

1 Multilingual Events in Late Medieval Personal Documentary Texts from the Winchester Diocese Collection in 1400–1525

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Introduction

The linguistic situation in late medieval England was characterised by societal multilingualism, meaning that Latin, French and English were used within one society. While English was the spoken language of the majority of the English population, Latin and French were used in official documents for different purposes. Textbooks on the history of English commonly present English as the language of official documents in England starting from the fifteenth century (Barber *et al.*, 2009; Millward and Hayes, 2010: 147–149). According to Stenroos (2020: 40–41), this is based on an earlier claim made by Samuels (1963: 71), who noted that from 1430 English was regularly used in government documents. However, according to Dodd (2012), Latin was still the main language of the Privy Seal during the fifteenth century.

Similarly, Schipor (2018) found that in the period 1400–1525 Latin was the main language of official writing in manorial, local government and episcopal administration in Winchester and the surrounding areas. This is based on findings from her doctoral study, which investigated 7,070 texts from three collections: the Jervoise family, the Winchester city archives and the Winchester Diocese.¹ Of these texts, 6,847 were written in Latin (Schipor, 2018: 102), which is the dominant language in all of the three collections. However, the same study indicates that in this period, personal documentary texts, such as statements and testaments, were increasingly written in one of the vernaculars, namely English and, very rarely, French. In these texts, the vernaculars are almost always accompanied by Latin, resulting in the use of more than one language within a single text. The aim of the present study is to investigate the types and functions of such instances of multiple language use.

This chapter discusses multiple language use in personal documentary texts recorded in 12 bishops' registers from the Winchester Diocese collection in the period 1400–1525 (Appendix, [Table 1.2](#)). The registers cover this period almost entirely, with a gap of 22 years corresponding to the second part of the register of Henry Beaufort, which has either

been lost or destroyed.² These registers contain 5,359 texts,³ which represent 76% of the total number of texts collected and analysed in Schipor (2018).

Digital images of all the texts dated to 1400–1525 were collected from the three collections mentioned above. This was carried out in compliance with the archive’s copyright regulations. All of the texts were carefully examined and then registered into a database that contains both linguistic and extralinguistic information. To be more specific, the following details were noted: languages used, place and date of text production, text type, domain, and persons mentioned. For the aim of the present study, the instances of multiple language use in personal documentary texts were identified and a selection of multilingual events were thereafter analysed in detail from a sociolinguistic and philo-pragmatic perspective.

The [chapter first](#) presents an overview of the data, including clarifications regarding the types of texts constituting the material. The theoretical framework is then presented and explained. The following section contains an in-depth discussion of the types and functions of multiple language use in a selection of texts. Directly quoted examples from manuscripts are provided in italics and underlining is used to signal the presence of contractions in the manuscript. The ~ sign indicates the final-word flourishes in the original and the & sign represents various manuscript abbreviations for “and”. The final section of the chapter is dedicated to conclusions.

The tables and figures in this chapter have been produced by the present author, based on her doctoral study.⁴

Materials

The texts here studied have survived as copies recorded in bishops’ registers. According to Smith (1981: ix), the main distinctive feature of a bishop’s register is the record of appointments of clergy to benefices. This would include material related to the appointment of parish clergy to rectories and vicarages, of chaplains to chantries and hospitals and of higher clergy to dignities and canonries in cathedral and collegiate churches. Coupled with these entries are the exchanges of livings, resignations and deprivations of incumbents, appointments of coadjutors, inquiries about the causes of vacancies and rights of patronage, and a host of similar business relating to benefices and the parochial clergy. Jacob (1953: 3) describes a bishop’s register as the official record of his administration. The two most salient characteristics of such a register are the eclectic character of contents and the extensive coverage across time (Jacob, 1953: 3).

The texts found in bishops’ registers may generally be referred to as documentary texts. Documentary texts are related to specific situations,

places, persons and dates and have pragmatic functions, for example, they disseminate information, convey decisions and record transactions (Bergstrøm, 2017: 46). Even when the time and place of text production are not mentioned explicitly, they may often be inferred from references to specific persons and historical events. Of the 5,359 texts in the 12 bishops' registers, 66% represent memoranda documenting a variety of parochial and episcopal business. Other frequent categories of texts are conveyances, directives, statements and correspondence. Such texts contain information about the socio-economic and legal-administrative aspects of daily life in late medieval England, thus facilitating a socio-pragmatic study of multilingualism.

The registers contain 5,288 texts in Latin, 23 in English and 48 written in more than one language (Figure 1.1). The Latin texts form a mega genre on the basis of their shared characteristics. Although they represent different categories, they have similar topics, such as the employment and retirement of clergy. They also represent top-down communication from the bishops and their representatives, addressed to members of the lower levels of ecclesiastical hierarchy. Such texts are largely monolingual, with the exception of English and French proper names and place names.

Of the 48 texts written in more than one language, three show the use of French together with Latin. It may be noted that French, as opposed to English, is always accompanied by Latin in the register texts. One of the

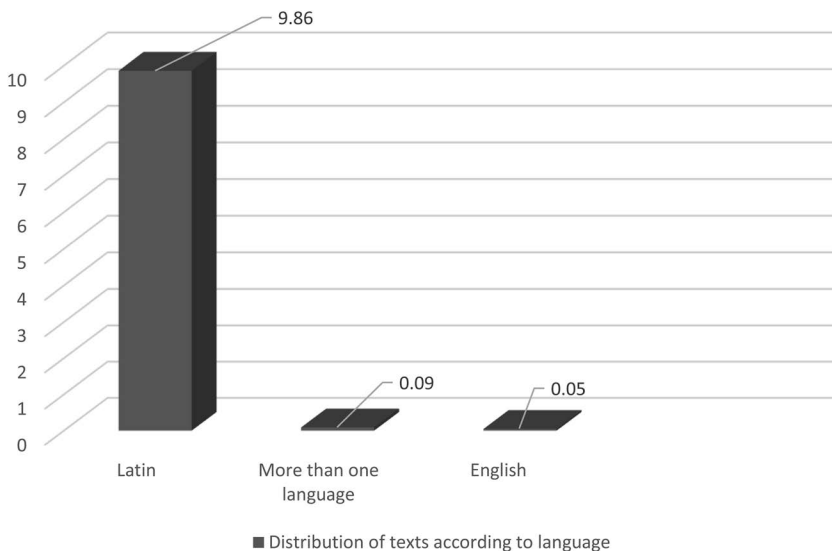


Figure 1.1 Distribution of texts in the bishops' registers of the Winchester Diocese collection (1400–1525) according to language

Table 1.1 Genres of personal documentary texts in the bishops' registers of the Winchester Diocese collection (1400–1525)

	<i>English</i>	<i>French</i>	<i>Latin</i>	<i>Multilingual events</i>
Abjurations	7	0	0	4 – English, Latin
Allegiances	0	0	0	1 – Latin, French; 1 – English, Latin
Juraments	0	0	0	1 – French, Latin; 1 – English, Latin
Testamentary texts	12	0	41	25 – English, Latin
Total	19	0	41	33

Source: © Delia Schipor

three texts with French and Latin is an assignation of pensions, representing the only instance where this text type shows the use of French in the registers (Schipor, 2018: 217). The remaining two texts with French and Latin are statements (Table 1.1).

The 23 texts written in English represent testamentary texts and abjurations. In 45 texts, English is used together with Latin in various text types, such as testaments, abjurations, agreements, court proceedings, and religious rules. The two languages are used in different ways and proportions across the text types. In the religious rule, for example, Latin is used to refer to the names of the prayers in the English body text (Schipor, 2018: 178–179). In some of the court proceedings, English and Latin appear to be used in almost equal proportions. By contrast, in abjurations and testaments, Latin is most commonly used in marginal and text-final notes (see examples 1 and 6).

Of the 48 texts, 33 are personal documentary texts, belonging to seven of the 12 bishops' registers (see Appendix, Table 1.2). Documentary texts written in the first person are here referred to as personal documentary texts. There are four types of personal documentary texts in the material here studied: abjurations, allegiances, juraments and testamentary texts (Table 1.1). Abjurations, allegiances and juraments are legally binding statements, while testamentary texts are conveyances concerning transactions of a spiritual and material nature (Schipor, 2018: 9). Abjurations represent renunciations of religious beliefs, given on oath, usually in an ecclesiastical court. Allegiances are statements of service and loyalty to a sovereign or feudal lord. Juraments are oaths made on entering an office or monastic rule.

The term *testamentary texts* is used to refer to wills and testaments collectively, based on their similarities. Traditionally, the main difference between the two text types is that wills typically cover unmovable goods, while testaments refer to movable goods, spiritual matters, funeral arrangements and alms. However, this distinction is often blurred. For example, certain fifteenth-century female testators from St Albans refer to their testaments as “wills”, even when they bequeath movable goods (Schiøld, 2019: 57).

There are several similarities between statements and testamentary texts in terms of structure and form. First of all, they are written in the first person. Secondly, they begin with the name of the person making the statement or testamentary text, often accompanied by a formulaic opening phrase. In the case of abjurations and testaments, for example, this is almost always represented by the divine invocation *In the name of God amen* or its Latin equivalent *In dei nomine amen* in testaments. Wills, on the other hand, usually begin with the standard phrase *This is my last will*. Thirdly, statements and testamentary texts commonly end with providing contextual information such as the date, place and names of witnesses.

Another important aspect shared by statements and testamentary texts is that they are in some ways closely connected to oral statements. For example, defendants would read aloud or repeat their abjurations in court, depending on their level of literacy (Stretton, 1998: 31–33). The copies of abjurations found in bishops' registers would most likely have been made after this stage. Testamentary texts were generally drawn on the basis of dictation or information provided orally by testators when they were not written by the testators themselves (Wright, 2015: 36). The resulting documents were thereafter proved by a probate court and recorded in a bishop's register after validation (Schipor, 2018: 157).

The complex nature of textual processing results in structural and linguistic multi-layering. The process of copying documentary texts in large volumes such as bishops' registers has led to the occurrence of textual elements which were most likely not found in the previous versions of the documents. In certain cases, elements such as titles, headings and marginalia are written in a different language than the copied text. The lasting character of episcopal collections allowed the different scribes who accessed them to insert their own notes at different points in time (Schipor, 2018: 161), which contributes to the visual complexity of the manuscript page. The study of multiple language use in this context requires a tailored theoretical framework that accounts for the visual fluidity of historical manuscripts.

Theoretical framework

Studies of multilingualism have traditionally employed the term *code-switching*, which may be defined as the “change from one language to another within one act of communication” (Schendl, 2000: 77). This concept was initially used for investigating multilingualism in spoken communication and thereafter commonly adopted in studies of written communication, including historical texts. While code-switching may be successfully applied to certain instances of multilingualism in manuscripts, attempting to employ it for all types of multiple language use may prove challenging. Written language is less linear than spoken language

in the sense that its permanence allows for alternating sequences of reading and writing. In other words, different visual elements of texts may not necessarily be read or written in a specific order, especially when they have different pragmatic functions. For example, a reader with limited time may look first at the title of a text and then at the concluding paragraph to find the needed information. Similarly, a scribe may copy a text and return to it at a later stage to add marginal notes. In such contexts, it may be problematic to establish where and if switching occurs.

Pahta *et al.* (2017: 11–12) have previously noted that studies of historical multilingualism may benefit from the adoption of a general term, such as *multilingual practices*, to cover all types of multiple language use. In the present study, multilingual practices are understood as general practices of scribes and readers in interaction with multilingual texts, which result in the creation of *multilingual events* (Schipor, 2018: 44). Multilingual events are constituted by the presence of stretches in different languages within a single text across the manuscript page. A *stretch* is here understood as a continuous sequence in one language within a single text/element. In this study, only stretches longer than one word, which are not proper names are taken into consideration, with the exception of marginalia (Schipor, 2018: 45), which typically contain single or very few words and in some cases may consist solely of personal names or place names. There are two main reasons for this principle of selection. Firstly, one-word instances of another language may be considered borrowings, while sequences longer than one word may be classified as multiple language use (Ingham *et al.*, 2016). Secondly, proper names given in a different language constitute specialised multilingual events, which may be referred to as *onomastic multilingual events*. Such events seem to be exponentially more frequent than other types of multilingual events in documentary texts (Schipor, 2018: 147) and thus merit an investigation dedicated exclusively to them.

Multilingual events may be classified based on four main aspects: visual and syntactic structure, level of expectedness, content and visual marking. In terms of visual structure, multilingual events may occur *intra-* or *inter-elementally*, that is, within one element or between elements. An *element* is an integral part of a text which is visually separated from other parts of the same text. Such elements may vary in length and may be written in one or more languages. An inter-elemental multilingual event would be, for example, the use of Latin in a title preceding an English body text. An intra-elemental multilingual event would be the alternation between English and Latin within a body text. Such multilingual events may be termed code-switching as defined above. Syntactically, intra-elemental multilingual events may occur *intra-* or *inter-sententially* (Myers-Scotton, 1993), that is to say, within a sentence or between sentences. For example, the insertion of the Latin phrase *et multes alijs* “and many others” at the end of a list of witnesses in a testamentary text would

be an intra-sentential multilingual event (see example 2). An example of an inter-sentential multilingual event with English and Latin is found in the abjuration of Court Lamporte (see example 5).

According to the level of expectedness, multilingual events may be classified as: *formulaic*, *customary* and *free* (Schipor, 2018: 45). Formulaic multilingual events are constituted with set phrases which occur in the same language across time and text types. Two examples of set phrases are the Latin phrases *In dei nomine amen* and *et multes alijs*, typically written in Latin in both Latin and English texts. Even when the English equivalents of these phrases are used, they show precisely the same wording, respectively: “In the name of God amen” and “and many others”. Customary multilingual events occur when certain pieces of information or elements generally appear in a certain language, but the choice of words and extent of multilingual input may vary. For instance, dates are usually given in Latin – or both Latin and English – even in English texts. However, in some texts, they appear as running text, while in others, they are written in a combination of nominal phrases and Roman numerals. Marginal notes indicating the functions of the texts they accompany may also be classified as customary since this may be considered common practice in large collections like bishops’ registers (Schipor, 2018: 257). Multilingual events which are neither formulaic nor customary may be classified as free.

Based on their content, multilingual events may be classified as *parallel* and *complementary* (Sebba, 2012: 14–15). Parallelism occurs when the same information is provided in different languages, while complementarity is the result of providing distinct details in different languages. For example, using Latin to provide novel contextual information at the end of an English text constitutes a complementary multilingual event.

Scholars have suggested that the alternation of languages in the same text is often accompanied by variation in its layout (Piller, 2001: 161–162; Sebba, 2012: 173; Kaislaniemi, 2017: 165–166). The present study accounts for several layout features, such as size, colour and position on the page. Based on the combined use of such features, stretches in different languages may be visually marked up, down, or confused. A stretch may be marked up by a larger and more formal script, its central position on the page, as well as red ink, rubrication, embossing and underlining. Conversely, a stretch may be marked down by a smaller and less formal script, as well as its position at the bottom of the page. Alternatively, the different languages employed in a text may show no visual marking in relation to each other. In other cases, the marking may be confused. This is the case of a text-final note in Latin, found at the end of a town rule of Winchester written in English. The Latin note reads:

Example 1: Explicit hic totum pro Christo da michi potum
Everything ends here, for Christ’s sake give me a drink.

This scribal comment is placed under the English body text, towards the bottom of the parchment roll. The English body text is written in a script that may be classified as *Cursiva Mixed*, while the Latin note is written in a script resembling *Textualis*, which may be perceived as more formal. However, the Latin note is written in a smaller-size script than the English body text. Therefore, the Latin stretch may be classified as marked down from the English body text based on position and size but marked up according to the style of the script. Although intricate, the choice of visual marking here may not be accidental. This is a customary scribal comment, indicating the scribe's esteemed profession and – most likely – his ability to write Latin (Schipor, 2018: 207). It is, in other words, an instance of the scribe's voice, textually less significant than the lengthy town rule preceding it but not less authoritative. Although the classification of multilingual events according to visual cues may be complex, it is required for a holistic understanding of the functions of such events.

The framework presented in this section facilitates the classification of different types of multiple language use in documentary texts, which may be used to analyse and discuss the functions of multilingual events based on their type.

Multilingual events in personal documentary texts

The analysis of multilingual events is structured on the basis of their type and function rather than the type of text they belong to. This is because the four types of personal documentary texts investigated here (Table 1.1) are represented unequally in the material. The most frequent type is the testamentary text, which accounts for more than two-thirds of the 33 texts. However, the shared characteristics of these texts allow the thematic discussion of the functions of multilingual events based on their grouping across the text types.

A detailed investigation of every multilingual event in the material is beyond the scope of this chapter. The personal documentary texts collectively show all of the types of multilingual events presented in the previous section, but some types are more frequently represented than others. For example, there are multiple instances of formulaic events in various texts and one instance of free multilingual events, found in a testamentary text (see example 6). This discussion addresses both frequent and infrequent types of events in order to present a complex overview of the various functions they perform.

Three languages are used in these documentary texts: English, French and Latin. French appears only in two of the texts studied here, an allegiance and a jurament. This reflects the findings presented in Schipor (2018), where only 20 out of 7,070 texts employ French, and its use is limited to the first quarter of the fifteenth century (Schipor, 2018: 102, 253–254).

The two vernaculars, English and French, are quantitatively dominant in the personal documentary texts with multilingual events, except for the allegiances where Latin and the vernaculars seem to be employed in almost equal proportions. Latin is generally used in marginalia, text-final notes, as well as introductory and closing phrases.

Text type and formulaicity

All of the 33 personal documentary texts are to some extent characterised by formulaicity, in the sense that they use very similar or identical phrases which appear to be text-type specific. In certain cases, such phrases are given in a different language, which creates formulaic multilingual events. This is often the case of testaments written in English which begin with the divine invocation in Latin. For example, the testament of Hugh Vaghan, dated to 1517, is written in English and begins with the Latin divine invocation *In dei nomine amen*. This constitutes an inter-sentential switch between Latin and English which acts as a discourse structuring device, indicating the beginning of a testament. Abjurations begin with the same invocation, *In the name of god amen*. However, in the 11 abjurations found in the bishops' registers, this introductory phrase is always in English.

Another Latin formulaic phrase, *et multes alijs* "and many others", is typically used in testaments, abjurations and allegiances, when presenting lists of witnesses. In the testament of Edmond Atkynson, dated to 1513, the use of Latin constitutes an intra-sentential switch from English:

*Example 2: wisse to the same Mr Thomas Crokwell~ Curate of
Saint margarete parish in Southwerk Raynold newington~
and Richard Atkynson~ et multes alijs.*

Latin is here used to indicate that some of the witnesses to the transaction remain unnamed, so the resulting multilingual event may be classified as complementary. At the same time, the Latin phrase marks the end of the list and of the testament itself, so it has a discourse organising function. This phrase is used in precisely the same manner in the allegiance of Richard Tystede, dated to 1402. By contrast, in the abjuration of Jsabelle Gartrygge, the same Latin phrase is used in a longer stretch of Latin text, where it seems to completely replace the list of witnesses (see example 4). In other words, this set phrase seems to have various pragmatic functions in different contexts and may not always form multilingual events.

In the testament of Richard Mathewe, dated to 1515, there is an intra-sentential switch from Latin to English with the Latin discourse

marker *In primis* “Firstly”, which introduces the testator’s first bequest, namely the conveyance of his soul to God. In other testaments, such as that of Henry Bodill, dated to 1511–1515, the same discourse function is carried out in English. The two texts belong to the same register and are written in the same hand, so the alternating choice of English and Latin in such discourse markers appears to be a matter of preference rather than a pragmatic function.

All of the personal documentary texts representing statements – the jurament, allegiances and abjurations – contain the rhetorical formula “so help me God” or variations thereof. An example of this is found in the abjuration of Court Lamporte (see example 5). A slightly different version is found in the jurament of Agnes Burton, dated to 1449:

Example 3: si dieux me eide & sez seintz
If God help me and his saints.

The English and French allegiances contain an almost identical phrase. Although these formulae are without exception written in the language of the respective statement, they are followed by Latin interventions in certain cases, such as Lamporte’s abjuration and the allegiance of Richard Tystede (see section “Multi-layered voices” below).

Intra-elemental multilingual events of a formulaic nature appear to mainly carry out discourse organising functions in personal documentary texts. Although the same formulae are used across texts, they may be used in English or Latin in English texts, with different pragmatic functions. However, they never appear in English in Latin texts.

Navigation by marginalia

The vast majority of texts recorded in bishops’ registers, including personal documentary texts, contain marginal notes which mainly present the function of the texts and the names of the persons concerned. The marginalia in bishops’ registers are generally in Latin, but the frequent use of abbreviations may represent a challenge in drawing distinctions between languages.

Whenever Latin marginal notes accompany English or French body texts, they form inter-elemental multilingual events. An example is found in the jurament of Agnes Burton, most likely given after she was elected abbess of St Mary’s monastery. The body text of the jurament is accompanied by a marginal note represented by the nominal phrase *tenor cedula intercluse*, meaning “contents [of the] enclosed document”. Both “tenor” and “cedula” are of Latin origin and refer to, respectively, “contents” and “document, piece of writing”. They would be borrowed into French and possibly into English, but it is difficult to determine whether they represent established loanwords into English at the time of

text production. “Intercluse” is the feminine plural of the past participle form of the Latin verb “interclūdēre”, meaning “to shut up, enclose, confine within bounds”. The absence of prepositions and articles indicates that this marginal note is written in Latin rather than in French or English. This represents a complementary multilingual event since the Latin stretch provides additional information. In this case, the marginal note does not indicate the function of the text, but it gives insight into the context of text production, indicating that the jurament it accompanies was copied from another document.

A similar multilingual event is found in a jurament for the rule of St Paul the hermit, containing a vow of chastity. This text may be dated to 1470–1486 based on the text immediately following it on the register page (Schipor, 2018: 178). The jurament starts with *J.N.*, which may be read as both “In nomen” and “In Name”, and continues in English. This may indicate that it represents a pre-composed text used by different prospective hermits taking their oath upon entering the respective rule. The marginal note which accompanies the jurament reads *Professio her~mite* “profession of hermit”, which may be read in English, French or Latin, and may thus be considered an inter-elemental multilingual event.

The testament of Hugh Vaghan, dated to 1517, contains a marginal note in Latin reading *testam~ hugonis vagham* “testament [of] Hugh Vaghan”, which is apparently written in a different hand and possibly added after the body text of the testament was copied. Other similar notes are: *testamentu~ henr~ Bodill*, *Johannis Farre testum~*, *testm~ Agnetes Wyght and Testm~ Johannis Lovestede*. The various abbreviations of the word “testament” enable its reading as English, Latin or French. However, the latinisation of first names prompts the reader to classify such notes as Latin, especially since the same names are not latinised in the corresponding English body texts. These marginal notes facilitate searches through the voluminous register books by indicating the function of texts and the names of the testators. In other words, marginalia perform a navigational function (Birke and Christ, 2013).

The will of Henry Bodill, written in English, is also accompanied by a Latin marginal note, reading *ultima volūtas eiusdem* “last will of the same”. The note states the function of the text but not the name of the person concerned. Instead, it performs an indexical function by using “eiusdem” to refer to Bodill’s name, which was mentioned in the preceding marginal note found a few lines above on the same register page. The physical proximity of Bodill’s testament and will – and their corresponding marginalia – eliminates the need to mention his name twice in the margin. Given the size of registers, the use of such indexical marginal notes in similar contexts would have saved time without cancelling their usefulness.

Since most of the marginalia in registers is in Latin, this conventional practice appears to have expanded to English body texts

(Schipor, 2018: 161). Scribes producing bishops' registers did not have time to translate vernacular texts into Latin and there was no requirement to do so. Producing Latin marginalia for English body texts required no additional effort and was convenient for both producers and users of registers, who would have been trained in Latin. The use of Latin may have had the pragmatic function of enhancing the navigational character of marginal notes, especially in a context where Latin, especially the system of Latin abbreviations, was expected and familiar to fifteenth-century scribes producing and handling such documents.

The multilingual events with Latin marginalia may be classified as inter-elemental and parallel since the Latin notes typically indicate the functions of texts, which are easily inferred from the English body texts. The events may further be classified as customary since the marginal notes in Latin with a navigational function are generally expected in registers.

Multi-layered voices

The process of copying personal documentary texts in bishops' registers has resulted in the multi-layering of "voices", revealed by the presence of multilingual events. This is visible in cases where statements and testamentary texts were given in one of the vernaculars, then copied in registers, and supplemented with scribal comments in Latin. This occurs in all of the four types of personal documentary texts investigated in various ways.

The four abjurations which contain multilingual events are written in English, with Latin towards the end, to present details such as the date, place and witnesses to the oath. For example, the abjuration of Jsabelle Gartrygge, dated to 1491, contains the following multilingual event:

Example 4: J putto my signe & fecit signum Cruces Cora~ Magistro Canc~ & multes Alijs in Capella de Fromonde Infra Coll~ beate marie virginis prope winton~ ij^{do} die Mens~ Septembris A^o domini Millesimo CCCCxC^{mo} Primo.

I put my signature and [she] made the sign of the cross in the presence of the master chancellor and many others in the chapel of Fromond of the College of St Mary the Virgin in Winchester the second day of September 1491.

After the abjurer renounces her witchcraft practices and makes the solemn oath to avoid relapsing, she indicates signing her declaration. At this point, the voice of the scribe takes over in the third person – indicated by the Latin verb *fecit* – to provide contextual details and describe the non-verbal gesture of the defendant. The transition from the voice of the abjurer to the voice of the clerk is thus accompanied by an

inter-sentential switch from English to Latin. This multilingual event is not visually marked, except for the fact that the date is written in darker ink, which may indicate that the scribe changed the ink or inserted the date at a later stage. The text of the abjuration was most likely composed in advance by a clerk, then read aloud or repeated by Gartrygge in an official setting. The date and place of the solemn oath were probably unknown when the declaration was prepared, meaning that these details were added at the hearing. The fact that the scribe added them in Latin rather than English indicates that Latin was perceived as the language of record.

The abjuration of Court Lamporte, dated to 1493–1501, has a similar structure, but the scribal intervention at the end does not provide information about the date and place of the oath:

Example 5: also god me help and thes holy euangelistes & osculatus est librum And in to the witnesse therof to my present abiuracomm J put to my signe et fecit signu~ cruces
 also God help me and these holy evangelists and the book is kissed
 And to the witness thereof to this my present abjuration I put my signature and [he] made the sign of the cross.

In this example, there are two switches from English to Latin, where Latin is used to describe the non-verbal behaviour of the abjurer. The alternation of languages coincides with shifting between voices, as indicated by the first-person verbs in the English stretches and third-person verbs in the shorter Latin ones. If the abjuration was prepared in advance, the gestures presented in Latin – kissing the Bible and making the sign of the cross – probably had a prescriptive function and would have been translated to the defendant as he was guided through the process of renunciation.

In the allegiance of Walter Mymes, the contextual information is provided in Latin at the beginning of the English statement. In other words, the text of the allegiance is prefaced by a scribal comment indicating that Mymes sworn allegiance to the prior of Southwark on 3 November 1473 at the prior's residence in Southwark. The two sections are written in the same hand. Although they are separated by an empty line, there is a curly bracket on the right-hand margin which links them, indicating that they form a single entry. This entry is also accompanied by a marginal note in Latin: *For^u iura^{ti} homagiu~ facientis* “oath of homage made publicly”, which indicates the function of the text. The presence of Latin thus creates a visual-linguistic frame around the vernacular in the register.

The allegiance of Richard Tystede, delivered in 1401, is written in Latin and French in almost equal proportions. The beginning and the end of the register text are in Latin, while the statement itself is in

French, so first, there is an inter-sentential switch from Latin to French, followed by a switch in the opposite direction at the end of the statement. The Latin introduction provides the name of the person who makes the allegiance, *Ricardus Tystede*, as well as the date and place of the event. The allegiance ends with the standard formula: *si dieux me aide & touz ses seintz* “may God and all his saints help me”, which is followed by the names of some of the witnesses, in Latin. The switch from Latin to French is accompanied by a change of footing. To be more specific, there is a transition from the extra-linguistic details of the event provided in the third person to the allegiance itself in the first person. The scribe signals that the allegiance is given in Tystede’s own words by using the Latin phrase *sub hac forma verborum* “under the form” which is followed by the statement in French. Although the scribe would have had the competence to produce the whole register entry in Latin, he preserved the original statement in French. This is very similar to what occurs in abjurations: Latin is used to provide extra-textual information, while the statement is given in English. Equally important, the scribe would have been able to produce the whole entry in French, but he preferred to use Latin as the contextual frame for the French statement.

There is an instance of scribal comment at the end of the will of John Saynctjohn, dated to 1512, which contains an inter-sentential switch from English to Latin. After providing the list of witnesses, the scribe inserts a Latin note indicating that the testament of the same person was recorded on a preceding folio:

Example 6: Nota que testamentum isteis defuncti scribitur in fo prox~ preceden~

Note that the testament of the defunct is written on the immediately preceding folio.

In most cases where the will and testament are not part of the same text, the separate texts usually appear in the register in succession, so they are in physical proximity. In this case, however, the two texts – the will and the testament of John Saynctjohn – are interspersed with other testamentary texts. The pragmatic function of this multilingual event is navigational because it informs the reader that the register also contains the testament of John Saynctjohn, written on the previous folio. Based on the level of expectedness, this is a free multilingual event since the scribe seems to have chosen the wording at his own convenience. Notes with similar content may have been commonly used at the time, but this is the only instance of a free event with a navigational function in the set of 7,070 texts investigated in Schipor (2018).

All of the multilingual events where the juxtaposition of Latin and the vernaculars indicate the multi-layering of manuscript voices may be classified as intra-elemental because they are found within the same visual

element, namely the body text. In terms of content, they may all be classified as complementary since they add new information to the register copies. Further, the events signal the change of footing between scribe and abjurer, testator or liegeman, depending on the text in question. Except for the note in Saynctjohn's will, these multilingual events perform the pragmatic function of presenting the spatio-temporal context of the statements or transactions they refer to. At the same time, they create Latin frames around the vernaculars, which indicates that Latin was perceived as the main language of record in bishops' registers.

Visual marking

Certain types of multilingual events seem to have a greater tendency to be visually marked than others. However, the presence of marking does not seem to be triggered by the introduction of a different language within a certain text. To be more specific, marginal notes, for example, are intrinsically marked down by position since they are placed in the margins, surrounding the central space occupied by body texts. Wherever visual marking is present, it seems to be the result of various practices.

The intra-elemental multilingual events with a discourse organising function are not visually marked consistently. In some of the English testamentary texts, the divine invocations in Latin are marked up by size and a more formal script. This occurs, for instance, in the testament of Robert Palling and Thomasyn Dalacourt, both dated to 1511. However, in other English testaments, such as that of Richard Mathewe, the Latin invocation is not visually marked. The same testament also contains a Latin discourse marker (see section "Text type and formulaicity" above) which lacks visual marking. Such varying practices of visual marking are also visible in Latin testaments. For example, while the testament of Robert Bassett, dated to 1516, contains a visually marked invocation, the testament of Johannes Harix, dated to 1517, does not. This indicates that visual marking was part of the variation which largely characterised late medieval documentary texts from England.

The note added at the end of Saynctjohn's will is preceded by a virgule, which separates the English stretch from the Latin one. Although it may seem that the virgule indicates the introduction of a different language, it is, in fact, also used in monolingual texts in order to distinguish between different parts of the same text (Schipor, 2018: 198, 256–257).

The intra-elemental multilingual events with Latin framing are generally not visually marked, except for Myme's allegiance, where the Latin intervention is placed above the English statement, with an empty line between the two stretches. There is then another visual feature, resembling a curly bracket, indicating that they are to be considered a single entry.

In terms of visual features, some register texts show an interesting characteristic. The texts found in the second part of the register of

Richard Fox all contain decorations referred to as the twisted-ribbon decorative style by Kennedy (2014: 147–152). This is represented by minutely decorated initials, typically containing profiles of bearded male faces, with a frowning or sad countenance, in some cases also adorned by drops of tears. In the context of episcopal administration, such serious facial expressions may be considered adequate. Such an adorned letter is the capital “p” at the beginning of a probate note following the will of John Lovestede, dated to 1506–1511. Such tragic facial expressions are especially appropriate in the context of testamentary texts, which deal with the demise of souls and their funeral arrangements. Perhaps more importantly, such decorations may function as layout organising devices. Together with empty lines, they may be used to locate the beginning of a new entry. On the whole, the presence of visual marking seems to be related more to organising the discourse or layout of texts rather than the introduction of another language.

Conclusion

The use of English and French in personal documentary texts appears to be directly related to the oral and legal character of such documents. Abjurations, for example, were legally binding, meaning that if the abjurers did not respect their oath, they would most likely be sentenced to death. The statements were legally valid only if the abjurers could be held accountable for them, which implied they had to be in a language they understood. The other types of personal documents also had legal value, which may explain the use of the vernaculars. Interestingly, French was used only in two of the 33 texts, an allegiance and a jurament, both dated to the beginning of the fifteenth century. Selecting French rather than English in these particular situations may have been a matter of preference or social status. The restricted use of French and prevalence of English seems to indicate a shift to English in personal documentary texts.

Documentary texts of a personal nature found in bishops’ registers contain multilingual events with, on the one hand, English and Latin and, on the other hand, French and Latin. The language of the original statements was preserved when recording the corresponding texts in the register, which leads to the occurrence of multilingual events consisting of Latin and one of the two vernaculars. This indicates that Latin was perceived as the main language of record, together with the fact that the overwhelming majority of texts in Schipor (2018) are in Latin.

As far as the types of multilingual events are concerned, personal documentary texts recorded in registers contain both inter- and intra-elemental multilingual events. These multilingual events serve various functions: they act as discourse organising devices, guide the reader through the

register, make reference to the context of text production and provide extra-textual information about the social context in which the personal statements were given.

The functions of multilingual events seem to correlate with their types. To be more specific, inter-elemental multilingual events mainly have a navigational function and may sometimes provide insight into the context of text production. On the other hand, intra-elemental multilingual events with discourse markers mainly have an organisational function while also facilitating the recognition of various types of texts. Intra-elemental multilingual events with Latin framing provide contextual details, while at the same time indicating that this information is given by a different person than the one making the statement. However, both inter- and intra-elemental multilingual events seem to be used to transfer the vernaculars to the conventional framework of bishops' registers, which were written in Latin.

As far as the visual aspect of personal documentary texts is concerned, visual marking does not seem to be triggered by the occurrence of multilingual events. Although certain multilingual events are visually marked, this may result from their nature, as is the case of marginalia, or may be triggered by the discourse markers constituting the respective events.

The present study has investigated the use of multilingual events in personal documentary texts by employing a framework designed specifically for an integrated analysis of pragmatic functions and visual features. The use of Latin to frame the vernaculars, together with previous research, situates Latin as the language of record in fifteenth-century England. As English was becoming increasingly more common in personal documentary texts, multilingual events seem to have held a significant pragmatic role for facilitating the navigation of texts and registers and allowing for the multi-layering of voices on the manuscript page. The study of historical multilingual events might further benefit from investigations of visual features extended to various text types and formats.

Notes

1. The doctoral thesis is titled *A Study of Multilingualism in the Late Medieval Material of the Hampshire Record Office*, and was completed in 2018.
2. Special thanks to archivist Adrienne Allen from the Hampshire Record Office for this information.
3. A *text* is here understood as a “discourse unit which is coherent in terms of content and visually distinct” (Schipor, 2018: 6). In this sense, different texts are units of information which are coherent on their own and separated visually by empty lines or different sheets of paper or parchment. However, visually separated units on a page may represent a coherent text based on their content.

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Appendix

Table 1.2 The Winchester Diocese collection – Bishops’ registers at the Hampshire Record Office

<i>Register</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Multilingual personal documentary texts</i>	<i>Archive reference no.</i>
William of Wykeham, Part I	1367–1404	No	21M65/A1/10
William of Wykeham, Part II	1367–1404	Yes	21M65/A1/11
Henry Beaufort, Part I	1405–1425	No	21M65/A1/12
William Waynflete, Part I	1447–1470	Yes	21M65/A1/13
William Waynflete, Part II	1470–1486	Yes	21M65/A1/14
Peter Courtney	1486–1492	Yes	21M65/A1/15
Thomas Langton	1493–1501	Yes	21M65/A1/16
Richard Fox, Part 1	1501–1504	No	21M65/A1/17
Richard Fox, Part 2	1506–1511	Yes	21M65/A1/18
Richard Fox, Part 3	1511–1515	Yes	21M65/A1/19
Richard Fox, Part 4	1518–1522	No	21M65/A1/20
Richard Fox, Part 5	1522–1534	No	21M65/A1/21

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