A TESTIMONIE'S STANCE: EDITORIAL POSITIONING IN ÆLFRIC'S *SERMO IN DIE PASCAE*[1]

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ABSTRACT

Being one of the first texts to reproduce in printed form the Anglo-Saxon characters, *A Testimonie of Antiquity*, basically an edition of Ælfric's "Sermo in Die Pascae", has been the object of philological studies. Its subject matter related to the Anglican reform has also been analysed from a religious perspective. This article intends to focus on a different aspect, the reason for the text's success evidenced in its several reproductions and content discussions, which have reached the 20th century. We claim the main credit for this success is to be given to its editors and, therefore, a pragmatic analysis concentrating on stance and engagement (Hyland 2005, 2009) is an adequate study frame. The conclusions will reveal how although there are quantifiable markers that facilitated the positive reception of the text, there were other elements (closer to modern writing implements) the authors utilized to achieve their final objective.

1. Introduction

A Testimonie of Antiquity (c.1566) is a work which initially called philologists' attention due to its use of Anglo-Saxon fonts or printed reproduction of Old English characters (Bromwich 1962; Claire 1976; Kelemen 1997; Robinson 1998; Mele-Marrero 2007). Nevertheless, the text was not about historical linguistics, it pursued a religious objective: prove the effective existence of an ancient faith and practice of the Church of England, especially concerning transubstantiation.

The several editions of *A Testimonie* are good evidence of its success, at least about how it was perceived as a creditable text. However, the "simple" reproduction of an Old English homily by Ælfric in the 16th c. does not seem persuasive enough for Early Modern English speakers, even more if we consider that parts of the content of the original text have been, in the 20th c., matter of debate for asserting, denying or reinterpreting transubstantiation (see for example: Thurston 1907; Leinbaugh 1982 or Grundy 1991).

In this paper we intend to analyse those pragmatic features that may have contributed to the credibility of *A Testimonie*. We claim that though some of them may be quantified, there are others less measurable, such as the form in which the text was reproduced and translated, which had an important weight in the achievement of its purpose. For the completion of this objective, we are going to concentrate not on the translation of the homily itself but on the elements surrounding it. A thorough reading of the Anglo-Saxon version of the homily against the Early Modern English version reveals that it was a quite close reproduction and word for word translation with few errors, inaccuracies or misprints (Leinbaugh 1982; Mele 2003). This fact makes us be more interested in the additions external to the homily since these are the ones that allowed the text to be interpreted from an Anglican perspective.

The contents of this article are structured as follows: first *A Testimonie* is described and historically contextualized, determining why a pragmatic analysis may be helpful in the understanding of its success. Section three establishes as a starting point for the study, the interaction author-reader in terms of stance and engagement as proposed by Hyland (2005, 2009). Section four presents quantifiable data basically for hedges, boosters, attitudinal markers, self-mention, reader pronouns, shared knowledge and personal asides. This is followed by a discussion of findings and the necessary inclusion of other factors in the analysis. Finally, conclusions will be stated.

2. The text: origins, production and success

A Testimonie of Antiquity is essentially an edition of one of the homilies by Ælfric (c.995-1020/25) who has been identified, not without some controversy (Magennis 2009) as abbot of Eynsham in Oxfordshire in 1005. He wrote, among other works, eighty homilies for the ecclesiastical year, issued in two series of forty, which show influence, or even possible translations, of previous Latin works.[2] Apparently, Ælfric's intention was that these texts were used as "ready-made lectures" for novice preachers; therefore, he propitiated the combinations of the two volumes and the circulation of copies what resulted in the

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2   For modern editions of the homilies see Clemoes (1997) or Godden (2001).

preservation of them to our days in up to twenty-seven manuscripts (Sisam 1967: 156).

The first Archbishop of Canterbury under Elizabeth I's reign, Mathew Parker (1504-1575), probably using MS. Corpus Christy College Cambridge 198 and MS. Cotton Faustina A IX, published in 1566 *A Testimonie of Antiquity*; here Ælfric's "Sermo in Die Pascae", number xv in the *Second Series*, is reproduced. This is the antecedent of other later editions of the *Anglo-Saxon Homily*. The printer was John Day, probably the one who produced the special Anglo-Saxon fonts used for the Old English original. Thanks to Parker, the preservation of valuable Anglo-Saxon manuscripts was possible.[3] He contributed to the Anglican Reformation and part of his antiquarian spirit had to do with his idea of finding in these manuscripts some support for the existence of an earlier Anglo-Saxon Church independent of Rome. These seem good reasons for Parker's election of the "Sermo in Die Pascae" of all Ælfric's homilies and its publication in *A Testimonie of Antiquitie, shewing the auncient fayth in the Church of England touching the sacrament of the body and bloude of the Lord here publikely preached, and also receaued in the Saxons tyme, aboue 600. yeares agoe*, full title of the work. Parker's intention was to sustain Ælfric's text was an evidence of the Anglo-Saxon belief in a spiritual communion and not a real blood and flesh one, which would imply a transubstantiation of wine and bread. As mentioned before, Ælfric's text, probably owing to its own sources (Leinbaugh 1982) is quite ambiguous for this, we even can find in it the retelling of two miracle stories in which people actually see that transubstantiation in the altar. Nevertheless, Parker achieved his purpose with a careful edition of the homily.

The eighty-seven folios of the book are mainly covered by the homily and its word for word translation by Joscelyn (Parker's secretary) on facing pages, but it also includes other sections. After the title page there is a Preface (17 folios), where the figure of Ælfric is presented; then follows the homily, "Sermo in die Pascae", with 42 folios and after it extracts from two letters attributed to Ælfric that mix Old English and Latin together with commentaries and translations by the editors (14 folios). The first letter is to Wulfsine (bishop of Scyrburne), and the second to Wulfstane (archbishop of York). The latter is also reproduced in Latin. These are followed by a list of supporters preceded by the corresponding commentary (3 folios), continuing with an introduction to the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ten Commandments in Old English with interlinear translations

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[3] Others like his secretary John Joscelyn, Lawence Nowell and William Lambarde, and later the Elstobs (William, b. 1673 and Elizabeth, b. 1683) contributed to what is known as the Anglo-Saxon revival. Nowell prepared a text on Anglo-Saxon laws, *Archaianomia*, published in1568 by his friend and pupil Lambarde (1536-1601). He also compiled a dictionary based mainly on Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*. Joscelyn prepared a glossary based on Nowell's and a grammar but they were never published. For further information see Murphy (1982).

(8 folios). Next to the commandments it is stated how they were obtained from Ælfred's laws, restoring the words on the rejection of worship of idols that according to the editors had been erased considering the instruction of the second council of Nicene in 787, as received by Charles of France who sent to Britain a synod book in 792 (2 fols). The book ends with a brief explanation of the Old English characters, punctuation and their equivalents in Early Modern English (1 page).

According to Leinbaugh (1982: 51-52), with this work Parker introduced a "faulty textual tradition by suggesting that passages in Ælfric describing Christ's literal presence in the Eucharist were mere interpolations"; thus, he favoured the reproduction of Ælfric's homily with or without further modifications. The second edition of Fox's *Acts and Monuments* in 1570 contained a first replication of the homily in book 8. Fox eliminated the account of the miracles on the transubstantiation that Parker had maintained in *A Testimonie* as "interpolations". The text had two subsequent editions, one in 1576 and another in 1583, with several reprints.[4] Not only these but also in 1623 William L'Isle reproduced the text again as an appendix to his *Treatise on the Old and New Testament*, and the same did Guild in 1624 in *Three Rare Monuments of Antiquitie.* A re-edition of L'Isle appeared in London in 1877 (Leinbaugh 1982: 58-59, *ODNB* vol.1 166).[5]

As stated before, the text itself presented some content problems so its editors must receive most of the credit for their convincing capacity. This characteristic of the book is what we intend to analyze below and a pragmatic approach seems adequate since it will allow us to consider the positioning of the editors without entering in the "real value" of the homily itself, even though we do not intend to elude the importance it has in the whole context.

Several are the terms and definitions for the expression of the author's attitude, his relationship with the reader and the organization of his discourse. Thompson and Hunston (2003: 1-6) summarize it quite well going from *modalization/modulation*, *appraisal*, *modality*, *evidentiality*, *epistemic/deontic modality*, *epistemic/attitudinal stance*, *style stance*, etc., to be captured, in their case, in the umbrella term: *evaluation*. Quintana-Toledo (2009); Mele-Marrero and Alonso-Almeida (2011) have previously demonstrated the validity of these approaches for other Medieval and Early Modern English texts. Probably all the above designations and perspectives, with their shares and differences will have something to say about *A Testimony*, but we have adopted Hyland's approach

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[4]   For more information on Fox's works and see *The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online or TAMO* (2011)

[5]   The *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (*ODNB*) also continues this tradition when stating: "The name of Ælfric has become famous from the vigour with which he opposed the doctrine of transubstantiation [...] the sermon 'on the sacrifice,' for Easter Sunday, contains strong statements against the teaching of the Romish church on the subject of the eucharist".

that distinguishes between *stance* and *engagement* because it somehow under-lines both the position of the author (no matter how convincing or not) and his explicit interrelationship with the reader, trying to convince him. This is what we find initially in our text and what we think contributes to reinforce the links of a textual community in terms of Barton (2007: 75-76):

> A discourse community is a group of people who have texts and practices in common, whether it is a group of academics, or the readers of teenage magazines. In fact, discourse community can refer to several overlapping groups of people: it can refer to the people a text is aimed; it can be the people who read a text; or it can refer to the people who participate in a set of discourse practices both by read-ing and by writing [...] More generally, discourse communities are defined by having a set of common interests, values and purposes [...] Members of a dis-course community by definition have a common discourse, in the narrow sense of common ways of using language, and in the broader sense of common ways of acting in relation to knowledge.

The potential readers of *A Testimonie* would be those around the Anglican com-munity anxious to find or deny ancient origins for the church and with enough knowledge about transubstantiation and literacy in England to understand the text. How the authors position themselves and interrelate with the readers of their tex-tual community might be a relevant factor for the text's success.

3. Stance and engagement

In his article on stance and engagement (2005) Hyland concluded suggesting his model serves to expose "how writers anticipate and understand their reader's background knowledge, interests, and interpersonal expectations to control how they respond to a text and to manage the impression they gain from the writer". Even though other authors may have underlined the importance of this dialogic character of written texts (Bakhtin 1986; White 2003; White – Martin 2005), Hyland's exposition seems the most suitable for our analysis. We perceive that in *A Testimonie* it is not just the author's positioning what is relevant but also how the interrelationship reader-text is handled, specially because it is basically an edition of an older text, a "Sermo in Die Pascae".

Using Hyland's classification of stance and engagement markers, it is our pur-pose to deepen into the editors' capacities to control the response of the readers of the text. In his model of interaction Hyland (2005) proposed a basic distinction between stance and engagement. The first, not far from previous definitions (Biber et al. 1999), has to do with how writers express themselves with respect of their text, revealing their authority or minimize it. On the other hand, engagement has to do with the involvement of the readers by the writer "including them as discourse participants, and guiding them to interpretations" (Biber et al. 1999: 176). Both

forms of interaction present their specific resources, whereas *stance* relies more on hedges, boosters, attitude markers and self mentions, *engagement* appears in reader pronouns, personal asides, appeals to shared knowledge, directives and questions. Since these are the elements we have tried to localize in *A testimonie*, we will describe them briefly below using Hyland's (2005, 2009) examples.

3.1. Stance markers:

1)   Hedges mitigate the degree of commitment of the author avoiding categorical assertions and also allowing eventual discussions. Verbs like, *suggest*, *may*, *might* or adverbs like *perhaps* are typical hedges.
2)   Boosters, opposite to hedges, underline the author's certainty. *Clearly*, *obviously*, *demonstrate*, are usual boosters.
3)   Attitude markers can be exemplified in adjectives like appropriate, logical, adverbs such as *unfortunately* or verbs like *prefer*. These elements remark the writer's affective attitude.
4)   Self-mention appears through the use of the first person pronouns and possessive adjectives. This use varies in academic writing from one field to another, but it is clearly a way of establishing an authorial voice.

3.2. Engagement markers:

5)   Reader pronouns such as *you* and *your* are forms of involving the reader clearly in the discourse, though according to Hyland (182) these are less frequent than the inclusive *we*.
6)   Personal asides, are those commentaries through which the writer "talks" directly to the reader, in most cases guiding him to a specific interpretation of the text.
7)   Appeals to shared knowledge, form part of a communal basis for the understanding between writer and reader, marked more explicitly when trying to ask the reader "to recognize something as familiar or accepted" (184) with elements like *of course you know*, *obviously* or *familiar*.
8)   Directives are basically performed by imperatives (*consider*, *note*) or modals (*must*, *should ought*) which look for eliciting an action from the reader or again guide him to a specific view of the text.
9)   Questions, are mainly rhetorical and answered by the writer himself nearly always but they clearly search for the readers involvement and participation in the construction of the argument.

Our next sections shows the findings related to these type of markers and discussing if they appear the same way as in modern research articles contributing to the credibility of the text.

4. Results

As stated in the introduction, we have concentrated on those parts external to the homily itself, therefore our initial analysis has been divided into three parts: first, the preface to the homily (preface), second, the marginal notes to the translation of the sermon (sermon translation) and third, the texts that go from the epistles of Wulsine and Wulfstane till the end of the book (additions). Following this, Figure 1 presents the type of markers related to stance and engagement we have found in these three parts. Here are not included the elements that appear within the translations themselves since we are more interested in the editorial part that leads to a specific interpretation of the original
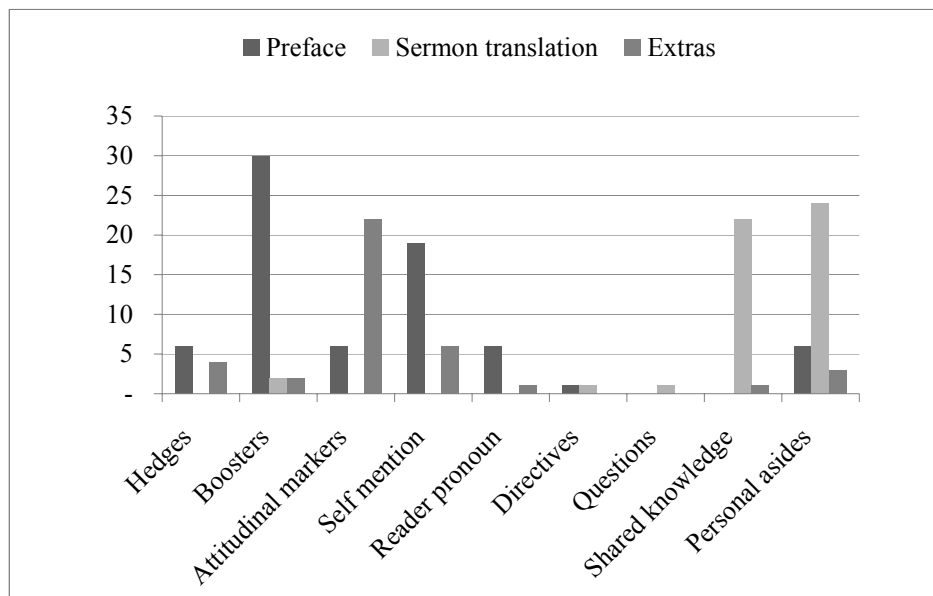
Figure 1. Stance and engagement markers

Figure 1 shows that the highest figure is that of the boosters and especially in the preface of the book, examples below illustrate this use:[6]

1) wherin is *plainly shewed* what was the iudgement of the learned men (3r)
2) And *truly* he calleth him selfe abbot (7v)
3) and therefore *dyd* most earnestly request (10v)

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[6] Original spelling is maintained in the examples, except for some majuscules and <-u-/v-> contextual allographs, contractions and abbreviations are also expanded. Italics are added for emphasis unless otherwise stated.

4)   they *doe* place amongst them also these two epistles (11r)
5)   it is *most certayne*, that there is no age (16v)

Adverbs showing the author's conviction are quite frequent but also the use of "periphrastic do" stressing the assertion or adding force to the adverbs as in (3).[7]

Personal asides also prevail, especially in the sermon translation. Since the original Anglo-Saxon text appears usually on the verso part of the folio and the translation on the recto, it is here where we find marginal notes,[8] marked with asterisks, that somehow expand the nearly word for word translation. We encounter, as exemplified below, commentaries that contradict the text (6) and (9), underline a point in it (7), (8) and (10) or clarify the translation giving an alternative (11). In the examples we offer the main word/words in question (maintaining the original round type) and the note (maintaining the original italics) immediately following, marked with asterisks.

6)   *Tau *No such signe commaunded by God in that place of scripture, but
      it was the bloud that God dyd loke upon (26r)
7)   Some thinges be spoken of Christ by *signification, some thyng by thing
      *A necessarye distinction (30r)
8)   It is *neturally corruptible bread & corruptible wine *No transubstantia-
      tion (35r)
9)   These tales seme to be infarsed placed here upon no occasion (39r)
10)   *This holy housel is both Christes body, and the body of all faithfull men
      *The housel is also the body of al faithfull men (47r)
11)   *heavenly meate *Manna (44r)

In (6), the original and the translation talk about the tau sign that the Israelites supposedly painted on their door posts to prevent the plague that would kill the Egyptians firstborns. From (7) to (9) it is perceived how these asides control the reading, through the word *necessary* in (7) and the negative in (8). (9) refers to the inclusion of the already mentioned stories of the miracles concerning transubstantiation in which their protagonists, having doubts about the consecrated host, are actually presented with bloody human rests in the altar (an angel sacrificing a child and a mutilated finger). These would go against the objective of the text, but on the other hand eliminating them would go against the expurgating that it also criticises. Therefore, the best option seems to suggest, hedging the aside with

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7   See Rissanen (1991) and Bækken (2002) for the historical development of the periphrastic do
    forms and their specific use in Early Modern English.
8   Notes appear included in the margin with a smaller type but also in italics, as the translation,
    and usually in column, otherwise they would exceed the printable space. They are marked
    with an asterisk that decreases in size if there is more than one note in the same margin.

seme, they are additions not present in Ælfric's first intention. In this case there is no asterisk marking note, which could be due to the length of the stories, fols. 39-40. (11) is just a clarification for the words "heavenly meate", which comes to emphasise that idea of a close translation from Anglo-Saxon.

Next in prominence are attitudinal markers and shared knowledge. The latter are found mainly in the sermon considering that all the marginal references to the scriptures with no additional comments (and no asterisk) are there to demonstrate Ælfric, the editors and the readers maintain the same original line of knowledge. An example could be the three allusions to the gospels that appear aside the following part of the translation:

12) Those Israelites were delivered from that sodaine death, & from Pharaos bondage by the lambes offringe which signified Christes suffering *Math.27./ Marc.15./Luke.24.* (24r)

Attitudinal markers are more frequent in the final part of the text. Some insist on previous personal asides:

13) Here is also made reporte of ii *vayne* miracles, which notwithstanding seeme to have been infarced for that they stand in their place (76r)
14) They are *truelye* put forth in print without any adding (77r)

Many expressions are in the line of *truelye*, like *more faithful*, *better credite*, *diligent care*, or right the opposite as in (13) or others like *unaptly*, *suspitious words*, *unadvised writing.* These reassert the reliability of the translation and Ælfric's own text versus those parts that were inconvenient for the main purpose of *A Testimonie.*

Self-mention and reader-pronouns again appear basically in the preface and the additions. In the preface the first person pronouns we find are just four more for the plural forms than for the singular. There seems to be an intention of involving the reader, especially when addressed directly but also stating this is the work of a group of "experts":

15) as might reveal unto *us* what has been the state of *our* church in England (3r)
16) *I* thinke notwithstanding, that there will hardlye be found of them any Lattyne books being (*I* feare *me*) (4v)
17) Also Leofricke and Wulfsine whom *we* have shewed to have been the gevers of those Cannon books (17v)
18) But that *thou* mayest knowe (good christian reader) (2r)
19) Here *thou* seest good reader how Aelfrike upon finding an abuse of his time (64v)

As it can be seen in graphic 1, hedges are quite low in comparison with the total amount of boosters, nevertheless, they do appear, see *might reveal* in (15) above or *shoulde appear* in (20) below:

20)   were not first written in the olde Saxon tounge: but were translated into it, as it *shoulde appeare*, from the Lattyne (3v)

The presence of clear directives using imperatives is reduced to two examples in the marginalia:

21)   *Understand thys as that of s. Paule (26r)
22)   *See a transubstantiation (43r)

In (21) and (22) appear imperative forms in which the reader is instructed on how to interpret the text. (21) refers specifically to the sign of the cross as mentioned in the main text: "we ought to marke our foreheads, and our bodies with the token of Christes roode" (26r) which is connected to the generally accepted idea of St. Paul's saying (Galatians 6:17.) that he bears the marks of Christ on his body. (22) refers to the mentioning "he turned that heavenly meate to his fleshe, and the flowing water from that stone to hys owne bloude" (43r) where the imperative of the note seems to indicate the transubstantiation did exist in that case, without any problem, probably because later the translation (and the Anglo-Saxon original) state it was a corruptible meat and "they ghostly understode by that visible thing and ghostly received it" (45r). Nevertheless, Fox's edition, changed this note and wrote "Here is no transubstantiation" (*TAMO*, 1570 edition, book 8: 1348).

For questions a single case could be pointed out, which might be doubtful:

23)   *What body do the faithfull now eate (45r)

Rather than a question we might be facing an exclamation or a relative clause of the type "whiche + repetition of the antecedent" pointed out by Görlach (1991: 124). We are inclined to subscribe this later possibility since the note would assert what is said in the main text: "but he ment with those words that holy housel, which ghostly is his body, and his bloud" (45r). We have no other examples to contrast this opinion, except that in the case of Fox, he altered the syntax of the sentence to "What body the faithfull do now eate" (*TAMO*, 1570 edition, book 8: 1348). Thus, we would be closer to an aside than to a question, but with the same intention of underlining specific passages in the homily.

If we sum up the markers for stance and engagement in each part of the book, separately and in total, we obtain the results of figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2. Stance and engagement totals per text parts
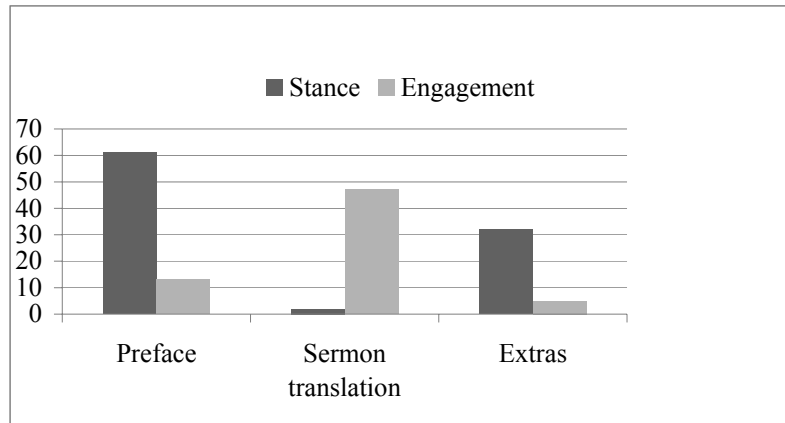
In figure 2 it can be appreciated how through stance markers the editors position themselves clearly in the preface and the extra parts, whereas in the translation of Ælfric's text what dominates is engagement. Consequently, they try to make the reader interrelate with Ælfric's text, and their interpretation of it without apparently positioning themselves but always conducting the dialogue between them. In total terms, as seen in figure 3, stance maintains a higher occurrence.

Figure 3. Stance and engagement totals
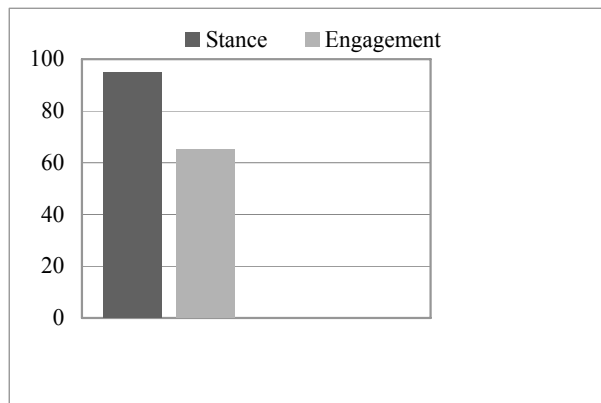
5. Discussion

From the figures and the examples above it can be appreciated how the continuous positive evaluation on the part of the editors in the preface and extras may have had a strong influence on the readers who assume the text presented as a valid source worthy of reproduction. The interaction with the readers specially in the annotations to the translation is also an essential part; we are told, not just informed, why something is significant or not and how what is mentioned is part of a common authoritative knowledge, the gospels. In total terms, the authors' position about the homily is significant but the engagement markers contribute notably to enhance the cohesion of the textual community.

There are other aspects difficult to quantify, that nonetheless have an effect on the reader, even if primarily visual since we are talking about written discourse. The reproduction of the Anglo-Saxon alphabet for Ælfric's text, including not only the runic characters thorn and wen, but also letters eth, ash, yogh, tau, long <s> and <r>, does not seem to be a casual decision but a rather meditated one by Parker. Special fonts for the printing were required for the period, a work initially attributed to John Day, although according to Claire (1976: 260) "the roman letters were of Flemish origin and the runes mixed with them were made in London by one of Day's foreign journeymen". Not only the letters but also the script, reproducing a Carolingian mixed with some insular forms, show to what extent they pretended to emulate the original homily. On the one hand we have the intentionality of the editors and on the other the effect caused on the readers, thus, it must have had repercussions in the appraisal of the text. These fonts are there like boosters, or positive attitude markers, trying to convince about the great respect with which the text was reproduced, nourishing the idea of its veracity. Not many would be able to read and completely understand Old English by the time, as the authors acknowledge and therefore "translated also for our better understanding, into our common, and usual Englishe speech" (6r). Thus, the veracity of the homily could hardly be challenged and this reliability is profitably extended to Parker's interpretation which is, nevertheless, biased. The graphemes format, contrasting the round forms for Anglo-Saxon with the italics for Early Modern English, also "engages" the reader in the translation and its notes.

Another contribution to the positive estimation of the text by the readers is the addition of the list of thirteen authorities (fol. 77) supporting the text for its "better credite", acting like an editorial board. They might, or might not, have read the whole text but if their name is there you trust their evaluative capacity within your discourse community and also the publication itself.

5. Conclusions

Our analysis has tried to show the importance of the author's expression for the success of a written work even in such an earlier period as the sixteenth century. The "faulty textual tradition" Leingbaugh talked about (see section 2) extended itself to the nineteenth and even the twentieth century if we consider the mention of the *ODNB* (see note 4). Stance and engagement markers have influenced the interpretation of a text which by itself is rather ambiguous. Boosters and inclusive self-mention for the preface, establish solid basis for the reproduction of the homily; shared knowledge and personal asides for the translation direct the reader to a specific interpretation, and, finally, attitudinal markers for the extras reinforce the pursued reading.

Further than this we have also exposed the relevance of factors more difficult to quantify. Parker and his associates benefitted of the tools the printing press offered them by employing special fonts and graphemes formats to validate their text. Their privileged position also allowed them use manuscripts of difficult access to safeguard the homily and to involve other authorities to support *A Testimonie*. These factors can be extrapolated to modern academic writing where editing implements of the type mentioned plus graphics, percentages, acknowledgements, etc. play a significant role in the positive evaluation of a text and its future success in the number of citations it will achieve.

In terms of Hyland all the above mentioned elements, not only quantifiable stance and engagement markers, contribute "to control how they [the readers] respond to a text and to manage the impression they gain from the writer". From our point of view, in spite of exerting this control over the reader, the editors of *A Testimonie*, initially, did not cheat, they presented all the data and a plausible interpretation, using all the writing devises they had at hand to accomplish their aim and following a pre-established theory. Their success resides in the repercussion this interpretation had. Later plagiarism, cutting and pasting are not the responsibility of *A Testimonie*; the blame for a "faulty textual tradition" can be laid on its fulfilment of the common desire of an Anglican textual community.

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