(running head: Reader involvement on sixteenth-century English title pages)

Patterns of reader involvement on sixteenth-century English title pages, with special reference to second-person pronouns

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Abstract

Title pages may be viewed as early forms of advertisement, intended to make the potential reader purchase the book and attach a high value to its contents. In research into the consumer psychology of present-day advertisements, second-person pronouns have been found an effective means of persuasion. Based on a comprehensive dataset of sixteenth-century title page texts, the study shows that early English book producers made versatile and creative promotional use of the second-person pronouns YOU and THOU so as to involve the potential reader (purchaser). The core of the analysis consists of a qualitative contextual analysis of the pronoun forms.

Keywords

advertising, Early Modern English, involvement, pronouns, title pages

1. Introduction

In the language of advertising, pronouns play an important role in constructing relationships between the sender (manufacturer, retailer etc.), the product, and the receiver (consumer, purchaser). In fact, according to Cook (1992: 155), "[o]ne of the most distinctive features of advertising is its use of pronouns". Second-person pronouns are of specific interest in advertising because of their deictic potential to induce receivers to "become personally involved with the message and product and to make them feel that the communication is meant for them as individuals" (Debevec & Romeo 1992: 86). In advertising research, the strategy of employing second-person pronouns for this purpose is one of the means available for what consumer psychologists call *self-referencing*, i.e. "relating a message to one's personal experience" (Chang 2011: 147).[1] Second-person pronouns are also a hallmark feature of *internal requests*, which cognitive reader/listener response studies have shown to reduce the psychological distance between the message and its receiver, thereby potentially enhancing the persuasiveness of advertisements, in addition to other factors, such as the motivation of the receiver and the

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[1] The use of *second-person* pronouns as a characteristic feature of *self*-referencing in consumer psychology may seem confusing or even counterintuitive in linguistics, where self-referencing tends to be prototypically associated with the use of *first-person* pronouns, interpreted from the deictic centre of the speaker/language user (see e.g. Fetzer & Bull 2008: 275–276).

quality of the message (see e.g. Debevec & Iyer 1988, Burnkrant & Unnava 1995, Chang 2011).

Historical linguistic studies of English advertising texts have largely focused on the period from ca. 1700 onwards, when advertisements became an important feature of periodical publications (e.g. Gieszinger 2001, Görlach 2002, Brownlees 2017). However, while the late modern period is crucial for the development of advertising genres and the context of mass media communication, the history of promotional texts in English actually goes further back. Owing to the ephemeral status of separately circulating advertisements, only tiny fragments survive of what must have been a prolific promotional culture based on posters (Hirsch 1967: 63–65). A rare survival of this kind is Caxton's 1477 broadside advertisement for the Sarum *Ordinal*; both extant copies were probably salvaged from binder's waste (Needham 1986: 82).

Promotional texts that formed part of some larger publication, however, had a better chance of survival. In the emerging print culture of the early modern period, front matter developed into a promotional system, enabling book producers to communicate with their consumers; Saenger (2005: 197) suggests that it might "constitute something like the birth of modern advertising". Hirsch (1967: 72) describes front matter as an innovation that helped "the producer to make his merchandise attractive and useful" (see also Genette 1997: 33–34). Within front matter, the title page came to play a key role in this innovative process.

Smith (2000) shows how the early modern title page developed from a blank to a space crowded with textual and visual elements geared towards promoting the book. By making various 'claims' for the value of their product on the title page, book producers used it as an interactive site in engaging the potential purchaser/reader. Such claims would often focus on the merits of the work at hand or on those of its author, or highlight some novelty in the material book or its production process, such as the presence of specific visual features or corrections made to a new edition (Smith 2000: 102–108; Olson 2016; Varila & Peikola 2019: 74–77). The promotional potential and interactional nature of title pages is also manifest in early booksellers' custom of hanging them outside their shops to attract customers (Shevlin 1999: 49; Olson 2016: 620–623), reflecting the fuzzy borderline between ephemeral book advertising through posters and that based on front matter.

The purpose of this chapter is to shed more light onto English sixteenth-century book producers' use of the promotional potential of the title page, exploring their use of second-person pronouns as a 'self-referencing' strategy (cf. Chang 2011, above). The study thus joins the ranks of recent pragmaphilological and book-historical research into the communicative properties of Early Modern English (EModE) title pages (e.g. Tyrkkö et al. 2013, Olson 2016, Ratia & Suhr 2017, Varila & Peikola 2019). The core of the analysis consists of a qualitative contextual analysis of second-person pronouns (Section 4.2).

2. Second-person pronouns

The strategic potential of second-person pronouns in promotional texts can be linked to the general discourse properties of personal pronouns. As Fetzer & Bull (2008: 275) observe, "[b]ecause of an individual's multiple social, discursive and interactional roles, a personal pronoun can refer to more than one identity and therefore can express multiple meanings" (see also Tyrkkö 2016). According to Myers (2008: 359), it is precisely due to this "slippery" quality that "the *you* of ads is powerful". In addition to its potential for addressing actual (anticipated) readers individually or collectively, as in the famous World War I enlistment poster "Your Country Needs You", the textual *you* may also be used without a clear addressing purpose, in an impersonal or generalized referential function of the kind typical of recipes or proverbs, as in the proverb "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink" (Herman 2002: 340–341; Fetzer & Bull 2008: 276–280; Bell & Ensslin 2011: 314–315). Furthermore, *you* has the potential of indexing entities in the fictional world(s) of the text, for example when the pronoun is used in communication between the characters in a novel (Herman 2002: 341, 345; Bell & Ensslin 2011: 316). In both modern advertisements and early modern title pages alike, there is also the possibility of what Herman (2002: 341–342), discussing modern narrative fiction, calls *actualized address*, in which addressing a character in the text-internal fictional world is extended

to the 'real' (external) world. In a British World War I enlistment poster discussed by Myers (2008: 359–360), for example, the question "Daddy, what did <u>YOU</u> do in the Great War", asked by a girl sitting on the lap to his father in an armchair, clearly extends the *you* from the father to the reader of the poster. Ultimately, in *double deixis*, the internal and external references may become blurred and wholly superimposed upon one another (Herman 2002: 342–343; Macrae 2015: 111–115).

In advertising, the persuasive power of the second-person reference essentially requires the reader to recognize themselves in the general or fictional *you* (Myers 2008: 368). Cook (1992: 156–157) characterises this deictic quality of *you* in advertisements as a *double exophora*. He maintains that its function is different from literary narrative in the sense that advertisements practically 'force' their readers to project themselves onto the *you*, whereas literary readers have the option of detaching themselves from it and identifying the *you* with some other referent(s) instead (Cook 1992: 157). Macrae (2015: 110), however, reports studies by narratologists who doubt readers' ability to completely detach themselves from the *you* even if they are aware of its pragmatic fluidity.

In their use for indexing the addressee, second-person pronouns belong to the linguistic markers of what Chafe calls "involvement of the speaker with the hearer" (Chafe 1985: 116–117; see also Biber 1988: 105, 225). In a factor-analytical study of EModE genre conventions, Taavitsainen (1997: 210) found second-person pronouns among the most salient of the

features contributing to the factor she interpreted as "Interaction". She identified this factor as typical of the genre of fiction, particularly passages that emulate natural dialogue and show a strong emotional stance (ibid. 213–217). In a genre study of English medical writing between 1375 and 1550, Taavitsainen (2000) found the use of second-person pronouns characteristic of instructive texts that focus on the actions expected of the reader (cf. Werlich 1976: 136). Another frequent context for these pronouns to occur consisted of metatextual passages that "bring a reader-centred point-of-view to the text" (Taavitsainen 2000: 200; see also Taavitsainen 2006). In that context, second-person pronouns may usefully be approached as instantiations of *addressee-related metadiscourse*, which "typically make use of 2nd-person pronouns or imperative constructions" (Boggel 2009: 28; see also Chaemsaithong 2013: 173–174).

Owing to a systemic difference, the deictic potential of *you* in sixteenth-century English is not identical with that of the PDE *you*; in this study, we also needed to take into account the singular pronoun *thou*. Although *thou* was on the decrease, it was still commonly used at the close of the sixteenth century (and well beyond), especially in fiction and speech-related genres (e.g. Finkenstaedt 1963: 172–173; Taavitsainen 1997: 239–244; Walker 2003). The complex linguistic and extralinguistic factors affecting the choice of the singular *you* vs. *thou* in EModE have been subject to extensive discussion and debate (for useful summaries, see Walker 2007: 39–63; Buyle & De Smet 2018). The previously dominant interpretation of

thou as invariably the "marked" form, signalling social asymmetry between the interactants or their adoption of an affective/agitated style (e.g. Calvo 1992; Wales 1996: 75–76; Lass 1999: 149–150), appears to have given room to pragmatically more nuanced approaches, seeking to interpret individual choices of *you/thou* based on the flexible social roles and shifting interactional statuses of the participants in a specific communicative situation (e.g. Jucker 2000; Walker 2007: 48). Thus, Buyle & De Smet (2018: 53) argue that "semantic neutrality in EModE *you* is only apparent".

3. Research design

This study was based on a digital dataset of English title pages from 1501 to 1600. The dataset was compiled by the Framing Text research team at the University of Turku, from the bibliographic metadata available through ProQuest's *Early English Books Online* (EEBO) database.[2] The txt-formatted metadata, arranged into 100 annual files, comprise the title-page texts of almost 15,000 publications (editions), i.e. a large majority of all surviving publications from the sixteenth century.[3] While the metadata systematically include the titles of the publications and information about the

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[2] The dataset was compiled from EEBO in 2016–2018 using the old Chadwyck-Healey interface before its replacement with the new ProQuest platform in August 2019.
[3] Barnard & Bell (2002: 780–782) list 15,367 titles (editions) for the years 1501–1600.

printer/bookseller when they appear on the title page, there is some variation in the extent to which other text segments are recorded. This applies especially to epigrams and other short verses that have sometimes been excluded by the EEBO compilers.

AntConc was used to find occurrences of the second-person pronouns YOU (EModE nominative form *ye*) and THOU in the title page metadata. For both pronouns, their object (*you, thee*) and genitive (*your/yours, thy/thine*) forms were also included. As the metadata were not lemmatised, spelling variations had to be worked into the queries. Table 1 shows the spelling variants used in the queries. For practical reasons, the possible spelling variant "the" for *thee* had to be left out from the query, as its homonymity with the definite article resulted in 49,167 hits in the dataset. A close reading of all the retrieved title pages containing forms of THOU (using the variants listed in Table 1) revealed five title pages in which "the" was used for *thee* – four of them in editions of the same work from the 1530s and 1540s. As a 'safety check', all hits for "the" in 1530–1560 (N=12,624) were then browsed using the keyword-in-context (KWIC) display in AntConc. No other occurrences of "the" as a variant of *thee* were spotted, suggesting that the exclusion of "the" from the query did not lead to any loss of a substantive amount of relevant data for the century as a whole.

Table 1. Case forms and spelling variants of the pronouns YOU and THOU used in the query

PRONOUNS	CASE FORMS	SPELLINGS
YOU	*ye*	"ye", "yee"
	you	"you", "yow"
	your/yours	"your", "yowr", "youre", "yowre", "yours", "yowrs"
THOU	*thou*	"thou", "thow"
	thee	"thee"
	thy/thine	"thy", "thi", "thine", "thyne"

The results generated by AntConc were checked individually using the KWIC display, and all irrelevant hits were removed (such as instances of "ye" standing for the definite article *the*). All relevant hits (i.e. those representing the pronouns shown in Table 1) were then checked against the corresponding image in EEBO. A few instances of pronouns were discarded from the data at this stage, as these pronouns occurred in broadside publications (proclamations, ballads), without an actual title page, and were also not part of their typographically highlighted title or first paragraph. Pronouns occurring in the visually highlighted title or first paragraph of broadsides were included in the data. In some title pages, additional second-person pronouns were found in epigrams or very long subtitles that had not been included in the EEBO metadata in their entirety. These instances were included in the qualitative analysis of the pronouns, but owing to the inadvertent nature of

their discovery they were excluded from the quantitative overview. A few transcription errors found in the EEBO database were corrected in the present data during the checking procedure.

4. Second-person pronouns on sixteenth-century title pages

The findings reported in this section comprise a quantitative decade-by-decade overview of the frequencies of second-person pronouns on sixteenth-century title pages (Section 4.1), followed by their qualitative contextual analysis (Section 4.2). The contextual analysis of the use of the pronouns to signal reader involvement focused on such features as their referents and their collocation with imperatives and auxiliary verbs.

4.1 Quantitative overview

Interpreting the nuances of pragmatic meaning of the pronouns requires a context-sensitive close reading of the title pages located by means of corpus searches. It is helpful, nonetheless, to begin with a quantitative overview of the frequency and chronological distribution of sixteenth-century English title pages containing second-person pronouns. The search turned up a total of 231 such publications (editions/issues furnished with different Short-Title Catalogue (STC) numbers). Their title pages (or, in the case of broadsides,

their visually highlighted titles or first paragraphs) contain a total of 321 instances of second-person pronouns, indicating a certain tendency for the pronouns to co-occur on individual title pages (see examples 1, 8, 14, and 16 below). Table 2 shows, decade by decade, the absolute frequencies of publications with second-person pronouns on their title pages, and the absolute frequencies of the second-person pronouns themselves on these title pages.

Table 2. Decennial absolute frequencies of sixteenth-century publications with second-person pronouns on their title page, and absolute frequencies of second-person pronouns on these pages

Decade	1500s	1510s	1520s	1530s	1540s	1550s	1560s	1570s	1580s	1590s	1501–1600
Publications	0	1	10	13	39	36	27	29	37	39	**231**
Pronouns	0	4	19	21	52	46	42	40	54	43	**321**

To interpret these frequencies meaningfully it is crucial to take into account the fact that the overall number of publications (editions) increased steadily throughout the sixteenth century, from 475 publications in the 1500s to 2,987

in the 1590s (as reported by Barnard & Bell 2002: 780–782).[4] Figure 1 shows the proportional distribution of the 231 publications with second-person pronoun title pages decade by decade as percentages of all publications that appeared during each decade.
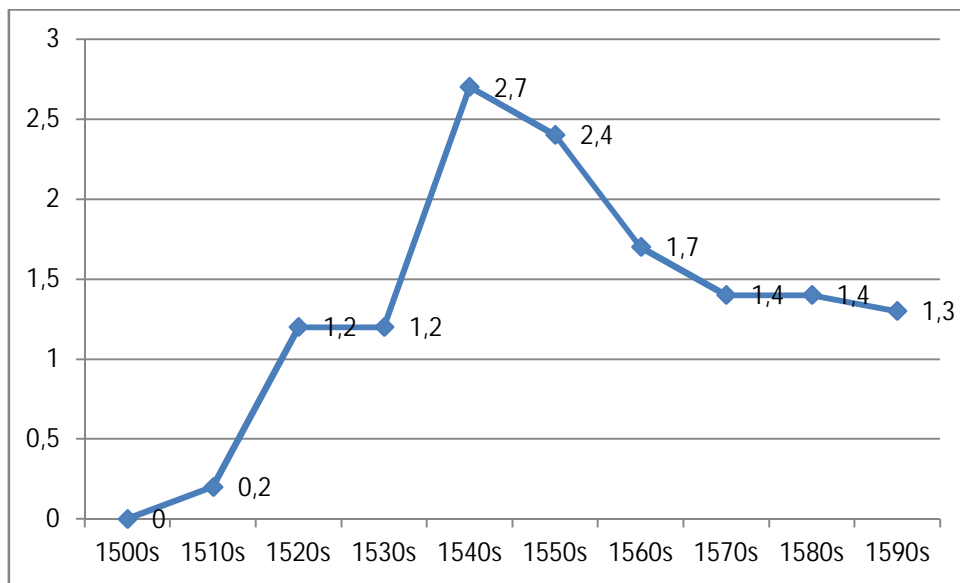

Figure 1. Decennial proportions (in percentages) of publications with second-person pronouns on their title pages out of all publications (editions) of each decade

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[4] The decennial numbers of published titles (editions) from the 1500s to the 1590s, calculated from the annual figures provided by Barnard & Bell (2002: 780–782) from STC (2nd ed.), are as follows: 1500s (N=475), 1510s (585), 1520s (831), 1530s (1043), 1540s (1470), 1550s (1501), 1560s (1634), 1570s (2117), 1580s (2724), 1590s (2987). The data in Barnard & Bell (2002) include all known publications issued in the British Isles, including those in languages other than English (notably Latin); the proportional frequencies of second-person pronouns in *English-language* title page data were therefore slightly higher than those shown in Figure 2, especially for the early decades of the century, from the 1500s to the 1520s, when more Latin publications came out than English ones (for decennial counts of Latin vs. English title pages in 1500–1550, based on EEBO, see Varila 2018; no similar counts are available for the latter half of the century).

As Figure 1 indicates, when the frequencies of publications containing second-person pronouns on their title pages (cf. Table 2) are viewed in relation to overall publication numbers, the 1540s and 1550s stand out as the decades when book producers favoured YOU and THOU on the title pages of their publications. Thereafter, the relative frequency of the second-person pronouns on the title pages declined gradually towards the end of the century. Figure 1 also shows that with the decennial proportions ranging between 0 (1500s) and 2.7 per cent (1540s) of all publications appearing in each decade, the use of second-person pronouns on title pages remained relatively infrequent throughout the century.

The 1540s and 1550s also emerge as the top decades in terms of the relative frequency of the second-person pronoun title pages when the chronological distribution of the altogether 321 occurrences of YOU and THOU (cf. Table 2) is viewed in relation to the total number of words used on the title pages in each decade (see Figure 2; frequencies are normalised to 1,000 words).
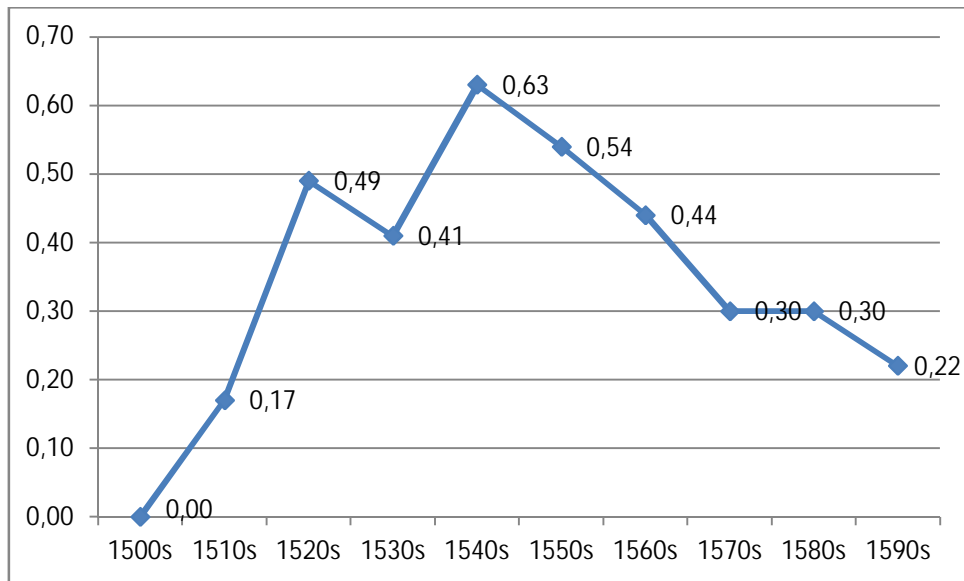
Figure 2. Normalised frequencies (per 1,000 words) of occurrences of YOU and THOU on sixteenth-century title pages, by decade[5]

4.2 Second-person pronouns in context

As observed in Section 2, the deictic fluidity and ambiguity of second-person pronouns can present a challenge to any attempt to interpret the interaction expressed through them. In interpreting the use of these pronouns on sixteenth-century title pages, it therefore makes sense to start with those

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[5] The decennial word counts of the title pages used as the basis of the normalisation are calculated from the annual (1501–1600) files of the title page dataset compiled from the bibliographic metadata in EEBO (1500s: N=16,725 words; 1510s: 23,056; 1520s: 39,108; 1530s: 50,886; 1540s: 83,198; 1550s: 84,886; 1560s: 95,138; 1570s: 133,773; 1580s: 178,347; 1590s: 194,844). The word counts include the titles of all publications as they appear in the EEBO metadata, regardless of language. The counts also include the date and bibliographic reference name/number for each publication as part of their metadata, which adds approximately 10–20 words to the word count of each title page. Since these additions apply to all publications, however, their presence does not change the overall pattern of the results.

instances in which a referent for the pronoun can be explicitly identified. While such uses are sporadic, they also facilitate our understanding of those instances in which no such explicit reference is present.

There are several instances in which a second-person pronoun occurs in the immediate context of an explicit address to the reader, in a noun phrase whose head is the noun *reader*. In examples (1) to (7), boldface highlights these noun phrases and the second-person pronouns collocating with them. They predominantly show book producer(s) directly guiding the individual (singular) reader in various ways in examples (1) to (6); the plural address to *readers* in (7) is exceptional. The reader(s) addressed may be specified as *Christian* (1, 2), *good* (3), *good Christian* (4) or *(most) gentle* (5) to (7), in a manner that resembles reader address in early modern prefaces. To make these reader-oriented expressions visually more salient, they are often presented in a separate paragraph on the title page.

(1) <u>Rede</u> bothe o **Christen Reader**, truthe is comynge home, longe afore beynge incaptyuytye, <u>steppe forth</u> and <u>meete</u> her by the waye: yf **thou** see her presente, <u>embrace</u> hir, and <u>shewe</u> **thy selfe** gladde of her retourne. (1538, STC 13081)[6]

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[6] Boldface and underlining have been added to examples to highlight the items discussed.

(2) To the reader. In thys boke shal **you** fynde **Christian Reader** the ryght probation of the righte Olde Catholyke Churche, and of the newe false Churche, whereby eyther of them is to be knowen. <u>Reade</u> and <u>iudge.</u> (1548, STC 16964)

(3) <u>Reade</u> with iudgement, and <u>conferre</u> with diligence, [la]iying aside all affection on eyther partie, and **you** shall easily perceaue (**good Reader**) how slender and weake the allegations and persuasions of the Pa[pi]stes are (1551, STC 5991)

(4) **Thou** hast heer in this little book **good christian Reader** moste plain, sure and substantiall reasons to establish mutuall consent and christian concord (1575, STC 4055.5)

(5) Therefore <u>beware</u> (**gentle Reader**) **you** catch not the hicket with laughing. (1589, STC 534).

(6) **Thow** shalt also fynde here (**most gentle Reader**) of the reasons wher wyth a firme and sure concorde and peace in the Churche [...] and of other certen thynges moste worthy truly to be red and consydered. (1542, STC 3047)

(7) The complaynte and testament of a Popiniay Which lyeth sore

wounded and maye not dye, tyll euery man hathe herd what he

sayth: Wherfore **gentyll readers** <u>haste</u> **you** y^t he were oute of his

payne. (1538, STC 15671)

In most of these examples, book producers use directives when addressing the reader. Directives are among the characteristic interactional devices whereby readers are constructed in texts (Chaemsaithong 2013: 177). Taavitsainen (2006: 449) found the co-occurrence of second-person singular pronouns with imperatives of cognitive verbs to be a prototypical feature of audience guidance in Late Middle English learned medical writing. The imperatives underlined in the above examples also exhibit cognitive verbs that characterise the reader's engagement with the book/text: *confer* in example (3), *judge* (2), *read* (1, 3). The actions that the readers are exhorted to perform, however, extend well beyond the conventional cognitive field, indicating a possible endeavour on the part of book producers to attract potential purchasers with linguistically creative title-page texts. This can be seen especially in (1), where the reader is told to *step forth* and *meet* the personified Truth, now freed from her long captivity, *embrace* her, and *show* themselves glad. In (7), readers are directed to *haste* to hear (through reading the book) what the dying popinjay has to say and end his sufferings. As instances of promotional language, these figurative examples might possibly be viewed in terms of what Leech (1966: 199–200) calls a *'literary' copy*, i.e.

an advertisement "in which imaginatively unconventional use of language is itself one of the major appeals to the reader's interest" (see also ibid., 45 for imperatives as one characteristic of *direct address advertising*, and Mcquarrie & Mick, 1996, for the use of rhetorical figures in present-day advertising language). Since, however, metaphorical language was a stock feature of Renaissance English front matter – to the extent that "one encounters metaphors and personifications on virtually every page" (Saenger 2006: 95) – the unconventionality of figurative exhortations formed with non-cognitive verbs cannot be automatically assumed (see also example 16 below).

Imperatives are found in less than 20 per cent of the title pages containing second-person pronouns.[7] Unlike in the examples above, however, they are quite often used in contexts in which either (a) the person(s) directed through them cannot be explicitly identified with the referent of the second-person pronoun (see example 8), or (b) both the second-person pronoun and the imperative at least primarily index entities in the (fictional) world of the text at hand or in some other text (example 9).

> (8) <u>Rede</u> me and <u>be</u> nott wrothe for I saye no thynge but trothe. I will ascende makyng my state so hye/ that my pompous honoure shall never dye. O **Caytyfe** when **thou** thynkest least of all/ [with] confusion **thou** shalt have a fall. (1528, STC 1462.7)

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[7] The imperatives were located through a close reading of the title pages that contain second-person pronouns.

(9) A most excellent and heavenly sermon: Vpon the 23. Chapter of the Gospell by Saint Luke. The text. Luke 23.28. <u>Weepe</u> not for me, but <u>weepe</u> for **your selues**. (1595, STC 20014)

In (8) – a satire against Cardinal Wolsey – the imperatives occur in the main title of the work, in which the personified book addresses the reader. The two instances of the second-person pronoun, however, occur in a rhyming couplet addressing Wolsey as a "Caytyfe" ('wretch, villain'; see Parker 1992: 159, 212). It appears unlikely that readers would have wished to identify themselves with the ridiculed cardinal; this instance thus seems to be one of those few instances in the data in which the readers'/consumers' projection of themselves onto the YOU/THOU does not seem to work in the way characteristic of the double exophora in the language of advertising.

In (9), both the second-person pronoun and the imperative occur in the biblical locus on which the sermon is based (Luke 23:28), where Jesus on his way to Calvary addresses "Daughters of Jerusalem" in the words cited on the title page. It may be argued, however, that the text on which the sermon is based is also inherently intended to apply to any Christian reader who recognises the biblical quotation and identifies with those addressed by Jesus. The effect is similar to that of biblical epigrams containing second-person pronouns on some sixteenth-century title pages (e.g. "Let the worde of Chryst dwell in you plenteously in all wysdome" from Colossians 3:16 in the New

Testament edition STC 2843). Such uses resemble Herman's (2002) *actualized address* or *double deixis*.

In addition to the use of imperatives, some of the examples above in which the second-person pronoun explicitly indexes the reader illustrate ways in which the reader (YOU/THOU) can also be guided to engage with the book by means of periphrastic future expressions formed with *shall* (examples 2, 3, 6), possibly sometimes including a degree of obligation in addition to marking futurity (cf. Mustanoja 1960: 491–492; Kytö, 1991: 261–263; Rissanen, 1999: 210–212). Such expressions are found quite frequently on sixteenth-century title pages containing second-person pronouns; in fact, approximately 33 per cent (77 out of 234) of all instances of YOU/THOU in grammatical subject positions occur in them. As to the future actions projected onto the YOU/THOU through these constructions, *find* is by far the most common verb attested in them, present in 43 of the 77 occurrences. In addition to book producers' promotional claims that the reader will find in the book some specific topic or theme, such as "the ryght probation of the righte Olde Catholyke Churche, and of the newe false Churche" in example (2), future expressions with *find* are also often used to advertise a specific (para)textual element in the physical book, such as a perpetual almanack (10), a table (11), or additions appended to a new edition (12).

(10) And in the ende **ye shal finde an almanack for euer** (1547, STC 20423)

(11)   The cōplaint of Roderyck Mors [...] For the redresse of certein wycked lawes, euell custumes & cruell decrees. **A table wherof thou shalt finde** in the next leafe. (1548, STC 3760)

(12)   The Workes of our Antient and lerned English Poet, Geffrey Chavcer, newly Printed. In this Impression **you shall find these Additions**: 1 His Portraiture and Progenie shewed. 2 His Life collected. 3 Arguments to euery Booke gathered. 4 Old and obscure Words explaned. 5 Authors by him cited, declared. 6 Difficulties opened. 7 Two bookes of his neuer before printed. (1598, STC 5077)

Another common pattern evoking reader involvement through second-person pronouns consists of modal expressions formed with *may*. Approximately 25 per cent (62 of 234) of all title-page occurrences of YOU/THOU in grammatical subject positions represent this pattern. The three most frequent main verbs used in these constructions are all cognitive: *see* (N=19), *learn* (N=11) and *read* (N=11). These are illustrated in examples (13) to (15) respectively:[8]

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[8] These frequencies also include all new editions of one and the same work, in which book producers may have retained the wording of the title as it appeared in a previous edition.

(13)   A new Almanacke and Prognostication, for the yere of our Lorde. M. D. lxviii beyng leape yere, wherin is set forthe and shewed the chaūge of the Moone [..] and many other necessarie notes, as in the table of the contentes, **you maie aesely and euidently see and perceiue**. (1568, STC 422.3)

(14)   The Antidotharius, in the whiche **thou mayst lerne** howe **thou** shalte make many, and dyuers noble plasters [...] & wounde drynkes/ the whiche be very necessary, and behouefull/ vtyle/ & profytable, for euery Surgyan, therin to be expert/ and redy at all tymes of nede. (1535, STC 675.7)

(15) Two wunderfull and rare Examples. Of the vndeferred and present approching iudgement, of the Lord our God: the one vpon a wicked and pernitious blasphemer [...] The other vpon a vvoman [...] to whome the Deuill verie straungely appeared, as in the discourse following, **you may reade**. (1581, STC 23399.7)

As seen in (13) to (15), the modality expressed through *may* in the present data as a rule represents what Rissanen (1999: 237) calls "neutral possibility", i.e. one that does not primarily seem to indicate ability or permission. These expressions too (cf. 10–12) can be used to focus the reader's attention on the benefits of a specific (para)textual element in the book, like the table of

contents mentioned in (13). The promotional quality of the claim in (13) is evident in how the adverbs *easily* and *evidently* are used to modify the acts of seeing and perceiving.

In addition to the constructions using *shall* or *may*, a third relatively frequent type of expression to mark the involvement of the YOU/THOU as the reader of the book is by means of non-periphrastic constructions formed with *have*. This pattern occurs in approximately 9 per cent (22 out of 234) of the instances of YOU/THOU in grammatical subject positions in the title-page data. In such cases, producers plainly state what the book has to offer to the reader. This strategy is exemplified in (4) above: "Thou hast heer in this little book [...] moste plain, sure and substantiall reasons" (STC 4055). Similarly to (4), these expressions often include spatial deictic adverbs (*here, herein, wherein*) or locative prepositional phrases (formed with *after* or *before*) to focus the reader's attention on the physical artefact and the 'navigation' of its structure.

As seen in (16), *have* can also appear in periphrastic future expressions formed with *shall*. Here the book producers make a jocular promotional use of a commercial metaphor by presenting the book with its five treatises as a shop of five windows, for readers to "cheapen and copen" ('bargain for and buy') for their profit (see *OED Online* s.vv. *cheap*, v., *cope*, v.3):

(16) The key to vnknowne knovvledge. Or, A shop of fiue Windowes, Which if **you** doe open, to cheapen and copen, **You** will be vnwilling, for many a shilling, To part with the profit,

that **you shall haue** of it. Consisting of fiue necessarie Treatises:

(1599, STC 14946)

While the second-person pronouns marking involvement on sixteenth-century title pages typically seem to identify the YOU/THOU with an unspecified generic reader who is expected to navigate the book and/or benefit from its contents in various ways, we also find instances where the intended audience is specified more narrowly. This may be seen in (14) above, where the medicines discussed in the book are said to be "behouefull/ vtyle/ & profytable, **for euery Surgyan**" (STC 675.7). Addressing members of this readership with the singular *thou* helps render the alleged multiple benefits of the book more immediate to the individual surgeon, and thus potentially persuade him more readily to purchase the volume.

5. Conclusion

As indicated at the beginning of this chapter, title pages may be viewed as early forms of advertising, intended to make the potential reader purchase the book and attach a high value to its content. In studies of the consumer psychology of present-day advertisements, second-person pronouns have been found an effective means of persuasion. Based on a comprehensive dataset of sixteenth-century title page texts, the present study shows that early

English book producers made versatile promotional use of the second-person pronouns YOU and THOU to engage the potential reader (purchaser). This type of reader involvement was typically manifested in linguistic patterns formed with imperatives and periphrastic future/modal expressions with *shall* and *may*. By means of these patterns, potential readers – often addressed in the singular – were persuaded to engage cognitively with the content of the book at hand, or alerted to the value of some specific (para)textual element in it that would help them use and navigate the volume more effectively. In these expressions, second-person pronouns were mostly found to index the reader in a relatively unambiguous way. The study, however, also revealed cases in which book producers exploited the deictic potential of second-person pronouns to simultaneously index the reader through personae in the fictional world.

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