

Possession in Latin: effects of linguistic models on comprehension

Partes, posses e propriedades em Latim: efeitos de modelos linguísticos na compreensão

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Abstract: In this paper, I use Braga Bianchet's model of Latin and her translation of *Satyricon* as tools to describe the causal chain from a theory of language to a linguistic model and from that model to our comprehension skills. In one route, I sketch an alternative description of Latin. In the other, I show how little explanatory power comes from Braga Bianchet's claims. In the end, I extract a passage with a reference to a character's body part in Braga Bianchet's translation of *Satyricon*, then I demonstrate that any translator using her model of Latin would be lead to recognise an equivalent reference in the original. Finally, I show that such a miscomprehension does not happen when a translator uses a functional model of Latin such as the one sketched in this paper.

Keywords: possession; possessive; clause; modifier; head.

Resumo: Neste artigo, uso o modelo do Latim de Braga Bianchet e a tradução de *Satyricon* feita por ela como instrumentos para descrever a sequência causal desde uma teoria linguística passando um modelo linguístico até habilidades de compreensão textual. Por um caminho, esboço um modelo alternativo do Latim. Pelo outro, mostro o ínfimo poder explanatório das teses linguísticas de Braga Bianchet. No reencontro, destaco uma referência a uma parte do corpo humano na tradução e mostro que tradutores usando o modelo linguístico de Braga Bianchet são levados a enxergar uma referência equivalente no original.

Por fim, demonstro que mal-entendidos como esse não ocorrerão se tradutores passarem a usar modelos funcionais como o esboçado neste artigo.

Palavras-chave: controle; possessivo; oração; modificador; núcleo.

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1 Introduction

In this position paper, I anchor myself onto four linguistic claims about Latin made by Braga Bianchet, the translator of *Satyricon* (2004), to enter a broader discussion: on the one flank, I show ways by which a model of language can help us cope with the inherent complexity of human languages; on the other, I shed light on how such a model can also have a negative effect on our reading and translation skills.

For that enterprise, I chose Braga Bianchet's translation of *Satyricon* for a very special reason. Braga Bianchet is not only a proficient translator and a Latin scholar but also a linguist. In particular, in addition to translating *Satyricon*, she also carried out a study of Latin having *Satyricon* as her *corpus* and published the results in the end of her book. The four claims discussed in this paper come from that final chapter.

I see this chapter as a valuable instrument for studying how a translator's model of a particular language impacts his or her comprehension of the original text. When we have access to such a linguistic model, we can find an original text segment, predict how a translator would understand that segment using that model, and then check whether that understanding is confirmed by how the text was translated by him or her. In addition, when such a linguistic model is created with a public *corpus*, we can also explain how the linguist arrived at his or her model of Latin given the theory of Language he or she used. This is what I shall focus on: the causal chain from a theory of language to a model of a particular language and then from that model to a translator's comprehension skill.

My concern is by no means Braga Bianchet's competence as a Latin-Portuguese translator, which is unprecedented. The translation she made of *Satyricon* is an impressive work that many times challenges me

with her well thought-out translation decisions and I do not intend to make this paper a devaluation of her work in any sense. My concern is a theoretical one: which theory of language is more suitable for developing models of language that can be applied to reading and translation tasks.

To defend that the traditional/generative hybrid model that is currently used and taught is not adequate for enabling the development of proficiency and expertise in reading ancient languages such as Latin, I shall take two separate routes. In the first route, I shall sketch a description of Latin according to the Systemic-Functional Theory. In the second, I shall show how little explanatory power comes from Braga Bianchet's generative claims and demonstrate that they are not applicable to the tasks of reading and translating texts. I also consider a secondary explanation of how Latin works from another generative description of Latin to demonstrate that Braga Bianchet's model of Latin is not less powerful nor less accurate than other models within the same framework, the issue being in the framework itself. When we come to the application of the two models, the parallel routes come together and I extract an example of a comprehension problem from her translation and demonstrate that its occurrence is predictable given her linguistic claims. Again Braga Bianchet is not alone in this misunderstanding. All translations I have access to for this passage in English, German, Spanish, and French show that this reference does not get understood by anyone with the current models of Latin. What makes her case special is that we have access both to the linguistic model she used and to the *corpus* that she used to create the linguistic model, and not her actual misunderstanding of the original. Finally, I show that such a comprehension problem would not have happened if she had used a functional description of Latin such as the one sketched in this paper.

The contribution of this paper is not in the fact that functional models of Latin are better tools than generative ones for understanding ancient texts. This should be taken as given since enabling proficiency and expertise in comprehension is not the main goal of Generative Theory. A generative model is meant to generate all and only the strings that are possible in a language according to a grammaticality judge or judging committee. The purpose of such a model is to delimit a boundary for grammaticality and not to be a tool for readers and translators to understand what is meant. In other words, a good generative model is supposed to predict whether a string of characters will be considered

well formed or malformed by members of a linguistic community. Such models are not meant to explain why a sequence of words was chosen, i.e. they are not designed to predict what is meant by word sequences produced by members of that community. In that sense, generative models are intrinsically not applicable to the task of reading and translating texts. What makes this paper relevant is not that a model is better than the other for a particular purpose, but rather that a misunderstanding of a source text in translation can be explained based on the fact that the model of Latin used by the translator is a generative one. In other words, what shall be shown in this paper is that, by (unadvisedly) using a generative model of Latin to translate a Latin text, a translator will be lead to misunderstand the source text systematically. In particular, I shall show how this is the case for the model of Latin proposed by Braga Bianchet. In the next section, I present her claims.

2 Traditional/generative claims

The following claims were made by Braga Bianchet (2004) about the use of genitive nominal groups in *Satyricon*. These are approximate translations written in such a way that they become compatible with both a Systemic-Functional Theory and a Generative Theory. The original terminology is a hybrid from different theoretical frameworks whose meaning is inherently imprecise. In translating her claims, I chose to make my best and most favourable interpretation.

1. In most cases, genitive nominal groups have their primary function of Modifiers inside other nominal groups.¹
2. In this function, both the function of Premodifier (305 tokens) and Postmodifier (386 tokens) are similarly frequent.²
3. No variation can be seen in different episode groups.³

¹ “Os dados demonstram que, na maior parte dos casos, o genitivo exerce sua função precípua de complemento de nomes e que [...]”

² “As sequências com genitivo são bastante numerosas ao longo do *Satyricon* (305 ocorrências de genitivo-nome e 386 ocorrências de nome-genitivo)”.

³ “A análise das ocorrências de genitivo segundo seu emprego ao longo dos três grupos de episódios e a ordem do genitivo utilizada, demonstra que o posicionamento do genitivo é indiferente ao registro linguístico empregado pelo autor, [...]”.

4. There is no difference in meaning between Premodifiers and Postmodifiers.⁴

In the following, I shall take two parallel routes. In the first route comprising Sections 3-6, I shall review the data with the purpose of explaining why grammatical structures are chosen. The very fact that I shall describe motivations for constituent order choice implies that Claim 4 cannot be sustained and that choice is not random. In the second route comprising Section 7, I shall reduce and/or reject Braga Bianchet's claims so that what is left is supportable by evidence. Then I shall defend the argument that what is left has so little explanatory power that it is not applicable to the task of understanding Latin texts. Finally, the two parallel routes shall meet again in Section 8 and I shall illustrate with an example from Braga Bianchet's translation of *Satyricon* how her model of Latin encourages a translator to misunderstand the original. And I shall demonstrate that no alternative generative model of Latin would be able to explain constituent order for the given example, which means that no generative model would be able to encourage a different understanding of the passage. In the conclusion, I urge us to rethink our models of Latin so that we can read and translate surviving texts of that period in a less fail-prone way.

3 Possession

One of the experiential functions of genitive nominal groups is that of Possessive. For that reason, in this section, I shall review the notion of possession and the representation of it at the clause rank. There are two primary kinds of possession: part/part-of relations in which we conceive a whole and its parts as in Examples 1-4 and ownership/belonging relations in which we conceive of an owner and his or her goods as in Examples 5-8.

- (01) The house *has* a door. (part)
- (02) The house *comes with* the door. (part)
- (03) The door *is part of* the house. (part-of)

⁴ “[T]anto a preposição quanto a posposição eram utilizadas sem qualquer diferença de sentido”.

- (04) The door *is included with* the house. (part-of)
- (05) I *own* the house. (ownership)
- (06) I *have* a house. (ownership)
- (07) This house *belongs to* me. (belonging)
- (08) This house *is* mine. (belonging)

Part and ownership relations are said to belong to the having-type whereas part-of and belonging relations are said to belong to the belonging-type (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014, p. 296). If we consider the clauses above to be about an entity that carries an attribute, the notions of Possessor and Possessed conflate with Carrier and Attribute in the following ways: having-type possessions consist of a Possessor who/that is the Carrier of an Attribute and a Possessed that is that Attribute (see Table 1); on the other hand, belonging-type possessions consist of a Possessed that is a Carrier of an Attribute and a Possessor who/that is that Attribute.

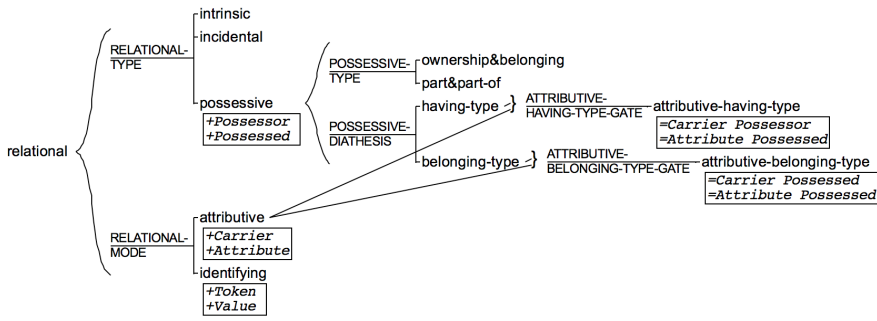


FIGURE 1: Network for possessive clauses

TABLE 1
Having-type and belonging-type of possession

the house	has	a door
I	own	the house
Carrier	Process	Attribute
Possessor		Possessed
the door	is part of	the house
the house	belongs to	me
Carrier	Process	Attribute
Possessed		Possessor

Applying these functions to the description of Latin, a typical Latin clause that represents ownership relation can be said to have an optional nominative/accusative nominal group with the functions of Carrier/Possessor and an accusative nominal group with the functions of Attribute/Possessed. In enumerations, there are examples such as the one below in which the Process word appears in a non-final position in all but the last clause.

- (09) || *habeō* | scyphōs urnālēs plūs minus... ||
|| I | *have* | about... engraved bowls ||
- (10) || *habeō* | capidem || quam... ||
|| I | *have* | a handled cup || which... ||
- (11) || nam | Hermerōtī pugnās et Pētraitis | in pōculīs | *habeō* ||
|| and | I | also | *have* | Hermerotus's fights and Petraitis's | in cups ||

In contrast, belonging relations are represented by clauses that can have a nominative/accusative nominal group with the functions of Carrier/Possessed and a genitive nominal group with the functions of Attribute/Possessor. The following clause complex has examples of relational clauses representing both belonging and ownership relations.

- (12) || eādem invidiā | prōclāmāre 'coepimus' ||
|| we | also | shouted out | with the same anger ||
- (13) || nostra | **esse** | spolia [[quae | illī | *possiderent*]] ||
|| that | the object [[they | *held*]] | *belonged to* | us ||

In the clause complex comprising Examples 12-13, we can see that the Process word in a projected affirmative clause⁵ (Example 13) was placed in the middle position and that a Process word in a relative clause was placed at the end. Similarly, possessive relational clauses with predicated themes⁶ (Example 14) and projected element-interrogative clauses (Example 16) also seem to end with a Process word (see below):

- (14) || sōlus | sum | quī | vēra Corinthea | *habeam* ||
 || I | am | the only one | who | *has* | real Corinthian craft pieces ||
- (15) || et | forsitan | quaeris ||
 || you | might | be | wondering ||
- (16) || quārē | sōlus | vēra Corinthea | *habeam* ||
 || why | I alone | *have* | real Corinthian craft pieces ||

There is a range of such textual motivations that influence the choice of whether and where to place arguments. In some cases, Process words are put in a non-final/middle position of relational clauses. In some other cases, Process words are put in the final position. Whether a clause is relative, has predicated theme, is projected or is the last one in an enumeration seem to be textual motivations for placing the Process word at the final position. A more detailed and more reliable account of the textual motivations for initial, middle, and final position of Process words in relational clauses has not been proposed yet and I shall not attempt one here because I lack corpus evidence for that at the moment. This does not mean that the order is random, but only that I myself and other researchers have not invested the time to investigate it properly yet.

In addition, as illustrated in Example 13 with the word “nostra”, personal pronouns within genitive nominal groups agree in case, number, and gender with the Carrier/Possessed. In this sense, personal pronouns in genitive nominal groups have both a primary case, namely genitive, and a secondary case due to agreement. Table 2 organises spellings of a pronoun based on primary and secondary grammatical features of the nominal group.

⁵ A clause that represents a locution said or thought by a person or a group of people.

⁶ “Cleft structures” in generative terms.

TABLE 2
Grammatical features of argument nominal groups at clause rank

Primary	Secondary			Pronoun
	case	number	gender	
nominative	–	–	–	ego
accusative	–	–	–	mē
genitive	nominative	singular	neutral	meum
			masculine	meus
			feminine	mea
		plural	neutral	mea
			masculine	meī
			feminine	meae
	accusative	singular	neutral	meum
			masculine	meum
			feminine	meam
		plural	neutral	mea
			masculine	meōs
			feminine	meās
dative	–	–	–	mihī
ablative	–	–	–	mē

4 Downranked possession

Possession is represented not only by clauses but also by Possessive constituents of nominal groups. Since clauses are a rank above groups and phrases, a possessive relation represented within a nominal group is said to be downranked. In this section, I shall explain how downranked possessions are represented within definite nominal groups. Indefinite nominal groups shall not be considered here.

When belonging is downranked to a Possessive constituent of a definite nominal group, it comes in the form of a genitive nominal group typically in the final position. Table 3 shows a contrast between English and Latin downranked belongings.

TABLE 3
Downranked belonging

the butler Nasta's	house	aedibus	Nastae vilicī
Jupiter's	throne	solium	Jovis
Priapus's	sanctuary	sacellō	Priāpī
Quartilla's	slave	ancilla	Quartillae
my	clothes	pannōs	meōs
my	home	casulās	meās
my	bed	torum	meum
our	tunic	tunicam	nostram
their	cloak	pallium	suum
Modifier	Head	Head	Modifier
Possessive/Deictic	Thing	Thing	Possessive/Deictic

However, when a part-of relation is downranked, it seems to be the case that different constituent orders apply for persons and non-persons functioning as possessors. Personal possessors seem to come in the end for definite nominal groups if they are pronouns such as *meus* and *teus*, but in the beginning if they are not (Table 4).

TABLE 4
Downranked part-of persons

my	eyes	oculīs	meīs
my	hair	capillōs	meōs
her	hands	mānūs	illīus
his	neck	cervicem	eius
his	waist	cōlō	suō
his	mouth	ōs	suum
one's	heart	cor	nostrum
your	knees	genua	vestra
Modifier	Head	Head	Modifier
Possessive/Deictic	Thing	Thing	Possessive/Deictic

the girl's	head
their fathers'	heads
Ascyllus's	hands
Tryphaena's	hands
Modifier	Head
Possessive/Deictic	Thing

puellae	caput
patrum suōrum	capita
Ascyllī	mānūs
Tryphaenae	mānūs
Modifier	Head
Possessive/Deictic	Thing

On the other hand, when the downranked part-of relation has a non-personal possessor, there seems to be a default order according to which all things equal⁷ the genitive nominal group comes at the end (see Table 5).

TABLE 5
Downranked part-of non-person

the bedroom	door
the tray	edges
the tray	centre
the table	foot
the pork	side
Modifier	Head
Possessive/Deictic	Thing

līmen	thalamī
angulōs	repositoriī
thēca	repositoriī
pedem	mensulae
latus	apī
Head	Modifier
Thing	Possessive/Deictic

Not only part-of and belonging relations can be downranked. All possessive relations can. Part relations are no exception and they can be downranked too. However, Possessive Modifiers for part relations are not genitive nominal groups, the nominal case is ablative instead. Table 6 shows an example of such Modifiers extracted from Chapters 14 and 16 of *Satyricon*.

TABLE 6
Downranked personal part

the	woman	with covered head
the	woman	with covered head
Modifier	Head	Modifier
Deictic	Thing	Possessive

mulier	opertō capite
mulier	opertō capite
Head	Modifier
Thing	Possessive/Deictic

⁷ Unless there is some textual motivation for doing it otherwise.

Finally, some adjectives in Latin function as a Thing within a nominal group. In English, the same linguistic phenomenon is to be seen in nominal groups such as *Northern England*. *Northern England* is the same part of England as *the north of England* (OLIVEIRA *et alii*, 2015). The adjective north in the former, however, cannot be plural whereas the noun in the latter allows us to talk about different *norths of England*. Alternatively, we could also talk about different *Northern Englands* if there are more than one regions that can be represented as *Northern England*, but the plural suffix would be in *Englands*, the noun, and not in *Northern*, the adjective.

In a nominal group, the constituent functioning as Head is the central pillar of the grammatical structure for modification. For our two examples, the Head is *England* in *Northern England* and it is *north* in *the north of England*. On the other hand, the constituent functioning as Thing is the one that best matches the thing that is represented by the nominal group (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2014, p. 390-396). It is *Northern* in *Northern England* and *north* in *the north of England*. The same linguistic phenomenon happens in Latin. In Table 7, I present examples of such nominal groups in which the Modifier functions as a Thing and the Head functions as a Possessive/Deictic.⁸

TABLE 7
A Thing constituent functioning as Modifier ‘the edges
of the clothes’ and ‘the edges of the bed’

the	‘outer’	clothes	laciniam	extrēmam
the	‘outer’	bed	torum	extrēmum
Modifier	Modifier	Head	Head	Modifier
Deictic	Thing	Possessive	Possessive/Deictic	Thing

⁸ It should be noted that both in Latin and in English a sequence of letters may function as a Thing in a wording and as a Possessive in another wording. For instance, in English *Northern* in *Northern England* represents a northern part of England whereas *northern* in *a northern city* locates a city in the north of a county or country. The same linguistic phenomenon occurs in Latin: e.g. whereas *torum extrēmum* ‘the outer bed’ represents the edges of a bed, *vinculum extrēmum* ‘an outer village’ represents a village on the edges of the Roman Empire. It does not represent the edges of the city.

Finally, a part of something can be represented as an unclassified Thing (*pars/partis*), which may be modified by a Classifier. This also happens in English. For instance, we may talk about *the northern part of England*, where the region is a particular part of England, namely the same region as the one represented by *Northern England* and *the north of England*. Table 8 shows examples of this kind of linguistic representation taken from phrases such as in *partem navis inferiorem* ‘to the lower part of the ship’ and nominal groups such as *superioremque partem repositoriū* ‘and the upper part of the tray’.

TABLE 8
A Thing constituent with a Classifier

the	lower	part	of the ship
the	inner	part	of the house
the	upper	part	of the tray
Modifier	Modifier	Head	Modifier
Deictic	Classifier	Thing	Possessive

partem	navis	inferiorem
partem	aedium	interiorem
partem	repositoriū	superiorem
Head	Modifier	Modifier
Thing	Possessive	Classifier/Deictic

the	lowest	part	of which
Modifier	Modifier	Head	Modifier
Deictic	Classifier	Thing	Possessive

quōrum	imam	partem
Modifier	Modifier	Head
Possessive/Deictic	Classifier	Thing

Issue 1: As proposed above, the types of things being represented (whether personal or non-personal) and the types of relation being represented (whether belonging or part-of) motivate different constituent orders. This is not only the case for Latin nominal groups but also for English ones. According to the Longman Grammar of spoken and written English (BIBER et alii, 1999, p. 301), among the most important factors for choosing between an s-genitive Premodifier as in *his mother’s* and an of-genitive Postmodifier¹⁰ as in *of his mother* are the types of things being represented and the types of relation that hold between the thing represented by the Head and the one represented by the Modifier. This means that if a team of corpus researchers would count genitive Premodifiers and Postmodifiers without considering the kinds of things

⁹ The order of constituents for nominal groups containing the enclitic *que* is not preserved in the table.

¹⁰ A “postmodifying of-phrase” in their words.

and the kinds of relations being represented, they would not make the experiential¹¹ distinctions that are necessary for predicting constituent order. For instance, they may wrongly assume that an evidence for randomly chosen constituent order would be the fact that corpora contain both *solium Jovis* ‘Jupiter’s throne’ (something owned) and *Ascyltī mānūs* ‘Ascyltus’s hands’ (someone’s part), whose constituent orders are in fact motivated by the kinds of things they represent. Then they may wrongly infer that *Ascyltī mānūs* ‘Ascyltus’s hands’ and *mānūs Ascyltī* ‘the hands of Ascyltus’ are equally likely and that *solium Jovis* ‘Jupiter’s throne’ and *Jovis solium* ‘the throne of Jupiter’ are also equally likely, which is not the case. In Section 7 we shall see that this misjudgement is not only potential, but that this is exactly what happened in two descriptions of Latin using a generative approach. The lack of experiential semantics in Generative Linguistics does not compromise the boundary of grammaticality in terms of the nominal case of constituents, since both constituent orders – namely genitive Modifier + Head and Head + genitive Modifier – do occur and are thus possible. The fact that these two orders are likely for some represented things and not for others cannot be captured by a generative description. Finally, since there are no Latin speakers to judge whether or not the inferred constituent orders are grammatical, corpus researchers are free to consider them grammatical without any external checks with members of the linguistic community. What happens in this process is that this lack of experiential semantics combined with the judgement of an imaginary speaker hinders a prediction of constituent order, which can only be done when we rely on the types of things and relations being represented, that is, it makes it impossible to predict which of the two constituent orders is most likely to be chosen for a given segment of text.

4.1 Elliptic downranked possession

A Possessive Modifier can also be *elliptic*. *Ellipsis* can be understood as a proposal for the reader to go back in the context of discourse (co-text) and fill out the elliptic wording with what one finds

¹¹ In generative terms, non-textual motivations are said to be simply ‘semantic’. I opt to call the subset of motivations related to the way we represent our experience of our environment ‘experiential’ (and not just ‘semantic’) in the same way as other researchers adopting a Systemic-Functional approach to the description of human languages do.

there. From the writer's perspective, the action of suppressing parts of a wording given that they are recoverable in the tail of the preceding text is called **elision**; and, from the reader's perspective, the action of filling out parts of a wording with segments of the text tail (segments of a *repletive* wording) is called *interpolation*. In that sense, the reader must interpolate the expressed wording with the latest wordings in the text tail whenever the writer elides parts of a wording. An example of ellipsis is given bellow:

- (17) || ancilla | *tōtam faciem* [*eius*] | fuligine largā | perfricuit || ... ||
 || the female slave | covered | [his] entire face | in black soot || ... ||
- (18) || *latera umerōsque* | sopitiōnibus | pinxit ||
 || she | spread | cum¹² | on ['his'] traps and shoulders ||

The nominal group *latera umerōsque* 'traps and shoulders' in Example 18 can be said to be elliptic because it can be filled out with *eius* 'his' from Example 17, resulting in *latera eius umerōsque eius* 'his traps and his shoulders'. Notice that in English, the usual distance between the repletive and the elliptic wording is somewhat shorter, nonetheless ellipsis does occur with Possessive Modifiers in English as well. For instance, a speaker is more likely to say the elided wording *his traps and shoulders* in casual conversations than the non-elided wording *his traps and his shoulders* as long as no differentiation between the two body parts is being made.

¹² The meaning of *sopitiō* in this passage is not clear. In Catulo's poems, *sopiō* seems to be a popular and erotic term for penis that connotes the function of a penis in sexual intercourse. In that sense, *sopiō* would be the Latin equivalent for *cock* and *dick* in English. The word *sopitiō* is etymologically related to *sopiō* and it ends in *itiō*. Therefore, it is likely to be either a repetitive action or the product of a repetitive action done with a *sopiō* 'penis' during sex. Given that *sopitiō* opposes *fuligine largā* 'black soot' in the described situation as a substance that can be used for making people dirty against their will and since the scene consists of a series of outrageous sexual abuses, I suppose this term could represent the product of ejaculation (*sopitāre*?) such as *ejaculates* or *cum*. The absence of such a term in vocabularies compiled prior to the modern times can be explained by the fact that such a term might have been taken as too vulgar to be described while it was still in use.

Issue 2: As far as Possessive Modifiers are concerned, Ellipsis is a cohesive device that results from the elision of a Possessive Modifier, which is supposed to be recovered in the co-text. Because of that, researchers counting expressed genitive Premodifiers and Postmodifiers without considering ellipsis will count elliptic references to body parts as nominal groups without genitive Modifiers. Since generative linguists such as Braga Bianchet aim exclusively at explaining the relative position of expressed words, this linguistic phenomenon cannot be covered by her explanation. As a consequence, readers and translators using such generative models will be left to their own intuitions from their modern languages when they encounter an elliptic wording and, since ellipsis works in different ways in different languages, their intuitions may either help or add noise to their understanding of the text.

Note 1: As a remark for those attempting to verify the claims of this section or to apply them in reading activities, it must be emphasised that I selected only definite nominal groups for this analysis. Given other nominal groups that I saw and did not consider because they were indefinite, it appears to be the case that indefinite nominal groups such as *mendīcī spoliūm* ‘a beggar’s object’ have a different internal order from definite nominal groups such as *solium Jovis* ‘Jupiter’s throne’. Moreover, Modifiers of indefinite nominal groups can be realised both as nominal groups as in *cōda vitulī* ‘a calf’s tail’ and as adjectives as in *oculum bublum* ‘a bull’s eye’. However, since I did not include those examples in my data, I cannot propose any explanation for their internal structure at the moment.

Note 2: As a second remark, the description given above is to be understood as an unmarked¹³ constituent order for nominal groups. This means that textual motivations may exist for other marked orders. For instance, enclitic conjunctions such as *-que* seem to motivate marked orders as in *porcīque ventrem [...]* ‘and the pork belly [...]’ for animal parts and *pedēsque recumbentium [...]* ‘and the feet of those laid down

¹³ The unmarked order is the order that we as descriptive linguists choose not to explain in terms of textual motivations. Aiming at economy of description, it is a wise decision to choose the most difficult order to explain as the unmarked one and the easiest to explain as the marked ones. The unmarked order is not a basic order upon which movements are made.

[...]’ and *mānūsque aniculae [...]* ‘and the old lady’s hands [...]’ for human parts. Finally, as we shall see next, the position of words representing body parts also depends on whether body parts are truly referenced as participants in a process as in [...] *urceolum fictilem in Eumolpī caput jaculātus est* ‘[he] threw a clay jug at Eumolpus’s head’ or whether they are relata of locations as in *digitōsque paululum adpersōs in capite puerī tersit* ‘and he dried his wet fingers on the boy’s head’. This difference shall be discussed in the next section.

5 Presumed possession

So far I was very conservative when it comes to selecting examples related to possession. In particular, I selected clause simplexes that represented a single rhetorical figure of ownership or belonging (Section 3) and Possessive constituents of nominal groups (Section 4). This semantically motivated selection paints a very different picture of constituent order in Latin from the random choice of constituent order claimed by Braga Bianchet. Departing from a semantically arbitrary selection of genitive modifiers, Braga Bianchet (2004, p. 309) came to the conclusion that the relative position of genitive modifiers does not relate to differences in meaning. Coming from semantics, I came to the opposite conclusion that relative position is not only semantically motivated but clearly so. The only caveat in my account of constituent order is that my semantically motivated description of ordering so far does not cover all examples of genitive modifiers nor does it cover all examples of possession. It covers only part of the intersection of the two.

In this section, I shall further the description of possession in Latin by elaborating on how possession can be relied upon for cohesion when it is neither represented by a clause nor downranked. In particular I shall characterise the ways in which possession is ‘presumed’ at the clause rank. In this exploratory work, it is worth noticing that, when it comes to actions aimed at body parts, languages vary drastically as for how grammatical constituents relate to the participants of the actions. In some languages such as English, whether the goal of an action is part of the actor or part of someone else does not seem to restrict available grammatical structures (see Table 9).

TABLE 9
English goal-affecting actions

I	washed	the dishes
I	washed	my hands
I	washed	her hands
she	washed	the dishes
she	washed	my hands
she	washed	her hands
Actor	Process	Goal

5.1 Goal-part-affecting actions

In other languages such as German, it matters whether the goal of the action is a body part such as hands and legs. When the goal is just a thing, there is only one available grammatical structure. When the goal is part of a person, there is at least one extra available grammatical structure at the clause rank (see Tables 10 and 11).

TABLE 10
German goal-affecting actions

ich	habe	das Geschirr	gewaschen
ich	habe	meine Hände	gewaschen
ich	habe	ihre Hände	gewaschen
sie	hat	das Geschirr	gewaschen
sie	hat	meine Hände	gewaschen
sie	hat	ihre Hände	gewaschen
Actor		Goal	Process

TABLE 11
German goal-part-affecting actions when goals are people

ich	habe	mir	die Hände	gewaschen
ich	habe	ihr	die Hände	gewaschen
sie	hat	mir	die Hände	gewaschen
sie	hat	sich	die Hände	gewaschen
Actor		Goal	GoalPart	Process

To some extent, 1 CE Roman Latin seems to be similar to German in this respect. I cannot claim with my nominal group data whether there is a semantic restriction of personhood for examples of Table 13. At the moment, I can only illustrate that both Goal-affecting actions and goal-part-affecting actions can be represented in Latin (see Tables 12 and 13).

TABLE 12
Latin goal-affecting actions

	<i>pedem mensulae</i> a foot of the table	<i>extorsī</i> cut off
	<i>cultrum</i> the knife	<i>arripuit</i> pick up
Actor	Goal	Process

TABLE 13
Latin goal-part-affecting actions when goals are people

<i>illī</i> him	<i>Cyclops</i> Cyclops	<i>pollicem</i> the thumb	<i>extorsit</i> cut off
Goal	Actor	GoalPart	Process

This means possession was not only represented by relational clauses and by modifiers of nominal groups. Possessive relations were also presumed between two mentioned things that participate in material processes.

Issue 3: This semantically motivated contrast was made between two clause structures. In the first, a genitive nominal group functions as Possessive Modifier inside an accusative nominal group, which in turn functions as Goal in a clause. In the second, there are two clause constituents: a dative one functioning as Goal and an accusative one functioning as GoalPart. The clause constituent functioning as GoalPart represents a thing that is part of the goal. This means that the thing that has parts is represented either by a dative constituent of the clause or by a genitive constituent of a nominal group. As a consequence, researchers counting genitive Premodifiers and Postmodifiers and comparing them for experiential motivations such as possession are bound to ignore nominal groups functioning as GoalPart and not to come to the hypothesis that a small number of genitive Premodifiers for body parts might be due

to a competing clause structure where possession is presumed between mentioned things. When not considering this factor, the resulting lower frequency of genitive Premodifiers may wrongly lead researchers to an explanation of variance between Premodifiers and Postmodifiers in terms of ‘emphatic’ constituent order. Such an explanation would be based solely on scarcity and not on actual rhetorical ‘emphasis’ realised by the chosen word order¹⁴. In Section 7, I shall make note that this also happened to a corpus-based description of Latin using a generative approach.

5.2 Actor-part affecting actions

Yet other languages such as Brazilian Portuguese seem to have a different structure pair: a general structure for goal-affecting actions as in Table 14 and another structure for actor-part-affecting actions as in Table 15.

TABLE 14
Brazilian goal-affecting actions

eu	lavei	a louça
eu	lavei	[as] minhas mãos
eu	lavei	as mãos dela
ela	lavou	a louça
ela	lavou	[as] minhas mãos
ela	lavou	as mãos dela
Actor	Process	Goal

TABLE 15
Brazilian actor-part-affecting actions

eu	lavei	as mãos
ela	lavou	as mãos
Actor	Process	ActorPart

¹⁴ Skewedness is a measure of frequency distribution among variants. Choosing a low frequency variant does not imply making textual emphasis. It may just be the case that certain bundles of systemic features are less likely to happen in combination than others.

The difference that I just made between goal-affecting actions and actor-part-affecting actions is motivated in the following terms. When people read a nominal group functioning as Goal such as *a louça* ‘the dishes’, *as minhas mãos* ‘my hands’, and *as mãos dela* ‘her hands’, they search the imagined situation for that entity. In doing that, they consider applicable Possessive restrictions such as the restriction that the hands are part of the addresser (*eu*) or part of a mentioned female (*ela*). Such a description of the mentioned entity would be sufficient to discriminate an entity in the situation. However, when an ActorPart such as *as mãos* ‘the hands’ is mentioned, the reader does not search the entire situation for an entity of that kind. Instead, he or she searches the actor for a part of that kind.

From my personal experience in collecting examples for this paper, this seems to be a frequent rhetorical figure for when an actor does something to him or herself. However, this personal intuition of frequency should be taken with scepticism since I lack corpus evidence at the moment to back it up with.¹⁵

Tables 16 and 17¹⁶ show these two options.

TABLE 16
Latin goal-affecting actions

<i>tetigit</i> touch	<i>puer</i> the boy	<i>oculōs suōs</i> his eyes
Process	Actor	Goal

¹⁵ Every time I expose an intuitive hypothesis that is not backed up with sufficient evidence and I stay honest about it, I intend to raise our awareness that evidence must be our ground for claims and to invite other researchers to join efforts with me in a joint descriptive project of Latin and other ancient languages.

¹⁶ I normalised all examples to imperative so as to make them fit a single table.

TABLE 17
Latin actor-part-affecting actions

<i>operī</i> cover	<i>modo</i> please	<i>caput</i> the head	
<i>operī</i> cover	<i>modo</i> please	<i>oculōs</i> the eyes	
<i>operī</i> cover	<i>modo</i> please	<i>oculōs</i> the eyes	<i>amplius</i> further
Process	–	ActorPart	

Issue 4: Reference to actor parts need to be understood in terms of presumed possession whereas reference to goals do not. Because of this, counts of reflexive genitive Possessive Modifiers might be lower than they would be if there were no alternative way of restricting a reference through possessive relations. Explanations for those counts that do not include this competing phenomenon may lead researchers to claims that cannot be sustained with evidence.

5.3 Rhetorical close up and personal tools

In Latin, clauses may represent figures including only parts of the human body without including a whole human. An example of such clauses is given bellow:

- (19) || haec vulnera | prō libertāte publicā | excēpī || hunc oculum | prō
vōbīs | impendī || date | mihi | dūcem || quī | mē | dūcat | ad liberōs
meōs || nam | succīsī poplitēs | membra | nōn | sustinent ||
|| I | got | these wounds | for our freedom || I | lost | this eye | for
you all || now | I | ask | for a carrier || to carry | me | to my children
|| because | the injured knees | don't | hold up | the legs | any more ||

The war veteran saying *haec vulnera* ‘these wounds’ and *hunc oculum* ‘this eye’ is probably pointing at his own body while he says this. This would be an exophoric demonstrative reference to things in the situation. When he says *succīsī poplitēs* ‘the injured knees’ and *membra* ‘the legs’, given that his listeners have already been invited to pay attention to his battered body, he would not need to point to his knees and legs for the listeners to identify whose knees and legs are being referred to. His knees and his legs would be the only knees and legs in

the ‘rhetorical frame for reference’. For this reason, these references to his body parts would be exophoric, but not demonstrative. Another example of an exophoric non-demonstrative reference to a body part, without further specification of whose body parts they are, is given below.

- (20) [...] || mulier | basiāvit | mē | spissius || et | ex [lacrimīs] | in
 [rīsum] | mōta || [[descendētēs | ab [aure]]] capillōs [meōs] |
 [lentā] mānū | duxit || et | [...] | inquit | [...] [...] || that woman |
 kissed | me | [very] intensely || and | moving | from [tears] | to
 [a smile] || she | took | [my] hair [[falling | over [an ear]]] |
 slowly | back | with [a hand] || and | said | [...]

Making an analogy with cinema, I shall call this rhetorical phenomenon of zooming in onto someone’s body a rhetorical close up. In other words, a rhetorical close up onto someone would happen every time the represented situation is zoomed in such a way that a single person stays inside the ‘rhetorical frame’ and only his or her body parts can be referred to. In movies, when a camera close up is made on someone’s hair falling over an ear, we know that the person’s hair and the ear are parts of the same person. In clauses such as *descendentēs ab aure* ‘falling over an ear’ in Example 16, the whole of the human is not represented in its integrity, but we can recover that the things that are falling are Encolpius’s hairs and the thing they are falling over is one of his ears. Every body part represented by this clause is part of one and the same human under a rhetorical close.

Moving forward, when someone takes the hair of another person slowly back with one of their hands, the personal tools of the actor such as the actor’s hands can be represented in Latin without representing that they are part of the actor. This is an explanation for why both *eōs mānū suā duxit* ‘she took them back with one of her hands’ and *eōs mānū duxit* ‘she took them back with a hand’ were common.

Finally, instead of representing process qualities such as *lentē* ‘slowly’ as a way of doing something in a figure, where it would be together with the process at the same constituency level, in Latin ways of doing can be represented as a property of a thing that is used for doing something in a certain way as in *lentā mānū* ‘with a slow hand’. The semantic relation between the process and the process quality would be a super-relation of following relation chain: a process in a figure that has a tool being used to do something in a certain way. This is an explanation

why both *eōs lentē duxit* ‘she took them slowly back’ and *eōs lentā mānū duxit* ‘she took them back with a slow hand’ were options of representing motion speed in Latin.

Here two other dimensions are added to the issue of presumed possession. How close we are to a participant rhetorically influences whether reference is made to body parts directly or in relation to someone. The closer we are to a person, the less likely we are to need further specification that a knee, a leg, or an ear are part of that person. And the farther we are from a group of people, the more likely we are to depend on such specifications to identify whose body parts are meant. In addition, since actors use tools to do their actions, the agency implied by tools anchors the represented personal tool as part of the actor. It is the kind of tool being used – for instance, the fact that the tool is a hand – that makes it be taken as a personal tool and not just some ownerless tool lying around.

Issue 5: Corpus linguists who do not explain representation choice based on rhetorical distance and kinds of tools are bound to count those nominal groups as not presuming possessive relations. In turn, readers and translators using such models would need to apply their own modern linguistic intuitions on when such phenomena occur if they are aware that they happen at all. They will depend on luck for their intuitions to be correspondent to that of people living almost 2.000 years ago if they do not rely on actual linguistic descriptions. And their comprehension skills will depend drastically on the similarity between the languages they speak today and Latin. The way modern languages can make it easier or harder for a translator to understand Latin (in the absence of a linguistic model) shall be illustrated in Section 8.

5.4 ‘At someone’s feet’

Possessive relations are not only represented and presumed in Latin (rhetorical figures in rhetorical close). As in any other language, they are also metaphorically implied. For instance, in English, relations such as to be with someone can mean accompaniment, but they may also imply an affective relation.

To elaborate on this kind of implicature, let’s suppose that in some social event commentators are gossiping about actors’ private lives and that their dialogue goes on like this:

- Did you see who Jared Leto went to the Academy Awards with?
- Who?!
- [...]!
- I knew it!

This verbal interaction only makes sense because Jared Leto going to the Academy Awards with someone implies that there is probably an affective relation between him and his companion. Latin was no exception in this respect. In this section, I shall explain how metaphorically implied possessive relations affect constituent order and how they may impose a worldview to fluent Latin speakers.

When it comes to interpersonal relations, 1st century Latin culture differs drastically from modern post-abolitionist secular cultures. For instance, free women were ‘in their father’s or their husband’s hands’, free kids were ‘in their father’s hands’, and slaves were ‘at their owner’s feet’.

In such a society, some humans are free adult males (free men), others are free adult females (free women), others are free kids, and others are slaves (*servilis*: *servus* or *ancilla*). According to Gaius’s institutes, free men have a main entry of their own (*suī jūris*) in the administrative apparatus of the time whereas all other humans are listed under someone else’s entry (*aliēnō jūrī subjectae*). How physical or virtual this registration entry was in each time window and region is beyond our concerns here. The list of livestock includes humans and cattle, which is evidence that this administrative system was inherited from pastoral societies. From an administrative perspective, free women, free kids, and slaves belong to free men in the same way that cattle does.

However, the relation between a free man and an ox or a slave was intrinsically different from that between a free man and other free humans both in daily linguistic representation and in the practice of law. As far as language is concerned, there were kinship roles for marriage relations between a free man and a free woman, namely *marītus* and *uxor*, and there were kinship roles for nurturing relations between a free adult and a free child of both genders, namely *pater*, *māter*, *filius*, and *fīlia*. In contrast, there was no kinship role for slaves. In that sense, being a slave is linguistically much more similar to being an ox than to being someone’s wife, someone’s son, or someone’s daughter. See the word games below:

- (21) This is an ox.
 (22) This ox is mine.
 (23) This is a slave.
 (24) This slave is mine.
 (25) *This is a wife.
 (26) *This wife is mine.

In that sense, being a slave is a way of being that is absolute and does not depend on other entities. In contrast, being someone's wife is a description of that woman in relation to someone else. In such a society, a slave is a slave as an ox is an ox independent of there being someone who claims to own them. Moreover, since there were humans who were slaves, all mentioned humans are potentially slaves and potentially owned by someone. For that reason, the clause *cujus esset puer quaesivit* translates better into *she asked who the kid belonged to* than into *she asked whose child that was*.

In other words, the relation between *cuius* 'who' and *puer* 'the boy' was one of owning-and-belonging and not a parent-child bond. In particular, that clause represents the possessive relation between Encolpius and Giton, Encolpius's male kid slave (boy slave). And in the context of situation, the woman posing this question wanted to know who the present boy (*puer*) belonged to.

Assuming this context of culture in which humans can be free people or slaves, let's now consider the following clauses extracted from different chapters of *Satyricon*:

- (27) servus [[quī ad pedēs Habinnae sedēbat]]
 the slave [[who was sitting at Habinna's feet]]
 (28) servīs [[quī ad pedēs sedēbant]]
 the slaves [[who were sitting at the feet]]
 (29) Gītōn << quī ad pedēs stabat >>
 Giton << who was standing at the feet >>

In that context of culture, to be sitting (or standing in the case of a kid) at someone's feet at a dinner was a visual display of both being a slave

and belonging to that person. Because of this, we can infer that the slave who was sitting at Habinna's feet belonged to Habinna in Example 27.

Notice that the genitive nominal group *Habinnae* comes after *pedēs* and not before as predicted by the ordering rules I claimed in previous sections. However, there is a way to explain this constituent order so as to accommodate both the default constituent order of the nominal group and the constituent order of this phrase. In contrast to situations in which people cover someone else's head with a cloak or look at someone else's hands, in this situation as far as positioning is concerned, the relevant elements are not the feet but the person being located and this person's location in relation to another person. The word *feet* in *at the feet* and *at Habinna's feet* is as non-referential as *front* in *in front* or *in front of Habinna*. In other words, we can consider *ad pedes* to be a preposition on its own that has a genitive nominal group as complement. The same rationale applies to other parts of the body as in *ad genua Ascyltī* 'at/to Ascyltus's knees', *ad aurem Agamemnonis* 'at/to Agamemnon's ears' and *in faciem Fortunatae* 'into Fortunata's face'.

However, as proposed in the cultural model, the information in this clause is not merely a physical location. The information includes both where the slave was located in relation to Habinna and that he belonged to Habinna.

Taking this double meaning into consideration, we can also infer that the slaves who were sitting 'at the feet' in Example 28 belonged to whoever free man is recoverable in discourse at that point. The referenced slaves would be the ones who belonged to the recoverable free man and who were at his feet. This absence of a nominal group representing that free man would be a case of ellipsis or presumption due to rhetorical close up. Finally, in Example 29, we can only figure out where Giton was located in the storyline if we know that he belonged to the couple formed by Encolpius and Ascyltus. His position can only have been next to his owners and, being more precise, at their feet.

If we project this implied possession back onto the clause, the resulting process is that of **sitting at someone's feet** where the bold text functions together as a single possessive Process. This clause can be understood as implying a representation of a belonging relation. That implied representation would have a genitive nominal group functioning as Attribute/Possessor. In this second analysis, the bold part of **to be sitting at someone's feet** is not a Process word but a Process idiom

for possessive relations in the same way as the bold part of *to be with someone* is a Process idiom for affective relations in English. With this new culturally motivated implied linguistic representation, we are able to augment our linguistic analysis for this clause with the two new rows added at the bottom of Table 18.

TABLE 18

Two parallel grammatical analyses for the same clause.

quī	ad pedēs	Habinnæ	sedēbat
quī	ad pedēs		sedēbant
quī	ad pedēs		stabat
Carrier	Attribute		Process
Locatum	Place		
Carrier	Process...	Attribute	...Process
Possessed		Possessor	

As pointed out by Fillmore *et alii* (1988), “an [idiom] is something a language user could fail to know while knowing everything else in the language”. His claim still holds and I have evidence that this is also the case for Latin. In the end of this paper, I shall exemplify how a more simplistic account of Latin clauses that does not allow for shuttling forth from grammatical structure into semantics and back from implied semantic structure into grammar will result in a misunderstanding of ancient texts.

The task of shuttling between grammar and semantics has been considered part of the descriptive activity of a linguist for a long time. Mathesius (1936) was among the first linguists to propose the notion of cross-stratal shuttling between sounds and semantics as a way to describe how sounds can represent something else. Halliday and Hasan (1985) defended that cross-stratal shuttling must go through and impact grammatical structure given that a sound stream is linear and that the constituents of a semantic structure are not linearly ordered. If we are to treat idiomatic representation in terms of shuttling as I suggested above, describing how cross-stratal shuttling works in both directions seem to be a way to move forward.

In computational linguistics, researchers describing idioms across multiple languages developed methods of recognising catalogued

discontinuous idioms automatically (ANASTASIOU, 2010) without explaining the shuttling process supporting their appearance. Such an approach to tackling idiomaticity might be useful for machine translation and language processing tasks, but it is not applicable to Latin because we do not have such a catalogue of idioms to search for and recognise. In the case of Latin, we do not need to recognise idioms but to be able to claim that there is one without knowing them beforehand. In that sense, we as researchers are in an uncharted territory if we are to explain how Latin speakers shuttled between grammar and semantics and how idioms were created and passed on. We will have to defend the presence of such implied meanings, as I shall do next. However, we should face such challenges. We are in a different situation from linguists describing modern languages. We cannot have a reliable account of idiomatic meaning without a proper theoretical apparatus because ancient Latin speakers are not alive to tell us what their idioms meant and we are not ancient Latin speakers ourselves.

Moving forward, we come to the task of identifying referenced people in Example 24. Because a reader needs to distinguish those who are free men from those who are not in the situation to resolve the anaphoric reference to the slave possessor, we can assume that people who spoke Latin fluently needed to keep track of all free men in a situation. Free men needed to be treated as a different type of rhetorical entity for resolving anaphoric reference. With this I mean that fluent speakers of Latin kept track not only of the gender opposition between males and females, but also of the pactus opposition between free humans and slaves. If they had not done that, they would have been incapable of determining which slaves are meant in Example 28 as most people nowadays are (There were far too many feet at Trimalchio's dinner!).

Moreover, we can also assume that they needed to keep track of the ownership relations between free men and slaves. Otherwise, they would be incapable of understanding where Giton is located in Example 29. The linguistic evidence for this last claim is that Encolpius and Ascyltus were not the last mentioned free men in discourse, which means this is not simply a reference to the most salient person nor to the most salient free man, but to one of Giton's owners, which, in this case, was Ascyltus. This means that we need to understand this clause as Giton standing 'at his owner's feet' (a personal position of his) and rely on the interpersonal ownership relations between Ascyltus and Giton to

figure out where that location is. Practically speaking, if Giton were said to be ‘at the feet’ and another slave were also said to be also ‘at the feet’, Giton’s location would be one and the location of the other slave would be another. They would not be together in the same place. Each one of them would have their own position next to their respective owners. In other words, ‘at the feet’ functions in Latin in the same way as ‘home’ in English. If I am ‘home’ and you are also ‘home’ at the same time, I am somewhere and you are somewhere else because those are personal positions.

As a consequence, without being aware of this social structure, modern Latin readers cannot identify referenced humans and locations in discourse. This has the consequence that recognising the structure of Latin society in their own terms is the only way to achieve proficiency and expertise in Latin comprehension: more specifically, modern Latin readers and translators are advised to develop the practice of separating mentioned people into free people and slaves and to keep track of who owns whom when reading ancient texts. In particular, we must be aware that relative physical positions between people might have a social implication in terms of possessive, kinship, and power relations. Finally, we are advised to be aware that certain physical spaces relative to people are personal in the sense that each person has his or her own spaces relative to other people. Which relative positions implied which interpersonal bonds is, however, still an open research question.

Issue 6: If linguists do not consider implied possession and shuttling in their linguistic model, they will not be able to predict possessions restricting reference to people as in the example above. Modern readers and translators are likely to misunderstand original texts with simpler models because these models would not inform us about the difference between the way we perceive humans referred to in the Antique nowadays and the way Latin speakers would perceive them around 60-64 CE in Rome.

5.5 ‘Into someone’s eyes’

Idioms do not only represent possession, kinship, and power relations. They may also represent other kinds of processes such as processes of sensing. In this section, I shall demonstrate the kinds of rationale that we will need to use if we are to defend idiomatic

understandings of clauses. The example I chose is a Process idiom of sensing, namely *intentāvī in oculōs ea* ‘to lay eyes on it’, which Braga Bianchet’s model of Latin encourage us to misunderstand.

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (1999, p. 150), there are two primary types of mental processes, the ‘like’ type and the ‘please’ type. I shall describe them in my own terms for the purpose of explaining Latin idiomaticity as presented in Table 19.

TABLE 19
‘Like’ and ‘please’ types of sensing

I	liked	the gift	the gift	pleased	me
I	saw	the gift	the gift	appeared to	me
AtOrient	Process	Medium	Medium	Process	Occident
Senser		Phenomenon	Phenomenon		Senser

In all four clauses of Table 19, ‘the gift’ functions as the thing that gets sensed (phenomenon) and the addresser functions as the person who senses that thing (senser). The difference between ‘like’ and ‘please’ types of sensing lies on the way the process of sensing comes about.

To explain this difference, I shall make use of four metaphors. If we take the Sun to consist of not only the mass of plasma and gas in the centre of the solar system, but also all quanta of light emitted from this kernel, we can state that a person standing on the surface of the Earth can be in fact ‘in the Sun’. In the same way, if we consider a theatre spotlight to consist of not only a metal and glass body but also the quanta of light it emits, an actor can be said to be literally ‘in the spotlight’. Similarly, people’s eyes can be understood as consisting of not only the organic part of our bodies but also all the quanta of light coming into it. In that sense, a physical object can be literally ‘in our eyes’. Furthermore, in cinema, by taking light as particles in such a fashion, we can say actors are physically ‘in the camera’ and ‘out of the camera’.

If we take bodies (physical things) to consist of solely connected solid, liquid, and plasma particles, then these literal understandings do not hold. If we accept bodies to consist of both connected and disconnected particles such as light particles, then they hold. The difference between these two understandings is not between a literal and a metaphorical one. This difference lies on the ways we identify linguistically represented phenomena with perceptual phenomena: in the case of the Sun, this

difference lies on whether we take the Sun to be a ball of plasma in outer space that we can see as an extremely bright visual blur above us or whether we take the Sun to include the light particles falling from the sky, which can light up, warm up, and burn our skins and eyes.¹⁷ As defended by Smith and Brogaard (2003), the fact that we can cut reality in different ways for one and the same linguistic representation is exactly what makes it possible to create a single model of a language that accounts for both linguistic representation and reference. A more detailed defence of this claim goes beyond the scope of this paper.

Now let's consider a building in a city and take the perspective of people on the street in front of the building. We can say that, as the Sun moves from the Orient to the Medium, the building becomes progressively more visible. Similarly in theatre, if a spot light is moved onto an actor, the actor becomes visible. Analogously, as people turn their eyes towards the building, the building becomes visible; and as a cameraman turns the camera towards an actor, the actor becomes visible. At the moment when a physical thing becomes perceptible and another physical thing perceives it, it becomes a perceptual phenomenon and the other entity becomes a perceptual senser. Now, if we imagine a series of things being lit by the Sun one after the other, we can take the Phenomenon to be the Medium, things lit prior to the Phenomenon to be Orients, and things lit after the Phenomenon to be Occidents. In that sense, prior to the sensing, in like-type sensing, the Senser is at an Orient and the Phenomenon is the Medium. In that sense, the Sun metaphor consists of the Sun starting out by covering the orient and ending by covering the medium, when visual perception can take place.

In contrast, if we consider a squirrel getting out of the shadow into the Sun in the street in front of the building, the squirrel is the moving body and at the same time it is the thing that gets visible. In theatre, the spotlight might be still and an actor might enter it. Analogously, people may be staring at the building when a squirrel 'crosses their eyes' and a camera might be capturing a still shot when an actor discretely enters the scene. In such cases, the metaphor of motion works in the opposite

¹⁷ The understanding of light, sound, and smell as particles that move through space is not a notion that contradicts the Sun metaphor for sensing. A static delimitation of bodies in reality, which includes light particles, is just a way of coping with the complexity of linguistic representations of space and perception and not a rejection of modern physics.

way round. What moves forward is the thing that can be perceived. In an initial state, the physical thing is the Medium and is at a place where it will not be covered by the senser. When that thing moves forward, it gets covered by the senser, which is the Occident. In other words, in this motion metaphor, it is the Phenomenon that goes from its initial position where it is not sensed to the position where it will be sensed. My analysis in Table 19 captures both the sensing direction and this prior state that leads to sensing: senser and phenomenon are the roles of the entities at the sensing moment whereas AtOrient, Medium, and Occident are the movement roles prior to the sensing, given that we assume different things are moving: in the one case, the ‘moving thing’ is the Senser/AtOrient; in the other, the Phenomenon/Medium.

Finally, when it comes to agency, the one causing a sensing figure to happen is the agent. In the case of people running into the camera, the Agent is the Phenomenon/Medium. In the case of someone turning towards a building, the Agent is the Senser/AtOrient. And in the case of leaves falling in front of a camera, there is no Agent and the process is better conceived of as a happening and not a doing. However, the Agent causing a sensing process to happen does not need to be either the Senser or the Phenomenon; it can also be a third thing. In that case, the external Agent is a Shower (see Table 20).

TABLE 20
Showing and revealing

they	showed	me		the gift
Shower	Process	Senser		Phenom.
Agent		Occident		Medium

they	revealed	the gift	to	me
Shower	Process...	Phenom.	...Process	Senser
Agent		Medium		Occident

I shall now move on to implied processes of sensing. As far as position and motion are concerned, we can conceive of place attributions as those that relate some physical thing to its location whereas we can conceive of displacing events as those that represent some physical thing in a series of locations, starting with an initial location, continuing with

zero or more intermediary locations, and ending with a final location. Table 21 presents analyses for place attributions and displacing events.¹⁸

TABLE 21
Placing relations and displacing events

we	are	in the Sun	
that man	is	in the camera	
Carrier	Process	Attribute	
Locatum		Place	

we	ran away	from the shadow	into the Sun
that man	came	from backstage	into the camera
Actor	Process	Update	
		Initial Attribute	Final Attribute
Motum		Route	
		Origin	Destination

Relying on the motion metaphors for emotive and perceptual sensing figures (emotion and perception), I shall now turn to the examples below:

- (30) || intentāvī | in oculōs | Ascyltī mǎnūs ||
|| I | brought | Ascyltus's hands | into my eyes ||
- (31) || intentāns | in oculōs | Tryphaenae mǎnūs ||
|| bringing | Tryphaena's hands | into my eyes ||
- (32) || alius | vērū [extīs stridentibus plēnum] | in oculōs eius | intentat ||
|| one of them | brought | a hot skewer [with popping sausages] |
into his eyes ||

In Examples 30 and 31 the addresser moves someone's hands into his eyes and in Example 32 someone moves a hot skewer into someone else's eyes. From a material perspective, there is an actor moving something into someone's eyes (here to be understood as consisting of both the organic mass and the cone of the light particles coming into it).

¹⁸ See the work by Couto-Vale and de Oliveira (2015) for a more detailed analysis of spatial relations.

The motion is represented relative to someone’s eyes in the same way as when we say in a car that a bridge is nearing even though we are the ones driving towards the bridge from a pedestrian’s perspective. This means that the eyes might be the entities that are moving relative to someone standing nearby while the hands that are moving relative to the eyes are not moving relative that person. In other words, the existence of a motion is relative to an observer’s frame of reference. In this case, motion takes place relative to the referenced eyes and not relative to the room or to the Planet Earth. Finally, the fact that the moving hands end up in someone’s eyes implies that that person with those eyes will perceive the moved thing. Table 22 shows both the material analysis and the two implied perceptual analyses.

TABLE 22

Linguistic analysis for ‘I brought Ascytlus’s hands into my eyes’, ‘I captured Ascytlus’s hands with my eyes’, or ‘I looked at Ascytlus’s hands’

	intentāvī	in	oculōs	Ascytlī mǎnūs
Actor		Final Attrib.		Goal
Motor		Destination		Motum
Agent			Occident	Medium
Shower	Process		Senser	Phenomenon
Agent			Occident	Medium
Senser	Process			Phenomenon
AgentOccident				Medium

In Table 22, the material analysis maps perfectly onto clause constituency. In the first analysis, we assume a material process of *bringing something into something else*, which can be used not only for bringing things into one’s eyes, but for bringing anything into anything else. Since this motion in particular implies a perceptual process, the *bringing of something into someone’s eyes* must also be understood analogically with *showing something to someone*. Given that analogy, we can assume that this is a process of sensing involving a Shower, a Senser, and a Phenomenon. The analogy works in so far as the Agent, the Medium, and the Occident of both clauses can be mapped onto each other.

The metaphorically implied semantic structure is then projected back onto the current grammatical structure, resulting in a clause

constituency that is semantically motivated and congruent with what we can reasonably assume is being represented: namely that Encolpius ‘laid eyes on’ Ascyltus’s hands. Here we must make a final adjustment, the Senser of Examples 30 and 31 is part of the Shower, what is presumed by the figure, whereas the Senser of Examples 32 is part of another person, which gets represented within the nominal group. Making more generalisations, we can conceive of the former Sensers as being personal in the same way as we conceived of Tools as being personal for material actions in Section 5.3. Finally, if we shuttle once again and make an analogy of this process of *showing something to one’s own eyes* with processes of *seeing something* and *checking something*, we turn the word sequence *intatāvī in oculōs* into a Process idiom, which associates a physical thing functioning as Senser/Occident/Agent with another thing functioning as Phenomenon/Medium.

We can assume that the same kind of perceptual Process idioms should occur to all personal sensing tools such as eyes, hands, nose, mouth, tongue, and ears.¹⁹ What makes such a representation special – and not just a more complex alternative – is that it makes it possible for a Senser/Agent to be the Occident of sensing and not the thing AtOrient. In other words, this structure represents the world rotating around Ascyltus’s eyes instead of his eyes turning to the object.

Issue 7: The final issue with models of Latin that do not handle presumed possession and shuttling is that such models cannot be used to defend that some linguistic analyses are more adequate than others in terms of how expected and meaningful they are in given contexts of discourse, of language, of situation, and of culture. How much a model of Latin without ellipsis, presumption or shuttling impacts comprehension negatively shall be discussed in Section 8.

6 Possession as restriction

The effort that needs to be put in explaining language functionally as I did so far is much greater than the effort of counting nominal cases in a semantically arbitrary way. For that reason, there can be no

¹⁹ More modernly, new expressions such as *flying a camera drone over someone else’s backyard* are also metaphors of perception of this kind.

complete account of “the meaning of the genitive” that does not include a description of Latin language as a whole. Completion is not what I aim at achieving in this paper. My concerns are restricted to ensuring that my description of the representation of possession in Latin is applicable to the tasks of reading and translating ancient texts.

In the following I shall sketch a few linguistic phenomena that we still need to explain in a better way before we can account for more abstract functions of genitive nominal groups that go beyond possession. Let’s consider the opposition between the two clauses in Table 23.

TABLE 23
English property attribution

my throat	is	sore
Carrier	Process	Attribute
Entity		Property
Given	New	

I	have	a sore throat
Carrier	Process	Attribute
Possessor		Possessed
Restrictor		Restricted

my	throat
Modifier	Head
Deictic/Poss.	Thing
Restrictor	Restricted

a	sore	throat
Modifier	Modifier	Attribute
Deictic	Epithet	Thing
Given	New	Given

In the example *my throat is sore*, there is a carrier and this carrier is both a throat and part of the addresser. This linguistic representation of a throat is useful for determining which throat and which part of the addresser is being talked about. That this part of the addresser is sore is probably new information from an addressee’s and from a reader’s perspective. It is this novelty that makes this clause an exchange of information and what prevents it from becoming just a visual/acoustic stimulus redundant to our perception of a state in our environment. My assumption here is that humans only indicate a present state if there is information being exchanged (HALLIDAY; JAMES, 1993), thus only if the speaker/writer assumes that our shared present model of a world is different from what it is supposed to be. The fact that there can be serious exchange of information with such a clause is what makes this clause an indication of a present state and not just a reference to that state. Informational novelty is what separates indication from mere reference.

When we move to the second example, we see a very interesting linguistic phenomenon going on. What is represented by the clause is a part relation between a Carrier and an Attribute whereby the Attribute is part of the Carrier. The fact that the addresser has a throat is a present state indeed, but this fact could only be seriously indicated in some specific situations such as an anatomy lecture. The issue here is that in most practical situations no information is exchanged when indicating that someone has a throat. The reason for that is simple: humans assume that everyone has a throat. Because of this, if a character in an epic story were to say that he saw a monster and that the monster had a single eye (a Cyclops), this would be a serious exchange of information. However if this character were to say I have a throat, chances are that the readers of the epic story would take him for mentally challenged. See the contrast in Table 24.

TABLE 24
English attributive clauses and information structure

it	has	a single eye	I	have	a throat
Carrier	Process	Attribute	Carrier	Process	Attribute
Possessor		Possessed	Possessor		Possessed
Given	New		Given	Given	

Even though monsters do not exist and even though everyone has a throat, the clause *it has a single eye* is likely more frequent in the English language than *I have a throat* just because the former contains information whereas the latter does not. As evidence of that, *one-eyed* occurs more frequently in Google Books NGram Sets than *one-throated* even though there are more *one-throated* beings than *one-eyed* ones. This is how far this linguistic constraint of informativeness can go.

For that reason, the clause *I have a sore throat* can only be indicative if information is being exchanged and if that information is not in the relation between the addresser and the throat. The information being exchanged must be between the throat and it being sore. In that sense, the nominal group a sore throat does not function as Given nor as New in the clause as proposed by Halliday and Matthiessen (2014, p. 117), but as what I shall call “Restricted”. In turn, this nominal group in particular has an information structure of its own and its constituents must function either as Given or as New. See Table 23.

Assuming that both clauses and nominal groups may have constituents functioning as New, let us take a look at the following passage of *Satyricon*, in which Trimalchio describes how Aries-borns are.

- (33) ||| quisquis [[nascitur | illō signō]] | multa pecora | habet ||
 ||| those [[born | in this sign]] | have | many sheep ||
- (34) || multum lānae ||
 || a lot of wool ||
- (35) || caput [praetereā] dūra ||
 || and also | ‘an impenetrable head’ ||
- (36) || faciem expūdōrātam ||
 || ‘a challenging face’ ||
- (37) || cornum acūtum |||
 || and ‘lock-ready horns’ |||
- (38) ||| plūrimī [hōc signō]|scholasticī | nascuntur ||
 ||| many [with this sign] | are | natural-born scholars ||
- (39) || et | arietillī |||
 || and | ‘natural-born stubborns’ |||

The sequence of possessive relations in Examples 33-37 shows a slow progression from what can be honestly taken to be ownership and part relations to what can be understood in such terms only metaphorically. Example 33 can be understood as simple ownership because humans can own sheep. Example 34 can also be understood as simple ownership because the same can be said about wool. Metaphorically, though, one could also understand that Aries-borns (Sheepmen) have a lot of wool in the same way as sheep do, namely as part of themselves. However, even if this analogy is possible, it is not necessary to make sense of this clause.

Example 35 is a turning point in this sense. First, the relation from Aries-borns to their heads is that of part and not ownership. Since all humans have heads, the fact that humans have heads is not informative. What is stated by this clause is that Aries-borns’ heads are impenetrable. Physically speaking, this is an absurd statement. Metaphorically speaking, if we take ‘ideas’ to exist in people’s heads or to be taken out and put into people’s heads, a head becomes a ‘container of ideas’ in a similar way as

a bowl can be a container of olives.²⁰ And ‘having an impenetrable head’ becomes a personal character of not ‘taking in’ ideas from others. It is only in so far as we construe a metaphorical understanding for this clause – an understanding of it in terms of another linguistic representation – that we can make sense of it. Therefore, we can say that this further step of analogical understanding is not only possible, but necessary for this clause.

Example 36 works in a similar way. Everyone has a face, so what is new is that Aries-borns’ faces are challenging. Again, someone’s face here is not solely the front part of a person’s head, but also a container of non-challenging manners (*pūdōrēs*). In this case, Aries-borns are said to have ‘*pūdōr*-depleted’ faces, thus to have a personal character of challenging others. The bowl of olives metaphor supports this rationale as well, but other analogies might also be applicable in this case such as a wall not covered by paint. In *Satyricon*, faces and walls are compared to each other as well as falling make-up and falling wall paint. In that sense, a make-up-less face could also serve as a physical metaphor for ‘*pūdōr*-depleted’ faces in this example.²¹

Up to this clause, we were able to justify the existence of a New information in the nominal group based on the fact that the part relation represented by the clause was entirely given. We were also able to understand parts of the human body as containers of abstract things such as ‘ideas’ and ‘manners’ with bowl-of-olives and painted-wall metaphors.

However, Example 37 challenges this approach of assuming that novelty is located in Epithets only when clauses are uninformative in our shared model of the reality we are part of. For instance, on the one hand, people do not have horns, but we do not assume that the novelty in this clause is that Aries-borns have horns. We cannot do this. Aries-born people at Trimalchio’s dinner do not have horns as part. This would be already absurd. Nonetheless, even if this representation must be metaphorical, we do not take the horns to be new information.

²⁰ In the first chapters of *Satyricon*, Encolpius criticises teachers of rhetoric for feeding their students with a huge amount of sweetened spherical verbal things spiced with poppy seeds and sesame. This is the linguistic support for the olive metaphor for ideas.

²¹ This analogy cannot be supported by modern intuitions of how gender-conformant men currently behave around the world. To have make-up on is not perceived as a condition for men to appear in public in any populous city in this day and age.

Analogically to the last three examples, we would have to understand ‘to have horns’ not as ownership but as a part relation in the same way as male sheep have wool, head, face, and horns. In this sheep-human analogy, having a horn is not new information. It is given. The new information would be in the fact that the horn of Aries-borns is sharp (*acūtum*) and ‘ready for lock’. Thus the novelty would be that sheep/Aries-borns are ready for fighting each other: sheep would fight in the realm of physics whereas humans would fight in realm of ideas.

For this indicative clause, we cannot align a linguistic reference to horns with perceivable horns that are part of perceivable humans. Even though we can collectively construe reality through consensus, at least in this case, we cannot align linguistic representation with perceptual representation of the same reality in which the man stating this is. In other words, there is no cut of perceivable reality at Trimalchio’s dinner that can be said to be such horns. So we cannot rely on a general assumption such as that humans have throats for considering humans having horns uninformative. This givenness must come from somewhere else. I assume that the analogy between humans and sheep might play such a role in this process. In that case, it would be the alignment between linguistically represented sheep and perceivable sheep that would make a male sheep having a horn to be taken as given. Through the analogy, a man having a horn would also be given.

In addition, to understand such a clause in a reasonable way, we need to construe a reality in which a human has a horn, simulate the purpose of a horn in terms of the behaviour of male sheep, and find an analogy between that behaviour and equivalent behaviours in humans. How such an understanding process works – whether it is haphazard or orderly – has not been explained so far. And I shall not attempt any detailed explanation such as the one I proposed for idioms in previous sections. But we need to have such explanations for a progression from perceivable things and relations to their metaphorical counterparts if we intend to describe Latin representations of more abstract possessions such as Example 37 and the one dealt with in the next section. Otherwise, we risk ‘opening up an academic Pandora’s box’ after which any rationale can be said to be valid in an ad-hoc fashion and descriptive generalisations cannot be achieved. We should never forget that the amount of linguistic evidence and the generality of explanations should be still our guidance.

6.1 Abstract possession

Let's now take it for granted that an indicative clause is at the same time a representation of a state or an event and an exchange of information. And let's assume that the way to describe how information is exchanged is to characterise and differentiate clauses progressively in a semantically motivated way as I have done in this paper so far. With that in mind, let's read the following text:

- (40) *Adulescens,*
Young man,
- (41) *quoniam sermōnem habēs nōn publicī sapōris,*
given that your speech is not meant to meet the taste of the audience,
“given that you made a speech not of audience taste,”
- (42) *et, quod rarissimum est, amās bonam mentem,*
and, what makes you very special, that you value reasonability
- (43) *nōn fraudābō tē arte secrētā.*
I shall add a comment if I may.²²
“I shall not deceive you with a silent behaviour”

As a starting point, we should notice that this dialogic contribution is a wonderful example of polite critique in the Latin scholastic environment. Indicators of politeness abound in this passage. A striking one is the ‘abstractness’ of the things represented by nominal groups: e.g. speech, audience taste, reasonability, and polite manners. This is no ordinary impolite dialogue in interaction such as Trimalchio’s punishment of a slave by ordering the removal of his tunic, which takes place later in the same book. The contents of the dialogue above are completely removed from mundane matters. Every mentioned thing is socially construed through lexical and grammatical metaphors and none of them is perceivable with our natural senses of our environment.

²² Such a clause might have been just a polite way to prepare the listener for a criticism. For that reason, I reworded the clause so as to achieve a similar illocutionary force in the English academic context. I aimed at illocutionary force equivalence at the cost of representation because the verbal process represented in the original seems less relevant discursively in that situation than the actual preparation of the listener for what was about to be said.

Because of this, observations of possession apply here only metaphorically. A person owning a house is clearly an ownership relation. A person having a head, two feet, and two hands are clearly part relations.²³ In contrast, a speech having an audience taste is a possession only metaphorically. Both a speech and an audience taste are abstract entities and the relation between the two is likewise abstract.

As far as genitive nominal groups are concerned, we have the task of explaining the position of one in Example 41. This clause has an accusative nominal group, which is either the continuous wording *sermōnem* or the discontinuous wording *sermōnem ... nōn publicī sapōris*. Independent of the option of analysis we take, there is a genitive nominal group, namely *nōn publicī sapōris*. In the first analysis, this nominal group would be a constituent of the clause whereas in the second analysis, it would be a constituent of the accusative nominal group. With the descriptive tools that I used in this paper, we are able to deal with both kinds of analysis. The first analysis would lead to an understanding of this clause similar to that of Carrier and Attribute where possession is represented by the clause. On the other hand, in the second analysis the accusative nominal group would function as a Restricted and in their turn the constituents of that group would function as Given and New.

When considering which analysis to pick, we should choose the one that generalises best across examples if we care about the amount of human labour spent in linguistic description of ancient languages. However, since I ‘brought’ a single example ‘to the table’, I cannot claim which analysis is best at this moment in such terms. Let me restate why this example is interesting for researchers continuing this work in the future:

1. The holding of a speech (*sermōnem habēre*) is not the information being exchanged. The information is rather a characterisation of the speech as being unappealing to an audience.

²³ In the last few years, human rights activists have protested state overreach with statements such as *my belly is mine* and *my uterus is mine* against abortion bans, *my face is mine* against gender non-conformance bans, and *my ass is mine* and *my asshole is mine* against anal sex bans. In such cases, we should understand these clauses as representations of belonging and ownership relations. However, one must be cautious not to project such modern linguistic representations back in time without collecting enough situational evidence for such understandings.

2. The position of the genitive nominal group after the Process verb might be a restriction motivated by the information structure, in which case considering the genitive nominal group to be a clause constituent (and not a constituent of another nominal group) might be a good descriptive decision as far as cross-example generalisation is concerned.

I shall leave it open how to describe such structures until we have a larger community of Latin scholars involved in the discussion so that we can find pros and cons of each alternative from different perspectives in terms of descriptive economy. In the meanwhile, I shall invite other linguists who do generative descriptions of Latin to reconsider their views on language so as to make our future claims sustainable and useful for Latin readers and translators. Adding to that, if applicability to comprehension tasks is perceived not to be the goal of a particular generative model of language, I shall invite those linguists to be explicit about the purpose of their models and to warn readers and translators not to use their models for comprehension tasks. In the following, I shall demonstrate how our views on language can not only induce unsustainable unapplicable claims, but also compromise comprehension skills and ultimately result in non-optimal translation products.

7 Reduced claims

I shall restate the claims that I chose to consider in this paper:

1. In most cases, genitive nominal groups have their primary²⁴ function of Modifiers within other nominal groups.²⁵
2. In this function, both the function of Premodifier (305 tokens) and that of Postmodifier (386 tokens) are similarly frequent.
3. No variation in frequency is seen in different episode groups.
4. There is no difference in meaning between Premodifiers and Postmodifiers.

²⁴ “precípua”.

²⁵ “função de complemento de nomes”.

Claim 1 is loaded. It has at least one implied claim: that the primary function of genitive nominal groups is to be Modifiers within other nominal groups. I do not know of any other evidence but frequency to sustain such a claim of primarity. In that sense, stating that in most cases genitive nominal groups have the function that is its most frequent function is tautological at best. Because of this, I shall ignore this tautology and assume that what is being claimed is that in most cases genitive nominal groups are Modifiers within other nominal groups. This is a claim that can be supported by evidence.

After trying to analyse the same data functionally, I must admit that I cannot verify Braga Bianchet's Claim 1 neither by inspecting the originals nor by inspecting the translation produced by her. And I am afraid no one can at the current stage.

In the first place, from a functional perspective, what counts as a nominal group, part of one, or part of a clause depends on both how functional our analysis is and how much we shuttle between grammatical and semantic structures. For instance, in the example *quī ad pedēs Habinnae sedēbat*, I considered *ad pedēs* a spatial preposition and *Habinnae* the complement of that preposition in the same way that we consider the sequence of words *in front of* a preposition in English nowadays.²⁶ I did not consider *pedēs Habinnae* a nominal group on its own in any of my analyses. This is reflected on the way I divided the sequence of words into grammatical constituents. The motivation for this decision was that I wanted to create a description of grammatical structure that is useful for reading and translating texts and that decision served my purpose. Once I shuttled forth and back, *Habinnae*, which was at first taken to be a constituent of a phrase, became a clause constituent on its own. The preposition *ad pedēs* became part of the Process idioms *sedēre ad pedēs cuius* 'to be sitting at someone's feet' and *stāre ad pedēs cuius* 'to be standing at someone's feet'. On the one hand, the grammatical structures in both analyses do not include the nominal group *pedēs Habinnae* that Braga Bianchet counted. On the other hand, in each analysis I proposed, *Habinnae* is part of a different rank. I did not claim that the clause is ambiguous and has one of the two grammatical constitutions. I claimed it has both grammatical constitutions at the same

²⁶ I also considered *ad pedēs* a spatial adverbial in the same way as we consider *home* an adverbial in English nowadays.

time. Both analyses are right and applicable at the same time. In that sense, shuttling makes counting constituency relations not only model-specific (as it is always the case) but also unfeasible.

Secondly, constituency relations also depend on how much descriptive power we are willing to assign to the clause and to the nominal group. For instance, if we consider that an information structure can exist both in a clause and in a nominal group, the adjective sore in I have a sore throat can function as New even though it is inside a nominal group. Describing Example 37 in such a way would lead us to consider the genitive nominal group as a constituent of another nominal group and not of the clause because it would be able to function as New at that rank. This helps us reduce the complexity of our description of clauses at the cost of increasing the complexity of our description of nominal groups. This is a decision that we as researchers make based on economical factors. It is not a property of the English grammar outside of our model of it. We, as descriptive linguists, are the ones who choose how expressive each rank needs to be for our purpose. Depending on our choice of how to describe linguistic structures, hopefully based on economical criteria and not on authority, constitution will take different shapes. In that sense, constituency frequency is a property of our model of language and not of language itself.

However, this assumption that a genitive nominal group can function as New within another nominal group only makes sense from a functional perspective. One needs a semantic motivation to recognise a New constituent that is not a constituent of the clause. If that possibility were not given, there is no way to consider this nominal group as anything but a part of the indicative clause. Otherwise, there would be no indicative clause in the first place. Given that Braga Bianchet's approach to language is mainly traditional/generative even if she uses a few functional terms such as *function*, I doubt that she considered information structures and the semantic motivation behind Given and New in her analysis. Therefore, her framework has probably put her in a position from which she could not doubt whether such genitive nominal groups should really be considered a constituent of a nominal group and not of a clause. This option was not given by her traditional/generative theory of language, and the way she reports her claims indicate that the paradigm of semantically unmotivated description of language might have made her unaware that the constituency frequencies she found was

a property of her semantically arbitrary model of Latin and not a property of Latin language *per se*.

From a generative perspective, the fact that a nominal group is genitive and is part of another nominal group can be authoritatively defined to be what makes it a ‘modifier’ without any semantic motivation; such a consideration is a convention that reduces the number of rules for generating all and only the strings that are possible in a written language and nothing more. So Claim 1 is probably much simpler than it reads: removing the term function of modifier, this is likely a claim that in most cases genitive nominal groups are constituents of nominal groups (and very rarely a constituent of the clause). At first this seems a reasonable claim. From my experience as a Latin reader, I myself think this might be the case even though I cannot verify it. There are far too many examples such as Example 41 for which two different descriptions are reasonable and for which there is no right or wrong option. Depending on the way we look at such a wording, genitive nominal groups are constituents either of the clause or of another nominal group. What can be said though is that the cases in which a genitive nominal group is certainly a constituent of another nominal group or of a phrase and not of the clause clearly outnumber the cases in which we can be certain of the opposite for the examples that I can explain in functional terms. This might be correlated with the fact that part-of relations do not need to be indicated very often in most practical situations²⁷ (genitive Possessor Attribute) whereas they are very useful in many situations for restricting reference to things (genitive Possessive Modifier). It might also have to do with the fact that reference to things can also be restricted by representing things as belonging to a particular person (genitive Possessive Modifier) whereas Petronius was more inclined to indicate what people had (accusative Possessed Attribute) than who things belonged to (genitive Possessor Attribute). In that sense, a reduced and explained version of Claim 1 would be still good.

Claim 2 must also be reduced to something in the following lines: as a constituent of a nominal group, genitive nominal groups may appear before, after (or enclosing) the Head noun (as long as there is one, which is not always the case). On the one hand, this claim is absolutely

²⁷ Unless interactants are building a puzzle, talking about non-visible things, or doing other kinds of activities that demand indication of part-of relations.

right. It cannot be wrong since there is evidence that the two (actually three) relative positions are possible. On the other hand, given the fact that nominal groups are often discontinuous in Latin, this claim cannot be applied to the task of understanding a text since we cannot make any prediction of constituent order with it.

Claim 3 is very unexpected. It is based on the assumption that the formality level might be what makes a constituent order more likely than the other. Braga Bianchet presents no example pair nor sets of example pairs that would lead us to this hypothesis and it seems to be the case that this test was applied indiscriminately to all linguistic features annotated in her corpus independent of there being a hypothesis to be verified or not. What comes out of this verification of a (likely) random hypothesis is a negative claim, an avoidance of a hypothesis that no one had ever made and will probably never come up with again in the future.

In this paper, I present evidence that the critique of Encolpius's speech by a scholar is very abstract. This seems to me to be a practice of "hedging". If such a passage is contrasted with Trimalchio's critique of the cook's work during the dinner episode in terms of hedging markers, I am sure that a positive correlation between abstractness and politeness is to be achieved. So my critique of this negative claim is not a general critique of the idea of contrasting different episode groups but on the lack of motivation for the random hypothesis that was verified and correctly proven not to be the case.

Finally, Claim 4 is probably the only one that has a detrimental effect to comprehension skills. It is a claim of meaninglessness. It is a claim of random choice of constituent order or, in other terms, semantically arbitrary order. This is a claim that originates not from any actual description of language adopting a generative approach, but from Generative Theory turned into ideology. The very fact that a researcher chooses a generative theory of language instead of a functional one shows that the researcher believes or accepts that the relation between semantic and lexicogrammatical structures is or might be arbitrary. In that sense, we can say that the choice of classifying structures into two groups based on the relative order of a genitive nominal group and a noun has no semantic motivation. Let me rephrase this more emphatically: it is the choice of classifying the wordings in such a way that has no semantic motivation, not the constituent order of those wordings per se. In the same way, one could describe the relative order of adjacent *rs* and *es* in Latin words and

the frequencies of two letter orders *er* and *re* might have an interesting statistical distribution even though this has in itself no explanatory power. Such a letter order classification of ‘diletters’ is semantically arbitrary in a very similar way to what Braga Bianchet did.²⁸

Braga Bianchet is not alone in making unsustainable claims of constituent order when creating a model of Latin with a generative theory of language. For instance, the generative linguist Oniga (2014) claimed that, as for constituent order, “the possessive genitive can either precede the noun, i.e. *Hamilcaris filius*, or follow it, e.g. *arma hostium*. This alternation was explained in the following way. In the base structure of the noun phrase, the possessive genitive, which modifies object nouns, is generated on the left of the noun [...]. The post-nominal position of the genitive, in contrast, can be derived via leftward movement of the noun, which is optional in a language like Latin, but obligatory in a language such as Italian. This is the reason why Latin admits both *Ciceronis liber* and *liber Ciceronis*, while in Italian the only possible order is *il libro di Cicerone* (cf. **di Cicerone il libro*)”. The explanation for two different constituent orders proposed by Oniga is much more complex than Braga Bianchet’s and mine. He not only claims that the two orders are possible, but also that one is derived from a cross-linguistic basic order through a ‘leftward movement’ of the noun, therefore claiming an ordered base structure for a set of languages that is different from surface variations that can be observed. Given he talks about ‘obligatory movements’, his claims cannot be supported by evidence of any kind. In addition, the only motivation he gives for movement (when it is optional) is the discriminatory or poetic power of the attribute represented by the genitive constituent (ONIGA, 2014, p. 194-195). His explanation of constituent order in the nominal group as having only textual motivations does not match the linguistic evidence that I collected in *Satyricon*. Moreover, his postulation of an ordered base structure that can be altered given textual

²⁸ There are 3623 occurrences of *er* and 2263 occurrences of *re* in *Satyricon*. I cannot explain their choice based on this classification of diletters nor can I say anything about the frequencies of *er* and *re*. However, even if I cannot make any explanation based on these frequencies, I cannot claim that the choice of one of these two sequences of letters is random only because my classes of diletters are semantically unmotivated. There is a reason for the choice of *er* and not *re* or of *re* and not *er* in each single occurrence of them. The diletters do not become equivalent and interchangeable when I cannot explain their meaning with my diletter classes.

motivations cannot be defended in terms of theoretical economy if we assume that the motivation is not only textual (such as definiteness) but also the nature of things and the nature of possessive relations being represented.

However, what concerns me in Braga Bianchet's claim of meaninglessness and Oniga's claim of textually motivated 'movements' is not their ideological origin but rather their negative effect on our ability to understand ancient texts. These claims hide from Latin readers and translators that the order of constituents in the nominal group is indeed semantically motivated. On its turn, this unawareness of motivated constituent order leads to problems in Latin comprehension. The caveat that the motivation for constituent order is known by us nowadays for just a small percentage of the cases should not prevent us from making use of them as we move forward. In this paper, I showed some grammatical structures and the semantic motivations behind their choices. I started out with the notion of possession and how possession is represented in different languages. With that background, I selected the expressions that I could honestly assume were possession. Then I described the variation in a semantically motivated way. The amount of effort put into analysing examples in a functional way is drastically larger. But there is a very positive consequence to this additional labour. We can make use of such a description to understand texts in a better way. In the next section, I shall demonstrate the detrimental effects of Braga Bianchet's traditional/generative model of Latin to text comprehension.

8 Detrimental effects to comprehension

I shall now extract an example from Braga Bianchet's translation of *Satyricon* (2004) and I shall tentatively explain her misunderstanding of the passage based on the fact that she used a traditional/generative model of language. This is not meant as a negative criticism of her work as a translator nor as a negative criticism of this segment of her work in particular. This misunderstanding is not her fault, but a fault of the model of language that she used. It is not a consequence of any personal mistake, but a consequence of an inevitable mistake that anyone would make if they used that model, which we all rely on nowadays in the absence of a more suitable one. For that reason, I shall take this example as evidence that we as an academic community need to rethink whether and to which

extent traditional/generative accounts of language are having positive or negative effects on our capability of coping with the complexity of human languages. I chose the following passage because it is an example of miscomprehension that strongly supports my defence that a functional model of Latin is needed. It is taken from the middle of Chapter 9.

- (44) «tuus» inquit «iste frater seu comes paulō antē in conductum accurrit, coepitque mihī velle pūdōrem extorquere. cum ego prōclāmārem, gaudium strinxit, et «sī Lucrētia es,» inquit «Tarquinius invēnistī.»». quibus ego audītīs, intentāvī in oculōs Ascytlī mānūs. «...» inquam «...».

Disse enfim: “Esse seu companheiro, ou amigo, sei lá, ainda a pouco surgiu de repente aqui no quarto e quis violentar-me. Como eu reclamei, ele empunhou a espada e disse: ‘Se você é Lucrecia, então encontrou um Tarquínio.’” Depois de ouvir essas coisas, eu estendi a mão em direção aos olhos de Ascytlo e disse: “...”

He finally spoke out: “This boyfriend of yours, this friend of yours, he came into the room a few moments ago and wanted to molest me.²⁹ Since I complained,³⁰ he picked up his sword and told me: “If you are Lucretia, then you just met a Tarquinius.”” When I heard that, I extended my hand towards Ascytlus’s eyes³¹ and said: “...”

At the moment of the last material action of the passage, Giton, the narrator’s boy slave, had just told the narrator that Ascytlus had sexually molested him. According to what he had told the narrator, Ascytlus had come into the room earlier, attempted forced sex, and, when Giton said “no”, he would have picked up his sword, called Giton “Lucretia” and himself “Tarquinius”, then likely forced Giton into having sex with him. Giton does not report this last action of the story, but this is recoverable given who Lucretia and Tarquinius are according to a Roman historical legend: Tarquinius is a man who raped Lucretia while holding a sword to her throat. The last material action of the passage takes place inside a flat immediately after Giton spoke out about Ascytlus’s sexual assault of him and while both the narrator and Ascytlus were next to each other. In that context, if we assume that the presence of Ascytlus, the ex-gadiator

²⁹ “quis violentar-me”.

³⁰ “como eu reclamei”.

³¹ “eu estendi a mão em direção aos olhos do Ascytlo”.

accused of rape, which is possibly armed with a sword, poses a threat to the others and that Encolpius's reaction took place immediately after he heard that story, what would be the most reasonable reaction for him to have before the physical fight that is about to start? I think it would be to 'watch out for' Ascyltus's hands since he might be holding a sword and then to 'keep' his hands 'under watch' so that he cannot get hold of one. The narrator is probably operating in fight mode and is expanding his eyes (vision field) in such a way that Ascyltus's hands falls within.

Moreover, as shown in Examples 30-32, the idiom *intentāre in oculōs quid* 'to lay eyes on something' happens three times in *Satyricon*. In two situations, the narrator 'looks at' someone else's hands (for a weapon) and, in the other situation, someone else threatens the narrator by 'showing' him a hot skewer (the weapon). In all these situations, looking for a weapon and showing off a weapon are the last perceptual processes prior to a fight.

Furthermore, still from a synchronic perspective, there is an additional argument to be made that such a motion-into-eyes metaphor for perception is not only found in Petronius's satires, but also in other texts written by contemporaries. For instance, Seneca the Younger makes use of motion-into-eyes metaphors for perception at least two times in his moral letters to Lucilius (Examples 45 and 47). The only difference between the metaphors by the two authors consists of the fact that Seneca makes use of that idiom *intentāre in oculōs quō quid* instead of Petronius's *intentāre in oculōs quid*, which represents a goal-part-affecting dispositive figure instead of a goal-affecting one (see Example 47).

- (45) || nihil <<nisi quod *in oculōs incurret* || manifestumque erit>>
crēdāmus ||
|| let's not believe in anything || unless it *comes into our eyes* || or
has been manifest ||
- (46) et quotiēns suspiciō nostra vāna
and let's believe in our impressions with a reasonable amount of
suspicion
- (47) *in oculōs* nunc mihī mānūs *intentat* ille, quī omnium animum
aestimat ex suō, now these folks who judge the spirit of others
based on their own *are keeping* my hands *under watch*

- (48) quod dīcam paria bona esse honestē jūdicantēs et honestē pericli tantis,
because I'm claiming that the social worth is the same for the men who punish according to law and for those punished according to law
- (49) quod dīcam paria bona esse ejus, quī triumphat, et eius, quī antē currum vehitur invictus animō.
because I'm claiming that the social worth is the same for the ones who triumph and for the ones dragged forward in front of a chariot who were not enslaved in spirit
- (50) nōn pūtant enim fierī quidquid facere nōn possunt.
these folks just don't think others do what they can't
- (51) ex infirmitāte suā fērunt dē virtūte sententiam.
because of their own insecurities, they pass judgement on the virtue of others

Figure representations with bold words are instances of the motion-into-eyes metaphor, which identifies perceived things with things that enter one's field of vision. As seen in the examples above, these metaphors come together with an ideology that limits the known as well as the believed to the perceivable. And it is at this point – the experiential nature of linguistic representation – that a systemic and functional model of Latin enables a more precise linguistic analysis of Latin texts than a traditional/generative model.

Going back to the example in which the thing that moves into the narrator's eyes is Ascyltus's hands, we notice that the genitive nominal group *Ascyltī* comes right in between the words *oculōs* (eyes) and *mānūs* (hands). If the position of the genitive nominal group in relation to the noun is assumed to be random and semantically unmotivated, which is the assumption that any model without an experiential component will lead to, the Latin translator needs to use contextual evidence for deciding whether the narrator is mentioning Ascyltus's eyes or Ascyltus's hands. If the Latin translator knew of the predictable constituent order I suggest in this paper, she would already go right for Ascyltus's hands. And if she could shuttle between grammatical and semantic structures, on the one hand, she would be able to turn *intentāvī in oculōs quid* into a Process idiom and, on the other, she would understand that this clause represents a dispositive process that in turn stands for a perceptual process (metaphor). Latin translators would be able to translate this clause in a better way

with a functional model of Latin even if they had taken this clause in isolation and did not know the context of situation in which Ascyllus, an ex-gladiator accused of rape, is possibly holding a sword. As we see in the translation above, neither the semantically motivated default order, nor the idiomaticity of the clause, nor the contexts of discourse and of situation were sufficient for the translator to make an optimal linguistic analysis of this clause. As a result, the translator considered wrongly that there was a reference to Ascyllus's eyes. This means the reasoning path taken by her must have been a different one.

As I said before, this misunderstanding is not – in any sense – evidence that Braga Bianchet did a poor job in translating this passage. The sequence of actions represented by her translation is as nonsensical as all other representations I have access to, which were produced with the current traditional/generative model of Latin. This mistake was not a personal failure because 100% of those translating this passage did not understand the original as one can see in the extracts below.

Latin

Quibus ego audītīs, intentāvī in oculōs Ascyllī mānūs, et «...»
inquam «...».

English

I heard him, and shaking my fist at Ascyllus: "...” said I "...”
(Burnaby, 1694)

When I heard this, I shook my fist in Ascyllus’ face, "...”
I snarled "...” (Firebaugh, 1922)

Hearing this, I exclaimed, shaking my two fists in Ascyllus’
face. "...” (Allinson, 1930[1902])

Furious at such treachery, I rushed across to Ascyllus and shook
my fists in his face. "...” I yelled. (Bellow, 1994[1959])

When I heard this, I shook my fist in front of Ascyllus’s face:
‘...’ (Sullivan, 2011[1965])

On hearing this, I brandished my fist in Ascyllus’ face, and said:
“...” (Walsh, 1997)

After hearing this, I aimed my fingers straight at Ascyllus’ eyes.
“...” (Ruden, 2000)

German

Als ich das hörte, fuhr ich Ascyltos mit den Fäusten vor die Augen und sagte: „...“ (Müller, 1972)

Als ich das hörte, schüttelte ich meine Fäuste Ascyltos vorm Gesicht und sagte: « ... » (Schnur, 1987)

Als ich das hörte, fuhr ich Ascyltos mit den Fäusten vor die Augen und schrie: „...“ (Schönberg, 1992)

Als ich das hörte, fuhr ich Ascyltos mit den Fäusten vor die Augen und sagte: „...“ (Müller & Ehlers, 2004)

Nach dieser Nachricht hielt ich dem Ascytl die Faust vor die Augen und sprach zu ihm: „...“ (Heinse, 2012)

French

A ces mots, peu s'en fallut que je n'arrachasse les yeux au perfide. – ... – m'écriai-je – ... (G. 1834)

A ces mots, je faillis arracher les yeux à Ascylte. « ..., lui criaï-je, ... » (Langle, 1923)

Spanish

Tras oír esto metí los puños a Ascilto en los ojos y le dije: – ... (Díaz y Díaz, 1968)

Al oír semejante cosa, poco me faltó para sacarle los ojos a Ascilto, y exclamé: – ... (Ayuno, 1973)

Al oír eso, apuntando con mis puños a los ojos de Ascilto, pregunto: “...” (Fernández, 1978)

Al oír esto lancé mis puños a los ojos de Ascylo. – ... – le repliqué yo – ... (Santidrián, 1978)

A esta noticia me dirigí hacia Ascilto, con los puños dirigidos a sus ojos, apostrofándole así: ... (Picasso, 1985)

Al oír esto metí los puños a Ascilto en los ojos y le espeté: – ... (Díaz y Díaz, 1990)

Cuando escuché esto a punto estuve de arrancarle los ojos a Ascilto; le digo: «... » (Merino, 1996)

Al oír estas palabras apunté con mis puños a la cara de Ascilto y le dije: « ... » (Maldonado, 2014)

In the extracts, English and German translations represent a fist-shaking gesture by the narrator, the French represent Encolpius's failed attempt to pull Ascyltus's eyes out, the Spanish represent either an unrealised intention to pull Ascyltus's eyes out, or a no-where-to-be-seen two-fist pointing gesture towards someone else's eyes, or a no-where-to-be-seen two-fist punch against someone else's eyes. As we can see

above, the represented figures are language-specific. This means that our accumulated experiences as members of linguistic communities must play some role in this language-specific divergence.

I assume that the steps whereby such language-specific patterns come about are the following: first, different sets of phenomena get represented in each linguistic community; secondly, whenever a Latin representation of a phenomenon is not understood, that representation is associated with a structurally similar modern language representation of one of the phenomena that are represented in the translator's linguistic community; finally, a recent phenomenon experienced by a modern linguistic community gets accidentally transferred to the past, leaving the impression that ancient Romans had produced a Latin representation of this recent phenomenon even though that is definitely not the case. In other words, whenever translators do not understand a Latin representation of a figure, translation is produced by mapping modern language wordings to Latin wordings and not by searching for a wording in modern languages that best represents the figure represented in Latin. As a result, modern culture-specific language-specific figures get 'transferred' to the past.

For instance, from English and German speakers' perspective, an ancient Roman's behaviour might be understood as a phylogenetic model for a modern Neo-Latin speaker's behaviour. In that sense, a modern Italian's fist-shaking gesture of disagreement might be not only perceived by Non-Neo-Latin speakers but also used as a trait for guessing whether a person is a southerner or an Italian. Because this gesture is useful for recognising a foreigner's birthplace, fist-shaking gestures do get represented in Non-Neo-Latin languages outside of Italy. Finally, that modern-day fist-shaking gesture, which metaphorically implies a nationality in Northern Europe and in North America, might get represented in Non-Neo-Latin translations of ancient texts as if that gesture did also occur in the past, which we cannot claim to be the case.

From French and Spanish speakers' perspective, an ancient Roman's behaviour might be understood as a phylogenetic model for a behaviour that was "revived" during the Renaissance (late 15th to late 18th centuries). In that sense, mutilations such as eye extractions and hand amputations as well as capital punishment of Early Modern Period might be recalled and taken to be one of the "revived" habits. As a result, those relatively recent phenomena that happened until the French Revolution might get represented in their translations of *Satyricon* as if those were normal practices in Rome.

Finally, from a Spanish speaker's perspective, behaviours of Pre-Christian Romans might be understood as more primitive or more unreasonable in comparison to those of Christian Neo-Latin speakers. In this mind-set, the stranger and the more unpredictable body motions are, the more detached from a Pre-Christian culture our Neo-Latin speaker's culture is portrayed to be.

Of course, since I did not interview any Latin translator, I cannot claim with certainty that my explanation for these language-specific patterns reflects how translators perceived Ancient Romans or wanted them to be perceived by others at the time of translation. The only proposition I can state for sure is that my speculation about the reasons why different phenomena got represented in different linguistic communities could have been falsified by the kind of evidence that I used. The important point, though, is that my speculation was not falsified for collected evidence because divergence patterns showed to be language-specific in a very worrisome way.

Moreover, lack of understanding of metaphorical representation and consequent misunderstanding of originals are not only generalised across all translators for this particular example, but also systematic in the sense that it repeats for all instances of these idioms throughout translations and across translations of different texts. In that sense, I do not attribute this misunderstanding to any translator cited above nor to any misleading context of discourse or of situation but to our current model of Latin, which is traditional/generative and highly supplemented by insights from philology and from our modern European languages and cultures. The only reason for picking out Braga Bianchet's translation and not the others is the fact that she explicitly stated that she assumes word order is *semantically unmotivated*, what other translators have not done. Other translators are also likely to have assumed that word order is meaningless if they used our current traditional/generative model of Latin, but I do not have such a positive statement of word order meaninglessness for them. In particular, this clause is picked out because this is a representation for which the recognition of references to things depends on word order, which is semantically motivated and highly predictable, but which is assumed by most if not all translators to be random.

In the following, I shall illustrate how Braga Bianchet's model of Latin and the tools that we currently use for understanding ancient texts encourage us to translate this passage in the way Braga Bianchet did. In

particular, I shall demonstrate how they may cause the misunderstanding of this clause as representing an action of pointing one's hand (sic) towards another person's eyes. I do not claim that this is what Braga Bianchet did, but only what a Brazilian translator using her model of language would be "encouraged" to do given the lack of semantic motivation in traditional/generative models of Latin.

It all starts with the condition that a traditional/generative model of language puts a translator in. In the absence of any semantic motivation for grammatical structures, any fragmented interpretation is made reasonable. For instance, the Process word *intentāvī* is understood here as representing the process of *pointing something towards something else*. The consideration of this process is well grounded in morphological derivation *in + tentāre* ("conversion" + "stretching") and in the historical development of the stem *intentā* into *intend* and *intent*: both approaches relate this stem to a vector in physical or symbolic space in some way or another. The corresponding grammatical frame does not come from a corpus-based functional description of the Latin language because such a description does not exist. It probably comes from a personal intuition based on an entry in a bilingual dictionary and fluency in Brazilian Portuguese. Here I must emphasise again that this is not a critique of Braga Bianchet's work. Looking up words in a bilingual dictionary and trying to make sense of what is there in the text is the process of translation that we all do nowadays and that we teach our students to do. This is the regular practice of Latin translation nowadays with the tools that we have at our disposal. If we are to do something different from that, it must be done with alternative and more reliable tools, not with more intuition and less external support.

The grammatical frame in question is [accusative, prepositional phrase with accusative complement]. Around the process word there was what appeared to be an 'accusative nominal group', namely *mānūs* (the hands). This is a typical reference to an actor part in Brazilian Portuguese, possibly also in Latin, even though it is not typical in English and German. Supposing the translator is Brazilian, this alternative would seem a reasonable linguistic analysis even if people from other parts of the world might (unadvisedly) consider it as a last resort. By chance, the Brazilian translator gets an advantage over other translators in this case.

Moreover, before the 'accusative nominal group' there was what appeared to be a 'phrase': *in oculōs Ascyltī* 'into the eyes of Ascyltus'.

Given the absence of shuttling in the model of language, the translator would not be able to construe the Process idiom *intentāvī in oculōs quid* ‘to lay eyes on something’, what would make the phrase not more implausible than any other wording that can be built up. The actual metaphor for perception becomes unrecoverable at this point and what happens from here on is a language-specific culture-specific pattern of divergence.

Continuing the reconstruction of what might happen to Brazilian translators of Latin, Brazilian Portuguese might play a causal role in divergence once again. The preposition *em* in Brazil does not mean containment such as *in* in English, German, and Latin. It is often a general location in relation to something else such as *at/to* in English and *zu* in German (COUTO-VALE and de OLIVEIRA, 2015). This relaxed understanding supports a meaning such as towards Ascylltus’s eyes.³²

Finally, since Brazilians point with one hand and not with two and since there is no documented culture with this habit of pointing to other people’s eyes with two hands, the number of hands might be well advisedly reduced to one as in *a mão* ‘the hand’ so as to make the action sequence more plausible. The translator will, however, notice that the Brazilian representation of that figure is not equivalent to the Latin one according to his or her interpretation so far. For that reason, the translator might justify this choice based on the fact that both *as mãos* ‘the hands’ and *a mão* ‘the hands’ can represent two hands in Brazilian Portuguese, the first being a more prestigious representation as in *lavar as mãos* ‘wash one’s hands’ (prestigious) and the second being a less prestigious one as in *lavar a mão* ‘wash one’s hands’ (non-prestigious). In that way, given that *Satyricon* is understood as an instantiation of Vulgar Latin, understanding *a mão* as a non-prestigious reference to two hands might be a secondary way of justifying this translation as “technically” equivalent to the original. This technical justification, however, serves only as an instrument for us to “keep our conscience clear” as translators: we would assume that we did not commit any mistake of our own while being sure that readers without access to the original would inevitably

³² This misunderstanding and mistranslation may be later (unadvisedly) used as evidence that some occurrences of the preposition *in* might have already represented a general spatial location in the 1st century as *em* does in modern Brazilian Portuguese.

understand such a clause as representing the less nonsensical figure of a person pointing at someone else's eyes with a single hand, not two.

In the end, given the nonsensicality of the resulting sequence of actions, if there is still some insecurity left about whether the passage was properly translated, the translator might check how this passage has been translated to an array of modern languages. Since all other Latin translators are likely to have used the same traditional/generative model of Latin, which is the only one that exists, they will have committed the same language-specific mistakes unless they did not perform one of the standard translation habits. As a result, by checking other translations, the translator will necessarily be reassured that his or her translation, though noticeably nonsensical and somewhat ideologically tainted, is at least non-deviant. Finally, since the resulting translation is not only non-deviant but also technically well executed (the translator applied a fail-prone method of translation without personal mistakes), the translator might accept that not everything that was written in the past must make sense in the present and move on to translating the remainder of the text.

I assume that the most immediate translation hypothesis made by a translator using Braga Bianchet's model of Latin would not be that the represented figure is a metaphor of perception, that is, this translation hypothesis would not be that the represented process of disposition might stand for a process of perception as in *to bring something into one's eyes* or *to put something under watch*. This assumption is supported by the fact that her model of Latin is semantically arbitrary, thus highly supplemented by modern linguistic and cultural intuitions. Moreover, a linguistic model that does not predict shuttling forth from grammatical to semantic structure and back from an implied semantic structure to a grammatical one cannot provide us with a reliable understanding of Process idioms such as *intentāre in oculōs quid* shown in Table 22. Such understandings are not predicted by the model itself but only allowed in a final step of open-ended interpretation where everything goes. Finally, in the lack of any understanding, the insecurity brought about by the need of personal interpretation makes translators default to structural analogies between modern language representations and Latin ones instead of structural analogies between Latin representations of the same time period, resulting in a 'transfer' of recent phenomena into the past and in the tainting of the translations with culture-specific ideologies.

9 Conclusion

Being aware that grammatical structure is semantically motivated and that not every linguistic representation is congruent with what we assume that is going on in a story are two essential skills that readers of any language must acquire. Unfortunately, we cannot count with everyday life among ancient people as a source for intuitions of what is meant in an ancient language. For our reading and translating activities, we depend on descriptions of how surviving texts used to have a meaning for dead members of an ancient linguistic community, who we do not know personally and who we cannot reach for any clarification.

In that sense, such a misunderstanding exposed in the previous section can be easily explained through a model of Latin that is semantically arbitrary. In that situation, the translator needed to supplement that model with her unspoken grammatical intuitions from her primary language to arrive at some representation of some sort. This is not a problem that Braga Bianchet faces alone. This is a problem that all of us who read and translate ancient texts face the entire time. It is an issue that comes from our linguistic models and the tools that they provide us such as bilingual dictionaries. This is not an issue of linguistic competence and personal dedication. I cannot imagine how many hours it took and how much effort was put by Braga Bianchet into making what is now in my opinion the best translation of *Satyricon* there is for Brazilian Portuguese. Still, in this fail-prone process of translation with current tools, a wording that was unambiguous in Latin at clause, phrase, and group ranks, in default constituent order, in a highly restrictive context of situation that would make an ancient Latin reader even predict what the narrator would do next, this unambiguous wording is misunderstood and a nonsensical sequence of actions develops out of this misunderstanding.

For that reason, motivated by our shared desire to understand the history of mankind, I urge us to reconsider our theoretical frameworks and to reflect with low academic animosity whether we indeed need functional accounts of Latin for supporting the development of better reading skills both for ourselves and for the next generation of scholars. And for those of us who really align philosophically with the principles of the Generative Theory, I urge them/you to reconsider whether the counts we are feeding generative models are indeed correct. If we assume that some expressions are systematically being misunderstood as in the example I showed in

this paper, the pattern counts that support our generative models of Latin cannot even be accurate at the current stage. In that sense, explanatory claims based on them would be currently unsustainable. In other words, a functional model of Latin would also be needed in the first place if we want to develop accurate generative models of that language. In other words, we simply cannot understand Latin texts well enough with our current descriptions of it for counting structures in a corpus because we cannot rely on our modern culture-specific language-specific intuitions for that. In that sense, I shall close this paper with this open invitation for a collaborative effort. There is still much work to be done and this work cannot be done by any linguist alone.

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