerations to Priestley, and to the function of the 'genius of the language' in his challenge to established grammaticographic practices. The role of the phrase is then further amplified in the 1768 *Rudiments,* which contains seven occurrences of its variants,[33] five of which can be found in the preface,

[33] The variants are 'genius of the language', 'genius of a language', 'genius of the English language', 'genius of our language' and 'genius of the English tongue'.

where Priestley lays out his general views about language, grammar, and grammar writing. This indicates that Priestley conceived of the phrase primarily as a theoretical concept, and not, as one could have assumed, as a normative tool in the analysis of the specific linguistic features discussed in the body of the grammar. I will examine in closer detail all the aforementioned occurrences of 'genius of the language' in Section 3.4 so as to determine more precisely the meaning(s) Priestley associated with it, and how it changed Priestley's approach to grammar writing between 1761 and 1768. But, first, I will look at the historical context in which it arose so as to identify the possible meanings the notion of 'genius of the language' can take on, and the debates surrounding its use in other works and other grammatical traditions. This will allow me to place Priestley within these broader debates.

3.2 The origins of the phrase 'genius of the language'

3.2.1 Earliest attestations

Studies of the 'genius of the language' (Rosiello 1961, Christmann 1967, Fumaroli 1992, Meschonnic 2000, Schlaps 2004, Trabant 2006, Siouffi 2010, Gambarota 2011, Haβler 2012, etc.) trace its emergence as an object of study back to the European Renaissance when a new interest in vernacular languages arose for political as well as scholarly reasons. Reformation, the advent of printing, and increased centralisation of power gave greater prominence to a number of European vernaculars which gradually replaced Latin in administrative, religious, literary, and scholarly uses. During this process, which W. Keith Percival called the 'vernacular turn' (1999: 11), the relationship between Latin and the vernaculars was one of mutual influence, but ultimately 'the vernaculars were extending their sphere of usage to more and more areas which had previously been reserved for Latin, and one of these areas was the technical language of grammar' (Percival

1999: 18). Sylvain Auroux (1994) has termed this stage *grammatisation*: the material and technological process consisting in tooling up (*outiller*) vernaculars with grammars and dictionaries. This process required a new metalanguage in and for the vernacular being codified.

Concurrently with the material *grammatisation*, a more socio-political process was engaged. For vernaculars to replace Latin in official and prestigious uses, it also became necessary to enhance their status. From the end of the fifteenth century, discourses extolling the qualities of a particular language – and consequently exposing the faults of others – became commonplace. The discovery of new languages in new worlds prompted comparisons between languages and further reflections on the universality of human language. Comparisons between languages also increased the perception that each language had its own characteristics. Percival mentions, by way of example, the *questione della lingua* in Italy, when fifteenth-century Italian literati attempted to establish a modern Italian literary and spoken language. He argues that their debates 'hinged to a significant extent on the notion that the vernacular had fundamental structural features of its own distinguishing it from Latin and other languages' (1999: 18). Similar debates arose in the French context about *lingua gallica*, and the *naïve* French language, i.e. a pure and original form to be rediscovered (Meschonnic 2000, Siouffi 2010, Ayres-Bennett and Seijido 2011), and in the English language as shown by Richard Foster Jones in *The Triumph of the English Language* (1953).

The phrase 'genius of the language' was born out of these two processes – technological and socio-political – at the heart of the standardisation of European vernaculars. Although these developments started as early as the fifteenth

century, the phrase 'genius of the language' did not appear until the seventeenth century according to most scholars (Schlaps 2004, Siouffi, 2010, Haβler 2012). Since Hans Christmann's archaeological work (1967), it has been recognised that the phrase was first used by French orientalist Amable de Bourzeys (1606–1672). In a speech commonly referred to as *Discours sur le dessein de l'Académie et sur le différent génie des langues*, given in 1635 at the newly founded *Académie française*, Bourzeys argued that each language has its own 'air' and 'genius':

> Qui ne sçait que chaque langue a son air et son genie particulier et que les unes refusent ce que les autres desirent et la mesme parure releve les unes et charge les autres. Il faut donc qu'il y ait une Eloquence particuliere aux François et Inconnue aux Anciens et qu'elle attende ses plus doux monumens et ses plus agreables couleurs de ceux qui sçavent ses tendresses. (Bourzeys 1635: 233 fn3)

Playing with the feminine gender of *la langue*, Bourzeys metaphorically compares languages to women, pointing out that finery which enhances the beauty of some, may be ill-suited to others, because each has its own 'air' and 'genius'. In turn, this explains, according to Bouzeys, that speaking or writing styles (*éloquence*) which suit Latin, might not be appropriate for French. The anthropormorphic metaphor also links the *génie* to the *caractère* of the language, a phrase sometimes used concurrently at the time, and which links the particularities of a language to those of its speakers as fashioned by their customs, the climate they live in, their mode of government, etc. (see Bourzeys 1635: 237). Before Christmann's discovery, Luigi Rosiello (1961) had claimed that the phrase *génie de la langue* originated in the Port-Royal writings on grammar – their *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (1660) and Lancelot's Latin grammar (1644). Rosiello argued that the phrase was part and parcel of their rational Cartesian approach to language and that, as summarised by Paola Gambarota, 'the genius of the language designated the idea of an autonomous organization of formal elements' (2011: 237 fn13; and Rosiello 1961:

373-85 for the original in Italian). Consequently, in that period of the mid-seventeenth century, there were already competing uses of *génie de la langue*: one more stylistic and the other more formal.

In a more recent article, Toon van Hal (2013) has argued that the phrase was already in use much earlier, in Latin texts discussing the Hebrew language from the first half of the sixteenth century. The earliest attestation found by Van Hal dates from a 1542 work by Theodor Bibliander, in which the author discusses Hebrew grammars. Pointing out their inadequacy in describing the language properly, Bibliander blames their authors, but also the genius of the Hebrew language – 'Hebraicae linguae genium' (Van Hal 2013: 84 fn8). Van Hal points out that Bibliander's assertion is loosely based on the views expressed by Jerome (c347-420) that Latin and Greek were too poor to translate the Hebrew language appropriately (2013: 84-85). As suggested by Van Hal himself, in those earlier Latin texts, the context of translation problems is always underpinning the discussion of the genius of the language, which is not often the case in early-modern vernacular texts. Crucially, Van Hal finds that 'in none of the instances surveyed in [his] paper the character of the language is linked with the character of a nation, a link which is pivotal to modern conceptualizations of *génie de la langue.* [...]', and he goes on to add that 'Bourzeys so far stands out as the first to interpret *genius* in a "national" manner' (2013: 92). Therefore, while a variant of the phrase and similar reflections on the proprieties of different languages may have circulated before Bourzeys's speech, the seventeenth century remains a turning point in the development of the phrase as an epistemological tool. Bourzeys gave it a new significance by linking the uniqueness of a language to its speakers' own sense of collective identity.

In this respect, Bourzeys set a trend within which the most influential language commentator in the seventeenth century was undoubtedly Dominique Bouhours (1628–1702). He was commented upon by most of his contemporaries and influenced many eighteenth-century grammarians in France, as well as abroad. Siouffi (2010: 16) observes that Bouhours had much impact on Italian writers such as Orsi, Muratori or Vico, and, as I will show below, he also inspired English commentators such as Ephraïm Chambers (ca. 1680–1740). In addition to remarks on the French language, Bouhours wrote a short book of dialogues called *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (1671), the second one of which is an apology of the French language. In the passage quoted below, French, Spanish and Italian are presented, in another anthropomorphic metaphor, as the three dissembling daughters of Latin.

> Mais puisque la langue Latine, reprit Ariste, est la mere de ces trois langues ; ne pouvons-nous pas dire, que ce sont trois sœurs qui ne se ressemblent point, & qui ont des inclinations fort contraires, comme il arrive souvent dans les familles. [...] Ainsi, pour ne parler que de leurs genies, sans rien decider de leur naissance, il me semble que la langue Espagnole est une orgueilleuse qui le porte haut, qui se pique de grandeur ; qui aime le faste et l'excés en toutes choses. La langue italienne est une coquette toûjours parée & toûjours fardée, qui ne cherche qu'à plaire, & qui se plaist beaucoup à la bagatelle. La langue Françoise est une prude, mais une prude agreable, qui toute sage & toute modeste qu'elle est, n'a rien de rude ni de farouche. C'est une fille qui a beaucoup de traits de sa mere, je veux dire de la langue Latine. Je n'entends pas par la langue Latine, la langue qu'on parloit au temps de Néron, & sous les autres empereurs qui le suivirent : j'entends celle qu'on parloit au temps d'Auguste, dans le siècle de la belle Latinité, & je dis que nostre langue dans la perfection où elle est, a beaucoup de rapport avec la langue Latine de ce temps-là. Pour peu qu'on les examine toutes deux, on verra qu'elles ont le mesme genie & le même goust : & que rien ne leur plaist tant qu'un discours noble & poli ; mais pur, simple, naturel et raisonnable. (Bouhours 1671: 77-78)

Bouhours elaborates on the same metaphors as Bourzeys to emphasise the differences in style between the three languages. But, while the *génie* was more of an appearance in Bourzeys's description (*un air*), it is here an internal trait – a preference (*le goût*) or a disposition (*une inclination*) – which presumably endures even when external appearances change. A second notable difference is that Bourzeys insisted that French was different from Latin, while Bouhours is keen to emphasise the resemblance. This is typical of the dilemma inherent in the standardisation of vernaculars: on the one hand, they must be different enough from Latin to have a legitimacy of their own – what Heinz Kloss (1967) called *Abstand* – and, on the other hand, they must be similar enough to Latin to have inherited its status and refinement – what Kloss called *Ausbau*.

To summarise, in the earliest attestations of the 'genius of the language', two strands can be identified. On the one hand, a vision deriving from problems of translation and the lack of one-to-one correspondence between languages, focuses on the formal properties of language and their systematisation. On the other hand, a more rhetorical vision focuses on the expressive uniqueness of different languages, i.e. their suitability and disposition to particular styles of eloquence. This more metaphorical genius is often related to the perceived characteristics of the people who speaks the language in question.

3.2.2 Spread of the genius of the language

After Bouhours, the popularity of the phrase increased dramatically between the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, in France and in neighbouring European countries. In recent works which concentrate on this period, Siouffi (2010) and Gambarota (2011) suggest that the two strands of genius of the language identified above were in fact connected. Gambarota's work

emphasises the political significance of the notion of genius of the language in the context of nascent nationalism in eighteenth-century Italy. She observes that, in this discourse on the genius of the language, 'the particulars of languages previously regarded as accidents are integrated into organic autonomous systems' (2011: 16), and goes on to add that

> [...] the characteristics of a national vernacular, once declared organic and peculiar to it, acquired a greater force in shaping both collective and individual identity, sustaining the internalization of the nation. Once the peculiarities of a high-culture vernacular were explained as the intrinsic manifestation of affects and perceptions shaping the genius of the language, rather than as rhetorical conventions, any transgression of such features could be perceived as a form of self-violation. Rhetorical and grammatical conventions turned into powerful elements of identity, conflating political interest in cultural uniformity and individual self-definition. (Gambarota 2011: 16)

Her remarks suggest that an important reversal takes place in that period. The peculiarities in the structure of vernaculars, made apparent in translations and comparisons with Latin, were turned into positive, defining, and soon-to-be normative, characteristics, and they played a key role in reinforcing a sense of collective identity amongst the speakers of vernaculars. To go back to Kloss's two aspects of the legitimisation of vernaculars, one could say that their *Abstand* – the linguistic differentiation from Latin – is becoming conflated with their *Ausbau* – the cultivation in the language.

In his extensive study of the *génie de la langue française* in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Siouffi (2010) observes a similar reversal. But in lieu of the political and cultural explanations of the development of the notion put forward by Gambarota, Siouffi offers a linguistic analysis. He argues that in the process of reducing the French language to rules, grammarians created a *forma*

mentis, a fantasy, which served as a framework for the codification of the vernacular.

> L'un des phénomènes qui ont accompagné la construction du discours grammatical en France a donc été l'effort d'enraciner les descriptions idiomatiques dans une commune essence qui serait descriptible en termes quasi autonomes. Il ne s'agirait plus seulement de décrire les éléments formels qui pourraient rapprocher ou distinguer le français du latin, mais de s'investir dans l'individualité d'une langue de manière à percevoir l'ensemble des traits qui en découlent comme une continuité homogène. Cette articulation, dont l'évolution de la discipline entre le XVIe et le XVIIe siècle fournit une première lecture historique, est à la base du concept de « génie de la langue » tel que celui-ci dominera la description linguistique au XVIIIe siècle. (Siouffi 2010: 28)

Siouffi describes a process whereby, once the vernacular is becoming autonomous from Latin, it is necessary to find a new framework – a 'common essence' – which accounts for features previously regarded as anomalous, and binds the language together as a homogeneous entity. This process, Siouffi argues, is what gave birth to the concept of *génie de la langue*. The genius is necessarily partly fantasised because the bounds of the language do not pre-exist its codification. While Gambarota linked the emergence of the genius of the language to the crystallisation of 'imagined communities' – in the words of Benedict Anderson (2006 [1983]) whose framework informs Gambarota's study –, Siouffi considers that the genius of the language was part and parcel of the development of a new linguistic discourse in which what he calls *l'imaginaire linguistique* – mental representations about the language shared by the speech community, or its codifiers in the first place – played a key role. Despite the different angles from which they approached the question, Siouffi and Gambarota converge in observing that the genius of the language served the purpose of turning anomalies and irregularities in the description of the language, as they

gradually appeared in contrast with the description of Latin, into legitimate elements of an autonomous entity. Unfortunately, no similar study exists for the development of the genius of the language in the English tradition, as the phrase 'genius of the English language' has mostly been examined in cross-linguistic studies – such as Schlaps (2004) and Haßler (2012) – with a cross-linguistic frame of reference. In the next section, I will therefore lay the foundations for such a study of uses of 'genius of the language' in the English tradition.

3.3 The genius of the English language

3.3.1 Guy Miège (1644–1718?)

Before turning to Priestley's own case, I shall first look at key texts from the English tradition which discuss or use the notion, so as to get a sense of where Priestley might fit into this genealogy. The first mention of the phrase 'genius of the English language' occurs in Guy Miège's *English Grammar* (1688).[34] In addition, to featuring in its long title – *The English Grammar, or, The Grounds and Genius of the English Tongue: with a Prefatory Discourse Concerning its Original and Excellency* – the phrase recurs four times in the text of the grammar.[35] Miège was a native speaker of French from Lausanne. After a career as a diplomat, he taught French in London from the 1670s and wrote several pedagogical works on the French language before his English grammar. As a French language master, Miège was very familiar with the works of seventeenth-century French grammarians and language commentators. In his *New French Grammar* (1678: 209), for instance, he acknowledged his debt to two prominent *remarqueurs* Laurent Chiflet (1598–1658) and Claude Favre de Vaugelas (1585–1650). Not only does Miège's 1687 French

[34] A few other occurrences of the phrase can be found earlier in the English tradition, but they always apply to other languages.

[35] There are four occurrences of 'genius' relating to the English language in the body of the text, but there is also one relating to Latin, and three to language in general.

grammar borrow passages from their works, but his approach to grammar writing was also much influenced by their focus on usage. Miège's use of the phrase 'genius of the English tongue' is therefore rooted in the French understanding of *génie de la langue* at that time. As observed by Siouffi (2010: 41-42), the phrase reached a high level of popularity in France during that period, with four grammars entitled *Génie de la langue française* by Dutruc (1668), Menudier (1674), D'Aisy (1685) – the most popular and influential one, published only two years before Miège's grammar – and an anonymous author in 1705. Siouffi notes that identifying the target audience is key to determining the meaning of the phrase 'genius of the language' in these grammars. When the target audience is foreign, and the grammar is evidently pedagogical, the phrase 'genius of the language' indicates that the book gives an account of the essentials of grammar and an insight into what is most idiomatic in the language ('une version quintessenciée de l'enseignement en même temps qu'[...] un abrégé de ce qu'il y a de plus idiomatique', 2010: 43). When the target audience is native speakers, the aim is not so much to give a pedagogical account of the grammar. The phrase refers instead to what is inaccessible or intangible in the language ('Sa valeur transcendante, sa dimension d'inaccessibilité, l'emporte nettement sur la volonté d'en donner une version tangible', 2010: 43), as part of a eulogistic discourse raising the status of the language and potentially awakening 'nationalistic' feelings in the native speakers.

Miège was in the complicating situation of being a non-native speaker of English teaching French in England when he wrote his monolingual English grammar. The texts prefixed to the grammar bear the mark of this ambivalence. In his address 'To the Reader', Miège indicates that his grammar is intended for native speakers of English:

> My Aim in it is to satisfy the Curious, and to advance the Illiterate into the Knowledge of the Grounds of their Language, so as to be able to give an account thereof. [...] Could I have my Option, all Young People that are designed for any Thing of good Education should begin with the Grounds of their Language. And, as it is fit for Travellers to be capacitated first to give an Account of their Native Country before they lanch into forein Parts, I think it were very proper, before a Young Man be turned over to the Latin Tongue, to know the nature and Principles of his own [...]. (Miège 1688: A2^{v}-A3).

In addition, Miège prefaced this English grammar with a 'Discourse Concerning the Original, and Excellency of the English Tongue'; a eulogy of the English language, addressed to native English speakers, with a view to raising the status of the language and potentially stimulating 'nationalistic' feelings, especially where the superiority of English over French is emphasised. These features fall within Siouffi's second category of genius. Yet, the passage from the address 'To the Reader' quoted above also has a strong pedagogical outlook and advocates the teaching of English grammar as a propaedeutic to learning Latin. In this address, Miège states that his grammar is intended for a foreign audience too: 'Neither will it be improper for the Use of Forreiners, especially the French, that have already got some Smattering of the English Tongue' (1688: A3-A3^{v}). This may be a marketing device – appealing to the largest possible audience in these prefaces is commonplace – but the intended foreign audience is also implied in the body of the text, with innumerable comparisons with French, especially in the parts dedicated to spelling and orthography. The grammar is also on the short side: 180 pages, 48 of which are dedicated to a list of monosyllables. Compared with some of his other works which include many observations, this one only seems to tackle the essentials of English grammar, as the grammar's subtitle – 'the grounds' of the English Tongue – also suggests. A foreign audience and a condensed structure with pedagogical objectives correspond to Siouffi's first definition of the genius.

A closer look at the uses of the phrase in the text of the 'Prefatory Discourse' and the grammar proper will offer further insights.

In his 2001 article on the 'Characterization and Evaluation of Languages in the Renaissance and in the Early Modern Period', Werner Hüllen asserts that 'The most telling example of the genius concept in Britain [is] Guy Miège's treatise on the excellency of the English tongue' (2001: 243). The discussion of Miège's work comes after Hüllen has presented the origins of the concept in seventeenth-century France, and more particularly the societal and anthropomorphic qualities associated with it in Bourzeys's and Bouhours's works. Hüllen then argues that Miège's treatise

> is the representative of a different facet of the problem. It places a heavier stress on the properties of the language than on those of the people who speak it. Whereas the previously mentioned authors tended to explain the language with the help of its society, Miège tends to explain the society with the help of its language. He chooses those qualities (facility, significance, copiousness, sweetness) which enable the language to mirror all things and all notions of the human mind for the purpose of human communication. Miège's argument, just like that of Harsdörffer and Schottelius, is thus placed next to that of a perfect language, and it is the pride in possessing it which distinguishes its speakers [...]. (Hüllen 2001: 243)

Hüllen's claims show the significance of Miège in the development of the 'genius of the language' argument. However, my own research has revealed that most of the text of this 'Prefatory Discourse', with its focus on the four qualities of 'facility, significance, copiousness, sweetness', was copied from the anonymous *Vindex Anglicus; Or The Perfections of The English Language Defended and Asserted* (1644). In turn, William A. Craigie showed in his 1946 edition of the *Vindex Anglicus* that, in the description of the four qualities, 'the [anonymous] writer [of the *Vindex Anglicus*] copies much of his matter from Richard Carew's *Epistle on the Excellency*

of the English Tongue (ca. 1595), printed by Camden in the 1614 edition of his *Remains*' (1946: 166n).[36] In other words, the views ascribed by Hüllen to Miège's 1688 grammar can actually be traced back to a piece written almost a century earlier, by a native English speaker. It also confirms Van Hal's view that what happens in the seventeenth century is that the newly-coined phrase 'genius of the language' gets attached to a pre-existing discourse on the characterisation and evaluation of languages. Miège is a textbook example of this phenomenon because he copied the reflections of his predecessors on the four excellencies of the English and added a reference to the 'genius' of the English Tongue which did not feature in the original text. Indeed, Miège follows the *Vindex Anglicus* verbatim in more than half of the 'Prefatory discourse', particularly in the sections on 'Significancy' and 'Sweetness'. The section on 'Facility' is the least similar as Miège introduces comparisons with French to demonstrate how easy it is to learn English. But it is in the section on 'Copiousness' that Miège introduces the notion of genius of the language, as the paralleled texts show in Table 3.1.

[36] In a paper on language myths, Richard J. Watts observes that Carew's reflections on language variety 'appears almost verbatim' (2000: 43) in Miège's preface, but Miège's source was undoubtedly the *Vindex Anglicus*: for instance, he used the term 'facility' whereas Carew's text uses 'easiness'.

Vindex Anglicus (1644)	Miège (1688)
Our copiousnesse I need not use much art to demonstrate, for besides the treasures of the ancient *Dutch* which we retaine in our *Saxon* monosyllables, the choycer wits of our nation have fetcht hither the very *Quintessence* of those other Languages and by their excellent industry so happily improved our English soyle, that I dare safely affirme many of those forraigne scyons beare better, and more plentifully then in their former climate. The *Latine* and the *French* are defective in the expression of many words which we utter with ease, and they have none whereunto our ability extendeth not [...]. We almost equallise the *Greeks*, and even exceed the *Latines* in a peculiar grace of compounding many words together, which is one the greatest beauties can be in a Language.	The *copiousness* I need not use much Art to demonstrate. For, besides the Treasures of the ancient *Dutch* which retain in our *Saxon* monosyllables, the choicer Wits of this Nation have fetcht hither the very Quintessence of some forein Languages; who, like Bees, have gathered the best, and left the worst. By which means they have so happily improved their Mother-Tongue, that those amongst Forreiners who understand **the Genius of it** are in a maze to see this Language so far outdo their own, and to find so many of their Words transplanted here, thrive better in England than in their proper and natural Soil. And whereas the *French* is stinted, and grown barren through its exceeding Nicety, the English on the contrary is grown mighty Copious, by its innate Liberty of making such Compounds and Derivatives as are proper to abridge the Expression, and to say *Multum in parvo*. Insomuch that it does almost equalize the *Greek*, and even exceed the *Latine,* in a peculiar grace of compounding many Words together, which is one the greatest Beauties can be in a Language.

Table 3.1 Description of the 'copiousness' of English in the original text of the *Vindex Anglicus* (1946 [1644]: 167) and in Miège's 'Prefatory Discourse' to his *English Grammar* (1688: A5v-A6, my highlights)

The notion is introduced in a development welcoming borrowings from other languages into English which the *Vindex Anglicus* reprised from Carew's text, even though the rest of the *Vindex Anglicus* is in fact critical of 'unnatural

domesticks' importing such words.[37] Miège's suggestion that not everyone can grasp the genius of the English tongue echoes Siouffi's description of the second type of genius as somewhat 'inaccessible'. But Miège also uses an agricultural metaphor ('transplant', 'soil', 'barren') which opposes the sterility of French to the fertility of English. According to him, French has become too rigid and devitalised because of interventions, as suggested by the negative connotations of the word 'nicety' which conjures up images of unnatural sophistication and artificiality.[38] This image became a topos in comparisons between the French and the English languages, as I will show with Samuel Johnson in Chapter 4. By contrast, Miège suggests that the genius of the English language lies in its 'innate Liberty of making [...] Compounds and Derivatives' or, in linguistic terms, its morphological productivity. The phrase 'innate Liberty' associates the ideas of the unchanging in 'innate' with the dynamic in 'liberty' which corresponds to the etymological meaning of the word genius as characteristic disposition or natural inclination.

My interpretation of Miège's genius of the language as morphological productivity, is supported by the very first occurrence of 'genius' in the grammar. In the first sentence of the address 'To the Reader' Miège states that '[t]he want of an English Grammar for the Use of this Nation, and the fair Opportunity I had in the Composing of my late Dictionary, to find out the Genius of the English Tongue, did easily prevail with me to gratify the Publick with this Service' (1688:

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[37] Carew's text may have been derived, in turn, from Sir Philip Sidney's *Apology for Poetry,* also published in 1595, which contains a very similar passage on compounding: '[our language] is particularly happy in compositions of two or three words together, near the Greek, far beyond the Latin: which is one of the greatest beauties can be in a language' (Sidney 1973 [1595]: 140).

[38] See sense 7.a. in the *OED* 'Delicacy of feeling, sensibility; scrupulosity, punctiliousness; an instance of this, a scruple. Formerly also: †excessive delicacy (*obs.*).' This acceptation seems to have taken off at the end of the seventeenth century.

A2). Miège implies that his extensive familiarity with the lexicon of English helped him to 'find out' its genius, a verb evoking inaccessibility again. It must be noted here that Miège first organised his dictionary in a way that presented all the words derived from a same root in the same entry, rather than in a strict alphabetical order. By way of example, *excesse [sic]*, *excessive* and *excessively* are entered under *to exceed*, and therefore appear before *to excell [sic]*, *excellent* and *excellence*. Morphological derivation was therefore Miège's guiding principle in composing his dictionary. He was adopting the same approach as the *Académie Française* in the first edition of their dictionary, to be published in 1694 but already well underway. Lexicological aspects of the language, and derivational morphology in particular, were therefore at the heart of Miège's understanding of the genius of the English language. This is reflected in the grammar too.

As can be seen in its table of contents (Table 3.2), Miège's grammar is overall a very traditional grammar for the time, to the point that Emma Vorlat (1975: 32-33) considers it as a step backwards in the development of English grammar. There are still large sections on pronunciation and spelling, as well parts dedicated to prosody and editing.

Table 3.2 Table of contents of Guy Miège's *English Grammar* (1688)

In the first part, Miège adopts the canonical system of eight parts of speech – Noun (article with substantive), Pronoun, Verb, Participle, Adverb, Conjunction, Preposition, Interjection – the same as Bullokar's, and System 1 in Ian Michael's classification (1970: 214). The only, but crucial, innovation introduced by Miège in this first part is that he begins with an overview of the derivation and composition of words, before discussing the parts of speech. This is an unusually prominent position for morphology, generally confined to small paragraphs within the section on nouns. It is also where the two occurrences of 'genius of the English language' which I have not yet discussed appear, each at the end of one section: 'Thus I have shewed the genius of the English Tongue in making Derivatives' (1688: 20), 'All which is sufficient to shew the Genius of the English,

in making their Compounds' (1688: 29). These occurrences confirm that morphological productivity is central to Miège's understanding of the genius. A second innovation in the grammar proper is the list of 'English monosyllables, according to their several terminations' which comes at the end of the second part and makes up one quarter of the book. Miège's justification for adding this supplement resonates with his view of the genius: 'The *Monosyllables* being in a manner the Spring, or Root of the English Tongue, I thought fit to subjoyn the following List of them, according to their several Terminations' (1688: 133). Not only does he make monosyllables a typical feature of English, but he also conjures up images of growth from a base stock and productivity – with the references to a spring and a root – which are reminiscent of the phrase 'innate liberty' in his agricultural metaphors. With this emphasis on morphology and lexicography in his English grammar, Miège moves away from the characterology of languages (which prevailed in the French tradition) and from the idealisation of the language displayed in the *Vindex Anglicus*. In that sense, Hüllen was right to point out that Miège 'places a heavier stress on the properties of the language than on those of the people who speak it' (2001: 243). Paradoxically for a monolingual English grammar, what caused Miège to give the genius of the language a more tangible meaning was his work on lexicography, and his comparisons, no longer with ancient languages, but with another modern language. In that sense, his pedagogical experience as a language tutor trying to find modes of entry for his students was probably instrumental in his developing such a view of the genius of the language.

3.3.2 From Miège to Priestley

After Miège, a few English grammarians used the phrase 'genius of the language' in the early eighteenth century, but their inspiration was the Port-Royal

Grammaire générale et raisonnée, written by Antoine Arnauld and Claude Lancelot in 1660. A translation of Arnauld and Lancelot's grammar was appended to the *Grammar of the English Tongue* attributed to John Brightland and Charles Gildon (1711). The phrase occurs in the very literal translation of a passage from their French source discussing the varying realisations in French and Latin of postmodification in noun phrases.

> On which 'tis to be observ'd, First, That when two Nouns are joyn'd together, the one of which is not govern'd but agrees with the other, either by Apposition (as *Urbs Roma*) or as Adjective (as *Deus Sanctus*), especially if this Adjective be a Participle, (as *canis currens*), all these ways of speaking contain the Relative in the Sense, and may be resolv'd by the Relative; *Urbs que dicitur Roma, Deus qui est sanctus, canis qui currit*. It depends on the Genius of the Languages to make use of both ways; and then we find, that in the Latin the participle is commonly us'd, as, *Video canem currentem*; and in French the Relative, *je voy un chien qui court*. (Brightland and Gildon 1711: 164-65)

The English translation is not as clear, but the French original suggests that the genius of the language corresponds to the language's preference for one or the other construction: '[...] il dépend du génie des langues de se servir de l'une ou de l'autre manière. Et ainsi nous voyons qu'en latin on emploie d'ordinaire le participe *Video canem currentem* : et en français le relatif; *Je vois un chien qui court*' (1660 : II.ix). The same year, another rational grammar authored by James Greenwood came out with the phrase 'genius of the language' in its full title: *An Essay Towards a Practical English grammar, Describing the Genius and Nature of the English Tongue.* In one of the prefatory texts Greenwood translated parts of Wallis's *Grammatica Linguae Anglicanae* (1653) from Latin to English. As Miège did with the *Vindex Anglicus*, Greenwood inserted the term 'genius' into the original: 'I have undertaken to reduce our Language, which is naturally very easy, to a few short rules, by which the Language may be render'd more easy to be learnt by

foreigners, and our Country-men may more clearly perceive the Reason and Genius of their Native Tongue' (1711: 29). Wallis's original text did use the phrase 'reason of the language' but it did not contain any word meaning 'genius': 'ut linguam in se facillimam brevibus præceptis traderem; unde & exteri facilius illam addiscere valeant, & nostrates veram nativæ suæ linguæ rationem penitius perspiciant' (1653: A7b).[39] While the word 'reason' evokes the idea of 'structure of the language', the phrase 'more clearly perceive' (*penitius perspiciant*) harks back to Siouffi's description of the genius as an 'inaccessible' dimension of the language. It must be noted, however, that Wallis did use the phrase 'genius of the language', much later, after it had become fashionable, in a letter published in 1696: 'In the year 1653 I was persuaded to publish a Grammar of the *English Tongue*; chiefly to gratify strangers, who were willing to learn it [...] but complained of it's *[sic]* difficulty for want of a Grammar, suited to the propriety and true Genius of the Language' (1696: clxv). Like 'reason' (*veram rationem*) in the 1653 preface, 'genius' is modified by the adjective 'true', and also associated with 'propriety'. For the first time, in this short historical overview, the grammarian makes the grammaticographic suggestion that a grammar must be 'suited' to that structure, as Priestley does in the 1768 preface. Wallis's grammaticographic suggestion is born out of a pedagogical concern – facilitating the learning of English – which is in keeping with John Locke's contemporary use of the phrase in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693). Having advised tutors to teach Latin to their pupils through translation, Locke adds:

> This being a more imperfect way than by talking *Latin* unto him; the formation of the verbs first, and afterwards the declensions of the nouns and pronouns

[39] Translated by J.A Kemp as 'I aim to describe the language, which is very simple in essence, in brief rules, so that it will be easier for foreigners to learn, and English people will get a better insight into the true structure of their native tongue' (1972: 109).

> perfectly learned by heart, may facilitate his acquaintance with the genius and manner of the *Latin tongue,* which varies the signification of verbs and nouns, not as the modern languages do by particles prefix'd, but by changing the last syllables. (Locke 1693: 199)

As in the Port-Royal grammar and Gildon and Brightland's translation, the genius refers here to the preference in construction ('the manner') displayed by each language to render similar meanings, but it creates two clearer categories between what we would now call analytic and synthetic languages. It is also striking that, in these more rational grammars, the genius of the language tends to contrast English with Latin, rather than other European languages, and that it often serves a pedagogical purpose.

Whilst the Port-Royal grammarians had much impact on these rational grammars, at the other end of the spectrum, Bouhours also remained influential, for example in Chambers's *Cyclopaedia* (1728). In the entry on 'Language', Chambers translated verbatim the text examined in section 3.2.1 from the *Entretiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène* (1671), and added a characterisation for English:

> The *Latin* is the common Mother the three former [Spanish, Italian and French languages], but the Daughters have very different Genius's and Inclinations. The *Spanish*, a haughty Dame, that piques herself on her Quality, and loves Excess and Extravagancy in every thing. The *Italian*, a Coquette, full of fine Airs, always appearing dress'd, and taking all Occasions of shewing her Finery: to be admired, being all she aims at. The *French,* an easy Prude, that has her share of Modesty and Discretion, but on occasion can lay them both aside. The *English* is of a more Masculine Temperament. 'Tis not only of a different Family from the others, but appears of a different Sex too: Its Virtues are those of a Man: indeed 'tis the Product of a colder Climate and a rougher People, and its Features may be somewhat coarser that those of its Neighbours; but its Faculties are more extensive, its Conduct more ingenuous, and its Views more noble. (Chambers 1728: 429)

The connection between the genius of the language and the character of the people who speak it is made even more explicit further below, in a passage where Chambers elaborates on the masculine qualities of the English language.

> There is found a constant Resemblance between the Genius or Natural Complexion of each People and the Language they speak. Thus the *Greeks*, a polite but voluptuous People, had a *Language* perfectly suitable, full of Delicacy and Sweetness. The *Romans*, who seemed only born to command, had a *Language* noble, nervous, and august; and their Descendants, the *Italians*, are sunk into Softness and Effeminacy, which is as visible in their Language as their Manners. The *Language* of the *Spaniards* is full of that Gravity and Haughtiness of Air which make the distinguishing Character of the People. The French, who have a World of Vivacity, have a Language that runs extremely brisk and lively. And the *English*, who are naturally blunt, thoughtful, and of few Words, have a *Language* exceedingly short, concise, and sententious. (Chambers 1728: 429)

Brevity as a masculine quality of the English language is epitomised by its large numbers of monosyllables. Joseph Addison explores this theme at length in issue No. 135 of the *Spectator* (1711), which begins with the following words: 'I think my self very happy in my Country, as the *Language* of it is wonderfully adapted to a Man who is sparing of his Words, and an Enemy to Loquacity' (1898 [1711]: II.253-54). Addison uses the phrase 'genius of the language' in this piece, precisely to refer to this English brevity, even in the pronunciation of borrowed words:

> In the next place we may observe, that where the Words are not Monosyllables, we often make them so, as much as lies in our Power, by our Rapidity of Pronounciation; as it generally happens in most of our long Words which are derived from the *Latin*, where we contract the length of the Syllables that give them a grave and solemn Air in their own Language, to make them more proper for Dispatch, and more conformable to the Genius of our Tongue. This we may find in a multitude of Words, as Liberty, Conspiracy, Theatre, Orator, &c. (Addison 1898 [1711]: II.255).

In these reflections on language, Addison somehow mixes a Bouhours-like characterology consisting in 'deduc[ing] a greater Part of what is peculiar to [languages] from the Genius of the People who speak them' (1898 [1711]: II.258), together with Miège's focus on observable linguistic properties, and monosyllables in particular.

Coming to Priestley's contemporaries, the use of the phrase becomes more specific. With Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755), there is a clear return to the lexicological issues discussed in Miège, as can be seen in the preface for instance:

> Our language, for almost a century, has, by the concurrence of many causes, been gradually departing from its original *Teutonick* character, and deviating towards a *Gallick* structure and phraseology, from which it ought to be our endeavour to recal it, by making our ancient volumes the ground-work of stile, admitting among the additions of later times, only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idioms. (Johnson 1755: n.p.)

Although Johnson shares the same concerns as Addison on borrowing, his focus is neither the abstract character of the English people, nor the pronunciation of these borrowings. Like Miège, Johnson associates the genius of the language with lexical proprieties. He also places a heavy stress on monosyllables as a marker of the so-called Teutonic character of English. But it is in the grammar prefixed to the *Dictionary* that Johnson's concerns get even closer to Miège's. The 'genius of the language' next occurs at the end of section 'VI. Of Derivation' where Johnson comments on Wallis's grammar and complains that the latter 'makes no distinction between words immediately derived by us from the Latin, and those which being copied from other languages, can therefore afford no example of the

genius of the English language, or its laws of derivation' (1755: n.p.).[40] At the same time as this quotation validates the interpretation of the first quotation in terms of assimilation of borrowings, it offers a clear definition of the genius of the language with the paraphrase 'laws of derivation'. This is strikingly reminiscent of Miège's use of the genius of the language in terms of derivational productivity. The only difference is that the discourse underpinning Johnson's description of the genius of the language is more purist than Miège's, at least in the preface.[41] Finally, Robert Lowth uses the phrase 'genius of the language' only once in his *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), but interestingly, it is also related to derivational morphology.

> Adjectives are sometimes employed as Adverbs: improperly, and not agreeably to the Genius of the English Language. As, '*extreme* elaborate:' Dryden, Essay on Dram. Poet. '*marvellous* graceful:' Clarendon, Life, p. 18. '*extreme* unwilling;' '*extreme* subject:' Swift, Tale of a Tub, and Battle of Books. 'I shall endeavour to live hereafter *suitable* to a man in my station.' Addison, Spect. N° 530. 'Homer describes this river *agreeable* to the vulgar reading.' Pope, Note on Iliad. ii. v. 1032. (Lowth 1762: 125-26fn)

The difference with Johnson and Miège is first that, while they tried to 'find out' the genius of the English language in the words of Miège (to which Johnson's quest for 'examples' is a parallel), Lowth's genius of the language is presented as a given and therefore used in a normative fashion ('not agreeably to'). The second difference is that, although the feature discussed here pertains to morphology,

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[40] This remark seems to refer back to an earlier passage in the section on derivation: 'Nothing is more apparent, than that Wallis goes too far in quest of originals. Many of these which seem selected as immediate descendents from the Latin, are apparently French, *conceive, approve, expose, exempt*. Some words purely French, not derived from the Latin, we have transferred into our language; as, *garden, garter, buckler, to advance, to cry, to plead*, from the French *jardin, jartier, bouclier, avancer, cryer, plaider*; though indeed, even of these, part is of Latin original.' (Johnson 1755: n.p)

[41] I will discuss the nuances in Johnson's purism in Chapter 4.

the genius of the language is as much of a syntactic issue as a lexicological one, because it is based on the assumption that there is a one-to-one correspondence between form and function.

In conclusion, at the time when Priestley started to write about grammar, the notion of genius of the language had been part of the discourse on the English language for 73 years, very much under the influence of French grammarians. The same dichotomy between the Port-Royal and the Bouhours approaches is observable. But there is also a uniquely English use of the genius of the language related to derivational morphology, its productivity and its relation to borrowings and their assimilation. I will now turn to Priestley's own use of the notion, starting with the 1765 *Grammar*.

3.4 Priestley's use of 'the genius of the language'

3.4.1 'Changes, whereby Words pass from one Class to another'

The notion is first referred to by Priestley in the 1765 *Grammar*. Having examined the four parts of speech – nouns, adjectives, pronouns and verbs – which are affected by 'changes', i.e. inflections, Priestley is about to move on to the other four parts of speech, those not affected by changes. But before doing so, the need arises for him to mention another type of change.

> Besides these constant Changes of Termination, there is a Variety of other Changes, whereby Words pass from one Class to another; but because only some of the Words of any Class admit of a similar Change for the same Use, they are not usually reckoned among the Grammatical Changes of Termination; tho' **the Genius of a Language appears in nothing more than in such Changes**, and were they constant and regular, would have the same Right to be enumerated with the others. Thus the Adjectives *long* and *strong*, by similar Changes are converted into the Nouns *Length* and *Strength*, and into the Verbs *lengthen* and *strengthen*, *joyful* and *joyless* come from the Word *Joy*: By the Addition of *ness* the Words *hard* and *soft* become *hardness* and *softness*; and by prefixing the Particle *dis* to the Words *arm*

> and *believe*, we have the Words *disarm* and *disbelieve*. (Priestley 1765: a6^{v}-b, my highlights)

Priestley associates the genius of the language with derivational morphology, and thereby follows in the footsteps of Miège and Johnson. Indeed, when he reproduces this paragraph almost verbatim in the 1768 *Rudiments*, he acknowledges his debt to Johnson on this topic: 'Of these changes I shall here give the following short summary, extracted chiefly from Mr. Johnson' (1768: 30). Priestley's inspiration for introducing this topic and the notion of genius of the language was therefore Section VI 'Of Derivation' in Johnson's grammar (1755), where the lexicographer comments on Wallis's long list of 'etymologia', and defines the genius of the language as the 'laws of derivation'. This lineage with two other lexicographers could suggest that Priestley introduced this passage in 1765 for lexicographic purposes because this grammar, like Johnson's, is prefixed to a dictionary. But the fact that he retained it in the 1768 *Rudiments* shows that this development is part and parcel of Priestley's broader concern to develop a model of grammar suited to English and break away from the canonical model of grammar – going back to the medieval works of Donatus and Priscian via Lily's Latin grammar (1540) – which does not allow the grammarian to give a comprehensive account of the English language.

Indeed, the passage in question constitutes an evolution away from the more traditional 1761 *Rudiments*. In that first edition, Priestley did not discuss derivational morphology other than in passing when discussing nouns: 'The distinction of gender (when it is expressed by a change of termination) is made by adding [*ess*] to the masculine to make it feminine; as *Lion*, *Lioness*; *Heir*, *Heiress*; *Poet*, *Poetess*: And a few feminines end in [*ix*] as *Administrator*, *Administratrix*; *Director*, *Directrix*' (1761: 6). These sentences read like a clumsy attempt to conform

to the Latin model of grammar in which gender marking has greater currency than in English. Priestley's introduction in 1765 of a development on derivational morphology in English despite the fact that it is a much shorter grammar than the 1761 *Rudiments* testifies to his dedication to the task of adapting his grammar to the English language. Besides, in his appropriation of Johnson's discussion of derivational morphology from 1765 on, Priestley also asserts that the genius 'appears in nothing more than in' this aspect of English which he goes on to describe as not 'constant and regular'. This is typical of the reversal observed for Italian and French by Gambarota and Siouffi: what had previously been rejected by grammarians as irregular and anomalous, because it did not fit in with the established model of grammar, becomes the very essence or specificity of the language in question. Priestley's grammaticographic reflections are strikingly brought to the surface here with the phrase 'would have the same right' which shows his questioning the legitimacy of the canonical model of grammar. In this respect, Priestley's approach is in line with that of French grammarians, rather than Lowth (1762: 125n) who, as remarked above, understood the genius of the language as conformity with a partly fantasised Latin-like one-to-one correspondence between form and function. Finally, the first sentence in the passage quoted above shows Priestley highlighting a smooth transition in the grammar between inflectional morphology – 'Changes of Termination' – and derivational morphology – 'Changes, whereby Words pass from one Class to another' as well as compounds which are discussed in the following paragraph (1765: b). That is because, from 1765 on, Priestley chose a new heading for this section on parts of speech 'Of the Kinds and Inflections of Words'. This new heading, which gives greater prominence to morphology than the traditional parts-of-speech format, is part of a broader re-organisation of his grammar which

stems from Priestley's embrace of the notion of genius of the language, as I will now demonstrate.

3.4.2 'The methods of expressing the relations of words to words'

There are six further references to the genius of the language in the 1768 *Rudiments*. In this section, I will focus on the first two occurrences from the preface. They are part and parcel of the reflections, briefly examined at the end of Chapter 2, in which Priestley explains his goal for this revised second edition. Since this passage is crucial to my demonstration, it is worth quoting *in extenso*.

> [...] I have also been so far from departing from the simplicity of the plan of that short grammar [the 1761 *Rudiments*], that I have made it, in some respects, still more simple; and I think it, on that account, more suitable to **the genius of the English language**. I own I am surprised to see so much of the distribution, and technical terms of the Latin grammar, retained in the grammar of our tongue; where they are exceedingly aukward, and absolutely superfluous; being such as could not possibly have entered into the head of any man, who had not been previously acquainted with Latin.
>
> Indeed, this absurdity has, in some measure, gone out of fashion with us; but still so much of it is retained, in all the grammars that I have seen, as greatly injures the uniformity of the whole; and the very same reason that has induced several grammarians to go so far as they have done, should have induced them to go farther. A little reflection may, I think, suffice to convince any person, that we have no more business with *a future tense* in our language, than we have with the whole system of Latin moods and tenses; because we have no modification of our verbs to correspond to it; and if we had never heard of a future tense in some other language, we should no more have given a particular name to the combination of the verb with the auxiliary *shall* or *will*, than to those that are made with the auxiliaries *do*, *have*, *can*, *must*, or any other.
>
> The only natural rule for the use of technical terms to express time, &c. is to apply them to distinguish the different modifications of words; and it seems wrong to confound the account of *inflections*, either with the grammatical uses of

> the *combinations* of words, of the *order* in which they are placed, or of the *words which express relations*, and which are equivalent to inflections in other languages.
>
> Whenever this plain rule is departed from, with respect to any language whatever, the true symmetry of the grammar is lost, and it becomes clogged with superfluous terms and divisions. Thus we see the optative mood, and the perfect and pluperfect tenses of the passive voice, absurdly transferred from the Greek language into the Latin, where there were no modifications of verbs to correspond to them. The authors of that distribution might, with the very same reason, have introduced the dual number into Latin; and *duo homines* would have made just as good a dual number, as *utinam amem* is an optative mood, or *amatus fui* a perfect tense. I cannot help flattering myself, that future grammarians will owe me some obligation, for introducing this uniform simplicity, so well suited to **the genius of our language**, into the English grammar. (1768: vi-ix, my highlights)

These paragraphs have so far been analysed either as the epitome of what Schofield (1997: 103) called Priestley's 'anti-Latin theme', or, according to Hodson (2008: 183-85), as an underhand attack on Lowth and his more popular *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), which indeed describes three tenses in the English language, including a future tense. My contention, however, is that the significance of this passage is not so much a linguistic or grammatical one as grammaticographic one, and that it goes a long way towards explaining the evolution of Priestley's approach to grammar writing between 1761 and 1768.

Priestley is not introducing a new grammatical rule here: as shown in 2.5.1, he already described two tenses in the 1761 *Rudiments*. What he introduces is a grammaticographic rule, successively presented as 'natural' and 'plain': grammarians must respect the 'true symmetry' or 'uniformity' between their grammatical tools – namely 'the distribution' and 'technical terms' – and the genius of the language. Priestley's claimed grammaticographic achievement is therefore to have made his grammatical tools – the categorisation and metalanguage – better 'suited' or more 'suitable' to the genius of the English

language. The verb harks back to Wallis's description of his own achievement in making up for the 'want of a Grammar, suited to the propriety and true Genius of the Language' (1696: clxv). The grammarian who wants his grammar to faithfully reflect the genius of the language first needs to find out this genius. On the face of it, Priestley gives us little clue as to what this genius consists of or how it can be discovered, other than the few counterexamples he mentions. My contention is that, in order to understand Priestley's view of the genius and make full sense of the grammaticographic rule laid out in the 1768 preface, it is necessary to go back to the 1762 *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar.* In section 2.5, I showed that the connections made between these two texts by Schofield were actually further developments of themes already contained in the 1761 *Rudiments.* By contrast, the connection with regard to the notion of genius marks a significant shift away from the 1761 *Rudiments*, as I will now demonstrate.

Priestley wrote the *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar* shortly after arriving at the Warrington Academy. The text was never published properly speaking; it was only printed in 1762 for private use at Warrington by William Eyres, who oversaw the Warrington Press where he printed reports, the tutors' lectures, and textbooks for the Academy. The topic of these lectures is recorded in the Warrington Trustees' Report as one of the duties of Priestley's position at the Academy.

> In the Latin Class the *Classics* are read; *Latin Compositions* made; and a Course of *Roman Antiquities*, and *Mythology* gone through.
>
> In the Greek Class are read the *Greek Authors*, and a Course of *Greek Antiquities*.
>
> Those young Gentlemen who learn *French* are taught to read, and write that Language; and go through a Course of Exercises calculated to prepare them to converse in it.

> The English Grammar is taught to the younger Students, and they are trained up in a regular course of *English Compositions*.
>
> By the Tutor of this Department are read Lectures on Logick, the *Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar, Oratory and Criticism*; the *Study of History and Anatomy*.
>
> He also directs the public Academical Exercises, consisting of *Translations* from *Greek*, *Latin*, and *French* Authors; and *Orations*, or *Dissertations*, which are delivered alternatively in *English*, and *Latin*, or *French*; wherein a particular Attention is paid to the manner of Reading and Speaking. (*A Report of the State of the Warrington Academy, By the Trustees at their Annual Meeting July 1st- MDCCLXII, 2-3* cited in Schofield 1997: 96-97)

This report was published in July 1762, that is at the end of Priestley's first academic year at Warrington. It is therefore unclear whether the lectures on the theory of language and universal grammar were already part of the curriculum before Priestley's arrival, or whether he introduced them himself as a particular interest of his own. The phrasing of the report, with its specific reference to 'the Tutor of this Department', seems to support the latter view. The fact that universal grammar is also mentioned in a footnote in the 1761 *Rudiments*, which were composed when Priestley was still in Nantwich, also suggests that Priestley had some interest in the topic before he started lecturing at Warrington.[42] The printed version of the *Course* is composed of an introduction and nineteen lectures as per Table 3.3.

[42] In a paragraph on articles, Priestley observes: 'In *universal grammar* they should be considered as belonging to the class of *Adjectives*' (1761: 6). Articles are discussed together with adjectives in Lecture VI of the *Course* (1762: 86), and not with noun substantives, as in the 1761 *Rudiments*.

I. Of Articulation
II. Of the Origin of Letters
III. Of Hieroglyphicks, Chinese Characters, and Different Alphabets.
IV. Of the General Distribution of Words into Classes.
V. Of Nouns.
VI. Of Adjectives and Pronouns
VII. Of Verbs.
VIII. Of Verbs.
IX. Of Adverbs, &c. Irregularities and Dialects.
X. Of Derivation and Syntax.
XI. Of the Concatenation of Sentences and Transposition of Words.
XII. Of the Regular Growth and Corruption of Languages.
XIII. Of the Complex Structure of the Greek and Latin Languages.
XIV. The Same Subject Continued.
XV. Of the Revolutions of Languages and Of Translation.
XVI. Of Metrical Composition.
XVII. Observations on the Different Properties of Languages.
XVIII. A Comparison of Different Languages.
XIX. Of the Origin, Use, and Cessation of Diversity of Languages.

Table 3.3 Table of contents of Joseph Priestley's *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar* (1762)

The plan of the work is fairly straightforward: the first half – lectures I-XI – deals with the formal aspect of language. Priestley provides a genealogy of the parts of speech; they are discussed in the order in which they are assumed to have appeared to meet the needs of social interactions. In the second half – lectures XII-XIX – Priestley addresses issues related to what would now be termed historical and comparative linguistics. This second part will be of greater interest to my demonstration here. As observed by Swiggers '[o]ne of the central topics of the *Course* [...] is the explanation of linguistic diversity' (1994: 38). This topic is specifically dealt with in Lectures XII-XIV, where Priestley discusses internal causes of language change. It is in these three lectures that parallels with the 1768 preface can be found.

Having observed that not all languages develop in the same way and that some languages 'grow more simple while others grow more complex', Priestley endeavours 'to solve so curious a problem' by showing that these diverging

developments are rooted in the 'first principles of languages' (1762: 190). This is where references to the genius of the language are introduced.

> To recur to the principles laid down in the fourth lecture:[43] All the necessary words of a language are either the names of things, or words contrived to express the relations of these to one another; which are called auxiliary words. Two languages may consist of the same words, that is, the people that use them may call every thing by the same name, but have quite a different manner of expressing their relations; or, on the contrary, their manner of using words may be the same, but the words themselves be totally different. In this latter case, **the structure or genius of the language** is said to be the same, and the Grammar of them must be precisely the same: whereas, in the former case, though the same words or names of things were used, the different manner of using them would make the grammar rules of the two languages quite different. The one might be extremely simple, and the other complex: a very few instructions might explain every thing relating to one of the languages, exclusive of what was contained in the dictionary of it; but to have the dictionary of the other by heart might not be to have half learned it. (Priestley 1762: 190-91, my highlights)

Before focussing on the connections with the 1768 preface, it is worth pointing out that, even in these theoretical lectures, Priestley's concern when it comes to the genius of the language is pedagogical: how to facilitate the learning of the language. In this respect, the role of the grammar is considered alongside that of the dictionary. I will develop this point further in Chapter 5, but it already makes thinking of Priestley's reflections on grammar writing in terms of *grammaticography*, as a parallel to *lexicography*, all the more relevant. More

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[43] Lecture IV: 'Of the General Distribution of Words' gives a genealogic account of the institution of words. Priestley is referring here to the final summary of the chapter:

> All the words of which the languages of men consist are either the name of things and qualities (the ideas of which exist in the mind) or words adapted to denote the relations they bear to one another; or lastly, a compendium for other words, with or without their relations. The names of things or qualities are termed *Substantives* and *Adjectives*: the substitutes of these are *Pronouns*. Their coincidence or agreement is expressed by *Verbs*: The relations of words by *Prepositions*, and of sentences by *Conjunctions*. And *Adverbs* are contracted forms of speech, which may be analized into words belonging to other classes (Priestley 1762: 65-66).

specifically now, this paragraph illustrates what Priestley calls 'true symmetry' in the 1768 preface: the grammar must reflect the genius of the particular language it describes, and therefore, if two languages have different geniuses, they must have different grammars. But unlike most of his predecessors, Priestley gives us a clear definition of the notion of genius of the language, as its 'structure', and more precisely 'the manner of expressing [the words'] relations [to one another]' or the 'manner of using' these words.[44] In the following paragraph, Priestley goes on to provide a more specific description of what this 'manner' is, by outlining three 'methods of expressing the relations of words to words':

> The methods of expressing the relations of words to words are principally two: the one is by the inflections of them, that is some change in the form of them; and the other by auxiliary words, appropriated to the several relations: sometimes also recourse is had to bare position. (Priestley 1762: 192)

In other words, the genius of a language consists in the manner in which this language uses the three methods of expressing the relation from words to words: inflections, auxiliary words, and position. This is where a connection with the 1768 *Rudiments* can be established. These three methods correspond to the three aspects of the language which Priestley highlights in italics when he spells out the 'natural rule' which all grammarians must follow in the 1768 preface, but also in the 1765 *Grammar* as made apparent in Table 3.4.

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[44] The genius is also mentioned in Lecture XV, where the meaning of the phrase is the same: it is opposed to the lexicon again, but Priestley chooses the gloss 'constitution' instead of 'structure'.

> If the conquerors be numerous, and intimately mixed with the old inhabitants, the ancient language may undergo a very considerable alteration, not only in the change of its words, but in the very genius and constitution of it. Thus the people of *Italy*, in consequence of the frequent irruptions of the northern barbarians, have entirely changed their language, for another of a quite different genius and constitution, with different laws of the modifications of words, and a different syntax (Priestley 1762: 222).

1762 *Course*	1765 *Grammar*	1768 *Rudiments*
The methods of expressing the relations of words to words are principally two: the one is by the **inflections** of them, that is some change in the form of them;	He [the Grammarian] has nothing left to him belonging to the Language, but the **Inflections**, which are extremely few;	and it seems wrong to confound the account of ***inflections***,
and the other by **auxiliary words**, appropriated to the several **relations**:	And the **Order** in which words are placed in a Sentence [...]	either with the grammatical uses of the ***combinations* of words**, of the ***order*** in which they are placed,
sometimes also recourse is had to bare **position**.	[...] I shall give an Account of the Use of **some particular Words**; and especially such, as (because they **serve to ascertain the meaning of other Words**) all English Grammarians have thought themselves obliged to take Notice of.	or of the ***words which express relations***, and which are equivalent to inflections in other languages.

Table 3.4 Correspondences between the 1762 *Course*, the 1765 *Grammar*, and the 1768 *Rudiments* on the three 'methods of expressing the relations of words to words'

Although the order in which they are mentioned is slightly different in 1762, all three texts offer the same view of grammar, with three aspects to be investigated: (i) inflections; (ii) order or position; (iii) words expressing relations or words ascertaining the meaning of other words. This threefold vision based on his reflections on the genius of the language was turned by Priestley into a grammaticographic principle. As can be seen in Table 3.5, after 1762, the headings in Priestley's grammars replicate this vision so that their organisation be suited to 'structure' of the language.

1761 *Rudiments*	1765 *Grammar*	1768 *Rudiments*
SECT. I. GENERAL DISTRIBUTION. SECT. II. OF NOUNS. SECT. III. OF ADJECTIVES. SECT. IV. OF PRONOUNS. SECT. V. OF VERBS. SECT. VI. OF ADVERBS, &c. SECT. VII. OF DERIVATION. SECT. VIII. OF SYNTAX. SECT. IX. OF PROSODY. SECT. X. OF FIGURES.	A GENERAL VIEW OF ENGLISH GRAMMAR. **SECTION I. Of the Kinds and Inflections of Words.** **SECTION II. Of the Signification and Use of certain Words.** **SECTION III. Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.**	The GENERAL DISTRIBUTION. **PART I. Of the Inflections of Words.** SECTION I. Of the Inflections of Nouns. SECTION II. Of the Inflections of Adjectives. SECTION III. Of the Inflections of Pronouns. SECTION IV. Of the Inflections of Verbs. SECTION V. Of the Derivation and Composition of Words. **PART II. Of the grammatical Use and Signification of certain Words**, especially such as the paucity of our inflections obliges us to make use of, in order to express what, in other languages, is effected by a change of Termination. SECTION I. Of the Articles. SECTION II. Of the Use of the Auxiliary Verbs. **PART III. Of** Syntax; comprising **the Order of Words in a Sentence**, and the Correspondence of one Word to another. PART IV. Of Prosody. PART V. Of Figures.

Table 3.5 Plans of Priestley's three grammars

Whilst, in the original 1761 *Rudiments*, Priestley adopted a very traditional parts-of-speech approach complemented by sections on syntax, prosody and figures of speech, in the 1765 and 1768 grammars, Priestley implemented a novel three-part approach which reflected the three 'methods of expressing the relations of words to words' outlined in the 1762 *Course*. Therefore, we now know more precisely what Priestley means in the 1768 preface when he argues that he had 'been so far from departing from the simplicity of the plan of [the 1761 *Rudiments*], that [he had] made it, in some respects, still more simple [and] more suitable to the genius of the English language': he separated the accounts of the three ways of

describing the structure of the language: inflections, auxiliary words, and word order. It looks as though this organisation is also reflected in the 1768 'Notes and Observations'.

SECTION I. Of the Plural Number of Nouns.
SECTION II. Of the Genitive Case, and other Inflections of Nouus *[sic]*.
SECTION III. Of Adjectives.
SECTION IV. Of Pronouns.
SECTION V. Of Verbs.
SECTION VI. Of Adverbs and Conjunctions.
SECTION VII. Of the Composition and Derivation of Words.
SECTION VIII. Of Articles.
SECTION IX. Of the Use of Prepositions.
SECTION X. Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.
SECTION XI. Of the Correspondence of Words expressing Numbers.
SECTION XII. Of corresponding Particles.

Table 3.6 Plan of the 'Notes and Observations' in the 1768 *Rudiments*

Sections I-VII deal with inflections (which includes derivation) or lack thereof, Sections X-XII examine problems of word order, and in-between, two sections look at parts of speech – articles and prepositions – which are also dealt with in the 'Use and Signification of certain Words'.

In the grammar proper (the actual 'rudiments'), the content of Part I on inflections and Part III on word order mostly recycles material from the 1761 *Rudiments*. The introduction of new material is mostly caused by the creation of Part II: the account of auxiliary words. In both the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments*, it is entitled: 'Of the grammatical Use and Signification of certain Words, especially such as the paucity of our inflections obliges us to make use of, in order to express what, in other languages, is effected by a change of Termination' (1765: b2^{v}; 1768: 35). Hodson argues that this Part II constitutes an 'intermediate level', 'rather thin and miscellaneous', which makes the discussion of some topics 'unnecessarily disjointed' (2008: 188). The analysis which I have offered of Priestley's reflections on the genius of the language shows that, on the

contrary, the creation of Part II was neither clumsy nor haphazard. It was the grammaticographic consequence of the 1762 reflections. The need for this section on 'certain words' can be traced back to the 1761 *Rudiments*. I showed Priestley's dissatisfaction with the organisation of that first edition in 2.4.2, but it is worth mentioning again for the purpose of this chapter's demonstration.

> As but few of the relations of words and sentences in construction are expressed by a change of termination in English, but generally by conjunctive particles, the art of English Syntax must consist chiefly, in the proper application of the *conjunctive particles*; and the accurate use of these can only be learned from *observation* and *a dictionary.* (Priestley 1761: 32f)

In Chapter 2, I argued that this passage foreshadows the 1768 'Notes and Observations'. In fact, it also anticipates Part II on 'the use of certain words' in its acknowledgment that the traditional division between the 'general distribution' of parts of speech, on the one hand, and 'syntax', on the other, is not sufficient to account for all the aspects of the language.

The 'certain words' from the heading of Part II are called 'auxiliary words' in the 1762 *Course*. Priestley does not give any definition or list of auxiliary words in these lectures. But what he had in mind can be inferred from two passages where he gives examples. In the first one he compares Latin with English.

> The same change of termination and the same auxiliary word, were they made use of invariably to express the same relation, would be learned with the same ease, for example, what greater difficulty would it be to remember that that *[sic]* the relation we intend by the genitive case of the word *Carthago*, *Carthage*, were made by *Carthaginis* as in Latin; or *of Carthage*, as in English: or can it be said that the change of *amo* to *amaveram*, or of *love* to *had loved* is either of them a greater burden to the memory than the other? (Priestley 1762: 192-93)

Priestley includes prepositions and verbal auxiliaries amongst auxiliary words in this passage. He then argues that, although auxiliary words are no more economical than inflections, they are more advantageous because they are 'of universal application', whereas inflections will vary from word to word.

> And had the Greeks been aware of the extensive use of auxiliary words they would certainly not have made so great use of inflections. But happening in the first rudiments of their language to have no occasion for words corresponding to our *shall*, *will*, *may*, *must*, *have*, &c. having no words to express what we mean by *to*, *for*, &c. and, whether through an affectation of brevity, or inattention, not repeating the personal pronouns with verbs, they were under an absolute necessity of inflecting their words according to what Grammarians call the *cases* of the nouns, and the *tenses, moods,* and *persons* of verbs [...]. (Priestley 1762: 198)

In this second passage, the category of auxiliary words has been extended to modal auxiliaries and personal pronouns in addition to prepositions and verbal auxiliaries. But the last sentence is in fact the best definition: auxiliary words in English are parts of speech which correspond to cases, tenses, moods, and persons in Greek and Latin. This corresponds exactly to the title Priestley gave to Part II: 'Of the grammatical Use and Signification of certain Words, especially such as the paucity of our inflections obliges us to make use of, in order to express what, in other languages, is effected by a change of Termination'. As a matter of fact, both in 1765 and 1768, Part II contains remarks on auxiliaries, prepositions, but also articles. In 1765, Part II also contained remarks on the relative pronouns *which, whose, who,* and the neutral pronoun *it*, but by 1768 they have been moved to the 'Notes and Observations'. Likewise, in 1768 Priestley observes that although prepositions belong to Part II he thought best to 'throw' (1768: 39) his lengthy remarks on the subject into the 'Notes and Observations'. These hesitations explain Priestley's very first words in the 1768 preface, where he expressed regret that he was unable to complete the original project he had given himself, perhaps suggesting that the 'Notes and Observations' were meant to be inserted into the

new three-part organisation of the grammar proper, as is the case on a smaller scale in the 1765 *Grammar*. They also show that Part II on the 'use of certain words' and the 'Notes and Observations' on usage are complementary in Priestley's attempt to break the Latin mould of grammar and find a model better suited to the genius of the English language.

3.4.3 'A general propensity'

There are three further occurrences of the 'genius of the language' in the preface. Having argued that he had improved his grammar by adopting a simpler plan, more suited to the genius of the language, and rejecting the Latin mould of the canonical grammar, Priestley goes on to explain what sources of authority he has used instead of that Latin model.

> It must be allowed, that the custom of speaking is the original, and only just standard of any language. We see, in all grammars, that this is sufficient to establish a rule, even contrary to the strongest analogies of the language with itself. Must not this custom, therefore, be allowed to have some weight, in favour of those forms of speech, to which our best writers and speakers seem evidently prone ; forms which are contrary to no analogy of the language with itself, and which have been disapproved by grammarians, only from certain abstract and arbitrary considerations, and when their decisions were not prompted by **the genius of the language**; which discovers itself in nothing more than in the general propensity of those who use it to certain modes of construction. I think, however, that I have not, in any case, seemed to favour what our grammarians will call an irregularity, but where **the genius of the language**, and not only single examples, but the general practice of those who write it, and the almost universal custom of those who speak it, have obliged me to do it. (Priestley 1768: ix, my highlights)

There is a third use of the genius of the language in this vein, where Priestley comes to explaining the methodology which he used to collect examples.

> Besides, I think there is a real advantage in making such collections as these from books which may be supposed to be written in a hasty manner, when the writers

> would not pay much attention to arbitrary rules, but indulge that natural propensity, which is the effect of the general custom, and **genius of the language**, as it is commonly spoken. It is not from the writings of grammarians and critics that we can form a judgement of the real present state of any language, even as it is spoken in polite conversation. (Priestley 1768: xii, my highlights)

This time the genius of the language is associated with the notion of propensity, a word which in fact is closer to the etymological sense of genius as natural disposition. This propensity is successively linked with 'the general practice', the 'universal custom', the 'general custom', or the language as it is 'commonly spoken'. On the face of it, these three occurrences, seem to be in contradiction with the previous use of genius of the language as the 'structure' of the language and the 'rules' which come with this structure. Yet, from the first occurrence of this third type of genius, Priestley establishes a clear connection with the previous one by asserting that the genius of the language 'discovers itself in nothing more than in the general propensity of those who use it to certain modes of construction'.[45] The phrase 'modes of construction' harks back to the different methods of expressing the relations of words to words. Priestley therefore implies that the structure of the language – its genius – with its different ways of expressing these relations is not an *a priori* framework (what he calls 'abstract and arbitrary considerations' in the first quotation), but the result ('the effect' he says in the second quotation) of the custom of speaking or practice of writing. Priestley combines here the formal generalisation of the genius in the Port-Royal tradition together with the speaker-centred uniqueness attached to the genius in the tradition of the characterology of languages. He suggests that there is no

[45] It is striking that Priestley uses the same turn of phrase 'discovers itself in nothing more' as in the passage from 1765 *Grammar* discussed in 3.4.1, which may be further evidence, if any more was needed, that Priestley was its author.

contradiction between these two visions by arguing that the genius is neither a set of arbitrary rules to be adhered to nor a compilation of irregularities, but the constructions which emerge as 'general' or 'universal' among the speakers.[46] In this respect, he follows in the footsteps of Italian and French eighteenth-century grammarians who, as argued by Gambarota and Siouffi (section 3.2.1), also tried to reconcile these two strands in the concept of genius of the language.

In fact, Priestley's discourse on the genius of the English language here is reminiscent of that of Abbé Girard on the genius of the French language in his *Vrais principes de la langue françoise, ou la parole réduite en méthode, conformément aux lois de l'usage* (1747). Girard recommends to avoid 'l'écueil ordinaire, qui est d'adapter aux langues analogues ce qui ne convient qu'aux transpositives' (1747 : 35). *Langues analogues* and *langues transpositives* correspond to what modern linguists call analytic and synthetic languages. Girard goes on to add that 'la grammaire en général n'est ni la méthode latine, ni la méthode française, ni celle d'aucune langue particulière ; mais elle est l'art de traiter chaque langue suivant ses usages et son propres génie' (1747 : 38). Although Priestley does not use Girard's terminology, the views about language which he expresses in the 1762 *Course* and the grammaticographic principles which he defends in the 1768 preface, advocating a grammar 'suited' to the genius of the English language, are the same as Girard's. But the connection with the French grammarian is even more striking in that these types of language structures which Girard calls *génie* are not abstract and universal frameworks for him either. The *génie* lies within specific features of the language typically used by its speakers, and which he calls

[46] Figure 1.5 seemed to suggest that Priestley used 'universal' and 'general' interchangeably in the context of language practices.

'un goût distinctif'. This notion is very similar to Priestley's 'natural propensity' in that it is when it becomes universal – Priestley's uses both 'general' and 'universal' – that it forms the genius of the language according to Girard: 'Lorsque ce goût est considéré dans son universalité, c'est alors ce qu'en fait de langue on nomme GÉNIE, dont il est important au grammairien de bien connaître la nature' (1747: 22). I will explore further the possibility that Priestley knew of or had read Girard's work in Chapter 5. Suffice to say for now that they were both engaged in the same undertaking which was to break the Latin mould of grammar, and they both used the genius of the language in the same manner, which is succinctly summarised by Siouffi in his study of Girard: 'une dialectique subtile entre la rigueur d'une observation en tous points assujettie au devoir de fidélité, et l'élan vers l'universalité, qui rejoint le désir de taxinomie' (2010: 52).

3.5 Conclusion

Priestley's introduction of the notion of genius of the language in his grammars is one the distinctive and defining features of his work which have been overlooked because they do not fit in with the 'prescriptive versus descriptive' framework and because they are not elucidated by reference to Lowth. In order to understand this notion and the role it plays in the *Rudiments*, it has proved necessary to examine Priestley's work in its continuity, by going back to the 1762 *Course*, and to look for other influences, notably Samuel Johnson and French grammarians. This varied genealogy, which is illustrated by the three different meanings which the phrase genius of the language takes on in Priestley's grammars – 'changes, whereby words pass from one class to another', 'the methods of expressing the relations of words to words', 'a general propensity' – confirms Rivarol's sentiment that it is difficult to say what the genius of the language is. But, despite these variations, I have shown in this chapter that all

occurrences of the concept have a common purpose: they all point to the grammaticographic transformation of the *Rudiments* after 1761, and Priestley's elaboration of a model of grammar better suited to the English language.

The second conclusion which can be drawn from this chapter is that this transformation stems from pedagogical concerns. Unlike some of his predecessors – such as Miège, Addison or Johnson in the English tradition – Priestley's discourse on the genius of the language does not aim to show the superiority of the English language, neither politically, as reflecting the character of its speakers, nor linguistically, in terms of its expressive adequacy. In this sense, he is closer to the tradition of the general and rational grammars, and to Wallis and Locke in English or Girard in French. Priestley's reflections on the genius of the language in the *Course of Lectures on the Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar* (1762) are meant to be transferred to and implemented in the 1765 *Grammar* and 1768 *Rudiments.* Although his practical goal is to break away from the Latin mould of grammars, his discourse does not show any desire to prove that English is the best language. And the absence of comparison with other languages in the seven occurrences of genius of the language discussed so far is particularly telling in this respect. At the heart of his discourse is instead an educator's concern – which was already apparent in the letter to Rotheram (Table 2.6): How to teach English? What makes a good grammar?

There is, however, one final occurrence of the genius of the language in the 1768 *Rudiments* which seems to contradict all these conclusions.

> Several of our modern writers have leaned to the French idiom in the use of the preposition *of*, by applying it where the French use *de*; though the English idiom would require another preposition, or no preposition at all, in the case; but no writer has departed more from the genius of the English tongue, in this respect,

> than Mr. Hume. *Richlieu profited* of *every circumstance, which the conjuncture afforded.* Hume's History, vol. 4. p. 251. We say *profited* by. *He remembered him* of *the fable.* Ib. vol. 5. p. 185. [...] (Priestley 1768: 158-59)

Unlike the previous seven occurrences, this one is used in the grammar itself, in the 'Notes and Observations' specifically. Priestley uses the genius of the language here in an unusually normative way, and to contrast English with another language, French. This actually is much closer to the manner in which Priestley uses another notion which he introduced in his grammars after 1761: the idiom of the language. I will now examine this second innovation so as to shed light on this passage and many others referring to French, which did not feature in the 1761 *Rudiments*, and to understand the role that this notion played in the evolution of Priestley's approach to grammar writing.

4. Gallicisms and the idiom of the English language

4.1 Priestley's purism

In chapter 2, I showed that what Priestley himself considered in the 1768 preface to be his two main achievements as a grammaticographer have so far been overlooked by scholars interested in his work on language. Chapter 3 focused on the first of these: a grammar more 'suited to the genius of the English language'. This chapter examines the second, which Priestley emphasises even more strongly in the preface:

> If I have done any essential service to my native tongue, I think it will arise from my detecting in time a very great number of *gallicisms,* which have insinuated themselves into the style of many of our most justly admired writers; and which, in my opinion, tend greatly to injure the true idiom of the English language, being contrary to its most established analogies.
>
> I dare say, the collections I have made of this nature, will surprize many persons who are well acquainted with modern compositions. They surprize myself, now that I see them all together; and I even think, the writers themselves will be surprized, when they see them pointed out. For I do not suppose, that they designedly adopted those forms of speech, which are evidently French, but that they fell into them inadvertently, in consequence of being much conversant with French authors. (Priestley 1768: x-xi)

Considering the importance attached to it by Priestley himself, it is surprising that these paragraphs from the 1768 preface have received little attention in recent reassessments of Priestley's work. Straaijer, for instance, only mentions this issue *passim* in a short footnote relative to the examples Priestley had taken from Hume: 'The question remains why Priestley, like Johnson, was so concerned

with these gallicisms to begin with' (2011: 225fn). It remains indeed, and my goal in this chapter is very much to address this question.

The two paragraphs above place contact between English and French at the heart of Priestley's reflections on grammar and grammaticography. The words he uses answer to the definition of linguistic purism which in George Thomas's terms is 'the manifestation of a desire on the part of the speech community (or some section of it) to preserve a language from, or rid it of, putative foreign or other elements held to be undesirable [...]' (1991: 2), or in R. L. Trask's, '[t]he belief that words (and other linguistic features) of foreign origin are a kind of contamination sullying the purity of a language' (1999: 254). Priestley conjures up images of contamination and purity in the first paragraph with 'insinuated' and 'injure' for the former, and 'true' for the latter. But as Thomas and Trask imply, purism is as much rooted in beliefs pertaining to folk linguistics and socio-historical representations as in objective phenomena. This too is apparent in Priestley's purist discourse which is tinged with patriotic rhetoric such as the phrase 'an essential service to my native tongue'. The detection of Gallicisms is not only presented as a scholarly practice but also as a deed dutifully performed in the name of the homeland and its language. Furthermore, by repeating 'surprize' three times in the second paragraph, Priestley highlights the innovative but also alarming nature of his findings. The alarmist tone is enhanced by the adverbial phrase 'in time', implying imminent danger. Priestley stands as a whistle-blower alerting the reader to a danger that has gone unnoticed before ('I see them all together'; 'see them pointed out'; 'fell into them inadvertently'). Detecting and collecting Gallicisms therefore equate to protecting the language. Finally, Priestley's detection of Gallicisms does not target the common language of everyday speakers of English, but more specifically influential writers and, in

particular, those familiar with French authors. Intimated in these remarks is the suggestion that having a penchant for the French language and the culture it carries is objectionable. The two prefatory paragraphs therefore reveal attitudes and representations underpinning Priestley's discourse on French.

The aim of this chapter is to examine whether this purist discourse reflects Priestley's actual practice as a grammarian. For that purpose, I will first give an overview of eighteenth-century Anglo-French relations and how they framed contemporary rhetoric about language contact, so as to shed contextual light on these prefatory statements. Subsequently, I will investigate Priestley's purist practice as a grammarian with a survey of thirty-three observations from the 1768 and 1769 *Rudiments* which reference the French language. Using criteria first outlined in a similar study of Samuel Johnson's attitude towards French (Gilmore 1981), I will assess Priestley's purism by examining his metalanguage and the varying stances it displays, his examples and what they say about his understanding of French influence, and his sources in the collection of examples. The conclusions of the survey will lead me to interrogate the notion of 'idiom of the language' around which Priestley's purist discourse revolves. I will examine various occurrences of the phrase in the *Rudiments* to elucidate its meaning for Priestley, its relation to the notion of 'genius of the language' previously examined, and most importantly the grammaticographic role it played in changing Priestley's approach to grammar writing.

4.2 The origins of anti-French purism in the mid-eighteenth century

4.2.1 Britain's favourite enemy: the roots of Francophobia

France and what became Great Britain with the 1707 Act of Union were engaged in several conflicts over the long eighteenth century. In the build-up to the 1760s,

the two countries fought each other during the Nine Years' War (1689–97), the War of Spanish Succession (1702–13), the War of Austrian Succession (1743–48), and, most decisively, during the Seven Years' War. This last conflict, caused by the two nations' antagonistic interests in their colonial and trading empires, started in earnest in 1756 and ended with the Peace of Paris in 1763, the period when Priestley established himself as a tutor and grammarian. Gerald Newman argues in his cultural history of the *Rise of English Nationalism 1740–1830* (1997) that, by the mid-eighteenth century, continued warfare and rivalry with France gave rise to 'Folkish Gallophobia'. Building upon Max Sylvius Handman's general definition of the sentiment of nationalism as a response to provocation and 'a whole attitude of animosity toward another group, historically developed and maintained by a process of education' (1921: 105), Newman defines 'Folkish Gallophobia' as:

> [...] the increasing force, increasingly important, of English popular opposition to France after the beginning of the Seven Years' war; the growing opposition, primarily military and economic but running beyond that, to France as historic enemy – as 'competitor, aggressor, oppressor, plunderer, defiler, enslaver and destroyer' (Handman 1921: 105) (Newman 1997: 74-75)

Newman pinpoints the Seven Years' war as a climax in the development of this anti-French feeling. He goes on to emphasise the role of Gallophobia in shaping English national identity – his primary focus – and even a British sense of identity.

> [...] it would perhaps be no exaggeration to say that a consciousness of France as England's military, commercial and diplomatic enemy was one of the foundation stones of the national mind, perhaps in those days even more basic than the sense of common territory and language, and one of the very few articles of belief that in some way or another was capable of influencing all Britons beneath otherwise

> immense diversities of wealth, locality, dialect, occupation, religion, and political faith. (Newman 1997: 75)

The anti-French sentiment born out of this drawn-out rivalry was not only central in shaping eighteenth-century mentalities in Britain but also in unifying the country. This was all the more the case because the opposition to France extended beyond the strategic military and commercial terrains. It also operated on the more day-to-day cultural level. In her seminal study *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (1992), Linda Colley insists on one key factor in the response to the French across Britain: religion.

> France had a larger population and a much bigger land mass than Great Britain. It was for a long time its greatest imperial rival. It possessed a more powerful army, which regularly showed itself able to conquer large tracts of Europe. And it was a Catholic state. This last point was the crucial one in shaping responses throughout Britain *as a whole*. (Colley 2009 [1992]: 25)

As a Catholic stronghold, France was the embodiment of a threat under which the whole of Britain could unify. Several of the wars between Britain and France which took place during the long eighteenth century had, indeed, political and religious roots. Their purpose was partly to prevent a Jacobite invasion and the restoration of a Catholic dynasty in Britain, which could not happen without the aid of the Bourbons who reigned over France and Spain. Since the Glorious Revolution, Catholic France also represented both the popish fanaticism and the arbitrary power from which Anglicans had broken free. The pervasiveness of this sentiment in Britain is evidenced by a number of Anti-Catholic outbursts. such as the Gordon Riots which erupted in 1780 in response to the 1778 Catholic Relief Act, of which Ian Gilmour says that '[w]ith the exception of the 'Fifteen' and the 'Forty Five' [1715 and 1745 Jacobite risings], [they] were by far the most violent episode in eighteenth-century England' (1993: 342).

Placing religion at the centre of the antagonism between France and Britain, Colley argues that it was a unifying factor amongst Britons who, thereby, 'defined themselves as Protestants struggling for survival against the world's foremost Catholic power' (2009: 6).[47] Such religious unity in Britain should not be exaggerated, as the tensions between the established Church and various groups of dissenters – to which Joseph Priestley himself belonged – remained a defining feature of British society.[48] But Colley's argument is at its most convincing when it is understood that along with the religious dimension of the Catholic label came a number of related socio-political representations which shaped responses to France. This is outlined in her paper 'Britishness and Otherness: An argument':

> By way of such texts [as *The Book of Martyrs* and John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*] and in response to sermons, ballads, and folklore, Britons were encouraged to look through the Catholic glass darkly so as to see themselves more clearly and more complacently. Catholics, they chose to believe, were superstitious and persecuting, inclined to be arbitrary when powerful, starving, illiterate, and cringing when not. (Colley 1992: 319)

A good illustration of such representations of the French as the Other is William Hogarth's 1748 painting 'The Gate of Calais, or O the Roast Beef of Old England' which ridicules the French in the person of scrawny soldiers and a covetous fat friar surrounding an opulent piece of roast beef, symbolising British power and wealth. The painting features the painter himself being arrested simply for

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[47] Other historians have found that Colley's argument overlooks religious divisions and tensions within Britain, see Claus and Marriott's *History: An Introduction to Theory, Method, and Practice* (2012: 162-68).

[48] Priestley and his dissenting friends were themselves prime targets of the Birmingham riots of 1791. In fact, as a counterargument to Colley's approach to the eighteenth century, Paul Langford puts on a par the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots, the anti-Dissenter Birmingham riots and the reaction against the Jew Bill in 1753, as illustrations of '[h]ostility to religious minorities' which he sees as 'an abiding characteristic of many Englishmen and Scotsmen, especially uneducated ones' (1989: 291).

painting the Calais Gate, an experience Hogarth had himself gone through the previous summer. Such representations of Catholic France as a place governed by fanaticism and arbitrariness were also informed by the arrival of French Calvinist Protestants after Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes in 1685, thereby stripping these Huguenots of their religious and civil rights. Many found refuge in Britain, around the 1680s, but also in subsequent waves, for instance during the 'Camisard' rebellion (1702–10). It is estimated that between forty and fifty thousand crossed the Channel during the reign of Louis XIV (1660–1714).[49] In Britain, they were a living testament to the tyrannical and intolerant nature of the French absolutist monarchy.

4.2.2 Language codification, the 'spirit of English liberty' and the project of an Academy

As well as shaping British identity, these antagonistic Anglo-French relations also had an effect on language matters. Representations of France as an arbitrary and despotic regime partly informed the debate over the establishment of English Academy, following the foundation of the *Académie française* in 1635. Here too the debate shows 'the influence of French normative ideas on the codification of the English language', to quote the title of Beal's comprehensive account of the failed attempt to create an English academy (2011: 435-45). Since Priestley mentions the issue in the preface to his *Rudiments*, it is worth going over the evolution of this well-known debate.[50] It started in earnest in 1664 when the Royal Society adopted a resolution to set up a 'committee for improving the English language' (see Baugh and Cable 2012: 258-60, Crystal 2005: 376). John Dryden, one of the

[49] For further details on the number of Huguenots crossing the Channel after 1685, see Gwynn (2001: 44).

[50] In this section, I have brought together several historiographical accounts of the debate each highlighting different aspects which are all necessary to the present overview.

members, had been the first prominent advocate of the project, famously writing in the dedication of *The Rival Ladies*: 'I am Sorry that (Speaking so noble a Language as we do) we have not a more certain Measure of it, as they have in France, where they have an Academy erected for that purpose, and Indow'd with large Privileges, by the present King' (1664: n. p.). Five years later, in the dedication of *Troilus and Cressida*, Dryden developed his views on the project for the Earl of Sunderland, putting forward the connection between language and political matters.

> The quiet of the Nation must be secur'd, and a mutuall trust, between Prince and people be renew'd: and then this great and good man will have leisure for the ornaments of peace: and make our language as much indebted to his care, as the French is to the memorie of their famous *Richelieu*. You know, my Lord, how low he laid the foundations of so great a work: That he began it with a *Grammar* and a *Dictionary*; without which all those Remarques and Observations, which have since been made, had been perform'd to as little purpose as it wou'd be to consider the furniture of the Rooms, before the contrivance of the House. Propriety must first be stated, ere any measures of elegance can be taken. Neither is one *Vaugelas* sufficient for such a work. 'Twas the employment of the whole Academy for many years, for the perfect knowledge of a Tongue was never attain'd by any single person. (Dryden 1679: n.p.)

In a period of domestic and religious tension not dissimilar to that experienced by France a few decades earlier, Dryden presents the project to the newly appointed first secretary as a chance to attain the same grandeur as his French counterpart Richelieu, painted here in a flattering light, as the architect of a glorious enterprise. A few years later, in his *Essay on Projects* (1697), Daniel Defoe uses the same strategy in his appeal for patronage, showing that, at the time, the emphasis was put on status planning in selling the project of an Academy to potential protectors.

> The Peculiar study of the Academy of *Paris*, has been to Refine and Correct their own Language; which they have done to that happy degree, that we see it now spoken in all the Courts of *Christendom*, as the Language allowed to be most universal.
>
> I had the Honour once to be a Member of a small Society, who seem'd to offer at this Noble Design in *England*. But the Greatness of the Work, and the Modesty of the Gentlemen concern'd, prevail'd with them to desist an Enterprise which appear'd too great for Private Hands to undertake. We want indeed a Richelieu to commence such a Work: For I am persuaded, were there such a *Genius* in our Kingdom to lead the way, there would not want capacities who could carry on the Work to a Glory equal to all that has gone before them. The *English* Tongue is a Subject not at all less worthy the Labour of such a Society than the *French*, and capable of a much greater perfection. (Defoe 1697: 228-29).

Seven years into the Nine Years' War, the language competition stands as a proxy for the diplomatic and military antagonism which I presented in the previous section, or as Beal puts it 'a cipher for imperial ambitions' (2011: 439). Defoe's words on Richelieu are as laudatory as Dryden's, and the French Academy is depicted as an example to follow, indicating a sense of inferiority on the English side.

With the 1701 Act of Settlement – which settled the religious disputes underpinning the succession to the throne – and the 1707 Act of Union, the regime became stronger and political uncertainty decreased. This seems to have affected the debate on the need for an Academy, which changed focus around the turn of the century, as evidenced in Joseph Addison's pieces in the *Spectator*.

> There is another Particular in our Language which is a great Instance of our Frugality of words, and that is the suppressing of several Particles, which must be produced in other Tongues to make a Sentence intelligible. This often perplexes the best Writers, when they find the Relatives *whom*, *which*, or *they [sic]*, at their Mercy whether they may have Admission or not; and will never be decided till we have something like an Academy, that by the best Authorities and Rules drawn

> from the Analogy of Languages, shall settle all Controversies between Grammar and Idiom. (Addison 1711: no 135 n.p.)

Addison's appeal for an Academy shifts the focus from status planning – the political role and prestige of the language – to corpus planning[51] – the codification of the language – which he calls settling controversies between grammar and idiom. This also appears to be the main concern in the most vocal of the Augustan calls for an English Academy: Swift's address to the earl of Oxford in *A Proposal for Correcting, Improving, and Ascertaining the English Tongue* (1712). Convinced that the English language had reached its Golden Age under the reign of Elizabeth and had deteriorated since the Civil War, Swift laments 'that our Language is extremely imperfect [...] and, that in many Instances, it offends against every Part of Grammar' (1712: 8). As the essay comes to an end, Swift outlines the tasks assigned to the body of literati which he wants to set up to improve the language.

> The Persons who are to undertake this Work, will have the Example of the French before them, to imitate where these have proceeded right, and to avoid their Mistakes. Besides the Grammar-part, wherein we are allowed to be very defective, they will observe many gross Improprieties, which however authorised by Practice, and grown familiar, ought to be discarded. (Swift 1712: 30)

Although Swift's inspiration remains the French example, there no longer is any sense of inferiority as he sets the bar higher by pointing out shortcomings in the French undertakings. It is worth remarking that his distinction between a grammar part, on the one hand, and observations on improprieties, somehow anticipates the structure of the 1768 *Rudiments*. As remarked by Baugh and Cable,

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[51] I am not using *corpus planning* in reference to corpus linguistics but, in keeping with Kloss's seminal distinction, to refer to aspects of language planning affecting 'the structure and form of language', as opposed to *status planning*, which focusses on the language's 'standing alongside other languages or vis-a-vis a national government' (Kloss 1969: 81).

'The publication of Swift's *Proposal* marks the culmination of the movement for an English Academy' (2002: 268). The proposal faced political objections and ran into several obstacles (see Baugh and Cable 2002: 268-71, Beal 2011: 440-41). However, Swift's complaint about the state of the English Language set the tone in English grammaticography and lexicography for the next fifty years. By way of example, in the first paragraphs of the preface to his *Short Introduction to English Grammar* (1762), Lowth observes that 'the justness of this [Swift's] complaint, as far as I can find, hath never been questioned; and yet no effectual method hath hitherto been taken to redress the grievance of which he complains' (1762: ii). But, whilst Lowth agreed with the general sentiment, he did not take up the suggestion that an Academy could settle all the uncertainties Swift had pointed out and fix the language. Instead, he believed that the state of the language would improve if English grammar was properly taught in English schools. Besides, by the time Lowth was writing, Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) was already an authority, and acted as the one-man equivalent to the French Academy's *Dictionnaire* (first published in 1694). Garrick famously celebrated Johnson's achievement in the last couplet of an epigram which aptly shows how the war between France and Britain had expanded from the military to the literary:

On Johnson's Dictionary.

TALK of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
That one English soldier will beat ten of France;
Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
Our odds are still greater, still greater our men:
[...]
First Shakespeare and Milton, like gods in the fight,
Have put their whole drama and epic to flight;
In satires, epistles, and odes, would they cope,
Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope;
And Johnson, well arm'd like a hero of yore,

Has beat forty French, and will beat forty more! (Garrick 1785: 506)

But Johnson's achievement was not the only reason why support for the Academy had dwindled by the mid-eighteenth century. In fact, as soon as Swift's *Proposal* came out, it triggered very critical responses, notably from Maynwaring and Oldmixon. The former – a Whig – launched a blistering attack against Swift, and the Tory party, for party politics also underpinned the debate on the foundation of an Academy. Oldmixon's pamphlet is of interest because his response deploys an argument against the French model which persisted for many years. He accuses the Tories of trying to 'not only force their Principles upon us, but their Language, wherein they endeavour to ape their good Friends the *French*, who for these three or fourscore Years have been attempting to make their Tongue as Imperious as their Power' (1712: 2). The Tory party and the French are but one in Oldmixon's view; they share a love for despotism and authoritarian politics, as he goes on to explain.

> What Law of ours Impowers any body to order our Language to be *Inspected*, and who is there that wou'd think himself oblig'd to obey him in it? Is there no difference between the Ministers of a Despotick Monarchy, and the Servants of a limited one, who have no Rule but the Law, and are as accountable to it as the vilest of their Flatterers. We see how our Tongue would be improv'd and enlarg'd, had the Doctor [Swift] and his Brethren the ordering of it. He has already impos'd on us the Court Style of *France*, and their Politics wou'd soon come after it. (Oldmixon 1712: 30)

Oldmixon attempts to depict the Tories as the enemy within by associating them with the enemy without. In the process the project of an Academy becomes tainted with the then prevalent cultural representations of France – an unaccountable and omnipotent authority which, from the Whig point of view, was now alien to the country's sense of identity. Although it is often argued that,

effectively, support for an English Academy waned with the death of Queen Anne in 1714 (see Millward 2012: 237 for instance), the popularity of this anti-authoritarian argument throughout the eighteenth century shows that antagonism with France also played a part, as the 'the example of the French' became a counterexample.

Coming closer to the 1760s, the rejection of an Academy based on a distaste for authoritarianism became commonplace. It is striking for instance that the figure of Richelieu, depicted by Dryden and Defoe as a powerful protector of the arts, was turned around into that of a tyrant by William Warburton in his remarks on Pope's *Dunciad*.

> Nothing can be juster than the observation here insinuated, that no branch of Learning thrives well under Arbitrary government but the *Verbal.* The reasons are evident. It is unsafe under such Governments to cultivate the study of things of importance. [...] Another reason is the *encouragement* which arbitrary governments give to the study of *words,* in order to busy and amuse active genius's, who might otherwise prove troublesome and inquisitive. So when Cardinal Richelieu had destroyed the poor remains of his Country's liberties, and made the supreme Court of Parliament merely *ministerial,* he instituted the *French Academy*. (Warburton 1751: Vol.5, 244-45)

Four years later, in the preface to his *Dictionary* (1755), Johnson was less derogatory about the role left to the French Academicians by their protector, but still, observing that the *Académie* had failed to reach its goal to fix the language, he extended the metaphor of the overreaching power.

> With this hope, however, academies have been instituted, to guard the avenues of their languages, to retain fugitives, and repulse intruders; but their vigilance and activity have hitherto been vain; sounds are too volatile and subtile for legal restraints; to enchain syllables, and to lash the wind, are equally the undertakings of pride, unwilling to measure its desires by its strength. (Johnson 1755: n.p.)

In the final lines of the preface, as he laments the corruption of the English language through French loanwords, Johnson invokes the 'spirit of English liberty' in a dogged rejection of the establishment of an Academy.

> If an academy should be established for the cultivation of our stile, which I, who can never wish to see dependance multiplied, hope the spirit of *English* liberty will hinder or destroy, let them, instead of compiling grammars and dictionaries, endeavour, with all their influence, to stop the licence of translatours, whose idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of *France*. (Johnson 1755: np)

Joseph Priestley was familiar with this last passage for he uses it as an example to illustrate anaphoric 'them' referring to a collective noun like 'academy' (1768: 185). It is therefore no surprise that Priestley should have trodden in Johnson's footsteps, although in less belligerent terms, by invoking 'the genius of a free nation' and the example of 'free states' when tackling the issue in the preface to the *Rudiments*.

> As to a publick *Academy*, invested with authority to ascertain the use of words, which is a project that some persons are very sanguine in their expectations from, I think it not only unsuitable to the genius of a *free nation*, but in itself ill calculated to reform and fix a language. We need make no doubt but that the best forms of speech will, in time, establish themselves by their own superior excellence: and, in all controversies, it is better to wait the decisions of *Time*, which are slow and sure, than to take those of *Synods*, which are often hasty and injudicious. [...] As to the little varieties which the interposition of an academy might prevent, they appear to me very far from having a disagreeable effect in the style of different persons writing upon different subjects. What would *Academies* have contributed to the perfection of the *Greek* and *Latin* languages? Or who, in those free states, would have submitted to them? (Priestley 1761: vii-viii)

Priestley's views on language planning here are firmly established in the Johnsonian tradition which itself goes back to the turning point constituted by

the rejection of Swift's *Proposal*.[52] The last question echoes one of the questions already raised by Oldmixon: 'who is there that wou'd think himself oblig'd to obey him in it?'. Crucial in that rejection were cultural representations of France as a despotic and arbitrary regime in contrast with British self-representations around 'the spirit of English liberty'. This broad overview of the evolution of the debate sheds some useful light on the different factors informing Priestley's views in the 1768 preface. His anti-Gallicism purism is neither new nor unique and, more importantly, it places him firmly in the Johnsonian lineage, both with regard to his response to the project of an Academy and, as I will now examine, in the apprehension of language contact with French.

4.2.3 The linguistic Other

In 'Britishness and Otherness: An Argument' (1992) and *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (2009), Colley sets herself in opposition to previous interpretations of the rise of Britishness which, in her words, understood it mostly as 'the result of an integration and homogenization of disparate cultures' (1992: 316). Instead, she builds on Benedict Anderson's view of the nation as 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (2006 [1983]: 6) to argue that the wars waged by Britain during the long eighteenth-century 'allowed its diverse inhabitants to focus on what they had in common, rather than on what divided them' (Colley 1992: 316). Essential to this operation was the construction of an 'Other beyond their shores' (Colley 1992: 316 and 2009: 17). By and large, France played that role on the military, political, religious, commercial levels, but, importantly, the French were also the linguistic Other. In

[52] At least that of the *Dictionary*, for in the *Plan* (1747) Johnson still believed that language could be fixed.

this section, I will examine how representations of French which constructed it as the linguistic Other affected the codification of English. I will focus, in particular, on lexicography and the response to the introduction of French loanwords.

4.2.3.1 French attraction: protecting the English character

Earlier in the century, Addison had satirically lamented that the adoption of a large number of military terms from French was a defeat in itself (*Spectator* 165, 8 September 1711). By the mid-eighteenth century, the focus had shifted to French fashion and imported goods, which were often associated with a corruption of manners. Thus, in Johnson's *Dictionary*, the verb *Frenchify* is defined as 'to infect with the manner of France, to make a coxcomb' (1755: n.p.). A few years later, the prevailing mood is summarised by the *Critical Review*, in words echoing Johnson's: '[...] we are obliged to the French for a great number of terms and phrases, some of them used by men of taste and learning; others only by the *coxcombs* of both sexes, who *affect* to speak à la Mode de Paris' (Pringle 1775: 49 cited in Beal 2012: 144).[53] In *Fashioning Masculinity* (1996), Michèle Cohen avers that eighteenth-century relations with the French produced anxieties over the effect of French on English masculinity. She argues that the French tongue was associated with supposedly feminine qualities: '[it] was held to be soft, harmonious and elegant, and the 'vivacity' of discourse the French displayed deemed pleasing'; and the English tongue with masculine traits: 'Strength and sincerity, on the other hand, were the distinguishing characteristics of the English tongue' (1996: 3). In the same vein, Paul Langford's *Englishness Identified* (2000) discusses two linguistic

[53] For further details on French borrowings related to lifestyle and affected language, see Beal (2004: 19-20)

traits associated with English identity. The first one is plainness: 'Language was taken to be a clear indication of the English obsession with plainness and directness. Unmasking cant, it was noted, the Englishman would say 'The English of this is...'' (2000: 90). The second one is taciturnity (Langford 2000: 175-219), of which a good illustration is the 1711 issue of the *Spectator* quoted in section 4.2.2 where Addison lists an abundance of monosyllables, contractions, abbreviations, and a certain frugality of words as evidence of 'our Natural Taciturnity', by contrast with French which stands for prolixity, as is made clear by Addison's introductory anecdote:

> I have somewhere read of an eminent Person, who used in his private Offices of Devotion to give Thanks to Heaven that he was born a *Frenchman*: For my own part, I look upon it as a peculiar Blessing that I was Born an *Englishman*. Among many other Reasons, I think my self very happy in my Country, as the *Language* of it is wonderfully adapted to a Man that is sparing of his Words, and an Enemy to Loquacity. (Addison 1711: no 135 n.p.)

French affectation and loquacity were the mark of a feminine language, as opposed to conciseness or taciturnity, and sincerity or plainness, conceived of as masculine characteristics. Framed by the broader political, military and religious context, this opposition meant that the French language was perceived as a threat, as argued by Cohen:

> [...] the danger represented by the French for *all* ranks was '*bewitching* Pleasure', not only irresistible, but unnatural, ungodly, even. It was because this enchantment produced 'inordinate and exhorbitant *[sic]* desires' that the English became 'other', effeminate – excess is precisely the site of incommensurable desire – Frenchified, and the national fibre was weakened and enervated. France's attraction was exerted not only by its fashions and luxury goods but even more insidiously by its manners and by its tongue. The 'invasion' of 'Frenchisms' into English epitomized this seduction. The fear was that such 'intimacy' with French

> would debilitate and 'enervate' the masculine English tongue, just as consorting with women was apt to weaken and make men effeminate. (Cohen 1996: 6-7)

Although Priestley does not explicitly use these gendered images, the more general representations of French attractiveness is conjured up by his choice of words in the 1768 preface when he blames writers for the importation of Gallicisms. Thus, to Priestley, Gallicisms have not been borrowed by writers into their language, but they have 'insinuated themselves into [their] style', implying the insidious nature of the process and the fact that it affects the more personal aspect of their writing. The lack of agency is then elaborated on by Priestley: 'I do not suppose, that they designedly adopted those forms of speech, which are evidently French, but that they fell into them inadvertently, in consequence of being much conversant with French authors'. As in Cohen's analysis, Priestley blames these authors excessive 'intimacy' with the French tongue ('being much conversant with'). He also invokes the spell of the French tongue by depicting them as blind to the otherness of these words ('fell into them inadvertently') which is 'evident' to those unaffected. This French threat is also suggested in the more patriotic metaphor developed by Priestley in his purist paragraphs for, as well as the English character, the English border needs protection.

4.2.3.2 French invasion: protecting the English border

In her monograph *Samuel Johnson and the Journey into Words* (2015), Lynda Mugglestone observes that the task of the lexicographer is often represented, by himself or others, in terms usually associated with the ruling of a country: 'disputes over the legitimate territories of language (and languages) were by no means uncommon by the eighteenth century, as were associated perceptions of lexical migration and settlement, incursion and defeat' (2015: 142). In the case of Johnson, she shows in the chapter 'Defending the citadel, patrolling the borders'

(2015: 141-66) that his work often depicts language as a site of conflict through a set of tropes involving military metaphors and raising questions of naturalisation, citizenship and identity. I commented in 4.2.2 on Johnson's extolling the 'spirit of English liberty' in his rejection of an English Academy. In the same passage, Johnson laments the negative influence of translators on the English language, arguing that their 'idleness and ignorance, if it be suffered to proceed, will reduce us to babble a dialect of *France*' (1755: np). The tropes evoked by Mugglestone appear here with the verb 'reduce' which, in military terms, implies defeat. She adds that 'Johnson also sets "dialect" against "language", configuring subordinate against superordinate. He envisions – and resists – a state of conquest and subjugation in which not only England, but English too, has been subsumed into French' (2015: 145). The lexicographic debate about French borrowings is therefore framed in terms echoing long standing fears of a French-backed Jacobite invasion.

Within the *Dictionary*, Johnson puts his views into action by rejecting Gallicisms. Noting that Johnson defines *Gallicism* as 'A mode of speech peculiar to the French language', Mugglestone goes on to observe (2015: 148) that Johnson's definition of *peculiar* – 'Appropriate; belonging to any one with exclusion of others' – draws a clear territorial divide between languages, with a seemingly impenetrable border. She also notes that when Johnson points out such *Gallicisms* he uses a form of 'nosism', the tribal use of *we*, which sets English speakers apart and renders their identity incompatible with French.[54] By way of example, Mugglestone cites the entry for *comport* ('To bear; to endure'), which, in this sense, Johnson rules, is 'a Gallick signification, not adopted among us' (2015: 148). The

[54] Mugglestone borrows the term 'nosism' from Paul Rastell (2003).

use of *us* implies a *them*, which tangibly makes the Gallick tongue the linguistic Other. It is worth pointing out that Johnson's apprehension of *our* tongue in the discussion of Gallicisms is reminiscent of Anderson's definition of the nation in its two-fold dimension: 'an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign' (2006: 6). By territorialising the language and fixing borders, Johnson implies that English is inherently limited and that, in the words of Anderson, it 'has finite, if elastic, boundaries, beyond which lie other nations [languages]' (2006: 7). Likewise, by using a tribal *we* either to describe 'what we do' or to make definite judgments about what is in use or not in the language, Johnson implies that indigenous speakers are sovereign in deciding what belongs to the language, at the exclusion of all other authority. It can therefore be argued that, in the same way as Anderson's nation is an imagined community, Johnson's language is an imagined territory, both limited and sovereign. Here again Priestley's anti-Gallicism resonates with Johnson's approach. In addition to the patriotic and tribal undertones of the phrase 'essential service to my native tongue' which I commented upon in 4.1, the same territorialisation of the language is perceptible. The phrase 'insinuated themselves' conjures up images of trespassing by alien elements and intrusion within the borders of the language. By the same token, Priestley's job of 'detecting' the intruders and protecting the language against the threat they pose, as suggested by the phrase 'in time', has every characteristic of what Mugglestone calls 'defending the citadel and patrolling the borders'.

This characterisation of French as a threat to the territorial integrity of English is all the more part of an imaginary as Johnson's alarmist discourse is not fully supported by the lexical evolution of English at the time. In *Borrowed Words* (2014), Philip Durkin notes that 'the eighteenth century shows a considerable dip

in the numbers both of loanwords and of new words of all origins, as reflected in the *OED*' (2014: 208).[55] With regard to French borrowings specifically, Durkin comments that there is little variation over time in absolute numbers. Figure 4.1 indicates that between 1550 and 1799, the number of loanwords of French and French and/or Latin origin remained around 500 per half century. There even seems to be a gradual decrease over time up to 1750.

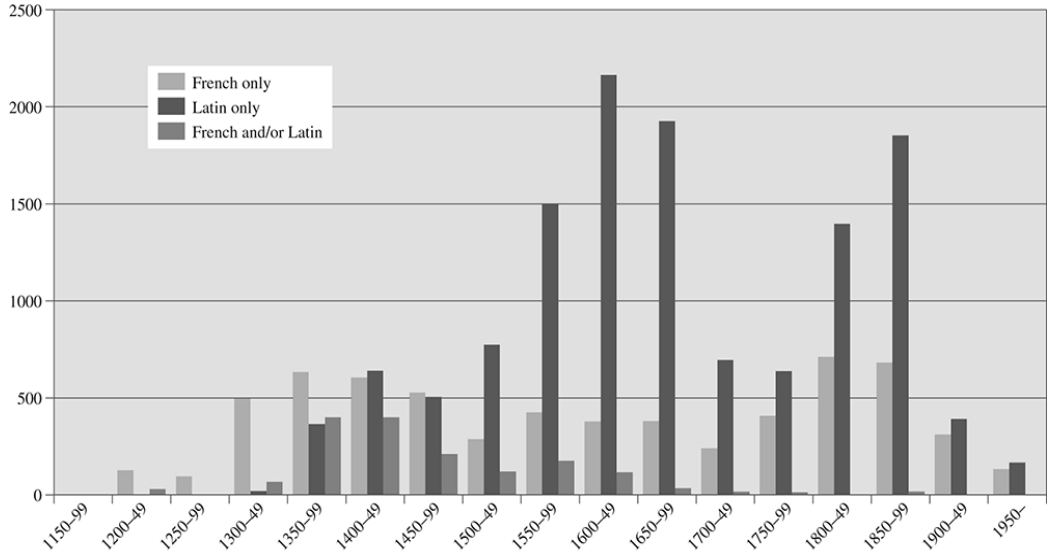

Figure 4.1 Loanwords from French, Latin, and French and/or Latin in parts of *OED3* so far completed, arranged chronologically, 1300–present (reproduced from Durkin 2014: 311).

My own decade-by-decade count of words with a French origin in the *OED* online (Table 4.1) also shows that throughout the eighteenth-century numbers remained fairly stable, with no big upsurge.

Decade	**1700-09**	**1710-19**	**1720-29**	**1730-39**	**1740-49**	**1750-59**	**1760-69**	**1770-79**	**1780-89**	**1790-99**
Words of French origin	214	129	224	114	108	155	162	209	234	310

Table 4.1 Words of French origin introduced in the eighteenth century, *OED* online (last accessed 27.07.2019)

[55] Durkin convincingly demonstrates that this is a genuine trend in the language and not an effect of the modes of compilation in the *OED* (2014: 310-14).

Surprisingly, the number of French loanwords was decreasing in the decades leading up to the period in which Johnson compiled his *Dictionary* (1747–55). The modern observer will note that French loanwords gradually increase from the 1750s onwards, but it is uncertain that the start of this long-run trend would have been perceived at the time. Relative to the fluctuations over previous decades, the increase of the 1750s is not out of the ordinary. Besides, it is possible that this increase, in the *OED*'s data, partly derives from a rise in recording, due to the greater number of codifying texts published at the time, rather than an increase in usage.[56] By way of illustration of this phenomenon, I found six words of French origin, first recorded in the 1750s according to the *OED,* whose first, and sometimes sole, citation is from Johnson himself: *chaumontel, dossel, duvet, ebrillade, escot,* and *versatility*. Paradoxically, none of them is marked as a Gallicism in his *Dictionary*. These findings tend to show that perceptions of an invasion of Gallicisms were not entirely grounded in the reality of usage.

As regards the proportion of French borrowings within all new words, Figure 4.2 shows it remained limited under 10% even though it consistently increased from the early seventeenth century until the second half of the eighteenth century. What is more remarkable is that, over the same period, the share of words of Latin origin decreased sharply.

[56] For further details on the production of codifying texts in the eighteenth century, see Tieken-Boon van Ostade (2008b).

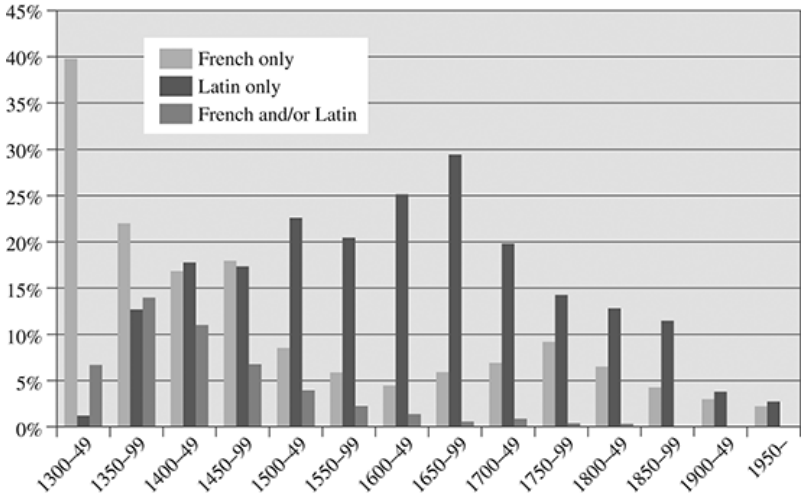

Figure 4.2 Loanwords from French, Latin, and French and/or Latin as a proportion of all new words, as reflected by parts of *OED3* so far completed, 1300–present (from Durkin 2014: 311).

It can therefore be conjectured that, although there was no dramatic change in the number of French borrowings, in the period leading up to Johnson's *Dictionary* and Priestley's *Rudiments*, Gallicisms became more noticeable. Durkin develops a similar point in his analysis.

> From the eighteenth century onwards, the differences in the patterns of borrowing from French and Latin become yet more marked. French loanwords continue to be numerous (more numerous than those from any other modern language), but they become easier to classify into distinct groups: those that reflect the role of French as an international language of scholarship [...], and those that reflect areas of French cultural influence or prestige [...]. (Durkin 2014: 348)

This observation is probably key to Johnson's and his contemporaries' attitudes towards Gallicisms. Their defensive rhetoric might not have been triggered by a sudden 'invasion' of French words, which, as the raw numbers suggest, is partly fantasised, but by the greater consistency in the worldview and way of life that these borrowings carried, which might have heightened their perceived otherness. Further investigating this hypothesis is not within the scope of this thesis but it deserves to be done in future research projects.

This concludes my survey of the context in which Priestley's statements against Gallicisms were made in the 1768 preface. I have shown that although his purism is not as vocal and radical as other such discourses in the same period, it is nonetheless underpinned by similar representations of the otherness of the French tongue. The fact that such purism is at odds with the descriptivist and anti-Lowth image associated with Priestley in the historiography may explain why this aspect of his grammaticographic undertakings has not been addressed. It may also come from underestimating the influence of Samuel Johnson on Priestley's work. The figure of the lexicographer looms large in Priestley's prefatory comments and further comparisons between their productions is needed. In this respect, several scholars have observed that Johnson's practice with regard to French borrowings did not quite match his prefatory discourse. In the next section, I will therefore investigate Priestley's practice as a grammarian to establish whether it matches his purist prefatory discourse.

4.3 Priestley's use of French in the 1768–69 *Rudiments*

In his 1981 article 'Johnson's Attitudes toward French Influence on the English Language', Thomas B. Gilmore investigated how the anti-French purism which Johnson expressed in the *Dictionary*'s paratext manifested itself in the dictionary entries themselves. He looked specifically at Johnson's metalanguage in the entries for words of French origin and classified them according to the intensity of Johnson's objection. Gilmore was able to show that these entries presented a broad range of attitudes towards French influence which did not always correspond to Johnson's prefatory statements. Many entries showed acceptance and sometimes approval of the assimilation of French borrowings. In this section, I will replicate Gilmore's study and apply it to Priestley's attitudes towards French. I will primarily focus on the intensity of Priestley's objections to French

influence, adapting Gilmore's methodology to the necessarily different metalanguage used in a grammar. A few other problems raised by Priestley's prefatory statements will be examined. The first one is that, having been added in 1768, they seem to contradict another passage from the preface dating back to the 1761 edition, in which Priestley welcomes borrowings from foreign language:

> A circumstance which may give us hopes to see the speedy accomplishment of the design of completing the grammar of our language, is the exceeding great simplicity of its structure, arising, chiefly, from the paucity of our inflections of words. For this we are, perhaps, in some measure, indebted to the long continued barbarism of the people from whom we received it. The words we afterwards borrowed from foreign languages, though they now make more than one half of the substance of ours, were like more plentiful nourishment to a meagre body, that was grown to its full stature, and become too rigid to admit of any new modification of its parts. They have added considerably to the bulk and gracefulness of our language; but have made no alteration in the simplicity of its original form. (Priestley 1768: xvii)

Hodson (2006: 78) resolves this contradiction by pointing out that, as suggested by the phrase 'contrary to its most established analogies' in Priestley's preface, his detection of Gallicisms was aimed at grammatical features rather than lexical items. This is a claim my study will help verify. Another aspect to be investigated is Priestley's contention that he has detected these Gallicisms 'in time', implying that they have not yet been assimilated. I will consequently examine whether the features which Priestley associates with French were a recent introduction into English, and whether they would have been perceived as 'evidently' French. Finally, I will list the authors censured by Priestley to test the claim that their English was contaminated by their familiarity with the French language.

4.3.1 *Priestley's metalinguistic references to French*

For the purpose of this survey, I will look at the 1768 and 1769 editions of the *Rudiments*. The 1769 *Rudiments* has received little attention, even though it was the last edition which Priestley updated himself.[57] Relying on the information given by Alston (1965: 40) and his own assessment that 'the size being the same and the number of pages nearly so', Straaijer (2011: 89) believes it to be a reprint of the 1768 edition. However, having consulted a copy of the 1769 edition in the Rare Books collections at the Cambridge University Library, I was able to identify several changes from the 1768 *Rudiments*, which explain the differing numbers of pages. There is one additional remark in the preface and twelve additions to the 'Notes and Observations'. These are also the only changes which I could find in the third edition, dating from 1772 according to Alston (1965: 40). My conclusion is therefore that the 1772 *Rudiments* is a reprint of the 1769 *Rudiments*, which is the actual third edition. The changes introduced in 1769 do not affect the fundamental principles underpinning the *Rudiments*, they are mostly afterthoughts: clarifications, further explanations, or extra examples, almost exclusively taken from Catharine Macaulay's eight-volume *History of England* (1763–1783). The 1768 *Rudiments* already contained examples from the third volume of Macaulay's *History* dated 1767, but the few additions in the 1769 *Rudiments* all come from Macaulay's fourth volume published in 1768. The reason why I will also be using the 1769 addenda in this study is that some include references to French.

[57] As per what Straaijer claimed about the 1772 edition (2011: 117-18), which I am showing here to be a reprint of the 1769 edition.

There are 43 occurrences of 'French' in the 200-page volume of the 1768 *Rudiments*, to which must be added 2 occurrences of the phrase 'the same idiom' referring to French, and an extra two occurrences of 'French' in the 1769 *Rudiments*. This is in stark contrast with the 1761 edition which contained only one occurrence of the word. Out of these 47 references to French, 6 occur within examples and do not belong to Priestley's metalanguage. In the remaining 41 references to French, 2 appear in the prefatory statements commented upon in section 4.1. above. Another 2 occurrences appear in the section 'Of the Derivation and Composition of Words' (1768: 32), in the first part of the grammar. The first of these is also the one reference to French which already occurred in the 1761 edition. I will leave these two references out as they were overtly borrowed from Johnson's own remarks on morphology in the grammar prefixed to his *Dictionary* and are therefore not the expression of Priestley's own voice in the *Rudiments*. I will focus on the remaining 37 references to French which all occur in the 'Notes and Observations' (1768: 57-200). By way of comparison, Latin occurs 18 times in the whole grammar, and only 9 times in the 'Notes and Observations'; Greek features 6 times overall, and only 3 in the 'Notes and Observations'; Hebrew does not occur at all, and, of the other modern vernaculars, only German is used by Priestley, once.[58] For the purpose of this study, the 37 references to French have been divided up into 33 observations because 'French' occurs twice in 4 of them to comment on a single feature. The observations are all listed in the Appendix attached to this thesis and will be referred to by the number of the page(s) in which they can be found.

[58] 'The Germans use the third person plural, when they speak the most respectfully.' (Priestley 1768: 82)

In order to assess Priestley's attitude towards French in these 33 observations, I have adopted the same approach as Gilmore, so as to facilitate comparisons between our respective results. Gilmore inferred whether Johnson objected to or accepted words of French extraction by looking at his choice of labels and metalinguistic comments and, when these were absent or unclear, at paratextual clues such as the use of italics to emphasise the foreignness of the word, or the quantity, dates, and sources of the examples as evidence that the words were admissible or inadmissible to Johnson, in view in particular of his preference for restoration English or his detestation of translation. Thus, Gilmore distinguished four types of French entries in Johnson's dictionary: those he 'definitely or almost certainly objects to' (1981: 249), those in which 'Johnson's hostility is more qualified or less certain' (1981: 250), those where 'Johnson cites a French word or phrase to clarify or illustrate an analogous expression in English' (1981: 255), and those that 'Johnson readily admits' (1981: 257). In my own investigation, I have also looked for evidence of rejection or acceptance in the necessarily different metalanguage and paratext of Priestley's grammar. For instance, the use of labels and italics to mark out some entries will not be relevant. In fact, the label 'Gallicism' never occurs in Priestley's grammar, it only appears in the preface. I have therefore examined whether Priestley's metalanguage in the 33 observations mentioning French corresponded to the definition of Gallicism which he gave in the preface: contrary to 'the true idiom of the English language' or to 'the most established analogies'. I have also looked at the nature of the relationship between French and English (imitation, correspondence, comparison, etc.), the frequency of occurrence and recentness of the feature in question according to Priestley, and the sources of the examples (author, date, translation or original, etc.). Using this approach, I was able to identify four

categories of observations showing Priestley's multiple and complex attitudes towards French: unidiomatic French, unanalogous French, acceptable French, and heuristic French.

4.3.1.1 Unidiomatic French

The first and largest group comprises 10 observations – 108-09, 138-39(69), 149, 158-59, 162-63, 167a, 173-74, 180-81, 195, 196-97 – in which French is explicitly associated with unidiomaticity. In keeping with Priestley's prefatory statements, these observations identify French-looking constructions as unequivocally unidiomatic with such comments as 'foreign to the idiom of the English tongue' or 'does not seem to suit the English language'. Alternatively, French is sometimes explicitly set against examples of idiomatic English – e.g. 'though the English idiom would require', 'where some other prepositions would be more agreeable to the English idiom', etc. A particularly clear example for this category is observation 138-139(69):

> *That* is used improperly in the following sentences, in which the French and not the English idiom is observed. *The resolution was not the less fixed*, that *the secret was as yet communicated to very few, either in the French or the English court.* Hume's History, vol.7. p.474. *We will not pretend to examine diseases in all their various circumstances, especially* that *they have not been so accurately observed or described by writers of later ages, as were to be wished.* Martine's Essays, p.29. *Though nothing urged by the kings [sic] friends on this occasion had any connections with the peace, security and freedom the Scots at this time enjoyed; and* that *their proposal of engaging against England manifestly tended to the utter destruction of these blessings, yet the forementioned arguments had such weight with the parliament, that a committee of twenty-four members was empowered to provide for the safety of the kingdom.* Macaulay's Hist. vol. 4. p. 377. (Priestley 1769: 138-39)

It must be noted that the words used by Priestley in these observations are never as censorious as in the preface, and expressions of unidiomaticity do vary in

intensity. Priestley's rejection is at times firm and definitive – e.g. 'by no means suit the idiom of the English tongue' (180-81). But, on other occasions, his judgment is more nuanced, as in observation 162-63, where the same turn of phrase is hedged – 'does not seem to suit the idiom of the English language'. By and large, contemporary writers are Priestley's main target here – 'some of our later writers', 'several of our modern writers', 'some of our more modern writers', 'Mr Hume', etc. A large majority of the 31 examples illustrating these observations are taken from works written within the previous 20 years, which seems to support Priestley's claim that he is working with current usage.[59] However, Priestley is not always as alarming as in the preface about the threat posed to English. Discussing the reciprocal construction of some verbs in 108-09, he observes: 'this custom is so foreign to the idiom of the English tongue, that I think it can never take generally'. Priestley's view that the feature examined cannot be assimilated suggests that borders between French and English are not that porous and that contact with French does not always pose a threat to English.

4.3.1.2 Unanalagous French

This group comprises 9 observations in which Priestley points to French influence, but without explicitly saying that the feature is unidiomatic – 102-03, 106, 133, 145(69), 159, 160a, 160b, 161, 167b. Instead, the unidiomaticity of the French-like feature is strongly suggested by the fact that Priestley offers an 'English' alternative which ought to have been used ('instead of', 'for'), thereby indicating that the feature examined is, in the words of the preface, 'contrary to

[59] By contrast, Lowth's examples were all taken from dead writers and his remarks could only reflect contemporary usage to a limited extent (see Percy 1997).

[the] most established analogies' of the English language. A good illustration of this category is observation 160b:

> In a variety of cases, the preposition *of* seems to be superfluous in our language; and, in most of them, it has been derived to us from the French. *Notwithstanding* of *the numerous panegyrics, on the ancient English liberty.* Hume's Essays. p. 81. *Notwithstanding* of *this unlucky example.* Ib. p. 78. Aukward as this construction is, it is generally used by several of our later writers. This preposition seems to be superfluous, when it is prefixed to a word which is only used to show the extent of another, preceding, word, as, *the city of London, the passions of hope and fear are very strong.* It also seems to be superfluous after several adjectives, which are sometimes used as substantives, *a dozen of years.* Hume's Essays, p. 258. (Priestley 1768: 160)

In this group, frequency is generally lower ('sometimes', 'in some cases') than in the first group, except in 133 ('often'), and, when there is no indication of frequency, as in 159 and 161, Priestley's judgment is hedged ('seems', 'perhaps'). The threat is, therefore, presented as either less serious or less imminent than in the previous group. Adding these observations on unanalogous features to the unidiomatic ones in the first group, I have found a total of 19 observations which correspond to Priestley's prefatory agenda. The remaining 14 observations are not so consistent with it.

4.3.1.3 Acceptable French

In 7 observations, imitation of French is either accepted, to varying degrees, or even overtly approved – 69, 85, 103, 145, 146-47, 148, 189. They all contain either the phrase 'in imitation of' or 'after the manner of' the French, but unlike previous observations they do not suggest an alternative feature more suited to the English idiom. In two of these observations, it is, paradoxically, the restriction imposed on the use of the French-looking features which validates their acceptability. Thus, 'in imitation of the French, [the pronoun *it*] may be used for

a person', Priestley writes in observation 85 (as in '*What a desperate fellow* it is'), '[b]ut this is only in conversation, and familiar style'. In observation 189, using a plural construction after 'it is' or 'it was' is implicitly accepted when Priestley adds that, in some cases, the construction becomes 'almost unavoidable'. In fact, in the 1769 *Rudiments*, an addendum to this observation calls this practice a 'licence', confirming its acceptability. Reluctantly somehow, Priestley seems to admit that for these two French-looking features it is *too late* to intervene, contrary to his prefatory claim that he has detected Gallicisms 'in time'. They have entered the imagined territory of English, albeit with a special status, as if this 'licence' with restricted rights was a residence permit. In the remaining five observations, Priestley's approval of the French-looking features is more evident. He consistently uses a factual indicative present to describe the generalised use of the feature. By the same token, he never targets any specific author or group of writers, seemingly describing standard usage instead. Thus, when he does not use an impersonal passive form to introduce the French feature in question, as in 103 and 148, Priestley takes for subject the tribal *we* discussed above in relation to Johnson's *Dictionary*. A particularly telling example of this is observation 146-47:

> We sometimes, after the manner of the French, repeat the same article when the adjective, on account of any clause depending upon it, is put after the substantive. *Of all the considerable governments among the Alps, a commonwealth is a constitution,* the *most adapted of any to the poverty of those countries.* Addison on Medals. *With such a specious title, as that of blood, which with the multitude is always the claim,* the *strongest, and most easily comprehended.* Ib. p. 235. *They are not the men in the nation,* the *most difficult to be replaced.* Devil upon Crutches. (Priestley 1768: 146-47)

In writing 'we [...] repeat' – or in other examples 'we [...] make use', 'we prefix' – Priestley confirms the assimilation of the features in question – what Johnson would call their *naturalisation*, i.e. the fact that they are no longer other, and have

integrated the imagined territory of English. This is even more striking in observations 69 and 148 where the features derived from French are not only undoubtedly accepted as having been assimilated – in both cases 'often' and 'daily' indicate high frequency – but imitation of French is actually presented as an improvement on the alternative English feature (presumably more analogical), which is deemed either 'very harsh' and 'aukward' in 69, or less 'elegant' in 148. These 7 observations are completely at odds with the agenda set in the preface.

4.3.1.4 Heuristic French

The fourth and final group comprises 7 observations in which the reference to French does not point out influence on English usage. Instead, French is brought in either to help make a decision between two alternative English forms or to elucidate the meaning of an English form – 94, 105-06, 127-28, 132, 136-37, 146, 147-48. In 4 of these observations (105-06, 127-28, 146, and 147-48), comparison with French – or more specifically with what 'the French' do – is used in a heuristic fashion, i.e. so as to find the solution to an unsettled issue, between two English forms. This kind of ongoing debates is alluded to in 105-06, which mentions the opinions of 'our grammarians' and of 'the authorities', and spelled out in 127-28:

> It seems not to have been determined by the English grammarians, whether the passive participles of verbs neuter require the auxiliary *am* or *have* before them. The French, in this case, confine themselves strictly to the former. [...] The French would say, *what is become*; and in this instance, perhaps, with more propriety. Yet I think we have an advantage in the choice of these two forms of expression, as it appears to me, that we use them to express different modifications of the sense. When I say, *I am fallen*, I mean at this present instant; whereas, If I say, *I have fallen*, my meaning comprehends, indeed, the foregoing; but has likewise, a secret reference to some period of time past, as *some time in this day*, or *in this hour*, *I have*

> *fallen*; implying some continuance of time, which the other form of expression does not. (Priestley 1768: 127-28)

Priestley does not necessarily favour the alternative which is closer to French, he may just be 'present[ing] the available evidence', as Hodson (2006: 68) has it, leaving it to 'all-governing custom [to] declare in favour of the one or the other' as his preface recommends to do in such cases (1768: xviii). But the fact that he introduces French examples in the discussion, sometimes with approving comments, and even in the case of 105-06 to determine positively the nature of 'the idiom of the English tongue' – as opposed to negatively in observations from 4.3.1.1. – is remarkable and unexpected. It is also worth noticing that, by contrast with English, in these 4 observations, Priestley presents French as particularly consistent, using absolute adverbs such as 'never used', 'confine themselves strictly to', 'never fail to', and 'always use'. Justifiably or not, Priestley therefore uses French as a foothold, a source of certainty, which can offer answers where there is none in English. In the remaining 3 observations belonging to this group (94, 132, 136-37), Priestley draws a parallel with French ('in the same sense as', 'equivalent to', 'corresponds to') to elucidate the meaning of an English form. He is here teasing out one specific sense of the words in question (*one, to,* and *so*) which differs from its most common use. Comparison with French serves the purpose of showing that behind a unique English form, there may lie several meanings because, in French, these meanings are realised by distinct forms. A good illustration of that is observation 136-37: 'The word *so* has, sometimes, the same meaning with *also, likewise, the same*; or rather it is equivalent to the universal pronoun *le* in French. *They are happy, we are not so*, i.e. *not happy*' (Priestley 1768: 136-37). Bryan (1926: 369fn) argues that Priestley was the first to recognise 'the pronominal, pro-adjectival and pro-adverbial use of *so*' in this

observation where he compares the word to 'the universal pronoun *le* in French' to tease out the pro-adjectival meaning. According to my research, the phrase 'universal pronoun' is not used by any other grammarian, English or French, before Priestley, which is evidence of the originality of his contribution in introducing these French parallels.

4.3.2 Priestley's attitude towards French

This survey of references to French in Priestley's 1768 and 1769 'Notes and Observations' shows that just over half of the observations containing such a reference (19/33) answer to Priestley's purist statement against Gallicisms in the preface. Unexpectedly, I found that in 14 of these 33 observations, Priestley either accepts the influence of French on English or uses French as a resource or, even, an authority to elucidate English usage. The same conclusion can therefore be drawn about Priestley as about Johnson in Gilmore's study: '[his] attitudes toward French influence on the English language were multiple and complex, [but] they were not nearly as hostile as some vehement passages in the preface [...] would suggest' (1981: 259-60). Gilmore justifies the discrepancy between Johnson's discourse and his practice by pointing out that his approach was fundamentally 'empirical or pragmatic' and that 'Johnson's empiricism appears to have triumphed over the prejudices expressed in the preface' (1981: 260). Mugglestone comes to a similar conclusion: '[P]ragmatism frames the human desire for control and codification. As Johnson noted with pointed reference to the Académie Française in 1755, dictionary-makers cannot, in reality, repulse lexical intruders nor retain fugitives' (2015: 164). The same can obviously be said of Priestley, his pragmatic ambition to look at 'what is the real character of the language and turn of the language at present' (1768: xi) compelled him to acknowledge language change and accept the assimilation of French imports. However, I believe that, in

Priestley's case at least, this seemingly inconsistent attitude towards French validates my claim in section 4.2.3 that French plays the role of the linguistic Other in the codification of English, except that the Other is not to be understood as alien, but partly as of what fashions the Self.

In the 1768 and 1769 *Rudiments,* French plays the role of the linguistic Other in a twofold manner: it is both a counterexample and a counterpart. This is particularly well exemplified in observation 105-06 where Priestley discusses selecting the 'oblique case' in the subject predicative function – 'we [...] become *him*' – and in pronominal NPs following *than* – 'You are taller than *him*':

> It appears to me, that the chief objection our grammarians have to both these forms, is that they are not agreeable to the idiom of the Latin tongue, which is certainly an argument of little weight, as that language is fundamentally different from ours: whereas those forms of expression, are perfectly analogous to the French, and other modern European languages. In these the same form of a pronoun is never used both before and after the verb substantive. Thus the French say, *c'est moi, c'est lui*; and not *c'est je, c'est il*. (Priestley 1768: 106)

Priestley argues that the forms he favours in this case, in opposition to other grammarians, are better suited to English because they are more analogous to French than to Latin. The claim is a spectacular reversal of the prefatory anti-Gallicism statement in which he rejected French for being contrary to 'the most established analogies' of English. But it does, in fact, resonate with another agenda set in the preface, which I pointed out in Chapter 3, that is to break away from the Latin model of grammar: 'I am surprized to see so much of the distribution, and technical terms of the Latin grammar, retained in the grammar of our tongue [...] as greatly injures the uniformity of the whole' (1768: vi-vii). In doing so, Priestley found in the French language an alternative source of authority as is made explicit in the next paragraphs of the preface: '[I]t is evident,

that all other grammarians have leaned too much to the analogies of that language [Latin], contrary to our modes of speaking, and to the analogies of other languages more like our own' (1768: ix). Given the number of references to other modern vernaculars in his grammar – 41 French, 1 German and none other – it can be inferred that by 'other languages more like our own' Priestley mostly meant French. When it comes to mapping out English, to go back to the territorial metaphor, French also has value as the Other because it shares something in common with English – it is not entirely alien as the Other, or it would be irrelevant. This common ground is that they are both modern languages whose codification requires breaking away from the Latin mould of grammar. In fact, French is probably all the more of a threat *because* it is similar to an extent, making it easier for Gallicisms to enter the territory of English unobtrusively. In other words, behind the prefatory statements on Gallicisms, there lies a more complex agenda consisting in establishing a new paradigm for English grammar: cutting the cord with Latin and entrenching its codification in the realm of living modern languages.

In his article, Gilmore advances another explanation to Johnson's similarly inconsistent attitude, that is, his targeted audience. Gilmore suggests that when Johnson cites a French word or phrase 'to clarify or illustrate an analogous expression in English', he is driven by 'a desire for clarity, not only to a native English audience that knew French but - and no doubt more important in the use of analogy - to a French reader hoping to learn English' (1981: 255). There is no evidence that Priestley was driven by a similar desire to cater for a French audience hoping to learn English. As Gilmore demonstrates, Johnson's preface shows that instructing foreigners was one of his goals. Priestley's, on the other hand, was solely aimed at 'introducing *English grammar* into *English schools*'

(1768: xix). However, we know that when Priestley was appointed at Warrington in 1761, he was required, as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres, to teach French. It is therefore possible that his comparative references to French in the *Rudiments* were prompted by this teaching or even that they were designed as a pedagogical tool. This question will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5.

4.3.3 Sources of the examples associated with French

In the 33 observations containing a reference to French, Priestley uses 93 examples to illustrate the features under discussion. With the help of the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, and *Google Books* in one instance, I was able to attest 73 of these examples. There were only 2 which I could not locate,[60] and the remaining 18 (about 20% of the total) are made-up or out-of-context examples. This last number is slightly deceiving as, often with this category, Priestley gives a list of 2 or 3 examples to illustrate the same phenomenon – e.g. articles in the names of towns, 'the Hague, the Havannah, the Devises' (observation 145). On reviewing the 73 sourced examples, I found that 7 had been misattributed by Priestley.[61] I therefore found three extra authors used by Priestley: Richard Hurd

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[60] They are 'The good lady was careful of serving me of every thing' (observation 158-59) which is not sourced, and 'Youth wandering in foreign countries, with as little respect of others, as prudence of his own, to guard him from danger' (observation 159), which is referenced by Priestley in Hume's *History of England*, but which I could not locate there, nor anywhere else.

[61] They are: 'He offered a great recompence to whomsoever would help him to a sight of him' (103, in King not Hume); 'His wealth and him bid adieu to each other' (106, unsourced but found in Smollett's *Devil upon Crutches*); 'Of all the considerable governments among the Alps, a commonwealth is a constitution, the most adapted of any to the poverty of those countries' (146-47, in Addison's *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. in the Years 1701, 1702, 1703* not in his *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals*); 'With such a specious title, as that of blood, which with the multitude is always the claim, the strongest, and most easily comprehended' (146-47, in Hume's *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects* not Addison); 'Richlieu profited of every Circumstance, which the Conjuncture afforded' (158-59, in Bolingbroke not Hume); 'You know the esteem I have of his philosophy' (159, in Hurd not Home); and ''Tis these that early taint the female soul' (189, unsourced but found in Pope's *Rape of the Lock*).

(1720–1808) and his *Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel*, first published in 1764, William King (1663–1712) as the translator of *The Persian and the Turkish Tales*, published posthumously in 1714, and Alexander Pope (1688–1744) for the *The Rape of the Lock,* first published in 1712 in *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations*. Besides, among the authors correctly referenced by Priestley, I discovered two new sources: for Hume, the *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*, first published in 1752, and for Addison, the *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. in the Years 1701, 1702, 1703*, first published in 1705.[62] Priestley's carelessness is no surprise since he acknowledged it himself: 'Some of my examples will be found without authorities, and many of them without references to the particular passage of the author. This was generally owing to a mere inattention, in omitting to note the author, or the place, at the time I was reading; and afterwards, the oversight was irretrievable' (1768: xii-xiii). As shown in Table 4.2, 23 authors are quoted by Priestley in the 73 examples under examination. Descriptions of occupation are based on the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* and the *Encyclopædia Britannica* for Maupertuis.

Authors	Citations
Hume, David (philosopher and historian)	34
Smollett, Tobias George (writer)	6
Addison, Joseph (writer and politician)	5
Johnson, Samuel (author and lexicographer)	3
Macaulay, Catharine (historian and political polemicist)	3
Viscount **Bolingbroke** (politician, diplomatist, and author)	3
Dryden, John (poet, playwright, and critic)	2
Swift, Jonathan (writer and dean of St Patrick's Cathedral, Dublin)	2
Atterbury, Francis (bishop of Rochester, politician, and Jacobite conspirator)	1
Ferguson, Adam (philosopher and historian)	1

[62] The *Persian Tales* is cited one other time in the grammar (1768: 80) and Pope is mentioned 11 times, including once for *The Rape of the Lock* (1768:65). But the other three new sources are not mentioned elsewhere.

Authors	Citations
Holy Bible	1
Home, Henry, **Lord Kames** (judge and writer)	1
Hurd, Richard (bishop of Worcester)	1
King, William (writer)	1
Martine, George (physician)	1
Maupertuis, Pierre Louis Moreau de (mathematician, biologist, and astronomer)	1
Milton, John (poet and polemicist)	1
Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley [*née* Lady Mary Pierrepont] (writer)	1
Pope, Alexander (poet)	1
Porter, James (diplomatist)	1
Smith, Adam (moral philosopher and political economist)	1
Tillotson, John (archbishop of Canterbury)	1
Young, Arthur (agricultural reformer and writer)	1

Table 4.2 Number of citations per author in all observations mentioning French in the 1768–69 *Rudiments*

By far, Hume is the most cited author, with almost half of the examples. Again, this is no surprise as Priestley felt the need to warn his readers about that in the preface.

> If I be thought to have borne harder upon Mr. Hume than upon any other living author, he is obliged for it to the great reputation his writings have justly gained him, and to my happening to read them at the time that I did; and I would not pay any man, for whom I have the least esteem, so ill a compliment, as to suppose, that exactness in the punctilios of grammar was an object capable of giving him the least disturbance. (Priestley 1768: xiii)

Hume's name occurs 157 times in the grammar as a whole, so Priestley relied heavily on him to comment on usage, but overall his observations on Hume are both positive and negative. When it comes more specifically to observations referring to French, the discrepancy between Hume and other sources is striking: almost 50% of the examples come from him, and he is cited almost six times more than his second, Smollett. These observations are overwhelmingly negative: 26

(76%) belong to the unidiomatic or unanalogous categories. Thus, while Priestley's judgement on Hume's usage is balanced overall, on Gallicisms, he finds in him a prime offender. This assessment is confirmed by a comment made passim by Priestley in his *Lectures on History*: 'Though the style of Mr. Hume is, upon the whole, excellent, yet he has departed more than any other writer of the present age from the true English idiom, and leaned more to that of the French' (1788: 210). In expressing this view, Priestley captures the mood of his time and follows again the opinion of Samuel Johnson. Boswell reports in an entry for 1763 from his *Life of Samuel Johnson* that the author of the *Dictionary* said about Hume 'Why, Sir, his style is not English; the structure of his sentences is French' (*Life of Johnson*, 1:439; cited in Potkay 2000: 285). Adam Potkay commented that '[t]his seemingly off-handed remark, never explained by Johnson, has gained a surprisingly wide currency among not only Johnsonians but also students of Hume' (2000: 85). It is likely that Hume's Francophilia and the fact that he moved to France for the second time in 1763 – the year in which Johnson made his comment according to Boswell – will have tainted Johnson's judgment, and Priestley's too.

As can be seen in the following letter to William Robertson, dated November 27, 1768, Hume's initial response to Priestley's observations was outrage.

> Have you seen Priestly's *[sic]* Grammar? In his Censure of me, he is wrong nine times in ten, as I am assurd by consulting the best Judges; and his Friend, Johnson, is even commonly against him; so negligently did he write. However, you may look into it. The People in this Country wou'd wish to be hypercritical on these points, if they knew how. (Hume, cited in Fieser 2005: I.334)

Nonetheless, Hume did alter or erase some of the passages censured by Priestley in later editions of his *History of England*. In *Early Responses to Hume's History of*

England, James Fieser (2005: I.337-42) gives a selection of changes made by Hume, several of which correspond to observations referring to French.[63] For instance, in 'The King of England, *provided of* every Supply' (observation 158-59), Hume followed Priestley's recommendation and substituted 'of' for 'with'. In other places Hume changed his syntax but did not use Priestley's suggestion. In observation 167b, Priestley recommends substituting 'in' for 'of' in 'He *made a point* of honour *in* not departing from his enterprize', but Hume chose to use 'to'. In my own research, I also found that following Priestley's recommendations in observation 69, Hume changed 'in the army's name' (vol.7, p.136) to 'in the name of the army', in the 1796 edition of his *History*. Paradoxically, this is one of the observations in which Priestley favours what he considers to be the French idiom over the English analogy. Overall, Hume's many changes show that grammars like Priestley's *Rudiments* could have a significant impact on the English of influential authors, and subsequently on codified usage.

Priestley's other sources in the observations referring to French only include two women – Catherine Macaulay and Lady Montagu. Either Priestley did not associate Gallicisms with women's language, contrary to the contemporary representations which I detailed in section 4.2.3.1., or this is simply a function of the few female writers getting published at the time. In the list of 23 authors cited by Priestley, 10 were still alive at the time of publication – *Ferguson*, *Hume*, *Home*, Hurd, Johnson, Macaulay, Porter, *Smith*, *Smollett*, Young – five of whom were Scottish (italicised). There is one more Scot among the dead sources: George Martine (added in 1769). It may seem significant at first sight but, putting Hume's 34 examples aside, the other four authors only make up for 5 of the total 93

[63] Fieser's survey (2005: I.335) is based on a limited 15-page portion of Priestley's observations.

examples. There is no particular indication that Priestley blamed Scots for importing Gallicisms more than English authors. On the contrary, Potkay believes that '[t]he sensitivity to correction that Hume expressed to Robertson [in the letter quoted above] stems from the peculiar concern among mid-century Edinburgh literati to write English more correctly than the English – a palm to which they aspired and, on the continent if not in England, were often awarded' (2005: 289). It is therefore not apparent that Hume was targeted for being Scottish rather than for the popularity of his *History of England* and his Francophilia.[64]

Indeed, Priestley asserts in the preface that the authors he has censured for their Gallicisms were particularly familiar with the French language: 'they fell into them inadvertently, in consequence of being much conversant with French authors' (1768: x-xi). Overall, Table 4.2 supports Priestley's assertion. Bolingbroke for instance wrote most of his essays and letters while in exile in France.[65] Hume spent three years in France between 1734 and 1737, although the *Treatise of Human Nature* on which he worked during that period is not mentioned by Priestley in the observations containing references to French. But, crucially, Hume spent another three years across the Channel, between 1763 and 1766. This was posterior to the publication of his much cited *History of England* (1754–62), but it is the period (1762–65) when Priestley would have been collecting his observations for the 1765 *Grammar* and 1768 *Rudiments*, as demonstrated in Chapter 1. Consequently, to Priestley, Hume would have been 'that famous historian living

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[64] Hume's association with the French may also have been compounded by religious and political considerations in the minds of Johnson and Priestley, as Hume was commonly accused of being an 'atheist' and a 'republican' like many *philosophes* (see Russel 2008: 12-24 for the former, and Harris 2015: 174-86 for the latter).

[65] Note that Bolingbroke was also a target of Johnson's. The list of examples in the entry for 'Gallicism' of the *Dictionary* ends on the following note: '[...] with many other expressions to be found in the pages of *Bolinbroke [sic]*' (1755: 881).

in France' at the time. Ironically, Johnson also features in the list of cited authors, for his *History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia* (1759), cited three times: twice for an unidiomatic feature (observation 173-74), and once to illustrate a heuristic use of French (observation 146). Despite his anti-Gallic attitude, Johnson was indeed well versed in French. He had translated from French the *Voyage to Abyssinia* (1735) and Crousaz's *Commentaire* on Pope's *Essay on Man* (1739), and, as we are reminded by Potkay, he 'assisted Charlotte Lennox with her translation of Pierre Brumoy's *Greek Theatre* (1759), personally translating two substantial sections of the work' (2000: 290-91). Robert DeMaria and Gwin J. Kolb (1998: 38-43) also showed that Johnson was indebted to French lexicographers whose work he was very familiar with, going back to debates started across the Channel by Boileau and Furetière. Finally, Mugglestone points out his fluent letters in French to Louise Flint and Marie Hyppolyte, Comtesse de Boufflers-Rouverel (2015: 162).

Even more to the point, several of the works cited by Priestley in relation to Gallicisms are translations from French. King's *Persian and Turkish Tales* (1714) were originally published in French by orientalist François Petis de la Croix (1653–1713); *The Figure of the Earth* is a translation of Maupertuis's *Sur la Figure de la Terre* (1738) by an unknown translator; and *The Works of M. de Voltaire* were translated by Smollett, who also seems to be behind *The Devil upon Crutches*, translated from Le Sage's *Le Diable Boîteux* (1707).[66] In the same vein, Dryden's *Aurenge-Zebe: or, the Great Mogul* first staged in 1675, but published in 1676 (the example used by Priestley being taken from the Epistle dedicatory) is not a translation but it was

[66] The identity of the translator of *The Devil upon Crutches* still remains doubtful, but in the 2005 edition of the 1759 version of the book, the editors, O. M. Brack, Jr. and Leslie A. Chilton, conclude that '[a] careful examination of the translation and the revisions to it places *The Devil upon Crutches* firmly in Smollett's canon' (2005: xxii).

inspired by another French orientalist's work – François Bernier's *Mémoires sur l'empire du grand Mogol* (1670–71) – via a previous translation into English. Surprisingly, Priestley's judgment on all these sources tainted by French influence is much more balanced than his treatment of Hume's prose. Priestley collected 15 examples from these sources which have a clear association with French. Those taken from Bolingbroke, Dryden and Johnson are for the most part negative. But those collected from translations – Smollett's in particular – are predominantly positive. This suggests that Priestley suspected some writers who had spent time in France, such as Hume and Bolingbroke, to be overly Frenchified. But, unlike Johnson, he did not think that '[t]he great pest of speech [was] frequency of translation', nor did he believe that 'the licence of translators' was the main source of corruption of the English language (cf. 1755: preface n.p.).

One last prefatory claim which needs to be checked is whether Priestley's observations on Gallicisms reflected current usage in English. In Table 4.3, I have listed, in the chronological order of their first publication, the sources used by Priestley for the examples which illustrate his observations referring to French. This only applies to 73 of the 93 examples, the rest being made up or out of context. Three periods can usefully be distinguished: the generation preceding the publication of the 1768–69 *Rudiments* (one generation of 25 years being generally accepted as a meaningful unit for language change); the Age of Augustan literature (from the ascension to the throne of Queen Anne in 1702 until the death of Swift in 1745), which includes the works of Addison, Pope and Swift; and the seventeenth-century, or the few works published prior to the Augustan Age.

Date	Source	Occurrences	
1611	*King James Bible* (Romans, New Testament)	1	5
1658–63	Milton, John, *Paradise lost*	1	
1664	Tillotson, John, 'The Wisdom of Being Religious'	1	
1676	Dryden, John, *Aurenge-Zebe*	1	
1700	Dryden, John, 'Of the Pythagorean Philosophy from the fifteenth book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*'	1	
1705	Addison, Joseph, *Remarks on Several Parts of Italy, &c. in the years 1701, 1702, 1703*	1	20
1706	Atterbury, Francis, 'A Sermon preach'd at the Guild-Hall chapel'	1	
1709	Swift, Jonathan, *A Project for the Advancement of Religion, and the Reformation of Manners*	1	
1711	Swift, Jonathan, *The Conduct of the Allies*	1	
1712	Pope, Alexander, *The Rape of the Lock*	1	
1714	King, William, *The Persian and the Turkish Tales*	1	
1717	Montagu, Mary Wortley, Lady. *Letters of the Right Honourable Lady M--y W---y M----e*	1	
1720	Addison, Joseph, *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals*	4	
1738	Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, Viscount, *Letters on the Study and Use of History*	3	
1738	Maupertuis, *The Figure of the Earth*	1	
1740	Martine, George, *Essays Medical and Philosophical*	1	
1741	Hume, David, *Essays, Moral and Political*	4	
1750	Smollett, Tobias, *The Devil upon Crutches*	2	48
1752	Hume, David, *Essays and Treatises on Several Subjects*	1	
1758	Kames, Henry Home, Lord. *Historical Law-Tracts*	1	
1759	Johnson, Samuel, *The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abissinia*	3	
1759	Smith, Adam, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*	1	
1754–62	Hume, David, *The History of England*	29	
1764	Hurd, Richard, *Dialogues on the Uses of Foreign Travel*	1	
1761–65	Smollett, Tobias, *The Works of M. de Voltaire*	4	
1767	Ferguson, Adam, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*	1	
1767	Young, Arthur, *The Adventures of Emmera, or the Fair American*	1	
1767–68	Macaulay, Catharine, *The History of England* (vol. 3-4)	3	
1768	Porter, James, *Observations on the Religion, Law, Government, and Manners, of the Turks*	1	

Table 4.3 Priestley's sources in observations referring to French in the 1768–69 *Rudiments*, by date of publication.

4.3.4 Analysis of the examples associated with French

Like Johnson, Priestley was not always rigorous in transcribing his examples. There are several instances where he seems to be misquoting his sources; e.g. in 'He told the Queen, that he would submit to her, in the same manner that Paul did to Leo' (195), 'Leo' should have read 'Nero'; in observation 173-74 'purposed' became 'proposed', etc. Priestley also often tidies up the examples to make the feature examined more salient, but I did not find any example where the difference between the original and the transcription skewed Priestley's analysis. In two cases, however, the feature pointed out by Priestley could not be found in the source: 'The Lords' house (Hume's History, vol.8. p.217)' in observation 69, and 'Notwithstanding of the numerous panegyrics of the antient English liberty (Hume's Essays, p.81)' in observation 160b. In both cases Hume's original reads like Priestley's recommended correction: 'the House of Lords' and 'Notwithstanding the numerous'. However, the two uncorrected forms are attested in other contemporary sources cited by Priestley: e.g. the former in Macaulay's *History of England*, Vol. 3 (1767: 202) and the latter in Lord Kames's *Essays upon Several Subjects Concerning British Antiquities* (1747: 33, 46, 161). It does not, therefore, affect the validity of Priestley's observations, but may explain Hume's indignant response.

The 'Notes and Observations', in which the 93 examples related to French occur, are divided into twelve sections. Table 4.4. shows the relative weight of each section in the 'Notes and Observations' alongside the relative share of observations and examples involving French which they contain. Substantives (sections I-II), adjectives (III), and verbs (V) are markedly underrepresented in observations on French relative to the length of these sections overall in the 'Notes and Observations'. By contrast, articles (VIII) and prepositions (IX), are

overrepresented. Together with pronouns (IV) they form part of a distinct trio of features on which Priestley's references to French were concentrated.

Sections in the 'Notes and Observations'	Total words (29,217)[67]		Observations on French		Examples on French	
	count	%	count	%	count	%
I. Of the Plural Number of Nouns.	1,977	6.8	0	0	0	0
II. Of the Genitive Case, and other Inflections of Nouns.	1,210	4.1	1	3.0	4	4.3
III. Of Adjectives.	1,551	5.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
IV. Of Pronouns.	5,394	18.5	6	18.2	12	12.9
V. Of Verbs.	5,182	17.7	3	9.1	6	6.5
VI. Of Adverbs and Conjunctions.	1,452	5.0	3	9.1	6	6.5
VII. Of the Composition and Derivation of Words.	1,008	3.5	1	3.0	1	1.1
VIII. Of Articles.	1,896	6.5	6	18.2	18	19.4
IX. Of the Use of Prepositions.	3,098	10.6	8	24.2	32	34.4
X. Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.	2,850	9.8	2	6.1	5	5.4
XI. Of the Correspondence of Words expressing Numbers.	2,022	6.9	1	3.0	5	5.4
XII. Of corresponding Particles.	1,577	5.4	2	6.1	4	4.3

Table 4.4 Distribution of the observations and examples referring to French in the 'Notes and Observations' (1768–69)

It is striking that the parts of speech most discussed in relation to French are those 'auxiliary words' for which Priestley created a new section entitled 'use and signification of certain words' in the 1765 and 1768 grammars because they did not fit in with the canonical structure of grammar, as explained in Chapter 3. This confirms my earlier claim in 4.3.1.5 that Priestley references French to introduce a new dimension in the codification of English. In his discussion of the genius of the language, English was contrasted with Latin. These 'auxiliary words' were

[67] Word counts are based on the 1769 edition of the *Rudiments*.

evidence that English and Latin had a different structure or 'genius of the language', and therefore that the Latin mould of grammar was ill-suited to English. Now French, which presumably Priestley regarded as having a genius comparable to that of English, is brought in more specifically to compare and contrast the uses of these auxiliary words – pronouns, articles, prepositions – in the two modern vernaculars. This dimension of the analysis, between languages with similar geniuses, seems to be the locus of the 'idiom of the language', since this is the notion at stake in Priestley's discussion of Gallicisms and contact with French in general. I will discuss this point further in section 4.4.

Turning now to the grammatical features themselves, I will examine the validity of Priestley's analysis of French influence on English usage. Borrowing is less easily identifiable in grammar than in lexis, as it is often in competition with other mechanisms of language change. Thus, some forms targeted by Priestley do bear a resemblance to the alleged French equivalent but contact with French may not be the cause for the emergence of that form. For instance, in two observations, Priestley condemns the use of the object pronoun 'him' in subject position as imitation of the French idiom, e.g. '*My father and* him *have been very intimate since*' (1768: 102-03), '*His wealth and* him *bid adieu to each other*' (1768: 106). In the two examples quoted here, French would indeed require the object pronoun 'lui' in a subject position. But in both languages, this happens because of the coordination in the subject NP. In French and English, as well as in other languages, case assignment in subject position varies between simple and coordinated NPs. It may therefore be an internal linguistic constraint and not a borrowing from French, all the more so as 'him' is attested in subject positions long before the 1760s according to the *OED*. Indeed, Priestley sometimes censures forms as Gallicisms which in fact correspond to older English usage. I pointed out

in section 4.3.2 that Priestley's examples in observation 162-63 were outdated. Two of them illustrate an intransitive use of 'obey' with preposition 'to': '*His servants ye are,* to *whom ye obey.* Romans.'; '*And* to *their general's voice they soon obeyed.* Milton'. This use of 'obey' is attested in the *OED* from Chaucer c.1390 until 1730. It may have been a French borrowing in Middle English, but it did not enter the language in the eighteenth-century. In fact, the *OED* entry suggests that the form became obsolete in the seventeenth century and would have been rare at the time when Priestley was writing. The imminent threat to the 'idiom of the English tongue' is therefore largely exaggerated. The same comments can be made about what Priestley describes as the 'reciprocal' use of 'to repent':

> Some of our later writers, use certain neuter verbs, as if they were transitive, putting after them the oblique case of the pronoun, which was the nominative case to it, agreeable to the French construction of reciprocal verbs; but this custom is so foreign to the idiom of the English tongue, that I think it can never take generally. Repenting him *of his design*. Hume's History, vol. 2. p.56. *The king soon found reason to* repent him *of his provoking such dangerous enemies*. Ib. vol.1. p.121 [...]. (Priestley 1768: 108-09)

This use of the verb is fully attested in the *OED* (sense 2.a.) from c1300 up until Salman Rushdie's 1988 *Satanic Verses*, even though it is now considered archaic. French influence is not unlikely in Middle English, but it did not introduce the reflexive use of 'repent' at the time when Priestley was writing. These issues affect the positive parallels with French as much as the negative ones. The acceptable repetition of the definite article in the examples of observation 146-47 often reads more like stylistic variation in English than the ongoing grammaticalisation of a feature under French influence. Likewise, the correspondence between the generic use of 'one' as a personal pronoun and French 'on', in observation 94, while seemingly obvious, remains a disputed topic in historical linguistics in

particular because, unlike 'one', French 'on' cannot be used as an anaphoric (see Fischer 1992: 224-25).

There is only one observation dealing with a lexical issue, which confirms that by 'Gallicisms' Priestley meant grammatical forms. In this observation, added in 1769, French is used as an explanation, albeit tentative, to account for what Priestley presents as an inconsistency with English usage.

> Though both the words *proposal* and *proposition* be derived from the verb *propose*, we now use the word *proposal* to denote a thing that is proposed to be done, and *proposition* for an assertion proposed to be proved. Mrs. Macaulay, in conformity, perhaps, to the French idiom, use *[sic]* the latter in the sense of the former. *This observation was followed by* a proposition, *which had been at first suggested, and was immediately consented to by the commissioners.* Macaulay's History, vol. 4. p. 312. (Priestley 1769: 145)

Evidence from the *OED* shows that the clear semantic distinction set by Priestley between 'proposal' and 'proposition' is not as settled as he suggests. In the entry for 'proposition', sense 2a. reads 'Something suggested or put forward as a scheme, plan, or course of action. Cf. PROPOSAL *n.* 2a.' and is illustrated by examples running from a1382 to 2004. Johnson did not make such a distinction in his *Dictionary* either. The first sense of 'proposition' is 'A sentence in which any thing is affirmed or decreed', but the second sense is 'proposal; offer of terms'. There is, therefore, little reason to believe that Macaulay's use of 'proposition' would have been caused by French influence. Even more perplexing are cases where the English feature does not bear any resemblance to the implied French equivalent, making French influence unlikely. Such is the case in observation 160b: 'In a variety of cases, the preposition *of* seems to be superfluous in our language; and, in most of them, it has been derived to us from the French. *Notwithstanding* of *the numerous panegyrics, on the ancient English liberty.* Hume's Essays. p. 81.

Notwithstanding of *this unlucky example.* Ib. p. 78.' I could not find any evidence that either of the two possible translations of 'notwithstanding' in French – *nonobstant* and *malgré* – has ever been followed by *de*, or any other preposition for that matter. The closest French phrase with such a preposition would be *en dépit de* but it is difficult to see how analogy with French would have been more influential than internal analogy with English 'in spite of'.

Finally, in several other cases, the alleged error attributed to French influence looks more like a solecism depending on co-textual constraints or one-off stylistic choices. For instance, the use of the preposition 'of' together with the adjective 'necessitous' in the following Hume example: 'Of *which, he was extremely greedy, extremely prodigal and extremely* necessitous. Ib. vol. 4. p. 12.' (1768: 158-59). In his later corrections, Hume actually kept the pied-piped construction, and replaced 'necessitous' with 'indigent' (see Fieser 2005: I.337-42). The stylistic choice made by Hume, with the anteposition of the preposition, is therefore likely to be the cause for the solecism. Besides, once again the form 'necessitous of' is attested in the *OED* from the early seventeenth century, and is therefore not a recent borrowing from French. Similar examples of solecisms are common in the final sections of the 'Notes and Observations' where Priestley discusses word order and syntax.

> The preposition *of,* and the words with which it is connected, may often elegantly precede the verb on which they both depend. *Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard*. Rassilas, vol. 2. p. 54. This construction is not quite so easy, when these words depend upon a substantive coming after them. *He found the place replete with wonders,* of which *he proposed to solace himself with* the contemplation, *if he should never be able to accomplish his flight.* Ib. vol. 1. p. 32. This construction is properly French, and does not succeed very well in English. Of the present state, *whatever it be, we feel and are forced to confess* the misery. Ib. p. 143. In

> the former of these sentences we should read, *with the contemplation of which, he proposed to solace himself.* (Priestley 1768: 173-74)

The fact that all these examples are taken from Johnson might suggest that they reflect an idiosyncratic feature, rather than actual language change due to French influence. Likewise, all the examples given by Priestley in observation 180-81 on the placement of adverbs are taken from a single author, Hume, and are more likely to reflect his idiolect than general usage.

> The French always place their adverbs immediately after their verbs; but this order by no means suits the idiom of the English tongue, yet Mr Hume has used it in his history, almost without variation. *His government gave courage to the English barons to* carry farther *their opposition.* Hume's Hist. vol. 2. p. 46. *Edward obtained a dispensation from his oath, which the barons had compelled Gaveston to take, that he would* abjure for ever *the realm.* Ib. vol. 2. p. 342. *to carry their opposition farther,* and, *to abjure the realm for ever.* (Priestley 1768: 180-81)

Generally speaking, however, the most convincing examples of French influence are those which apply primarily to Hume. The most striking example of that is his recurring use of 'that' where the French universally use 'que', as discussed in observations 195 and 196-97. The impression is therefore that, as regards French influence, Priestley is here focussing on the idiosyncrasies of a particular author's style of writing, rather than on language change.

4.3.5 The role of French in Priestley's description of English

With this survey of Priestley's use of French in the 1768–69 *Rudiments*, I found that Priestley is not only far less hostile to French in the 'Notes and Observations' than in the preface, but he is also less alarming about the imminent peril of French influence on English. In several cases, Priestley has accepted the assimilation of Gallicisms, and even, at times, welcomed them as improvements. Besides, although his examples are mostly taken from recent sources, they illustrate

features which, for many, have been in use in English for a long time. Generally speaking, while there may be a resemblance between the English forms examined and their French equivalents, the process of borrowing is far from obvious. When French influence is more convincingly established, it tends to date back to Middle English, or to be limited to the idiolect of specific authors. Consequently, the threat posed by Gallicisms at the time when Priestley was writing seems in turn disputable, exaggerated, or even fantasised. Underpinning Priestley's parallels with French, there is a form of idealisation of the French language. This impression is compounded by the fact that, unlike English, French is generally depicted as uniform or invariable: 'In these [modern languages] the same form of a pronoun is never used' (105-06), 'The French always use' (147-48), 'The French always place' (180-81).

Several explanations can be advanced to understand this idealisation. Firstly, Priestley's perception of French influence may have been framed by his experience of learning French as a foreign language, and teaching it as a Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at Warrington, with little exposure to native speakers. The mnemonic and pedagogical processes through which foreign languages are learnt and taught with textbooks and drill exercises tend to artificially simplify the structures of that language and elicit sometimes unfounded parallels with the speaker's native tongue. In this case, Priestley's idealisation of French might reflect the extent of his knowledge of French grammar and the sources he used. I will further explore this issue in Chapter 5. Another possible interpretation is that Priestley's representation of French was inherited from that of previous or contemporary language commentators, in particular Johnson. Priestley's attitude towards French may then reflect what sociolinguists have recently called 'enregisterment' (see Agha 2003, 2005, and

2007, and Beal 2009 and 2017). The term is defined as 'processes whereby distinct forms of speech come to be socially recognized (or enregistered) as indexical of speaker attributes by a population of language users' (Agha 2005: 38). In the present case, while the forms which Priestley depicts as Gallicisms may derive from various mechanisms of language change in English, to him, they are primarily indexical of a variety of English written by overly Frenchified authors: perhaps something like the 'dialect of France' which Johnson feared he would soon be reduced to babble. These two aspects will probably have played a part in the idealisation of French displayed in Priestley's observations. However, my contention in this chapter is that French serves a grammaticographic purpose, comparable to the lexicographic purpose it plays in Johnson's *Dictionary*. By bringing language contact into the *Rudiments,* Priestley separates out and establishes the English language and its grammar within the realm of modern vernaculars. He endows the grammar of English with autonomy, making it 'limited and sovereign' as Anderson would say about imagined communities. Although Priestley does not delve into the territorial metaphor deployed by Johnson, he does construct with the French language a linguistic Other, both similar and different, which helps shape the Self of the English language. This Self being given autonomy is embodied throughout the 'Notes and Observations' by the recurring notion of 'idiom of the language', which, in effect, is Priestley's primary concern when he raises the problem of Gallicisms in the preface, as he aims to preserve it against them. The etymology of 'idiom' actually conjures up the ideas of Self and autonomy as the Greek word *ἰδίωμα* comes from ancient Greek *ἰδιοῦσθαι* 'to make one's own, to appropriate', itself derived from *ἴδιος* 'own, private, peculiar' (see *OED* entry). I will therefore now investigate how this notion of idiom is used by Priestley in his grammars.

4.4 The idiom of the language

Like the 'genius of the language', the notion of 'idiom of the language' is new metalanguage which did not feature in the first edition of the *Rudiments* and was introduced from 1765 onwards.[68] In the 1768–69 *Rudiments*, the word 'idiom' appears thirty times overall. Apart from the prefatory paragraph against Gallicisms, it occurs only in the 'Notes and Observations', by contrast with 'genius' whose use is almost exclusively confined to the preface and the rudiments proper. To a modern reader, the meaning of the phrase 'idiom of the language' is not straightforward. The *OED* gives three possible senses:

1. The specific character or individuality of a language; the manner of expression considered natural to or distinctive of a language; a language's distinctive phraseology. Now *rare*.
2. a. A language, especially a person or people's own language; the distinctive form of speech of a particular people or country.
   b. In narrower sense: a dialect or variety of a language; a form of a language limited to or distinctive of a particular area, category of people, period of time, or context.
3. A form of expression, grammatical construction, phrase, etc., used in a distinctive way in a particular language, dialect, or language variety; *spec.* a group of words established by usage as having a meaning not deducible from the meanings of the individual words.

The most common nowadays, although apparently the latest to have emerged in English, is sense 3, referring to a set phrase. Only one occurrence in Priestley's *Rudiments* seems to correspond to this sense of phrase or 'form of expression':

> By a very peculiar idiom, the nominative case is sometimes put after the conjunctive form of the verbs *may*, *can*, &c. when a question is reported the word if being understood, as in the former case. *She demanded of me*, could I play at

[68] The overwhelming majority of the occurrences in the 1765 *Grammar* are reproduced word for word in the 1768 *Rudiments*. Since Priestley uses the phrase in the same way in both grammars, I will focus on its use in the 1768–69 texts.

> cribbage. Swift's Posthumous Works, i. e. *she demanded of me, if I could play*. I have frequently heard this form of expression in conversation, but do not remember ever to have met with it in writing, except in this passage of Swift. (Priestley 1768: 177-78)

In this passage, 'idiom' is presented, with the qualification 'very peculiar', as a form of diamesic variation, potentially describing the emergence of *style indirect libre* in English. The ambivalent notion of 'peculiarity' is also invoked in contemporary definitions of the term 'idiom'. In the 1751–52 edition of Chambers's *Cyclopaedia*, the entry for 'IDIOM, IDIOMA' reads: 'sometimes used for the peculiarities of a language; sometimes for a *dialect*; or the language of some particular province; differing, in some respects, from the language of the nation whence it is derived'. Although the second half of the definition moves on to the *OED*'s sense 2, the general sense here is that idiom refers to variation in the language, as implied by 'differing' and 'derived' which suggests that the idiom is not the true or original language, but a secondary form of it.

In the *OED*, the two definitions of sense 2 lay emphasis on the association between a language variety and a specific 'people', 'country', 'time', 'area', etc. 'Idiom' in this sense is language conceived of as primarily determined by its link to a circumscribed community of speakers. This relation can be a source of discrimination, that is where sense 2 shares characteristics with sense 3 in referring to variation. But, in turn, the idiom in this sense can become a means of identification for that community. This is signalled by the possessives – *our* and *their* – in the *OED*'s illustrative quotations:

> 1711 J. Addison *Spectator* No. 165. ¶3 The Histories of all our former Wars are transmitted to us in our Vernacular Idiom.
>
> 1774 T. Falkner *Descr. Patagonia* iv. 102 The Tehuelhets, who in Europe are known by the name of Patagons, have been, through ignorance of their idiom, called

> Tehuelchus: for chu signifies country or abode, and not people; which is expressed by the word het.

In this sense, 'the English idiom' will mean 'the idiom of the English' – the language which determines them as a community. In many of the occurrences of the word in Priestley's *Rudiments*, 'idiom' is accordingly associated with the adjectives English or French, referring to the way its speakers 'use' it: 'Several of our modern writers have leaned to the French idiom in the use of the preposition *of*, by applying it where the French use *de*; though the English idiom would require another preposition, or no preposition at all, in the case' (1768: 158-59). But, closer examination of the occurrences of the phrase 'English idiom' shows that there is more to its meaning than just referring to the language spoken by such and such a people. Indeed, Priestley does not use 'idiom' synonymously with 'language' or 'tongue'. He often qualifies the word – 'the true English idiom' (1768: 159), 'is more peculiarly the English idiom' (1768: 195) – in a manner which suggests that not all speech that is 'in English' or spoken by the English corresponds to the English idiom. This qualitative distinction is most explicit when 'idiom' is used concomitantly with 'tongue', in particular in observations where Priestley rejects Gallicisms for their unidiomaticity: 'this custom is so foreign to the idiom of the English tongue' (1768: 108) or 'this order by no means suits the idiom of the English tongue' (1768: 180).

Although there are nuances of senses 3 and 2 in Priestley's uses of 'idiom', it is therefore the *OED*'s sense 1 which best corresponds to the way Priestley conceived of the idiom of the language. This sense has now become rare according to the *OED*, but helpful synonyms are provided in the definition: 'character', 'individuality', 'manner of expression', and 'phraseology'. They all suggest something inherent in the language but difficult to pin down, and also have more

or less anthropomorphic connotations which hark back to the idea of the self in the language which I proposed above. Importantly, 'idiom' in this sense has none of the connotations of deviant, anomalous, or non-standard that senses 2 and 3 could evoke. On the contrary, it represents what most epitomises the language, the distinctive rather than the distinct, and the legitimate rather than the illegitimate. This is made apparent by the fact that all occurrences of idiom in the *Rudiments* are used with a normative turn of phrase: 'agreeable to' (9 times), 'in imitation of' (3), 'true' (4), 'to lean to' (3), 'according to' (2), 'in conformity with', 'foreign to', 'to injure', 'to oppose', 'to require', 'to observe', 'to suit', 'to resemble', 'more peculiarly', 'a regard to', or 'by'. The idiom of the language therefore refers to a desirable norm in the language. However, this normative approach is not about correctness, as the following example shows:

> *In the same manner as,* or, *in the same manner that,* may, perhaps, be equally proper; but the latter construction leans more to the French, and the former is more peculiarly the English idiom. *He told the Queen, that he would submit to her, in* the same manner that *Paul did to Leo.* Hume's History, vol. 5. p. 51. (Priestley 1768: 195)

The phrase 'in the same manner that' is said to be proper, i.e. correctly formed, yet not idiomatic. Priestley distinguishes between what is properly formed grammatically and what corresponds to the idiom of the language. Hence, it must be assumed, the grammaticographic need to add 'Notes and Observations' for the latter, to the rules laid out in the rudiments. The introduction of the notion of 'idiom of the language' seems to be a response to a realisation that there is more to grammar than the rules laid out in the rudiments proper. This point is supported by a significant change in the definition of 'grammar' between the 1761 and 1768 *Rudiments.* In the first edition, where the rudiments stand alone, Priestley defines grammar as 'the art of using words properly' (1761: 1), thereby

indicating that what is contained in the rudiments themselves is the rules of proper formation. But, in the second edition, Priestley states that 'the grammar of any language is a collection of observations on the structure of it, and a system of rules for the proper use of it' (1768: 1). This new double definition shows that the introduction of the 'Notes and Observations' was not an afterthought and that they are not a mere appendix. They are part and parcel of the grammar and responded to a grammaticographic purpose, after Priestley took, what he called 'a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v). Where the 1768 definition gets a little confusing is that, as shown in Chapter 3, Priestley uses the word 'structure' in the 1762 *Course* to refer to the 'genius of the language', i.e. what is laid out in the rudiments themselves, whereas here he uses the phrase 'system of rules' for that, and instead refers to what is in the 'Notes and Observations' as a 'structure'. However, what can be inferred from his use of the word 'structure' for what he put in the 'Notes and Observations' is that there is an inherent coherence to them, something that ties them together. The phrase 'idiom of the language' encapsulates this inherent coherence, which could be glossed by character, individuality, or phraseology, and resorting to the French language as the linguistic Other has helped Priestley give it shape and visibility.

While Lowth only used the word 'idiom' three times in the *Short Introduction* (1762) and with little consistency, there are hints in Johnson's preface to his *Dictionary* that he shared Priestley's view of language. In one of his anti-Gallic tirades, Johnson asserts that he collected all his examples from authors predating the Restoration and goes on to explain why.

> Our language, for almost a century, has, by the concurrence of many causes, been gradually departing from its original *Teutonick* character, and deviating towards a

> *Gallick* structure and phraseology, from which it ought to be our endeavour to recal it, by making our ancient volumes the ground-work of stile, admitting among the additions of later times, only such as may supply real deficiencies, such as are readily adopted by the genius of our tongue, and incorporate easily with our native idioms. (Johnson 1755: preface n.p.)

The word 'phraseology' is used as a synonym in the dictionary entry for 'idiom'.[69] Further research needs to be done to clarify the meaning of these words in the rest of Johnson's writing, but it is tempting to see the pairs 'structure and phraseology', and 'genius of our tongue' and 'our native idioms' as reflecting a view of language similar to the one developed in Priestley's *Rudiments.* What can be said for certain is that Johnson floats these ideas in the context of discussing not simply the lexicological issues surrounding the process of borrowing but language contact in a broader sense and the role it plays in defining his lexicographic practice as mapping out or defining the English language. From this perspective, Priestley's post-1761 approach is in tune with Johnson's. It applies to grammar the ambition of mapping out and defining the English language, with the help of metalinguistic tools such as 'genius' and 'idiom'. This point also justifies my choice of using the term grammaticography as a counterpart to lexicography. In the end, it could almost be argued that the 1768 *Rudiments* aims to be the Johnsonian grammar which Priestley was calling for in the preface.

4.5 Conclusion

This investigation has shown that the linguistic purism which Priestley displays in the preface is not entirely reflected in his grammar. His prefatory sentiment echoes representations of the French language pervasive in the eighteenth-

[69] 'I'DIOM. n.s. [idiome, French; ἰδίωμα.] A mode of speaking peculiar to a language or dialect; the particular cast of a tongue; a phrase; phraseology.'

century, both in reflecting the supposed character of its speakers and in idealising the form of the language. As such, Priestley's anti-Gallic paragraphs may have answered a marketing strategy by playing into popular prejudices. But his practice shows a more complex and nuanced attitude towards French which, as I have demonstrated, plays a grammaticographic role. The French language is the linguistic Other to the English Self, both similar, when it comes to breaking the Latin mould of grammar, and different when it comes to mapping out and defining the English language. In performing this last task, Priestley used the notion of 'idiom of the language' to epitomise the Self of the English language. By introducing issues of language contact in his grammaticographic practice, Priestley applies to grammar reflections on the boundaries of the language which had been hitherto an attribute of lexicographic practices.

I have argued that the idiom of the language complements the genius of the language in the act of what Evans and Dench (2006) call 'catching language'. Priestley's transformation of the 1761 *Rudiments* corresponds indeed to his taking 'a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v). My contention is that he perceived that the rudiments proper, where the genius of the language is laid out, were not enough to 'catch language'. In order to be as exhaustive as Johnson's lexicographic undertaking, it was necessary to have a different grammaticographic approach which adds the 'idiom' of the language to the 'genius' of the language – that's the role of the 'Notes and Observations'. I have shown that in adopting this approach Priestley was following in the footsteps of Samuel Johnson, more than has perhaps been acknowledged in Priestleyan scholarship. But Priestley's use of the idiom of the language may also have roots in another tradition already alluded to in Chapter 3. Indeed, the conclusions I have drawn from this chapter's investigation echo,

rather paradoxically, what Siouffi says about uses of *le génie de la langue* in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French works on language (as already quoted in section 3.2.2).

> L'un des phénomènes qui ont accompagné la construction du discours grammatical en France a donc été l'effort d'enraciner les descriptions idiomatiques dans une commune essence qui serait descriptible en termes quasi autonomes. Il ne s'agirait plus seulement de décrire les éléments formels qui pourraient rapprocher ou distinguer le français du latin, mais de s'investir dans l'individualité d'une langue de manière à percevoir l'ensemble des traits qui en découlent comme une continuité homogène. Cette articulation, dont l'évolution de la discipline entre le XVIe et le XVIIe siècle fournit une première lecture historique, est à la base du concept de « génie de la langue » tel que celui-ci dominera la description linguistique au XVIIIe siècle. (Siouffi 2010: 28)

Siouffi observes that the notion of *génie de la langue* emerged from a desire to go beyond the description of formal or structural differences between French and Latin, and explore the intrinsic specificities of the French language as if all its distinctive features formed a homogeneous whole. In many ways, going beyond the description of formal elements which make English more or less different from Latin – i.e. the description of the genius in the rudiments – in order to 's'investir dans l'individualité' of the English language is what Priestley does in the 'Notes and Observations'. The notion of idiom of the language can be construed as what gives the features examined there a 'continuité homogène' – isn't 'individuality' one of the synonyms of 'idiom' given in the *OED*'s sense 1? Consequently, there may be in Priestley's use of the idiom of the language – or of both the idiom and the genius – an adaptation of grammaticographic discourses and practices from the French tradition. I have raised a number of such possible French connections over the course of these first four chapters and I will now make this aspect of Priestley's work my main topic of investigation in Chapter 5.

5. Priestley's French connections

5.1 Introduction

The scholarship on Priestley's *Rudiments* has been dominated by the view that the wide-ranging changes which he introduced between the 1761 and the 1768 editions were prompted by the intervening publication of Lowth's *Short Introduction to English Grammar* in 1762. I have argued that, far from being intimidated by Lowth's success or experiencing a 'crisis of faith' in the teaching of English grammar, Priestley became more ambitious in his undertakings after the publication of the first edition. He took, as he put it himself in the 1768 preface, 'a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v), to which the introduction of the notions of genius and idiom of the language is testament.

In this chapter, I will develop my earlier contention that Priestley's change of grammaticographic approach was prompted by his appointment at the Warrington Academy. I showed in Chapters 1 and 4 that Priestley's observations on Gallicisms did not change between the 1765 *Grammar* and the 1768 *Rudiments*, and must, therefore, predate 1765. I also established in Chapters 2 and 3 that the foundations for the 1768 reflections on the genius of the language were already laid in the 1762 *Course* delivered to his students at Warrington. Bearing in mind that the first edition of the *Rudiments*, though published in 1761, was composed in Nantwich in 1758 or 1759 (Straaijer 2011: 35-37), it seems likely that Priestley's appointment as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at the Warrington Academy

in September 1761 (Rutt 1999: I.46) was instrumental in shaping the changes which he introduced between the 1761 and 1768 editions.

The demands of this new post are recorded in a 1762 report by the Academy's Trustees (as already quoted in section 3.4.2):

> IN THE LATIN CLASS the *Classics* are read; *Latin Compositions* made; and a Course of *Roman Antiquities*, and *Mythology* gone through.
>
> IN THE GREEK CLASS are read the *Greek Authors*, and a Course of *Greek Antiquities*.
>
> THOSE young Gentlemen who learn *French* are taught to read, and write that Language; and go through a Course of Exercises calculated to prepare them to converse in it.
>
> THE ENGLISH GRAMMAR is taught to the younger Students, and they are trained up in a regular course of *English Compositions*.
>
> BY the Tutor of this Department are read Lectures on Logick, the *Theory of Language, and Universal Grammar, Oratory and Criticism*; the *Study of History and Anatomy*.
>
> HE also directs the public Academical Exercises, consisting of *Translations* from *Greek*, *Latin*, and *French* Authors; and *Orations*, or *Dissertations*, which are delivered alternatively in *English*, and *Latin*, or *French*; wherein a particular Attention is paid to the manner of Reading and Speaking. (*Report of the State of the Warrington Academy, By the Trustees at their Annual Meeting July 1st- MDCCLXII,* cited in Schofield 1997: 96-97)

I found the same description of duties in a similar report dated 28 June 1764 (available on *ECCO*), which suggests that Priestley's duties hardly changed during his 6-year tenure at Warrington. Schofield notes, however, that 'Aikin soon took over the logic course and Priestley taught anatomy one year only, but later added the teaching of elementary Italian, according to a letter, 14 February 1766, to Caleb Rotheram' (1997: 97 fn13).[70] Schofield goes on to argue that '[t]his was a

[70] See Rutt (1999: I.50fn) for a transcription of this letter.

heavy teaching load, but one for which Priestley, so far as languages were concerned, was scarcely unprepared' (1997: 97). While Priestley already taught English grammar and ancient languages at Nantwich as evidenced by Schofield's own research (1997: 79), his appointment at Warrington required him to focus much more on language in general, and specialise in modern languages in particular, essentially in French. It is, therefore, worth examining Schofield's claim in greater detail and assess Priestley's exposure to the French language before 1761 and the extent of his preparation to teach the subject.

In the following sections, I will look at the impact that these new teaching duties may have had on Priestley's evolution as a grammarian and grammaticographer. Relying on biographical and archival resources, my investigation will examine Priestley's knowledge of languages and his proficiency in French, the proportion and place of French in the Warrington Academy's curriculum, and the material Priestley may have used for his and his students' pedagogical benefit. This will allow me to identify several French grammarians whose work informed the development of Priestley's grammaticographic practice.

5.2 Priestley's linguistic expertise and proficiency in French

Throughout his education, Priestley studied languages but, since he was preparing to become a dissenting minister, they were mostly the so-called learned languages. He recounts in his memoirs that he was first introduced to them at a free school generally admitted to be Batley grammar school (Rutt 1999: I.7fn; Schofield 1997: 10-11).

> I was sent to several schools in the neighbourhood, especially to a large free school, under the care of a clergyman, Mr. Hague, under whom, at the age of twelve or

> thirteen, I first began to make any progress in the Latin tongue, and acquired the elements of Greek. But about the same time that I began to learn Greek at this public school, I learned Hebrew on holidays of the Dissenting minister of the place, Mr. Kirkby [...]. (Rutt 1999: I.7)

Priestley moved to Kirkby's own school when it opened but, owing to his poor health, he dropped out and began to study on his own from around 1749 (Schofield 1997: 11).[71] These circumstances forced him to reconsider his career plans: 'with a view to trade, I learned the modern languages, French, Italian, and High Dutch, without a master; and in the first and last of them I translated and wrote letters for an uncle of mine, who was a merchant, and who intended to put me in a counting-house in Lisbon' (Rutt 1999: I.8). The first and, as it happens, only evidence of Priestley learning French – and other modern languages – is for the brief period when he contemplated a career in trade and a move to Lisbon, where, it was thought, the climate would improve his health (Schofield 1997: 12). Having no contact with either native speakers or tutors, it seems unlikely that he would have been able to converse in these languages. The tasks described suggest that he would not have acquired more than the skills needed to read and write letters for very specific purposes. Schofield argues that Priestley's memoirs and correspondence show his lack of interest in these mercantile endeavours and a rapid return to academic pursuits (1997: 12-13). Thus, during his two-year intermission, he also continued to study ancient languages: 'I spent the latter part of every week with Mr. Thomas, a Baptist minister [...] who had had no learned education. Him I instructed in Hebrew, and by that means made myself a considerable proficient in that language. At the same time I learned Chaldee and Syriac, and just began to read Arabic' (Rutt 1999: I.14). Again, these were learned

[71] According to Schofield (1997: 12 fn23), this Mr. Kirkby was not John Kirkby (1705–54) who authored *A New English Grammar* (1746).

languages, the study of which, probably with a polyglot Bible (Schofield 1997: 13), was meant to further his understanding of the Scriptures. When Priestley's health finally improved, he started to prepare for the ministry again at Daventry Academy, a dissenting institution where he spent three years (September 1752 - September 1755). There, together with a friend – a 'Mr. Alexander of Birmingham' –, he 'read everyday ten folio pages in some Greek author, and generally a Greek play in the course of the week besides. By this means we became well acquainted with that language and with the most valuable authors in it' (Rutt 1999: I.26). This was probably Priestley's only contact with languages at Daventry since he noted in his memoirs that '[t]hese voluntary engagements were the more necessary in the course of our academical studies, as there was then no provision made for teaching the learned languages. We had even no compositions or orations in Latin' (Rutt 1999: I.26). Under Caleb Ashworth (d. 1775) and Samuel Clark (d. 1769), the curriculum at Daventry focussed on the intellectual challenges of natural philosophy, philosophy, and theology. Upon graduation, Priestley had therefore become an expert in the learned languages – Latin, Greek and Hebrew – which prepared him for the ministry and, for the same purpose, had learnt the rudiments of Chaldee, Syriac and Arabic. As regards modern European vernaculars – French, Italian, and German ('High-Dutch') – he had gained a basic knowledge of them through self-study for very specific tasks.

Priestley's teaching career began as he left Daventry to become a minister in Needham Market, Suffolk. As his Arian leanings were met unfavourably by the congregation,[72] he found himself in a difficult financial situation, and reluctantly

[72] The main tenet of Arianism is summarised by Schofield as the belief that 'Christ the Son was a created being and therefore subordinate to God the Father' and furthered described as

tried to become a schoolmaster proposing 'to teach the classics, mathematics, &c.' (Rutt 1999: I.41). No student enrolled and, eventually, in 1758, he left for Nantwich, Cheshire, where, finding a more welcoming congregation, he stayed for three years. There he established a school and taught Latin, some Greek, English grammar, geography, natural and civil history, some mathematics, and natural philosophy (Schofield 1997: 79). Although he had little time to compose anything, being occupied with teaching all day on most days (Rutt 1999: I.44), this is where he wrote the first edition of his *Rudiments of English Grammar*.

> For the use of my school, I then wrote an English Grammar, on a new plan,[73] leaving out all such technical terms as were borrowed from other languages, and had no corresponding modifications in ours, as the future tense, &c.; and to this I afterwards subjoined 'Observations for the Use of Proficients in the Language,' from the notes which I collected at Warrington, where, being tutor in the languages and Belles Lettres, I gave particular attention to the English language, and intended to have composed a large treatise on the structure and present state of it. But dropping this scheme in another situation, I lately gave such parts of my collection as I had made no use of to Mr Herbert Croft of Oxford, on his communicating to me his design of compiling a Dictionary and Grammar of our language.[74] (Rutt 1999: I.44–45)

This passage confirms that the Notes and Observations in which Priestley made references to French were collected after his arrival at Warrington. All in all, the biographical evidence available to us shows that while Priestley taught ancient

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'sufficiently anti-Trinitarian formally to exclude him [Priestley] from the Act of Toleration' (1997: 55)

[73] The phrase 'on a new plan' is reminiscent of Buffier's *Grammaire française sur un plan nouveau* (1709), which was translated in English in 1734 as *French Grammar on a New Plan*. The only other text containing the phrase in its title before 1761 is *Youth's general director, or Hoey's new instructor; containing; A Comprehensive English Grammar, on a New Plan, for the Use of Children before they learn Latin* (1751).

[74] Although Priestley mentions this material passed on to Croft in another letter in 1789 (Straaijer 2011: 42-43), Croft's dictionary was never published. It is uncertain whether there was more in that material than what Priestley used in the 1768 'Notes and Observations'.

languages before 1761, he does not seem to have had any experience in the modern languages. In fact, as related in his memoirs, the first time he was considered for a position at Warrington, it had been precisely because of his expertise in the learned languages: 'Mr. Clark, knowing the attention that I had given to the learned languages when I was at Daventry, had then joined with Dr. Benson and Dr. Taylor in recommending me as tutor in the languages' (Rutt 1999: I.46-47). In his history of the Warrington Academy (1989), Padraig O'Brien asserts that when they appointed Aikin instead, Priestley 'was turned down on account of his youth and inexperience, together with the fact that he had something of a stammer. The trustees could not ascertain how severe this was as he was far away in Suffolk' (1989: 56). Priestley's stammer may also explain his preference for the study of learned languages, over the constraints of conversation in modern vernaculars. After Taylor's death in 1761, Aikin took over the tutorship in Divinity, and the tutorship in Languages and Belles Lettres was offered to Priestley again. He accepted the offer but noted in his memoirs: 'I should have preferred the office of teaching the mathematics and natural philosophy, for which I had at that time a great predilection' (Rutt 1999: I.47), showing little taste for modern languages. Diana Cooper-Richet goes as far as to assert that Priestley had 'aucune maîtrise de la langue française' (2018: 26-27). She adduces a later letter to French Interior Minister Roland (20 September 1792) in which Priestley, having just been granted French citizenship for his support to the revolutionaries, turned down a seat at the national Convention. The letter is cited in the *Dictionnaire des parlementaires français de 1789 à 1889* (Robert *et al.* 1891 : V.47) : 'Mais je dois refuser la place de député à votre Convention nationale, par la conviction de ma pleine incapacité ; j'y suis déterminé, parce que je n'ai qu'une connaissance imparfaite de votre langage, et par l'ignorance où je suis des

circonstances locales de votre pays'. While the word 'imparfaite' does not really suggest that he had no proficiency in French at all, the letter confirms retrospectively that Priestley never really professed to be a master of it.

The biographical evidence examined here corroborates Schofield's statement that Priestley was 'scarcely unprepared' for his teaching load at Warrington, so far as ancient languages are concerned. His appointment was the result of his extensive familiarity with the learned languages and his tangible experience as a teacher in Latin, Greek and English grammar at Nantwich. Regarding modern languages, however, the evidence concurs to show that, apart from the self-study which he had conducted ten years prior to his appointment at Warrington, Priestley had no specific expertise in the French language, which he did not appear to use; he had no experience in teaching it, and seemingly little taste for it. It can therefore be conjectured that, upon his arrival at Warrington, Priestley had to study the language and consult pedagogical resources. This newly required attention to the language may explain the introduction of references to French in the two grammars which he wrote while at Warrington. To get a better sense of what Priestley was expected to teach, I will now examine the place occupied by French in the curriculum at Warrington.

5.3 The place of French in the curriculum at the Warrington Academy

After Priestley's arrival at Warrington, French came to play a central role in his educational undertakings, not only because of his regular language teaching, but also in the larger context of curriculum development at the Warrington Academy. As noted by Jenny Uglow in the *Lunar Men* (2002), the exclusion of Nonconformists from Oxford and Cambridge fostered the creation of dissenting schools delivering a different curriculum from the classical courses of the universities: 'Many

Dissenters went to Europe or to Scotland, returning to work in the Dissenting academies, which positively welcomed the new, teaching modern languages, modern history, politics and natural philosophy' (2002: 71-72). The subjects taught by Priestley were at the heart of this new outlook, and Priestley embraced the modernisation of the curriculum at Warrington. Herbert McLachlan notes that '[f]rom the time of the appointment as tutor in languages and belles lettres in 1761 the course of studies in the Academy was revised in accordance with [Priestley's] views on education' (1931: 216). As recounted in his preface to *Lectures on History, and General Policy* (1788), upon arrival at Warrington, Priestley found that the programme was not adapted to the needs of the majority of the students, because they 'were young gentlemen designed for civil and active life' and not the learned professions (1788: v). He, therefore, introduced new courses 'which would bring them acquainted with such branches of knowledge as would be of more immediate use to them when they should come into life' (1788: v), in particular modern history and law. This new curriculum is laid out in his *Essay on a Course of Liberal Education for Civil and Active Life* (1765), the first few pages of which give an insight into the place of languages.

> If I were asked what branches of knowledge a young gentleman should, in my judgment, be master of, before he can study this course with advantage; I would answer, that a knowledge of the learned languages is not absolutely necessary, but is very desirable; especially such an insight into Latin as may enable a person to read the easier classics, and supersede the use of a dictionary, with respect to those more difficult English words which are derived from Latin. The student of this course should understand French very well, he should also be a pretty good accomptant, be acquainted with the more useful branches of practical mathematics; and if possible have some knowledge of algebra and geometry, which ought to be indispensable in every plan of liberal education. (Priestley 1765b: 18-19)

It is remarkable that knowledge of Latin is primarily needed insofar as it helps with the English tongue, while proficiency in French is emphasised as a prerequisite and seemingly the first skill needed. This is a shift from the classical education which prevailed in universities, but also in the dissenting academies which Priestley had attended. This *Essay* was later republished together with *Miscellaneous Observations Relating to Education* (1778), whose section III is dedicated to Latin and Greek. Priestley elaborates on the place of ancient languages by noting that '[a]t present, almost all valuable knowledge is to be found in modern languages, and if a man communicates his thoughts to the public, it is in the same channel' (1778: 42). He argues that this evolution over the past century should be reflected in education and '[...] as *writing Latin* is now of little consequence, even to a professed scholar, it seems unnecessary to insist upon it, in a course of *general education*, any farther than it may be thought useful in order to a perfect knowledge of the language' (1778: 43). Although he notes again that Latin can be helpful in understanding English words, he adds '[t]o persons in trade, or manufacturers, the knowledge of Latin and Greek is certainly of no *direct use*' (1778: 44).

These views on the role of ancient and modern languages in education had a direct impact on the teaching provision at Warrington. Elementary Italian was added to Priestley's duties, as mentioned in 5.1, and French grew in importance while Latin and Greek were given less and less weight. Using the 'Minutes of the Committee of the Academy' and the 'Reports of the Board of Trustees', McLachlan established that two courses were offered at the time – a five-year course for students intended for the learned professions and a three-year one for those intended for business and commerce. He gives an extensive account of the 'Plan' of education published in 1760, the year before Priestley's appointment, which I

am quoting in full to show the place occupied by languages and grammar in the two courses and highlight the differences between the two.

> A student taking the full course was to spend his first year learning languages and elementary mathematics. In his second year, the study of languages was continued, and Logic, more advanced Mathematics, 'Natural History' and an 'Introduction to Natural Philosophy' were taken. The third year was chiefly occupied with Natural and Moral Philosophy, and occasional classes in Belles Lettres and Mathematics. In the fourth year, Moral Philosophy and Theology, and in the last 'those studies that peculiarly relate to his Profession and those Exercises which are to prepare him for a proper Discharge of the Public Office he has in view' were to occupy his time and thought. Throughout the course, translation, composition, and exercises in speaking supplemented the lectures and classes. [...]
>
> The course for lay students is here given in greater detail, since the provision for these in the academics *[sic]* is not generally set forth, nor did any other academy have so large a proportion of them amongst the total number of students.
>
> First Year:
>
> (1) Elementary mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry).
> (2) French.
> (3) Universal Grammar and Rhetoric.
>
> Weekly exercises:
>
> (1) Translations out of French into English.
> (2) The composition of an essay on some easy subject in English.
> (3) Specimens of letters in the epistolary style to imitate.
>
> Second Year:
>
> (1) Mathematics (Trigonometry; Navigation if desired).
> (2) Natural Philosophy, and 'the easier Parts of Astronomy applied to the use of the Globes, and the general system of the Universe.'
> (3) French.
>
> Exercises:
>
> (1) Translating out of English into French.
> (2) Specimens of French letters to imitate.
> (3) 'Some English Composition.'
>
> Third Year:
>
> (1) Natural Philosophy and 'some of the principal Experiments in the Elements of Chemistry.'

(2) 'A short system of Morality ... concluding with the Evidences of the Christian Religion.'

Exercises:

(1) Dissertations in some moral, political, or commercial Subjects.

(2) French-English, English-French translations.

Further, lay students were to give attention to pronouncing the English language well, and in this connection attend lectures on Oratory and Grammar, and during 'the whole of their course' they were to learn 'the best methods of Book-Keeping,' 'to improve their Writing,' and 'to make some Progress in the Art of Drawing and Designing.' To this end a special tutor was appointed from time to time to give instruction in Writing, Drawing and Book-keeping. Shorthand would be taught if desired. Finally, 'one or two lectures' were to be given every week on Geography during the whole course in which 'the principal problems upon the Globes will be resolved; the Use of Maps represented; and the Natural History, Manufactures, Traffick, Coins, Religion, Government, etc., of the several Countries will be enlarged upon.' (McLachlan 1931: 210-11)

McLachlan also notes that 'after a few experimental years the Trustees decided "to have nothing to do with teaching the first rudiments of the learned languages," since it was scarcely possible to connect two such different plans of education together, and to bring young gentlemen of such different ages under the same discipline [Report of Warrington Academy, 1766]' (1931: 210). These reports confirm that Priestley's views on the teaching of ancient languages were implemented sometime after his appointment in September 1761. Most striking of all in the two plans is the amount of French taught in the three-year course for lay students, whether in lectures or via translation and composition exercises. It is omnipresent, as the only subject studied throughout. Bearing in mind that most of his students were laymen taking this course, these documents confirm that teaching French made up a substantial part of Priestley's duties as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres. Having previously established that Priestley's proficiency in French was rather limited, it is fair to assume that, in order to teach

this amount of French to his students, he is likely to have relied on a number of books and manuals either to improve his own French or as pedagogical support. As these sources may shed light on the development of his thinking about language in general, I will now try to identify what they could have been.

5.4 Priestley's sources for the teaching of French

In several letters, Priestley's friend, the reverend Caleb Rotheram, asked him for advice on the different subjects he taught at Nantwich. In answer to one of these requests (18 May 1766, see also Table 2.6), Priestley gave a list of books he used in his Latin classes.

> I made use of Holmes' Latin Grammar, not because I altogether liked it, but because I thought it easy for beginners. I used the London Vocabulary, a few of Clarke's Translations, then a few of Sterling's editions, and lastly made my scholars read their authors without any help at all, except the Dictionary. Several of the collections for the use of Eton school are excellent; as are their four books of *Exercises*, beginning with *Exempla minora*, and ending with historical examples. (Rutt 1999: I.64-65)

In a similar letter from 1767, he gave Rotheram references for the teaching of geography (Rutt 1999: I.67), but there is no such record for the teaching of French, perhaps because Rotheram did not teach French at Daventry. However, these recommendations are evidence that Priestley usually relied on manuals, grammars, dictionaries, and exercise books for the teaching of Latin, rather than his own material, and that he must have done so for French too.

The 1762 Report of the Board of Trustees states that 'young Gentlemen who learn *French* are taught to read, and write that Language; and go through a Course of Exercises calculated to prepare them to converse in it' (cited in Schofield 1997: 96-97). A search for titles containing <French+exercises> in *ECCO*

returned 41 results, only two of which predate 1761. They are both 1750 volumes by Lewis Chambaud, and, when examined closely, appear to be the same text in two versions: the monolingual *Exercises to the rules of construction of French-Speech. Consisting of passages extracted out of the best French authors. With a Reference to the Grammar-Rules, to be turned back into French* (London: A. Millar) and the bilingual *Thèmes françois & anglois. or, French and English exercises* (London: A. Millar). In fact, 18 of the 41 titles returned are by Chambaud. This search does not fully reflect the range of manuals of French exercises available at the time, but it shows Chambaud's prominence in this field.

Two sources are available on the books owned by Priestley during his lifetime. Douglas McKie's 'Priestley's Laboratory and Library and Other of His Effects' (1956) mostly contains scientific books, none which are of interest to the question of French. The *Catalogue of Joseph Priestley's Library* (1816) is a much richer resource. It was published in America after Priestley's death in 1804, as Thomas Dobson collected the books to be sold off. It is impossible to ascertain which books from the catalogue Priestley already owned at Warrington, which he acquired later, and which he may have owned at Warrington but lost and purchased again in a different edition after crossing the Atlantic. Indeed, we know that parts of Priestley's library were destroyed during the Birmingham riots (1791) when his house was set on fire. The catalogue may nevertheless give us an idea of the books which Priestley used while at Warrington. It comprises 1,863 books, in a wide variety of topics: religion, history, mathematics, languages, etc.[75] Table 5.1 shows the nine titles relating to the French language which I identified in the catalogue.

[75] The catalogue is available online at *LibraryThing*: http://www.librarything.com/profile/JosephPriestley [last accessed 31.07.2019]

Date	Author	Title
????[76]	Boyer, Abel	*Boyer's Royal dictionary abridged. In two parts, I. French and English; II. English and French*
1665	Vaugelas, Claude Favre de	*Remarques sur la langue françoise : utiles à ceux qui veulent bien parler, & bien écrire*
1747	Girard, Gabriel	*Les vrais principes de la langue françoise, ou, La parole réduite en méthode, conformément aux lois de l'usage*
1751	Chambaud, Louis	*The idioms of the French and English languages*
1753	Lancelot, Claude	*A general and rational grammar : containing the fundamental principles of the art of speaking, explained in a clear and natural manner : with the reason of the general agreement, and the particular differences of languages*
1764	Boyer, Abel	*The royal dictionary abridged. In two parts. ... Containing many thousand words more than any French and English dictionary yet extant. To which are added, the accents of the English words to facilitate their pronunciation to foreigners. As also an alphabetical list of the most common christian names of men and women*
1776	Girard, Gabriel	*Synonymes françois*
1778	Chambaud, Louis	*Nouveau dictionnaire francois-anglois & anglois-francois : contenant la signification des mots, avec leur differens usages, les constructions, idiomes, facons de parler particulieres, & les proverbes usites dans l'une & l'autre langue, les termes des sciences, des arts, & des metiers, le tout recueilli des meilleurs auteurs anglois & francois*
1790	Chambaud, Louis	*A grammar of the French tongue With a prefatory discourse, containing an essay on the proper method for teaching and learning that language*

Table 5.1 Titles on the French language in Thomas Dobson's *Catalogue of Joseph Priestley's Library* (Philadelphia, 1816).

There are several reasons to believe that this list corresponds to resources which Priestley used back then. First, they were not the most recent references by the time he died and were all available during his time at Warrington, including the

[76] The first edition dates from 1700 but there were at least 19 editions throughout the eighteenth-century (not all by Boyer himself, who died in 1729).

last four items, whose first editions were published before or in 1761. It is possible, therefore, that, after the Birmingham riots or his move to America, Priestley bought later editions of books he had owned at Warrington. There is also consistency in the authors he consulted. Chambaud, who came up in the previous inquiry, occurs three times, confirming his significance in French language teaching, alongside his most famous competitor and predecessor, Boyer, who occurs twice. The monolingual references in this list were also among Chambaud's sources. Vaugelas's *Remarques* (1647) was a staple of French grammar famous for turning collections of observations on usage into a genre of its own and celebrated among the *Remarqueurs* in Chambaud's prefaces. He may well have inspired Priestley to write his own 'Notes and observations'. Abbé Girard was very popular in the eighteenth century and is cited by Chambaud as a 'the last, and the best of our Grammarians' (1750d: xiv). Finally, the Port-Royal grammar by Arnauld and Lancelot is the one work from this list which Priestley undoubtedly consulted while at Warrington. At the end of the 1762 *Course*, there is a list of references which includes 'A general and rational grammar by Messieurs de port royal; as also their Latin and Greek grammars' (1762: 305). Lancelot's Greek grammar is also listed in Dobson's catalogue. Since the *Course* was printed in 1762, shortly after Priestley was appointed at Warrington and started to teach French, it may also provide useful information as to what sources he used in his teaching.

The *Course on the Theory of Language and Universal Grammar* contains 28 occurrences of 'French' and none of 'Gallicism'. Most of them are very general references to French, as one language among others, in developments about the history of languages. Unlike Priestley's later grammars, the *Course* relies heavily on Latin when it focusses on grammatical observations. This may be because Priestley recycled material used by his predecessor Aikin who taught this topic

before his appointment, or because of his own sources on universal grammar. There are, however, nine grammatical features discussed with reference to French, as shown in Table 5.2.

Pages	Feature
84-85	The construction of the three degrees of the adjective
87-88	The several cases of the personal pronoun subject
88-90	The pronoun used in 'complimental language', e.g. *if you please*
91-92	'*pronoun supplying*'
91-92	*On*
105-06	Personal pronouns in addition to verbal terminations
123-25	Double negatives
130-31	Expletives 'adding nothing to sense ..., but serving only to improve the sound'
165-66	Place of object pronouns/word order

Table 5.2 Grammatical features discussed with reference to French in the 1762 *Course*.

Surprisingly, none of these nine features is discussed with reference to French in the 1765 *Grammar* or the 1768 *Rudiments*. But the remark on the so-called 'pronoun supplying' does offer some similarity with 1768 and, because it also mentions French grammarians and several examples which may prove useful in tracking Priestley's sources, it is worth examining closely.

> The *French* language is peculiarly happy in what their Grammarians call the *pronoun supplying*; viz. *le, en, y*; being of vastly more easy and extensive application than any relative in other languages as *Ils sont heureux, et nous ne le sommes pas.* They are happy and we are not; i.e. not happy; which is particularly referred to by the French *le*. *Newton vous plait, vous en parlez toujours*, You like *Newton*, you always speak of him. *Quand un homme est mort, on n'y pense plus*; when a man is dead, he is no more thought of.
>
> The *French* pronoun *on* is likewise of as extensive use as a nominative case to verbs, as the pronoun supplying, which is governed of them; and in particular with the active voice of verbs is very elegantly made use of instead of the passive; as *on tint hier un conseil a Whitehall*: yesterday a counsil was held in Whitehall. (Priestley 1762: 91-92fn)

Unlike the 1768 *Rudiments,* the 1762 *Course* gives examples in French to illustrate points on French grammar. However, the translation of one of these examples – 'They are happy and we are not; i.e. not happy' – does feature in the 1768 *Rudiments* in connection with French. But Priestley's judgment on the feature differs from one work to the other. In the *Course*, he makes the pronoun supplying unique to French, whereas, in 1768, adding in the pronoun 'so' to the example, he highlights the similarity between English and French: 'The word *so* has, sometimes, the same meaning with *also, likewise, the same*; or rather it is equivalent to the universal pronoun *le* in French. *They are happy, we are not so*, i.e. *not happy*' (1768: 136-37). His judgment also evolved regarding neutral subject pronoun 'on' which he regards as unique to French in 1762, but analogous to the English indefinite pronoun 'one' in 1768: 'We sometimes use the pronoun 'one' in the same sense in which *on* is used in French. One *would imagine these to be expressions of a man blessed with ease*. Atterbury' (1768: 94). These two remarks illustrate how Priestley's grammatical thinking evolved between 1762 and 1768 with regard to French. They show that he developed either a greater grammatical awareness of the similarities between French and English, or a greater grammaticographic desire to entrench English within the realm of modern vernaculars against Latin.

The second point of interest in the above passage is that Priestley acknowledges that he borrowed the category 'pronoun supplying' from French grammarians. Since they are referenced at the end of the *Course*, the authors of the Port-Royal *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* (1660) are most likely to be these grammarians. However, the phrase 'pronom suppléant' is nowhere to be found in Arnauld's and Lancelot's works. Instead, I found the phrase in Abbé Vallart's *Grammaire Françoise* (1744) who, discussing 'le, en, y', remarks that 'Le P[ère]. Buffier appelle ces pronoms *suppléans,* parce qu'ils suppléent pour des phrases

entiéres, comme en ces exemples. *Vous dites que l'on veut me tromper, je ne le croi pas,* ou *je n'en croi rien,* c'est à dire*, je ne croi pas que l'on veuille me tromper*' (Vallart 1744: 172). Buffier does dedicate a whole section to the 'pronom conjoint supléant' in his *Grammaire françoise sur un plan nouveau* (1709:190-92), mentioned above when Priestley used the phrase 'on a new plan'. The examples used by Buffier to illustrate this point in §421 are strikingly similar to Priestley's.

> Il est évident qu'il est pronom: car il s'emploie pour des noms particuliers ; comme, *vous êtes maître & moi je ne le suis pas* : *le* se met ici pour le nom *maître* : de même, *Platon vous plaît, vous en parlez toujours*, c'est-à-dire *de Platon* : de même aussi, *regardez le ciel, pensez-y souvent*, c'est-à-dire *au ciel*. On l'emploie de même avec des pluriels : *ils sont heureux, & nous ne* le *sommes pas* : *ce sont des ignorans ne m'*en *parlez pas : ce sont des contes, ne vous* y *fiez point*. (Buffier 1709 : 190)

Thus, 'Ils sont heureux, et nous ne le sommes pas' features word for word in Priestley's *Course*, as does 'Newton vous plait, vous en parlez toujours' with the exception that Buffier used 'Platon' instead of 'Newton'. The third example in the 1762 paragraph – 'Quand un homme est mort, on n'y pense plus' – also features in Buffier, but in §425 and with a different negative particle: 'quand un homme est mort on n'y pense guere'. However, the last example used by Priestley – and more generally, the whole remark on 'on' – does not appear in Buffier. The fact that two of the examples used by Priestley contain such iconic English proper nouns as 'Newton' and 'Whitehall' suggests that his source is more likely to have been another French grammar, adapted from Buffier, but written for an English audience and using cultural references with which they would be more familiar.

Searching *ECCO* for the examples used by Priestley proved more fruitful as I found that all of them feature in Lewis Chambaud's 1750 *Grammar of the French Tongue* in a section entitled 'The Use and Construction of the pronoun supplying

and governed' (1750a: 211). Consequently, it seems that Buffier was Chambaud's rather than Priestley's source and, importantly, that Priestley borrowed these examples from Chambaud. However, it must be noted that Chambaud never acknowledges Buffier's influence. Instead, he observes in his grammar that Abbé Girard is 'the only modern Grammarian worth reading' (1750a: 195). Girard's *Vrais Principes de la Langue Françoise* was published in 1747, yet he does not seem to refer to supplying pronouns at all in that grammar. It may be the case that Buffier's grammar, which had been first published in 1709, was not considered by Chambaud as modern, yet still worth reading or plagiarising. All in all, in this section on Priestley's French sources, I have looked at the curriculum at Warrington, Priestley's library, and references to French grammars and manuals in his work. In all three lines of investigation, I have found a web of evidence clearly pointing towards Chambaud, with the last piece of evidence the most conclusive because it rests on Priestley's own writings. I will therefore go on to examine Lewis Chambaud's work with a view to finding how he may have influenced the development of Priestley's views on language and grammar.

5.5 Lewis Chambaud (d. 1776)

5.5.1 Circulation of ideas between the French and English grammatical traditions

The Anglicisation of Louis Chambaud's first name in his publications is evidence of his pivotal role in the circulation of grammatical ideas between the French and English traditions. Like him, many Huguenot refugees became translators, tutors, and schoolmasters in French, bringing over ideas and methods which affected foreign language teaching and the codification of English, both with regard to lexicography and grammaticography. Among them featured François Cheneau (fl. 1653?), Paul Festeau (fl. 1670–1690), Michael Mattaire (1668–1747), Claude

Mauger (fl. 1690) and Guy Miège (1644–1718?)[77] who arrived before the revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), while Abel Boyer (1667?–1729), Pierre Coste (1668–1747) and Pierre Desmaizeaux (1673–1745) formed part of the larger post-1685 contingents.[78] Although their primary occupation was to translate and teach French, some – such as Festeau, Mauger and Miège – also started to teach English as a foreign language (in particular to new immigrants), thereby improving the existing literature in that field and fostering new comparisons between the two languages. According to Howatt, Guy Miège's *Nouvelle méthode pour apprendre l'Anglois* (1685) 'raised the teaching of English as a foreign language to a standard of expertise and professionalism it had not enjoyed before' (2004: 57). Mauger and Festeau who had both authored their own French grammars – *The True Advancement of the French Tongue* (1653) and *A New and Easy French Grammar* (1667) respectively – teamed up towards the end of the century to produce *Nouvelle Double Grammaire Françoise-Angloise et Angloise-Françoise* (1693). It remained an authority until it was superseded by Miège and Boyer's own version, which was reprinted several times from 1718 until the end of the eighteenth century. Some went on to write English grammars and dictionaries for native English speakers, thereby entering the narrative of the history of English grammar and bringing with them different approaches and references. Miège's *English Grammar* (1688) did not meet the same success as its French equivalent, and Michael Mattaire's *English Grammar* (1712), intended for the Westminster School, only touched a

[77] Miège was not strictly speaking a Huguenot since he was Swiss-born and arrived in London in different circumstances in 1661. However, he moved in the same French-speaking protestant circles as the others and was very influential among them.

[78] This rich collection of names is based on Caravolas's chapter 'Les Anglais et le français' (2000: 20-34) and Howatt's chapter 'Guy Miège and the Second Huguenot Exile' (2004: 56-64), to which I have added names which I was able to identify in the prosopography included in Matthew Symonds's dissertation on Huguenot Intellectuals (2001: 64-79).

limited audience, but Boyer's *Royal Dictionary* (1699) soon became a reference and was continuously reprinted until 1875.

5.5.2 Chambaud's life and work

By contrast with these language teachers, very little biographical information is available on Lewis Chambaud, even his date of birth remains unknown. Most of the information which has been gathered about him was extracted from his publications. He was a prolific writer, as an educator and a teacher of French for English speakers in particular. In 1750, alongside the first edition of his 424-page *Grammar of the French Tongue*, he released the whole paraphernalia of supporting works necessary to learners of French, i.e. an accompanying manual of exercises (*Exercises to the rules of Construction of French-Speech*), one of translation exercises (*Thèmes François & Anglois. or, French and English Exercises*), and a bilingual vocabulary (*The Treasure of the French and English languages*), all printed by Andrew Millar in London. The following year three further works came out, still in London, but printed for J. Ward by Jean Nourse: a collection of French dialogues based on Molière's comedies with their English translation (*Dialogues French and English*), a reader of fables together with a glossary (*Fables choisies*), and a bilingual phrasebook (*The Idioms of the French and English Languages*). Still in 1751, the grammar was published in a shorter version as *The Rudiments of the French Tongue*. The bilingual dictionary *Dictionnaîre françoîs & angloîs* took longer as it was not published until 1761. Overall, Monique Cormier has counted up to a dozen books on language written by Chambaud over a period of 12 years (2010: 177-78).[79]

[79] Cormier asserts that '[h]is final volume was *The Elements of the French Tongue*, in 1761' (2010: 178). However, it appears from my research that this book was published in 1762 as *The Elements of the French Language.*

The popularity of Chambaud's works is evidenced by the numerous reprints and new editions they enjoyed throughout the second half of the eighteenth century. He also became a household name in the world of education. Cohen notes, for instance, that 'Chambaud's grammars were recommended by Erasmus Darwin in his *Plan for the Conduct of Female Education in Boarding Schools*' (2003: 101). After his death, when other grammarians and lexicographers took up his work, they included his name in the title. In 1782, James Nicholson contributed a new edition of the book of exercises entitled *Chambaud improved; or, French and English exercises, With their respective Grammar-Rules at the Head of each Chapter and Exercise*, and, in 1787, John Perrin produced an abridged version of *Chambaud's Dictionary, French and English and English and French*. These titles suggest that the brand 'Chambaud' sold well, and that, by then, his renown was well established inside Great Britain. It was also well established outside as noted by Jean-Antoine Caravolas in his inventory of works used for language teaching in America:

> Avec les jeunes débutants on se sert d'habitude de textes religieux faciles et de fables. Avec les élèves plus âgés et les adultes on utilise la Bible, *Télémaque* de Fénelon, *The Compleat French Master for Ladies and Gentlemen* (1694) d'Abel Boyer, *Grammar of the French Tongue* (3e éd. 1764), *Exercises to the Rules of Construction of French Speech*, les *Fables choisies à l'usage des enfants, The Idioms of the French and English Languages,* le *Nouveau dictionnaire français-anglais et anglais-français, The Rudiments of the French Tongue, Thèmes français et anglais*, tous de Louis Chambaud, **auteur très populaire aux Etats-Unis après 1750**. (Caravolas 2000: 328, my highlights)

His success is further corroborated by Cormier who points out that 'Thomas Cadell, one of the executors of Andrew Millar's estate and his successor as a bookseller, commented in 1769 that in the language field, "the richest titles" (in other words, the most lucrative books) were Samuel Johnson's dictionary and the grammars by Lewis Chambaud printed for J. Ward by Jean Nourse' (2010: 178).

Chambaud's place next to the unbeatable Johnson testifies to the prominent status he enjoyed by the end of the eighteenth century. This popularity seems to stem from the approach to language teaching he advocated, which proved particularly influential. Cohen stresses that 'Chambaud's work is crucial to the history of French language teaching in England, because it represents the emergence of modern methods. The conceptual basis for his method became the rationale for French instruction in the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth' (2003:109). In fact, Chambaud's lasting influence went beyond the realm of French language teaching. Richard Steadman-Jones (2007: 202-06) has demonstrated that Scottish Indologist John Gilchrist (1759–1841) drew upon Chambaud's textbooks for his pedagogical material on the Hindustani languages *The Oriental Linguist* (1798). Nicola McLelland (2017: 98) conjectures that he may also have inspired Gebhard Wendeborn's *Elements of German Grammar* (1774). I will now examine the tenets of what Cohen calls the 'conceptual basis for his method', with a view to relating it to Priestley's work.

5.5.3 Chambaud's pedagogical approach

5.5.3.1 The grammar and supporting material

Eighteenth-century grammarians used prefaces to make the case for their work and demonstrate that it filled a gap in the market or represented an improvement over their competitors' work. Chambaud was no exception, but he also used prefaces to lay out his teaching philosophy. In fact, commercial and pedagogical concerns are tied together in his presentation. He argues that the multiple textbooks published alongside the grammar form a systematic and interconnected ensemble. Each volume plays a unique role in the process of learning French, but they are all related to the grammar and to each other, which, as a result, makes it necessary for learners to acquire more than one. Thus,

Chambaud stresses that the *Exercises to the Rules of Construction of French Speech* 'are themselves the Test of my Grammar' and that 'they will be of very little service, to those who have not previously learnt the Grammar' (1750b: iii). Cormier believes that the material supporting the grammar constitutes Chambaud's original contribution to French language teaching in Britain: 'Chambaud followed in the tradition of his predecessors, Guy Miège and Abel Boyer, but differed in that he focussed on exercises for learning a language' (2010: 178). In fact, up until the preface to his *Dictionnaire* (1761), Chambaud hardly mentioned Miège and Boyer, the two most prominent French grammarians and lexicographers in Britain before him. His criticisms focus on Claude Arnoux (1695–1770) and David Durand (1680–1763). The whole preface to the *Thèmes François & Anglois* (1750), for instance, is dedicated to 'a candid examination of' – in fact a scathing attack on – Durand's *Exercices François & Anglois pour les Enfans* (1746). Indeed, Chambaud was not actually the first French language teacher to include exercises in his material. In addition to Arnoux and Durand, Michel Malard had also published *English Exercises to be Made in French* in 1727. But, the difference between Chambaud and his predecessors is the presentation and method he adopted: much like in modern-day workbooks, each section of the *Exercises to the Rules of Construction* is cross-referenced with a specific section of the *Grammar* where the rules to be applied are laid out. Chambaud prided himself on this design, claiming it 'was never attempted before' (1750a: viii). In her periodisation of the history of language teaching in Britain, McLelland dates the era of the 'practical grammar' with its targeted exercises from Chambaud (2017: 95-99). Crucially, these material considerations on the make-up of Chambaud's works reflect pedagogical principles, what he calls 'the necessity of learning a language grammatically' (1750b: vi). This phrase recurs in all the prefaces to his works, but it is really

elaborated in the 26-page 'Essay on the Proper method for Teaching and Learning' (henceforth *Essay*) affixed to the *Grammar of the French Tongue* (1750).

5.5.3.2 'Learning the language grammatically'

The *Essay* begins with the observation that although French has become a 'useful and universal language' in diplomacy, commerce, polite society, and science, it is poorly spoken and written by the many people who learn it (1750a: iii). Chambaud argues that, contrary to common belief, the reason is not so much the difficulty of the language but the fact that it is badly taught.

> To be fully convinced of this, one need only consider the common way of teaching *French* either in schools or in private. The only thing that Masters do, is, to set their Scholars to construe *French* books, making them understand the meaning of each sentence, either in gross, or *verbatim*, but without explaining to them the *Genius* of the Language: to make them get by heart words and common loose sentences, but without shewing them what grammatical dependence each word has upon another; and thereby enabling them by solid principles to converse on all occasions [...]. (Chambaud 1750a: iv)

The last few words resonate with the curriculum followed by Priestley at Warrington where students taking French 'go through a Course of Exercises calculated to prepare them to converse in it' (see 5.1). As pointed out by Cohen (2018: 3), it is often difficult to disambiguate terms like 'conversation' and 'speaking' in the history of language teaching. But in this passage, Chambaud is very clear: 'to converse' does not simply refer to oral competence (phonetic or otherwise) but to fluency, spontaneity, and autonomy in speaking ('on all occasions') – as opposed to the psittacism fostered by rote learning.

> Masters [...] presently begin by making them [young boys] learn words, dialogues and Phrases, and labour hard to beat into their heads as many common sentences as they can; pretty near after the same as Parrots are instructed. [...] The

> consequence is, that they of course acquire the knack of talking a glittering Gibberish, which no body can make anything of. (Chambaud 1750a: xvii-xix)

Chambaud gives an edifying specimen of this 'glittering Gibberish' with many interferences and calques from English: 'Demain est un jour de fète pour un nouveau garcon. Il est douze ans vieux, quoi qu'il ne regarde pas si vieux; mais il est court de son âge. etc.' (1750a : xxi). To him, the path to fluency requires students to learn the language 'grammatically', which he elucidates above as learning 'the *Genius* of the Language' or 'what grammatical dependence each word has upon another'. Chambaud is not solely attacking competing language masters in order to justify a new item on the marketplace. He also advocates a new pedagogical approach based on the deductive method ('explaining to them'; 'shewing them'). Cohen argues that Chambaud marks a 'major shift' because '[i]n the first part of the eighteenth-century, there was only one way to proficiency – constant oral practice' (2003: 107) – as illustrated by this quotation from Boyer's very popular *Compleat French Master*: 'La Méthode la plus facile pour apprendre le François, est de le parler souvent' (Boyer 1729: 276 cited in Cohen 2003: 107).

The dichotomy between learning by practice and learning grammatically is not as clear-cut as Cohen seems to suggest (2003: 107-108). Although Chambaud rejected the phrase-book approach, he did believe in constant practice, but he understood its role differently. Arguing that those who objected to his method 'mistake *Rote* for *Practice*', he explained:

> Practice, rightly understood, consists in exercising one's self upon what one has learnt, and in the frequent using of the terms and idiomatical phrases of a language. It therefore supposes the previous learning, not only of words to speak, but also of the way or rules of using them, conformable to the *Genius* of the language. Practice, then, has not learning for its object, but is itself the object of

> learning, and is no more than the exercise of the mind in the thing learnt. (Chambaud 1750a: xxiii-xxiv)

The notion that practice is the 'exercise of the mind in the thing learnt' is typical of deductive methods: exercises are of no use without prior learning of the rules in a methodical and reflexive fashion. It involves what Steadman-Jones calls a 'rational engagement with the language' (2007: 195). This is strongly emphasised in the following paragraph.

> The right placing and using of words in speech require a constant and steady application of the mind, and cannot be acquired but by much meditation upon the language, either by one's self, or jointly with a teacher; by much construing, and turning both that language into our Mother-Tongue, and vicissim our Mother-Tongue into that language, and comparing all along the Genius and Idiom of the two languages. (Chambaud 1750a: xix)

It is striking that, like Priestley, Chambaud adduces the notions of genius and idiom of the language – on which I will comment further below – for pedagogical purposes, contrary to what academic views of the phrase examined in Chapter 3 seemed to assume. Indeed, in this reflexive approach to language learning and in the student's apprehension of the genius and idiom of the language the pedagogical role of the teacher or grammarian is crucial.

5.5.3.3 The grammarian's 'Observations': reconciling use and reason

According to Steadman-Jones, the teaching philosophy laid out above is precisely what Gilchrist drew upon in *The Oriental Linguist* (1798), which recycles large extracts from Chambaud's *Essay*. Gilchrist was hostile towards methods of language learning built on habituation, but he was facing intense competition on the marketplace from language masters, such as George Hadley, who enticed students with seemingly less strenuous ways of learning such as dialogues

(Steadman-Jones 2007: 192-208). Steadman-Jones suggests that 'Chambaud provided Gilchrist with a non-empiricist model of 'practice' – one that focused on the exercise of the intellectual faculties rather than on the use of repetition as a means of forging associations between words and ideas' (2007: 215). In using the word 'non-empiricist', Steadman-Jones refers to a dichotomy he had previously outlined after observing that the *Essay* 'alludes to the typology of disciplines in which a 'knack' (*empeiria*) is inferior to an 'art' (*technē*), the two types of knowledge being connected with two types of literature' (2007: 203). Steadman-Jones thereby teases out of Chambaud's preface an opposition between the 'knack of talking a glittering gibberish' which students acquire through practice – i.e. habituation and imitation through dialogues and rote learning of words and phrases – and grammar as 'the "art" of speaking, which implies the use of reason in the acquisition of grammatical principles' (2007: 203). To make this distinction, Steadman-Jones draws more particularly on extracts from the following passage:

> Another advantage, that youth, and illiterate people, will reap from it, is, that in learning *French*, they will at the same time learn Grammar; that is, the Art of speaking, the reason of the words they utter, the Oeconomy of all languages. Therefore after a succinct, but clear, and exact Analysis of the Analogy and Foundation of Languages, prefixed by way of Introduction to the *French* Grammar, I give in the sequel, true and perfect notions of the parts of speech, and other Grammatical terms used in the work: and both the division of the work, and definitions used in it, will be found grounded in the nature of things, and made after the most exact rules of Logic. (Chambaud 1750a: viii)

Chambaud claims here that his French grammar can also be used to learn the principles of general or universal grammar. He does indeed indulge in universal grammar in the introduction to his grammar (1750: 1-4) and in a short appendix entitled 'The Analogy of Speech; or, The Grounds and Principles of Grammar' (1750: 312-22). However, unlike Steadman-Jones, I believe this is more probably a

selling argument – universal grammar being rather popular at the time, following the translation of *Grammaire générale et raisonnée* in 1747 – rather than a key principle at the heart of Chambaud's prefatory discourse.

Indeed, Chambaud's promotion of what Steadman-Jones calls 'a rational engagement with the language' does not actually preclude empiricist models and methods. By way of illustration, Chambaud claims for instance 'that a living language is a practical science' (1750a: xxiii). The vision of grammar on which Chambaud draws to elaborate a teaching method allowing students to 'learn the language grammatically' is not ostensibly founded on the *a priori* categories of universal grammar. On the contrary, within the French tradition, Chambaud does not place himself in the lineage of the Port-Royal grammarians; he prefers the *Remarqueurs* and acknowledges his debt to their trademark observations.[80]

> For above an age past the *French* have been making observations upon their language. *Ramus, Vaugelas, Malherbe, Corneille, Ménage, Bouhours*, and many other learned Grammarians have examined into its *Genius*, Foundation and Analogy. They have remarked the constructions wherein use is grounded upon reason, and also those irregular constructions which that imperious master of languages has despotically enacted, and to which it has made reason submit; and their observations have ever been to the learned and polite part of the nation the standard of speaking and writing. Authors now-a-days conform themselves so strictly to them, that the least deviating from them would be deemed a gross ignorance of their own language; and they are taught to youth, both in public and private education, as the only principles of their Mother-tongue; so that those observations have regulated the language, which is by that means arrived to its full perfection. Some words may indeed happen to grow obsolete, and new ones grow in use, as will always be the fate of living languages, but the foundation and *Genius* of the language will remain as it is, fixed and invariable.

[80] For further details on seventeenth-century collections of 'Remarques' as a genre, see Ayres-Bennett and Seijido (2011).

> This Grammar is nothing else but those observations digested into order, fitted to all capacities, and accommodated to the *Genius* of the *English* tongue, I mean, explained with respect to the construction of that language [...]. (Chambaud 1750a: v)

By invoking the *Remarqueurs*, their vision of the language, and their grammaticographic approach, Chambaud is tackling a perpetual conundrum in the history of linguistic thought: whether the principles governing language are founded in reason or whether they arbitrarily result from usage (metaphorically referred to as 'the imperious master of languages' which 'despotically' imposes irregularities).[81] Indeed, the debate over the best pedagogical approach – learning by practice versus learning grammatically – is strictly paralleled by this more deeply rooted debate over the principles in which language is grounded. Thus, citing a potential objection to his pedagogical approach, Chambaud observes that:

> Some people urge, that the best way of learning a language is to learn by Practice: that it is impossible to make sure rules upon a living language, which is entirely grounded upon use: that these rules are destroyed by the exceptions, which prove that they are groundless: and in fine, that 'tis too tedious and painful for children to get such a Grammar by heart: that 'tis overloading their memory, and losing a great deal of time, which may be better employed in making them speak *French*: and that the rules serve only to puzzle their understanding. (Chambaud 1750a: xxiii)

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[81] The description of usage in such terms is a familiar trope in European grammatical traditions. Vaugelas referred to it as 'le Roy, ou le Tyran, l'arbitre, ou le maistre des langues' (1647: preface, n.p.) echoing Horace's *De Arte Poetica*, which Chambaud himself quotes in a footnote to the preface, in the following terms:

> Multa renascentur quae jam cecidere, cadentque
> Quae nunc sunt in honore vocabula, cum [si] volet usus
> Quem penes imperium [arbitrium], jus est, et [est et jus et] norma loquendi.

'Many terms that have fallen out of use shall be born again, and those shall fall that are now in repute, if Usage so will it, in whose hands lies the judgement, the right and the rule of speech.' (Translation H. R. Fairclough in Horace, 1926).

According to him, the advocates of learning by practice believe that imitation and habituation are the best methods because language is so irregular and anomalous that it is pointless to try and teach any rule to the students. Chambaud's calling on the *Remarqueurs,* their observations, and the notion of the genius of the language is a response to that view. The *Remarqueurs'* vision of the language provides a justification for his alternative pedagogical approach of learning grammatically and deductively. Chambaud presents them, partly as they presented themselves, as being faithful to usage and not oblivious to irregular and anomalous forms. But at the same time, he credits them with regulating the language and giving it a standard to which all speakers and learners can conform, which was also their ambition. To a grammarian like Chambaud, faced with two unsatisfactory options – the rationalism of general grammar imposing the procrustean bed of *a priori* (generally Latin) categories, where anomalies and idiosyncrasies are left out; and the relativism of usage theories depicting the language as an elusively Protean object, where analogies and generalities are disregarded – the *Remarqueurs'* legacy offers a way to reconcile use and reason.

While Steadman-Jones portrayed Chambaud as a rationalist, positing grammar as an art founded in general grammar and showing 'prioritisation of reason over practice' (2007: 203), my contention is that Chambaud showed a constant desire to reconcile use and reason, and practice and grammar. As evidenced by the first few lines of the introduction to his *Grammar*, Chambaud thought of empirical observations on language use, on the one hand, and deductive methods of language teaching, on the other, as fundamentally interconnected.

> GRAMMAR is the art of speaking and writing a language.

> An ART is a set of *Rules* digested into a methodical order, for the teaching and learning of something.
>
> This word *Rule,* taken in its proper sense, signifies an instrument used by an artist as a guide in what he is about: and, in its figurative sense, it signifies a sure and infallible mark in what is right or wrong in any thing we undertake. – These *Rules* or Marks, in point of languages, are Observations made upon what Use has introduced into a language; and therefore prescribe after what manner it must be spoke. (Chambaud 1750a: 1)

The word 'rule' is the crux, connecting the empiricism of observations on language and the rationalism of the deductive teaching method. From the *Remarqueurs'* observations on use – their distinctions, analyses, and judgments on doubtful usage – rules have been drawn up which have endowed the language with identifiable principles. As a consequence, learning the language grammatically – i.e. in a deductive manner – by following these principles, is not only possible but necessary. Chambaud concisely sums this up with a syllogism: 'All ways of speaking were originally established independently from any rule, but they are become by use the very Rules of speaking, which make the Grammar of a language: and if they are not studied and entirely known, 'tis impossible ever to speak, or write, conformable to use' (1750a: xxvi). These principles laid down in observations make up the 'genius of the language' which, according to Chambaud, 'will remain as it is, fixed and invariable', as a result of the regulation initiated by the *Remarqueurs*. Chambaud's demonstration seems to echo the vision of *le génie de la langue* obtaining amongst eighteenth-century French grammarians, as depicted by Siouffi.

> Il est possible de faire l'hypothèse que, dans la manière dont l'idée de « génie de la langue française » s'est affirmée à la fin du XVIIe siècle, il y a eu quelque chose comme une volonté de réaction face aux théories de l'usage. Pour une génération confrontée à la labilité des formes, à leur obsolescence semble-t-il inarrêtable, il peut paraître important de caractériser le « génie » de la langue en tant qu'il peut

> être posé comme stable, insensible aux changements. L'essentiel, au-delà des mots, est qu'il y ait un *fonds*, un substrat, une cohérence fondamentale de la langue dans ses choix qui permette, lorsqu'on le jugera bon, d'arrêter l'infini mouvement qui la porte à se dégrader toujours plus elle-même. (Siouffi 2010: 49)

Almost every word in Siouffi's generalisation about late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French grammarians is reflected in Chambaud's account of the *Remarqueurs*' work: 'la labilité des formes, [...] leur obsolescence semble-t-il inarrêtable' sums up '[s]ome words may indeed happen to grow obsolete, and new ones grow in use, as will always be the fate of living languages'; while 'un *fonds*' and its glosses 'substrat, cohérence fondamentale de la langue' straightforwardly transpose 'the foundation' of the language which Chambaud puts on a par with 'genius'; and the genius itself is described as remaining 'fixed and invariable', i.e. 'stable, insensible aux changements'. Earlier seventeenth-century versions of *le génie de la langue*, such as Bouhours's, were designed to show that the vernacular was as worthy and noble as Latin. But, in doing so, they also contributed to frame the distinctive features of the vernacular as anomalies and irregularities. This second phase in the development of the *génie de la langue*, climaxing in the middle of the eighteenth century, sets out to show, on the contrary, that there was a unifying principle in all these specificities which gave it some sort of foundation, albeit of a different nature from that inherited from Latin.

Obviously, Priestley belonged to a different tradition, with its own chronology and its own developments. But there are unmistakable parallels with Chambaud and the *Remarqueurs* in Priestley's own use of the genius of the language to refer to the specific structure of English, and in the introduction of observations into his grammars after 1761. Priestley's reading of Chambaud is likely to have influenced these substantial changes. As seen in 5.4, Priestley also

owned a copy of Vaugelas's *Remarques sur la language françoise* when he died. He may also have been influenced more directly by the main *Remarqueur*'s very popular collection of observations on the French language, if indeed he already owned a copy at Warrington. But the most striking parallel between Chambaud's and Priestley's approaches is their vision of the genius of the language and its relation to the idiom of the language.

5.6 Genius and idiom of the language: Chambaud, Girard, and Priestley

5.6.1 Chambaud's definitions

The two concepts are ubiquitous in Chambaud's *Essay*: over its 26 pages, the phrase 'genius of the language' occurs 17 times and 'idiom of the language' 15 times, almost always next to each other. Some of the quotations above have already given an insight into the meaning of 'genius of the language': it is first glossed as 'what grammatical dependence each word has upon another' (1750a: iv) and, second, as 'the construction of that language' (1750: v). Both paraphrases inevitably evoke Priestley's similar understanding of the genius of the language in the 1762 *Course* as 'the methods of expressing the relations of words to words' or the 'the structure' of the language (1762: 191-93). But, very helpfully, Chambaud is more explicit than Priestley in endorsing these two concepts as key to his grammatical reflections and spells out their meaning.

> Two things are to be considered in a language, its *Genius* and *Idiom*. The *Genius* consists in the agreement and influence, which the parts of speech have with, and over one another. Thus it is the *Genius* of the *French* language to make the article and adjective agree with the substantive in gender and number; to have several orders of verbs conjugated through moods, tenses, and persons; to have conjunctions and prepositions that affect the verbs and nouns in a manner peculiar to itself alone, which the *Genius* of the *English* don't *[sic]* allow. The *Idiom* of a language consists in the signification of the words, and the only proper manner of expressing one's self in the same. Thus the Idiom of the *French* for

> expressing this *English* Idiom, *How do you do*, is *Comment vous portez-vous?* tho' word for word the *English* signifies *Comment faites-vous faire*, and the *French How d'you carry yourself*, which cannot be understood, and exhibits downright nonsense, tho' expressed in good *French* and *English* words, conformable to the rules of the construction of each respective language. Hitherto Grammarians (I don't mean the *French* only) have thought that they had sufficiently performed their part, in treating only of the construction of a language, wherein its *Genius* consists; and without troubling themselves further, left it to Dictionaries to treat of the Idiom. But as it is obvious that both *Genius* and Idiom must be master'd by any body that is desirous to understand and speak a language, and *Boyer*'s Dictionary is very defective with respect to the idiom, (which is however the most important part of the language) I have in the *Appendix*, considered in order the common idiom of *French*, with respect to the *English*; and have made another book of such idioms as cannot be treated of methodically. (Chambaud 1750a: vii)

The definition of the genius is consistent with Chambaud's other glosses. It focuses here on morphosyntax (agreements, inflections, etc.), but where he gives examples to illustrate the notion, Chambaud primarily refers to the use of certain parts of speech such as articles and pronouns. For example, he uses it in reference to word order: 'Thus it is the *Genius* of the *French* language to invert the pronouns attending a verb; as *Je vous le dis*, which it is the *Genius* of the *English* to express in the natural order as it is conceived, thus, *I tell it you*.' (Thèmes 1750: vi), or in reference to anaphora, with the aforementioned supplying pronouns:

> The teacher must sedulously make the Scholar observe the *Genius* of the two languages with respect to these pronouns; and how essential it is to express in *French* by them what is understood in *English* [...]. It is its *Genius* to express the words with such a grammatical connection, that each of them rules, or is ruled by another. Some instances will make it obvious: *Etes-vous content? Je ne* le *suis pas*, Are you contented? I am not. *Avez-vous trouvé ce que vous cherchiez? Je ne* l'*ai point trouvé*, Have you found what you was *[sic]* looking for? I have not, or I han't *[sic]*. *Ils sont riches & nous ne* le *sommes pas*, They are rich and we are not. (Chambaud 1750b: 16-17)

As for the idiom of the language, although Chambaud's definition would suggest that he conceives of it as a collection of idiomatic phrases, there is more to it than that. His remark on the necessity for grammarians to tackle the notion, because lexicographical works are defective, implies that it is not a purely lexical aspect of the language. The grammatical aspect of the idiom becomes evident when, justifying the use of translation exercises, Chambaud asserts that it is critical for the master 'to explain the *Use* and *Force* of the *Prepositions*, and *Adverbial* ways of speaking, in which chiefly consists the *Idiom* of a language, which he must always have in view with his scholars' (1750a: xvii). Like the genius which relates to construction of sentences, the idiom involves the use of parts of speech, and in particular prepositions.[82] Chambaud's definitions of the two notions therefore overlap and their relationship or difference can appear complex. But, what can be observed is that they both serve a pedagogical purpose, and through comparisons between source and target languages, they point to what is distinctive about a particular language: 'a manner peculiar to itself alone' for the genius, and 'the only proper manner of expressing one's self in the same' for the idiom. This is also how Priestley uses them in the 1765 *Grammar* and 1768 *Rudiments*, and it seems clear that reading Chambaud was instrumental in Priestley's introduction of these notions in his two grammars. But to fully understand Chambaud's apprehension of the two notions, it is necessary to trace them further back to his principal source Abbé Girard – 'the only modern

[82] Chambaud hardly ever uses the term 'adverbial', but by 'adverbial ways of speaking', he seems to be referring to prepositional phrases. In the fifth edition of the grammar (1769), the expression recurs in two footnotes dedicated to prepositional phrases introduced by *à* and *de*, both times with the same text: 'This preposition serves to make up a great many more adverbial ways of speaking, each of which is set down in its proper place in my Dictionary.' (1769: 325fn; 327fn)

Grammarian worth reading' (1750a: 195) – and his *Vrais principes de la langue françoise* (1747).

5.6.2 *Abbé Girard's* Les Vrais principes de la langue françoise *(1747)*

The views of language and grammar put forward by Girard in the preface to *Les Vrais principes de la langue françoise* suggest that he had much influence on Chambaud's. Girard strongly advocates learning languages grammatically, or methodically,[83] as opposed to learning them by practice. His choice of terms foreshadows Chambaud's:

> On peut apprendre les langues par simple pratique, ainsi que les enfans aprennent de leurs parens leur Langue maternelle, ou par méthode raisonnée, comme les écoliers aprennent de leur maitre les Langues étrangeres. Cette méthode se fait en rédigeant sous certains chefs généraux tout ce qui est d'usage, & en le mettant dans l'ordre le plus commode pour l'étude de la Langue. Voilà justement ce qu'on nomme Grammaire ; qui par conséquent est l'art d'enseigner méthodiquement tout ce que l'Usage a introduit & autorisé dans la langue, soit pour la parler soit pour l'écrire correctement. (Girard 1747: I. 25-26)

Girard's pedagogical approach foreshadows Chambaud's *Essay*, firstly, because it advocates a rational engagement ('méthode raisonnée') with the language as opposed to mere practice or imitation ('simple pratique'). Secondly, it rests on the same conception of the grammar, as a pedagogical tool: it lays out in a methodical manner – under general headings ('sous certains chefs généraux') – what use has introduced and authorised in the language. The subtitle of Girard's grammar already points to this programme: 'La parole réduite en méthode conformément aux loix de l'usage'. Likewise, Chambaud's depiction of a 'fixed and invariable' genius of the language in contrast with its ever-changing lexicon is already

[83] Chambaud also calls learning grammatically 'a regular and methodical way of learning' (1750a: xxvii).

present in Girard's text: '[...] le genie indépendant des organes par consequent moins susceptible d'altération & de changement, se maintient au milieu de l'inconstance des mots' (1747: 30). But, crucially, the foundation of Girard's pedagogical reflections in this preface is, as in Chambaud's *Essay,* his characterisation of the genius and the idiom of the language.

> La différence la plus aparente dans les Langues est celle qui frape d'abord nos oreilles ; elle vient de la différence des mots: mais la plus essencielle ne se montre qu'à nôtre réflexion ; elle nait de la diversité du gout de chaque peuple dans le tour de frase & dans l'idée modificative de l'emploi des mots.
>
> Lorsque cette sorte de gout propre & distinctif ne regarde qu'une circonstance unique ou une seule façon particuliere de s'exprimer ; on le nomme IDIOME, c'est à dire propriété de Langue. Par exemple, c'est un idiome françois d'exprimer par le pronom indéfini *on* joint au verbe actif l'attribution vague & indéterminée d'une action: au lieu que c'est un idiome italien de l'exprimer par le pronom réciproque *si* avec le même verbe: & c'est un idiome latin de se servir pour cet effet du seul verbe passif sans pronom ni particule. Le François dit donc *on demande,* l'Italien *si domanda*, le Latin *quœritur.*
>
> Lorsque ce gout distinctif est considéré dans son universalité ; c'est alors ce qu'en fait de Langues on nomme GÉNIE, dont il est important au Grammairien de bien connoitre la nature. Chaque Langue a le sien: ils peuvent néanmoins être réduits à trois sortes: & par ce moyen les Langues se trouvent distinguées en trois classes. Si on ne leur a pas encore donné des noms ; c'est qu'on n'a pas connu l'influence qu'ils devoient avoir dans l'établissement des regles. Cette inattention n'empeche pourtant pas qu'ils ne soient les fondemens de tout principe de Grammaire, & que leur confusion ne devienne une source d'absurdités. (Girard 1747: I. 21-23)

The first paragraph seems to distinguish between 'le tour de frase' (turn of phrase) and 'l'idée modificative de l'emploi des mots' (modifications relative to the use of words), which reflects Chambaud's apparent distinction between, respectively, the idiom – as a collection of phrases – and the genius – as a set of morphosyntactic features. But, as in Chambaud's case, the idiom turns out to be rooted in problems of grammar too, as shown by examples provided by Girard. To

him, the difference between genius and idiom is not one of nature, but one of degree. Both notions refer to features which are distinctive of a particular language, but the idiom refers to singular features while the genius refers to features which can be generalised to the whole structure of the language. Girard outlines a typology of three classes of languages, based on their differing geniuses:

i. 'les langues analogues': their construction follows the 'natural' order of ideas (subject, action, object); they have articles but no cases, e.g. French, Italian, and Spanish.
ii. 'les langues transpositives': their construction follows no particular order but the speaker's fancy; no ambiguity follows thanks to cases and a wide range of modifications; they have no article, e.g. Latin, Slavonic, and Russian.
iii. 'les langues mixtes' or 'amphilogiques': they have an article like 'langues analogues', and cases like 'langues transpositives', e.g. Greek and German.

Although Girard's categories of languages are based on his own criteria, this view of the genius of the language as a mode of construction and the ensuing typology are very similar to Priestley's view of the genius in the 1762 *Course*. He outlined two main methods of expressing relations of words to words: 'by the inflection of them' or 'by auxiliary words'; the third, less important, being by 'bare position' (1762: 192). English is not mentioned by Girard and it is unclear whether it falls under 'langues analogues' or 'langues mixtes' (on account of the genitive), but, like French, it could not be in the same class as Latin. Indeed, the parallel with Priestley becomes even more compelling upon examining the rationale behind Girard's reflections and his categorisation based on the genius. What he is seeking to demonstrate with this typology of languages, is that the genius of the French

language is different from the genius of Latin, and that, consequently, grammars of French must be different from grammars of Latin.

> [La Grammaire] doit former ses définitions sur la nature des choses : tirer ses préceptes de la pratique & du propre génie de la Langue qu'elle traite : surtout éviter l'écueil ordinaire, qui est d'adapter aux Langues analogues ce qui ne convient qu'aux transpositives. Ce défaut rend une méthode également confuse dans ses principes & barbare dans ses termes : il est cause que l'invective s'en mêlant, on traite l'Usage de capricieux ; tandis que c'est ceux qui l'insultent qui donnent eux même dans le caprice de vouloir enseigner une Langue par d'autres préceptes que par les siens. Ils copient des Maitres Latins pour s'ériger en Maitres François : trouvent ensuite fort étrange que nôtre pratique ne s'accorde pas avec leurs regles [...] (Girard 1747 : I. 35-36)

The agenda behind this view of the genius of the language consists in breaking away from the Latin mould of grammar, or from Latin shackles as he has it – '[...] desserrer les liens par lesquels on attache nôtre Langue à la Latine, [...] briser les chaines sous lesquelles la Méthode Françoise gémit. Chaines si fortes que personne n'a encore osé entreprendre de les rompre' (1747 : I.34). This is the meaning of the *Vrais principes de la langue Françoise*: by 'true', Girard means suited to the genius of the French language, implying that other grammars use 'false' Latin categories, in the same way as Priestley thought his overhauled 1768 *Rudiments* was better 'suited to the genius of our language' for breaking away from the Latin mould and its inadequate categories. Priestley owned a copy of Girard's grammar when he died (see section 5.4); it is unclear whether he already owned it when he wrote about the genius and the idiom of the language at Warrington, but these parallels and the fact that Chambaud held Girard in such great respect makes it fairly likely. Girard's unique division between the genius and the idiom as the generalised and the particular within the distinctive features of a language also offers a possible interpretation for Priestley's handling of the two notions. It

may explain why the notion of idiom only features in the 'Notes and Observations', whose purpose is to deal with an array of individual features, while the structure determined by the genius of the language is laid out in the actual 'rudiments'.

Another point of note regarding Girard's use of the genius of the language to separate French from Latin is that it puts him at odds with earlier accounts of the genius of the language in the French tradition. Talking about 'construction' as the basis of the genius of the language, Girard remarks that

> [e]lle varie chez les Peuples ainsi que les mots, fait la différence la plus essencielle entre les Langues, & s'opose à l'opinion de ceux qui assûrent que la Françoise l'Espagnole & l'Italienne sont les filles de la Latine. Ces messieurs ne raportent d'autre titre de cette filiation que l'étymologie de quelques mots & l'étendue de l'Empire Romain sur les pays présentement habités par ces nations. Mais quand on observe le prodigieux éloignement qu'il y a du génie de ces Langues à celui du Latin : quand on fait attention que l'étymologie prouve seulement les emprunts & non l'origine [...] : lorsqu'enfin on voit aujourd'hui de ses propres yeux ces Langues vivantes ornées d'un article ; qu'elles n'ont pû prendre de la latine où il n'y en eut jamais, & diamétralement oposées aux constructions transpositives & aux inflexions de cas ordinaires à celleci ; on ne sauroit acause de quelques mots empruntés dire qu'elles en sont les filles, ou il faudroit leur donner plus d'une mere. [...] Ce n'est donc pas aux emprunts ni aux étymologies qu'il faut s'arrêter pour connoitre l'origine & la parenté de Langues : c'est à leur génie, en suivant pas à pas leurs progrès & leurs changements. (Girard 1747: I. 27-29)

This demonstration rejecting the filiation between French and Latin is manifestly aimed at Bouhours's very popular characterisation of the French language, as examined in Chapter 3. However, contrary to what Girard's presentation of the argument suggests, Bouhours did not specifically adduce etymologies to demonstrate the lineage between French and Latin: 'Pour peu qu'on les examine toutes deux, on verra qu'elles ont le mesme genie & le même goust: & que rien ne

leur plaist tant qu'un discours noble & poli; mais pur, simple, naturel et raisonnable' (Bouhours 1671: 78). Bouhours invoked the genius as a form of 'discours', or style of writing. But Girard's rebuke shows the evolution of the notion of genius of the language between the mid-seventeenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries. Whilst Schlaps's model (2004: 369-73) for the analysis of the evolution of the concept grouped Bouhours, Girard and Priestley under the same label of a genius focussing on 'outward features', my analysis shows that there is an important turnaround: in the first stage, the genius of the language serves to show that, despite anomalous distinctive features, the vernacular is related to Latin and, therefore, that it has a similar status; in the second stage, by contrast, the vernacular's distinctive features are acknowledged, but the genius of the language is what gives consistency, and therefore legitimacy, to the vernacular in its newfound autonomy from Latin. Both Girard and Priestley contributed – at a Pan-European level, to use Schlaps's phrase – to the development of the second stage. And since they were both very influential, Schlaps's model ought to take this nuance into account.

5.6.3 Construction and signification : Priestley's grammaticography

The final aspect of Chambaud's pedagogical approach which sheds light on Priestley's work is his conception of the role of the grammarian. The second half of the paragraph defining the genius and idiom of the language in Chambaud's *Essay* is particularly relevant in this respect.

> Hitherto Grammarians (I don't mean the *French* only) have thought that they had sufficiently performed their part, in treating only of the construction of a language, wherein its *Genius* consists; and without troubling themselves further, left it to Dictionaries to treat of the Idiom. But as it is obvious that both *Genius* and Idiom must be master'd by any body that is desirous to understand and speak a language, and *Boyer*'s Dictionary is very defective with respect to the idiom, (which

> is however the most important part of the language) I have in the *Appendix*, considered in order the common idiom of *French*, with respect to the *English*; and have made another book of such idioms as cannot be treated of methodically. (Chambaud 1750a: vii)

The two notions of genius and idiom involve both grammatical and lexical issues, or as Chambaud puts it construction and signification. Since they are inseparable in the understanding and speaking of the language, like the two sides of the same coin, the old division of labour between grammarians and lexicographers is irrelevant. Traditional grammars and dictionaries are defective in one or the other of these two aspects. Focussing on pedagocial implications, Chambaud further spells out this vision at the end of the preface:

> Should they learn the words and examples only, without any observation upon them, they could get no knowledge of the language at all, the words being only the materials of it, and its *Genius* and *Idiom* consisting in the use of them. And should they learn but few rules, they could know but part of that *Genius* and Idiom, as this Grammar would be defective, if it did not contain all the observations that can be made upon the language. (Chambaud 1750a: xxvii)

Between learning words and phrases individually without knowing how to 'use' them together and learning the basic rules (the rudiments or 'accidence and syntax' type of grammar), there is a crucial space without which a 'Grammar would be defective' and that is the province of 'observations' upon the language. This is a fundamental tenet in Chambaud's approach: he rejects what could be called a paradigmatic vision of language with dictionaries listing words and grammars listing rules of accidence and syntax. As a language master, going back and forth between French and English, he is aware of the fact that construction and signification are inextricably linked, and, conceptualising the genius and the idiom of the language, he proposes a more syntagmatic vision of the language with a grammar geared towards 'using' the language. This syntagmatic type of

grammar means that the task of the grammarian is to make 'observations' upon the language. It is almost impossible not to see in these two extracts from Chambaud's *Essay*, the rationale behind Priestley's change of grammaticographic approach. The 1761 *Rudiments* were a paradigmatic 'accidence and syntax' type of grammar. The dissatisfaction which Priestley felt with it, and which moved him to take a 'more extensive view of language' – a syntagmatic one, it could be said – by introducing 'Notes and Observations' making up three quarters of 1768 *Rudiments* is spelled out for us by Chambaud: 'should they learn but few rules, they could know but part of that *Genius* and *Idiom*, as this Grammar would be defective, if it did not contain all the observations that can be made upon the language.' This last segment, implying the need for a grammar to be exhaustive, strongly resonates with Priestley's call for a Johnsonian grammar, i.e. a grammar which would be as comprehensive on the genius and the idiom of English as his *Dictionary* aimed to be on the lexis of English. The examination of Chambaud's text also corroborates my claim that, fundamentally, Priestley's new grammaticographic approach is rooted in pedagogical concerns.

The addition of the 1765 *Grammar* to the corpus of Priestley's works helps us to understand the evolution of his approach between 1761 and 1768. In 1761, Priestley established a clear-cut division of labour between grammarian and lexicographer: 'care hath been taken to omit nothing that properly falls within the province of the *Grammarian*; as distinct from that of the *Lexicographer*' (1761: iii). He goes on to chart the territory of this province: 'All the rules that relate to the modification and structure of words in the language are laid down in a methodical manner' (1761: iii). Further down, the division of labour between dictionary and grammar is clarified:

> [...] allowing a person, by the help of a dictionary, or any other means, to understand the meaning and force of English words, he will here meet with an account of all their inflections, and all the circumstances in which they are used: consequently, there is no error in writing, that is strictly speaking *grammatical*, but may be discovered and avoided by the help of it. (Priestley 1761: v)

Priestley's early grammaticographic approach is framed by a clear separation between lexis and 'accidence and syntax' (here, inflections and circumstances). By 1768, these passages and the reference to the respective provinces of the grammarian and the lexicographer have completely disappeared from the preface. Hodson (2008: 183) interprets this removal as a sign that Priestley no longer feels as confident about the quality of his text. But including the intervening 1765 *Grammar* in the narrative offers an alternative interpretation. At first, the 1765 *Grammar* seems to set out the same agenda as the 1761 *Rudiments*, with minor terminological changes: 'unless the Grammarian fix the Meaning and Use of Words, (which is reasonably expected from every Dictionary) he has nothing left him belonging to the Language, but the Inflections, which are extremely few; and the Order in which Words are placed in a Sentence' (Priestley 1765: a). But the next sentence introduces a turning point:

> And since Custom has authorized, and, in a Manner, necessitated Grammarians to depart a little from their Province; within that of the Lexicographer, I shall give an Account of the Use of some particular Words; and especially such, as (because they serve to ascertain the Meaning of other Words) all English Grammarians have thought themselves obliged to take Notice of. (Priestley 1765: a-a^{v})

I showed in Chapters 1-3 that Priestley is here outlining the new three-part re-organisation of his grammar – 'the Inflections', 'the Order in which Words are placed in a Sentence', and 'the Use of some particular Words' – corresponding to the three sections of the 1765 *Grammar* and 1768 *Rudiments*. But this passage also shows how, after 1761, Priestley reconsidered the division of labour between

grammar and lexicography, and acknowledged that the grammarian has to take into account 'Meaning' as much as construction. The removal in 1768 of the references to separate provinces can therefore be interpreted as a further step in his evolution – the full recognition that the two provinces overlap – and a necessary corollary of the introduction of 'Notes and Observations' on the idiom of the language. Finally, I would argue that this grammaticographic shift from a paradigmatic approach to a syntagmatic one offers a more accurate interpretation of Priestley's famous letter to Caleb Rotheram in 1766. In that letter (Table 2.6), Priestley's doubt about the teaching of any English Grammar are pedagogical in nature and rooted in the grammaticography of grammars extant, including his own. He distances himself from the paradigmatic approach based on accidence and syntax, which comes with the rote learning of the question-and-answer format. Instead, he favours a syntagmatic approach geared towards using and writing the language. The letter appears to lay out the lessons he would have drawn from teaching French to his students and from reading Chambaud's own pedagogical reflections.

5.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated the impact which Priestley's appointment at the Warrington Academy had on his grammaticographic project. At the end of 1761, Priestley took on a teaching position which required him to expand his skills in the French language and consult French grammarians such as Chambaud, and probably Chambaud's sources Girard and Vaugelas too. These texts shed new light on Priestley's grammaticography and the pedagogical concerns underpinning it. Girard developed reflections on the notions of idiom and genius of the language arguing that grammars of vernacular languages needed to break away from the Latin mould which still constrained them. Relying on this work, Chambaud

developed a deductive language teaching method whose purpose was to show students the genius and idiom of the language and break away from methods based on repetition and habituation. To lay bare the genius and idiom of a language, Chambaud argues, the grammarian must make 'observations' on it in the manner of Vaugelas's and the *Remarqueurs'*, and organise these observations methodically. I demonstrated in this chapter that these French sources were likely to have inspired the substantial grammaticographic changes introduced by Priestley between 1761 and 1768 – the three-part re-organisation of the 'rudiments' framed by the notion of genius of the language, and the addition of extensive 'Notes and Observations' framed by the notion of idiom of the language. Considered alongside Samuel Johnson's programmatic view, quoted in the Introduction to this thesis, that the 'observations' which he had subjoined to his dictionary entries were 'necessary to the elucidation of our language, and hitherto neglected or forgotten by English grammarians' (1755: preface), these French connections offer a new understanding of the unique character of Priestley's grammatical work and his Johnsonian ambition. The findings of this chapter thereby show that the study of eighteenth-century grammar writing in the English tradition benefits from adopting a broader perspective to include other genres – such as language teaching and lexicographic material – and work from other traditions with which it has been in contact.

Conclusion

Summary and evaluation of findings

In her 2006 paper on grammaticography, Mosel remarked that '[w]hile lexicography is a well-established branch of linguistics, represented in specialized journals and handbooks, grammaticography – the art and craft of writing grammars – is not' (2006: 41). Hence '[i]n contrast to grammatical analysis, grammar writing is not taught in linguistics courses or described in textbooks', and there is no work 'that focuses on how grammars are made' (2006: 41). In this thesis, my contention has been that one of the reasons for this state of affairs – and in particular the contrast with lexicography – is that the historiographical opposition between the 'age of prescriptivism' and the modern period's aspiration for descriptive adequacy has put too much emphasis on the discontinuities in the history of grammar writing, and hindered historians of linguistics from perceiving and exploring the continuities in the undertakings of grammar writers throughout the ages. Thus, despite bringing together material that had not been previously studied, the only other full-length study of Joseph Priestley's grammatical works (Straaijer 2011) remained constrained in interpreting this material by approaching it via the 'prescriptive versus descriptive' framework. By contrast, I have sought to build on Jane Hodson's observation that 'important aspects of Priestley's work have been overlooked because they do not fit comfortably with th[e] schematic 'prescriptivist versus descriptivist' account' (2006: 58). This dissertation turns her conclusion that eighteenth-century grammarians 'must be understood in their own terms' (2006: 73) into a grammaticographic programme of research for eighteenth-century

grammars, where grammaticography is defined as the grammarians' discourse on and practice of compiling and composing their grammars. Straaijer's study – entitled *Joseph Priestley, Grammarian* – focused on the man in his sociohistorical context, at the biographical level, and on the norms displayed both in his grammars and his own usage, at the textual level. The present study – which could be contradistinctively subtitled *Joseph Priestley, Grammaticographer* – seeks to explore the space between these two levels, by tracing the evolution of his grammatical thinking as reflected in the successive transformations of his grammar: its material, structure, guiding principles, and metalanguage. It thus contributes to filling the gap in the field that Mosel identified.

The starting point of this investigation, which prompted me to adopt this new approach was the re-attribution of the 1765 *Grammar* and its integration into the corpus of Priestley's grammatical works (Chapter 1). Having also established that the third edition of the *Rudiments* – the last overseen by Priestley himself – dates from 1769 and not 1772 as previously thought, I was able to present a complete tableau of the transformation of Priestley's grammars between 1761 and 1769. This fresh perspective on the evolution of Priestley's thinking about grammar has allowed me to challenge previous narratives placing his work in the shadow of Lowth (Chapter 2), and to identify distinctive and defining features of his grammaticography, encapsulated in the role he gives to the notions of genius and idiom of the language (Chapters 3 and 4).

The first of these defining features is Priestley's pedagogical concerns and the key role they played in the development of his thinking about grammar writing. In Chapter 5, I argued that if there was a turning point in Priestley's evolution, it was not the publication and success of Lowth's grammar in 1762, but

his own appointment at the Warrington Academy in 1761. As Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres, he found his 1761 *Rudiments* ill-adapted to the needs of his students; and, as he became familiar with foreign language teaching methods such as Chambaud's, he developed a more procedural view of language learning focused on the syntagmatic dimension of language, moving away from declarative knowledge and the rote learning of definitions and paradigms which informed traditional grammars. The introduction of the notions of genius and idiom of the language was to a large extent motivated by these concerns. I argued here that, whilst the genius and the idiom of the language are generally thought of as abstract categories confined either to philosophies of language and reflections on universal grammar, or jingoistic attempts to demonstrate the superiority or worthiness of such-and-such a language, for grammarians such as Girard, Chambaud, and Priestley, they served very practical purposes in developing deductive approaches to the teaching of grammar.

The second defining feature is Priestley's endeavour to 's'investir dans l'individualité de [la] langue', as Siouffi would put it (2010: 28), by finding a format of grammar best suited to the language itself and its distinctive properties. Previous studies of Priestley focusing on his competition with Lowth tended to present his evolution as evidence of subservience, a lack of assurance, or even a personal crisis. I have claimed that, on the contrary, he became more ambitious in his undertaking. To a large extent, this thesis is an attempt to understand what Priestley meant when he wrote in the 1768 preface that he '[took] a more extensive view of language in general, and of the English language in particular' (1768: v). As he hinted at himself, the 'much larger work upon this subject' (1768: v) for which he had collected the material which ended up in the 1768 'Notes and Observations' seems to have been thought of as the grammatical counterpart to

Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755). I therefore argued that the introduction of the notions of genius and idiom of the language in the 1765 and 1768 grammars testified to Priestley's ambition to write not a grammar of English, but the English grammar. In this respect, notions of 'genius' and 'idiom' served as heuristic tools helping Priestley to be more comprehensive in the act of what Evans and Dench (2006: 1-40) call 'catching language'.

Indeed, in the task of exploring the continuities in the history of grammar writing and establishing grammaticography as a fully-fledged field of research, the phrase 'catching language', as opposed to the act of codifying it, usefully encapsulates the common purpose of grammaticographers throughout the ages. In the introduction to their collection of essays bearing that title, Evans and Dench remark that in 'catching language',

> the grammarian must incessantly struggle with what should be in the grammar and what should be left out, of where the boundaries lie between grammar and lexicon, between linguistic description and ethnography, between one linguistic variety and another, and between the current state of the language and its evolving history. The question of when to formulate explanation, and when to stop at description, always lurks close at hand. The boundary between description and prescription can also become blurred, since as soon as one admits speaker acceptability judgments as sources of data alongside a naturalistic corpus these may call forth prescriptive biases. (Evans and Dench 2006: 2)

Although their volume focuses on modern-day grammars of previously undescribed and mostly endangered languages, these questions also correspond (with some adaptation) to the struggles apparent in Priestley's discourse on and practice of composing his grammars. Indeed, it can be argued that for early codifiers, English was still, to a large extent, an undescribed language, and that writing grammars of English was for them as much a heuristic process as an act

of codification. Most pertinent in Evans and Dench's observations is the notion of 'boundary'. I have shown that Priestley's transformation of his grammar in search for the most fitting model of English grammar was primarily an attempt to break away from the mould of Latin. In gaining this autonomy, the grammaticographer must navigate two important boundaries. The first one is the boundary between grammar and lexicon. The evolution of Priestley's prefaces shows the gradual disappearance of the separation between the province of the grammarian and that of the lexicographer, giving way to his main grammaticographic innovation from 1765 on – observations on usage. The second boundary is that between the French and the English language. I demonstrated that what first appears as purism against Gallicisms in the 1768 preface is actually a more complex and nuanced attitude towards contact with French, which enabled Priestley to delineate the borders of English.

This leads me to the central finding in this thesis. Previous studies of Priestley's work have very much located his grammars both in the sociohistorical context of eighteenth-century English, and in the historiographical context of the English tradition of grammar writing. The present study first shows that, within the latter, figures such as Johnson, Swift and Addison, who had tried to tackle similar questions – contact with French, boundary between grammar and lexicon, articulation between genius and idiom under different names, the role of the grammarian and deliberative bodies in language codification, etc. – are much more productive resources for the researcher to mobilise than Priestley's contemporaries Lowth, Ash, or Fisher. Furthermore, beyond the English tradition, I have shown how French connections informed the evolution of Priestley's grammaticography. His appointment as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at the Warrington Academy was crucial in producing this development.

The *Course of Lectures in Universal Grammar and the Theory of Language* which he designed there in 1762 was partly inspired by the Port-Royal grammarians, which had an influential effect on, for example, definitions of some parts of speech. I have also argued that the amount of French which he had to teach in his role as Tutor in Languages and Belles Lettres at a dissenting academy, where most students prepared for the professions, will have caused him to reflect on the differences between French and English, and led to the introduction of a large number of comments on the subject in his later 'Notes and Observations'. Finally, I have argued that he is likely to have used Chambaud's innovative pedagogical material in his French classes, which, together with the reflections of Girard and the *Remarqueurs* informing Chambaud's views on language, had a decisive influence on his introduction of the notions of genius and idiom of the language in his grammars. These French sources also framed Priestley's understanding of the two notions, which was new and unique at the time in the English tradition, and had a substantial impact on the grammaticographic transformation which Priestley implemented as a result.

Future research prospects

This study of Priestley's grammaticography prompts two follow-up projects with which I hope to break further new ground in the history of eighteenth-century linguistic thought. First of all, the enriched and updated corpus of grammatical texts written by Joseph Priestley which I have established here calls for a new annotated edition of the *Rudiments of English Grammar* which will show its transformation between 1761 and 1769, via 1765 and 1768, and highlight its connections with the 1762 *Course*. In this editorial work, I will build on the various findings from the present study to show where and how Priestley's thought and practice as a grammarian were informed by his French connections and his

English sources. This new edition will also allow me and future students of the texts to track the evolution of other aspects of Priestley's linguistic thought. Furthermore, it will serve as a sound basis for an analysis of Priestley's influence on later grammarians and language teachers, which the scope of this dissertation only allowed me to hint at.

The second immediate project for further research which I will undertake is to write a monograph of the life and works of Lewis Chambaud (d. 1776). The most promising and unexpected finding in this thesis has been the crucial role played by his innovative language teaching methods on the development of Priestley's pedagogical and grammaticographic practice. Given how influential Chambaud was, not only on Priestley, but also on Gilchrist and other language teachers, and how popular and successful his books were within and without Britain, it is surprising that we know hardly anything about him. Apart from a few articles (Caravolas 2000, Cohen 2003 and 2018, Cormier 2010), and the occasional references in histories of language teaching (McLelland 2018), hardly anything has been written about him. By filling this gap in the literature with a monograph on his life, work, and legacy, I aim to shed new light on eighteenth-century language teaching and grammar writing, and further explore the circulation of linguistic ideas between the French and English grammatical traditions.

On a broader scale, working on this dissertation has given me a sense of the difficulty of grammar researching for the historian of linguistic thought and highlighted the lack of appropriate digital tools for that purpose. Plagiarism software proved valuable in establishing Priestley's authorship of the 1765 *Grammar* in Chapter 1, investigating accusations of plagiarism against Priestley in Chapter 2, and identifying previously unexplored connections between

Priestley's work and other texts in Chapters 3, 4, and 5. However, the research functions in the *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* and *Google Books*, which have been my main port of call for the present study, have serious limitations. Anglicists lack a fully integrated and searchable database of digitised seventeenth- and eighteenth-century grammatical texts in English, comparable to the French *Grand Corpus des grammaires et des remarques sur la langue française (XIVe-XVIIe s.)* published online since 2010 by Classiques Garnier. The database of *Eighteenth-Century English Grammars* (ECEG) released in 2010 by the University of Manchester compiles bibliographic information about grammars and biographical information about their authors, but it does not contain the text of these grammars and does not allow any full-text search. The creation of an integrated and fully searchable database of these texts would form the basis of a large-scale multi-worker project on English grammaticography. I would aim to seek collaborators and funding for the creation and exploitation of such a resource. I have argued that Priestley's acknowledgement of his various sources and inspirations suggested that eighteenth-century grammarians built on each other's work, rather than plagiarised it, and that it could be said that the ambition to write 'the English grammar' was a work of collective intelligence. A multi-worker project could test this hypothesis using the newly created corpus to further investigate the reliance of eighteenth-century grammarians on one another, as well as the circulation of ideas, the recycling of examples, the convergences and divergences in analyses, the evolution of grammatical thought and grammaticographic practice, of the variations in metalanguage and categories, and the transformation of grammars themselves.

As part of this ambitious multi-worker project, I would focus (as supervisor or researcher) on outputs that develop two particular strands of

enquiry initiated in the present study. The first is the role of language contact in the eighteenth-century codification of English. Whilst there is abundant literature on the place of Gallicisms in the history and development of English lexicography, there has been little research on the role played by French as a linguistic or metalinguistic resource in the analysis and codification of English grammar. Priestley's complex attitude towards French structures shows that using another language in the codification of English raised a number of questions, which have often been overlooked or simplified in the 'prescriptive vs. descriptive' framework. Priestley's own use of French as a heuristic tool varied across time – for instance his changing views on French *on* as a point of reference in the analysis of English indefinite pronoun *one.* Mapping out the different types of references to French used by English grammarians would yield useful insights on the impact of language contact in the codification of English. This is another area where modern-day grammars of undocumented or endangered languages could provide a source of inspiration, as they tend to see contact between the grammarian's native language and the target language as a constant grammaticographic challenge.

A second area of enquiry, which I have addressed in my study of Priestley and which could profitably be expanded in scope in a multi-worker project, is the role of the notions of genius and idiom of the language in the history of the codification of English. There is abundant literature on the role of *le génie de la langue* in the French tradition (Christmann 1976, Fumaroli 1992, Meschonnic 2000, Siouffi 2010, Haβler 2012, Van Hal 2013), but the notion has been almost altogether ignored in the English tradition, as either irrelevant because viewed as more literary than linguistic, or, precisely, as French, and therefore ill-adapted to the understanding of English grammar writing. The circulation of

grammaticographic ideas between the French and English traditions, sometimes via translation of key texts or via methods of foreign language learning, which have been discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of the present study, shows that keeping these traditions separated from each other in historiographic accounts can be unproductive. The phrase 'genius of the language' may come from the French language but, as a linguistic notion, it takes a life of its own in the English tradition. That is why it needs to be explored for its impact on the codification of English. Schlaps's 2004 overview of the transformation of what she calls the 'concept' of genius of the language in different European countries is a good starting point, but it needs to be further augmented, updated, refined, and better placed in the English context.

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Appendix

References to 'French' in Priestley's *Rudiments of English Grammar* (1768, 1769)

Highlighted in grey is the text added in the 1769 edition.

A. UNIDIOMATIC FRENCH – 10 observations.

108-09 (Section V. *Of Verbs*. III. *Of Verbs in general*.)

Some of our later writers, use certain neuter verbs, as if they were transitive, putting after them the oblique case of the pronoun, which was the nominative case to it, agreeable to the French construction of reciprocal verbs; but this custom is so foreign to the idiom of the English tongue, that I think it can never take generally. Repenting him *of his design*. Hume's History, vol. 2. p.56. *The king soon found reason to* repent him *of his provoking such dangerous enemies*. Ib. vol.1. p.121. *The popular lords did not fail to* enlarge themselves *on the subject*. Macaulay's History, vol.3. p.177. *The nearer his military successes* approached him *to the throne*. Hume's History, vol.5. p.383.

138-39 (69) (Section VI. *Of Adverbs and Conjunctions*)

That is used improperly in the following sentences, in which the French and not the English idiom is observed. *The resolution was not the less fixed*, that *the secret was as yet communicated to very few, either in the French or the English court.* Hume's History, vol.7. p.474. *We will not pretend to examine diseases in all their various circumstances, especially* that *they have not been so accurately observed or described by writers of later ages, as were to be wished.* Martine's Essays, p.29. *Though nothing urged by the kings [sic] friends on this occasion had any connections with the peace, security and freedom the Scots at this time enjoyed; and* that *their proposal of engaging against England manifestly tended to the utter destruction of these blessings, yet the forementioned arguments had such weight with the parliament, that a committee of twenty-four members was empowered to provide for the safety of the kingdom.* Macaulay's Hist. vol. 4. p. 377.

149 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

Some writers, according to the same idiom, drop the article *the* before titles, and write (for they would not say) *preface, introduction, dedication,* &c. instead of, *the preface, the introduction, the dedication,* &c. which is the true English idiom.

158-59 (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* of.)

Several of our modern writers have leaned to the French idiom in the use of the preposition *of*, by applying it where the French use *de*; though the English idiom would require another preposition, or no preposition at all, in the case; but no writer has departed more from the genius of the English tongue, in this respect, than Mr. Hume. *Richlieu profited* of *every circumstance, which the conjuncture afforded.* Hume's History, vol. 4. p. 251. We say *profited* by. *He remembered him* of *the fable.* Ib. vol. 5. p. 185. *The great difficulty they find* of *fixing just sentiments*. Ib. *The king of England, provided* of *every supply.* Ib. vol. 1. p. 206. In another place he writes, *provide them* in *food and raiment.* Ib. vol. 2. p. 65. The true English idiom seems to be *to provide* with *a thing. Is [sic] is situation chiefly which* decides of *the fortunes and characters of men.* Ib. vol. 6. p. 283. i. e. *concerning. He found the greatest difficulty* of *writing.* Ib. vol.1. p. 401. i.e. in. Of *which, he was extremely greedy, extremely prodigal and extremely* necessitous. Ib. vol. 4. p. 12; *He was* eager of *recommending it to his fellow-citizens.* Ib. vol. 7. p. 161. *The good lady was careful of* serving me of *every thing.* In this example *with* would have been more proper.

162-63 (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* to *and* for.)

Agreeable to the Latin and French idioms, the preposition *to* is sometimes used in conjunction with such words as, in those languages, govern the dative case; but this construction does not seem to suit the English language. *His servants ye are,* to *whom ye obey.* Romans. *And* to *their general's voice they soon obeyed.* Milton. *The people of England may congratulate* to *themselves, that the nature of our government, and the clemency of our kings secure us*. Dryden. *Something like this has been reproached* to *Tacitus.* Bolingbroke on History, vol. 1. p. 136.

167a (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Prepositions* in, from, *and others.*)

The preposition *in* is sometimes used where the French use their *en,* but where some other prepositions would be more agreeable to the English idiom. Some of the following sentences are examples of this. *He made a point of honour* in *[of] not*

departing from his enterprize. Hume's History, vol. 1. p. 402. *I think it necessary, for the interest of virtue and religion, that the whole kingdom should be informed* in *some parts of your character.* Swift. i. e. *about,* or *concerning.* In some of these cases, *in* might with advantage be changed for *to* or *into. Painters have not a little contributed to bring the study of medals* in *vogue.* Addison. On the other hand, I have found *into* put for *in: engaged him* into *attempts.* Hume's History, vol. 5. p. 162. *To be liable* in *a compensation.* Law Tracts, vol. 1. p. 45.

173-74 (Section X. *Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.*)

The preposition *of,* and the words with which it is connected, may often elegantly precede the verb on which they both depend. *Two months had now passed, and of Pekuah nothing had been heard.* Rassilas, vol. 2. p. 54. This construction is not quite so easy, when these words depend upon a substantive coming after them. *He found the place replete with wonders,* of which *he proposed to solace himself with* the contemplation, *if he should never be able to accomplish his flight.* Ib. vol. 1. p. 32. This construction is properly French, and does not succeed very well in English. Of the present state, *whatever it be, we feel and are forced to confess* the misery. Ib. p. 143. In the former of these sentences we should read, *with the contemplation of which, he proposed to solace himself. I am glad, then, says Cynthio, that he has thrown him upon a science* of which *he has long wished to hear* the usefulness. Addison on Medals, p. 12.

180-81 (Section X. *Of the Order of Words in a Sentence.*)

The French always place their adverbs immediately after their verbs; but this order by no means suits the idiom of the English tongue, yet Mr Hume has used it in his history, almost without variation. *His government gave courage to the English barons to* carry farther *their opposition.* Hume's Hist. vol. 2. p. 46. *Edward obtained a dispensation from his oath, which the barons had compelled Gaveston to take, that he would* abjure for ever *the realm.* Ib. vol. 2. p. 342. *to carry their opposition farther,* and, *to abjure the realm for ever.*

195 (Section XII. *Of corresponding Particles.*)

In the same manner as, or, *in the same manner that,* may, perhaps, be equally proper; but the latter construction leans more to the French, and the former is more peculiarly the English idiom. *He told the Queen, that he would submit to her, in* the same manner that *Paul did to Leo.* Hume's History, vol. 5. p. 51.

196-97 (Section XII. *Of corresponding Particles.*)

That, in imitation, I suppose, of the French idiom is, by Mr. Hume, generally made to follow a comparative. *Such scenes are* the more *ridiculous,* that *the passion of James seems not to have contained in it any thing criminal.* Hume's History, vol 6. p. 5. *Other princes have reposed themselves on them with* the more *confidence,* that *the object has been beholden to their bounty for every honour.* Ib. This conjunction [*that*] is also frequently used by some of our more modern writers, in other cases where the French use *que,* and especially for *as*; I *never left him,* that *I was not ready to say to him, dieu vous fasse, &c.* Bolingbroke on History, vol. 1. p. 121. Perhaps *when* would be more truly English in this sentence, or we should rather say, *I never left him* but, or, till *I was ready.*

B. Unanalogous French – 9 observations.

102-03 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* III. *Of the Oblique Cases of Pronouns.*)

Contrary, as it evidently is, to the analogy of the language, the nominative case is sometimes found after verbs and prepositions. It has even crept into writing. *The chaplain intreated my comrade and* I *to dress as well as possible.* World displayed, vol.1. p.163. *He told my Lord and* I. Fair American, vol.1. p.141. This aukward construction is constantly observed by the author of this romance. On the other hand, he sometimes uses the accusative case instead of the nominative. *My father and* him *have been very intimate since*. Ib. vol.2. p.53. This last is a French construction.

106 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* III. *Of the Oblique Cases of Pronouns.*)

Sometimes, in imitation of the French, the English authors use the oblique case for the nominative. *His wealth and* him *bid adieu to each other.*

133 (Section VI. *Of Adverbs and Conjunctions.*)

In imitation of the French idiom, the adverb of place *where* is often used instead of the pronoun relative, and a preposition. *They framed a protestation,* where *they repeated all their former claims*. Hume's History. i.e. *in which they repeated. The king was still determined to run forward in the same course* where *he was already, by his precipitate career, too fatally advanced*. Ib. i.e. *in which he was.*

145 (69) (Section VII. *Of the Composition and derivation of Words*)

Though both the words *proposal* and *proposition* be derived from the verb *propose*, we now use the word *proposal* to denote a thing that is proposed to be done, and *proposition* for an assertion proposed to be proved. Mrs. Macaulay, in conformity, perhaps, to the French idiom, use *[sic]* the latter in the sense of the former. *This observation was followed by* a proposition, *which had been at first suggested, and was immediately consented to by the commissioners.* Macaulay's History, vol. 4. p. 312.

159 (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* of.)

It is agreeable to the same idiom, that *of* seems to be used instead of *for* in the following sentences. *The rain hath been falling* of *a long time.* Maupertuis' Voyage, p. 60. *It might perhaps have given me a greater taste of its antiquities.* Addison. *Of,* in this place, occasions a real ambiguity in the sense. *A taste* of a *thing* implies actual enjoyment of it; but a *taste* for *it* only implies a capacity for enjoyment. *The esteem which Philip had conceived* of *the ambassador*. Hume's History, vol. 6. p. 90. *You know the esteem I have* of *this philosophy.* Law Tracts. vol. 1. p. 3. *Youth wandering in foreign countries, with as little respect* of *others, as prudence of his own, to guard him from danger. An indemnity* of *past offences.* Hume's History, vol. 5. p. 29.

160a (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* of.)

In some cases, a regard to the French idiom hath taught us to substitute *of* for *in. The great difficulty they found* of *fixing just sentiments.* Hume's History, vol. 6. p. 63. *Curious* of *Antiquities.* Dryden.

160b (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* of.)

In a variety of cases, the preposition *of* seems to be superfluous in our language; and, in most of them, it has been derived to us from the French. *Notwithstanding* of *the numerous panegyrics, on the ancient English liberty.* Hume's Essays. p. 81. *Notwithstanding* of *this unlucky example.* Ib. p. 78. Aukward as this construction is, it is generally used by several of our later writers. This preposition seems to be superfluous, when it is prefixed to a word which is only used to show the extent of another, preceding, word, as, *the city of London, the passions of hope and fear are very strong.* It also seems to be superfluous after several adjectives, which are sometimes used as substantives, *a dozen of years.* Hume's Essays, p. 258.

161 (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Preposition* of.)

The preposition *of* seems to be omitted in the following sentence, in which it resembles the French idiom. *All this, however, is easily learned from medals, where they may see likewise the plan of many, the most considerable buildings of ancient Rome.* Addison on Medals, p. 23. i. e. *of many* of *the most considerable buildings,* &c.

167b (Section IX. *Of the Use of Prepositions. Of the Prepositions* in, from, *and others.*)

It is agreeable to the French idiom, that *in* is sometimes put for *with. He had been* provided in *a small living by the Duke of Norfolk.* Hume's History, vol. 8. p. 68.

C. Acceptable French – 8 observations.

69 (Section II. *Of the Genitive Case, and other Inflections of Nouns.*)

The English genitive has often a very harsh sound, so that, in imitation of the French, we daily make more use of the particle, *of,* as they do of *de,* to express the same relation. There is something aukward in the following sentences, in which this method has not been taken. *The General, in the* army's name, *published a declaration.* Hume. *The Commons' vote.* Hume's History, vol.8. p.217. *The Lords' house.* Id. *Unless he be very ignorant of* the kingdom's condition. Swift. It were certainly better to say, *In the name of the army, the votes of the Commons, the house of Lords, the condition of the kingdom.* Besides, *the Lord's house,* which is the same in sound with *Lords' house,* is an expression almost appropriated to a place set apart for Christian worship.

85 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* I. *Of Pronouns in general.*)

Not only things, but persons may be the antecedent to this pronoun. *Who is it? Is it not Thomas?* i.e. *Who is the person? Is not he Thomas?*

Sometimes, in imitation of the French, this pronoun may be used for a person in another manner, by being substituted for *he. What a desperate fellow* it is. But this is only in conversation, and familiar style.

103 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* III. *Of the Oblique Cases of Pronouns.*)

The pronoun *[sic] whoever* and *whosoever* have sometimes a double construction, in imitation of the French idiom. *Elizabeth publickly threatned, that she would have*

the head of whoever *had advised it.* Hume. *He offered a great recompence to* whomsoever *would help him to a sight of him.* Ib.

145 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

In some few cases, after the manner of the French, we prefix the definite article *the* to the names of towns; as, the *Hague*, the *Havannah*, the *Devises.*

146-47 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

We sometimes, after the manner of the French, repeat the same article when the adjective, on account of any clause depending upon it, is put after the substantive. *Of all the considerable governments among the Alps, a commonwealth is a constitution,* the *most adapted of any to the poverty of those countries.* Addison on Medals. *With such a specious title, as that of blood, which with the multitude is always the claim,* the *strongest, and most easily comprehended.* Ib. p. 235. *They are not the men in the nation,* the *most difficult to be replaced.* Devil upon Crutches.

148 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

The article *the* is often elegantly put, after the manner of the French, for the pronoun possessive. As, *he looks him full in* the *face,* i.e. *in his face. That awful Majesty, in whose presence they were to strike* the *forehead on the ground,* i. e. *their foreheads.* Ferguson on Civil Society, p.390.

189 (Section XI. *Of the Correspondence of Words expressing Numbers.*)

190-91 (69) (Section XI. *Of the Correspondence of Words expressing Numbers.*)

It is, and *it was,* are often, after the manner of the French, used in a plural construction, and by some of our best writers. It is *either* a few *great men who decide for the whole, or* it is the rabble *that follow a seditious ringleader, who is not known, perhaps, to a dozen among them.* Hume's Essays, p. 296. It is they *that are the real authors, though the soldiers are the actors of the revolutions.* Lady Montague's Letters, vol. 2. p. 5. It was the hereticks *that first began to rail against the finest of all the arts.* Smollett's Voltaire, vol. 16. 'Tis these *that early taint the female soul.* This construction seems almost unavoidable in answer to a question asked in the same form. *Who was it that caught the fish ?* It was we. This licence in the construction of

it is (if the critical reader will think proper to admit of it at all) has however, been certainly abused in the following sentence, which is thereby made a very aukward one. It is *wonderful the very few trifling accidents, which happen not once, perhaps, in several years.* Observation on the Turks, vol. 2. p. 54.

D. Heuristic French – 7 observations.

94 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* I. *Of Pronouns in general.*)

We sometimes use the pronoun *one* in the same sense in which *on* is used in French. One *would imagine these to be expressions of a man blessed with ease.* Atterbury.

105-06 (Section IV. *Of Pronouns.* III. *Of the Oblique Cases of Pronouns.*)

It is, likewise, said, that the nominative case ought to follow the preposition *than* because the verb *to be* is understood after it; As, *You are taller than he,* and not *taller than him;* because, at full length, it would be, *You are taller than he is*; but since it is allowed, that the oblique case should follow prepositions; and since the comparative degree of an adjective, and the particle *than* have, certainly, between them, the force of a preposition, expressing the relation of one word to another, they ought to require the oblique case of the pronoun following; so that *greater than me,* will be more grammatical than *greater than I.* Examples, however, of this construction, occur in very good writers. *The Jesuits had more interests at court* than him. Smollett's Voltaire, vol. 9. p. 141. *Tell the Cardinal that I understand poetry better* than him. Ib. vol. 8. p. 187. *An inhabitant of Crim Tartary was far more happy* than him. Ib. vol. 6. p. 89.

Perhaps these authorities, and the universal propensity which may be perceived in all persons, as well those who have had a learned and polite education, as those who have not, to these forms of speech, may make it at least doubtful, whether they be not agreeable to the true English idiom. It appears to me, that the chief objection our grammarians have to both these forms, is that they are not agreeable to the idiom of the Latin tongue, which is certainly an argument of little weight, as that language is fundamentally different from ours: whereas those forms of expression, are perfectly analogous to the French, and other modern European languages. In these the same form of a pronoun is never used both before and after the verb substantive. Thus the French say, *c'est moi, c'est lui*; and not *c'est je, c'est il.*

127-28 (Section V. *Of Verbs.* IV. *Of the Auxiliary Verbs*)

It seems not to have been determined by the English grammarians, whether the passive participles of verbs neuter require the auxiliary *am* or *have* before them. The French, in this case, confine themselves strictly to the former. [...] The French would say, *what is become*; and in this instance, perhaps, with more propriety. Yet I think we have an advantage in the choice of these two forms of expression, as it appears to me, that we use them to express different modifications of the sense. When I say, *I am fallen*, I mean at this present instant; whereas, If I say, *I have fallen*, my meaning comprehends, indeed, the foregoing; but has likewise, a secret reference to some period of time past, as *some time in this day*, or *in this hour*, *I have fallen*; implying some continuance of time, which the other form of expression does not.

132 (Section V. *Of Verbs.* IV. *Of Auxiliary Verbs*)

When the preposition *to* signifies *in order to*, it used to be preceded by *for*, which is now almost obsolete; *What went ye out* for to *see*. This exactly corresponds to the use which the French make of *pour*.

136-37 (Section VI. *Of Adverbs and Conjunctions.*)

The word *so* has, sometimes, the same meaning with *also, likewise, the same*; or rather it is equivalent to the universal pronoun *le* in French. *They are happy, we are not so*, i.e. *not happy.*

146 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

In general, it may be sufficient to prefix the article to the former of two in the same construction; though the French never fail to repeat it in this case. *There were many hours, both of* the *night and day, which he could spend, without suspicion, in solitary thought.* Rassilas, vol. 1. p. 23. It might have been, *of* the *night, and of* the *day.* And, for the sake of emphasis, we often repeat the article in a series of epithets. *He hoped, that this title would secure him* a *perpetual, and* an *independent authority.* Hume's History, vol. 3. p.326.

147-48 (Section VIII. *Of Articles.*)

A is sometimes put for *every*; as in such phrases as these, *a hundred* a *year,* i. e. *every year;* or for *one,* as when we say, *so much* a *dozen,* a *pound,* &c. *A hundred men* a *day died of it.* Hume's History, vol. 5. p. 80. The French always use the article *the* in this construction. It appears, however, that the article *a,* which, in many cases, signifies *one,* should not be prefixed to words which express a great number, yet custom authorises this use of it. *Liable to* a great many *inconveniences.* Tillotson. *Many a man,* i. e. *many times a man.*