

LINGUISTICS

WILT THOU BE LORD OF ALL THE WORLD? MODALS AND PERSUASION IN SHAKESPEARE¹

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ABSTRACT

Persuasion is defined as human communication designed to influence the judgements and actions of others (Simons & Jones 2011). The purpose of this research is to analyse the discourse of persuasion in Shakespeare from the perspective of historical pragmatics (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2010), with particular attention to modals employed as part of the strategies. The modals under investigation are proximal and distal central modals, SHALL/SHOULD, WILL/WOULD, CAN/COULD, MAY/MIGHT, MUST, and the contracted form 'LL. The data for the present study is drawn from *The Riverside Shakespeare* (Evans 1997) and the concordance by Spevack (1968-1980). The corpus includes both cases where the persuasion attempt is successful and unsuccessful.

After defining persuasion in comparison to speech acts, quantitative analysis reveals how frequently the persuader and the persuadee employ a modal regarding each type of modality and speech act. Further analysis shows in what manner the persuader and the persuadee interact with each other in discourse resorting to the following strategies: modality, proximal and distal meanings of the modal, speech act of each utterance including a modal, and use of the same modal or switching modals in interaction.

This research thus clarifies how effectively speakers attempted to persuade others in interactions, shedding light on communication mechanisms in the past.

Keywords: persuasion, modal, Shakespeare, speech act, historical pragmatics

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1. Introduction

In communication, speakers often try to ‘persuade’ others to do something. Observe the following context from Act 2 of *Antony and Cleopatra*, where Menus is asking questions to Pompey:

- (1) *Men.* *Wilt* thou be lord of all the world?
Pom. What say’st thou?
Men. *Wilt* thou be lord of the whole world? That’s twice.
Pom. How *should* that be?
Men. But entertain it,
 And though you think me poor, I am the man
Will give thee all the world.

(ANT 2.7.61-65)

From the viewpoint of speech act, he is simply asking questions regarding Menus’ intention to become a lord of the whole world. Actually, his real intention is to persuade Pompey to let him kill the triumvirs of Rome. He knows well that one or two utterances only are not enough to change Pompey’s mind, and initiates his attempt to persuade him by asking questions using a modal WILL, whose illocutionary force is not apparently related to the purpose of persuasion. What should be noted here is, therefore, that it is necessary to analyse the entire context of persuasion, not just these questions, in order to know the intention of persuasion, and that the modal WILL plays an important role in this attempt of persuasion. That being so, what are the conditions which regulate persuasion, and when is an action called ‘persuasion’? What strategies, modals in particular, does the persuader employ so as to achieve the goal of persuasion? If persuasion is part of communication, where the persuader and the persuadee participate, how does the persuadee accept or fend off the attempt of persuasion? Last but not least, how did speakers in the past attempt to persuade others in interactions?

The purpose of this paper is to analyse the discourse of persuasion in Shakespeare from the perspective of historical pragmatics (Jacobs & Jucker 1995; Jucker & Taavitsainen 2010; Taavitsainen 2012; Jucker & Taavitsainen 2013, etc.), with particular attention to modals employed as part of the strategies, and to elucidate the communication of persuasion in Early Modern English.

I will start the discussion by defining persuasion in comparison with a typical speech act, which is also related to communication. Next, Section 3 will describe the corpus of the present study. Section 4 will explain the meanings and functions of modals, and carry out a quantitative analysis of the modals which are used by the persuader and the persuadee as strategies. Section 5 will conduct a qualitative analysis of persuasion in discourse, with specific attention to modals. The final section is the conclusion.

2. What is persuasion?

Simons & Jones (2011: 24) define persuasion as a form of human communication designed to influence the judgements and actions of others. The two parties, the persuader and the persuadee, participate in the context of persuasion. The persuader has the intention to exert a certain influence over the persuadee. The persuadee, on the other hand, has the right to make a judgement of the persuader's attempt.² If persuasion is a kind of communication and influences others in a certain way, how about a speech act, which can also be performed through communication and exert a certain influence on others (Austin 1962; Searle 1969, etc.)?³ It is therefore beneficial to compare persuasion with a typical speech act to make its definition more clear-cut.

The speech act is one of the popular topics in historical pragmatics (Jucker & Taavitsainen 2008, etc.). The directive, for example, is a speech act to make someone do something, and performed with, for example, a performative verb, an imperative verb, and a sentence including a modal (e.g. *You shall ...*) (Kohnen 2004; Busse 2008; Culpeper & Archer 2008; Kohnen 2009, etc.). It should first be noted that typical speech acts are performed by a single utterance, which is at a micro level, while persuasion rather takes a macro perspective, because it requires a certain length of interaction with others. Since topics with a macro perspective require a more complex analysis, persuasion has not yet been analysed extensively in historical pragmatics.⁴ As seen in (1), Menus' purpose is to persuade Pompey to let him kill the triumvirs, and he starts this attempt at persuasion by asking questions, namely he performs speech acts, to bring about a change in Pompey's mind.

The other important point is that persuasion influences the judgements and actions of others more explicitly. The analysis of typical speech acts does not put a big emphasis on the perlocutionary effect, which focuses on this 'influence'. In persuasion, on the other hand, it is of paramount importance that there is actually an influence on others (O'Keefe 2002: 3); Jucker (1997: 123). For this reason, (2a) sounds strange because "I persuaded" means there was a certain influence on him:

² This paper basically assumes that the roles of the persuader and the persuadee continue to be the same in a single context of persuasion. To be more precise, however, they possibly switch roles as discourse progresses.

³ It is reasonable to assume that persuasion is a kind of speech act, or a speech act in a broader sense. Walton (2007: 46-90), for instance, defines persuasion as a kind of speech act. Here I am attempting to highlight the characteristics of persuasion by comparing it with typical speech acts, not to deny that idea.

⁴ As examples of historical research of persuasion, cf. Yoshikawa (2011) on ME religious prose, Pakkala-Wekström (2001) on Chaucer, and Vickers (1983); Gilbert (1997); and Boden (2004) on Shakespeare.

- (2) a. ?I persuaded him but failed.
 b. I tried to persuade him but failed.
 c. I persuaded him.

(O’Keefe 2002: 3)

In order to analyse both cases where persuasion is successful and unsuccessful, it is necessary to analyse “linguistic features of text types for which a persuasive intention can be taken for granted” (Jucker 1997: 123).

Having compared persuasion and typical speech acts, I will examine the four conditions of persuasion along the lines of O’Keefe (2002) and Simons & Jones (2011).

First and foremost, persuasion is accomplished by various means of human communication, i.e. verbal/nonverbal, spoken/written, explicit/implicit, and face-to-face/mediated through contemporary technology. In Shakespeare, most of the cases are face-to-face, spoken communication.⁵ Only 2 cases of communication via letters are recorded in the corpus of the present study.⁶ It is easy to imagine that in history communication medium was far more limited than in modern times. Second, as seen in (2), the persuasion attempt is not successful if the persuader cannot exert any influence on the persuadee.⁷ It is successful if the persuader can make the persuadee carry out some action, or change persuadee’s mind. If the persuader cannot make any change in the persuadee’s mind, if the persuadee wanted to do from the beginning what the persuader wants him/her to do, or if the persuadee always follows the persuader’s orders, it is not considered to be a case of persuasion.

The next two are the conditions on the persuader’s and the persuadee’s side, respectively. The third condition is that the persuader has some criterion or goal, and the intention to reach that goal. In (1), Menus has the goal and intention to persuade Pompey to give his approval to assassinate the triumvirs. Fourth, the persuadee is asked to make a certain judgement of the persuasion attempt. Since the persuasion is not an order, the persuadee has a measure of freedom to say “no”. In the later context of (1), Pompey rejects Menus’s proposal, and so the persuasion attempt fails in the end. Figure 1 below is the summary of the conditions for persuasion:

⁵ Monologues are excluded here.

⁶ For example, in Act 2, Scene 1 of *Julius Caesar*, Cassius tries to persuade Brutus to lead the conspiracy to assassinate Julius Caesar by sending an anonymous letter, not just by talking directly to him.

⁷ Influence is a category that encompasses a wide variety of attempts to deliberately change someone’s thoughts or behaviours. According to Cialdini (2009), influence has 6 features, i.e. reciprocity, commitment and consistency, social proof, liking, authority, and scarcity. Persuasion can be considered to be a subcategory of influence. The crucial difference is that persuasion is accomplished by human communication, which comes first among the conditions for persuasion on the list in Figure 1.

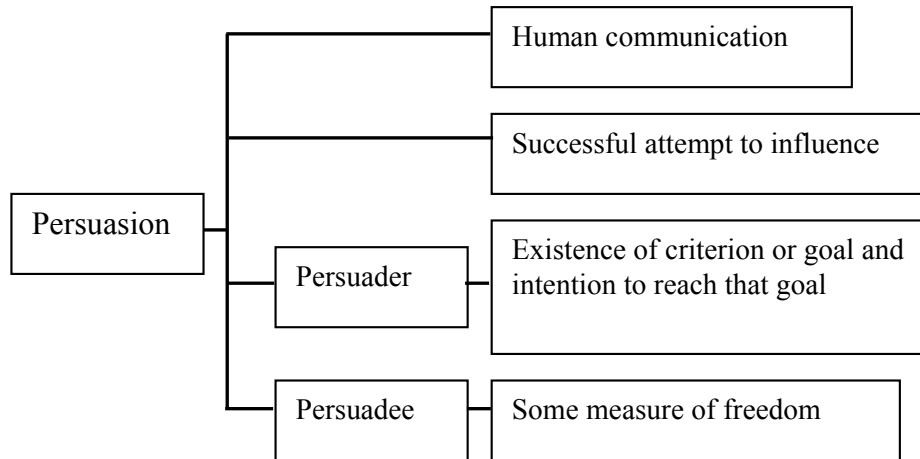


Figure 1. Conditions for persuasion

I have defined persuasion and examined its conditions comparing it with typical speech acts. In what follows, after introducing the corpus of the present research and the meanings and functions of modals briefly, I will analyse how the modals are exploited in the contexts of persuasion which fit these conditions.

3. Data

This paper analyses persuasion in Shakespeare's plays with particular attention to modals as strategies. The text for analysis is the Riverside edition of Shakespeare (Evans 1997), and the concordance by Spevack (1968-1980) has also been consulted. Four of Shakespeare's plays comprise the corpus for the present study:

Antony and Cleopatra (its abbreviatory form is ANT; 26,299 words)

Tragedy and history (1606-1607)⁸

Julius Caesar (JC; 20,764 words)

Tragedy and history (1599)

Love's labor's lost (LLL; 22,819 words)

Comedy (1594-1595)

The merchant of Venice (MV; 22,602 words)

Comedy (1596-1597)

⁸ The dates in parentheses signify the proposed dates when the plays could have actually been written (Evans 1997).

The corpus consists of a total of 92,484 words. The choice of plays maintains symmetry of tragedies and comedies, and offers a wide spectrum of dialogues among speakers of various social backgrounds. Table 1 below shows the summary of persuasion attempts in the corpus:

Table 1. Persuasion attempts in the corpus

Play	Persuasion
ANT	14
JC	9
LLL	4
MV	5
Total	32

The table indicates how many times the attempts of persuasion are detected in each play, but not the outcomes of these persuasion attempts, that is, if they are successful or not successful in that context. It is because what is important is rather to analyse the linguistic features of text types where a persuasion intention is detected as Jucker (1997) suggests, than to analyse the conditions for successful persuasion. Even when the persuasion attempt is successful, the persuadee might change his/her mind in later contexts, or he/she might not be able to put the idea into action for some reason.

4. Modals and persuasion

4.1. Modals

The present research analyses proximal and distal forms of modals SHALL/SHOULD, WILL/WOULD, CAN/COULD, MAY/MIGHT, MUST, and the contracted form 'LL.⁹ Modals syntactically developed from verbs, from auxiliaries, and semantically from lexical meaning, next (less subjective) modality, to (more subjective) modality (Traugott 1972, 1989; Sweetser 1990, etc.). Modals such as WILL and SHALL had further bleaching to obtain the meaning and function close to future tense (Arnovick 1999; Nakayasu 2009, etc.).

⁹ The distal modals do not necessarily express the past time. MOTE, which is the present tense form of MUST, is not recorded in the corpus. There are only 3 cases where the distal modal signifies past time.

Modality is a grammatical category which is typically represented by modals and concerned with the status of the proposition which expresses the event (Palmer 2001, etc.). The present research assumes a trichotomy for modality following Palmer (2001): epistemic, deontic, and dynamic.¹⁰ As regards the subjectivity of modality, I will follow Verstraete’s (2001) proposal of the subjective-objective distinction of modality:

Table 2. The subjective-objective distinction for epistemic, deontic, and dynamic modality

Modality	Subjective	Objective
Epistemic	+	–
Deontic	+	+
Deontic	–	+

(Verstraete 2001: 1525)

Epistemic modality describes the speaker’s judgement of the factual status of the proposition or the state of affairs represented in the proposition:¹¹

- (3) [Ant.] (...)
 Over thy wounds now do I prophesy
 (...)
 A curse *shall* light upon the limbs of men; (...)
- (JC 3.1.259-262)

Deontic modality describes the state of affairs represented in the proposition which has not yet been actualised. The conditioning factor is outside the relevant individual, as in the cases of obligation or permission:

¹⁰ While the present study and Palmer (2001) assume a trichotomy, works such as Coates (1983) adopt a dichotomy.

¹¹ Epistemic modality developed later than other modalities, and is considered to be more subjective (i.e. expresses the speaker’s judgement) (Traugott 1972, 1989; Sweetser 1990; Verstraete 2001, etc.). Although Lyons (1977: 797) assumes two kinds of epistemic modality, i.e. objective and subjective, it is difficult to make a clear distinction between them in everyday language use. The present research rather takes the position that the historical change in meaning from objective to subjective (subjectification) is part of the change called grammaticalisation, which is realised in the polysemy of modals.

- (4) *Cleo.* Who's born that day
When I forget to send to Antony,
Shall die a beggar.

(ANT 1.5.63-65)

Though dynamic modality also describes the state of affairs not actualised yet, the conditioning factor is inside the relevant individual, as in the cases of ability or willingness:

- (5) *Bru.* (...)
I *shall* find time, Cassius; I *shall* find time.

(JC 5.3.103)

The distal forms of modals, often called 'past modals', can represent three meanings of the past tense (Oakeshott-Taylor 1984). These meanings assume that the situation is distant from the here and now of the speaker, which is a default. The temporal meaning represents that the situation is temporally distant from the speaker's here and now, i.e. it is in the past:

- (6) *Cleo.* (...) and great Pompey
Would stand and make his eyes grow in my brow;

(ANT 1.5.31-32)

In the metaphorical meaning, the situation is distant from the direct speech act, i.e. the speaker is politely talking to the addressee:

- (7) *Dull.* (...) but I *would* see his own
person in flesh and blood.

(LLL 1.1.184-185)

The hypothetical meaning, on the other hand, describes the situation as distant from the fact, i.e. it is a hypothetical situation:

- (8) *Cleo.* I *would* I had thy inches, thou *shouldst* know
There were a heart in Egypt.

(ANT 1.3.40-41)

Salmi-Tolonen (2005) argues that epistemic modality works as a strategy of persuasion, and analyses in what way modals such as MUST and WOULD are related with other strategies such as speech act verbs. In the next subsection, I will analyse how modality and speech acts work in contexts of persuasion.

4.2 Quantitative analysis of persuasion and modals

This subsection will conduct statistical analyses of the semantic and pragmatic factors of the modals working in persuasion.

Examine Table 3, which summarises how many times the persuader and the persuadee employ each modal:

Table 3. Modals in persuasion

Modal	Persuader		Persuadee		Total	
	Instances	%	Instances	%	Instances	%
SHALL	27	12.3	56	20.7	83	16.9
SHOULD	25	11.4	29	10.7	54	11.0
WILL	49	22.3	57	21.0	106	21.6
WOULD	36	16.4	31	11.4	67	13.6
'LL	20	9.1	35	12.9	55	11.2
CAN	17	7.7	31	11.4	48	9.8
COULD	9	4.1	4	1.5	13	2.6
MAY	17	7.7	12	4.4	29	5.9
MIGHT	4	1.8	6	2.2	10	2.0
MUST	16	7.3	10	3.7	26	5.3
Total	220	100.0	271	100.0	491	100.0

The modals employed by the persuader more often than the persuadee are distal WOULD (16.4%) and COULD (4.1%), which are typically used for metaphorical and hypothetical meanings. In the following context, the hypothetical meaning of WOULD plays an important part:

- (9) *Agr.* (...) By this marriage,
 All little jealousies, which now seem great,
 And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing. Truths *would* be tales,
 Where now half tales be truths. Her love to both
Would each to other and all loves to both
 Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
 For 'tis a studied, not a present thought,
 By duty ruminated.

(ANT 2.2.130-138)

Agrippa tries to persuade Antony to marry Caesar's sister Octavia. He states what would happen if he could marry her, mitigating the speech act with hypothetical meaning of the distal modal WOULD. MAY (7.7%) is used to ask for the per-

suadee's permission politely, and with MUST (7.3%), the persuader insists on the persuadee's obligation. The persuadee, on the other hand, tends to employ proximal modals: SHALL (20.7%), 'LL (12.9%), and CAN (11.4%). This is because the effect of these modals to mitigate the speech act is weaker than that of distal modals. It is up to the persuadee to be polite to the persuader or not. If he/she wants to defend and argue his/her own position, he/she does not necessarily have to mitigate his/her argument. WILL is employed frequently both by the persuader (22.3%) and by the persuadee (21.0%). With the aid of WILL, the persuader makes a request more often than the persuadee (8 and 1 instances, respectively), while the persuadee expresses their intention more often than the persuader (16 and 2 instances, respectively). In contrast to WILL, the contracted form 'LL is seldom used for questions because it cannot take an interrogative structure. This can be one of the reasons why it is employed more often by the persuadee, who has an authority to choose and does not necessarily have to ask the persuader's intention.

Next I will examine modality, which is a semantic category. Table 4 reveals how often the three types of modality are used by the persuader and the persuadee, respectively:

Table 4. Modality and modals in persuasion

Modality	Persuader		Persuadee		Total	
	Instances	%	Instances	%	Instances	%
Epistemic	73	33.2	58	20.7	131	26.7
Deontic	31	14.1	51	18.8	82	16.7
Dynamic	111	50.5	155	57.2	266	54.2
Indeterminate	5	2.3	7	2.6	12	2.4
Total	220	100.0	271	100.0	491	100.0

The category 'indeterminate' covers cases where it is not possible to exclude from consideration all but one of the possible meanings (Coates 1983: 14-17).

The first point to note is that dynamic modality is frequently employed both by the persuader (50.5%) and the persuadee (57.2%). The persuader makes use of dynamic modality to show his/her own intention to persuade, while on the persuadee's side, he or she expresses his/her intention to accept or reject the persuasion. It is also interesting to note that while the persuader utilizes epistemic modality (33.2%) more often than the persuadee, the persuadee tends to resort to event modality, i.e. deontic modality (18.8%) and dynamic modality (57.2%). In other words, the persuader has a tendency to make a certain judgement of the proposition with more subjective modality: he or she mitigates his/her speech act to be more tentative to present the idea. On the other hand, the persuadee makes use of more objective modality more often than the persuader, which is related to factors that actualise the event, and does not mitigate his/her speech act, but pre-

sents the idea in a more straightforward way. However, it would be necessary to widen the scope of the corpus to make a definitive conclusion.

Although examining every detail of modality of all modals is not within the scope of this short paper, it is interesting here to briefly take an example of the modal WILL, which is frequently employed equally by the persuader and the persuadee. Table 5 below shows the breakdowns of modality of WILL exploited by the persuader and the persuadee:

Table 5. Modality of WILL in persuasion

Modality	Persuader		Persuadee		Total	
	Instances	%	Instances	%	Instances	%
Epistemic	9	18.4	6	10.5	15	14.2
Deontic	2	4.1	0	0.0	2	1.9
Dynamic	37	75.5	49	86.0	86	81.1
Indeterminate	1	2.0	2	3.5	3	2.8
Total	49	100.0	57	100.0	106	100.0

Dynamic modality enjoys by far the largest proportion, particularly for the persuadee (86.0%), and this is related to some speech acts such as intention and decision, which will be discussed later. You may also notice that epistemic modality is higher for the persuader (18.4%).

The next step is to observe how speech acts, a pragmatic category, are performed in utterances including a modal. Table 6 illustrates what kind of speech acts the persuader and the persuadee perform using a modal in their attempts of persuasion.¹²

Table 6. Speech acts performed with modals in persuasion

Speech act	Persuader		Persuadee		Total	
	Instances	%	Instances	%	Instances	%
Statement	33	15.0	23	8.5	56	11.4
Prediction	34	15.5	25	9.2	59	12.0
Expressive	5	2.3	7	2.6	12	2.4
Insult	0	0	2	0.7	2	0.4
Intention	5	2.3	43	15.9	48	9.8
Decision	15	6.8	22	8.1	37	7.5
Promise	8	3.6	13	4.8	21	4.3
Threat	3	1.4	9	3.3	12	2.4

¹² Table 6 basically follows the list in Nakayasu (2009), which analyses SHALL/SHOULD, WILL/WOULD, and 'LL, taking into consideration the speech acts performed by utterances including CAN/COULD, MAY/MIGHT and MUST. The present research deleted 'announcement' and added 'refusal'. See Nakayasu (2009: 246) for detail.

Assurance	5	2.3	3	1.1	8	1.6
Order	1	0.5	4	1.5	5	1.0
Prohibition	1	0.5	3	1.1	4	0.8
Advice	4	1.8	1	0.4	5	1.0
Request	12	5.5	9	3.3	21	4.3
Permission	2	0.9	5	1.8	7	1.4
Proposal	5	2.3	8	3.0	13	2.6
Offer	1	0.5	2	0.7	3	0.6
Refusal	0	0	4	1.5	4	0.8
Question	21	9.5	19	7.0	40	8.1
Confirmation	7	3.2	2	0.7	9	1.8
IFID	3	1.4	0	0.0	3	0.6
No act	55	25.0	67	24.7	122	24.8
Total	220	100.0	271	100.0	491	100.0

Since speech acts can be performed by a single utterance, this list naturally includes speech acts which do not seem to be related to persuasion, as seen in Section 2.

Note first that the persuader performs statement (15.0%) and prediction (15.5%) more often than the persuadee. In these speech acts, the speaker does not present his/her proposition as it is, but mitigates it with the aid of the modal. Recall (9) is an example of prediction. Agrippa states what would happen if Antony could marry Octavia, mitigating the speech act with hypothetical meaning of the distal modal WOULD.

On the other hand, though not so often, speech acts such as insult (0.7%) and refusal (1.5%) are performed by the persuadee. In (10) below, the King tries to persuade the Princess (Rosaline disguises herself as the Princess) to dance with him:

- (10) *King*. Why take we hands then?
Ros. Only to part friends.
Curtesy, sweet hearts—and so the measure ends.
King. More measure of this measure; be not nice.
Ros. We *can* afford no more at such a price.
King. Price you yourselves; what buys your company?
Ros. Your absence only.
King. That *can* never be.
Ros. Then *cannot* we bought; and so, adieu—
 Twice to your visor, and half once to you.

(LLL 5.2.220-227)

Rosaline employs CAN in a negative context to perform refusal. This speech act, however, is never performed by the persuader, because if it was performed, the persuadee would flatly reject the persuasion attempt.

Some speech acts are related to dynamic modality, while others have strong connection to deontic modality. The persuadee performs intention (15.9%) and decision (8.1%) more often than the persuader.¹³ In the following, Antony attempts to persuade the citizens to trust him and stand against the conspirators. He expresses his intention with the modal WILL:

- (11) *Ant.* (...)

O Masters! if I were dispos'd to stir

Your hearts and minds to mutiny and rage,

I *should* do Brutus wrong, and Cassius wrong,

Who (you all know) are honorable men.

I *will* not do them wrong; I rather choose

To wrong the dead, to wrong myself and you,

Than I *will* wrong such honorable men.

(JC 3.2.121-127)

If the persuadee performs these kinds of speech acts, he/she will reject the persuasion attempt, insisting on his/her own idea; or he/she gladly will accept it. On the other hand, order, prohibition and permission, which are related to deontic modality, have a low frequency, and the persuader in particular seldom performs them (0.5%, 0.5% and 0.9%, respectively).

Questions are relatively often performed both on the persuading side (9.5%) and on the persuaded side (7.0%). There are two kinds of questions, that is, information-seeking questions and rhetorical questions, and the latter occur a little more frequently (14 instances out of 21 on the persuader's side, and 13 instances out of 19 on the persuadee's side). The following is an example of information-seeking questions, as already seen in (1):

- (12) (=1))

Men. *Wilt* thou be lord of all the world?

Pom. What say'st thou?

Men. *Wilt* thou be lord of the whole world? That's twice.

Pom. How *should* that be?

Men. But entertain it,

And though you think me poor, I am the man

Will give thee all the world.

(ANT 2.7.61-65)

¹³ Though they are similar to each other in that both of them are related to dynamic modality and expresses the speaker's intention, the latter implies a change in the speaker's mind. For the difference between intention and (instant) decision, see Nakayasu (2009: 88-89; *passim*).

With a rhetorical question, the persuader tries to agitate and persuade the other, while the persuadee tries not to fall into the other's trap. In (13) below, Casca asks rhetorical questions to persuade Brutus to lead the conspiracy to assassinate Caesar:

- (13) *Cas. (...)*
 Brutus and Caesar: what *should* be in that "Caesar"?
 Why *should* that name be sounded more than yours?
 (JC 1.2.142-143)

IFIDs (illocutionary force indicating device) may include a modal. The persuader only employs them in the corpus, e.g. *I would say* (ANT 1.1.28), used when the persuader starts to say something difficult to say, and *if you may* (LLL 5.2.341), used when the persuader asks something politely.

Although it is not the purpose of this short paper to examine the relationship between all the modals and speech acts in detail, I will take an example of WILL, which is almost equally employed by the persuader and the persuadee. Table 7 below is the list of speech acts performed with the aid of WILL in the context of persuasion:

Table 7. Speech acts and WILL in persuasion

Speech act	Persuader		Persuadee		Total	
	Instances	%	Instances	%	Instances	%
Statement	3	6.8	1	2.1	4	4.4
Prediction	6	13.6	5	10.6	11	12.1
Intention	2	4.5	16	34.0	18	19.8
Decision	6	13.6	9	19.1	15	16.5
Promise	3	6.8	8	17.0	11	12.1
Threat	0	0.0	1	2.1	1	1.1
Assurance	1	2.3	0	0.0	1	1.1
Order	0	0.0	1	2.1	1	1.1
Request	8	18.2	1	2.1	9	9.9
Proposal	0	0.0	1	2.1	1	1.1
Offer	0	0.0	2	4.3	2	2.2
Question	5	11.4	0	0.0	5	5.5
No act	10	22.7	2	4.3	12	13.2
Total	44	100.0	47	100.0	91	100.0

Most notably, intention is performed by the persuadee most often (34.0%). The persuader defends him-/herself against the persuasion attempt, insisting on his/her intention. It is also noteworthy that the persuader makes a request more

often than the persuadee (18.2%). All of the instances recorded in my corpus assume an interrogative form (7 instances of *Will you - ?* and 1 instance of *Will't please - ?*). In these examples, the persuader is addressing the persuadee's intention using dynamic modality inherent in the modal WILL.

Having investigated quantitatively how the meanings and functions of the modals are exploited in persuasion, I will conduct a qualitative analysis of how the persuader and the persuadee actually interact with each other in the discourse of persuasion.

5. Persuasion in discourse

The analysis in Section 4.2 demonstrated that some of the meanings and functions of the modals are more easily accessible either by the persuader or by the persuadee. Here I will start the discussion with proximal and distal meanings of the modals.

The proximal meaning is connected to the here and now of the speaker and directly addressed to the hearer, while the distal meaning is apart from the here and now. This contrast of proximal vs. distal perspectives is sometimes exploited by the persuader and the persuadee. Recall the quantitative analysis of persuasion and modals in 4.2. Roughly speaking, the persuadee has a tendency to use proximal modals more often than the persuader (SHALL, 'LL and CAN as far as my corpus is concerned), whereas the persuader favours some distal modals such as WOULD and COULD.

It is the persuadee's choice to defend his/her own position, or to accept the persuader's idea. Sometimes the persuadee strongly insists on his/her position without mitigating it, and this is exactly when proximal modals are at work. Take the persuadee's use of WILL and 'LL, for example, where dynamic modality cooperates closely with negative element to express the strong intention to reject the persuader's attempt. In (14) below, Proculeius tries to persuade Cleopatra to follow Caesar, but she will not comply:

- (14) *Pro.* O, temperance, lady!
Cleo. Sir, I *will* eat no meat, I'*ll* not drink sir;
 If idle talk *will* once be necessary,
 I'*ll* not sleep neither. This mortal house I'*ll* ruin,
 Do Caesar what he *can*. Know, sir, that I
Will not wait pinion'd at your master's court,
 Nor once be chastis'd with the sober eye
 Of dull Octavia. (...)

(ANT 5.2.48-55)

Regarding the persuadee's WILL, 12 out of 57 instances are negative, and 11 out of the 12 negative instances are dynamic.¹⁴ The contracted form 'LL also demonstrates a strong connection between dynamic modality and negation (9 out of 35 instances are negative, and 8 out of the 9 negative instances are dynamic).

In Act 2 of *Julius Caesar*, Calphurnia tries to dissuade her husband Caesar from going out with the aid of SHALL, which is a proximal modal. The persuadee Caesar employs the same modal SHALL and insists on going out:

- (15) *Cal.* What mean you, Caesar? Think you to walk forth?
 You *shall* not stir out of your house to-day.
Caes. Caesar *shall* forth; the things that threaten'd me
 Ne'er look'd but on my back; when they *shall* see
 The face of Caesar, they are vanished.

(JC 2.2.8-12)

In *Caesar shall forth*, he expresses his strong intention, switching Calphurnia's modality of SHALL from deontic to dynamic. Recall that as already seen in 4.2, the persuadee performs the speech act of intention more often than the persuader. Although Caesar continues to use SHALL, Calphurnia succeeds in persuading him not to go out. He switches the subject from the metonymical "Caesar" to the first person "I", and the modal from SHALL to WILL:

- (16) *Caes.* And you are come in very happy time
 To bear my greeting to the senators,
 And tell them that I *will* not come to-day.
Cannot, is false; and that I dare not, falser:
 I *will* not come to-day. Tell them so, Decius.

(JC 2.2.60-64)

This means that his social role changes from a public figure as a triumvir to an individual (Nakayasu 2009: 227).¹⁵ Still, the persuadee Caesar is armed with proximal modals. Then, assuming the role of a persuader, Decius tries to talk him into going out with the aid of proximal modals:

- (17) *Dec.* I have, when you have heard what I *can* say;
 And know it now: the Senate have concluded

¹⁴ See Table 5 for the high percentage of dynamic modality in the persuadee's uses of WILL.

¹⁵ Caesar's social role as a triumvir functions as the conditioning factor outside him (the subject). This conditioning factor encourages him to choose SHALL, whose modality is deontic. Once he starts to employ WILL, and so the conditioning factor is inside himself, he expresses his own intention as an individual.

To give this day a crown to mighty Caesar.
If you *shall* send them word you *will* not come,
Their minds *may* change. Besides, it were a mock
Apt to be render'd, for some one to say,
“Break up the Senate till another time,
When Caesar’s wife *shall* meet with better dreams.”
If Caesar hide himself, *shall* they not whisper,
“Lo Caesar is afraid”?

(JC 2.2.92-101)

He does not request or order to go out, but he instead mitigates with epistemic modality what will happen if he does not go out, and performs a speech act of prediction. Recall that the persuader performs prediction more often than the persuadee, as seen in 4.2. This strategy achieves a successful outcome: Caesar decides to go out at last.

Distal modals are used also effectively in persuasion. In the following, Antony is attempting to persuade Caesar to reconcile:

- (18) *Ant.* I learn you take things ill which are not so –
Or being, concern you not.
Caes I *must* be laugh'd at
If, or for nothing or a little, I
Should say myself offended, and with you
Chiefly i' th' world; more laugh'd at, that I *should*
Once name you derogately, when to sound your name
It not concern'd me.
Ant. My being in Egypt, Caesar,
What was't to you?
Caes. No more than my residing here at Rome
Might be to you in Egypt; yet if you there
Did practice on my state, your being in Egypt
Might be my question.

(ANT 2.2.29-40)

The persuadee Caesar threatens Antony and makes a feint by using distal modals SHOULD and MIGHT in hypothetical meaning. The persuader Antony then reproaches Caesar, and fights back with COULD:

- (19) *Caes.* You praise yourself
By laying defects of judgment to me; but
You patch'd up your excuses.

Ant. Not so, not so:
 I know you *could* not lack, I am certain on't,
 Very necessity of this thought, that I,
 Your partner in the cause 'gainst which he fought,
Could not with graceful eyes attend those wars
 Which fronted mine own peace. As for my wife,
 I *would* you had her spirit in such another;
 The third o' th' world is yours, which with a snaffle
 You *may* pace easy, but not such a wife.

(ANT 2.2.54-64)

When the persuasion attempt seems to be unsuccessful, a new attempt is embedded in this context: Agrippa proposes that Antony marry Octavia, Caesar's sister, in order to lead them to reconcile:

(20) (=9)
Agr. (...) By this marriage,
 All little jealousies, which now seem great,
 And all great fears, which now import their dangers,
Would then be nothing. Truths *would* be tales,
 Where now half tales be truths. Her love to both
Would each to other and all loves to both
 Draw after her. Pardon what I have spoke,
 For 'tis a studied, not a present thought,
 By duty ruminated.

(ANT 2.2.130-138)

As already seen in (9), Agrippa utilizes the hypothetical meaning of WOULD, leaving the space to say “no”, and presenting the prediction that it would be beneficial to both parties if realised. This is precisely why hypothetical meaning of distal modals is exploited by the persuader.¹⁶ This embedded persuasion attempt turns out to be successful.

Next I will observe the cases where speech acts are exploited in persuasion attempts. As seen in 4.2, questions are occasionally performed in the discourse of persuasion. Recall the discussion on (1) in the first and second sections (repeated here for the sake of convenience):

¹⁶ From the perspective of politeness, it is a case of negative politeness. The persuader is paying respect to the persuadee's negative face wants not to be impeded by others. See Brown & Gilman (1989); Kopytko (1993); Nakayasu (2013), etc.

- (21) (=1))
Men. *Wilt* thou be lord of all the world?
Pom. What say'st thou?
Men. *Wilt* thou be lord of the whole world? That's twice.
Pom. How *should* that be?
Men. But entertain it,
 And though you think me poor, I am the man
Will give thee all the world.

(ANT 2.7.61-65)

In the above, the persuader Menus asks if Pompey intends to become the lord of all the world using information-seeking questions including WILL, which has dynamic modality. It is in fact an attempt to assassinate the three triumvirs. Menus knows well that he cannot persuade Pompey with a single utterance, and tries to draw his attention with this speech act. In later context, Pompey says he will not, and the attempt turns out to be unsuccessful.

Next the persuadee performs rhetorical questions. In Act 1 of *The merchant of Venice*, Antonio and his friend Bassanio ask Shylock to lend Antonio money, and Shylock curses about it with rhetorical questions to fend off the persuasion attempt:

- (22) *Shy.* (...)
 What *should* I say to you? *Should* I not say,
 "Hath a dog money? Is it possible
 A cur *can* lend three thousand ducats?" Or
Shall I bend low and, in a bondman's key,
 With bated breath and whisp'ring humbleness,
 Say this:
 "Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday last,
 You spurn'd me such a day; another time
 You call'd me dog; and for these courtesies
 I'll lend you thus much moneys"?

(MV 1.3.120-129)

As seen in 4.1, SHALL and SHOULD are related to deontic modality, whose conditioning factor is outside the relevant individual. This modality seems to strengthen the persuadee's rhetorical questions. Later Shylock agrees to lend him money on the condition that if Antonio cannot pay back, he should pay him an equal pound of his flesh.

Having seen speech acts in relation to modality, I will examine the context where the meaning and function of the proximal modal MAY play an active part in persuasion. In Act 3, Scene 1 of *Julius Caesar*, after Caesar has been

assassinated, Cassius attempts to dissuade Brutus from allowing Antony to speak at Caesar's funeral:

- (23) *Cas.* Brutus, a word with you.
 [*Aside to Brutus.*] You know not what you do. Do not consent
 That Antony speak in his funeral.
 Know you how much the people *may* be mov'd
 By that which he *will* utter?
Bru. By your pardon –
 I *will* myself into the pulpit first,
 And show the reason of our Caesar's death.
 What Antony *shall* speak, I *will* protest
 He speaks by leave and by permission;
 And that we are contented Caesar *shall*
 Have all true rites and lawful ceremonies.
 It *shall* advantage more than do us wrong.
Cas. I know not what *may* fall, I like it not.
Bru. Mark Antony, here take you Caesar's body.
 You *shall* not in your funeral speech blame us,
 But speak all good you *can* devise of Caesar,
 And say you do't by our permission;
 Else *shall* you not have any hand at all
 About his funeral. And you *shall* speak
 In the same pulpit whereto I am going,
 After my speech is ended.

(JC 3.1.231-251)

The persuader Cassius addresses solely Brutus ([aside]) and expresses his concern about Antony employing the modal MAY. However, the persuadee Brutus continues to employ proximal modals SHALL and WILL to argue his position, and despite another attempt by him using MAY, Cassius' persuasion attempt fails. Although these two instances of MAY are not in the main clause and therefore not directly related to the speech act of each utterance, their epistemic modality, and possibly its weak performative nature, play an important part here. With MAY, the persuader exploits a strategy called hedging and avoids committing himself to the truth of the proposition (Coates 1983: 133-134), which is in telling contrast to SHALL and WILL employed by the persuadee.¹⁷ These uses of MAY also demonstrate Cassius' character as a natural worrier, and his concern becomes a reality later.

¹⁷ See Fraser (1975) for hedged performatives, particularly the discussion on modals.

In the context of persuasion, the persuader can make a proposal depending on the interest of the persuadee, or agree to his/her view in the interaction. Here I will observe the cases where the persuader and the persuadee take advantage of each other's modals. The following context (24) precedes (22) above:

- (24) *Shy.* (...)

The man is notwithstanding sufficient. Three thousand ducats: I think

I *may* take his bond.

Bass. Be assur'd you *may*.

Shy. I *will* be assur'd I *may*; and that I *may*

be assured, I *will* bethink me. *May* I speak with

Antonio?

Bass. If it please you to dine with us.

(MV 1.3.25-32)

Bassanio makes use of MAY, which Shylock has just used, to persuade him to lend money to his friend Antonio. The persuadee Shylock further exploits MAY to show his favourable attitude toward lending him money.

The example below is taken from Act 2 of *Love's labor's lost*, where the King of Navarre has sworn to keep women away from him. The Princess of France tries to persuade him to welcome her into his court:

- (25) *King.* You *shall* be welcome, madam, to my court.

Prin. I *will* be welcome then – conduct me thither.

(LLL 2.1.95-96)

Note that the Princess switches the King's SHALL to WILL. While the King expresses his intention with the second person subject and deontic modality, the Princess does not just switch the modal, but also changes the subject to the first person, and the modality to dynamic modality.

My last example includes a variety of strategies which have been discussed in this section. As seen in (23), Antony has received Brutus' permission to speak at Caesar's funeral, and in Act 3, Scene 2, gives an address to Roman citizens.¹⁸ Although the citizens lean toward Brutus, who assassinated Caesar, Antony splendidly succeeds in persuading the citizens onto his side. Thanks to his various strategies, the citizens get strongly interested in his address, and ask him to read the will using proximal modals WILL, SHALL and 'LL:¹⁹

¹⁸ Gilbert (1997) attempts an analysis of this particular context by way of the politeness and co-operative principles.

¹⁹ The fact that the noun *will* and the modal WILL are homonyms gives a strong impression that the communication between Antony and the citizens are even closer.

- (26) 4. *Pleb.* We'll hear the will. Read it, Mark Antony.
All. The will, the will! We *will* hear Caesar's will.
Ant. Have patience, gentle friends, I *must* not read it.
 It is not meet you know how Caesar lov'd you:
 You are not wood, you are not stones, but men;
 And being men, hearing the will of Caesar,
 It *will* inflame you, it *will* make you mad.
 'Tis good you know not that you are his heirs,
 For if you *should*, O, what *would* come of it?
 4. *Pleb.* Read the will, we'll hear it, Antony.
 You *shall* read us the will, Caesar's will.
Ant. Will you be patient? Will you stay awhile?
 I have o'ershot myself to tell you of it.
 I fear I wrong the honorable men
 Whose daggers have stabb'd Caesar; I do fear it.
 4. *Pleb.* They were traitors; honorable men!
All. The will! the testament!
 2. *Pleb.* They were villains, murderers. The will, read the will!
Ant. You *will* compel me then to read the will?
 Then make a ring about the corpse of Caesar,
 And let me show you him that made the will.
Shall I descend? and *will* you give me leave?

(JC 3.2.138-160)

Antony, implying the content of the will, takes advantage of the proximal modals MUST and WILL.²⁰ Here WILL has epistemic modality, which assists his speech act of prediction. Then he switches to distal modals SHOULD and WOULD (epistemic modality); the hypothetical meaning of these distal modals and the rhetorical question with WOULD inflame the citizen's desire to know the content. Antony again makes the shift back to proximal modals and successively makes utterances: *Will you be patient? Will they stay awhile?* (modality is dynamic; speech act is request), *You will compel me then to read the will?* (dynamic; confirmation), *Shall I descend?* (deontic modality; proposal), and *will you give me leave?* (dynamic modality; request). With these proximal modals he performs speech acts where dynamic modality plays an

²⁰ Antony replies to the citizen's request, rejecting "I must not read it". Taking a narrower perspective, the citizens are the persuaders and Antony is the persuadee here. The present study postulates one persuader(s) and one persuadee(s) in a particular context, rather than assuming that the roles of the persuader(s) and the persuadee(s) take turns dramatically in that context. In this context of public address, Antony uses their request to his advantage by temporarily assuming the role of persuadee.

important role in asking the persuadees' intention, and at last succeeds in drawing them to his side.

In sum, both the persuader and the persuadee interact with each other, taking advantage of the meanings and functions of the modals.

6. Conclusion

This paper has analysed the discourse of persuasion in Shakespeare's plays from the perspective of historical pragmatics, with particular attention to the modals exploited as part of the strategies.

I started by examining the definition and conditions of persuasion, comparing them with those of typical speech acts, and pointed out that persuasion should be captured from a more macro perspective than typical speech acts, which are usually performed by single utterances. After describing the corpus of this research based on the definition of persuasion, the discussion was devoted to modality and the proximal and distal meanings of the modals. Statistical analyses were conducted of the context of persuasion in both cases where the persuasion attempt is successful and unsuccessful, classifying the strategies into the ones employed either by the persuader or by the persuadee. The analysis demonstrated that generally the persuader makes use of distal modals more often than the persuadee, while the persuadee prefers to employ proximal modals, and that both parties use WILL frequently. It was also shown that the persuader has a tendency to use more subjective (epistemic) modality more often, whereas the persuadee tends to resort to more objective (event, i.e. deontic and dynamic) modalities. The analysis of speech act showed that those which do not seem to be relevant to persuasion are often utilized; for example, statement, prediction and question. It was also found that some speech acts related to dynamic modality such as intention and decision are performed more often by the persuader, while some others such as prohibition and permission, which are associated with deontic modality, have a low frequency. Finally, I conducted a qualitative analysis of the cases where the modals play a significant role in discourse: how modality works in discourse, what kind of functions proximal and distal modals have in discourse, in what way speech acts, questions in particular, contribute to the purpose of persuasion, and how the persuader and the persuadee take advantage of the modals the other employs in interaction. The public address by Antony exemplified a wide variety of strategies connected to the modals.

The analysis in the present paper provided important insights into how speakers in the past communicated with each other, attempting persuasion and fending it off. It also shed new light on persuasion by putting the focus on modals. Further analysis will be necessary to elucidate the mechanism of persuasion in the past.

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