



The  
University  
Of  
Sheffield.

# Language living on the margins and beyond

A historical pragmatic study of marginal vocabulary use in  
eighteenth-century English

Roxanne But

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

The University of Sheffield  
School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics

March 2016



# Acknowledgements

Thank you Susan for being my supervisor and believing in my project. You are one of the few people who can be super professional (you were hard on me at times) and approachable with a soft spot at the same time. Thank you for giving me that extra push, saving me when I couldn't see the wood for the trees, and looking after me at times when I needed it the most. Your books – currently sitting comfortable at my bookshelf – are eagerly looking forward to the reunion with their respective owner.

Thank you to those in the Faculty of Arts and Humanities Executive Board who reviewed my PhD application and offered me a scholarship to do a doctorate. I will never forget that moment when I received your letter. Thank you for offering me this unique and once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that has changed me entirely – both intellectually, and personally. I'm glad that I could embark on this hard, but rewarding journey.

Thank you to those members of the academic community within and outside of Sheffield for your intellectual stimulation, conversation and support over the years. Special thanks go to my fellow PhD buddies and office space mates in the School of English. We were all stuck in this ivory tower, not allowed to leave the palace before we completed our challenging task, dreaming of that One Day that would set us free. My time has finally come, and I shall dearly miss those little every-day moments in the office space.

Thank you to the Coffee Rev lovelies for teaching me what real friendship is. You are my good bras: hard to find, very comfortable, supportive, and always close to the heart. Thank you for getting the best out of me and for giving me the confidence in being myself. Not many people can pull that off.

Thank you to my housemates whom I got to live with over the years. Even though I preferred my little private space, I'm thankful for your presence in the flat, and make me feel less lonely. Thank you for the chitchat, daytrips and the great memories that we created. Special mention goes to the C4 gang - a promise is a promise, you made it into my thesis! Thank you for being the guinea pigs of my slang experiment - I will never forget how to “do a Karima”. You are awesome (and you know it)!

Thank you Mum and Dad for your unconditional love, care and support. I know it must have been hard all these years that your little darling was away from home, but look where I am now! You were right (as parents usually do), studying can be a joyful activity! I will never, ever try to stop learning. This thesis is for you.

# Abstract

This thesis investigates the use of marginal vocabulary in eighteenth-century texts from a historical pragmatic perspective. The kind of marginal vocabulary that I will be specifically looking at is the special terminology associated with thieves, beggars and the low life known as ‘cant’. The aim of this study is to examine whether and how marginal vocabulary is used in eighteenth-century texts, and how this language evolves over the course of the century. Evidence of marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth century was elicited from two electronic resources, namely the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (1674-1913) and the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO) and then qualitatively examined through historical discourse analysis. In the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, I searched for the term ‘cant’ and a number of other marginal terms to find evidence of the actual use of this kind of language in these courtroom texts. As for ECCO, I conducted a diagnostic search of a particular marginal term (‘cull’) to trace the extent to which this term and other marginal terms are used beyond the Old Bailey texts in other eighteenth-century genres. One of the key findings is that marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts is associated with the criminal underclass and reproduced from real-life contexts for specific communicative purposes. Evidence of marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts shows the expansion of these terms into the wider print culture of the eighteenth century. The marginal vocabulary terms have become ‘public’ words because they have moved beyond the highly specific criminal context. Some of these expressions are reproduced, metalinguistically commented upon and appropriated in a wide variety of popular texts, such as prose fiction, drama and life narratives. In the process, the terms may or may not lose their specialised meaning.

## Copyright notice

Some of the work covered in Chapter 5 of the thesis has been published elsewhere as a book chapter in *Meaning in the History of English. Words and Texts in Contexts* (2013) and is therefore subject to copyright. I would like to thank the editors of Benjamins Publishing for granting me permission to reproduce part of the material into the thesis.

Book chapter: But, R. (2013), “The role of context in the meaning specification of cant and slang words in eighteenth-century English”, in *Meaning in the History of English. Words and Texts in Context*, Jucker, Andreas H., Daniela Landert, Annina Seiler and Nicole Studer-Joho (eds). Amsterdam: Benjamins, 129-154.

# Table of contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	i
<i>Abstract</i>	ii
<i>Copyright notice</i>	iii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Aims and rationale for the study	1
1.2 Overview of the structure of the thesis	7
2 Literature review	10
2.1 Introduction	10
2.2 Studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period (1500-1700)	10
2.2.1 Status of marginal vocabulary in the early modern period	11
2.2.2 Popularity and fetishisation of ‘cant’	15
2.2.3 Functions of ‘cant’ in literary texts	16
2.3 Studies on marginal vocabulary in the present day	17
2.3.1 Social and functional approaches	18
2.3.2 Functions of marginal vocabulary in written texts	21
2.4 Studies on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century	23
2.4.1 Canting lexicography	23
2.4.2 Changes in status of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century	26
2.4.3 Social significance of ‘flash’ and (im)politeness	27
2.4.4 Research gap	28
2.5 Conclusion	31
3 A historical pragmatic framework	33
3.1 Introduction	33
3.2 Written documents as data	34
3.3 Interpreting language use in context	35
3.3.1 Historical discourse analysis	35
3.3.2 Internal linguistic evidence: Clues from the co-text	36
3.3.3 External linguistic evidence: Clues about production circumstances text, authors and audiences	38
3.4 Theoretical concepts	39
3.4.1 Concepts related to language use and functions in written texts	39
3.4.2 Concepts related to the status and circulation of language	43
3.4.3 Concepts related to lexical meaning and semantic change	43
3.5 Conclusion	44
4 Marginal vocabulary use in the <i>Proceedings of the Old Bailey</i> between 1700	45

and 1800		
4.1	Introduction	45
4.2	Historical background of the <i>Proceedings</i> (1674-1913)	46
4.2.1	The texts	46
4.2.2	Electronic resources	47
4.2.3	The linguistic value of the <i>Proceedings</i>	48
4.3	Methodology and methods: Producing the evidence	50
4.3.1	Lexical-based searches in the <i>Old Bailey Proceedings Online</i>	50
4.3.2	Search procedures of metalinguistic marker ‘cant’	52
4.3.3	Evidence of the use of ‘cant’ in the <i>Proceedings</i>	53
4.3.4	Search procedures of actual marginal terms	55
4.3.5	Evidence of the use of actual marginal vocabulary in the <i>Proceedings</i>	60
4.4	Marginal vocabulary use in the Sessions Papers (SP)	62
4.4.1	Speaker pragmatic device: Marginal vocabulary use in the testimonies	65
4.4.1.1	Witness (victim)	67
4.4.1.2	Witness (for the prosecution)	69
4.4.1.3	Court officials (lawyers)	73
4.4.1.4	Defendant (prisoner)	76
4.4.2	Authorial pragmatic device: Reproduction of marginal vocabulary by the court recorder in the written record	77
4.5	Marginal vocabulary use in the Ordinary’s Accounts (OA)	84
4.5.1	Reproduction of marginal vocabulary by Ordinary in the written record	86
4.5.1.1	‘Slang Mort Lay’: Romancing the life of Jenny Diver (1705-1741)	88
4.5.1.2	Negotiating identity	94
4.6	Conclusion	99
5	Marginal vocabulary use in texts selected from the <i>Eighteenth Century Collections Online</i>	102
5.1	Introduction	102
5.2	About the <i>Eighteenth Century Collections Online</i> (ECCO)	103
5.2.1	Linguistic value of ECCO	104
5.3	Methodology and methods: Producing the evidence	105
5.3.1	Rationale for using ‘cull’ to search for marginal vocabulary	106
5.3.2	Search procedures keyword search ‘cull’	109
5.4	Types/contexts (co-texts and genres) of marginal vocabulary use in ECCO	111
5.4.1	Verse	113
5.4.2	Prose	114

5.5. Marginal vocabulary use in ECCO texts	116
5.5.1 Reproduction of marginal vocabulary	116
5.5.2 Metalinguistic awareness, discussion and evaluation	119
5.5.3 Characterisation and mixture of registers: Marginal vocabulary as a source of appropriation	122
5.5.4 Word meaning: The contingent polysemous nature of ‘cull’	135
5.6 Conclusion	138
6 Conclusion	142
6.1 Key findings	142
6.2 Historical pragmatics: Some reflections on methodology and methods	146
6.2.1 Historical discourse analysis	146
6.2.2 Use of electronic databases and search procedures	149
6.3 Future research	152
<i>Bibliography</i>	155
<i>Appendices</i>	169



# Introduction

## 1.1. Aims and rationale for the study

Around the year 1535, Robert Copland recorded the marginal vocabulary spoken by the beggars and rogues in *The Highway to the Spital-House*:

With bousy cove maund nase,  
Tour the patrico in the darkman case,  
Docked the dell for a copper make:  
His watch shall feng a prounce's nab-cheat.  
Cyarum, by Solomon, and thou shalt peck my jere  
In thy gan; for my watch it is nace gear;  
Or the bene bouse my watch hath a wyn

(*The Highway to the Spital-House* 1535-6: 24)<sup>1</sup>

It seems that only the beggars and the rogues that are described in Copland's work could make sense of this language. The insiders would understand the code completely. They might even have enjoyed using this language in their close-knit circle without other people overhearing them. Outsiders would be left completely baffled. To a twenty-first century reader, this language is opaque and unintelligible. The same goes for someone living in the early modern period, as the author does not provide a translation of these terms. Yet they would be fascinated by the obscurity and the strangeness of these terms. The terms in the excerpt are eye-catching and the mysteriousness of the terms tantalises people. Marginal vocabulary, then, in this context, refers to the language use of a specific group, especially those who lived on the margins of society. It is language that is understandable amongst those who know the terms but obscure and difficult to those who are 'not in the know'. It is difficult to access because it is part of the marginal rather than the mainstream, and specific to certain groups. For that reason, we do not know very much about this kind of language. Yet evidence of marginal vocabulary in texts like *Highway to the Spital-House* (1535-36) shows that this language has somehow caught the imaginations of people through the ages who would expose this marginal vocabulary in the public discourse. These texts were hugely popular even though some people did not understand the language. Publishers would even make sure that they include marginal vocabulary in the texts to boost their sales. The more obscure a text, the more popular it seems to have been.

This thesis considers the use of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century from a historical pragmatic perspective. It considers how this language is used in a wide variety of eighteenth-century genres as well how it develops over the course of the century. The eighteenth century is one of the important landmarks in the history of marginal vocabulary

---

<sup>1</sup> This excerpt was taken from Gotti (1999: 17), who offers a more detailed discussion about this text.

because the status of marginal vocabulary was ambiguous in this period (see Gotti 1999, Sorensen 2004, Burke 1995). One of the registers that was considered marginal vocabulary in this period is the special language used by beggars, thieves and the low life, also known as ‘cant’. The origins of the awareness of marginal vocabulary lie in the early modern period with the publication of the pamphlets about rogues and beggars such as Copland’s text (as seen above), Thomas Harman’s *A Caveat Warening for Common Cursitors* (1567), and Thomas Dekker’s Bellman of London series. Many of these pamphlets contain dialogues written in the marginal vocabulary used by members of the low life, as well as detailed descriptions of the different types of beggars and thieves, and what tricks they would use to rob people. Many pamphleteers wrote that they risked their lives in order to collect the language used by these rogues, so that the readers could recognise the slang on the street. The aim of these rogue pamphlets was to help the general public in detecting crime. By exposing the secret tricks that these people used, the pamphleteers hoped to make their readers aware of the dangers and risk of roguery and to prevent the readers from getting robbed. These works marked the beginning of a canting lexicography tradition that continued well into the late modern period. In the eighteenth century, we find an explosion of works that recorded the marginal vocabulary associated with thieves. Interest in crime was high in this period due to social anxieties and moral panic about the increase of criminals and the influx of foreigners and migrants in the London capital. What we see in this period is an explosion in the recording of this kind of marginal vocabulary in criminal biographies, trial records, specialised dictionaries as well as in plays and prose fiction in depictions of criminal characters in these works. Similar to the early modern period, eighteenth-century writers commented that it was essential to the eighteenth-century public that people should be knowledgeable about the language of the low life because it would save their lives. In other words, these works raised a heightened awareness of the special language used by thieves in this period.

In the eighteenth-century dictionaries, we also find traces of a shift in the awareness of marginal vocabulary associated with a particular group (i.e. the low life) to different social groups which belonged to mainstream eighteenth-century culture. The labels ‘slang’ and ‘flash lingo’ described a type of language that is more informal and more common to the public. ‘Flash’, in particular, was the popular language of eighteenth-century coffee houses. According to Coleman (2004b: 260), ‘flash’ is similar to the marginal vocabulary associated with thieves in that it had a disreputable character. The ‘cant’ used by thieves was dangerous because it was used as a secret code to talk about criminal activities that would harm members of the general public. However, ‘flash’ was considered to be more threatening than ‘cant’ because this special language use crossed social boundaries (Coleman 2004b: 260). ‘Cant’ was generally exclusive to the thieves themselves and they carefully tried to avoid exposing this language to the public. ‘Flash’ on the other hand, was not bound to particular social groups; any person in the eighteenth century could adopt this language and use it for their own means. In contrast to ‘cant’, users of ‘flash’ were rather proud to show off their language skills in public. Coleman suggests that there was a clear distinction between ‘flash’ and ‘cant’, but it was more likely the case that the

boundaries were more blurry and that the marginal vocabulary associated with the low life known as ‘cant’ was also part of ‘flash’ (Gotti 1999: 122, Burke 1995: 3). ‘Flash’ was especially popular amongst people from the upper classes, who would use ‘flash’ to escape from the daily social conventions that they had to adhere to. One of these conventions in the eighteenth century was that it was inappropriate to talk about taboo topics like bodily functions in public. Because ‘flash’ was so obscure, people could actually use ‘flash’ to talk about indecent matters without being explicit. For eighteenth-century rakes and habitués of public houses, using ‘flash’ was one of the ways to escape from the high life lifestyle and as part of their engagement in activities that were not appropriate for their class, such as excessive drinking and prostitution. ‘Flash’ was used as an expression of impolite behaviour, as well as to create a social bond between people who shared the same interest in engaging in the carefree lifestyle of the low life.

Marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century has been extensively studied, predominately in dictionaries. Coleman (2004a, 2004b) and Gotti (1999) used these dictionaries to gain insight into the history of canting lexicography in the period and the relation between those canting dictionaries. Dictionaries are wonderful sources because they offer good insights into what kind of terms were recorded as marginal vocabulary, as well as the lexical meanings of the terms. Many terms recorded in these ‘canting’ dictionaries refer to things that matter to the low life such as types of thieves, objects, food, drinks, body and health and criminal activities. Dictionaries also provide insights about language attitudes and language change in the form of metalinguistic commentary found in the prefaces. Metalinguistic commentary about marginal vocabulary provides evidence of the awareness of this type of language as being marginal in the period. These claims give us a glimpse into the minds of the eighteenth-century writers and their views on marginal vocabulary in the period. A particularly important point is that those dictionaries also hint to the ambiguous nature of marginal vocabulary: on the one hand, there is the marginal vocabulary known as ‘cant’ that is exclusive to the low life, but on the other hand we also see marginal terms that do not necessarily belong to the criminal world, but which are part of the common people’s world. The content of the dictionaries also shows the recording of the thieves’ cant as well as other types of jargon related to certain professions and pastimes, and also regional terms. Francis Grose, author of one of the important dictionaries of marginal vocabulary in the period, *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785), made the claim that his dictionary included words belonging to the ‘vulgar tongue’, which included not only thieves’ slang but also other types of registers. Furthermore, some scholarly attention has been paid to ‘flash’ in texts such as Moll King’s pamphlet, by Berry (2001) and Fitzmaurice (2010a) in relation to the understanding of eighteenth-century politeness and impoliteness. This raises the question: How is marginal vocabulary used in texts other than the canting dictionaries and Moll King’s pamphlet?

One of the challenges of studying marginal vocabulary is that this special type of language is exclusive to particular groups. Access to this language is difficult because it is part of the margins rather than the mainstream. Users tend to keep their language use hidden from

society and make sure that they do not expose this language in public. The study of marginal vocabulary in the past is further complicated by the fact that evidence of marginal vocabulary relies on what was preserved in written texts. For the eighteenth century, we are fortunate that marginal vocabulary was widely recorded in the dictionaries. Word lists of cant were also present in other popular works, such as the *Life and Character of Moll King* (1747), or works that contain accounts of low life, to provide a key to this language (George Parker's *Life Painter of Variegated Characters*). However, locating marginal vocabulary in other kinds of texts is much more difficult, a difficulty which has to do with the exclusive nature of certain types of marginal vocabulary. As evidenced by the early modern commentators, 'cant' was something that was exclusive to the thieves and people did really try to avoid exposing this type of language in public texts. One type of text in which we would expect the occurrence of marginal vocabulary are courtroom documents because these aim to record the language that was spoken in court. However, scholars have claimed that evidence of marginal vocabulary is rare in these texts. For the early modern period, evidence of 'cant' in court documents is scarce because these documents may not have survived (Beier 1995, Gotti 1999). So marginal vocabulary was not taken down. For the eighteenth century, we have the Old Bailey texts, court documents which report the content of the court cases that took place in the Old Bailey courtroom. However, Coleman (2012a) suggests that evidence of marginal vocabulary in these court documents is rare because people in the courtroom were under oath and in particular public circumstances, where they would not easily expose the language in court. Even if people used marginal vocabulary in the court, it might not have survived in these texts (Coleman 2012a: 129). Popular texts like prose fiction or plays are also likely to have marginal vocabulary in the text, but how do we know in which texts we can find the representation of marginal vocabulary, especially 'cant' and 'flash'?

Fortunately, we are in the position that many eighteenth-century texts have been digitised and made available online in this day and age. These resources provide instant access to the content of these texts with only a few mouse clicks without having to travel around the world to study these texts in particular libraries. These large digital collections of texts have revolutionised research conducted in the arts and humanities, and they are especially valuable resources for historians as well as historical linguists. The *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO) is currently the largest database of eighteenth-century texts to date. In addition, we have the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, which contains digital versions of the Old Bailey court records published between 1674 and 1913. The availability of these resources offers an excellent opportunity to trace evidence of marginal vocabulary in an enormous collection of texts without having to go through each text manually. Many of the resources have a built-in search function which allows one to conduct keyword searches, which generates 'hits' or contexts of excerpts in which the search term occurs within a few seconds. The identification of marginal vocabulary in these texts is thus much faster than when trying to identify marginal vocabulary in individual texts manually. In fact, Berry (2012) conducted a successful pilot study of the use of thieves' slang in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* to find out the extent to which the 'flash' that was used in Moll

King's pamphlet was used in the Old Bailey texts by real people. The results of her searches were promising; many of the terms that were recorded in Moll King's pamphlet were also used in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* text. Using the Old Bailey texts is a good way of comparing and contrasting the extent to which marginal vocabulary in the canting dictionaries were recorded in the Old Bailey texts, which report the speech of real people. Similarly, we can search for marginal vocabulary terms in the ECCO resource to trace the extent to which marginal vocabulary occurs in other eighteenth-century texts. We would expect marginal vocabulary to occur in canting dictionaries or criminal biographies because the marginal vocabulary associated with thieves is likely to occur in these kinds of crime-related contexts. In addition, we would also expect to find marginal vocabulary associated with thieves in prose fiction and plays that depict low life or criminal characters. But more importantly, it is hoped that these keyword searches would provide us access to the marginal vocabulary use in texts that were less well known and more obscure, or contexts that are not about criminals or do not feature low life characters.

If we find the evidence of marginal vocabulary in these texts we can study in much more detail how this language is used, conducting discourse analysis of how the terms are used in the co-text (surrounding words) as well as the textual context (purpose and content of texts) and the wider social and cultural situation, including the author of the text and the implied readership. The framework that is most suitable to do this kind of study is historical pragmatics. Historical pragmatics is concerned with language use and change in the past. One of the analytical tools that historical pragmaticians use is historical discourse analysis, which involves examining how language forms are used in historical data and contextualising how these forms are used and what communicative functions and meanings they have in the text. Close reading is a form of textual analysis common amongst literary critics that takes a holistic approach to understand the meaning of individual texts. Historical discourse analysis, in contrast, takes a more structured approach and involves a set of procedures of analysing texts such as gathering internal and external linguistic clues (e.g. deixis, anaphoric referencing) about the use of a particular feature to understand texts. A contextual approach to the study of marginal vocabulary has been successful in previous studies on both historical and present-day marginal vocabulary. Scholars working on early modern writers and texts (e.g. West 2003, Blank 1996) have considered the role of the marginal vocabulary known as 'cant' from a literary historical perspective, which involves a close reading of the language use in relation to the content and topic of the texts (that is the people represented in the text and what the text is about), as well as the overall purpose of the text and why authors use marginal vocabulary in the text in the first place. Social historians (Beier 1995, Blank 1996, Burke 1995) have considered marginal vocabulary in relation to the broader social and political context of the period, especially the role of marginal vocabulary in language reforms. Scholars who have worked on marginal vocabulary in the present day have used conversation analysis to shed light on the social and functional aspects of marginal vocabulary use in spoken discourse (see Reyes 2005, Bucholtz 2009). These scholars argue that context is crucial in offering a more nuanced understanding of the complexities of marginal vocabulary use in

spoken interaction. Based on this review, I also adopt a contextual approach, namely historical pragmatics, to the study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century which is informed by literary-historical insights on the study of early modern English and linguistic insights from present day studies. The close reading techniques from literary historical studies on marginal vocabulary is necessary in order to situate language use against the textual, socio-historical and cultural background of the texts in which marginal vocabulary is used. We need to study marginal vocabulary in the co-text and check contextual clues to see whether the terms were perceived as marginal and what the terms mean. Also, we have to take into account the socio-historical and cultural background to interpret how marginal vocabulary was used and what communicative functions and meanings these terms serve. In addition, my reading of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century is informed by present-day studies because the expectation would be that insights from marginal vocabulary in the present day can also apply to the use of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. An assumption underpinning historical discourse analysis is that the analysis of language use in the past is unique to a particular situation. Therefore, depending on the research questions and topic under investigation, historical pragmatics draw upon insights from other disciplines to help make sense of how a particular linguistic feature is used in particular texts. In this way, a historical discourse analysis can reveal what communicative functions and meanings marginal vocabulary has in texts selected from the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO.

Apart from looking at how marginal vocabulary is used in individual texts and genres, we can also examine marginal vocabulary on a wider scale. Previous studies on marginal vocabulary use in the early modern period and the present day have specifically focused on the use of marginal vocabulary in individual texts or interactions, but have not really considered this topic from a diachronic point of view. ECCO provides the opportunity to study marginal vocabulary diachronically across the period because it contains the largest collection of eighteenth-century texts to date. A keyword search of a particular marginal term allows us to trace how it is used in the wide range of genres in the eighteenth century and to check the status and the meanings of these terms. In my study I chose the term 'cull', a popular marginal term that has both a specialised meaning and a general meaning (as evidenced in the eighteenth-century dictionaries). The technical meaning of the term refers to a victim of a thief or a client of a prostitute. But the term can also refer to a man more generally, who may or may not have particular characteristics (e.g. a foolish person). I use this term as a diagnostic, first to check whether this term occurs in the eighteenth-century texts, and second, to check the extent to which the search of this term leads to instances of the use of this term in the presence of other marginal vocabulary terms, and what types of marginal vocabulary these terms are. Are these terms also thieves' slang, or do we also see the use of these particular terms with other registers of marginal vocabulary, such as flash? If the term occurs in a cluster with other marginal terms, we can raise the question whether the term loses its criminal specificity with the underworld or not. My hypothesis is that if marginal vocabulary is used in contexts that feature the low life, then the term would retain its specialised meaning. But if the term is

used in contexts that do not feature low life characters or do not take place in a low life setting, that the term would lose its technical sense and be used in a more general sense to refer to a type of man more generally.

This study then aims to make a contribution to the study of marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth century by tracing the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in texts selected from the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO. The questions that I address in this thesis are:

1. How is marginal vocabulary used in eighteenth-century texts?
2. Do we find a change in the status and meanings of marginal vocabulary over the course of the eighteenth century?

In exploring marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO, I aim to make a contribution to scholarship on marginal vocabulary in the past and its place within the history of English. Secondly, I hope to make a methodological contribution in applying a historical pragmatic approach to the study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century.

One note about the terminology used in this thesis. ‘Marginal vocabulary’ is the expression I use throughout the entire thesis to refer to special languages associated with particular social groups. The different studies have focused on ‘cant’, ‘slang’, ‘jargon’, and ‘flash’, terms which label different kinds of marginal vocabulary throughout history in different periods. In this thesis I use the expression ‘marginal vocabulary’ as an umbrella term to cover all types of marginal vocabulary, and also because it is a more neutral term to refer to special languages (see Coleman 2004a, Coleman 2004b). Terms like ‘cant’, ‘jargon’, ‘flash’ and ‘slang’ carry time and culture-specific connotations. Whenever I use the terms ‘cant’, ‘flash’, and ‘slang’ terms in the thesis, I do so because people in the past and present have used these terms to refer to marginal vocabulary of a particular group and time and because scholars working on marginal vocabulary use these labels in their studies.

## 1.2. Overview of the structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of six chapters. In Chapter 2, I review previous work which has been conducted on marginal vocabulary in both the past and present. This review is important for my study on marginal vocabulary use because I draw upon some of these insights and approaches that others have taken in the study of marginal vocabulary to inform my reading of marginal vocabulary in the period. In section 2.2, I review some key studies which have provided important insights in the study of marginal vocabulary in the early modern period. These studies are mostly literary historical and historical and they provide important insights about the role of marginal vocabulary in the context of language reforms and in literary texts. In section 2.3, I look at studies on marginal vocabulary in the

present day. These studies are predominately linguistic (sociolinguistic, linguistic anthropological and stylistic) and these approaches have provided crucial insights into the functional and social aspects of marginal vocabulary in this period. Then in section 2.4, I discuss in more detail the current scholarship on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. I also identify the research gap in our current knowledge of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century and demonstrate how the insights and approaches from previous studies on marginal vocabulary can inform our understanding of marginal vocabulary in my period. In section 2.5, I summarise the research gap in the form of two main research questions, which are explored in much more detail in Chapters 4 and 5.

Chapter 3 introduces the historical pragmatic framework that I use to interpret marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. Historical pragmatics is concerned with the study of language use and change in context, and as such, historical pragmatics can shed light on how marginal vocabulary is used in the eighteenth-century texts and how it develops over the course of the century. In section 3.2, I briefly discuss the kinds of data that historical pragmatics use to study language use in the past. I should note that this section does not include a detailed discussion of the data in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO; the discussions of those are covered in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively. In section 3.3 I explain what a historical pragmatic analysis involves and how ‘context’ can help us to make sense of how marginal vocabulary terms are used. Finally, in section 3.4, I present a number of key notions that I refer to in Chapters 4 and 5. These are concepts which I have taken from other linguistic studies and which inform my analysis of how marginal vocabulary is used in my eighteenth-century texts.

Chapter 4 presents my first case study on the use of marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* which were published between 1700 and 1800. This chapter starts with a brief discussion about the *Proceedings* in section 4.2, which is necessary historical background information for understanding how marginal vocabulary is used in these texts. In this section I also briefly describe the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, the electronic resource that contains digitised versions of the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. Then in section 4.3, I discuss the procedures for identifying marginal vocabulary in this resource. I also comment on the kinds of data that were elicited as a result of these procedures. The large amount of data that was produced as a result of these search procedures shows that marginal vocabulary used in the courtroom was preserved in the written record. In the following two sections, I present my historical discourse analysis of marginal vocabulary use in two different subgenres of the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. In section 4.4, I look at how marginal vocabulary is used in the Sessions Papers, which contain written representations of what was spoken in the Old Bailey courtroom. I demonstrate what communicative functions and meanings the marginal vocabulary fulfils for the people who are represented in the texts and the kind of social work that this language use can do for these people. Also, I discuss the role of marginal vocabulary in relation to the overall purpose of the Printed Sessions Papers. Section 4.5 focuses on the use of marginal vocabulary in the Ordinary’s Accounts, a type of criminal biography which reports the life narrative of prisoners who were executed at



Tyburn. I demonstrate in this section how marginal vocabulary plays a key role in the construction of the prisoner's life narrative as an entertaining story, and highlight some of the linguistic techniques that the Ordinary uses to achieve this purpose.

Chapter 5 presents my second case study on the use of marginal vocabulary in ECCO. In section 5.2, I discuss the basics of the ECCO resource and the linguistic value that this kind of resource holds for my research. In the following section (5.3), I discuss in more detail and justify the kinds of search procedures I undertook to identify marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts. Section 5.4 presents an overview of the kinds of genres in which marginal vocabulary was used, including texts like dictionaries, criminal biographies, prose fiction and drama. My analysis of how marginal vocabulary is used in the different texts is presented in section 5.5. The key question that this section addresses is: What happens to marginal vocabulary in the rest of the eighteenth-century texts? I focus on a select number of texts in which marginal vocabulary is used. In addition, I also focus on the marginal vocabulary on a wider scale, that is, what the status of marginal vocabulary is in these texts based on the evidence I found, and what happens to the lexical meanings of these terms over the course of the period.

Chapter 6 offers the conclusion to this thesis. In section 6.1, I highlight the contributions that this thesis makes to the current field. The key findings of Chapters 4 and 5 are also summarised in this section. In section 6.2, I reflect on the methodology and methods of historical pragmatic approach to the study of marginal vocabulary. Also, I reflect on some of the challenges that this kind of study brings with regard to the application of a historical approach, the use of electronic databases like the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO for eliciting evidence of marginal vocabulary, and conducting historical discourse analysis. Finally, in section 6.3, I discuss some ways in which my study can be carried forward.

## Literature review

### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter reviews key studies which have been important to our understanding of marginal vocabulary in the past and present, as well as to its investigation as a topic of historical, literary and linguistic inquiry. This review is crucial in a) demonstrating what the existing research on marginal vocabulary in the past and present looks like, and b) to demonstrate how studies of early modern marginal vocabulary and present day marginal vocabulary inform my own study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. First I will start with a review of studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period in section 2.2. These studies tend to be historical and literary-historical, focusing on ‘cant’ in pamphlets and plays. These approaches involve rich readings of marginal vocabulary in this period and provide useful insights into the status and functions of marginal vocabulary in the primary texts. In addition, these studies provide much insight into the wider literary and cultural milieu in which these texts were produced, transmitted and received, as well as the topic and content of these texts. This is necessary historical background for looking at marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. In section 2.3, I will review studies on present-day slang and what we can learn from these studies. Most of these have looked at the marginal vocabulary of particular social groups (e.g. teenagers) in spoken discourse, and are informed by sociolinguistic and anthropological insights. The key focus is on the functions and social meanings of marginal vocabulary, as well as identity construction. Then, in section 2.4, I will look at research conducted on eighteenth-century marginal vocabulary, and demonstrate how a study on marginal vocabulary in this period can be informed by insights into marginal vocabulary from other periods. Also, in this section, I will also present the research questions that I have identified on the basis of the survey undertaken in the previous sections.

### 2.2. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period (1500-1700)

Studies on the use of marginal vocabulary in the early modern period have focused on ‘cant’, or ‘pedlar’s French’, simply defined as the special vocabulary that was used by and associated with thieves, beggars, cony catchers, confidence tricksters and other members of the low life.<sup>2</sup> Marginal vocabulary was an interesting and fascinating topic of debate in the early modern period, as evidenced by the occurrence of ‘cant’ in the texts published in that period (Reynolds 2002: 68). For that reason, scholars have explored ‘cant’ in the

---

<sup>2</sup> The expression ‘pedlar’s French’ has negative connotations, since the French were considered immoral by the English (Reynolds 2002: 71). Gotti (1999: 116) comments that ‘French’ refers to the foreign origins of this ‘jargon’, and that ‘pedlars’ specifies a group of people who are vagabonds and petty thieves. ‘Peddling’ signifies the insignificance of their wares (Gotti 1999: 116).

early modern period in rich detail. Social historians of language have considered ‘cant’ in the context of language reforms and politics (Görlach 1999, Blank 1996, Blank 2007, Burke 1995, Beier 1995). Coleman (2004a) and Gotti (1999) have used both the rogue pamphlets and some well known canting word lists to look at the canting lexicographical tradition in the period. These texts provide important evidence of metalinguistic awareness of the phenomenon. The early modern period establishes the antecedents of the marginal vocabulary that we encounter in the eighteenth century. ‘Cant’ was clearly recognised as something very vibrant and relevant for the early modern period (Beier 1995: 71, Reynolds 2002: 68). Literary historians have particularly looked at the role of ‘cant’ in plays, and the history of beggary in relation to theatre (West 2003, Pugliatti 2003, Reynolds 2002). I will now take a closer look at some of these studies and what kind of insights they provide about marginal vocabulary in this particular period.

### *2.2.1. Status of marginal vocabulary in the early modern period*

Marginal vocabulary, or ‘cant’ in the early modern period is considered to be specialised terminology that is closely associated with thieves and the underworld (Blank 1996: 54, Burke 1995: 2, Gotti 1999: 116). Burke (1995) discusses ‘cant’ as a form of ‘jargon’ because the two terms were synonyms in the period. He considers ‘jargon’ in the early modern period as the secret language of the underworld that helped to mask the activities of its users (beggars, thieves, confidence tricksters) from other members of the public (Burke 1995: 2). The semantics of the terms also provide evidence to support the idea that marginal vocabulary was about the world of thieves, beggars and prostitutes (Beier 1995: 81, see Coleman 2004a). The different semantic fields that these words covered belong to everyday domains of existence such as parts of the body (‘nab’ for “head”, ‘fambles’ for “hands”, ‘prat’ for “buttock”), eating and drinking (‘bouse’ for “drink”), animals (‘prancer’ for “horse”, ‘cackling chete’ for “cock”), lodgings and places of hospitality (‘bousing ken’ for “alehouse”), money (‘lowre’ for “money”, ‘wyn’ for “penny”), and clothing (‘nab-cheat’ for “hat or cap”; ‘togeman’ for “coat”) There is also a wide number of terms referring to the members of the underworld themselves (‘Vpightman’, ‘Rogue’, ‘Prigger of Prancers’, ‘Abraham-man’, ‘Iacke-man’, ‘kinchin Mort’, ‘Doxie’, ‘Autem mort’) terms relating to the criminal activities of these people (‘to nyp a bung’ for “cutting a purse”).<sup>3</sup>

According to Burke (1995: 13), ‘jargon’ serves various functions. The primary function of ‘jargon’ is for practical convenience and “talking shop”, meaning that every profession has its own code or technical term to refer to those matters that are relevant to their own particular area of interest, as seen in the previous paragraph. Similarly beggars or thieves would use ‘cant’ to talk in code with each other to refer to their illegal practices and activities (Burke 1995: 13). Secondly, the thieves’ ‘jargon’ is a private and secretive means

---

<sup>3</sup> See Gotti (1999: 24-25) for a more extensive list of the different semantic categories of the terms listed in Harman’s *A Caveat* (1567)

of communication amongst the users so that the public cannot overhear them (Burke 1995: 14; Sorensen 2004: 438). This function of marginal vocabulary is emphasised in the literature of the period. Thomas Dekker pointed out in *Lantern and Candle-light* (1608) that vagabonds and beggars speak a language that is exclusive to themselves: “and as these people are strange both in names and in their conditions, so do they speak a Language, proper only to themselves, called *Canting*, which is more strange”. Pugliatti (2003: 129) notes that ‘jargon’ is used as a form of disguise; “it marks the practices and the aims of the group by mimicking and distorting the communicational code which is shared by the social community”. Finally, ‘jargon’ can function as show talk, that is, to indicate social inclusion or exclusion (Burke 1995: 14). People use ‘jargon’ to identify themselves as belonging to this particular group, and it expresses a form of bonding between those who understood the specialised terms. ‘Cant’ played an important role in expressing and creating group identity (Fox 2002: 95). According to Reynolds (2002: 64), it was ‘cant’ which unified the criminal culture of gypsies, rogues, vagabonds and other low life members in the early modern period. ‘Cant’ means that one could belong to this exclusive community, and knowledge of this language means that one could exclude those who were not involved in this community.

‘Cant’ or marginal vocabulary is a fascinating topic in the period as part of the social history of language, especially in discussions on politics of language (Blank 1996, Blank 2007, Reynolds 2002, Burke 1995). ‘Cant’ in the early modern period is extensively studied in the context of multilingualism, and associated with foreigners and exoticness. As far as the politics of language is concerned, ‘cant’ has been considered in the context of language reforms in the early modern period (Blank 2007). Early modern English vocabulary expanded exponentially with foreign words due to the increase in population migration, travel, poverty and crime in the period (Reynolds 2002: 66). Some early modern commentators such as William Shakespeare and Richard Carew talked about the utility of these borrowings and considered it an “enrichment” of the native language (Blank 1996: 33). Carew claimed that borrowings from other languages “raise a profit of new words from the same stock, which yet in their own Countrey are not merchantable” (as cited in Blank 1996: 45). The general consensus, however, was predominately negative; many such as John Cheke and Richard Verstegan saw the foreign influence as an “impoverishment” of the vernacular language (Blank 1996: 43). This criticism was part of the so-called inkhorn controversy, referring to the aversion to new terms that were borrowed from other languages such as Latin (see Blank 1996, Nevalainen 1999).<sup>4</sup> Those were generally “hard words”, new words in fields that were previously dominated by Latin, as well as neologisms and ‘cant’ (Blank 1996: 40). Underlying these language reforms was anxiety and a fear of loss of identity (Burke 1995: 13). Vernacular multilingualism was considered a threat to state power and national integrity (Reynolds 2002: 65). The ideal was monolingualism and the existence of a standardised language

---

<sup>4</sup> For more details about the language reform debates in the early modern period, see Blank (1996) on the politics of Renaissance dialects, and Blank (2007) on the prose of language reform in English renaissance.

would symbolise sociopolitical unification (Reynolds 2002: 65). Therefore social reformers of language expressed hostility and contempt towards anything that could threaten the pursuit of a pure language, denigrating anything that was foreign, new or technical, including the ‘cant’ used by the low life (Burke 1995: 12; Beier 1995: 91).

The general consensus about ‘cant’ and its users in the early modern period was negative (Beier 1995: 90). Thomas Dekker, among other early modern writers, expressed his contempt based on aesthetic grounds, namely that it was obscure and exotic:

It was necessary people so fast increasing and so daily practicing new and strange *Villanies* should borrow to themselves a speech, which so near as they could, none but themselves should understand. And for that cause was this Language, which some call *Peddler’s French*, Invented, to th[e] intent that, albeit any Spies should secretly steal into their companies to discover them, they might freely utter their minds one to another yet avoid that danger. (*Lantern and Candle-Light* 1608, italics in original)<sup>5</sup>

Early modern writers like Dekker expressed their criticism from an outsider’s perspective, and they disliked the language because the terms were unintelligible to them. They also believed that users of ‘cant’, that is, members of the low life, used ‘cant’ deliberately to obscure what they were saying. Blank (1996: 41) comments that some people may have use marginal vocabulary deliberately to “mystify” the people who did not know about it. The ‘cant’ lexis carried connotations of “threat” and “danger”, because in the minds of outsiders people who used it were evidently trying to cover up something or had ill intentions, or else they wouldnt be so secretive about it. Some of the criticism of cant went a step further and expressed xenophobia (Burke 1995: 10). It also did not help that there was a whole air of mystification around special languages (Burke 1995: 10). People thought ‘cant’ was derived from Romany and Yiddish (Burke 1995: 16). ‘Cant’ was similar to a foreign, exotic, obscure, mysterious language that clearly needed to be translated into “proper” English as seen in Dekker (1608):

*A Canter in prose.*

“Stow you bene cofe, and cut benar whids, and bing we to Rome-vill to nip a bung.”

*Thus in English.*

*Stow you, bene cofe.* Hold your peace, good fellow.

*And cut benar whids.* And speak better words.

*And bing we to Rome-vill.* And go we to London.

*To nip a bung.* To cut a purse.

*(Lantern and Candle-Light* 1608, italics in original)

---

<sup>5</sup> Excerpts from Dekker’s work are taken from Kinney (1990: 217), an anthology of Tudor and Early Stuart rogue literature.

Based on these metalinguistic discussions of ‘cant’ and language reform debates in the early modern period, modern scholars (Reynolds 2002, Beier 1995, Pugliatti 2003, Blank 1996, Gotti 1999) have interpreted ‘cant’ as a form of anti-language. The term ‘anti-language’ was first introduced by Halliday (1978: 164), and refers to the language of an anti-society, in his words “a society that is set up within another society as a conscious alternative to it”. In Halliday’s view, the group of thieves in Elizabethan England forms such an anti-society, who lived off the wealth of the established society and had their anti-language called ‘pelting speech’ (Halliday 1978: 164). The literature which emphasised the distinctive code of the thieves also reinforced the myth that these criminals were highly organised (Sorensen 2004: 439). One of the characteristics of an anti-language is that it is a language “relexicalised” (Halliday 1978: 164). The underlying principle is that it has the same grammar as the language that dominates in the established society but differs in the vocabulary. This vocabulary differs only in particular areas, typically those areas that concern the subculture, in this case that of the criminals (Halliday 1978: 164). Pugliatti (2003) claims that ‘cant’ is a parasitic language because it is derived from existing language. The term ‘parasitic’ refers to something that derives from an original or basic thing. According to Pugliatti (2003: 119), “it is not a complete invention, but implants on the structure of the local shared language words which might appear invented but are in reality taken from the common lexicon of one or more languages and slightly transformed”. The term has negative connotations, implying that ‘cant’ feeds off and thrives on a host, in this case the common language. The canting language was claimed to be partly invented by its own speakers, a secret code that also made use of neologisms (Blank 2007: 36). Harman says that ‘cant’ was “half mingled with English” (Gotti 1999: 117). Similarly Burke (1995: 6) comments, ‘jargon’ is a “parasitic or partial language, a supplement to the vernacular, and not an alternative to it”. Early modern writers also made objections against ‘cant’ on the grounds of the language ideologies of the time. Critics of ‘jargon’ objected to these special languages because they were mixtures and made up of compounds which “contaminated” the pure nature of the vernacular (Burke 1995: 16). Good language was “chaste, legitimate, not a bastard language, independent, not parasitic, healthy, not diseased” (Burke 1995: 12). ‘Cant’ lacked every aspect of a good language and was therefore subordinate to ‘pure English’, which connoted clarity and truthfulness. ‘Cant’ was judged against those conventional norms of a standard. It was an “unlawfull language” different to English rule (Blank 1996: 54). In *Belman of London* (1608), Dekker expresses the view that this language was not grounded upon any rules because it was invented by particular social groups themselves, namely the Gypsies, the underworld and the beggars. To Dekker and others, ‘cant’ was a “Babelish confusion” (Blank 1996: 53).

Pugliatti (2003: 119) interprets ‘cant’ as an anti-language in the sense that beggars did not simply borrow the grammatical structures of the common language to construct their own secret communicative system, but also implanted their own system of values which is in contrast with the common system. It was invented so they could communicate privately and securely while operating unlawfully within the physical and conceptual territory of

official culture (Reynolds 2002: 87). Reynolds (2002: 65) views the use of ‘cant’ by alternative groups as an expression of difference and resistance, rather than being antithetical to the dominant group. ‘Cant’ is not so much about negation but about assertion and promotion (Reynolds 2002: 65). ‘Cant’ promotes a culture that both thrived on difference from and dependence on official culture, even as it rebelled against it (Reynolds 2002: 65). Beier (1995) offers a different stance. While he believes that the literature of roguery and the word lists of ‘cant’ fostered the belief that an anti-society stood ready to destroy the good order in the early modern period (1995: 91), he is wary of the idea that it is anti-language because the lines of demarcation between anti-society and established society are blurry. In fact, there was some crossing of boundaries because there was evidence of interaction between gentlemen and criminals, and the fact that some of the canting words ended up in general dictionaries such as Elisha Coles’ *English Dictionary* (1676). Also, Beier (1995: 92) believed that the protests against marginal vocabulary were exaggerated. There was hostility against authority but only few words that suggest real attacks on the social, political or religious systems. Beier prefers to see canting as a “counter-experience” rather than a “counter reality” (1995: 92).

### 2.2.2. Popularity and fetishisation of ‘cant’

‘Cant’ was not only a topic of controversy, but also a topic of popular fascination in the period (Reynolds 2002, West 2003, Burke 1995). Reynolds (2002: 68) points out that the negative treatment of ‘cant’ effected a “romanticisation and fetishisation of ‘cant’”. There was a positive desire from members of official culture to learn and speak ‘cant’ (Reynolds 2002: 68). There was also a curiosity about the hidden secrets of the underworld. Authors responded to this demand by exposing the language of the criminals. Dozens of glossaries, manuals and cony-catching pamphlets were published to reveal the secrets of ‘cant’ to their reader (West 2003: 232). Authors promoted their works and presented it as something in the fight against crime (Blank 1996: 56; Sorensen 2004: 438). ‘Cant’ was widely recorded in rogue pamphlets such as Thomas Harman’s *A Caveat Warening for Common Cursitors* (1567), Robert Greene’s coney catching pamphlets, Thomas Dekker’s *Bellman of London series* (1608) and S.R. *Martin Mark-all, Beadle of Bridewell* (1610).<sup>6</sup> These pamphlets offered real descriptions of sixteenth century life and aimed to expose the rogue life (Aydelotte 1967). Authors claimed to have risked their lives in exposing the secrets of the underworld (Blank 1996: 54). We find also representations of ‘cant’ use in plays like *The Beggar’s Bush* (1612/22) and Richard Brome’s *A Jovial Crew* (1641). The main purpose of these texts was to sell these books and the glossaries as titillating and to boost the popularity of the work (Beier 1995: 70; Reynolds 2002: 68). People were keen on learning ‘cant’ for defensive and offensive purposes (Reynolds 2002: 68). This continuous fascination fuelled the publication of these glossaries and pamphlets, which was a

---

<sup>6</sup> Many literary historians have been interested in these early modern rogue pamphlets as literary objects such as Beier (2003), Woodbridge (2003), and Fumerton (2006)

profitable business in the period (Sorensen 2004: 438). Many people wanted to benefit from this business and many word lists published were based on Harman (see Coleman 2004a, Beier 1995: 68). Richard Head was known for plagiarising Harman in *The English Rogue* (1665) (Beier 1995: 68). In a later work, however, *The Canting Academy*, Head claims to have had first hand experience of the recording of these terms himself by interviewing users in person in prison (Beier 1995: 68). Other people were very explicit about consulting earlier sources. The terms appeared more often in print, thus making this secret language public (Burke 1995: 5). Reynolds (2002: 76) notes that ‘cant’ had “an enduring and increased stability, social status, and salability in popular literature and stage plays”. In his view, the English population was therefore more aware of cant’s existence and sociocultural significance, and consequently was much more interested in understanding the criminal-sociocultural functionality of cant (Reynolds 2002). The works were evidence of the spread and continuity of these terms (Burke 1995: 5). The recording of this kind of language in a wide variety of texts marked the beginning of a lexicographical tradition that would continue well into the late modern period.

### 2.2.3. Functions of ‘cant’ in literary texts

Literary-historical treatments have made some important claims about the functions of marginal vocabulary in (literary) texts, predominately plays. These approaches involve a close reading of the role of marginal vocabulary in relation to the content and the purpose of the texts. ‘Cant’ was indeed a popular feature in the plays in the so-called canting scenes (Reynolds 2002: 68). ‘Cant’ is used by the authors of those works to represent the low life in the period. Reynolds (2002: 68) shows that ‘cant’ in Dekker and Middleton’s play *The Roaring Girl* (1611) was depicted as an attribute of membership of a criminal culture (Reynolds 2002: 68). In the play we find a scene completely in ‘cant’ which would be impenetrable to a reader or audience who does not understand the terms (Reynolds 2002: 68). The character Moll Cutpurse (leader of a gang and prostitute) is walking through London with some gentlemen (Jack Dapper, Lord Noland, Sir Thomas Long, and Sir Beauteous Ganymede). She believes that Trapdoor is an “upright man”, a gang leader and challenges Trapdoor for a canting match in order to expose his identity as a criminal. During the match, they banter in the ‘cant’ without making explicit the denotative meanings of the term. The point is that Moll maintains her criminal solidarity with Trapdoor by speaking in code, as well as her solidarity with the members of the gentry by translating the terms for them (Reynolds 2002: 71). West (2003: 237) makes a similar point that ‘cant’ is indeed a marker of “social distinction” in these early modern plays. He notes that ‘cant’ in *The Roaring Girl* (1611) presents a parallel to London speech and society, and that ‘cant’ relies on its secret nature to “prey on the legitimate world” (West 2003: 237, 239)

Another important point that West makes is that ‘cant’ in *The Roaring Girl* (1611) is sexualised and eroticised because it is alien, mysterious and titillating to the reading public



(West 2003: 246). In the scene below, the characters Moll, Tearcat, and Trapdoor use the terms ‘wapping’ and ‘nigging’ to convey some kind of sexual activity, although none of the characters makes explicit what each of these terms exactly means and whether they all refer to the same thing (West 2003: 244).

Tearcat            And then we’ll couch a hogshead under the ruffians, and there you shall wap with me, and I’ll niggle with you.

Moll                Out, you damned impudent rascal! [Hits and kicks him] . . .

(*The Roaring Girl* 1611, excerpt taken from West 2003: 244)

The point is not so much what the terms ‘wap’ and ‘niggle’ mean; what matters is that as a listener we get the message that that something sexual is implied through their alienness. This is based on the principle that if one does not understand someone, it must be because they say something inappropriate or rude (West 2003: 246). ‘Cant’ here serves as a marker of distinction to those who are on the stage, as well as the real audience. ‘Cant’ does its job but not necessarily everyone will know how it works. People who get the sexual joke will interpret this scene differently from those who do not get the joke.

To summarise, studies on marginal vocabulary have provided plenty of evidence that marginal vocabulary was used in the early modern period. The occurrence of marginal vocabulary in these texts shows that ‘cant’ was an interesting and fascinating topic featured in popular texts published in the period. The evidence is really strong. The literature provides evidence for historians and literary historians of the use of marginal vocabulary in the period. Work on the early modern period gives us a clear sense of direction for when we approach the study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century.

### 2.3. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the present day

Studies have looked at different types of marginal vocabulary in the present day, such as ‘slang’, ‘dialect’, and ‘nonstandard’. Studies about the use of marginal vocabulary have mainly focused on ‘slang’, or the language use of teenagers (Reyes 2005, Elbe 1996, Kiessling and Mous 2004, Mattiello 2008, Bucholtz 2009).<sup>7</sup> Hodson (2014) looks at dialect representation in fiction and film. She defines ‘dialect’ as “a variety of English which is associated with a particular region and/or social class”, and she also includes ‘slang’ as part of dialect representation (Hodson 2014: 2). Amongst sociolinguists, ‘nonstandard’ is defined in terms of social class and it implies that ‘nonstandard’ indexes “low socio-economic status”, “low level of prestige” and “social stigmatisation” (Coupland 2009: 285). In the introduction to their collection of essays on non-standard writing,

---

<sup>7</sup> There has been a long ongoing debate about defining ‘slang’ (see Dumas and Lighter 1978, Lighter 2001, Mattiello 2008, Adams 2009). The definitions are wide-ranging but there is some agreement as to what ‘slang’ entails. ‘Slang’ can be loosely defined as a type of popular and informal language used in highly specific registers by particular groups in society. See also OED entry for ‘slang’, n<sup>3</sup>. sense 1a. The special vocabulary used by any set of persons of a low or disreputable character; language of a low and vulgar type (OED Online 2015)

Taavitsainen and Melchers (1999: 1) consider ‘nonstandard’ as part as a complex continuum of language use. They claim that the notion of ‘non-standard’ needs to be discussed in relation to a ‘standard’.<sup>8</sup> But the interpretation of ‘non-standard’ language varies according to the approach and the period of time. Sociolinguists would consider ‘non-standard’ in relation to normative attitudes such as education and prestige, whereas pragmatics would consider ‘nonstandard’ as violations of expected norm at the level of discourse, genre and register (Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999: 17). I will not say more about the definitions of ‘slang’ or ‘non standard’ language use, since this is beyond the scope of the thesis, but instead focus more closely on the studies which take a more qualitative approach to the study of marginal vocabulary in context.

Marginal vocabulary in the present day has received considerable attention and tends to be the key topic of study. Some scholarly treatments on marginal vocabulary in the present day tend to be wide-ranging, that is covering a wide variety of topics and aspects (see Sornig 1981, Mattiello 2008, Adams 2009, Coleman 2012a). These tend to be descriptive works on ‘slang’ as a linguistic phenomenon. Sornig (1981) looks at lexical innovations in ‘slang’, colloquialisms and casual speech, and covers topics such as structures and manipulations, ‘slang’ and the universe of metaphorical language, reasons for variability and its purposes. Mattiello (2008) looks at linguistic and social aspects of English slang, including its morphology, semantics and sociology. Along similar lines, Adams (2009) pays attention to the social, aesthetic and cognitive aspects of ‘slang’. Coleman (2012a) provides a wide survey of ‘slang’ used throughout the English-speaking world, from the use of marginal vocabulary known as ‘cant’ in the earliest records to the latest tweets, and offers important insights into the development, survival, metamorphosis and spread of ‘slang’. Other studies take a more specific approach, namely anthropological (Reyes 2005, Bucholtz 2009, Bucholtz 2011, Kiessling and Mous 2004), sociolinguistic (Elbe 1996, Coupland 2001, Bennett 2012) and stylistic (Hodson 2014, Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999). Much work has also been done on slang lexicography (Coleman 2008, Green 1997). This survey shows how broad marginal vocabulary as a topic is, and that we can look at different aspects of it and approach it in different ways. I will now review some of the studies which have taken a qualitative approach to the study of marginal vocabulary in the present, because their insights will inform my own approach to marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century.

### *2.3.1. Social and functional approaches*

The work by sociolinguists (Elbe 1996) and linguistic anthropologists (Kiessling and Mous 2004, Reyes 2005, Bucholtz 2009, Bucholtz 2001) focuses on the use of ‘slang’ amongst teenagers and college students, the social work that ‘slang’ does for its speakers and how it is linked to issues of social identity and stance, and anti-language (Kiessling and Mous

---

<sup>8</sup> See also Chapter 2 in Hodson (2014) in which she discusses standard versus nonstandard English.

2004, Bennett 2012). 'Slang' is regarded as ephemeral and informal vocabulary, and signals coolness and engagement in youth culture (Reyes 2005: 512-513). Kiessling and Mous (2004) conducted an anthropological study on urban youth languages in Africa and base their arguments on a systematic functional description of the youth languages rather than their actual use. They regard urban youth languages as a type of anti-language consciously manipulated by its users. Young people use these urban languages in artistic, competitive and provocative ways (Kiessling and Mous 2004: 328). The antifunction of these urban youth languages is that the speaker expresses jocular disrespect, to distance themselves from the older generation (Kiessling and Mous 2004: 328). Kiessling and Mous (2004: 313) note that the youth's appropriation of a stigmatised linguistic variety as a marker of identity involves a transition from a defensive identity to a new projected identity. That is, specific groups of speakers, principally male youth who see themselves as marginal, rebellious and affiliated with the underworld create a new social identity, namely that of the urban youth (Kiessling and Mous 2004: 328). The primary function of urban youth languages is thus to create a powerful icon of identity.

Reyes (2005) and Bucholtz (2009) looked both at specific slang terms and how speakers use them for social purposes, such as creating identity. Both take a more interactive approach towards the study of 'slang'. The data they use is spoken data collected through ethnography or video material. Both have emphasised the importance of looking at 'slang' in use and 'slang' in metadiscourse (Reyes 2005: 512; Bucholtz 2009: 165). Studies on marginal vocabulary in the present-day have emphasised the importance of both direct and indirect evidence in the study of marginal vocabulary use. Reports of slang use provide access to ideologies of 'slang' and the speakers' attitudes and beliefs about language, whereas analyses of slang use provide access to practices of 'slang' (Reyes 2005: 513). We need to examine both metalinguistic discourse as well as slang-in-use to make sense of how 'slang' is used and perceived. If we consider both direct and indirect evidence of marginal vocabulary in the period, then we can assess the extent to which perceptions about marginal vocabulary compare and contrast with the way that these terms were actually used in context.

One key strength of these social and functional approaches to 'slang' is that they emphasise the importance of context for understanding 'slang' and other marginal vocabulary which carries different connotations. 'Slang' relies on context for its meaningfulness (Reyes 2005, Bucholtz 2009). According to Reyes (2005: 513), traditional approaches, which tend to focus on the language-internal aspects of 'slang', fail to capture the social meanings of 'slang' because they do not pay attention to the situational context in which the terms are used. By looking at slang in use, we can discover implicit strategies that construct additional meanings and functions of 'slang' that are missed by more traditional approaches that rely solely on slang definitions at face value (Reyes 2005: 513). It is only through discourse analysis of 'slang' in context that we can uncover the social meanings of 'slang', particularly the implicit meanings which are carefully constructed (Reyes 2005: 513). Social meanings, unlike literal meanings of 'slang' are rarely fixed. For example, the

term ‘cool’ denotes something good, but what social meanings the term indexes precisely can only be uncovered by looking at the situation in which it is used, and who is using it (Reyes 2005: 514). When the term is used by a teenager it can signal participation in youth culture, whereas if it is used by an adult, it signals exclusion from youth culture, as well as social awkwardness. ‘Slang’ thus can achieve different kinds of meanings and effects depending on contextual factors such as who is using it, what the audience is, and the topic of conversation (Reyes 2005: 514). Bucholtz (2009: 165) makes the same point that context is important for the study of ‘slang’. Because ‘slang’ is ideologically laden, we cannot read social meaning from its semantics or distribution of its use; rather it gains its semiotic value within the sociocultural context in which it is used (Bucholtz 2009: 149). In Bucholtz’s view, social meanings of linguistic forms are about interactional moves through which speakers take stance, create alignments and construct personas (2009: 146). Linguistic forms acquire social meanings through the process of indirect indexicality, associated with particular social types or personas (Bucholtz 2009: 165). It is only by looking at the details of the interaction that we can discover the stereotypes that are linked to the use of ‘slang’ in particular situations (Reyes 2005: 513).

Through conversational analysis (which is highly contextual), anthropological studies on ‘slang’ used by youngsters have shown the complex dynamics of how ‘slang’ is used in everyday speech, namely to negotiate identities and personal stance. The key claim is that ‘slang’ plays an important role in the stylisation, the performance and the construction of particular social identities. Reyes (2005) investigated how Asian American teenagers use African American Vernacular English slang ‘aite’ (“all right”) and ‘na mean’ (“do you know what I mean?”). Appropriation is the adoption of terms that are associated with a particular group, by someone who is not part of that group, in this case, Asian Americans who adopt AAVE slang.<sup>9</sup> Reyes (2005) drew upon ethnographic and video data from a teen video-making project that covered four years of work. Through close analysis of slang-in-use and metapragmatic discussions of ‘slang’, she examined how the teenagers specify relations between language and social factors (race, age, gender, region and class) (Reyes 2005: 512). Her findings show that teenagers use ‘aite’ and ‘na mean’ to achieve multiple social purposes (Reyes 2005: 512). Van, one of the participants of Reyes’ study, uses the terms to feel black and to identify with African Americans. When Van appropriates ‘slang’, she indexes herself as tough and draws upon the stereotype of the aggressive African American portrayed in popular culture as violent and aggressive (Reyes 2005: 518). At the same time, Van still indexes the negative connotations of African Americans by evoking the stereotype in her use of AAVE slang, even though she draws on the positive traits of the stereotype of the African Americans (Reyes 2005: 518). Other teenagers in Reyes’ study use ‘slang’ to construct divisions of identity between youth and adults and between each other. They do so by foregrounding the function of ‘slang’ as a marker of urban youth subcultural participation, and positioning themselves and others as teachers and students of ‘slang’ (Reyes 2005: 521). Didi, an Indian American female scriptwriter, was told by

---

<sup>9</sup> I will discuss the notion of ‘appropriation’ in more detail in Chapter 3, section 3.4.1.

her teen co-scriptwriters to replace the sentence “she’s kind of cute”, into “she’s kind of aite” to make the characters in the script speak ‘slang’ more. In such a way, the teens evoke a term which belongs to a youth identity that Didi does not share. The division between youth and adult identity is further removed when Didi confesses that she does not exactly what ‘aite’ means, and the teens do not explain to her what the term means (Reyes 2005: 522). Similarly, Bucholtz (2009) found that Mexican immigrant teenagers at a California high school used the slang term ‘güey’ (“dude”) as a marker of interactional alignment and is part of a gendered style. Chris, as one of the participants of Bucholtz’s study used the term ‘güey’ to directly index the stance of cool as well as masculinity.

Apart from the ethnographic data, Bucholtz (2009) also examines media representations of ‘güey’ in detail. Ideologies about language do not only circulate through explicit metapragmatic commentary found in particular interactions between individuals, but also through implicit metapragmatic representations in the media (Bucholtz 2009: 158). Her key point is that when indexicalities enter the media space, they become simplified and erased. She draws upon Coupland’s (2001: 345) notion of stylization as the “knowing deployment of culturally familiar styles and identities that are marked as deviating from those predictably associated with the current speaking context” to describe the transformation of the youth culture style associated with ‘güey’ when it enters the media discourse. The term remains its direct index to a stance of cool solidarity, but the indirect index is restricted to a middle class of a masculinity that excludes many users of ‘güey’. In this case, stylization of ‘güey’ involves the displacement and implications of indexical associations in favour of others (Bucholtz 2009: 164). Bucholtz (2009) concludes her study that sociolinguists should engage in both interactionally grounded and ethnographically specific research, as well as the analyses of larger metapragmatic stereotypes (Bucholtz 2009: 165) to become more aware of the use of ‘slang’ and its representations. In such way, we can compare and contrast between the ideologies of ‘slang’ that circulate in the media and the linguistic practices that speakers engage in daily interaction to achieve certain social goals.

### 2.3.2. *Functions of marginal vocabulary in written texts*

While the bulk of studies focus on marginal vocabulary in spoken discourse, a number of studies have also looked at marginal vocabulary in written contexts. Bennett (2012), for example, focused on the stylisation of ‘chavspeak’ in humour books. Chavspeak is the supposed language of the chav, a well known stereotyped figure in Britain which is characterised by “brash and loud loutish behaviour and the wearing of designer-style clothes” and connotes low social status (see OED Online 2015). He makes use of the textual context and the metalinguistic commentary to claim that stylisations of ‘chavspeak’ draw on well-established stereotypes of non-standard Englishes. As he notes, the ideological force of ‘chavspeak’ is “to intensify sociolinguistic class stereotypes in accordance with the more general stereotype of the ‘chav’” (Bennett 2012: 5). In terms of

lexis, some of the terms recorded in the humour books are associated with stereotypes of West Indian and British Black Englishes ('wag'wan', 'bo', 'aight' and 'massive'), and African American Englishes ('wack', 'phat', 'yo'). The supposed use of Black English in 'chavspeak' is similar to the stereotype of Jafaican; that is, the chav is represented as a "race traitor" in rather mild terms (Bennett 2012: 15). The second kind of lexical stereotyping is overlexicalisation of semantic fields. Some of the words in *The Chav Guide to Life* are overlexicalised in areas of crime and public disorder ('nick' for "prison", 'refrigerator' for "stolen goods"), unemployment, poverty and welfare ('poor' to refer to the social status of most Chavs), family dysfunction ('cousin' for a "person ripe for marriage") and consumerism ('sharp' to describe the fashion style of a chav) (Bennett 2012: 16). Such overlexicalisation implies that chavspeak is the antilanguage of a dysfunctional underclass (Bennett 2012: 17). He suggests that stylisations of chavspeak like these contribute to the enregisterment of 'chavspeak' as a "socially recognised register of forms" (Bennett 2012: 7, see Agha 2003).<sup>10</sup> The contents of the texts include glossaries of chavspeak phrases which are translated into 'standard' English, and advice regarding the communicative norms of chavs, or rather their communicative incompetence (Bennett 2012: 20). Such metalinguistic commentary and stylisations of chavspeak contribute to the dominant representations of nonstandard language (Bennett 2012: 20).

Hodson (2014: 227) also found that marginal vocabulary is used for linguistic stereotyping. Drawing upon linguistic tools, she is interested in how and why dialects are represented in fiction and film. Like the linguistic anthropologists, her approach involves taking context into account, and she is interested both in how actual terms are used, and the metalinguistic commentary about these terms. Such linguistic representations of marginal vocabulary are linked to characterisation and stereotyping (Hodson 2014, also Culpeper 2001). Authors of nineteenth century fiction generally tend to attribute dialect and other marginal vocabulary to peripheral characters to create a comic scene or to make fun of the characters (Hodson 2014: 110; Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999: 13). Authors may do so by giving a general impression of dialect speech or a particular technical vocabulary, or through the exaggerated representation of these terms (Culpeper 2001: 213). A common way to indicate rustic speech for example is to use regional words, or proverbs (Taavitsainen and Melchers 1999: 16). In the novel *North and South* (1855), Elizabeth Gaskell uses a number of regional features to mark the speech of the characters Higgins and John Boucher as Northern, as a contrast to the other characters who represent the South. In the same way, Charles Dickens uses 'cant' in *Oliver Twist* (1837) to mark the speech of the gang of pickpockets such as Fagin and the Artful Dodger. In this way, authors of fiction can reinforce negative stereotypes about particular groups of people (Hodson 2014: 11). The effect is that audiences can receive the impression that they know what a dialect sounds like and what characteristics a speaker of that dialect is likely to have even if they have no real life experience of interacting with speakers of that variety

---

<sup>10</sup> I will come back to the idea of 'enregisterment' in Chapter 3, section 3.4.2.

(Hodson 2014: 11). Authors and filmmakers can intentionally or unintentionally create and maintain social prejudices about people.

Similar to the anthropological studies, Hodson (2014) notes that dialect does important social work for both the characters within the fictional world, as well as for the authors or directors of literature and film through metalanguage. Metalanguage is overt commentary upon language (Hodson 2014: 141). For the characters, metalanguage can give insight into the beliefs and attitudes of the characters, but also the kind of social work that speakers try to do and how they orient themselves to the community, in the same way that real speakers use dialect to do important social work for them. When the Artful Dodger first encounters Oliver Twist, he addresses Oliver as “Hullo, my covey! What’s the row?” The Artful Dodger uses the term ‘covey’ to address Oliver in a familiar way to create some form of intimacy, even though they have only met for the first time.<sup>11</sup> Also, authors make use of metalanguage to shape the way in which a given utterance is understood by the audience (Hodson 2014: 148). For example, when authors have rendered a scene in a fiction entirely in ‘cant’ or specialised terminology, they can add glossaries or translations of the terms within the text to make sure that the reader comprehends the texts (Hodson 2014: 101, see also Linder 2000). Sometimes an author may decide not to gloss a term, which means that the reader will struggle to follow the text if they are not familiar with it. Other forms of metalanguage include comments about a particular language variety, or explanations why dialect is being represented in a particular way (Hodson 2014: 148). They give important advice to the reader. In such case, metalanguage works on an ideological level, and can convey the author’s attitudes and beliefs about a particular linguistic variety to a reader.

In sum, approaches to marginal vocabulary use in the present day are informed by linguistic approaches (sociolinguistic, linguistic anthropological, and stylistic). These studies have looked at particular types of marginal vocabulary associated with particular communities, and draw upon the metalinguistic evidence and actual use in spoken and written discourse. These studies have provided crucial insights into the functions and social meanings of marginal vocabulary in the modern data. My expectation is that these modern insights can also inform our understanding of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century.

## 2.4. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century

### 2.4.1. *Canting lexicography*

Current research on marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth century predominately draws upon evidence from dictionaries. Coleman (2004a, 2004b) and Gotti (1999) have

---

<sup>11</sup> See OED entry ‘covey’, *n.3. Slang or vulgar*. Little ‘covey’. (Used of an intimate or associate cf. chappie *n.*) (OED Online 2015)

made extensive use of these dictionaries to report on the canting lexicographical tradition in this period.<sup>12</sup> The term ‘dictionaries’ is used loosely here, as the word-lists can be either “stand-alone works” or short glossaries that were included as part of a larger work. Coleman’s (2004a, 2004b) survey of marginal vocabulary recording in this period shows that this type of language was widely recorded. The main dictionaries that listed marginal vocabulary in the period are *New Canting Dictionary* (1725), *The Scoundrel’s Dictionary* (1754), Francis Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785), James Caulfield, *Blackguardiana* (1795) and Humphry Tristram Potter’s *New Dictionary of all the Cant and Flash Languages* (1795). The purpose of these dictionaries was to educate to a certain extent, but more so for amusement and entertainment (Coleman 2004b: 5). Canting word lists were also found as part of other popular works including criminal biographies (*The Memoirs of the right villainous John Hall* 1708, 1714; *Daniel Defoe’s Street Robberies Considered* 1728; James Dalton’s *A Genuine Narrative of all the Street Robberies* 1728, *Life of Bampfylde Moore Carew; Discoveries of John Poulter* 1754; *Life and Character of Moll King* 1747), plays (*The Beggars Opera*, 1728) and miscellanies (*Bacchus and Venus* 1725, George Parker’s *Life Painter* 1789). Compared with the early modern period to 1700, we see a big explosion of works recording marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. According to Coleman (2004b: 7), ‘cant’ and slang word lists were published four times as frequently as in the early modern period. This trend was related to the continued interest in crime and punishment in the period (Coleman 2004a: 147). Everyone could learn these terms from the dictionaries and use them for their own purposes. Publishers responded to this demand by publishing more works. They also realised that inclusion of those glossaries could boost the sales of the main works (Coleman 2004b: 262). This shows that there was still a popular market for these canting works in the period, and that these works contributed to the record and spread of ‘cant’ knowledge and other marginal vocabulary in the period (Burke 1995: 5).

Coleman (2004a, 2004b) looked at the kinds of lexical items that were recorded in these dictionaries, and the subject matter that each of these lists covers. She paid attention both to key works like Grose and Humphry Tristram Potter, as well as minor word lists such as George Parker’s *Life Painter* (1789), T.B.’s *The Pettyfogger Dramatised* (1797) and *The Diary of a Celebrated Police Officer* (1797). She also focused on the content and the methodology of each work making use of statistics, focusing on the sources that they used and the extent to which these sources are reliable reflections of marginal vocabulary use of the period. Also, she discussed the dictionaries against the social and historical background of the time, and the relations between those dictionaries. Gotti (1999) takes a similar approach as Coleman (2004a, 2004b) in that he is interested in the special features of each publication, the compilation methods that the authors used to compile these works, as well as the sources

---

<sup>12</sup> Coleman’s first volume deals with dictionaries from 1567 until 1784, whereas her second volume deals with dictionary from 1785 until 1858. Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) is her cut off point for the two volumes. According to Coleman (2004b: 1), Grose’s work is an important landmark in the canting lexicographical tradition of the eighteenth century because it “marks the fullest realisation of the old ‘cant’ dictionary tradition, as well as the beginning of a new tradition of slang dictionaries”.



of the entries, in order to establish the extent to which the terms are novel to the field. But he focuses on a smaller range of works of Richard Head, B.E., Alexander Smith, John Poulter and Francis Grose.

Both Coleman (2004a, 2004b) and Gotti (1999) conclude that dictionary makers also drew upon earlier sources in the eighteenth century. In terms of the lexicographical practice, not much had changed compared to the early modern period. It was obvious that the *New Canting Dictionary* (1725) and Alexander Smith's *A Compleat History of the Lives and Robberies of the most Notorious Highwaymen* (1719) borrowed extensively from B.E.'s *Dictionary* (Coleman 2004a: 104-120; Gotti 1999: 93, also Sorensen 2004: 442-443).

*Adam-tiler*, c. a Pickpocket's Camerade, who receives Stolen Money or Goods, and scowers off with them (B.E., 1699)

*Adam-Tiler*, a Pick-Pocket's Comrade, who receives stoln Money or goods, and scours off with 'em (Smith, 1719)

ADAM-TILER, the Comerade of a Pick-pocket, who receives stollen Goods or Money, and scours off with them. *Tip the Cole to Adam-Tiler; i.e.* Give the Money, Watch, Handkerchief, &c. to a Running Companion, that the Pickpocket may have nothing found upon him, when he is apprehended. The *Thirty-ninth Order* of Villains; who pretend to have given Origine to many other Societies of *Canters*. (*New Canting Dictionary*, 1725)

(excerpts taken from Gotti 1999 and Coleman 2004a)

However, the difference between Smith and the *New Canting Dictionary* (1725) is that the editor of the latter has added extra information to Alexander Smith's dictionary entry, for example what category of rogue the 'adam tiler' belongs to. The metalinguistic commentary also reveals that authors took their inspiration from other sources. Grose claimed that he used early modern sources (*Bellman of London*, 1608; *Thieves falling out, true men come by their goods*, 1615; *English Villainies* 1638) as well as sources from the same period (Bailey's dictionary, *New Canting Dictionary*, *History of Bamfield More Carew*, the Sessions Papers) to compile his dictionary (Preface iv-vi). Though this list seems extensive, the earlier sources are also influenced by each other. In turn, Grose's *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) inspired James Caulfield and Humphry Tristram Potter to publish their works based on Grose. These works show the commercial viability of such works and how little effort it took to benefit from them (Coleman 2004b: 74). Even dictionaries of general English such as Elisha Coles' *English Dictionary* (1676) and Nathan Bailey's *The Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (1737) got their inspiration from other canting works (Coleman 2004b: 176-182; Gotti 1999: 120). The close comparison of the content of the dictionaries shows that the dictionaries borrowed content from each other. Also, the compilers made it very obvious metalinguistically that they used earlier sources to compile their work.

#### 2.4.2. *Changes in status of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century*

An important observation made about marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth-century dictionaries is that they witnessed changes in the public conception and perception of ‘cant’ and what ‘cant’ entails in the period (Gotti 1999, Sorensen 2004, Burke 1995). Gotti (1999) notes that the term ‘cant’ underwent a process of change in the course of the eighteenth century, from a variety which is solely associated with the underworld, to the language of the popular and common people. In his dictionary, Grose uses different labels to refer to the canting language, namely ‘vulgar language’ ‘flash lingo’ and ‘slang’ to cover marginal vocabulary that goes beyond the thieves’ ‘cant’ (Gotti 1999: 121). However, ‘flash lingo’ and ‘slang’ can cover the language of the London underworld (Burke 1995: 3). Those labels reflect the gradual extension of the original meaning of “secret language of beggars and thieves” to “specialised languages” and “social dialects” of any kind in the eighteenth century (Gotti 1999: 122).

Sorensen (2004) makes the same observation as Gotti (1999) about a shift in ‘cant’ from a type of language that is exclusive to criminals to something which becomes more commonly available amongst eighteenth-century London society. She identified two stages of how substandard languages became attributed to common people. The first stage took place in the canting dictionaries of the first half of the eighteenth century, and witnesses a simple unification of a variety of overlapping “substandard” languages into one single ‘cant’ language as inherently criminal. In this process, the linguistic expressions of thieves, prostitutes, con artists, and sometimes other speakers of substandard English appear as singular (and mixed-gender) subculture (Sorensen 2004: 437). In the second half of the century, dictionaries of ‘cant’ and vulgar language attributed the use of these languages also to common people, which could serve as a source of imitation for fashionable men (Sorensen 2004: 437). The relation between language and the people that they represent is more ambiguous, meaning that ‘cant’ loses its criminal specificity.

The meaning of ‘cant’ is further expanded in the eighteenth century by Francis Grose, who named his dictionary *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785). ‘Vulgar’ here is much used in the sense of “common or ordinary language use”.<sup>13</sup> This redefinition of the term ‘vulgar’ is reflective of the second stage, and positions the vulgar within the society as a whole (Sorensen 2004: 446). Francis Grose comments in *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) that ‘cant’ was no longer only associated with criminals, but it was a commodity of the common people and part of the vulgar tongue:

The Vulgar Tongue consists of two parts: the first is the Cant Language, called sometimes Pedlar’s French, or St Giles’s Greek; the second those Burlesque Phrases, Quaint Allusions, and Nick-names for persons, things and places, which from long uninterrupted usage are made classical by prescription (Grose 1785: Preface ii).

---

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Johnson defines the term ‘vulgar’ in his *Dictionary* (1755) as “suited to the common people” and “mean; low; being of the common rate” (as cited in Sorensen 2004: 436). See also OED entry for ‘vulgar’ *adj.*, sense 3a. of language or speech: Commonly or customarily used by the people of a country; ordinary, vernacular (OED Online 2015)

As seen in Grose's metalinguistic comment, the "Cant Language" is attributed to the language of the common people and ordinary English social life. The marginal is no longer separate or a threat to the general or common populace. In addition, Grose notes that the "Vulgar Tongue" also consists of the popular phrases of the period ("those Burlesque Phrases, Quaint Allusions, and Nick-names from persons"). In his view, the eighteenth-century reader will find it useful to have knowledge of these different types of registers:

The many vulgar allusions and cant expressions that so frequently occur in our common conversation and periodical publications, make a work of this kind extremely useful, if not absolutely necessary, not only to foreigners, but even to natives resident at a distance from the metropolis, or who do not mix in the busy world; without some such help, they might hunt through all the ordinary Dictionaries, from Alpha to Omega, in search of the words, 'black legs, lame duck, a plumb, malingering, nip cheese, darbies, and the new drop,' although these are all terms of well-known import, at New-market, Exchange-alley, the City, the Parade, Wapping, and Newgate. The fashionable words, or favourite expressions of the day, also find their way into our political and theatrical compositions; these, as they generally originate from some trifling event, or temporary circumstance, on falling into disuse, or being superseded by new ones, vanish without leaving a trace behind, such were the late fashionable words, a Bore and a Twaddle, among the great vulgar, Maccaroni and the Barber, among the small; these too are here carefully registered (Grose 1785: Preface ii)

In Grose's *A Classical Dictionary* indeed we find more marginal vocabulary that was related to the London fashionable world in addition to 'cant' (Coleman 2004b: 259). Grose's *A Classical Dictionary* includes records of 'cant' ('blue pigeon fliers', 'crapped'), as well as naval jargon and nautical terms ('adrift', 'abel-wacket'), military terms ('butcher', 'mohair', 'used up') and terms related to a wide variety of occupations and pastimes ('conger', 'milch cow', 'upright men'), regional terms ('church warden', 'gotch gutted') and a few American terms ('calibogus', 'stewed quacker'). Grose's inclusion of 'slang' and colloquial language, names of clubs, and jokes demonstrates a widened conception of "vulgar tongue" towards the end of the century (Coleman 2004b: 70). Simultaneously, a reduction in terms that relate to criminals and 'cant' demonstrate a shift away from the language of criminals into general non-standard English (Coleman 2004b: 70).

#### 2.4.3. *Social significance of 'flash' and (im)politeness*

Coleman (2004b: 260) has pointed out that dictionaries of the eighteenth century also offered records of the 'flash', or the fashionable language of the period. 'Cant' and 'flash' are both similar in that they refer to the language of specific groups. Both types of languages are also unintelligible and dangerous; 'cant' is the secret language used by thieves to harm members of the general public, and to plot against their lives. However, 'flash' was considered more dangerous because it crosses boundaries, between the respected and nonrespected classes, "bringing the disreputable, immoral, enticing world

of gambling, drinking, and prostitution into one's own drawing room" (Coleman 2004b: 260). 'Flash' was an "expression of defiance" (Coleman 2004b: 260). Berry (2001) and Fitzmaurice (2010a) came to the same conclusion in their studies when they looked at 'flash' in Moll King's pamphlet, a text about an eighteenth-century prostitute and keeper of a brothel. Berry (2001) argues that the interest of 'flash' in this period indicates that this kind of fashionable slang was used in certain urban spaces as a means of cutting across boundaries. 'Flash' was initially associated with street vendors and criminals, but later attracted the interest of coffee house customers (Berry 2001: 79). Eighteenth-century rakes would use this language in the coffee house at liberty to express their disregard for prevailing normative conduct. They could for example use the language to talk about bodily functions, which was a taboo topic in eighteenth-century polite society (Berry 2001: 79). Fitzmaurice (2010a: 108) makes a similar case in that Moll's 'flash' belongs to the pragmatic performance of impoliteness amongst the eighteenth-century gentry. The coffee house was the place where people of all ranks could engage in conversation and activities such as casual violence, excessive drinking and prostitution. 'Flash' may be part of intentional ritual antisocial behaviour that took place in these coffee houses (Fitzmaurice 2010a: 108). The upper classes used 'flash' and engaged in antisocial activities to escape from the polite norms of the day (Fitzmaurice 2010a: 109).

In the same article, Fitzmaurice (2010a) also explores the marginal vocabulary of fashionable young people of London's polite society in Jonathan Swift's parodic treatment of polite conversation (begun 1704, published 1738). Fitzmaurice (2010a: 104) argues that Swift makes use of polite banter to ridicule the manners of the polite men and fashion. The polite banter consists of euphemisms, forms of address, compliments, as well as common proverbs, puns and sexual innuendos, for example the use of the cant term 'half-seas' for "half drunk". This example shows that the impolite terminology of the time was picked up by polite society of London.

#### *2.4.4. Research gap*

Studies on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century have predominately looked at canting dictionaries as indirect evidence for the existence and occurrence of this language in the period. Dictionaries are an important resource because they provide good evidence that there was an awareness of marginal vocabulary across different moments in the period. Dictionaries are the living proof that this language existed. These works are an important source of reference about the status of marginal vocabulary in the period, and they provide insights about language attitudes, language anxieties, and language change (Coleman 2012b: 107). They offer valuable insights into the kinds of lexical items that were recorded in these word lists and the subject matter that each of these lists cover. Lexicographical studies provide rich evidence of the production circumstances of the canting dictionaries, the content of the dictionaries, and which terms were considered to be marginal in the period by the compiler. They also provide metalinguistic insights about

the dictionary compiler's perspective on marginal vocabulary (though his view is not necessarily representative of the period). Also, they provide insights about the lexical meaning of the terms and provide a good starting point for exploring the extent to which this language occurs in other eighteenth-century texts. As will become clear with the methodology, the dictionaries are important in yielding the terms.

I am going to build on this by exploring how marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century is used beyond the dictionaries and Moll King's pamphlet. The availability of large electronic databases including the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO provides the opportunity to focus on evidence other than the dictionaries and to look at the extent to which we find marginal vocabulary in this period. I will discuss these two resources in more detail in Chapters 4 and 5, but for now I only want to mention the basics here. In other words, it is possible to validate the dictionary material against the evidence in the Old Bailey and ECCO texts. Scholars have noted that there is little evidence of marginal vocabulary in the court documents. Court records, in which we would expect the occurrence of the marginal vocabulary in the early modern period are scarce (Gotti 1999: 16). Similarly, Beier (1995: 70) notes that the evidence of the thieves' jargon in judicial records in the Elizabethan underworld is "not abundant" and not very detailed.<sup>14</sup> The availability of the Old Bailey texts allows us to test the extent to which marginal vocabulary terms recorded in the canting dictionaries in the eighteenth century have survived in the court documents of the period, as recorders and editors of these texts may have edited out the terms in favour of more standardised, 'cleaner' and more transparent language. In fact, Berry (2012) conducted a pilot study of the flash language in *Old Bailey Proceedings* to assess the extent to which the terms in the dictionaries are used in real-life contexts.<sup>15</sup> She took a sample of the terms that were listed in Moll King's pamphlet and searched for these terms in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. The outcome of this search was very fruitful and confirmed the idea that some of the terms listed in the Moll King's pamphlet were indeed used by real thieves in the period in the Old Bailey court (Berry 2012: 2). Thus Berry (2012) presents a good methodology for identifying marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* resource.

My aim is to take her work forward in identifying more keywords in the Old Bailey texts. The dictionaries will inform our search methods, because we can use these dictionaries as a basis to search for keywords in the Old Bailey texts. The crucial thing is that if we have evidence of marginal vocabulary use in the *Proceedings*, then that means that these terms were used by real people in the eighteenth century, people whose speech is represented in the written records. If we find evidence of marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts, then that would suggest that marginal vocabulary might be used as a 'jargon' amongst these members of the low life who were taken to court. Through close reading techniques

---

<sup>14</sup> Beier (1995: 72) only points to the most extensive use of 'cant' in a document of 1585 in a letter from William Fleetwood to William Cecil.

<sup>15</sup> I retrieved Berry's paper through personal correspondence. A reworking of this paper into a journal article is in progress.

that we take from the studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern and present day, we can explore in more detail who exactly is using these terms, whether people make metalinguistic comments about these terms and what communicative functions they fulfil. If they were used as a 'jargon', we would expect that they would be used for utilitarian purposes (to talk about specialised concepts), namely practical convenience, as well as social purposes, depending on who is using them and for what purposes (Burke 1995:14). As for the social work, we can draw upon the works by present-day studies on the social meanings of 'slang' and how it relates to identity construction. One of the main aspects of these studies is that marginal vocabulary fulfils important social work for its users, and is linked to issues of social identity (cf Burke 1995, Reyes 2005, Hodson 2014). Similarly, we can ask what social and identity work it does for the speaker in the Old Bailey courtroom, drawing both on metalinguistic evidence and evidence of actual use. Do they use it for social affiliation or social distancing? If they use it for antisocial purposes, do they use it as an anti-language? A discourse analysis of how marginal vocabulary is actually used offers insights into the social work that marginal vocabulary does in this context and may offer a more nuanced view of the status of this kind of language in these texts.

In addition to the Old Bailey texts, I am also interested in seeing to what extent marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century is used in other literary texts. As the biggest database of eighteenth century texts to date, ECCO offers access to a rich universe of eighteenth-century discourse. The search facility of ECCO allows us to search for marginal vocabulary terms and to generate excerpts of texts in which this language is used. Such a search enables us to generate excerpts in which this term is used in individual texts and different genres, but will also generate excerpts in which we find the use of other marginal vocabulary terms. These terms may be other thieves' slang, but also perhaps the popular language of the eighteenth century such as 'flash'. This would then demonstrate the extent to which a marginal term becomes widespread in popular discourse. Given the explosion of texts that recorded marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century (see Coleman 2004a, Coleman 2004b), we can expect evidence of marginal vocabulary and its widespread use in other eighteenth-century texts. We would expect to find evidence of marginal vocabulary in the canting lists that Coleman (2004a, 2004b) mentioned, such as like *Hell on Earth* (1708), the biography of Charles Hitchin, *Discoveries of John Poulter* (1754), and George Parker's *Life Painter of Variegated Characters* (1789), but also evidence of marginal vocabulary in other genres, such as prose fiction, plays, essays and others. The latter evidence would confirm the continuous popularity of marginal vocabulary in commercially printed texts. However, it should be noted that the OCR technology of the texts has important implications for generating quantitative data or frequencies of the use of marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts. I will come back to this issue in more detail in Chapter 4.

If we find marginal vocabulary use in different eighteenth-century genres, we can study in more detail how these terms are used in the specific texts and how they compare to their use in the Old Bailey texts. Do we replicate what we see in the early modern period? Do

we find literary representations? My analysis of the language use in these texts will be informed by the literary-historical insights used in studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period, as well as insights from present-day studies on marginal vocabulary in written texts (Hodson 2014). If we find evidence of marginal vocabulary in literary texts, we can study more closely what the functions of this language are, and what kind of marginal vocabulary we find. Do we find the canting scenes like the ones that were found in the early modern plays? It is just thieves' jargon, or do we also find 'flash' or the informal language? In addition, we can check whether marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century is attributed to low life characters, or whether we see an expansion of the linguistic representation of marginal vocabulary to other types of characters. What type of character is the marginal vocabulary attributed to? Are they stereotyped or not? If marginal vocabulary is attributed to specific types of characters, then we can make inferences about the fact that these printed texts play a role in constructing, maintaining or breaking linguistic stereotypes about marginal vocabulary and its users in the same way that this kind of language is represented in media representations of the modern age. They may confirm and evoke stereotypical uses of marginal vocabulary by particular personae, or they may also attribute it to a different set of personae, thus breaking the social stereotypes. In addition, if we find evidence of 'flash' in texts other than Moll King's pamphlet, we can assess whether it fulfils a bonding, ritual function. Do the people portrayed in the ECCO texts use marginal vocabulary pragmatically for the purpose of performing impoliteness in the eighteenth-century texts? Is this language perhaps sexualised and eroticised in the eighteenth-century texts in the same way it is in the early modern period?

Evidence of marginal vocabulary in a wide range of ECCO texts also allows us assess claims made in the eighteenth-century canting dictionaries about changes in the status of this language in the period, and whether marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth-century texts reflects the change in the conception of marginal vocabulary in the period as noted by Gotti (1999), Sorensen (2004). Is marginal vocabulary thieves' slang, or do we also have other types of registers that become more prominent in the period? To what extent does the thieves' slang found in the Old Bailey texts become less 'marginal' over the course of the century? We can question whether marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century was indeed a much looser concept than before, that is, whether marginal vocabulary includes not only thieves' slang but also other registers of marginal vocabulary that associated with the common ('vulgar') informal language use of the period. Using a marginal term, we can also trace the extent to which this term undergoes a change in its lexical and social meanings. Does the marginal term retain its specialised meaning in the literary texts, or do we also see a generalisation of its meaning? Does the term lose its criminal connotations in some of the eighteenth-century texts?

## 2.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have surveyed the field of studies which have looked at different kinds of marginal vocabulary in different periods, and looked at how marginal vocabulary has been approached in various studies. I have surveyed the current research on marginal vocabulary from the early modern period to the present day and how these can inform my own reading of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. For both the early modern period and the present day, marginal vocabulary is a variety that is specifically tied to particular communities, whether young people, thieves or rogues. The work on the early modern period provides us with really interesting tools, insights and definitions of the use of marginal vocabulary in a rich literary setting. The research done on marginal vocabulary in the present day informs my literary historical and sociolinguistic ways of studying marginal vocabulary. Current research on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century, which focuses predominately on dictionaries, provides us with a strong sense of the indirect evidence of that language, which we can take forward. I have translated the research gap identified in section 2.4 into the following research questions:

1. How is marginal vocabulary used in eighteenth-century texts?
2. Do we find a change in the status and meanings of marginal vocabulary over the course of the eighteenth century?

My major contribution is looking in depth at direct evidence of the language use of marginal communities and the extent to which this kind of language becomes embedded in the literature of the period, and I show how this works and whether it undergoes a semantic change.

In the next chapter, I will justify how a historical pragmatic approach can help us to answer these research questions. I argue that historical pragmatics is well suited to address these questions because it takes language as a starting point and studies how marginal vocabulary is used in context. It takes all kinds of data as sites of investigation. The method is historical discourse analysis, which is interdisciplinary in nature, and draws upon and brings insights from literary and social history, and linguistics (pragmatics and stylistics) together. Such an interdisciplinary approach is key to assess how marginal vocabulary is used in context, that is, what its functions and communicative meanings are.



## **A historical pragmatic framework**

### 3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I introduce historical pragmatics as my framework of analysis to study how marginal vocabulary forms are used in historical texts. Historical pragmatics is a perspective on language use that combines insights from pragmatics, which is concerned with contextualised uses of language, and historical linguistics, which focuses on language change (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 1-2). Historical pragmatics thus focuses on language use and change in past contexts (Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 3). It is concerned with (1) the study of intentional language use within a social and cultural context in earlier periods of time, (2) the study of the development of language use, and (3) the study of the communicative basis of language change in general (Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010: 12). One of the analytical tools that historical pragmaticians use to address these topics is to make use of historical discourse analysis. This analytical tool is qualitative and interdisciplinary in nature and involves an examination of how linguistic forms are used in written documents of the past. More specifically, it involves looking at linguistic clues (e.g. deixis and anaphoric reference) within the text, as well as external clues about the text (information about the author), and then drawing upon theoretical concepts from sociolinguistics and linguistic anthropology to account for how language is used. Applied to marginal vocabulary use, a historical pragmatic analysis can tell us how marginal vocabulary is used in historical texts, what its communicative functions are, and how the use of marginal vocabulary develops over the course of the eighteenth century in these historical texts.

In section 3.2, I first discuss briefly the type of data that historical pragmaticians use to study language used in the past. Then in section 3.3, I discuss my analytical framework in more detail and the importance of context in understanding language use in the past. Firstly, I demonstrate how historical discourse analysis can help us to understand and interpret the use of linguistic forms in historical texts (section 3.3.1). This involves a rich, qualitative analysis of the functions and meanings of linguistic forms in historical texts, which is informed by insights from other disciplines. Then I demonstrate how we can make use of context and contextual clues to uncover the communicative functions and meanings of linguistic forms in context. I discuss how we can derive direct and indirect evidence about the communicative functions of linguistic forms in historical texts from the co-text (section 3.3.2) and the socio-historical situation (section 3.3.3). Finally, in section 3.4, I introduce key concepts borrowed from present-day linguistic studies (sociolinguistic, anthropological and stylistic) that I refer to in Chapter 4 and 5 in my discussion of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century.

### 3.2. Written documents as data

Historical pragmatics relies on written data to access and understand how language is used in the past (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 20; Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 18; Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010: 7). I adopt the view in historical pragmatics which considers all written kinds of texts as legitimate data and worthy of study in their own right (see Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 28; Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 13, 18). The kinds of data that are legitimate for pragmatic studies are texts purporting to represent speech, such as trial proceedings/witness depositions, fictive speech related texts and sources that contain everyday language (Kytö 2010: 48). We should allow all kinds of texts as our objects of study, because each of these sources can include both direct and indirect evidence of language use. Direct evidence refer to explicit statements by authors about the state of language, whereas indirect evidence offers information about the state of language without such explicit commentary (Beal 2012: 65) Historical pragmatic analyses cover all surviving texts, as long as they are analysed for what they are and are not taken to represent something else (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 25). Both retrospective and fictional texts, for example, contain written representations of spoken language, but need to be considered in their own way. Retrospective texts such as courtroom reports represent the language use of actual people who were brought to court. The language that was recorded in these texts was produced from notes which were taken down by clerk during a particular speech event (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 22). These texts are valuable sources because they provide the closest access to the actual spoken language of the time, and we have to bear in mind the situational circumstances of the courtroom when we analyse the language use in these texts.<sup>16</sup> Fictional texts contain constructed language in imaginary dialogue and they are important sources for historical linguistic research (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 22; see also Anipa 2012 and Fitzmaurice 2010b). They offer a representation of actual language use, but we do not consider these to be a substitute for the spoken word (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 25).<sup>17</sup> Also, we need to bear in mind their special characteristics, as they can offer insights into human interaction in a typified form (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 25). Drama is a special genre of fictional writing, which also contains fictional dialogues (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 24). Like prose fiction, drama provides a lot of context about the speakers and the interaction in which language use takes place, because the speech is explicitly associated with different speakers. In sum, different texts are available for pragmatic analyses which provide different insights into how language is used in these particular texts. We analyse these texts within their own context and within the constraints of their own genres (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 25).

Much of the historical data in historical pragmatics these days is accessible and available through electronic resources or corpora and much has been said about this material (see

---

<sup>16</sup> See for example Archer (2002, 2007) who has conducted sociopragmatic work on trial records.

<sup>17</sup> See e.g. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) and Kytö (2010) on authenticity, faithfulness and the relation between spoken and written language in historical texts.

e.g. Kytö 2010: 36-47, Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 15-16).<sup>18</sup> The data for my analysis comes from the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and the *Eighteenth Century Collection Online*. I will discuss my use of these electronic resources in more detail in the respective chapters, because I used these two electronic resources for different research purposes, and I also followed different procedures to generate the appropriate data for my analysis of marginal vocabulary in each of these resources. It is therefore more appropriate to discuss the data that I used for my two case studies in Chapters 4 and 5 instead of in this section.

### 3.3. Interpreting language use in context

#### 3.3.1. *Historical discourse analysis*

The analytical tool that I adopt to study marginal vocabulary in historical texts is historical discourse analysis (Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007, Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010, Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013). Historical discourse analysis is literary in impulse and has its roots in pragmatology, which aims “to describe the contextual aspects of texts, including the addressers and addressees, their social and personal relations, the physical and social setting of text production and text reception and the goal(s) of the text” (Jacobs and Jucker 1995, as cited in Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010: 12). It takes the position that linguistic skill and sociohistorical background information are needed to construe how language is used in a text (Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 22). In other words, this analytical framework involves assessing and describing the cultural and literary context in which a text is produced or reproduced (Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 22). As seen in the literature review, a rich contextual approach is key in order to understand how marginal vocabulary is used. Sociolinguistic and anthropological studies make use of discourse analysis to analyse the use of ‘slang’ in spoken discourse, which foregrounds the role of context in the analysis. In the same way, we can use discourse analysis to study the use of marginal vocabulary in written texts, that is, considering how language is used in relation to the overall topic and purpose of the texts. The methods adopted by Reynolds (2002) and West (2003) may be drawn upon in an integrated historical pragmatic approach. Reynolds (2002) approaches ‘cant’ as a social and cultural phenomenon and this involves reconstructing the literary and cultural context in which this kind of language is used. Along similar lines, West (2003) conducted a qualitative, close reading of texts, studying the role of ‘cant’ in these texts, and relating it to external factors such as the purpose of the text, the author’s motivation, and the overall portrayal of the speaker of ‘cant’ in the text. Such a rich contextualisation of language use in the past requires an interdisciplinary approach, and we have to rely on linguistic expertise, as well as historical, social and cultural expertise (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 4). Only in this way, historical discourse analysis can offer “compelling accounts of historical pragmatic

---

<sup>18</sup> Kytö (2010) in particular offers an in depth discussion of the wide range of electronic resources that are available for historical pragmatics in Chapter 2 in *Historical Pragmatics* (2010), ed. by Jucker and Taavitsainen.

phenomena that are critically grounded in the historical, social and textual histories of the language” (Fitzmaurice and Taavitsainen 2007: 7)

‘Context’ then is key in historical discourse analysis and may cover historical, ideological, material and textual contexts (2007: 22). Jucker and Taavitsainen (2013: 32) provide a more specific breakdown:

a multi-layered notion that includes the **narrow linguistic context**, i.e. the immediate surroundings, the **context of larger groupings of texts** including genre and register, the **socio-historical situation** and in the widest possible sense, the **context of culture** with its general outlook, attitudes, beliefs and the whole world view (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 32, my emphasis).

The narrow linguistic context relates to the linguistic form and the surrounding words, or phrases, as well as the topic of the text. This layer of context is also known as the co-text. Individual texts belong to the wider textual print culture, depending on what kind of text it is (genre) and the register in which language is used. Genres are classifications of texts in different kinds according to their formal or functional properties (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 147). Surrounding the text, we have the socio-historical situation, which involves the situational interaction between participants, so speaker and hearer, or writer and reader, within a particular time frame and social milieu. Then, finally, the context of culture deals with the attitudes and beliefs that are communicated through language use.

### 3.3.2. *Internal linguistic evidence: Clues from the co-text*

‘Context’ plays a crucial role in the understanding of the communicative uses and functions of language in the past. This is especially important with regard to understanding language in the past when we have no direct access to the meaning of a function of a particular form, or access to its speakers. So we need to rely on the information that is supplied in the text itself, or what we can glean from the circumstances in which it is produced. We need as much help and understanding as possible on what is going on surrounding the use of a linguistic form, and that is where ‘context’ comes in useful. This means that we need to look out for contextual clues within and outside the text which can provide direct and indirect evidence about the uses and meanings of the linguistic forms.

In order to interpret the communicative meanings of language use in historical texts, our first point of reference is the linguistic form and to look out for direct clues in the co-text (the linguistic context and subsequent discourse) that tell us more about the forms themselves. The starting point for my analysis is the word, the smallest meaningful unit that can stand on its own and carries semantic or pragmatic weight. In addition, I check whether a term occurs immediately with collocations and modifiers. Sometimes the modifiers are marginal terms and might form together a marginal phrase or expression. Furthermore, I also check the co-text for the clustering of marginal terms, that is, the co-

occurrence of a term with other linguistic forms. Some expressions depend crucially on the co-occurrence with other terms for their pragmatic functions. Non-standard features like dialect can occur in a cluster in a text. The occurrence of a cluster of linguistic features can indicate that we are dealing with a comic text and that the terms are used for humorous effects (see Hodson 2014).

We can glean from the co-text whether there is other information about the use of a linguistic form by looking at metalinguistic commentary (see Hodson 2014; Jaworski, Coupland and Galansinki 2004). Metalinguistic commentary or metalanguage refers to language about language, and provides different kinds of information about a particular linguistic form, i.e. categorical (metalinguistic markers such as ‘cant’), or evaluative information. It provides clues to the pragmatic effects that the speaker wants to achieve with his language use. According to Hodson (2014: 204), metalanguage provides clues about how writers guide their reader’s response to the text. Glosses, for example, make the lexical meaning of a word explicit in a text. Adding glosses mean that the speaker might want to increase the reader’s comprehension of the text. If the speaker comments on someone’s language use, they may want to convey their attitudes and beliefs about language use, and express their evaluation about it. This gives insight into the language perceptions of the language user. In addition, metalinguistic comments can also reveal the social and identity work that a speaker wants to do (Hodson 2014: 157). In making negative evaluations about someone else’s language use, one may wish to create social distance between themselves and the people who use a particular type of language. Metalanguage is not only important as a source of evidence, but also helps us in the interpretation and reconstruction of the communicative meaning in context.

Words, collocations and metalanguage are not the only things that bear meaningful information. Written documents may have non-linguistic, paratextual, visual characteristics that might invite pragmatic interpretation. Terms can be visually foregrounded in the text in multiple ways, e.g. bold marks, italicisation and the use of capital letters. Sometimes, we do not find visual clues in the co-text. Whether linguistic forms are visually foregrounded or not, the absence or presence of visual clues has pragmatic significance.<sup>19</sup> Visual foregrounding gives important clues about the communicative functions of the use of a linguistic form by the author and the reader. Such clues draw attention to the terms themselves, and indicate their ‘otherness’ in relation to the surrounding words and sentences. This is also known as linguistic foregrounding and deviation in stylistics.<sup>20</sup> In marking language as ‘deviant’ from the rest of the text, the language user may want to achieve a particular effect upon the reader. For dialect representation in fiction, this can indicate that the character using dialect is a comic character, whom we should not take seriously (see Hodson 2014).

---

<sup>19</sup> See Machan (2011) for a more extensive discussion on ‘visual pragmatics’, as well as Fitzmaurice (2004) in *Methods and Data in English Historical Dialectology*, edited by Marina Dossena & Roger Lass.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 2 in Short (1996) on foregrounding and deviation in stylistics.

### 3.3.3. *External linguistic evidence: Clues about production circumstances text, authors and audiences*

When reconstructing the communicative meanings of language use between the author and the reader of his text, we also need to be aware of the external circumstances in which a term is used. External circumstances refer to the contextual elements outside the co-text which are the production circumstances of the text, the author and his audience (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 35). In order to understand how linguistic forms are used in texts, and what their communicative meanings are, the researcher has to know as much about the texts in which language forms are used as possible, and to acquire historical knowledge of the period and the culture in which the text was produced, the conditions in which the text was produced and received, as well as their producers (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 32, 34). We can do so by reading around the texts, and reading historical materials. We can find a lot of information about the purpose of the text in the paratexts, such as prefaces, and dedications. These paratexts often contain useful clues about the author and the implied audience/readership. Because we do not have historical evidence of the actual readership, we can reconstruct the implied audience of the text through the textual and linguistic evidence that we have. In addition, we can consult secondary sources about the texts and the period that we are investigating. This needs to happen in tandem with the historical discourse analysis. Depending on the kind of text, we can use the works of historians and literary critics to gain better insight into the historical conditions in which the texts were produced, transmitted and received. Literary insights can tell us more about the functions of marginal vocabulary in literary texts, as well as providing insights about the nature of the texts themselves, whom they were written by, and what literary techniques people used (see Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007). Historical approaches provide factual background information about the period itself, the texts (especially non fiction) that were produced and the people producing them. For example, the work by Shoemaker (2009) on the representation of crime in the Sessions Papers provides much contextual information about the content of the Sessions Papers. Many large electronic corpora and resources these days have catalogue descriptions, which contain contextual information about the texts and their producers. In addition, anchoring language use to its context of production and reception requires background facts on the author's education, social position, gender, age and other sociolinguistic parameters; ideally the same information should be available about the target group or audience (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 36). Additional biographical and social information about the author of a text can be checked using sources such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB).<sup>21</sup> By looking at as much at the context as possible, we can minimise the linguistic and cultural barrier that historians and historical linguists face when studying texts and language use in the past (see Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 28). That is, the way that linguistic forms were used and the kind of meanings they had may differ from how we

---

<sup>21</sup> Note that less known authors may not merit an entry in the ODNB. In such cases we need to check other secondary evidence to find out as much about these people as possible.

understand and interpret the use of these forms from a twenty-first century perspective. Historical texts are situated in a certain historical, literary and social environment, and they need to be interpreted using all the information that can be amassed from this particular historical perspective.

### 3.4. Theoretical concepts

Historical discourse analysis is informed by diverse approaches and theoretical perspectives borrowed from other disciplines to account for language choice, use and function in historical texts (Fitzmaurice 2010b: 663). In this section, I will discuss the interpretative tools that are specifically relevant in understanding the communicative functions and meanings of linguistic lexical items. Some of the concepts relate to the occurrence and functions of language in texts ('reproduction' and 'appropriation'), the status and widespread use of language ('public words', 'enregisterment') and concepts related to lexical meaning and change ('contingent polysemy', 'generalisation'). The various concepts are taken from present-day studies in sociolinguistics, stylistics, and anthropology because we expect that these terms can also be useful in the interpretation of the pragmatics of linguistic forms in historical texts. As such, this gives us the opportunity to (in)validate existing research on marginal vocabulary use in historical texts. As Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007: 15) note, historical pragmatics allows us to test the relevance/application of some of the current theories on modern language use to earlier periods in language history. The hypothesis is that some of the observations made about marginal vocabulary in the early modern and present day as seen in the previous chapter can also be accounted for the use of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. What follows is a more in-depth discussion of these interpretative tools and a demonstration of how they inform my historical pragmatic reading of the communicative meanings of linguistic forms in the past.

#### 3.4.1. *Concepts related to language use and functions in written texts*

Two relevant concepts that will be useful to interpret the use of marginal vocabulary in my historical texts are reproduction and appropriation. Both are examples of recontextualisation of language. 'Reproduction' refers to "the ability to reproduce language in either the same or alternative form from which it was perceived" (Mendoza and Foundas 2007: 345). Reproduction of language has been discussed in relation to speech representation, reported speech and direct quoting (Fludernik 1993, Lucy 1993, Holt and Clift 2003), and in studies on the history of English with regard to the relation between spoken and written discourse (see Culpeper and Kytö 2010). This notion accounts for uses of language that are taken from a previous context, such as reported speech or quoting (see Schilling-Estes 1998). This could either be between the same media (spoken to spoken, written to written) or between different media (spoken to written, or

vice versa). The reproduction of language serves a number of pragmatic purposes and effects, depending on the intentions of the speaker, the topic and the overall purpose of the message and what effects the speaker wants to achieve with it. One important reason for reproduction is to retain something from the original context and to pass it on into a new form. For example, courtroom recorders reproduce what was said in court to produce a written account for the general public of the content of the court cases. Dictionary makers of the early and late modern period, as seen in the previous chapter, reproduce the content of previous dictionaries in the creation of a new work. Speakers in everyday conversation can reproduce or quote other people in the creation of a more lively and entertaining story. Another stylistic effect of direct quotation is to make the narrative more vivid. Direct quotation of characters has the effect that the character is somehow more closely connected to the reader. Indirect speech representation on the other hand, creates a distance between the characters and the reader. Sometimes quoting the words of someone else relates to the kind of image that the author wants to present of the person being quoted. For example, stand up comedians who impersonate well known politicians, may do so to ridicule their manners, but more importantly, to criticise their political views and plans.

In all cases, speakers or writers can make a conscious decision whether or not to reproduce certain language forms when they report words used in a previous context. The speaker has a choice in reproducing language and what communicative aims it can serve for the speaker in this particular context. As Coupland and Jaworski (2004: 31) note:

The reporting of someone's words is not just a neutral account of what has been said. The act of retelling something involves the speaker's control both of what is being retold as well as how the retelling is structured and organised, depending on the speaker's view of the world, position of power, which will dictate the choice of quotatives and the more or less interpretative account of the other's words (Coupland and Jaworski 2004: 31)

In their view, the speaker has control over what words are selected for the retelling, and how they present their retelling of someone else's words. In this light, reproduction is not an exact "word-for-word" or "verbatim repetition", but minor variation in the wording is possible (Fludernik 1993: 15).<sup>22</sup> As Fludernik puts it, linguistic reproduction is not mimicry or imitation, but rather the evocation of an ideal type of language, which is based on the original token, and which serves as the model for the reproduced token (1993: 16). Sometimes people try to present language as accurately as possible in relation to the original, and to remain truthful to their original source. They want to appear authentic in order to be more authoritative. This is why the dictionary compilers acknowledge their previous sources. Alternatively, some authors make acknowledgement claims about the truthfulness of these sources in the texts, for example in the courtroom documents. In

---

<sup>22</sup> All the words that we hear undergo a mental filtering process called 'apperception' involving the speaker's memory and imaginary skills in what has been said and the delivery of how it was said. 'Apperception' prevents us from reproducing "incidental" phonetic or paralinguistic features such as peculiar pronunciations, hesitations and slips of the tongue by a speaker when we recall a conversation that took place in the past (Fludernik 1993: 15-16).



cases where people do not acknowledge a source, reproduction might be considered a form of plagiarism and copying. This is especially the case in written contexts when people reproduce not just single words or quotations but a whole paragraph or entire books. This happens for example in chapbooks, in which the author reproduces a favourite passage from a book that has made a big impression on him. Also, Richard Steele reproduced selected passages from John Tillotson's sermon, 'Of sincerity towards God and Man' (*Spectator* 103, Thursday June 28, 1711). The compilers of the canting dictionaries accused each other of plagiarism. S.R., author of *Martin Mark-all, Beadle of Bridewell* (1610) complains that Thomas Dekker had plagiarised Thomas Harman's work in his *Bellman of London* series:

They have a language among themselves, composed of *omnium gatherum*; a glimmering whereof one [the Bellman] of late days hath endeavoured to manifest, as far as his author [Dekker] is pleased to be an intelligencer; The substance whereof, he leaveth for those that will dilate thereof, enough for him to have the praise, other the pains, notwithstanding *Harman's* ghost continually clogging his conscience with Sic vos non vobis... (S.R., *Martin Mark-all*, italics in original)<sup>23</sup>

S.R. implicitly expresses the view that Dekker uses Harman to draw upon the success of the latter ("have the praise"), though he must feel a sense of guilt ("Harman's ghost continually clogging his conscience"). Ironically, S.R. does base his own work on Dekker's word list and corrects various entries of the former (Coleman 2004a: 41).

Appropriation has been mentioned in early modern studies of marginal vocabulary (Blank 1996) and in present day sociolinguistic studies (Reyes 2005, also Hill 2008). Appropriation is defined as "crossing into the linguistic variety which has been formulated as that of the (racial) other, and exploiting it for new purposes and effects" (Reyes 2005: 411).<sup>24</sup> I believe that appropriation can extend to any social other, not just language varieties that are associated with racial groups, but any groups that share a particular interest, profession, regional background (for example, when speakers appropriate or put on a regional accent that is different from their own accent). In previous studies, appropriation has been used to account for different communicative ends of language use. According to Blank (1996: 57), early modern authors like Harman and Dekker appropriated the specialised terms from thieves for literary and political purposes i.e. to characterise the thieves and beggars of the period as foreigners or "treacherous villains plotting to subvert English rule". In this way, appropriation of marginal vocabulary is linked to the construction of characters (characterisation) and to create a comedic effect (see Culpeper 2001, Coupland 1999: 24). In Reyes (2005), Asian American teenagers appropriate AAVE slang ('aite' and 'na mean') to reconstruct their identity as an aggressive young teenager and their social/cultural alignment with African Americans or

---

<sup>23</sup> Excerpt taken from Coleman (2004a: 41)

<sup>24</sup> Outside linguistics, the concept of 'appropriation' has been studied in a wide range of disciplines, such as the history of art, cultural studies (e.g. Young 2010), literary criticism (Chartier 1995, Kewes 1998 and Sanders 2006) and history (Taavitsainen 2005; McKenzie 2006).

to emphasise their identity as a slang teacher, and the identities of others as students of 'slang'. In other words, appropriation of 'slang' is doing important social work, namely, to represent specific characters as belonging to a particular group that is associated with the language variety, or to construct an identity as someone who is stereotypically associated with a specific language form.

Like reproduction, appropriation of language can be deliberate for a particular pragmatic effect. People sometimes appropriate a single word or a cluster of words. This is the case when a few marginal terms occur in a text to give a flavour of what this language sounds and looks like (see Hodson 2014). For example, in the play *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), Ben Jonson appropriates the language of the market and fairground for comic dramatic effect. In other cases, specific terms may be densely appropriated which makes the text unintelligible to a reader. The pragmatic effect of representing dialect speakers using dialect is that the audience may get the impression that they know what a dialect sounds like and what characteristics a speaker of a dialect is likely to have (Hodson 2014: 27). These linguistic impressions may influence the reader's understanding of the social or ethnic group that uses that variety (Hodson 2014: 27). This can intensify dominant stereotypes about certain language forms and their associations with particular social groups or ways of speaking. Hill (2008: 169) also notes that linguistic appropriation evokes certain stereotypes, be it negative, positive or neutral when the person doing the appropriation is not part of the insider group. In Reyes (2005), one of the participants appropriated AAVE slang to draw upon the positive qualities of African Americans as tough. At the same time, they also evoke the negative associations that come with the stereotype of African Americans as the other and the way they speak. Similarly, Bucholtz (2009) argues that White American speakers appropriate minority features to make claims on a wide range of desirable or positive qualities of the linguistic stereotype, such as "learned", "cosmopolitan", "cool", "hip", "funny", and "street-smart" (Hill 2008: 161). At the same time, speakers appropriate minority features to marginalise or denigrate the speakers that are ordinarily associated with the terms (Hill 2008: 161). For example, when White Americans use the Mock Spanish expression 'hasta la vista', they might evoke the negative stereotypical features that are associated with the speaker. This is because Latinos or Hispanics belong to a minority group in the US and the language attributed to them therefore connotes negative feature such as "lazy", "corrupted", and "dirty" (Hill 2008: 170). Appropriation thus can have a negative effect upon the people who are associated with the linguistic form that is being appropriated. Along similar lines, Blank (1996) notes that authors appropriate thieves' cant for negative purposes, and to characterise them negatively. In her view, none of the authors appropriated the terms as a "gesture of solidarity" with the poor (Blank 1996: 67). The author's motive was purely selfish, they use the terms to produce a unique piece of work that belongs to themselves, and to their fiction domains (Blank 1996: 67). This is why appropriation in these studies is regarded as a form of theft (Blank 1996: 4; Hill 2008: 158). In this context, the appropriators of a particular linguistic variety try to take possession of and own the language they borrowed, by giving new meaning to the terms. Thus appropriation is an

important concept that does important pragmatic work for the speakers and may have negative and/or positive effects, depending upon the context in which it is used.

#### *3.4.2. Concepts related to the status and the circulation of language*

As for the status of marginal vocabulary, I draw upon the notions of ‘public words’ and ‘enregisterment’. While these terms are adopted from present-day studies, the terms can account for the public exposure and the widespread use of marginal vocabulary in the historical texts. ‘Public words’ are words that circulate widely across communities, and are remembered, repeated, and quoted long after their first utterance (Spitulnik 2001: 99). Examples of ‘public words’ are ‘Make my day’, ‘Big brother (is watching you)’, and ‘Hasta la vista, baby’, which are popular proverbs, slogans and clichés in American popular culture (Spitulnik 2001: 99). Linguistic forms become socially recognised as a distinctive register in the public sphere through the process of ‘enregisterment’ (Agha 2003: 231). Agha (2003) uses this notion to account for the spread of cultural forms and their values in particular discourses across social populations. People’s experience of forms in the public sphere comes from metadiscursive activity which links accent forms to a set of social personae (Agha 2003: 237). The dissemination of this register depends on the circulation of these metalinguistic messages which typify speech (Agha 2003: 243). In his study, which focuses on RP, he claims that the historical spread of RP was linked to the circulation of particular discourses during the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Early prescriptivist works, popular handbooks, literary works, and penny weeklies, he argues, were responsible for the promotion and expansion of RP (Agha 2003: 243). The key effect of the enregisterment of these forms in these media genres is that they create a widespread awareness of the social value of linguistic forms (Agha 2003: 260). They promoted the competence of the general public to recognise this variety as a distinct variety (Agha 2003: 260). It is the mass media then who is responsible for the enregisterment of particular forms of language as ‘public words’ and the circulation of these words and their values. The expectation would be that marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth-century discourses are enregistered and become ‘public words’.

#### *3.4.3. Concepts related to lexical meaning and semantic change*

I am also interested in the lexical meaning of the marginal vocabulary, and the extent to which certain marginal terms undergo semantic change over the course of the eighteenth century. I use the term ‘lexical meaning’ to refer to the meanings of marginal vocabulary as they appear in the canting dictionaries and glossaries. Marginal vocabulary items and any other term can have more than one lexical meaning, and whichever meaning a term has depends on the context in which it is used. ‘Contingent polysemy’, a term used by Fitzmaurice (2015), captures the idea that an expression may have multiple meanings (polysemy), but that some meanings will be more prominent than other meanings

depending on the temporal, ideological and experiential stance of those speakers. For example, the term ‘beak’ has the lexical meaning of “the horny termination of the jaws of a bird, consisting of two pointed mandibles adapted for piercing and for taking firm hold: a bird’s bill”, as well as the meaning “a magistrate or justice of the piece” (OED Online 2015). The term was a popular marginal term used amongst thieves in the early and late modern period, but people who lived in the same period who were not familiar with thieves’ slang would probably not construe ‘beak’ as “a magistrate”. As Fitzmaurice (2015: 13) notes, “different speakers within the same temporal and spatial domain will construe an expression differently depending upon their particular temporal, ideological and experiential stance”. Because marginal terms are likely to show up in various contexts and genres, and will mean different things in different settings, this notion can account for the polysemous nature of the marginal vocabulary terms. This notion will be relevant in explaining why certain linguistic forms acquire certain types of connotations and values, and that this is contingent (dependent) on context. Finally, I adopt the term ‘generalisation’ to describe potential semantic changes of the marginal terms in the eighteenth century. ‘Generalisation’ refers to the process whereby words from specialised fields enter into common use (Nevalainen 1999: 437). They may or may not acquire a new meaning as a result. If meaning change takes place, the extensions may be metonymic or metaphorical (Nevalainen 1999: 438). For example, the term ‘humour’ underwent generalization of meaning in the early modern period from a medical term referring to “the four cardinal fluids of the human body” to the more generic meaning “general disposition” (Nevalainen 1999: 438). At such, it lost its medical associations. Given the specialised meanings of marginal terms, the notion of ‘generalisation’ will be appropriate to account for the semantic change that takes place when they are used in a wide variety of print texts in the eighteenth century.

### 3.5. Conclusion

In this chapter I have described the historical pragmatic framework that I use in this thesis to analyse marginal vocabulary use in historical texts, and I have explained the key concepts and definitions central to my analysis of two case-studies of marginal vocabulary use in the Old Bailey texts (Chapter 4) and marginal vocabulary use in the ECCO texts (Chapter 5). In Chapter 4, I will mainly look at the study of marginal vocabulary in its co-text and the socio-historical context of the Old Bailey texts. In Chapter 5, I will look at marginal vocabulary in both the individual texts (co-text and situational context) as well as the context of larger groupings of texts (genres).

## **Marginal vocabulary use in the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* between 1700 and 1800**

### 4.1. Introduction

The marginal vocabulary known as ‘cant’ in the early and late modern period is associated with people living on the lower margins of society (thieves, beggars, prostitutes), as evidenced by the canting dictionaries which contain records of these specialised lexical items and expressions. However, there is very little evidence of whether these lexical items were indeed used by these marginal groups and if so, how they were used. The *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* (hence: *The Proceedings*) provide a perfect testing ground for exploring whether ‘cant’ is used by people on the social margins, since these texts purport to represent the language of witnesses and defendants in the eighteenth-century law courts, some of whom were possibly members of the low life. Unlike the dictionaries and novels, the *Proceedings* purport to represent the language of real life people. The key research question that will be explored in this chapter is: Is marginal vocabulary used in the *Proceedings*, and if so, how it is used? The hypothesis is that if ‘cant’ is associated with thieves and beggars, it seems very likely to find instances of this marginal vocabulary in texts that closely approximate the language used by this group of people in the English courtroom.

This chapter consists of three sections. In section 4.2, I will provide some background on the *Proceedings* including their status as courtroom documents in the late modern period, the historical conditions in which these texts were produced, transmitted and received, and their place in the eighteenth-century print culture. This sociohistorical information is crucial for our understanding of what these texts represent and will help us to better understand how language is used in these texts. Also, I will briefly discuss the digitisation of these texts in a number of electronic databases, such as the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and the *Old Bailey Corpus*, and the implications for conducting linguistic research of the language used in the digitised editions of these historical documents. In section 4.3, I will discuss the methodology and procedures for generating data from the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* resource, which can be used for a historical pragmatic analysis. I will detail the procedures which I followed to locate instances of marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts and what the shape of the data looked like as a result of these procedures. In section 4.4, I will discuss and analyse the role of marginal vocabulary in the evidence produced from a historical pragmatic perspective, paying attention to the pragmatic uses of this kind of language by the person(s) using it, and relate it to the situational context in which this language is used. My discussion of how marginal language is used in the *Proceedings* will fall into two parts, since the *Proceedings* consist of two subgenres, namely the Sessions Papers

and the Ordinary's Accounts respectively. The argument that I will be making throughout this chapter is that whilst marginal vocabulary occurs in both the Sessions Papers and the Ordinary's Accounts, they fulfil different roles in each text type, depending on who is using the terms for their specific communicative purposes. I will conclude this chapter in section 4.5.

## 4.2. Historical background of the *Proceedings* (1674-1913)

### 4.2.1. *The texts*

The *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* refers to a collection of historical documents that capture the language used in court cases which took place at the Central Criminal Court in London, namely the Old Bailey (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). The Old Bailey was named after the street in which it was located, just off Newgate Street and next to Newgate Prison, in the western part of the City of London. The *Proceedings* first emerged in the mid 1670s as a periodical aimed at a popular readership interested in news and entertainment stories about the trials of real-life criminals (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014; McKenzie 2005: 55).

The *Proceedings* consists of a number of subgenres, namely the Sessions Papers (1674-1913), the Ordinary of Newgate Accounts (1676-1772), and Advertisements. Even though the Sessions Papers and the Ordinary's Accounts are both official publications of the Old Bailey, they differ significantly in terms of their form, content and purpose. The Sessions Papers (1674-1913) contain reports of what was said during the trials at the Old Bailey Court, and generally included transcripts of the indictment, the witness statements, the defendant statements and the verdict, punishment and recommendation. These transcripts were made by the court recorder, whilst the editor/publisher was responsible for the final content of the printed Sessions Papers. Between 1678 and 1913, this periodical was regularly published each time the sessions met, (eight times a year until 1834 and then ten to twelve times a year) (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Early editions of the *Proceedings* were between four and nine pages long, including brief summaries of trials (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Later editions were expanded to 24 pages and we find much greater use of verbatim accounts of the testimony of prosecutors, witnesses, and defendants, as well as judges' comments and questions (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). The aim of the Sessions Papers was to provide a "true, fair and perfect narrative" of all the trials, but in reality they were selective, judgemental and sensational in the selection of trials that they published, because they were aimed at a popular audience (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Indeed, the texts attracted an enthusiastic London readership who sought news, moral instruction and entertainment, and by the early eighteenth century, the Sessions Papers were an established periodical (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). From the second half of the eighteenth century onwards, the Sessions Papers expanded its contents and

distribution, and was on its way becoming an official court record (McKenzie 2005: 56). This does not mean that they became more popular; the Sessions Papers faced commercial problems with increasing publication costs and the fierce competition from newspapers. After the Criminal Appeal Act was introduced in 1907, shorthand notes of trials became a statutory requirement, paid for by the government (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Because full transcripts were now readily available, there was no longer any need to publish the Sessions Papers and so the last Sessions Paper was published in April 1913.

The Ordinary's Accounts were published between 1676 and 1772 and detailed the life stories of prisoners condemned to death, resembling very much a criminal biography. The prisoners would tell their life story to the chaplain of Newgate Prison, the most notorious prison of the country. Because Newgate prison appointed different Ordinaries, the Ordinary's Accounts were written by different chaplains over the course of time. The contents of the Ordinary's Accounts include a short summary of the names and crimes of those sentenced to death, the accounts of the Ordinary's sermon and his visits to the condemned prisoners, a short biographical sketch of each criminal and a description of the criminal's final confessions and behaviour at their executions (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014; Linebaugh 1977: 248). The texts may vary in length, depending on how many crimes the convict had committed, as well as the convict's reputation. For the prisoner, the Accounts provided the opportunity to share their side of the story, whereas the Ordinaries' aim of publishing the Accounts is to teach readers about sinful behaviour and about the risk of falling into sinful temptations like the prisoner did (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Apart from the moral message, the focus on the criminal's sins proved to be sensationally appealing to a general readership who sought moral instruction and entertainment. Indeed, the Ordinary's Accounts were commercially profitable in that over 400 editions were published that contained biographies of some 2,500 executed criminals (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). However, the Accounts had a shorter lifespan than the Sessions Papers after it suffered an editorial crisis after 1744. It faced fierce competition from competing genres such as the last dying speech, and collections of notorious crimes like *The Newgate Calendar* (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). It also slowly lost its popularity due to the readers decline in interest, and the Accounts ceased publication as a regular serial in 1772 (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014).

#### 4.2.2. *Electronic resources*

The original publications of the *Proceedings* are held in libraries across the world such as the Harvard University Library, the Guildhall Library, the British Library and others (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). But since 2003, all these surviving *Proceedings* published between 1674 and 1913 in these libraries have been digitised and made available online on the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org)). The website of *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* was the result of a large digitisation project led by social historians from

the University of Sheffield and the University of Huddersfield. The website covers the material of 197,000 trials – made up of 134 million words – and the whole collection is fully searchable by using the built-in search engine (Hitchcock, Howard and Shoemaker 2012). The website has been immensely valuable for historians who are interested in eighteenth-century crime (Shoemaker 2008, Berry 2012), as well as linguists (e.g. Traugott 2011, Archer 2014) because the data source is only a mouse click away. Researchers can search for the full text of particular *Proceedings* using the keyword search facility, and refine their searches according to year, given or surnames of criminals (e.g. Catherine Hayes, Jack Sheppard), type of offence, punishment and verdict. Once the search returns ‘hits’ of a list of *Proceedings*, the user can access the content of each *Proceedings* either as a transcript of the original text and/or as a scanned image of the original page of the Proceeding.

One electronic data source that comprises a subset of the *Proceedings* is the *Old Bailey Corpus* ([www.uni-giessen.de/oldbaileycorpus](http://www.uni-giessen.de/oldbaileycorpus)), a linguistic corpus developed by Magnus Huber at the University of Giessen. His motivation for creating the corpus is that the original website “was not created for the needs of linguists”, as he experienced some challenges in searching for high-frequency functional morphemes (Huber 2007). Huber (2007) noted the following restrictions for historical linguists who want to do corpus linguistic analysis using the original *Old Bailey Proceedings* website: Concordance-like list of hits cannot be manipulated in any way, search words are not allowed to begin with wild cards, function words like ‘a’, ‘and’ and ‘are’ are not included in the indices and can thus not be searched for, advanced search function does not include a keyword search, and searches can be limited to particular parts of the *Proceedings*, but not to spoken language alone. In order to investigate spoken language features in the *Proceedings*, Huber decided to create his own corpus by taking the material of 407 Sessions Papers published between 1720 and 1913 – ca. 318,000 utterances/14 million spoken words – and to tag each utterance with information about its speech representation.<sup>25</sup> Sociobiographical information about the speaker (gender, age, occupation) is included, as well as the pragmatic information about the speaker’s role in court, and textual information about the scribe, printer and publisher of the *Proceedings*. The annotated text in the Old Bailey Corpus allows for those corpus searches which are more difficult to carry out in the original *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* website.

#### 4.2.3. *The linguistic value of the Proceedings*

For my study on marginal vocabulary use, the real linguistic value of the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* is that the texts report the speech of real people living on the lower margins of society as opposed to fiction that represent this group. As seen in the literature review, most of the claims about marginal vocabulary use in the past are based on dictionaries or

---

<sup>25</sup> The Old Bailey Corpus only includes Sessions Papers and no Ordinary’s Accounts.



fictional accounts. In the Sessions Papers, the defendants and witnesses in court often tend to be members of the criminal class or low life. It is only through discourse analysis of the witnesses and defendants' statements that we are able to get a sense of the kind of language they used in the courtroom, and whether they presumably used marginal vocabulary in their statements. In the Ordinary's Accounts, we hear and read the prisoner's life story through the Ordinary's written words and we might expect instances of marginal language in the prisoner's life stories if those stories were based on the prisoner's words. The hypothesis I propose is that if 'cant' is associated with thieves and beggars, then I am likely to find instances of this marginal vocabulary in the *Proceedings*, which closely approximate the language use by witnesses and defendants in the courtroom. The *Proceedings* are authentic in their reporting of the spoken language in court, but it is important to remember that they are not verbatim or word-for-word transcripts (Archer 2014: 4, Huber 2007).<sup>26</sup> In terms of their content, the *Proceedings* are accurate but not comprehensive records of what was said in the courtroom (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014).<sup>27</sup> Because the language recorded in the *Proceedings* is the closest we can get to the actual spoken language of criminals in the late modern period, we can consider these trial reports as legitimate data for historical linguistic research (see Culpeper and Kytö 2010, Doty 2010, Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 23). If we find marginal vocabulary in the *Proceedings*, then we would be able to confirm that marginal vocabulary, which is found in fictional texts, also occurs in real-life language contexts, and was used by real people in their testimonies provided in court.

Another reason why the *Proceedings* are particularly suitable for conducting a historical pragmatic analysis of language use in the past is that the texts embody a rich, speech-related context which we can study in more detail. Historical pragmatics likes rich data (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 3). Unlike the canting dictionaries, the *Proceedings* contain transcripts of direct and indirect speech of what was said in the courtroom. Such dialogic texts, which contain evidence of conversational, oral features are particularly valuable for (socio)historical pragmaticians, because they enable us to study the use of marginal vocabulary in their co-text, taking into account where in the *Proceedings* they show up, by whom they are used and whether people would understand the technical term used or not. As for the Sessions Papers, we find the clerk's own reports of the interaction between the interlocutor present in court, namely the judge, defendant, witness, and the lawyers (if present). The Ordinary's Accounts were texts which embody the Ordinary's rendering of the life story of the convict before his execution, and also include traces of direct and indirect speech representation. The speech representation in the *Proceedings* has important implications for my study because direct speech representation would offer a direct clue

---

<sup>26</sup> See also Kytö (2010: 48) on the discussion on authenticity and faithfulness of written record as representation of authentic spoken interaction.

<sup>27</sup> Note the difference here between historical accuracy and linguistic accuracy (see Huber 2007). Historical accuracy refers to the relation between whether the content presented in historical texts is representative of the actual events that took place in history. Texts are historical inaccurate if they report invented events or they offer a significantly distorted view of what happened in the past. Linguistic accuracy refers to the relation between written representations of language and spoken language (Huber 2007).

about what parts of speech were said by whom, thus making it easier to attribute someone's language use in the *Proceedings* to a particular speaker.

The availability of the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey* as electronic resources has been enormously valuable for historical and linguistic research alike (Shoemaker 2008, Huber 2007, Kytö 2010). The fact that all the surviving editions of the *Proceedings* between 1674 and 1913 have been digitised and made available online means that we do not have to travel around the world to collect and study the texts in libraries. The search engine provides a quick way to navigate through the entire collection when we enter specific keywords to locate where they occur. As Kytö (2010: 33) notes, one of the huge advantages of electronic resources like the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* especially for pragmatic studies is that they offer relatively quick access to data on speaker-hearer and writer-reader interaction. The easy retrieval and identification of linguistic features in electronic texts is a huge time-saver in the process of extracting data in that we do not have to read and scan all the texts manually and individually. The 'hits', that is excerpts in which the keyword occurs, generated can be qualitatively evaluated and scrutinised.

In the next section, I discuss how I looked for evidence of marginal language use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, what discovery procedures I took to find out whether marginal language is used in the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey*, the rationale for these search procedures, and what the results of these procedures were.

### 4.3. Methodology and methods: Producing the evidence

#### 4.3.1. Lexical-based searches in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*

There are two ways of locating and finding out whether marginal vocabulary is used in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. The first method is to read the whole *Old Bailey Proceedings* and do a manual qualitative search and analysis in order to discover whether the texts contain instances of marginal vocabulary use. The second method is to make use of the search facility in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* in generating extracts from the *Old Bailey Proceedings* in which marginal vocabulary is used. This quantitative-based search method, which is derived from historical corpus studies, involves doing lexical searches that are associated or labelled as marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. Such corpus search methods are a common way of locating linguistic features in a large database of (historical) texts (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 42). I chose the second method instead of the first method for practical reasons. One reason is that conducting lexical searches is a more efficient and quicker way to locate marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*; the first method is simply too uneconomical and time-consuming for locating marginal vocabulary in the texts. As Williams (2011) also notes:

While it is important to not always forgo complete readings of texts in favour of quicker results, where context is key to interpretation – any realistic historical study that aims to

cover a wide breadth of texts will require methods conducive to timely data extraction (Williams 2011)

Williams (2011) conducted keyword searches to trace instances of verbal irony in Late Medieval English corpus. Given the search facilities of the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, it makes much more sense to make use of the search facility of the website to locate instances of marginal vocabulary in the whole collection of the *Proceedings*. The *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* has a built-in search facility which enables researchers to conduct all kinds of keyword searches. Keyword searches can be narrowed down according to a particular time frame or year, names of convicts, type of offence, which makes this a suitable tool for linguists to trace the occurrence of particular linguistic features in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* (see Huber 2007, Archer 2014). The choice of adopting the second method does not mean that we can abandon the qualitative process of reading the *Proceedings* in more detail altogether; as we will see in the next section, we still need to conduct qualitative checks of the ‘hits’ generated by the keyword searches, and do a discourse analysis of how marginal vocabulary is used in the *Proceedings* later on. It simply means that in terms of locating marginal vocabulary, we should make use of the search facility of the Old Bailey website (which allows us to locate instances of linguistic features in an instant) rather than adopting the much more time-consuming way of reading each Proceeding.

I searched for marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* database, because it comprises the full collection of the texts (cf the collection of the Old Bailey Corpus which only comprises Sessions Papers).<sup>28</sup> In order to find out whether and how marginal vocabulary is used in the *Proceedings*, I conducted a number of lexical searches that are related to marginal vocabulary by making use of the built-in search facility. This search engine allows us to enter keywords which are then searched for and located in the whole collection of the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. The search produces a list of hits, or extracts in which the keyword in question is found, which can then be used for qualitative analysis.

I took a lexical-based approach to searching for marginal vocabulary in *the Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, using the top-down approach (see Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 43). This approach takes lexical items as a point of departure, so I had to operationalise the concept of ‘marginal vocabulary’ in terms of keywords that we can search for to assess the extent to which marginal vocabulary is used in these texts, namely:

- Metalinguistic marker ‘cant’, which is the label used in the early and late modern period to describe the language or vocabulary used by marginal groups
- A number of lexical items which were labelled or identified as marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century (such as ‘scamp’, ‘cull’, and ‘ken’)

---

<sup>28</sup> I make use of the Old Bailey Corpus as a means of checking my readings against the social info/metadata held in the corpus.

In the following sections I will explain the rationale and procedures for conducting each type of methodological search, as well as the ‘hits’ produced as a result of these searches.

#### 4.3.2. Search procedures of metalinguistic marker ‘cant’

The first keyword search I conducted was a metalinguistic search of the term ‘cant’. ‘Cant’ was a specific label which referred to marginal vocabulary in the early and late modern period, and is indicative of the awareness of marginal vocabulary in the period. In my study, this would possibly reveal whether people in the Old Bailey court would be a) aware of marginal vocabulary items, and b) whether they explicitly talk about it. So the choice of searching for ‘cant’ as a keyword in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* is to find out whether people in court would be highly aware of their use of marginal vocabulary, the use of marginal vocabulary by other speakers, and whether they explicitly talked or commented upon these terms. This keyword search was a discovery procedure because I had no way of knowing ahead of time whether ‘cant’ would occur in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* at all, whether any of the speakers would mention ‘cant’ in their testimonies, or were remotely aware of marginal vocabulary use in the courtroom, but I expected that this metalinguistic search would yield results of instances of marginal vocabulary quite readily. That is, the keyword search of ‘cant’ would generate a list of ‘hits’, which are extracts of the Sessions Papers, Ordinary’s Accounts or Advertisements in which the term ‘cant’ is used metalinguistically, e.g. as a gloss in “He asked me whether to go upon the scamp, which is thieves’ ‘cant’ for going upon the thieving”.

With regard to the keyword, I used the wildcard search ‘cant\*’ in order to identify not only instances of ‘cant’, but also forms like ‘canting’. I narrowed down the time period of 1700 to 1800 to restrict the results to the *Proceedings* which were published in the eighteenth century. This metalinguistic search for ‘cant’ resulted indeed in a number of contexts where ‘cant’ appears. The total number of hits generated by the keyword search for ‘cant’ is 73, and ‘canting’ resulted in 203 results (out of 134 million words).

The next step was to manually check all these contexts through content analysis following Williams’ procedure of checking verbal irony in medieval texts:

Each result had to be qualitatively evaluated for relevance and for discerning whether or not it was indeed connected to an example of verbal irony through quoted or reported speech in the immediate surrounding text (Williams 2011)

Similarly, I checked each ‘hit’ qualitatively through content analysis to see whether the term ‘cant’ was connected to marginal vocabulary use in the quoted or reported speech in the *Proceedings*, or whether it was not related to marginal vocabulary at all. I used the OED

definition of ‘cant’ to check each ‘hit’, and eliminated those ‘hits’ in which ‘cant’ is not used in a sense that is related to marginal vocabulary.<sup>29</sup> Here is one such example:

- (1) Kate Bates thus depos’d. The Deceas’d keeps a Brandy Shop, and I **cant** say but I have taken a Dram there now and then, and so upon last Christmas Eve, there was I and my Girl, and Moll Beech, and Peg Gaskin the Deceas’d; and so as I was saying, the Prisoner’s Wife Mrs. Atkinson, send us 3s. 6. To buy Holly and Ivy (Sessions Paper William Atkinson, 11 July 1726)

As we can tell from the co-text, ‘cant’ in example (1) is used as the verb for “cannot”, and the use of this term is not related to marginal vocabulary. Similarly, in example (2), we find the use of ‘cant’ which is not related to marginal vocabulary, but in which the term refers to the victim’s last name:

- (2) SARAH ABERDEEN was indicted for stealing on the 3d of January, two woollen blankets, value 3s. the property of Stephen **Cant**. GUILTY, 10d. Privately whipped and discharged. Tried by the first Middlesex Jury before Mr. Justice ASHURST. (Sessions Paper Sarah Aberdeen, 12 January 1785)

Both examples (1) and (2) were hits that I excluded from my data collection because these do not provide evidence of the use of ‘cant’ as marginal vocabulary in the *Proceedings*. The occurrence of examples thus stresses the importance of qualitatively checking each ‘hit’ that is generated through the search engine in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. Whilst the search engine is invaluable for locating linguistic features in the whole collection of the Old Bailey website, it cannot intelligently distinguish between various uses and meanings of the term. The crucial task of the researcher is thus to manually check each hit that is produced by the search facility of an electronic database like the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*.

#### 4.3.3. Evidence of the use of ‘cant’ in the *Proceedings*

Following the qualitative evaluation of each of the 73 hits for ‘cant’, and 203 hits for ‘canting’, and discarding examples such as (1) and (2), the total number of examples or contexts in which ‘cant’ is used in relation to marginal vocabulary was 55. This metalinguistic search confirmed the expectation that ‘cant’ was mentioned in the trial reports, and that it occurred in the testimonies provided by the defendants and witnesses in the Old Bailey court. I copied and pasted each of the relevant extracts that was generated by the keyword search ‘cant’ into a separate Word document, and included the relevant source information (in what kind of text the extract occurred and the date of publication). As for the relevant search results for ‘cant’, 26 extracts in which ‘cant’ showed up appeared in the Sessions Papers, 22 extracts appeared in the Ordinary’s

---

<sup>29</sup> I check the results against the following meaning of ‘cant’, *n.*<sup>3</sup>: “The speech or phraseology of beggars, etc., and senses connected therewith.” (OED Online 2015).

Accounts, and 2 extracts of the term appeared in the Advertisements. Example (3) demonstrates the use of ‘cant’ in a metalinguistic way:

- (3) Memoirs of the right Villanous John Hall, the late famous and Notorious Robber, Pen’d from his Mouth some time before his Death. Containing the exact Life, and Character of a Thief in General. And also a lively Representation of Newgate, and its Inhabitariees, with the Manners and Customs observed there. The Nature and Means by which they [...] several Thefts and Robberies, and the Distinctness observed in their respective Functions. To which is added, **the Cant generally us’d by those Sort of People to conceal their Villanies**; and Rules to avoid being Robb’d or Cheated by them. Usefully set forth for the Good of the Publick, at the Instance of many honest People (Advertisement, 15 January 1708)

This excerpt comes from an advertisement for a criminal biography on John Hall, a notorious robber in the eighteenth century. The advert describes that this particular criminal biography includes a list of lexical items, “the Cant generally us’d by those Sort of People to conceal their Villanies; and Rules to avoid being Robb’d or Cheated by them” (Advertisement, 15 January 1708). This comment involves a categorical use of ‘cant’, namely that ‘cant’ is indeed associated with the language used by criminals. ‘Cant’ is indirectly ascribed to people who commit certain villainies, and the comment also conveys an evaluation about this type of people (not just any type of people, but THOSE sort of people). This is a good example of the enregisterment of ‘cant’ as a socially recognised register in the period as it is explicitly linking a type of person to a type of language.

In the Sessions Papers and the Ordinary’s Accounts we also find evidence and confirmation that ‘cant’ is used as a label to refer to marginal vocabulary, and that people were aware of and talked about ‘cant’ explicitly.

- (4) Mr. Fearnley. Did he [prisoner] not make use of some **cant expressions**?  
Mr. Garrow. How can you make use of such a question! Did anything more pass?  
Patrick Macmanus. Many things that I did not think worth my notice, and there might have been **cant words**, and I might have made use of them since, but I cannot charge my memory with them (Sessions Paper William Stewart, 8 December 1784)

In example (4), both Mr Fearnley (prosecution lawyer) and Patrick Macmanus (witness) use the term ‘cant’ in the courtroom, which is collocated with the term ‘words’ and ‘expressions’. Patrick Macmanus recalls in his testimony that he used this special kind of language, but unfortunately he does not make explicit which exact lexical terms he used. Examples (3) and (4) confirm that there is an awareness of a specific type of marginal vocabulary that was labelled ‘cant’ and which was explicitly talked about in the *Proceedings*. The label is clearly descriptive and categorical, but as example (3) shows, it is also evaluative in conveying a judgement about people who use this kind of marginal vocabulary.

In examples (5) and (6) below, we find the use of ‘cant’ as a classifier and gloss to describe particular lexical items as marginal vocabulary. In other words, when looking at the co-

text of the hits, we find the occurrence of the term ‘cant’ alongside lexical items that are classified and/or glossed as ‘cant’.

- (5) Then he [Abraham Pass] used to write suitable Answers thereto, promising the Remittance of such desired Sums, and so leave them carelessly in his Room, for the Inspection and Satisfaction of his Landlord; and when such poor Shifts and Evasions could serve his Turn no longer, he then made off with what he could most conveniently carry away, and so **(to speak in the common cant Phrase) bilk’d his Lodgings** (Ordinary’s Account, 21 November 1743)

In example (5), the term ‘bilked’ is classified as a “common cant Phrase” in an explanatory parenthetical comment. The brackets around the comment suggest that the comment was inserted by the Ordinary or the editor of the Ordinary’s Accounts. Though the exact lexical meaning of ‘bilk’d’ is not made explicit in the text, we can tell from the co-text that it must refer to the theft that Abraham committed.

In example (6), the term ‘cant’ is used to describe the term ‘lock’, which appears to be a term used by the Society – an indirect way of referring to the criminal gang – to describe a person “who buys stol’n Goods”, in this case Sarah Watts. In this example, the term ‘lock’ is explicitly labelled as marginal vocabulary used by the criminal gang (the Society), and explicitly glossed (“one who buys stol’n Goods”) by possibly the editor of the Ordinary’s Account.

- (6) All the Remainder was sold to Sarah Watts **(one who buys stol’n Goods, and in the Cant of the Society is called a Lock)** but not having well examined the Things before the Sale, they were mortified afterwards to hear, there was 40s. in Specie rap’d up in a Rag in the said Bundle (Ordinary’s Account, 20 May 1728)

#### 4.3.4. Search procedures of actual marginal terms

The hypothesis for doing the keyword search of the metalinguistic marker ‘cant’ was that if the term ‘cant’ appeared in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, then we might actually find specific tokens of ‘cant’ in the vicinity of the keyword because it was used as a gloss to label these specific items. Examples (5)-(6) above confirm my expectation that if the term ‘cant’ occurs and is mentioned in the *Proceedings*, it is also likely to show up as a label/classifier to describe particular lexis as marginal vocabulary. These kinds of examples raise the question whether terms like ‘bilk’ and ‘lock’ also occur in the other *Proceedings* published in the eighteenth century which were not explicitly labelled or glossed as ‘cant’. My hypothesis is that it will be very likely to find instances of these lexical items in the *Proceedings* which are not explicitly labelled as ‘cant’, but which are used in its specialised sense. I was particularly interested in finding out whether these terms would always appear in the *Proceedings* with glosses or not.

In order to examine whether lexical items such as ‘lock’ and ‘bilked’ occur in the rest of the *Proceedings* without being labelled ‘cant’, I checked all the hits of the keyword search for ‘cant’ in which ‘cant’ is used to describe a particular lexical item (that is, examples like (5) and (6)). I extracted all the lexical items that were mentioned in these kinds of hits into a separate Word document in order to create a list of vocabulary items that were explicitly labelled as ‘cant’ in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. The rationale is to have a set of vocabulary items which can be entered as keywords in the search facility of the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (see list in Appendix I). The only lexical items which I did not select as a candidate for a keyword search are names like (7) below, which were classified as ‘cant’:

- (7) John Strutton. [...] Holland went into the one pair of stairs room where Mary Chymist was at that time in bed; he staid there about a quarter of an hour, then he came down stairs with a candle, he had not set down the candle before Green came in; Holland said to Green, **Sophia, that was a cant name he went by**, I have touched a box of lace in a coach, the lace I warrant will be worth to us twenty guineas (Sessions Paper John Holland, William Green, Mary Chymist, Ann Pennick, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1771)

The total number of lexical items, excluding those names, which were included in this list is 39.

Beyond this list of vocabulary items, which I extracted from the ‘hits’ that the metalinguistic search for ‘cant’ generated, I also believe that there are other words and expressions used by the speakers in the Old Bailey which are marginal vocabulary. In other words, the list of expressions that I extracted from the ‘hits’ that the metalinguistic search for ‘cant’ generated does not amount to all of the instances of marginal vocabulary that occur in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. This raises the methodological question whether and how can we find those instances of marginal language use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* that are possibly ‘cant’, but which I could not identify using the metalinguistic search for ‘cant’ only. Again, reading the entire *Old Bailey Proceedings* texts is an impractical and time-consuming method to locate instances of marginal vocabulary. What we need is an appropriate set of eighteenth-century lexical items which relate to marginal vocabulary in the period. These lexical items can be found in contemporary sources such as a canting word list which contain detail about the low life and the language they use. The idea is to check this contemporary source which lists certain lexical expressions as ‘cant’, make a selection of those terms and look up these expressions in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. In such way we have two sets of vocabulary items which we can check and look up in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, namely (1) a set of lexical items which were *internally* identified as ‘cant’ by the speakers of the Old Bailey (list 1), and (2) a set of lexical items which were *externally* identified as ‘cant’ in the eighteenth century (list 2). As such, looking up these terms should give us a good sense of the extent to which marginal vocabulary is used in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* in the eighteenth century.

For the second list, I selected the lexical items from George Parker’s *Life Painter of Variegated Characters* (1790), which is an entertaining piece of work about various types of



men in English society, including the low life (Coleman 2004b: 193-200). Chapter 14 of this work is devoted to this specific group, which is “dramatically introduced in the neighbourhood of St Giles’s” and contains the text of a conversation between a ballad singer and his friends in a public house in St Giles:

Joe. They begin now to *drop the glanthen*, I must tip ‘em some rum gammon.

Moll. Aye do, why should you be *dubber-mum’d*? there’s no *hornies*, *traps*, *scouts*, nor *beak-runners* amongst them (*Life’s Painter* 1790: 136, italics in original)

The dialogues, as well as the lyrics of the songs are both rendered entirely in the marginal vocabulary (note the italicisation), and Parker provides a lengthy glossary in the next chapter, which gives a “perfect knowledge of the artifices, combinations, modes and habits of those invaders of our property” (Parker 1789: 144). The reasons for choosing this work as the source for extracting and selecting lexical items which I can look up in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* are threefold. Firstly, as I discovered that most cant terms in the keyword search for ‘cant’ appeared in the second half of the eighteenth century, Parker’s work was likely to record most of the marginal vocabulary terms used in the period since it was published towards the end of the century. Secondly, I assumed that if these lexical items were listed and tied to this fictional popular piece about the low life, then these words would be sufficiently well known for use over the course of the eighteenth century in the Sessions Papers and the Ordinary’s Accounts. Thirdly, since the word list is relatively short in terms of the items listed (just over hundred words and expressions), it would make the selection of terms easier and more manageable compared to selecting lexical items randomly from a larger dictionary such as Francis Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785).

The word list in the second edition of Parker’s *Life Painter* (1790) consists of 115 headword entries.<sup>30</sup> From this list, I selected every headword which would be a suitable candidate to look up in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, with the exception of those which were used as nicknames for the fictional thieves in the text (Chirruping Joe, Rolling Joe, Touching Sue, Tollibon Nan, Smacking Sam, and Moll Slavy), and those which also appeared in the other vocabulary list (‘gammon’, ‘flat’, ‘fence’, ‘scamp’, ‘scout’, ‘traps’ and ‘wack’ in list 1). After this process, I compiled my own set of vocabulary items consisting of 81 items, which I looked up in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* (see list in Appendix II).

For every item from list 1 (41 terms) and list 2 (81 terms), I searched for its original head form as well as for its grammatical variants. That is, if the lexical item is a noun and singular, I searched for both its singular and plural form. If the lexical item is a verb, I searched for the stem form as well as its inflectional variants using the asterisk (\*). These procedures are illustrated in Table 1:

---

<sup>30</sup> This was the only edition of Parker’s word list that I could find in the ECCO database.

**Table 1** Forms of lexical items which were searched for in the OBP Online

Lexical item	Type of lexical item	Forms that were looked up
Thrums	Noun	Thrum (sing.), thrums (pl.)
Bilk	Verb	Bilk, bilk* (including forms such as 'bilked', 'bilks', 'bilking')
Rum	Adjective	Rum

One important decision I made in terms of looking up these lexical items in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* is that I only searched for the spelling forms as they appear in the source text (that is the *Old Bailey Proceedings* and in Parker's word list) as well as their grammatical variants, but not alternative spelling variants of these terms. I would argue that looking up all spelling variants of a lexical item in an electronic database is crucial if one does a corpus linguistic study of the exact frequency and distribution of a particular linguistic feature in this collection of texts. One of the challenges of conducting quantitative work of this kind would be to determine the amount of possible spelling forms of each of these marginal terms. In order to be consistent, we need to know all spelling variants of a term, but it is impossible to find out exactly how many spelling variants each word has. Normally, we can consult the OED to find out how many possible spelling forms some words have, but some of the marginal terms that we are dealing with may not be recorded in the OED. Alternatively, we can consult various cant and slang dictionaries to compare and contrast different spellings but these dictionaries do not provide all spelling variants either. The fact that I did not search for all possible spelling variants of a lexical item does not affect my research aims, because I do not aim to find out how frequent the lexical terms occur in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. My purpose of doing these keyword searches is to generate excerpts in which these lexical items occur, which can then be subjected to a historical discourse analysis, i.e. study in much more detail as to how they are used, by whom and why they use the terms. In other words, I am interested in *whether* these marginal lexical items occur in the *Proceedings* at all, whether they are used in a specialised sense, and if so *how* and *why* they are used. Thus, I am aware that the search results of marginal vocabulary that I generate are not indicative of the complete distribution of marginal vocabulary use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*.

So for each lexical item in list 1 and list 2, I searched for the spelling variant that occurred in the 'hits' (list 1) and in Parker's glossary (list 2), along with their grammatical variants, but I did not look up for potential spelling variants. As with the keyword search for 'cant', most of the lexical items that I looked up from list 1 and list 2 generated a list of hits, or contexts in which this particular lexical item appears. A number of lexical items from list

2 (so the ones that were listed in Parker's glossary) simply did not return any 'hits' of their occurrence in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, such as 'glanthen', 'cockabrax', 'bobstick', 'cligh', and 'fawny'. It might be the case that some of these lexical items were unique to Parker; but we need to verify this by looking up these lexical items in texts other than the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. In sum, the fact that some of the lexical items listed in Parker's glossary did not occur in the *Proceedings* published between 1700 and 1800 does not mean that they do not occur elsewhere; they might occur in the *Proceedings* published before 1700 and after 1800, or they may occur in other eighteenth-century printed texts. This may be a potential avenue for future research.

Of the lexical items which did generate a list of hits, I checked each of those hits qualitatively through content analysis (like the 'hits' that were generated through the keyword search 'cant'), to check whether the lexical item in question is indeed used in the specialised or non-specialised sense, or whether it is a completely different form from the search term. For example, the keyword search 'ned\*' produced the following two hits:

(8) Barlow. I was to pay him 20 l. he said, You will not take it ill that I have threat' **ned** to arrest you for this 20 l. you see I have not extorted the money from you before the time; you see I have a large return, and here is the note so and so: this 20 l. was to help him to make up the 800 l. (Sessions Paper Nicholas Campbell, 16 January 1761)

(9) Oliver Smith. [...] When we were at the jail, he took me aside, and said, I will give you a **ned**.

Q. What did he mean by that?

Smith. **I suppose it to be a guinea**; he put his hand in his pocket, and gave me a bit of money, which I thought to be a guinea.

(Sessions Paper Thomas Wisely, 21 October 1761)

In the first example, the search engine identified 'ned' as part of the word 'threat'ned', possibly because the term 'threatened' is spelled with an apostrophe, and it looks like 'ned' is a separate word. This example shows that we have to be critical of the evidence produced by the search engine in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, because the search 'ned\*' identifies all linguistic forms which include 'ned', including 'Ned' as a first name and other examples like 'threat'ned' such as 'hard'ned' and 'd—ned'. These examples need to be carefully checked and discarded. As for the second example, we can tell from the co-text that 'ned' is used in a specialised sense. The fact that someone asking a metalinguistic question about the term 'ned' ("What did he mean by that") and the speaker comments on the term ("I suppose it to be a guinea") give us explicit clues to assume that 'ned' is a marginal term.

It was relatively easy to judge whether the occurrence of the term in examples (8) and (9) is related to marginal vocabulary or not, using the contextual clues found in the co-text. However, there were a number of examples where it was less straightforward to tell whether a lexical item was used in a specialised sense because of the lack of contextual

clues. In example (10), the term ‘bilk’ was used by Robert Daniel, a witness in the case against Robert Cane:

- (10) Robert Daniel depos’d, That having a Fair to carry to Kensington at 12 a-Clock at Night, the prisoner offer’d to go along with him, that he refus’d it; but he got into the Coach-Box, and went along with him, telling him, the Gentleman in the Coach would **bilk** him of his Fair, and he would stand by him (Sessions Paper Robert Cane, 16 April 1729)

Note that the term is not visually foregrounded in the text, which suggests that the term might have been common to the speaker, and who does not draw explicit attention to it. In this case, I checked the content of the co-text as well as a larger segment of the full Sessions Paper’s text in which this excerpt was found, in order to get a better sense of what happened to Robert Daniel and the prisoner after they went out of the coach. The subject of the verb is “the Gentleman in the Couch” and the object is “his Fair” (meaning Daniel’s). The other sentences in the excerpt provided the larger context of the situation that is being described. It turns out that Daniel and the prisoner were seated in the same coach, and that the prisoner warned Daniel of the risk that something would happen to his fair, namely that it would get stolen by another gentleman in the coach. The prisoner acted as Daniel’s guardian, claiming that he would “stand by him”. In this case, the co-text surrounding the term ‘bilk’ provide enough information to derive the lexical meaning from the term ‘bilk’, namely to be robbed or cheated. I double-checked my observation in the canting dictionaries as well as the OED to confirm my observation that ‘bilk’ was indeed a specialised term used to refer to robbing or cheating. This example demonstrates that marginal vocabulary items in the *Proceedings* are not always explicitly highlighted or marked as marginal vocabulary through contextual means, and that it is crucial to look at the co-text in which the term is used.

#### 4.3.5. *Evidence of the use of actual marginal vocabulary in the Proceedings*

Following the qualitative evaluation of each of the hits of the terms in list 1 and list 2, I copied and pasted all the relevant extracts into a Word document. The exact number of extracts generated by the keyword search of each lexical item can be found in Appendix III.

The search results or ‘hits’ that were generated by the keyword searches of the lexical items listed in List 1 confirms my hypothesis that terms like ‘bilk’ and ‘lock’, which were labelled ‘cant’ in the *Proceedings* also occur without this label in other Proceeding texts. Instead we find the occurrence of these terms with glosses and metalinguistic comments. These contextual clues draw attention to the term in the co-text, and make explicit that we are dealing with a lexical item that has a specialised meaning. The term ‘fence’ for example was clearly labelled ‘cant’ in the Sessions Paper of William Leegroves; an excerpt that was generated by the metalinguistic search ‘cant’:

- (11) She sent Ann Davis with Groves, to shew him a **fence**;\* he returned again, and brought two pounds, eleven shillings, and six-pence, and said that was the money the tankard came to. [...] **\*A cant word for a person that buys stolen goods** (Sessions Paper William Leegroves, John Bailis and Joseph Lyons, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1771)

However, the keyword search for ‘fence’ generated the following context:

- (12) The same Night we got three Snow-Balls, that is, three Sugar Loaves, which we Sold for 5d. per Pound, **to a Person we call Fence (that is one that Buys what we steal)** in Petty-coat-Lane, over against the Marlborough’s Head (Ordinary’s Account, 22 May 1733)

Though the term ‘fence’ is not labelled as ‘cant’ in example (12), we can still derive from the co-text that ‘fence’ is used in a specialised sense because of the metalinguistic comment in brackets (that is one that Buys what we stealing). Such a gloss is a common stylistic feature to draw attention to the fact that a lexical item is special. In this example, the gloss draws attention to the special nature of the term ‘fence’, by making its technical meaning explicit, and suggesting that ‘fence’ has a specialised meaning which may not be apparent to the reader or listener.

In other cases, we find those lexical items used in the *Proceedings*, without such contextual clues. The keyword search for ‘fence’ also generated a context in which the term is used in its technical sense of “a person who buys stolen goods”, but no explicit contextual clues are given in the co-text:

- (13) THOMAS WOOD sworn. I am a watchman; I was just calling the half hour after one, this woman comes up to the corner of Nag’s-head-court, Drury-lane, the prisoner comes up there, and says, Wood, how are you, says she, I am very cold, with that she pulled out this watch and says, I want money Murphy; I want a **fence**; she had somebody else with her; with that they went up a court; by that time it was very nigh two o’clock; I lost sight of them, and saw them no more. (Session Paper Martha Lipney, 15 December 1792)

This ‘unmarked’ use of fence suggests that this term was sufficiently well known amongst the criminals that they do not require any explicit glossing. In such case, we have to check the full excerpt and text of the Sessions Paper in order to understand better the situation that the testimony reports about. The term ‘fence’ is used in Thomas Wood’s testimony. Wood acts as a witness in the case against Martha Lipney, who was indicted for stealing the goods of James Sands. Wood reports how he overheard Martha threatening a woman called Murphy in giving money for a stolen watch that belonged to Sands. Wood reports the exact words that were uttered by Martha in direct speech, including her use of the term ‘fence’. The fact that Martha says “I want money Murphy”, suggests that she wants money for the stolen watch, and that someone needs to buy this watch. This sentence provides the clue that Martha used the term ‘fence’ to refer to a person who could possibly buy the stolen watch from her. Excerpts (13) and (14) are thus contexts of the

use of lexical items that are not explicitly labelled as ‘cant’, and which we would be able to locate by using the metalinguistic keyword search for ‘cant’ only.

The search results or ‘hits’ that were generated by the keyword searches of the lexical items listed in List 2 (the ones selected from Parker’s word list in *Life’s Painter*) confirm my hypothesis that a number of lexical items (such as ‘frisk’ and ‘cull’) which were regarded ‘cant’ in the eighteenth-century canting dictionary, also occur in the *Proceedings*. None of these terms of list 2 that is used in the *Proceedings* is labelled ‘cant’ in the *Proceedings*, but other contextual clues (visual and metalinguistic) in the co-text and the wider context in which the terms are used provide evidence that these terms were used in their technical sense.

\*\*\*

The question posed at the beginning of this section was to find out how to locate and search for marginal vocabulary use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. Given the built-in search facility of the website, I adopted a lexical-based search method in order to look for marginal vocabulary in the *Proceedings*. Both types of keyword searches prove to be very fruitful in producing contexts in which the term was used in the *Proceedings*, and thus confirms that ‘cant’ is not only restricted to literary contexts, but something which was used by real life people in their testimonies in court. The occurrence of the label ‘cant’ in the *Proceedings* shows that there was an awareness of marginal vocabulary use in the courtroom; it was something that people talked about, particular in cases where someone explicitly labelled a lexical item as ‘cant’. It also became evident that some words like ‘scamp’ and ‘boned’ are not always explicitly labelled ‘cant’ in the *Proceedings*, but often we find contextual clues in the form of glosses or metalanguage which highlight the fact that these terms were used in a specialised sense. In other cases, we find the occurrence of such lexical items without these contextual clues.

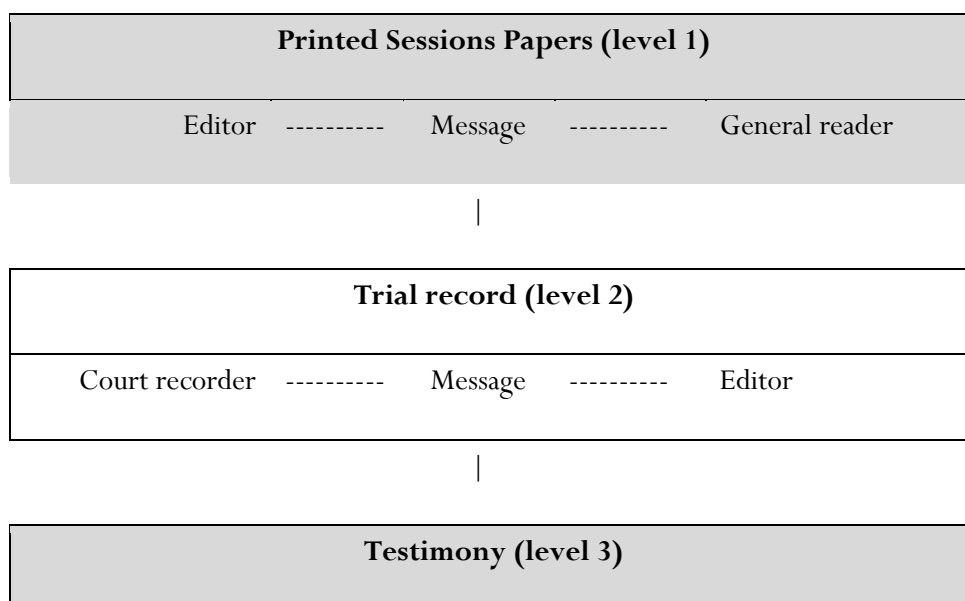
As my lexical searches produced much evidence of the use of marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* between 1700 and 1800, we can move on the next phase and take a more critical and in-depth look at our data and try to account for how and why marginal vocabulary is used in the *Proceedings*. Using the historical discourse analytic framework that I presented in Chapter 3, I am interested in the question: How and why is marginal vocabulary used in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* which are published between 1700 and 1800? Because the *Old Bailey Proceedings* consists of two subgenres, which are composed by different people for different aims and audiences, my analysis will consist of two main sections. I will examine the role of marginal vocabulary in the Sessions Papers and Ordinary’s Accounts in sections 4.4 and 4.5 respectively. The aim of these sections is to reconstruct the communicative functions and meanings of marginal vocabulary in each of these subtexts.

#### 4.4. Marginal vocabulary use in the Sessions Papers (SP)

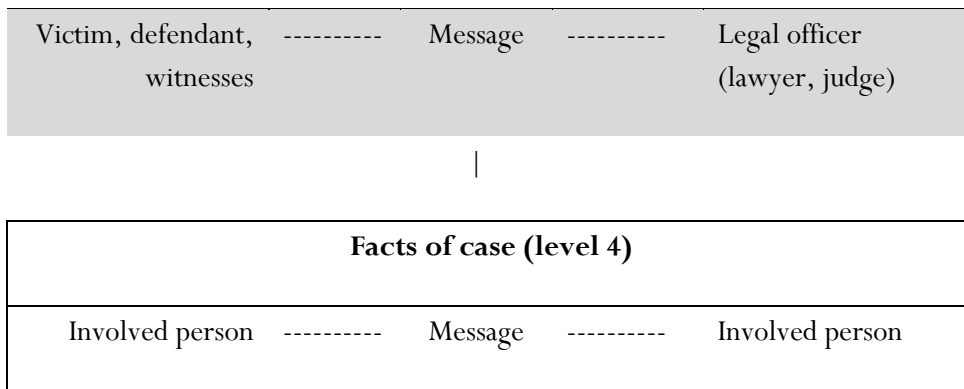
I argue that there are two different uses of marginal vocabulary in the Sessions Papers. Firstly, marginal vocabulary is used as a *speaker* pragmatic device by speakers and court officials in the courtroom, and used strategically to prove the defendant guilty or innocent. Marginal vocabulary plays a crucial role in the linguistic performance of providing evidence in court. Secondly, marginal vocabulary is used as an *authorial* pragmatic device by the editor of the Sessions Papers, and reproduced strategically for the purpose of news reportage in order to provide a particular picture of what was said in the courtroom. In this case, the author has inserted linguistic features for a particular purpose such as characterisation or to achieve a particular effect on the reader. Culpeper and Kytö (2010) used the phrases ‘speaker pragmatic device’ and ‘authorial pragmatic device’ in their analysis of the pragmatic status of repetitions and pragmatic noise in early modern plays. They used these phrases to distinguish the purposes of speech-like features in written texts. According to Culpeper and Kytö (2010), speech-like features have a different pragmatic status depending on the different multiple discourse levels that are found in historical texts.<sup>31</sup> Speech-like features operate as ‘speaker pragmatic device’ on the communication level(s) that is represented within the text, for example between characters, and as ‘authorial pragmatic device’ on the communication level(s) between author and reader, but also recorders and editors (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 84-85). It is important to note that these embedded discourse levels are not mutually exclusive; and that individual texts have different multiple discourse levels.

The speaker and authorial pragmatic device labels match the key communicative levels that we find in the Old Bailey Sessions Papers, as seen in Figure 1:

**Figure 1 Embedded discourse levels in Sessions Papers**



<sup>31</sup> The idea of embedded discourse levels in written texts is modeled on Leech and Short (1981), as well as Short (1996) which often serves important stylistic and pragmatic effects.



The use of marginal vocabulary as a speaker pragmatic device can be found in the testimonies (level 3). The communicative event that takes place in court between the defendant, victim, witnesses and lawyers is at the heart of the complex communication represented by the Sessions Papers. The defendant, victim and witnesses are interrogated and cross-examined by the lawyers and/or judge, and they provide evidence for or against the defendant (depending on which side they are) in the form of testimonies ('level 3'). In their statements, victims or witnesses can refer to another communicative event, that is, a past conversation between people that is somehow related to the criminal accusation of the defendant ('level 4').

The use of marginal vocabulary as an authorial pragmatic device can be found in the printed Sessions Papers (level 1) and the trial record (level 2) itself. The Sessions Papers are reports of what was said during trials at the Old Bailey court, and based on the work done by the court recorder. The court recorder is present in the courtroom and witnesses the communicative event that takes place between the speakers and the court officials (level 3). He does not take part in this communicative event; his task is to make notes of what was said during this communicative event. On the basis of these notes, the courtroom recorder writes out the transcription of the communicative event ('level 2'). This transcript is checked by the editor before it is sent to the printer to be published.<sup>32</sup> The final printed Sessions Papers thus contain the written transcripts of the communicative event that took place in court and produced for the eighteenth-century public ('level 1').

In my analysis, I predominately focus on the level of the editorial (level 1) and the testimonies (level 3). The reason is that levels 2 and 4 are not always present in the Sessions Papers. Level 1 is thus the level at which texts operate. However, the actual notes of the court recorder have not survived (so we do not have direct access to level 2), so we can only analyse the use of marginal vocabulary on the level of the actual Printed Sessions

---

<sup>32</sup> It should be noted that the trial record as represented at level 2, as well as the whole discourse structure represented in Figure 1, is a simplification of a much more complex situation. According to Huber (2007), we do not know exactly how many discourse levels there are in the Sessions Papers because we do not know how many times the texts have been edited. The final printed Sessions Papers has been filtered several times by different scribes, proofreaders, printers, typesetters and publishers (Huber 2007). In practice, there is more than one editor responsible for working on the Sessions Papers.



Papers (level 1). Often, these two levels are conflated (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 70). As for the testimony (level 3) and the facts of case (level 4), the testimonies of the speakers in the courtroom is always and most well represented in the Printed Sessions Papers, but speakers may not always refer to facts of case that were mentioned in a past conversation. As Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010: 12) note, level 4 sometimes does not occur in a courtroom document. So my arguments about the use of marginal vocabulary are based on its use in the testimonies (level 3), and if a reference is made to another speech event, i.e. the facts of case (level 4), and marginal vocabulary use in the Printed Sessions (level 1), the overarching communicative event of the whole Sessions Papers.

I will now demonstrate and discuss in more detail how marginal vocabulary is used strategically by the speakers in court (section 4.4.1) and by the editor of the printed Sessions Papers (section 4.4.2), and use relevant excerpts to illustrate my point.

#### 4.4.1. *Speaker pragmatic device: Marginal vocabulary use in the testimonies*

My interpretation of the use of marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey courtroom is that the terms are strategically reproduced and used by the speakers and court officials to make the defendant look guilty (victim, prosecution witnesses and lawyers) or innocent (defendant, defendant witnesses and lawyers). The courtroom event represented in the Sessions Papers (level 3) entails a confrontation between the speakers (victim, witnesses and defendant) and the court officials. The aim of this confrontation and the whole court case is that the defendant will be found guilty on the basis of the evidence provided in the courtroom. Depending on the different people in the courtroom, each of them is involved in this rhetorical battle in order to convince the judge and the jury that the defendant is guilty (apart from the defendant himself). Evidently, the key communicative aim of the victim, the witnesses and the lawyers on the prosecution side is to provide enough evidence to prove that the defendant is guilty. On the other hand, the defendant (prisoner), the defence witnesses and lawyers' aim is to prove that the defendant is innocent. Both the prosecution and the defence need to come up with a very strong and convincing rhetoric in order to achieve their communicative goals, and my interpretation of marginal vocabulary in these testimonies seems to suggest that this kind of language can play a crucial role in achieving those goals for both parties. In other words, it is a rhetorical tool used strategically and pragmatically to prove the defendant and those involved guilty (apart from the defendant himself).<sup>33</sup>

Apart from the strategic use of marginal vocabulary, we also find the strategic use of metalanguage to support the use of such terms in the Old Bailey court. Metalanguage is used as a strategic tool to shape the way in which a given utterance should be understood by an audience. Dialect writers, for instance, use metalanguage to define words, describe speech styles and explain why dialect is being represented in a particular way.

---

<sup>33</sup> See also Kahlas-Tarkka and Rissanen (2011) on attitudes and strategies of defendants in the Salem Witchcraft trials.

Metalinguage can thus be a very useful tool for writers because it can guide the reader to interpret how characters speak (Hodson 2014: 148). Similarly in the Sessions Papers, the witnesses incorporate metalinguage in addition to their use of marginal vocabulary in their testimonies to guide the hearers (defendants, lawyers, judge) interpretation and judgement of what the defendant had supposedly said. Judges and lawyers on the other hand, can also inquire after the meanings of the marginal terms to clarify what the witnesses have said, but also to elicit a certain response from the witness. Another important function of metalinguistic commentary in the courtroom, is that it “marks personal or group identities, display expertise, claim incompetence, and do many other sorts of ‘personal identification work’ or ‘social relationship work’” (Jaworski, Coupland and Galasinski 2004: 4). Such social relation work involves the use of linguistic features to create social affiliation or social distance towards the other speakers, and involves negotiating our own linguistic identity/position in relation to another person. In the courtroom, all the participants (victim, witnesses and defendant) are trying to reconstruct their testimonies in such way to represent the defendant as guilty or not guilty. Marginal vocabulary is not only a descriptive tool to refer to technical concepts, or to add veracity to the statements; it is also used strategically to convey a particular evaluation about the person who is associated with or attributed to that term, especially through the use of metalinguage.

In the following sections, I will demonstrate how each type of speaker in the courtroom employs marginal vocabulary and metalinguage in their speech as a rhetorical strategy to argue that the defendant is guilty or not guilty. I will discuss the strategic use of marginal vocabulary by the victim, the witnesses of the prosecution, the lawyers of the prosecution and the prisoner; as for the witnesses and the lawyers of the defendants. In Table 2, I have listed all the terms that refer to the various speakers in the eighteenth-century court in the Printed Sessions Papers (left column), along with the references (right column):

**Table 2 Legal terms used in the printed Sessions Papers**

<b>Term used in the printed Sessions Papers</b>	<b>Referent</b>
Prosecutor/prosecutrix	Victim
Prisoner	Defendant (or the accused)
Court	Judges
Prisoner’s Council/ Council for the Defence	Defence lawyer
Jury	Members of the jury
Q.	Unidentified court official, which could be the ‘judge’, ‘prosecutor’, or ‘members of the jury’

The table provides an essential guide to the terminology that I will be using to refer to the different language users in my analysis, and the terms that are used in the printed Sessions Papers. When I refer to the specific speaker in my discussion, I will use the terms in the right column, following the practice of Archer (2012), and Shoemaker (2008). In my discussion, I will take into account the specific identity of each speaker, their social roles (whether they are affiliated with the underworld or not) and, in case of the witnesses, what their relation is to the defendant and the victim. Witnesses in the courtroom could be either very close to the victim (such as a family member or a good acquaintance), and they would obviously provide evidence to support the victim's testimony about the crime committed, or more distant, such as a stranger who witnessed the crime scene, or a constable who was involved in apprehending the defendant. In addition, I will demonstrate the social work involved when these speakers make strategic use of marginal vocabulary and metalanguage, how it relates to the construction of their own identities, as well as how they refer to the identity of the defendant.

#### 4.4.1.1. Witness (victim)

The victim's statement is generally the first to be represented in the Sessions Papers. Their statement is important because the victims have been mistreated by the defendant and they want the defendant to be punished for his crime. This means that the victim's testimony will be constructed in such way to prove the defendant is guilty of his crime, by representing him or her as a dangerous and violent person. Even without detailed frequency analysis, it is clear that we find little use of marginal vocabulary in the victim's testimonies in court. This is not very surprising if he is the victim of a criminal offence and is not familiar with the marginal vocabulary. However, in example (1), we do have a victim, John M'Mahon, who remembers explicitly that the defendants used the marginal term 'tick':

- (1) JOHN M'MAHON sworn. On Saturday, the 23d of June, I left Kentish-town, at about half an hour after ten at night, and was coming to London. I observed the prisoner Gregory, when about thirty yards from me, come into the road. When he came near me, he presented a pistol, and said, D-n your eyes, stop! I looked at him meaning to take an opportunity to run from him. Then there came two more, and laid hold of the skirts of my cloaths. Then Stevenson came up, and came between me and the man who had the pistol at my head, and went to take the buckles out of my shoes. I told him they would be of no use to him; for they were plated. Then asked me for my money: I said I had none. They then asked me for my **tick, by which I understood my watch; for I had heard of the word before.** I said I had none. I had, previous, to that, suspecting I might be stopped, taken it out of my fob, and put it into my breast. They ordered me to stand still. I did. Upon which the two men on each side me rubbed me down on each side, and behind and before me; when I felt the men feeling at my breast, where my watch was. (Sessions Paper, Samuel Stevenson, William Gregory, 11 July 1781)

In his testimony, M'Mahon provides evidence against Samuel Stevenson and William Gregory, the robbers of his possessions, and claims that the defendants asks M'Mahon for his watch, using the marginal term 'tick'. He also adds the metalinguistic comment and gloss to explain what the term means. Even though the term is marginal, M'Mahon knew the meaning of the term because he "heard of the word before". In claiming that the defendants demanded him to hand over his watch, M'Mahon provides crucial evidence that the defendants were indeed guilty of robbing M'Mahon.

In example (2), we find an interesting example of the reproduction of marginal vocabulary by someone who pretended to be a victim to get the defendant apprehended. 'Victim' Edward Rogers pretends to be a member of the underworld in order to expose James Leonard's counterfeiting business. In this case, James Leonard is indicted for giving Edward Rogers twenty one pieces of false and counterfeit milled money and coin.

- (2) EDWARD ROGERS sworn. On the 30<sup>th</sup> of September last I went to the house of the prisoner, in Saffron-place, Saffron-hill: I found him at home, I asked him if he had any **counterfeit silver (I called them whites)**; he told me he had; I told him I come for the purpose of purchasing some; he desired me to go to the White-house, a public-house in the neighbourhood, and he would follow me; I accordingly went to the public-house, and in a few minutes he came; during our stay in the public-house I asked him what sort he made; I believe I termed them **bobs and half-bulls, (that is shillings and half-crowns), that is the flash name of them**; he said he made both, and that he sold them at the rate of 2s. counterfeit for one of good money; I asked him if he could let me see any of them (Sessions Paper James Leonard, 2 December 1795)

From the full text of the Sessions Papers, we can derive that Rogers was not a random victim of Leonard, but was in fact a thief taker, someone who detects and captures a thief in exchange for money. To capture Leonard, Rogers pretends to be interested in dealing in counterfeit money, and makes an actual deal with Leonard. When Rogers and Leonard meet for the second time, Rogers is accompanied by an extra-officer who can take Leonard into custody. In his testimony, Rogers refers to a past conversation between himself and Leonard. He narrates that he made use of the special vocabulary related to their business (whites, bobs and bulls) to mislead James Leonard into thinking that he is "one of them", and in the know of coining and counterfeiting business, and the specialised terms related to money. Rogers does so to win Leonard's trust. This is evidenced by the fact that Rogers makes a metalinguistic comment about his linguistic performance, namely that he explicitly used the term 'whites' to refer to counterfeit money ("I called them whites"), as well as the terms 'bob' and 'half bulls' to refer to shillings and half crowns ("I believe I called them bobs and half bulls"). In addition, he also draws attention to the fact that these are flash names, so marginal terms that would be indeed used by people like Leonard. In other words, Rogers' use of marginal vocabulary in an earlier conversation between himself and the defendant is part of Rogers' identity performance as a con person, with the aim to expose James Leonard's counterfeiting business and let him be taken up by the officials. In the courtroom, Rogers re-enacts in the courtroom his earlier

linguistic performance by reproducing some of the marginal vocabulary he used in order to expose and show that James Leonard is guilty of counterfeiting money.

#### 4.4.1.2. Witnesses (for the prosecution)

The majority of the speech represented in the printed Sessions Papers is made up by the witness statements of the prosecution. The role of the witnesses of the prosecution in the courtroom is similar to the victim's, namely to provide evidence against the defendant. It is the prosecutor's aim to get the defendant prosecuted, and they summon the witnesses who can provide testimonies in favour of the prosecution. They interrogate the witnesses and ask questions that will lead to testimonies which construct the defendant as being guilty of his crime. The answers that are given by the witnesses are constrained by the questions from the prosecuting lawyer. Like the victims, when questioned, a number of witnesses claim that the defendants used marginal vocabulary when they committed their crime, to give evidence of what happens around the time of the crime. In recalling past events and conversations in the courtroom, the various speakers in court will make sure to highlight certain events and quotes in order to shape a testimony which will prove the defendant as guilty. This retelling of a past conversation and quoting of someone else's words can be regarded a performance rather than a neutral account, because it involves the speaker's memory skills in what has been said, and the delivery of how this was said (see Coupland and Jaworski 2004: 31). In this view, the reporting of someone else's words is a pragmatic act, with the speaker being in control of what has been said (content) and the manner in which this content is presented. In constructing his testimony, the speaker takes control over what kind of and how much information he should reveal about the criminal events.

I would argue that the witness often uses marginal vocabulary as a pragmatic tool in their testimonies for such a purpose. When the witness attributes the marginal vocabulary to the defendant and/or his accomplice, the witness make the defendant sound guilty of a particular crime. The type of technical term used is important here, because those terms may refer to a particular social role ('cull', 'fence', 'scamp', 'traps'), a particular activity ('bilk', 'crap', 'hobbled', 'frisk', 'snitch', 'ding', 'boned', 'sham', 'stag'), stolen goods ('ned', 'tick', 'wipe', 'bulls', 'dubbs') and places ('ken'). When the witness claims that the defendant was talking about 'dinging stuff', 'frisking that person', or 'stealing wipes', then the witness also constructs a narrative in which the defendant is guilty of certain criminal activities. In doing so, the witness in court, on the one hand, try to show the authenticity of their account, and to appear as truthful as possible. On the other hand, they also try to avoid any suggestion that they may be part of the crime, and they will try to distance themselves from being too familiar with the marginal vocabulary. In attributing the accused with 'cant' and hence a criminal lifestyle, the witness create distance between themselves their association with the defendant.

In example (3), witness Elizabeth Sullens reproduced the term ‘fence’, to make it very explicit that William Archer committed the crime of stealing letters.

- (3) Elizabeth Sullens. [...] Archer swore, They should not be dropped, as they should not be brought against him; then those were burnt in the same fire-place. Archer said, He should wish to have the good ones sold to a **Fence, which is a cant name for a receiver of stolen goods.** (Sessions Paper William Archer, Thomas Roberts, 25 April 1781)

Defendants William Archer and Thomas Roberts were indicted for stealing twenty-three bags of letters out of the Norwich mail. In her testimony, Elizabeth Sullens recalls an earlier conversation between herself and Archer, and mentions that Archer talked about selling important letters to a fence, someone who receives stolen goods. In reproducing and explaining the term ‘fence’ (as evidenced by her metalinguistic comment “which is a cant word for a receiver of stolen goods”), Elizabeth Sullens provides crucial evidence that William Archer stole the letters and intended to sell them to a third party, namely a fence.

In example (4), James Spragg reproduced the expression ‘going on the scamp’ to provide evidence that James Coomes robbed Maria Spencer on the highway:

- (4) JAMES SPRAGG sworn. I know the prisoner; I was going along Parliament-street on the 2d of July; I heard the cry of Stop thief; the prisoner ran by me very fast; I pursued him and caught hold of him; he asked me what I wanted with him? I said nothing, but to know where he was going; he immediately dropped the cap; Mr King asked what was the matter? I said, I did not know; upon that the prosecutrix came up and said, she had been robbed of a hat and cap, and the prisoner had left the hat in the road; I said, I supposed that was the cap: on his making **use of some horrid expressions** to her, she fainted away.

**Q. What expressions did he make use of?**

James Spragg. **Very horrid ones; he said he was going on the scamp; he blasted her for a b – h;** and said, she assaulted him first.

(Sessions Paper James Coomes, 10 September 1777)

In his statement, Spragg claims that he ran into the prisoner, who tried to escape with the stolen hat of Maria Spencer, the prosecutrix, and that he also shouted some horrible expression to his victim. Note that Spragg initially does not make explicit what exact “horrid expressions” James Coomes used in his testimony. It is only after he is questioned by the court official (identity is not made explicit), who asks Spragg to specify those “horrid expressions” that James Coomes uses, that Spragg uses the marginal expression “on the scamp”. In addition, Spragg also claims that the defendant called his victim a “bitch”, which has been censored in the print publication. Spragg’s quoting or ‘performance’ of Coomes’ horrid language use, contributes to the portrayal of Coomes as aggressive, violent and/or dangerous robber. This suits Spragg’s communicative aim in the courtroom, namely to provide evidence against and show that the defendant Coomes is guilty of this crime.

Examples (3) and (4) show that both witnesses are in control over their language use in court and that they can carefully consider what specific parts of a past conversation they would reproduce, how much they wanted to reproduce, and whether or not to provide metalinguistic commentary on what the defendants had said. In example (5), witness Armstrong claims that one of the Rayners used the term ‘boned’ in his conversation, but carefully monitors mentioning other specific examples:

- (5) Armstrong. [...] I heard Rayner’s father say to him, for the love of God whether it be good or bad tell me the truth; what he said to his father I cannot say, he persisted in knowing about it at that moment; his father desired then to see the magistrate, and the magistrate told him, in my hearing, they were committed, and he had nothing further to do with them; as we were going down to gaol the little one said, it would have been happy for us if I had been **boned** by myself with the watch, but two of us could not tell a story alike.

Court. **What is the meaning of boned?**

Amstrong. **Apprehended; it is a cant word; they were a conversing with one another about different things; but perhaps your Lordship will not think proper for me to mention them;** when they were brought up on Monday Mr. and Mrs. Rutt attended, and the Justice asked the prosecutor, which he thought was the man that robbed him, he said the tallest; and he said he was the man; and the little one said, he was the man that robbed the woman, without our speaking at all.

(Sessions Paper William Davis, William Rayner, 25 October 1786)

Armstrong was a public officer who was involved in apprehending the defendants (William Davis and William Rayner), who were indicted for assaulting and robbing Thomas Rutt. In his testimony, Armstrong reports overhearing a conversation between one of the defendants, Rayner, and the latter’s father, who was also committed to Newgate Prison, and mentions the term ‘boned’. Then the judge asked him to clarify the meaning of this marginal expression. Armstrong clarifies the meaning as requested (“apprehended, it is a cant word”) and continues referring to the conversation, claiming that the Rayners were talking about different matters. He then explicitly censors the content of what they have said by saying “but perhaps your Lordship will not think proper for me to mention them”). In the co-text, we do not find whether the judge further inquired about these improper things, but the crucial point here is that such metalinguistic commentary shows that the speaker is in control over his testimony and monitors what kind of information he wishes to provide in court.

Sometimes the witness quotes the marginal term used by the defendant, and adds the metalinguistic comment that he did not know the meaning of the term. This tactic is to create some kind of social distance between himself and his topic of conversation:

- (6) John Lucas. [...] I took hold of him by the collar, and said I apprehended him for robbing Mr. Bailey’s house, for I saw him on the one pair of stairs landing place; I took him to Mr Bailey’s house; he said it was innocent, and that he was at the Nag’s-head in the Ambury

at the time the robbery was committed; when I came back again I took him to the watch-house; when I took him into the watch-house he said d – n me, you took me up for the sake of the forty **quid; the meaning of that word I did not know**; then he turned round and looked at me with a venomous look, and said you are a man; I told him I was; then he said in case any thing happened to him I should be in danger of my life as it went about my business; then I was ordered to go before Justice Welch. After I was examined, Ashby confessed that what I swore was nothing but truth. (Sessions Paper Thomas Ashby, Edward Lundy M'Donald, Andrew Latimer, 8 September 1773)

John Lucas lived opposite Mr Bailey's (the victim's house) and was involved in apprehending one of the defendants, Thomas Ashby (the person whom Lucas took hold of by the collar). What followed was a conversation between Ashby and Ashby accuses Lucas of apprehending him for the sake of money (40 quid), meaning that Lucas would get a monetary reward for apprehending a thief. In recounting this earlier conversation, Lucas reports that Ashby used the term 'quid', but adds that he did not know what Ashby meant by the term. Whether Lucas genuinely did not or pretends not to know the meaning of the term remains unclear but by adding the metalinguistic comment, Lucas draws attention to the fact that Ashby used this specialised term that belonged to the thieves' jargon. Through his language use, Lucas presents Ashby as a violent character ("he looked at me with a venomous look", "he said, in case any thing happened to him, I should be in danger of my life"). He emphasises Ashby's identity as a thief to make him look guilty, thus creates social distance between himself and the subject he is describing (namely Ashby).

Another tactic that the witnesses for the prosecution employ in their testimonies to explicitly create social distance between themselves and the defendant is linguistic they-ing, or the use of pronouns 'they' and 'their' to signify the speaker's position in relation to another speaker who belongs to a particular social group (Coupland 1999: 15). In Reyes (2005: 522-523), the use of 'slang' in combination with pronominal indexicals such as 'they' and 'we' creates a boundary between the youth in-group and the adult out-group. Similarly, in the Sessions Papers, the use of 'they' and marginal vocabulary by the speakers serves to widen the social distance between themselves and the thieves. In the case of John Underwood and William Wharton, Richard Pearce mentions the term 'hobbled', and makes use of linguistic they-ing to attribute the term to the defendants explicitly.

- (7) Pearce. Underwood used to tell me he would have me, **what they call hobbled**, and I was afraid of my life. I was taken up about three weeks ago; then I gave information, as I wanted to clear myself. (Sessions Paper, John Underwood, William Wharton, 30 May 1770)

The defendants were indicted for breaking in the house of Thomas Ayre, and stealing a number of valuable objects and money that belonged to Thomas. Pearce, who was involved with the robbery along with the prisoners and another person, claims that the prisoners had threatened him by having him 'hobbled', which is "a term when any of the gang is taken up, to say, such a one is hobbled" (Parker 1790: 172). So Pearce uses the



term in a technical sense, attributing it explicitly to the prisoners' language use ("what they called hobbled"). Pearce's reason for providing evidence against the prisoners is that he was threatened by them and that he feared his life. In explicitly attributing the term 'hobbled' to 'they' (the defendants Underwood and Wharton), he creates this social distance between himself and the defendants, and to demonstrate that the defendants used the term 'hobbled' to threaten Pearce.

#### 4.4.1.3. Court officials (lawyers)

Court officials in the Old Bailey court include lawyers (defence/prosecution), the judge (he is referred to as 'Court' in the printed Sessions Paper) and members of the jury. They fulfil the role of interrogator in the courtroom, but in the Printed Sessions Papers their words tend to be omitted. If their words are represented, they may or may not be exactly identified or named (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). Fortunately in the Sessions Papers that were published between 1783 to 1792, the lawyers are frequently named (Mr Knowlys) or identified as the Prisoner's Council, the Council for the Defence, or simply Council, and so we can explicitly attribute the possible use of marginal vocabulary to the lawyers (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). I argue that the lawyers make strategic use of marginal vocabulary in their questions in order to get a particular statement from the witness or to challenge the credibility of what has been said. The lawyers act on behalf of the prosecution or the defence in order to strengthen the evidence provided by the side that they support, and to question the validity of the evidence provided by the other party. The prosecution lawyer will challenge the evidence provided by the defendant and the witnesses, because their ultimate aim is to prove the defendant guilty, whereas the defence lawyer will challenge the evidence provided by the prosecution. Lawyers tend to elicit information that is strategically valuable, and so they will frame their questions in a way that might influence the response (Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann 2012: 134). They do so by direct and cross-examination. The interrogator, for example, plays an active role in eliciting the meaning of the marginal terms that are used from the witnesses in their statements. In other cases, he mentions a marginal term to provoke the person answering the questions.

Consider the following interaction between John Cook and his examiners Mr Knowlys and Mr Alley. John Cook is a police officer, who is summoned as a prosecution witness against Thomas Robertson and Frederick Smith. The latter are indicted for breaking and entering the dwelling house of Richard Rothwell.

(8) JOHN COOK sworn. – Examined by Mr. Knowlys. I am one of the officers of Shadwell-office (produces two pieces of calico); I found them in the house of Mrs. Starr, in Whitecross-street; I have had them ever since.

Cross-examined by Mr Alley. Mrs Starr is **what we call in plain English, a fence?**

J. Cook. Yes, **they call her so.**

Mr Alley. She is **a common receiver**?

J. Cook. Yes.

(Sessions Paper Thomas Robertson, Frederick Smith, 11 September 1799)

Mr Knowlys is the prosecution lawyer, who directly examined John Cook, but his words are not presented in this printed account. The words of Mr Alley, the defence lawyer on the other hand are represented in this excerpt. Mr Alley likes to confirm that Mrs Starr is the person who owns the house where the two defendants were found and taken up by Cook. Mr Alley does so by using the term ‘fence’ along with his metalinguistic commentary strategically to get J. Cook to confirm that Mrs. Starr is a receiver of stolen goods. In providing the metalinguistic comment “What we call in plain English”, Mr Alley highlights that ‘fence’ is a technical term which was apparently used by the defendants to describe Mrs Starr as a receiver of stolen goods. In his answer, Cook confirms that the two defendants indeed described Mrs Starr as a fence through linguistic they-ing (“yes, they call her so”), whereupon Mr Alley reformulates what Cook has said, to clarify that Mrs Starr is a common receiver.

One notable lawyer who was well known for his aggressive interrogation style is William Garrow (1760-1840), who, depending on the case, acted as the prosecution or the defence lawyer in the Old Bailey courtroom (Beattie 2004).<sup>34</sup> Garrow makes strategic use of marginal vocabulary by putting those words into the mouth of witness, such as in the following example:

(9) Garrow. How soon did you tell any body of this?

William Watts. I spoke of it the next morning to three or four seamen.

Garrow. I suppose you told them, I saw Dick Notely, and two or three other **scamps** in the house?

William Watts. **I said, I saw three people in the house.**

(Sessions Paper Richard Notely, Robert Richardson, Luke Hurst, 10 January 1787)

Mr Garrow acts as the Prisoner Notely’s Council and interrogates William Watts, one of the witnesses in the case against Richard Notely, Robert Richardson and Luke Hurst. William Watts claims that he knows two of the defendants (Notely and Hurst) and that he saw a number of people in the house where Christopher Stephenson, the victim, lives. In his second question, Mr Garrow ‘performs’ Watts’ language use in the past, as indicated by the modal verb ‘suppose’: I suppose you told them, “I saw Dick Notely, and two or three other scamps in the house”? In putting the words ‘scamps’ in William Watts’ mouth, Mr Garrow assumes that William Watts must have been familiar with such a term, and that he would use the marginal term to imply that that the defendants are thieves.

---

<sup>34</sup> Archer (2012) has worked extensively on verbal aggression in Mr Garrow’s rhetoric in the Old Baily texts.

Garrow's question thus carries a degree of speaker judgement – especially when it contains presuppositions that are assumed to be true (Archer, Aijmer and Wichmann 2012: 135). William Watts' answer implicitly reveals that he knows the meaning of the term 'scamp', and he is quick to correct Garrow's assumption. He rephrases Garrow's words and claims to have said that he saw three people in the house, thus denying the accusation that the defendants were thieves.

In the case of Thomas Burdett, Samuel Armstrong, and William Brown, Garrow makes strategic use of marginal vocabulary and metalinguistic commentary in questioning the words of witness Hannah Oseley. Mr Garrow is acting as the Prisoner's Council here.

- (10) Mr Garrow. Mrs Oseley, do you know Mrs. Moses?  
Hannah Oseley. Yes  
Garrow. Where does she live?  
Hannah Oseley. In Woolpack-alley, Houndsditch.  
Garrow. What, with Mr. Knotely?  
Hannah Oseley. Yes  
Garrow. She is your mistress?  
Hannah Oseley. Yes  
Garrow. Mr Knotely is your master?  
Hannah Oseley. Yes  
Garrow. Which of the Moses's is this, is it the old **fence** or the young one?  
Hannah Oseley. **She is no fence**  
Garrow. **I see you know what the word fence is?**  
Hannah Oseley. I do not  
Garrow. **No! why then how happened it, was it by intuition, or a strange illumination, you should know what I meant:** how long have you been with this pious family of the Knotely's?  
Hannah Oseley. Off and on these two years.  
(Sessions Paper Thomas Burdett, Samuel Armstrong, William Brown, 22 February 1786)

The defendants in this case were indicted for breaking into the house of John Chancellor in order to steal his possessions and money. One of the items that got stolen was John Chancellor's watch, which the defendants pawned to Mr Knotely and Mrs Moses, two receivers of stolen goods. However, Hannah Oseley, the maid of Mr Knotely and Mrs Moses happened to buy the stolen watch from Burdett in person. In this excerpt, Hannah is questioned about her relationship with Mr Knotely and Mrs Moses, and Garrow tries to get the information out of Hannah that Mrs Moses is a fence, using the term strategically in his question "Which of the Moses's is this, is it the old fence or the young one?". Instead of answering Mr Garrow's question, Hannah Oseley comments that Mrs Moses is not a fence, thus she defends her mistress that she is not a criminal. Mr Garrow is quick to pick up on that, and questions Hannah further by assuming that Hannah must be familiar with the term 'fence'. When Hannah Oseley denies that fact, Garrow undermines Hannah's words by saying that certainly she could not know the meaning of the word by "intuition,

or a strange illumination”. This is a clear example of Mr Garrow’s strategic use of marginal vocabulary to undermine and question the validity of the words of the witnesses that he interrogates.

#### 4.4.1.4. Defendant (prisoner)

Finally, the defendant is the central character in the court case, yet his voice tends to be underrepresented in the printed Sessions Papers. Yet we know that in the real court case (and the original communicative event), he could speak in court by responding to what the victim and the witnesses said about him, and also comment on what they claim what he had said in the past (when they refer to past conversations). Obviously, his ultimate communicative goal is to prove himself innocent. In the printed Sessions Papers, we find a number of instances in which the defendant is commenting or denying that he has said certain words according to the witness, as a strategic means of denying that he is guilty of a crime.

- (11) CHARLES ELLIOTT sworn. I apprehended the prisoner: a woman said her mistress was out: but I went up stairs and found the prisoner on the bed: she pretended to be asleep: then she opened her eyes, and knowing me, said, damn my eyes, now I am **boned**: I took the prosecutor with me, and left him below; and as soon as the prosecutor saw her, he said she was the woman.

Prisoner. **I never said I was boned; I said, now I must get up.**

(Sessions Paper Mary Farrell, 15 September 1790)

In example (11), Charles Elliot, who apprehended the defendant Mary Farrell for breaking into the house of Thomas Brown, claims that the defendant said the words, “damn my eyes, now I am boned”, after realising that she had been caught. The witness attributes the term ‘boned’, a cant word for being apprehended, to the defendant. The defendant replies to Elliot’s statement by denying that she used the word ‘boned’, and rephrases her own words in that she said “now I must get up”. In denying that she used the term ‘boned’, she dissociates herself from her identity as a burglar and someone who used such marginal terms.

In the court case of George Lee (who was indicted for assaulting and stealing money from Thomas Cuddin), we find defendant George Lee (‘prisoner’) responding to the words that witness David Brotherrow has said about him, in order to weaken the witness’s testimony:

- (12) David Brotherrow. I saw him [the prisoner] at the sign of the Union Arms, Piccadilly, about half after ten, or near eleven o’clock; I cannot speak to half an hour; there was a horse standing at the door, and a mob of people about it; I turned to see what was the matter, and the prisoner came out of the house; I took hold of his hand, and said, how do you do, Captain? He went to the corner of the house and made water, and then he said “D-n my eyes, I **have been upon the scamp**” (which is a cant word for

**having been upon the highway)** “and that is the **prad**” (meaning the horse): he mounted the horse and rode off as fast as he could.

Prisoner. I will leave it to the gentlemen of the jury, whether they can believe a man that is used to take persons for going upon the highway would have let me escape **if he heard such words**.

(Sessions Paper George Lee, 6 December 1775)

Brotherrow claims in his testimony that he saw Lee and that he claimed to have used ‘cant’ to describe that he was on the highway with a horse (“I have been upon the scamp, and that is the prad”). Lee, the prisoner, responds to Brotherrow’s statement, claiming that his evidence does not make sense because it seems rather unlikely that someone like Brotherrow would let the prisoner go, if that person would use “such words”, that is ‘upon the scamp’ and ‘prad’. Such comments imply that a person using such terms would anonymously be identified as a criminal. In making such a metalinguistic comment, David Lee weakens Brotherrow’s statement of what he claimed Lee had said. Thus he makes his own case appear stronger, by implying that he did not say these words.

In the court case against William Barrett, William Cherry and James Smith (otherwise Barber), the defendant makes strategic use of marginal vocabulary by attributing the language to the witness or the victim in order to present himself as the victim, instead of the other way around. William Cherry, one of the defendants, who was indicted for raping Ann Smith in a coach, comments on the marginal language use of the prosecutrix:

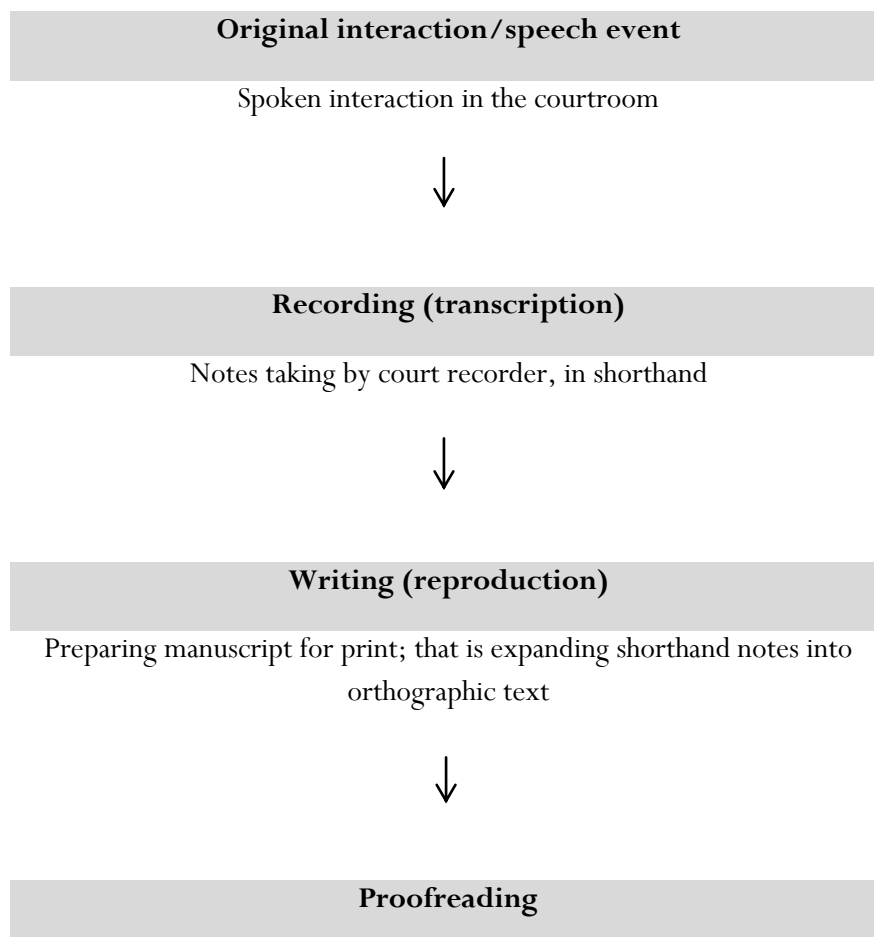
(13) Cherry’s Defence. What Barrett [Prisoner] has said is true; when we got into the coach, she called us four bloody thieves, and said she would **crap** us all; **I did not know the meaning of the word then**. (Sessions Paper, William Barrett, William Cherry, James Smith, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1772)

In his defence, Cherry (prisoner) accuses the prosecutrix of saying horrible language to him and his mates, calling them “four bloody thieves” and how she threatened the group of thieves to “crap” them all. ‘Crap’ is a marginal term for “hanged” (Parker 1790: 150), and Cherry strategically denies that he knows the meaning of the term. It may have been very well the case that he did know what the term meant, but for the purposes of his defence statement, he makes the metalinguistic comment to highlight the fact that Ann mentioned this obscure word, and that even though he did (pretend) not know the term, it must refer to something terrible. Cherry makes thus strategic use of marginal vocabulary and metalanguage in his defence to prove his innocence. In attributing the term ‘crap’ to Ann and commenting on the term, Cherry presents Ann as someone who used threatening language against Cherry and his mates and to present himself as a victim.

4.4.2. *Authorial pragmatic device: Reproduction of marginal vocabulary by the court recorder in the written record*

Apart from the strategic performance of marginal vocabulary by the speakers and the court officials in the courtroom, we can also interpret the use of marginal vocabulary as a pragmatic device from the authorial perspective, that is, from the court recorder and editor's point of view. I argue that marginal vocabulary that was used by the speakers in court is reproduced in the printed Sessions Papers by the court recorder for news reportage, in order to present a particular news report of what took place in the Old Bailey courtroom (focusing particularly on the prosecution side of things). Reproduction of marginal vocabulary is different from the reproduction of marginal vocabulary by the speakers in court, because it involves a transition from what was said in the courtroom to print. In this case, reproduction refers to "the action or process of producing a text, image, etc. again in the form of a copy, esp. in print" (OED Online 2015). In the Sessions Papers, reproduction is an important step in the production of the printed Sessions Paper, which involves reproducing the spoken language used in court to the printed record that the eighteenth-century reader gets to read. I have included all the different steps that are involved in the production process of the Sessions Papers in Figure 2 below (see also Huber 2007):

**Figure 2 Production stages of the Sessions Papers from spoken interaction to the printed publication (based on Huber 2007)**



Checking the manuscript by the editor



### Publication

Final printed version of transcript in the Printed Sessions Papers

The first stage of the production begins with the original interaction that took place in the courtroom between the witnesses, defendant and victim, and the court officials such as lawyers, which represent communication level 3 in the previous discussion. This interaction is witnessed by the court recorder, who takes notes of what was said by means of a shorthand transcription system. On the basis of these notes, the court recorder would produce a manuscript, that is expanding the shorthand notes and turn it into an orthographic text. Though we do not have direct evidence of the shorthand notes that were produced by the courtroom recorder, it seems very likely that the marginal terms used in the spoken speech event in the courtroom were taken down in shorthand by the courtroom recorder.<sup>35</sup> These terms could then be included in preparing the manuscript and turning the shorthand notes into an orthographic text. The next step is to hand over the manuscript to the editor, who will check the manuscript on its contents and language, making important editorial decisions about what can possibly be added, summarised or left out. In the next stage, the content and language use in the manuscript is carefully checked by the editor. Also this is the stage where the editor can annotate the text where necessary. It is on this level that the courtroom recorder and the editor work closely together in order to make important editorial and rhetorical decisions about how much content needs to be included, what can be omitted, and what needs to be summarised. One of these choices is whether or not to reproduce the marginal vocabulary used by the speakers in court into the manuscript, and if so, whether to reproduce these terms in full or whether they were censored. After the manuscript has been fully approved, it will go to the printer, who is responsible for printing the manuscript in physical form. The Printed Sessions Papers thus render the actual, spoken interaction between the different speakers in court. My evidence shows that a fair amount of marginal vocabulary that was used in the courtroom made it into the final printed Sessions Papers, that is the ones published after 1730.<sup>36</sup>

The reproduction of marginal vocabulary in the Printed Sessions Papers forms an important part of news reportage, that is, to produce a reasonable accurate account of

---

<sup>35</sup> See Huber (2007) for a more elaborate discussion of the shorthand system used by Thomas Gurney, the court recorder of the Old Bailey between 1749 and 1770.

<sup>36</sup> This is not the case for speech representation in the earlier Sessions Papers (those published before 1730), where much content was summarised and left out; in such cases, it might have been the case that not much marginal vocabulary remained in the printed Sessions Papers, because the aim was to provide a summary of what was said in court.

what was said in court. But while the ideal was to provide a “true, fair, and perfect narrative” of what was said in court, in reality, these printed Sessions Papers were far from perfect narratives in that they often tend to offer a particular picture of the court room, a picture that makes the prosecution look stronger (Shoemaker 2008: 569). This is evidenced in the selection of which speech to represent or omit; the speech of the witnesses of prosecution tends to be foregrounded, whereas the voices of the defendant, the witnesses and defence lawyers on this side is summarised or omitted (Shoemaker 2008 567). In addition, transcriptions always involve interpretation and selection, and so the court recorder and editors may purposefully, according to their social and political agendas, present particular pragmatic devices, in order to recreate – or perhaps create – a particular interpretation (Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 85). So while reproduction of marginal vocabulary is part of news reportage, I argue that the reproduction of marginal vocabulary by the court recorder and the editor serves a higher, ideological purpose, namely to demonstrate that the defendant in court is guilty of his crime. Because the witnesses of the prosecution use many marginal terms in their testimonies to claim that those words were used by the defendants, and because these testimonies were almost presented in full in the Printed account, it seems that preserving those marginal terms serves to demonstrate that we have indeed a defendant who has done something terrible, and deserves to be punished for his misdeeds. In other words, the way that speech is represented in the printed Sessions Papers (including the reproduction of marginal vocabulary use) reflects the ideological agenda of these publications, namely to present a negative picture of the defendant and to convince the reader that this man deserves to die for his misdeeds.

Given the connotations and associations of marginal words, it might have been the case that such words, which were used in the original speech event would have been censored to some extent, or replaced by a more respectable term (or would have been omitted altogether) because the language had to be respectable in the Printed Sessions Papers. According to Shoemaker (2008: 565), the language used in the Printed Sessions Papers was carefully monitored by the City authorities, because of the well-established reputation of the Sessions Papers. The language had to be respectable, which means that the editor would likely take out or not reproduce language that was inappropriate, such as swearwords. Swear words such as ‘damn’ or ‘bitch’ were indeed censored as ‘D—n’, or ‘b—ch’, seen in the following example:

(14) Thomas Mumford. [...] Crutchley said to Crocker, what have you done; then Tredway and I searched the other woman; she said Crocker gave her the breast buckle and purse; when she said so, Crocker said, **you snitching b-h**, you are a **snitch**.

Q. What did she mean by that?

A. Them that turn evidence they call them **snitches**.

(Sessions Paper Ann Crocker, Sarah Crutchley, 15 February 1797)



Since 'bitch' is very well known and easily recognisable, they can be censored because everyone know which term is used, and what it means. Expletives or profane words are not content words, and thus would not alter the content of the Sessions Papers if they were omitted or replaced, i.e. they do not convey material meaning.

On the other hand, the marginal terms 'snitch' and 'snitches' is reproduced fully in excerpt (14). The reason why marginal vocabulary cannot be censored, replaced or omitted is that these terms are content words. Unlike expletives, marginal vocabulary is specialised terminology and not well known so they need to be spelt out in the Printed Sessions Paper. The marginal terms used by the speakers in the court room refer to important concepts that relate to the low life, such as types of people ('cull', 'fence'), a particular activity ('bilk', 'crap', 'hobbled'), stolen goods ('ned', 'tick') and places ('ken'), and some of those terms provide crucial information about whether a defendant was guilty or not, and would thus affect the punishment given to them. Replacing the marginal terms by more respectable terms would significantly alter the content of the printed Sessions Papers, and thus would not conform to the aim of the Printed Sessions Papers in giving an account that was faithful in content to what was said in the courtroom (Huber 2007). In particular, leaving the marginal vocabulary terms out of the Printed Sessions would be problematic especially if marginal vocabulary is not only used as a means of communication, but also as a topic of communication in the courtroom (see Hodson 2014: 147).

Marginal vocabulary plays a central role in Mr Clark's testimony. Clark provides evidence against Thomas Denton, John Jones and William Jones, who were indicted for counterfeiting money:

(15) John Clark sworn. On the 25<sup>th</sup> of March I went, in company with Carpmeal, Jealous an Shallard, to the prisoner Denton's house, No. 18, Bell-court, Gray's-inn-lane, it was about twelve at noon; I told the rest of the officers, if I staid in the house so many minutes to come in; I went in alone, after going through the shop, which is a sort of picture and book-shop, there is a little parlour-door; I went in at the street-door, opened the shop-door, and in the little parlour there was Denton and John Jones sitting at a table, and before them this paper book, and these two cards; it appears on the face of them that they had been casting up some stock or another, where it is mentioned, all that I can explain in them papers, **bulls** and **half bulls** are crowns and half crowns, in coiner's language, and **bob** is a shilling, **flat** is metal; but I do not know of my own knowledge, only from informations and confessions.

Court. By what means have you known that **those phrases, such as bull and bob, bear a meaning so different?**

Mr Clark. By experience in court, and by a number of people that **I have heard so use them; I have heard them from five hundred people.**

Mr. Garrow. My Lord, I submit whether this is admissible?

Court. There is no way by which a man can acquire the knowledge of language but by information; originally all our knowledge of language must come from the information of

others; I do not know that **bull** signifies a horned beast, otherwise than by information; we have heard the word **traps** given in evidence a thousand times, and never objected to, and **a variety of other cant phrases that are as well understood among a certain set of people**, as the common words of the English Language; all language is arbitrary; I think it is admissible evidence.

Mr. Clark. Supposing a piece of metal is as thick as my two fingers, and we wish to reduce it to the thickness of one of these blanks, it is taken to the flatting-mill.

Mr. Garrow. And **flat has nothing of criminality annexed to it**, because it may be used for buttons to a coat, or for a variety of other purposes.

(Sessions Paper Thomas Denton, John Jones, 3 June 1789)

Mr Clark mentions a number of marginal terms in his testimony – ‘bulls’, ‘half bulls’, ‘bob’, ‘flat’ – and claims to have acquired knowledge of these terms by hearing it from other people (“I do not know of my own knowledge, only from informations and confessions”). The Judge (Court) inquires further about these terms, and requires Mr Clark to explain how these terms come have a specialised meaning. Mr Clark says then that he heard them used in the courtroom to refer to specific concepts related to money. His statement is questioned by Mr Garrow, who acts as the defence lawyer, who believes that Mr Clark has this specialised knowledge of these terms by virtue of him being a criminal. The judge then comments that Mr Clark’s claim to acquire marginal terms by information is valid, since that is the only way to gain information of a specialised term. Garrow then uses Mr Clark’s words to the advantage of the defendants, by saying that if his clients were using those terms, they might not have been used to refer to something related to criminality (“flat has nothing of criminality annexed to it, because it may be used for buttons to a coat, or for a variety of other purposes”). In this excerpt, marginal vocabulary is both the means and the topic of conversation in the courtroom to refer to specialised concepts. Accordingly it could not have been replaced or omitted from the manuscript, because it would significantly alter the content of what was said in court.

The courtroom recorder and the editor thus had much control over the way that they present the original spoken speech event into the printed Sessions Papers and made important pragmatic decisions in the writing stage, including whether or not to reproduce the marginal vocabulary in the manuscript. One final piece of pragmatic interference by the courtroom recorder in the trial record is to add glosses to the marginal vocabulary (see Kytö and Walker 2003: 226). While most of the marginal terms that were used in the original spoken speech event were explained by the witnesses themselves or clarified by the court officials, a number of marginal terms in the Printed Sessions Papers had to be glossed by the courtroom recorder or the editor, to clarify the lexical meaning of the terms (see Culpeper and Kytö 2010: 55). In example (16), ‘bob ken’ is glossed to clarify the specialised meaning of the expression, and to ensure that the reader of the Sessions Papers understands what the term means:

- (16) James Evans deposed, that himself, the Prisoner and another did the fact; that having a few nights before seen some Gentlemen drinking in the house, and engaged in Discourse, the Prisoner said it was a **Bob ken (i.e. a house easy to be robbed)** whereupon they lifted up the fath and took 3 Hats that hung on pegs; and, pleased with their Success, went again to the house to attempt to steal Mugs tipp'd with Silver: but going into the yard found the Linnen in water, which they wrung out, and put in their aprons, and breaking out at the back Door, carried it and sold it to Elizabeth Finch, for 35 s. (Sessions Paper Henry Sewel, 6 June 1717)

The term 'bob ken' which according to witness James Evans was a term that defendant Henry Sewel used has been glossed by the court recorder; it is not clear that it would have been originally glossed by the witness in his testimony. The inclusion of the gloss here is thus a pragmatic choice of the courtroom recorder because he also had the choice not to insert the gloss. The inclusion of glosses gives us an indication about the courtroom recorder's expectations about how much his readers know and understand. They also allow us to infer the intended readership of the Sessions Papers, namely a middle-class person who was a possible target for the criminals that were tried at the Old Bailey. In providing the glosses to the marginal terms, the courtroom recorder is bridging the gap between the exclusive and technical knowledge of the thieves and that of the eighteenth-century general public. In other words, the courtroom recorder positions himself as a mediator between the underworld and the general London public, and the glosses are inserted based on the assumption that the reader would benefit from knowing the language that defendants would use so that they can prevent themselves from being robbed. Thus the glosses are a strategic means employed by the courtroom recorder to guide the reader's interpretation of the marginal vocabulary used by the witnesses and defendants in court.

In addition to ensuring that the reader knows precisely what the term means, an additional reading of the pragmatic meaning behind glossing and other forms of metalanguage is that it draws specific attention to the marginal vocabulary used by the criminal. Such highlighting is a common linguistic and stylistic technique used by writers for the purpose of linguistic foregrounding, to make the marginal terms stand out from the wider textual context and appear more prominent in the text than other features. Foregrounding such terms reinforces the idea of marginal vocabulary as a distinctive lexicon as opposed to the rest of the text that is written in mainstream English and needs to be translated, as can be seen in example (17):

- (17) James Dalton depos'd, That he in Company with the three Prisoners, on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March last, overtaking the Prosecutor about 9 at Night in Fleetstreet, they agreed to snatch the Bundle from her, but not having an Opportunity in Fleet-street, they followed her from thence to Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, where Crouch knock'd her down, and Russell ran away with the Bundle. When they opened the Bundle, he said, they Found in it several Aprons, a Womans Mourning Gown, and 3 Black Hoods, and that when they took the Bundle there was a Looking-Glass in it, but it not being bound up well, it fell out and broke to Pieces: He said that they sold the Bundle altogether, to one Susan Watts, a

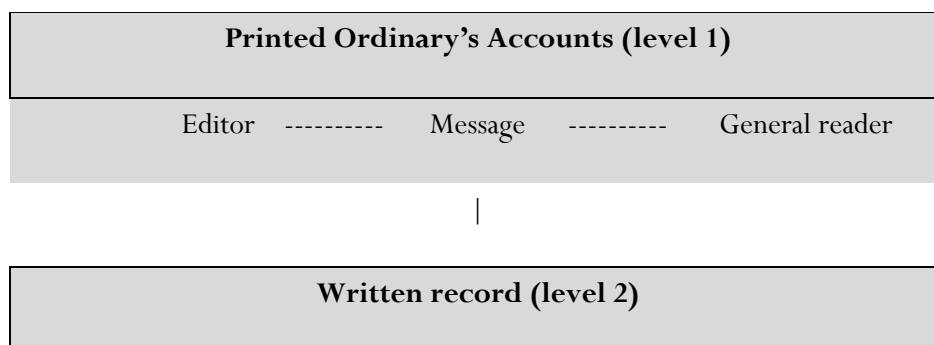
**Buyer of stolen Goods**, for 24 s. (**which in their Language is call'd a Lock**) and to their great mortification they heard afterwards, that there was forty Shillings in money wrapt up in Rag, which was contain'd in the Bundle (Sessions Paper William Russell, William Holden, Robert Crouch, 1 May 1728)

In this example, the courtroom recorder has inserted the metalinguistic comment “which in their Language is called a Lock”. Note also how the term ‘lock’ is explicitly attributed to the criminals through linguistic they-ing. Looking at the co-text shows that this comment is redundant because James Dalton already made it explicit in his testimony that Susan Watts is a buyer of stolen goods. However, the fact that the courtroom recorder includes additional information about how thieves would use this marginal term ‘lock’ to describe such a person reveals that the courtroom recorder strategically highlight the culpability and the criminal element. This again contributes to the ideological aim of the Printed Sessions Papers, to demonstrate that the City of London had the fight against crime under control and that defendants were brought to justice. They want to demonstrate that defendants are wicked people who succeeded in burglary, and this is not only reflected in the things they do (committing all these crimes) but also the way that they use language to convey secret messages that are only intelligible to themselves.

#### 4.5. Marginal vocabulary use in the Ordinary’s Accounts (OA)

The Ordinary’s Accounts differ from the Sessions Papers in that they resemble criminal biographies in detailing the life story of prisoners who were condemned to death in Newgate prison. I argue that marginal vocabulary is used as an authorial pragmatic device by the Ordinary in the written account, and reproduced strategically for the purpose of stylisation, namely to create a titillating story of the prisoner’s life that would sell well (he is working closely together with the editor and the publisher in doing so). In addition, the Ordinary makes strategic use of metalanguage in the Ordinary’s Accounts to reconstruct and negotiate his identity as a mediator between the thieves’ underworld and his reading public. My argument is based on the use of marginal vocabulary on the second, but also first communication level found in the Ordinary’s Accounts:

**Figure 3 Embedded discourse levels in Ordinary’s Accounts**



Ordinary of Newgate	-----	Message	-----	Editor
------------------------	-------	---------	-------	--------

|

<b>Narrative (level 3)</b>				
Prisoner	-----	Message	-----	Ordinary of Newgate

|

<b>Facts of life (level 4)</b>				
Involved person	-----	Message	-----	Involved person

As for the analysis of the role of marginal vocabulary in the printed Ordinary’s Account, the most relevant communicative events to focus on are the written record (level 2) and the printed Ordinary’s Accounts (level 1). We do not have direct access to the spoken interaction between the prisoner’s telling of his life story to the Ordinary (level 3), as we did with the core communicative interaction between speakers of the courtroom in the Sessions Papers. In the Sessions Papers, we as a reader and researcher had more or less access to this communicative event in that this interaction was presented as a dialogue in the form of questions and answers. Though this dialogue was not a verbatim account of the whole interaction that took place in the courtroom, we could analyse the use of marginal vocabulary in the testimonies, because it was usually clear whose language we were observing and who was using marginal vocabulary in the courtroom. However, in the printed Ordinary’s Accounts, the core interaction between the prisoner and the Ordinary is not presented in dialogue form, but instead we only have the Ordinary’s rendering of what the prisoner might have said to him in third person narration:

- (1) Gill had some money from his friends in Dublin before this, which he brought up to town; and here he lived for some time with his wife, every now and then taking a turn upon the highway; and he seldom came back without **scamping** someone or another, **as he termed it in the cant phrase**. He had been out so often, that he had run in debt 24 l. for horse-hire, for which he was put into the Marshalsea, where he had not been long before he found means to break out, and made his escape. (Ordinary’s Account Josh Gill, 17 March 1755)

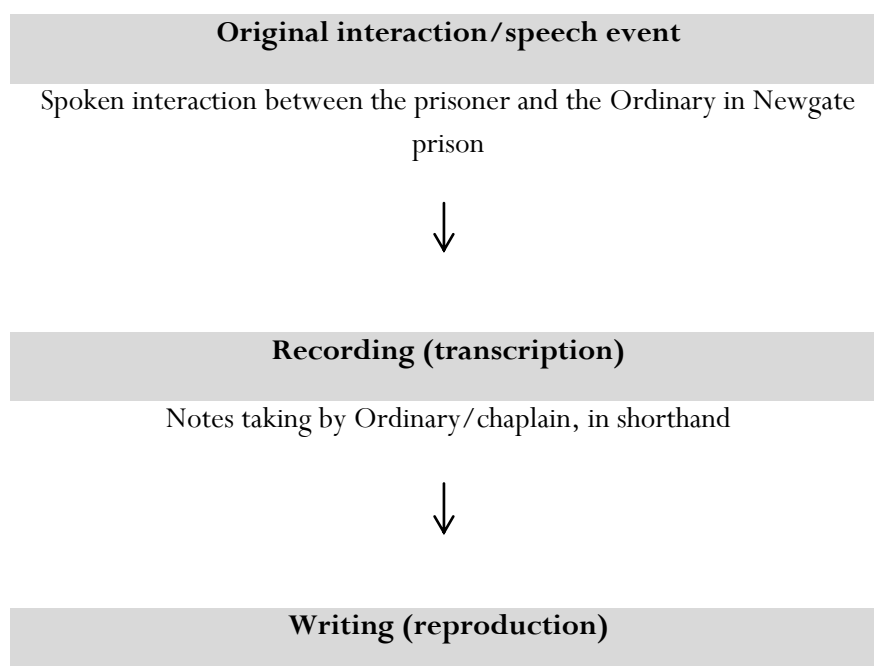
In example (1), we have the Ordinary’s representation of Josh Gill’s life story in third person (as indicated by the use of the third person pronoun ‘he’), and in his written record, the Ordinary reproduces the marginal term ‘scamping’ to describe Gill’s robbing

activities. Note how the Ordinary comments on this term through the metalinguistic comment “as he termed it in the cant phrase”. In attributing the term ‘scamping’ to Gill (as **he** termed it), we have evidence to conclude that the term was used by Gill himself in his narrative (level 3), and which the Ordinary has reproduced in his written record (level 2). The main point is that in the written record, we find a mixture of the prisoner’s actual words, and the Ordinary’s words in reconstructing the life story of the prisoner, and that involves the Ordinary’s strategic selection of the quotes and the words that the prisoner used (including the use of vocabulary). The Ordinary’s inclusion of marginal vocabulary in the written record is the result of reproducing these words that were ‘originally’ used in the spoken conversation between the prisoner and the Ordinary. As for the analysis of the role of marginal vocabulary in the printed Ordinary’s Account, the most relevant communicative events to focus on are the written record of the prisoner’s narrative by the Ordinary (level 2) and the printed Ordinary’s Accounts (level 1), where we find the final edition of the written record of the prisoner’s narrative in print form.

4.5.1. *Reproduction of marginal vocabulary by the Ordinary in the written record*

Like the Sessions Papers, the Ordinary’s Accounts also involves the reproduction of marginal vocabulary from an earlier communicative event, which is the prisoner’s retelling of his criminal life to the Ordinary (level 3). Reproduction of marginal vocabulary is part of the third production stage of the Printed Ordinary’s Accounts, as seen in Figure 4 below:

**Figure 4 Production stages of the Ordinary’s from spoken interaction to the printed publication**



Preparing manuscript for printed; that is expanding shorthand notes into orthographic text



### **Proofreading**

Checking the manuscript, and changing the type setting by the editor



### **Publication**

Final printed version of transcript in the Printed Ordinary's Accounts

The production of the Printed Ordinary's Accounts resembles the production process of the Sessions Papers, except that we have a different spoken interaction at the first stage of the production process, namely that took place in Newgate prison between the prisoner and the Ordinary. It is here that we find the marginal terms because they are originally used in the prisoner's narration of his life and part of his ideolect. Within his narrative, the prisoner can refer to another communicative event such as a past conversation that is relevant to the facts of his life (level 4 in Figure 3). In retelling these conversations, the prisoner may quote other people who used marginal vocabulary before. During this story telling event, the Ordinary would take notes of what was said by the prisoner by means of a shorthand transcription system. During this stage, it is possible that the Ordinary takes shorthand notes of the marginal vocabulary use by the prisoner. In other words, the marginal vocabulary that is originally used by the prisoner is reproduced and transcribed by the Ordinary. The Ordinary then would turn these notes into an orthographic text, thus producing the written record (level 2). The prisoner's words are rendered in either first or third person narration by the Ordinary. As such, we have indirect access to the prisoner's narration of his life story to the Ordinary. Then the editor checks the manuscript on its content and language, and makes important editorial changes to the format and type setting of the written record. After the manuscript is fully checked, it will go to the printer, who will print the written record in physical form. The editor has the final responsibility for the format of the printed Ordinary's Account, but it is the Ordinary who composed the written record of the prisoner's life. The final printed Ordinary's Accounts (level 1) thus contain the Ordinary's written transcript (level 2) of the spoken narrative told by the prisoner (level 3), and presented to an eighteenth-century public. The Printed Ordinary's Accounts thus represent the Ordinary's written record of the prisoner's narrative in print form.

As for its function, the reproduction of marginal vocabulary in the Ordinary's Accounts is done strategically as part of the reconstruction of an entertaining story with a moral undertone. Marginal vocabulary that was used in the prisoner's narrative is strategically reproduced by the Ordinary in the printed Ordinary's Accounts, for the purpose of stylisation, namely to create a salacious and titillating story of the prisoner's life that would sell well. The Ordinary has control over how many marginal terms he wants to reproduce in the written account, and how he makes use of these to shape the prisoner's story. In that respect, the Ordinary has a certain degree of freedom in how much marginal vocabulary he wants to reproduce, ranging from one term to cluster of terms. The number of marginal vocabulary terms that the Ordinary can reproduce in his written account depends in part on how many actual terms the prisoner used in his original narrative. If the prisoner used many marginal terms in his original narrative, then it is likely that a lot of marginal terms would occur in the Printed Ordinary's Accounts. My hypothesis would be that the more sensational or notorious a prisoner is, the more likely the Ordinary will sensationalise the life of the prisoner and thus more marginal vocabulary being reproduced.

Because the clustering of marginal vocabulary is a notable feature of how this kind of language is represented in the Ordinary's Accounts, I argue that this type of vocabulary representation serves a strategic and stylistic purpose in the Ordinary's Accounts, namely to give a flavour of the speech of the prisoner, and to portray the prisoner as an 'exotic', 'mysterious' anti-hero. This is a similar technique employed by fictional authors when they represent dialect or other non-standard features in their works (see Hodson 2014). By reproducing and attributing the marginal vocabulary to the prisoner, the Ordinary draws attention to the fact that the prisoner takes part in this exclusive, dangerous, and mysterious lifestyle in which one uses these specific marginal terms to communicate, and which is exclusively known to the criminals themselves. As such, the prisoner in the Printed Ordinary's Accounts tends to be romanticised and presented as some kind of antihero who goes on these criminal endeavours (also known as 'Adventures') and speaks in a secret code, but then is punished for his misdeeds in the end. The prisoners' portrayal is thus different from how the defendant is presented in the Sessions Papers, in which the defendant comes across as violent, dangerous and aggressive. In the Ordinary's Accounts on the other hand, the violent characteristics of the prisoner are euphemised. In dramatizing and romanticising the prisoner's biographical story, it was hoped that many readers would be tempted to buy and read such a sensational story with a moral undertone, and thus to sell many of these Accounts.

#### 4.5.1.1. 'Slang Mort Lay': Romanticising the life of Jenny Diver (1705-1741)

The argument presented just now can be best illustrated with a textual analysis of the prisoner's narrative about Jenny Diver (1705?-1741), which was featured in the Ordinary's Account of 18 March 1741. Born as Mary Young, she was a female robber



most notorious for her inventive and dexterous skills (Ordinary's Account, 18 March 1741). Mary gets involved in the criminal scene in London where she becomes acquainted with Ann Murphew, her landlady. It is Ann who introduces Mary to "a New Method of Life", which involves pick-pocketing and stealing. Mary joins Ann's pickpocketing gang, undergoes some training and is a quick learner of the pickpocketing techniques. Even more so, "her great Dexterity in picking Pockets" led others to give Mary the nickname Jenny Diver/Diving Jenny, and she was so successful that she became leader of her gang.<sup>37</sup> From 1720 onwards, Jenny and her gang committed various crimes across the country until Jenny was tried and convicted for the robbery of Mrs Gardener on the King's Highway in 1741. She was executed at the age of 36 on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March 1741, leaving a child behind. Despite her early death, Jenny's life story continued to live on and was reproduced in print publications throughout the eighteenth century. What was particularly sensational about Jenny's life is that she was a female thief, who was extremely successful in these criminal activities that were usually associated with men. Also, she made use of clever, inventive techniques such as dressing up as a pregnant woman in order to hide the stolen goods in her fake belly, or to put on an extra set of arms in order to pick people's pockets without moving her 'arms'. Such a story would definitely titillate and appeal to an eighteenth-century readership, who would be entertained by the reckless and immoral lifestyle of these criminals. Not surprisingly, Jenny's life story was selected and featured in a Printed Ordinary's Account.

In this account, known as the Transactions of Mary Young, the Ordinary reproduces Jenny's original use of marginal vocabulary to make Jenny's story stylistically more attractive and interesting. The use of such special lexis as a stylistic device in literary storytelling to increase the entertaining aspect of the story is similar to how authors of fiction use dialect in their literary works (see Hodson 2014). In this respect, the Ordinary's Accounts are similar to literary texts because writers of both texts make linguistic and stylistic choices in their story telling. Such a commonality has also been noted by Van Elk (2008: 3) in her examination of narrative strategies and techniques in the Bridewell Court Books. She notes that in spite of the fact that the records were initiated by a real encounter with a homeless person (thus based on real-life events), that those records can nonetheless be situated within the same discourse as literature. Both the Bridewell Court Books and the rogue literature for example show a reliance on narrative structures, literary ordering and story telling techniques (Van Elk 2008: 3). Similar to the Bridewell Court Books, the Ordinary's Accounts can be regarded as creative non-fiction, so based on real-life events and people rather than imaginary people and events, but presented using the stylistic techniques of fiction (or stylised by the writer for creative purposes). As such, the marginal vocabulary in the written record was not made up by the Ordinary but reproduced from a real life context, namely the prisoner's narrative. So how

---

<sup>37</sup> Mary Young was better known under her alias Jenny Diver. Her alias may be inspired by one of John Gay's characters in the play *The Beggars Opera* (1728) (Rawlings 1992). In the analysis I will use Jenny Diver to refer to the thief, because that is the name that the Ordinary also uses to refer to Mary Young.

is marginal vocabulary employed as a stylistic device in this particular Ordinary's Account? How does it contribute to the romanticisation of Jenny Diver as a skilful anti-heroine?

In the Ordinary's Account we thus have an Ordinary who acts as a storyteller, and who makes important linguistic and stylistic choices in reshaping and framing Jenny's account. He controls how much of Jenny's original words are represented and which events and aspects of Jenny's life should be foregrounded or backgrounded in the account. In this particular Ordinary's Account, we find instances of the clustering of marginal vocabulary in the sections where Jenny's 'Adventures', or criminal undertakings are presented in third person narration, with the Ordinary as the narrator. These indicate that we are dealing with the stylisation of marginal vocabulary for a comic purpose. The pragmatic effect of the clustering of marginal vocabulary is that the Ordinary reminds the reader that we are dealing with a criminal who is well-versed in this criminal jargon for them to conduct their business effectively.

- (1) The next Exploit that Jenny went on was, **Slanging the Gentry Mort rumly with a sham Kinchin, that is, (Cutting well the Women big with Child)** which was thus perform'd, Jenny had got 2 false Arms made, and Hands, by an ingenious Artist, and dressing herself very genteely, like a Citizen's Wife big with Child, with a Pillow artfully fixed under her Coats for under her Petticoat, and the artificial ones came across her Belly; Dressed in this Condition, with one of the Gang in the Habit of a Footman, she takes a Chair and goes, (it being on a Sunday Evening) to the Meetinghouse already mention'd it was so contriv'd by the rest of the Gang, that one should go before as a Scout, and bring Word to the supposed Footman in what Part of the Meeting set the **rummest Froes**; and likewise to **Saweer** clearly, (that is, to keep a good look out) that they should have **Vid Loges**, (repeating Watches) by their Side, that Jenny's Footman might place his Mistress accordingly. Now it was so ordered, that our big-belly-d Lady was be plac'd in a Pew between 2 elderly Ladies who had both repeating Watches by their Side; she sat very quietly all the Time of the Service, but at the Conclusion of the last Prayer, the Audience being standing, she took both the Ladies Watches off, unperceiv'd by them, and tip'd 'em to one of her Companions, who was ready to planted for the Purpose (and who went and tip'd them to **Slang upon the Safe**; and then went back to be ready for Business) Now the Congregation breaking up, every body was in a Hurry to get out, and the Gang surrounding the Ladies in order to make a greater Croud, and help Jenny off if she should be smok'd. (Ordinary's Account Jenny Diver, 18 March 1741)

The terms that are reproduced in example (1) are to give a flavour of "the Cant Language" that Jenny herself had to learn in order to become a member of the gang. The terms all refer to technical aspects of the criminal life style such as technique of stealing ('slanging the gentry mort with a sham kinchin'), secret actions ('saweer clearly'), victims ('rummest froes'), and objects ('vid loges'). Because the terms are unintelligible to anyone else but the Gang, the Ordinary has to include glosses within the text to clarify the technical concepts for the reader, thus to increase the reader's comprehension of the text. The underlying assumption is that the reader might not be familiar with the terms. The

clustering of marginal vocabulary in these accounts highlights the fact that these criminals spoke a language of their own, and that they carry connotations of ‘exotic’, ‘mystery’, and ‘danger’.

I also argue that marginal vocabulary is strategically reproduced by the Ordinary in his romanticisation of the prisoner’s life as a heroic and exotic crook. The act of ‘slanging the gentry mort rumly with a sham kinchin’, or in normal English, “Stealing pickpockets as a fake pregnant lady” is one of Jenny’s ‘signature’ robbing techniques. The detailed descriptions of this technique dramatise the act as an artistic and creative event, making pickpocketing sound more romantic than it actually is. We are told that “she sat very quietly all the Time of the Service”, but then seize her chance to pick the watches “unperceived by them”. The way that Jenny commits her crimes resembles the ‘elegant’ and ‘mannered’ way that highway robbers such as Captain James MacLaine (1724-1750), that is, using nonphysical and non-violent techniques to attack people. Thus the Ordinary presents a romantic portrayal of Jenny Diver as a con artist rather than a violent pickpocketeer.

Jenny’s violent character is euphemised in the Printed Ordinary’s Account. However, Jenny Diver’s portrayal as a romantic hero in the Ordinary’s Account is far removed from how she comes across in the Sessions Papers:

- (2) Judith Gardner. [...] While he was doing this the Prisoner Young came before me, and immediately I felt her Hand in my Pocket; upon that I put my Hand into my Pocket and seized her by the Wrist; - her Hand was clenched in the Bottom of my Pocket; upon my doing this, she with her other Hand struck me a great Blow on the side of the Face, so that I was obliged to quit her Hand which was in my Pocket, else I should not have left my Money (Sessions Paper Mary Young and Elizabeth Davis, 16 January 1741)

In her testimony, Judith Gardner, the last victim of Jenny Diver, presents Jenny’s ways of pickpocketing as far from romantic, claiming that while she tried to prevent Jenny from stealing her pocket money by seizing Jenny’s wrist with her hand, Jenny struck Judith Gardner “a great Blow on the side of the Face”, so that Judith had to let go of Jenny’s hand in her pocket. In contrast, witnesses who speak for Jenny’s defence portray her as an innocent woman who would never commit any criminal deeds:

- (3) Lydia Walker. Mrs Young I have known better than a Year; she rents a Room in my House at 2s. a Week, and takes in Plain-work. I have seen her receive Money, and never saw nothing but what was modest and well behaved (Sessions Paper Mary Young and Elizabeth Davis, 16 January 1741)

So Jenny is portrayed in different ways in different contexts, depending on who is speaking or writing, the social relation that the speaker has with Jenny Diver, and what the communicative purpose is of talking about her (to show that Jenny Diver is a violent or innocent character).

The argument that the marginal vocabulary has a very specific, pragmatic purpose to the Ordinary for sensationalising Jenny’s narrative can be further strengthened if we compare the printed Ordinary’s Account with another source text about Jenny’s life. Jenny’s life was also featured in *The Malefactor’s Register, or New Newgate and Tyburn Calendar* (1779). The *Malefactor’s Register* is an edited collection of stories on the lives, trials and accounts of criminals, which aimed to represent an “object of Curiosity and Entertainment”, but also “as a Work of real and substantial Use”, namely for “improving” literary purposes (Preface). A close comparison of the content of Jenny’s life story in the Ordinary’s Account and *The Malefactor’s Register* reveals that the two texts share a similar structure and content. Given the later publication date of *The Malefactor’s Register*, it seems that the latter reproduced the content of the Ordinary’s Account. However, one major difference between the two versions of Jenny’s life story in these texts is in the occurrence of marginal vocabulary, namely that marginal vocabulary is not used in *The Malefactor’s Register*. A comparison of examples (4) and (5) shows that the excerpt from the Ordinary’s Account is much more detailed and sensationalised than in the *Malefactor’s Register*:

- (4) One Day when they were all out together upon Business, at a noted Meeting-house in the Old Jewry, where abundance of People were crowding, in order to get in, Jenny being very genteely dressed, she observ’d a Gentleman who was a very **Rum Muns, (that is, a great Beau)** who had a very handsome **Glim Star, (that is, a Ring)** upon his **Feme, (that is, Hand)** which she longed to make, so giving the Hint to her Companions to **Bulk the Muns** forward, **(that is, Push)** they pushed him quite him; whereupon the Meeting being pretty full, as soon as he was in, Jenny held up her Hand to the young Spark, that he might help her forward, which he perceiving very complaisantly gave her his Hand, in order to assist her (Ordinary’s Account Jenny Diver, 18 March 1741, my emphasis)
- (5) Jenny, accompanied by one of her female accomplices, joined the crowd at the entrance of a place of worship in the Old Jewry, where a popular divine was to preach, and observing a young gentlemen with a diamond ring on his finger, she held out her hand, which he kindly received in order to assist her (*Malefactors Register* 1779: 386)

In the Ordinary’s Account, we find a clustering of marginal vocabulary, all related to the criminal lifestyle such as the victim (‘great Beau’), the object of desire (‘glim star’) and a particular action (‘bulk’), and are explicitly attributed and exclusive to the Jenny’s criminal gang. In the description of Jenny’s Adventure in the *Malefactor Register*, we find no instances of marginal vocabulary use for the terms “gentlemen”, “ring”, and “finger”. Also, the excerpt in the *Malefactor’s Register* includes less detail; in the Ordinary’s Account, we find a description of how Jenny signalled to her gang members to push the gentlemen forward on her account, whereas this detail is omitted from the *Malefactor’s Register*. The difference in use and absence of marginal vocabulary in the Ordinary’s Accounts and The *Malefactor’s Register* can be explained through the difference in the overall purpose of each text type. The Ordinary’s Accounts are clearly written with the idea of presenting an entertaining and moralistic text about Jenny Diver in mind, so the linguistic choices made

in these texts serve a persuasive purpose. The *Malefactor's Register* on the other hand, lacks this persuasive motive and reproduces the content of 'popular' texts to pass on these intriguing stories of notorious criminals from one reader to another. Though both texts report the same content, the language used in *The Malefactor's Register* is much more succinct, and lacks detail, which may explain why we do not find the reproduction of marginal vocabulary in this text. The marginal vocabulary in the Ordinary's Accounts, on the other hand, adds an extra layer of detail to Jenny's life story, making it much more compelling; the absence of such vocabulary makes Jenny's narrative in the *Malefactor's Register* sound less entertaining and titillating.

The marginal terms play an important role in making Jenny Diver's narrative more entertaining. This is also evidenced by the lack of marginal vocabulary use in the last part of the Account. In the last section of Jenny Diver's account, we find a shift in the way in which Jenny is portrayed towards the end of her life; she is no longer the romanticised figure who has all these clever techniques to rob people, but rather someone who has to pay for the consequences of her misdeeds. The tone and overall style of the Account here is graver and more serious compared to earlier parts of the account. Example (6) shows an excerpt of Jenny's final words, which is presented in first person, as if Jenny spoke these actual words herself and addresses the reader directly:

- (6) As I am in a few Days to suffer for what I most justly deserved, and am to give an Account to the righteous Judge of all things for my past wicked Transactions, I thought it a Duty incumbent on me, as I could no other Way make Restitutions, to publish an Account of my past misspent miserable Life; I know in doing this, I shall give much Offence to those Person who have been Partners in my Crimes and Partakers of ill got Goods; but let them consider 'ere 'tis too late, that the Course they are now pursuing, will one Day or other bring them into my sad State! (Ordinary's Account Jenny Diver, 18 March 1741)

The language used in this excerpt is rather at odds compared to other instances of speech representation we have seen in the Ordinary's Account, since the language use in this excerpt come across as more written rather than spoken. The sentence structure is exceptionally lengthy, and in terms of word choice we do not find instances of marginal vocabulary or euphemisms, but rather elaborate and formulaic language ("I thought it a Duty incumbent on me, as I could no other Way make Restitutions"). Such a language choice and style fits the moral purpose of such biographical sketches, namely to expose the sins of the criminals. The criminal is presented as someone who has realised her mistakes. By undergoing the punishment/sentence given, the prisoner will receive God's forgiveness, and will be forgiven by the eighteenth-century public. The prisoner's stories are set as an example to the reading public, and the message is that one should not follow into their footsteps. The fact that the Ordinary reproduces Jenny's use of marginal vocabulary in her biographical account and that he presents Jenny's final words in such a formulaic manner, shows the Ordinary's interference in making linguistic and stylistic

choices in reconstructing Jenny's narrative according to his communicative purposes, namely to provide both an entertaining and moralistic story of Jenny's life.

#### 4.5.1.2. *Negotiating identity*

Apart from the reproduction of actual marginal lexical items, the Ordinary also makes strategic use of metalanguage in the written record for the portrayal of the prisoner as an exotic character, which is similar to what the courtroom recorder did in the Sessions Paper. I argue that the Ordinary's metalinguistic commentary does important identity and social work for him. On the one hand, the Ordinary is acting as a translator to translate the marginal terms for the reader. The Ordinary narrator positions himself as an authoritative figure/translator in terms of his knowledge of the marginal vocabulary (his source is obviously, or presumably from the prisoner directly), by revealing the lexical meanings of the marginal terms, and which the eighteenth-century reader of the Ordinary's Account is presumably not familiar with. In the Ordinary's Accounts we find that the Ordinary strategically includes the glosses to clarify the meanings of the marginal term, as seen in Jenny Diver's account, as well as in excerpt (7):

- (7) [...] the Woman of the House looked out of Window and asked who was there, he answered Will. Lewis, I have got three **Clinks** to sell (**meaning the Tankards**) upon which she replied she would have nothing to do with them (Ordinary's Account William Lewis, 22 September 1735)

Like the courtroom recorder, the Ordinary educates his reader about the marginal vocabulary that the prisoners would use for their secret communication, as well as revealing the lexical meanings of these terms in order to help the reader recognise these terms. In doing so, he aims to bridge the gap between the reader and the underworld, and he also directs the reader's interpretation of knowing these terms (to help them get passive knowledge of the terms). In bridging the gap between the exclusive and technical knowledge of the thieves and that of the eighteenth-century general public, the Ordinary is constantly and consciously reconstructing his identity as a mediator by positioning himself in relation to the people he is writing about (the thieves) and the audience he is writing for (eighteenth-century public).

If the Ordinary had not included a gloss within the text, then the editor would have done so. In example (8), we find two kinds of glosses which are included by the editor for a pragmatic purpose.

- (8) I formerly agreed with †**Ruggety Madge**, to go upon \***biting the Culls of their scouts** when they were bung; in order that we might successfully manage our intended Enterprizes, we took an old uninhabited House, which nobody car'd to live in, near Plumbtree-street, St. Giles's; one of the Rooms we furnish'd with an old Bedstead and a Blanket, with the addition of two or three old rickety Chairs.  
†**Ruggety Madge, otherwise Margery Stanton, executed for the same Fact.**

### **\*Robbing Persons whom they pick up of their watches**

(Ordinary's Account Catherine Lineham, 31 July 1741)

The first gloss is a translation of 'Ruggety Madge', the cant alias of Catherine's companion, who also happens to be executed for the same offence. The second gloss is to clarify the marginal expression "biting the culls of their scouts", to a reader who has possibly never heard of the expression. In my view, the editor glosses the terms for the sake of the reader (who likes to be well-informed of the latest information) and to broaden the reader's understanding of the text. In addition, the glosses give us an indication of the target audience that Printed Ordinary's Accounts was aimed at, namely an eighteenth-century reader who was supposedly not familiar with the marginal language associated with thieves, but who might benefit from this specialised knowledge. Examples (7) and (8) show that the Ordinary and the editor are in control of the text and how much meta-information they want to reveal to their reader. The crucial function of adding these glosses is to direct the reader's interpretation of the text.

In the written record, the Ordinary narrator also makes use of his 'authority' as a mediator to comment on the marginal vocabulary use by the prisoner. He does so through the inclusion of metalinguistic commentary through the voice of a third person narrator. The effect is that the Ordinary influences how a reader should or might react to the content of the accounts, or to the reporting of them (Traugott 2011: 73; see also Hodson 2014; and Jaworski, Coupland and Galansinski 2004: 3-4)

- (9) This scheme succeeded pretty well for some Time, but having no Money to satisfy his Landlord at the stated Time of Payment, and fearing least his Credit should thereupon be questioned, or called into Dispute, he was wont (in order to remove any Suspicion) to write Letters to his Father (or rather pretend only so to do) as a noted Wine-Merchant at Bourdeaux, desiring to transmit such Sums of Money to him at a particular Time, and upon a particular Occasion! Then he used to write suitable Answers thereto, promising the Remittance of such desired Sums, and so leave them carelesly in his Room, for the Inspection and Satisfaction of his Landlord; and when such poor Shifts and Evasions could serve his Turn no longer, he then made off with what he could most conveniently carry away, and so **(to speak in the common cant Phrase) bilk'd his Lodgings** (Ordinary's Account, Abraham Pass 21 November 1743)

In example (9), the Ordinary narrator adds the metalinguistic comment "to speak in the common cant Phrase" to the marginal expression 'bilk'd his Lodgings' through his narrator's voice. The description of this expression as a "common cant Phrase" highlights the fact that it is marginal, something which has a specialised meaning, but is also linguistically deviant from the rest of the text (i.e. linguistic foregrounding). In other words, the inclusion of metalinguistic comments with reference to the marginal vocabulary shows that the Ordinary is in control of telling and presenting the prisoner's life story. Metalanguage is used as a strategic means adopted by the Ordinary to direct the

reader in interpreting specialised terms like ‘bilk’ as the marginal vocabulary named ‘cant’.

At the same time, the Ordinary negotiates and makes use of his authority as a mediator between the underworld and the general reader to make evaluative judgements about the language use and the speakers. The Ordinary then uses not only his mediator position to direct what the readers should make of the marginal terms, namely that they are associated with thieves and that they are distinctive terms, but he also makes strategic use of metalanguage to make evaluative judgements about the people who use the marginal vocabulary, namely the prisoners or criminals that he was writing about. As Halliday (1978) notes, metalanguage about particular language varieties or dialect does not only convey attitudes about language itself, but about the people who use this language, and even a whole world view:

A social dialect is the embodiment of a mildly but distinctly different world view – one which therefore potentially threatening, if it does not coincide with one’s own. This is undoubtedly the explanation of the violent attitudes to nonstandard speech commonly held by speakers of a standard dialect: the conscious motif of ‘I don’t like their vowels’ symbolises an underlying motif of ‘I don’t like their values’ (Halliday 1978: 179)

So when the Ordinary makes a particular metalinguistic comment in the Ordinary’s Account, he also sometimes conveys a particular evaluative stance about the people using that language in order to represent them in a particular way. Glosses, for example, draw attention to the fact that the criminals are speaking a different language and that they are the other (different identity from the Ordinary and the general public). In such way, he creates social distance between himself and the subject represented. He does so using various linguistic strategies, namely explicit metalinguistic commentary, glosses and linguistic they-ing.

In example (10) the Ordinary explicitly attributes this kind of marginal vocabulary to thieves, through the metalinguistic comment (“what the thieves call”). This is another example of the Ordinary’s influence in negotiating how the terms ‘fence’ and ‘lock’ should be interpreted:

- (10) He set himself up for a thief of consequence, and as it is the fashion with such, he kept **what the thieves call a Fence, or Lock; i.e. a place for the reception and disposition of stolen goods.** (Ordinary’s Account Patrick Cave, 26 July 1745)

The metalinguistic comment draws attention to the alien nature of the language that is associated with the low life. The glosses mark a non-normative, marked, and alien quality upon the thieves and the language they use. In addition, the glosses reinforce the idea of these marginal terms as a distinctive lexicon, as opposed to the text that is written in mainstream English. This builds on the assumption that the prisoners and the criminal world are constructed as deviant from the norm “non-threatening and non-violent citizen”. This kind of metalinguistic comment contributes to the linguistic representation



of the prisoner as ‘exotic’, and ‘deviant’. From the perspective of the Ordinary, we can argue that he is representing the prisoner as the other, given that the Ordinary has no social affiliation with the prisoner and his criminal lifestyle. Rather, he is someone who has close connections with the underworld for professional purposes, namely to publish the prisoner’s stories, in which the prisoner is presented as someone who displays immoral behaviour and actions in his life and that the eighteenth-century reader should not follow.

Another way to increase the social distance between himself and the subject representation (and which is also part of other representation) is the use of linguistic they-ing and we-ing. We saw ‘linguistic they-ing’ already in the Sessions Papers, but it seems even more so in the Ordinary’s Account that the Ordinary is applying this technique in order to represent a group that is involved in criminal activities. From the Ordinary’s perspective, the thieves and the underworld are the outgroup, since they engage in those activities that the Ordinary disapproves of. In example (11), the Ordinary includes linguistic they-ing and a linguistic label to create social distance for the sake of marginalising them:

- (11) This escape was followed with no other consequence, but an encouragement for him still to go on with his old companions in iniquity, and in his old courses on the highway, and street-robberies, ‘till, as before observed, he robbed a man at a house in **Chick-lane, an old resort for such sort of people, called in their cant term, a flash-house**. This poor man, a stranger in the town, as he passed along the Fleet, enquired, who replied, she knew no such person. Immediately a boy, who was upon **(what they call) the lay**, stepped up to him, and told him, he was going to the person he enquired son (Ordinary’s Account William Wilson, 1 April 1754)

Note the evaluative comment “such sort of people”, which expresses the Ordinary’s contempt for this group of people, and almost some kind of moral superiority. In essence, in using linguistic they-ing, the Ordinary also disparages the prisoners and his gang. In this case, the representation of the prisoner as exotic serves to marginalise them. The metalinguistic comment (such sort of people) is pejorative and suggests depreciation (see also Coupland 1999: 4). This negative evaluation ties in with the overall purpose of the written account, namely to demonstrate that the prisoner was engaged in an immoral and indecent lifestyle. The Ordinary conveys his negative evaluation about the prisoner’s life style and the language these people use in order to portray them in a negative light, so that the reader would not be encouraged to follow their example. The Ordinary perceives this lifestyle as threatening and does not shy away from expressing his views about the criminal lifestyle through metalinguistic commentary.

Sometimes we find explicit metalinguistic commentary about language in addition to linguistic they-ing, which makes explicit the Ordinary’s views on the people that he is representing. In example (12), the Ordinary makes use of linguistic they-ing in his metalinguistic commentary about the use of terms like ‘the lay’, ‘clacking’ and ‘bilking the taverns’:

- (12) But to return to Ramsey, and Carr; this Booty produced them upwards of ten Guineas, which they equally shared; but this Money being gone, they employed their Wits once more to raise a Recruit. In order to do this, they went upon (**Excuse the Use of their Cant honest Language, having no proper Expression for it, viz.) the Lay, Clacking, or Bilking the Taverns**, after the following manner, viz. (Ordinary's Account Robert Ramsey, 13 January 1742)

The Ordinary is clearly conscious of the way he uses these expressions and apologises to the reader that he had no choice but to use these not-so-proper expressions. The reason why he uses these expressions is because he has no alternative way of describing this, that is, there is no exact equivalent in the 'standard' language to describe these. So here the Ordinary narrator is very conscious of the fact that he is using these expressions, and that he might not have used them if he found a proper expression for it. This shows also how some of these marginal expressions are unique to describe technical concepts, but also carry certain values. Another reading of the label 'proper' is built on the assumption that the Ordinary has a norm for proper language use (in this case Standard English, and that the marginal vocabulary called 'cant' is not proper.<sup>38</sup> His writing is directed to a middle, reading class, who may not be familiar with the terms, but the fact that the Ordinary narrator makes this apology to the reader, suggests that the Ordinary felt reluctant to use terms like 'the lay', 'clacking' and 'bilking' because they belong to this marginal group of people who should be looked down upon because they commit all these indecent crimes.

In addition to linguistic they-ing, we also find the Ordinary's reconstruction of the criminal underworld as 'exotic', indirectly through first person narrations.<sup>39</sup> In such rare examples, the Ordinary lets the prisoner speak through his own voice as if he were to tell his life story directly to the reader, and also lets them construct their own linguistic identities through the use of marginal vocabulary and metalanguage:

- (13) Two Nights after this, I and my Fellowman, went to Wapping and there stole a bundle of Flannel, at a Slop-shop **upon the Sneak, that is, learning into Peoples Shop**, to see if we could take any Thing without being Discover'd; we Sold the Flannel for 11. 3s. which was worth about 6 l. The same Night we got three **Snow-Balls, that is, three Sugar Loaves**, which we Sold for 5d. per Pound, **to a Person we call Fence (that is, one that Buys what we steal)** in Petticoat-Lane, overagainst the Marlborough's-Head (Ordinary's Account Thomas Beck, 22 May 1732)

Thomas Beck talks about one of his criminal adventures which he describes as "upon the sneak". In his narrative, Thomas Beck considers marginal vocabulary as 'their' language, the language of thieves ("to a person we call fence, one that buys what we steal"). Such representation reinforces the idea of the thieves as belonging to this world that is exclusive

---

<sup>38</sup> The term 'proper' can be interpreted in two ways. First, 'proper' can refer to senses denoting suitability or conformity, see sense 1. Suitable for a specified or implicit purpose or requirement; appropriate to the circumstances or conditions; of the requisite standard or type; apt, fitting; correct, right (OED Online 2015). Secondly, it can relate to a certain norm., see sense 2a. Conforming to recognised social standards or etiquette; decent, decorous, respectable, seemly. Freq. in predicative use. (OED Online 2015)

<sup>39</sup> First person narrations of the prisoner's life are less common than third person narration.

and those involved in the criminal lifestyle, and that they make use of marginal vocabulary that it is unintelligible to anyone but themselves.

To conclude, the Ordinary, as a mediator of the world of the prisoner and the eighteenth-century reader, uses metalanguage strategically in the Ordinary's Accounts to influence and negotiate how an utterance is or should have been heard (see also Jaworski, Coupland and Galansinski 2004: 3-4). In addition, the Ordinary communicates his attitudes about the prisoner through metalanguage, which fits the overall purpose of the printed Ordinary's Account, namely to make a negative evaluation about the prisoner's life, and to advise the eighteenth-century reader not to follow in the prisoner's footsteps.

#### 4.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I explored the question whether marginal vocabulary is used in the Old Bailey texts, and if so how marginal vocabulary is used in these genres. I conducted lexical-based searches in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* database to locate instances of marginal vocabulary use in these texts. Like Berry (2012), my lexical-based keyword searches of marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey resource was very productive in identifying marginal vocabulary in historical texts. The evidence generated by the keyword searches shows that this kind of language was reproduced and used in the courtroom and was preserved in the written record. The marginal terms were attributed to the criminals and metalinguistically commented upon. The terms were actively used by real people as a jargon in the courtroom in their testimonies and questions, and then reproduced in the written records.

My interpretation of marginal vocabulary use through historical discourse analysis has provided important insights into the communicative functions and meanings of marginal vocabulary in the trial records. As for the functions, I have demonstrated that the use of marginal vocabulary was indeed used strategically for different communicative purposes for different people in the different sub texts of the Old Bailey texts. In the Sessions Papers, marginal vocabulary is used strategically in two communicative contexts, namely (1) the testimonies provided in court by the witnesses, defendants, victims, and (2) the Printed Sessions Papers written by the court recorder and the editor. In the first case, marginal vocabulary and metalanguage is strategically used as a speaker pragmatic device in the testimonies to prove the defendant guilty or innocent, depending on who is using it (victim, witnesses, defendant, court officials). On the level of the printed Sessions Papers, marginal vocabulary is strategically reproduced for the purpose of news reportage, to provide a particular picture of what was said in the courtroom. I argued that reproducing the marginal vocabulary in the transcriptions added to the portrayal of the defendant/prisoner as an immoral person, and to highlight culpability of the defenders (Emsley, Hitchcock and Shoemaker 2014). These people were dangerous because they made use of obscure language to talk about their illegal practices. The fact that the witness

statements covered the majority of the space in the Sessions Papers, and in which marginal vocabulary is reproduced, shows that the marginal terms do play a role in providing a particular stance on how the courtroom discourse was represented in the texts, and that this had a clear ideological purpose.

In the Printed Ordinary's Accounts, I argued that the Ordinary has carefully selected and reproduced the marginal terms used by the prisoners in accordance with the purpose of the text, namely to create a sensational story of the criminal's life. This is evidenced in the biographical part, where we find clustering of marginal vocabulary to sensationalise this person's life, and to present the prisoner as a kind of an antihero. But as soon as the Ordinary introduces the moral lesson into his account, the tone of the account becomes more serious, and marginal vocabulary is no longer found in the representation of the prisoner's final days. In strategically making use of marginal vocabulary and metalanguage, the Ordinary wants to convince and influence the reader's interpretation of the prisoner's story, namely that one should not following in the prisoner's footsteps, or one will be punished for his misdeeds.

Finally, my historical discourse analysis has demonstrated that marginal vocabulary can do important social and identity work for the people using it in the Old Bailey texts, especially to create social distance. Sometimes the speakers make metalinguistic comments, which fulfil 'social relation' work in creating social distance between the speaker and the topic (defendant), and to portray the prisoner as an exotic and dangerous person who needs to be punished for his misdeeds. Even the criminal offenders themselves try to distance themselves from using marginal vocabulary in denying knowing these words. At the level of the printed texts, the court recorder and the Ordinary draw attention to the fact that the marginal terms are a special register associated with a particular type of people through linguistic and visual foregrounding. In the process, I argued that both the courtroom reporter and the Ordinary negotiate their position/identity as a mediator of the topic that they are writing about (the criminal underworld) and the audience that they are writing for (middle-class, non-criminal audience) through the strategic use of metalinguistic commentary. On the one hand, in glossing the marginal vocabulary, the Ordinary acts as a translator in narrowing the gap in knowledge between the underworld and the general eighteenth-century reader. As for his relation/position towards the underworld, the glosses contain some form of evaluation, and in highlighting the specialised nature of the marginal vocabulary, the Ordinary creates social distance between himself and the topic he is writing about.

So marginal vocabulary was used as jargon by the speakers in court and by the prisoners and reproduced in the printed Sessions Papers and Ordinary's Accounts. This language was actively used by actual members of the low life as a kind of jargon to refer to specialised concepts that relate to the criminal lifestyle (meaning the defendants and the prisoner). However, we also see an expansion of the use of these terms to court officials, which is not surprising because the court officials have a professional relationship with the

criminals who use jargon in the courtroom and who have picked up the language. So there is an expansion of the use of thieves' slang amongst a wider range of members of society. Marginal vocabulary is used by different people, not just the low life but also the lawyers who are related to the criminals in professional ways. The reproduction of marginal vocabulary in the printed texts show that marginal vocabulary was no longer exclusive to the low life, but had become exposed to a wider public. In the next chapter, we will see what happens to marginal vocabulary in the rest of the eighteenth-century texts.

## **Marginal language use in texts selected from the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online***

### 5.1. Introduction

In the last chapter, I found evidence of marginal vocabulary use by real people in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* records, and demonstrated how these terms were used strategically for particular communicative purposes. However, the use of marginal vocabulary in these texts tells us only how it was used in a small part of the expanding print culture of the eighteenth century, namely the *Old Bailey Proceedings* (see Shoemaker 2009). What happens to marginal vocabulary in the rest of the eighteenth-century texts? The aim of this chapter is to explore the extent to which marginal vocabulary occurs in the eighteenth century, how it is used in these texts, and whether the terms undergo a change in meaning over the course of the century. As the largest electronic resource of eighteenth-century texts to date, the *Eighteenth Century Collection Online* (ECCO) offers a wonderful opportunity to explore marginal vocabulary in eighteenth-century discourse beyond the Old Bailey. Another reason to explore marginal vocabulary use in ECCO is that its vast coverage of texts allows us to explore the extent to which marginal vocabulary becomes widened in its use and meaning over the course of the eighteenth century.

This chapter is structured as follows. Firstly, in section 5.2, I will briefly discuss the ECCO resource, the kinds of texts that the resource holds, and the value of the resource for conducting linguistic research. In section 5.3, I will discuss the methodology and procedures to locate marginal vocabulary use in the ECCO texts, as well as the nature of the evidence produced. I conducted a keyword search of a specific linguistic form ('cull') as my method to locate its occurrence, as well as what other marginal vocabulary items occur in the co-text. The motivation for using 'cull' is that it is a term that has both a general and highly specific meaning, which allows one to check the extent to which it is restricted to crime-related texts, and how it is used in other genres. In section 5.4, I discuss in more detail the kinds of contexts/genres in which 'cull' and other marginal vocabulary occurs to gain a better understanding of the nature of the texts, its content, and the conditions in which they are produced. This kind of background information is essential when we conduct a historical pragmatic analysis of how marginal vocabulary language is used, because we need to consider this kind of language not only in relation to the co-text, but also the wider situational context, i.e. the texts themselves and who wrote them. After my discussion of how 'cull' and other marginal vocabulary is distributed across a wide variety of eighteenth-century texts, I conduct a historical pragmatic analysis of how these terms are used in the various genres in section 5.5. That is, I look more closely how 'cull' and other marginal vocabulary occur in the co-text, and

reconstruct their communicative meaning. My analysis of marginal vocabulary use in the ECCO texts shows that they are reproduced, appropriated and metalinguistically commented upon. My argument is that these processes contribute to the enregisterment of marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts. The terms are no longer secretive but widespread in public works and part of the public awareness in the eighteenth century. Depending on the context in which they are used, the terms may or may not change their lexical meanings and lose their criminal associations. Finally, this chapter ends with the conclusion in section 5.6.

## 5.2. About the *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO)

The *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (hereafter ECCO) is an electronic resource that has currently the largest collection of printed texts in the eighteenth century to date. The initial source of ECCO was the *Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue* (ESTC), a paper catalogue which contains an overview of short titles of a great number of pamphlets and other ephemeral material printed in English speaking countries between 1700 and 1800 (Gale Cengage Learning 2009). This project gave rise to a massive digitisation project, in which the full texts of all these short titles were digitised and made available online. The original works that were digitised came from a number of institutions across the world including the British Library, the Bodleian, Cambridge University, Harvard University, Library of Congress, the Huntington Library and the University of Manchester. The digitisation of such a large body of eighteenth-century texts is immensely valuable in humanities research because the resource offers easy access to one of the most extensive libraries of eighteenth-century English books in the world (Gale Cengage Learning 2009). In particular, ECCO's value as a linguistic source has been recognised in histories of English and historical pragmatics (see Kytö 2010: 43-45, Kytö and Pahta 2012: 131, Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 15, Jucker et al 2013: 6, Taavitsainen and Jucker 2010: 11, Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 17). As Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007: 17) note, the wide coverage offers the opportunity to explore new research questions. At present, ECCO contains over 180,000 titles (200,000 volumes) which include books, pamphlets, essays, broadsides and literary texts in a wide range of genres. Many are primarily written in English but there are also other languages. Each of these texts is full-text searchable – every word on over 33 million pages, can be viewed and downloaded as digital page images. Like the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, ECCO has a built-in search facility which allows one to search for the occurrence of keywords across the whole collection. The search engine is able to produce a list of 'hits' - links to the titles of the works and clicking the links will display the photographic facsimile of the pages where the search term appears with the search term highlighted (Berland 2006: 392, 394; see also Spedding 2011). For the study of the history of English and other languages, this search engine is a very fruitful way of identifying keywords in different texts, as well as generating the excerpts in which the terms occur. These excerpts can be studied in more detail by doing

a discourse analysis of how they are used, since the full texts in which these excerpts occur are fully accessible online.

### 5.2.1. *Linguistic value of ECCO*

ECCO is a good resource for exploring how marginal vocabulary is used for the following reasons. Its collection is vast enough for us to be able to find evidence of marginal vocabulary in the texts. As mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the challenges in eliciting evidence of marginal vocabulary in historical texts is that it is not easily traceable in the texts. That is, marginal vocabulary tends to be restrictive in its use and has very specific functions, so this kind of language would not be easily exposed in written material of the past. In order to be able to survey where marginal vocabulary is used, one needs a resource that is large enough to be able to locate these terms in very specific circumstances and marginal contexts. A small-scale resource or corpus will hardly be able to produce evidence of marginal vocabulary in the texts. ECCO is comprehensive enough to be able to elicit different types of contexts in which marginal vocabulary is used. In other words, ECCO allows us to conduct fine-grained lexical searches, and to explore the extent to which specific keyword searches of lexical items would lead to types of contexts (co-text) in which not only the search term itself occurs in context, but also other kinds of marginal vocabulary items.

ECCO thus is a good testing ground to check the feasibility of doing keyword searches in electronic resources for historical linguistic research. My hypothesis is that keyword searches in ECCO are feasible enough to produce types of contexts in which marginal vocabulary is used in a wide range of genres beyond the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. That is because ECCO contains texts on a wide diversity of genres and subjects, such as religion, social sciences and fine arts, literature and language, but also texts on history and geography, and medicine, science and technology. The coverage of these texts in ECCO is the largest in the subject areas ‘Religion and Philosophy’, ‘Social Sciences’ and ‘Literature and Language’, as the following statistics from the ECCO website shows: *Religion and Philosophy* (26.4%), *Social Sciences and Fine Arts* (25%), *Literature and Language* (23.8%), *Medicine, Science and Technology* (7.8%), *Historical and Geography* (7.5%), *Law* (7%), and *General Reference* (2.5%) (Gale Cengage Learning 2009). We can survey the use of this kind of language in the wide universe of eighteenth-century discourse and map out in which kind of texts marginal vocabulary is used across the period. It allows us to check whether and how marginal vocabulary occurs in eighteenth-century discourse beyond the *Old Bailey Proceedings*. In addition, we can also check the individual titles of the excerpts in which the marginal vocabulary occurs and which can be subjected to a historical pragmatic analysis. Then we can also compare and contrast the use of marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts with its use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings*.



The final motivation for using ECCO as a resource in my study is that its large-scale collection of texts offers not only the opportunity to look at the pragmatic uses of marginal vocabulary in individual texts, but also to study changing uses and meanings of this specialised terminology, and question the extent to which marginal vocabulary became more widespread over the course of time. As Sorensen (2004: 447) argues, the eighteenth century saw a gradual shift of marginal vocabulary that is known as ‘cant’ from a highly specific technical jargon associated with the underworld and vagrancy to a type of lexis that became more popular and common. Sorensen (2004) drew her claim from the evidence provided by the eighteenth-century canting dictionaries. With ECCO, we can test this hypothesis by checking whether the change in the perception of marginal vocabulary is also reflected in the way in which it is actually used in the eighteenth-century printed texts themselves. If we find marginal vocabulary use in ECCO in a large range of contexts, we can then explore whether there is a link between widening of genres or application in different contexts and widening of meaning. The hypothesis would be that widening of genres means greater accessibility of the terms to an eighteenth-century public, and therefore possibly generalisation of meaning. That is to say, when marginal vocabulary enters the public awareness, then it would go beyond the confines of the criminal contexts (as seen in Old Bailey when offenders use it in the courtroom), and enters the public domain. Then everyone who reads the texts will recognise these terms and then can use the terms in different contexts and can consciously change the lexical meanings of the terms when used in a new context. This leads us to the assumption that marginal vocabulary may lose its criminal connotations (social meanings) and expand its meaning to acquire a meaning beyond the specific meaning that the term has when used by criminals.

### 5.3. Methodology and methods: Producing the evidence

In this section I describe the methodology I used and explain how I searched for marginal vocabulary in ECCO. I largely followed the same procedure as I did with the Old Bailey material. First I will give the rationale for using my method - using one lexical item, ‘cull’, as a way into the ECCO material. Then I will lay out the search procedures for searching the material, and how I checked each of the ‘hits’ manually and qualitatively.

In order to trace the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in ECCO, I conducted a keyword search of one particular linguistic item. This was a diagnostic exercise in order to discover texts in which the marginal term appears, but more importantly, the extent to which this diagnostic search leads us to excerpts in which ‘cull’ occurs alongside other types of marginal vocabulary. The purpose of this keyword search is to assess how feasible this search is for producing excerpts in which other marginal vocabulary is used. My initial search procedure draws partly on a corpus method in tracing the distribution of this particular keyword and possibly other marginal vocabulary in the various texts that ECCO represent, and to give an overview of the different genres in which marginal vocabulary

occurs.<sup>40</sup> This approach allows us to answer the first research question, namely whether we find marginal vocabulary in the wider universe of eighteenth-century discourse. What distinguishes my study from a corpus study is that I am not interested only in *whether* my keyword occurs in the data and *where* (the kinds of genres in which) the keyword occurs, but more importantly, *how* and *why* marginal vocabulary is used in the texts. In other words, the corpus method is a first diagnostic step in generating contextual evidence of where the keyword occurs. The next step is then to further assess the excerpts in which marginal vocabulary occurs in much more qualitative detail, to compare and contrast the use of this kind of lexis amongst the various genres, including the Old Bailey texts, and to find out whether the meanings of marginal vocabulary become generalised over the course of time. I am interested in both the distribution of the terms across various genres, as well as in the actual use of these terms in the different genres and individual texts.

### 5.3.1. *Rationale for using 'cull' to search for marginal vocabulary*

The method I chose is to do a keyword search in ECCO. Given that I am interested in the kinds of contexts in which the term occurs, as well as in its potential widening in meaning, we need to choose a marginal term which is sufficiently well known in the period as a term, so that it would most likely occur in the ECCO resource. If it is well-known, then we would have a higher chance to find this term in a wider range of texts than when we use a term that is more marginal and more restricted in its use. Secondly, we need to have a term which has both a specialised meaning, as well as more general meaning, if we want to explore the extent to which the lexical meanings of marginal vocabulary becomes widened.

The term that I chose as my keyword is 'cull', which fulfils both criteria, namely (1) that it was a well-known marginal term in the period, and (2) that it is versatile in its lexical meaning in that it can be used both specifically as well as generally. According to the OED, 'cull' was first attested in *In Vino Veritas* 25 (1698) to refer to "a dupe, silly fellow, simpleton, fool; a man, fellow, chap" ("How prettily we top upon those Rum Culls called Gentlemen") (OED Online 2015). We also have contemporary evidence of the popularity of the term 'cull' from its recording in a number of canting dictionaries published in the period, as seen in Table 3 below. The fact that the term 'cull' is listed in a wide range of canting dictionaries suggests that the term has considerable longevity as a marginal term over the course of the period. In addition, the dictionary entries demonstrate the fact that

---

<sup>40</sup> I should note that my definition of 'distribution' differs from how it is used in corpus studies. 'Distribution' in my sense refers to the kinds of texts and genres in which the keyword is used, but does not indicate exact numbers of frequencies of the occurrence of this keyword.

the term has both a specific and general meaning.<sup>41</sup> The term may or may not require specification, depending on how it is used.

**Table 3 Dictionary definitions of ‘cull’ in eighteenth-century canting dictionaries (taken from But 2013: 133)**

<b>Year of publication</b>	<b>Title of canting dictionary</b>	<b>Definition of ‘cull’</b>
1725	<i>New Canting Dictionary</i>	Cull, a Man either Honest, or otherwise. <i>A Bob-Cull</i> , a Sweet-humour’d Man to a wench. <i>The Cull naps us</i> ; The Person robb’d, apprehends us. <i>A curst Cull</i> , an ill-natured Fellow, a Churl to a Woman.
1785	Francis Grose, <i>A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue</i>	Cull, a man, honest or otherways; (cant) (A bob cull, a good natured quiet fellow)
1790	George Parker, <i>Life’s Painter of Variegated Characters</i>	Applied [in] many ways, such as a rum cull, a queer cull, a fool, rogue, thief, flat, sharp &c.
1795	James Caulfield, <i>Blackguardiana</i>	Cull, a man, honest or otherways; (cant) (A bob cull, a good natured quiet fellow)
1795	Humphry Tristram Potter, <i>New Dictionary of all the Cant and Flash Languages</i>	Cull, men who are made easy preys to a whore, there are many of this description, such as keeping culls, flogging culls, coffin culls, bleeding culls, ruff culls, hanging culls, and knowing culls

In the earliest dictionary entry in the *New Canting Dictionary* (1725), as well as Francis Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) and James Caulfield’s *Blackguardiana* (1795), ‘cull’ refers to “a man” who is “honest” or who has another personality trait. If the term is used without a modifier, it can refer to a victim of a robbery (see the sentence “the cull naps us” to refer to “the person [being] robb’d”). If the term is used with a modifier, then it provides a special characteristic of the man being described. So a ‘curst cull’ refers to a “bad person” (an ill-natured fellow), and a ‘bob cull’ to a ‘good’ fellow, and can implicitly refer to a client of a prostitute. George Parker’s (1790) definition of the term expresses

<sup>41</sup> As for the gap between 1725 and 1785, ‘cull’ was not recorded as a separate item in canting dictionaries published in this period, i.e. *The Scoundrel’s Dictionary* (1754), *The Triumph of Wit: and Compleat Cant-Book* (1767) and *The Triumph of Wit: or, the Canting Dictionary* (1780).

versatility of its use and meanings, in that ‘cull’ can be “applied [in] many ways”. The term can be modified by ‘rum’ or ‘queer’ and may refer to a wide range of men. It may be used to refer to a victim (‘flat’), or to men who are on the criminal side of the coin (‘rogue’, ‘thief’), as well as persons who may be fools or ‘sharps’ (“a sharp person”) more generally. Finally, Potter’s (1795) definition of the term is more specialised and specific than the other dictionary definitions, referring to “men who are made easy preys to a whore”, in other words to denote a client of a prostitute. He notes that ‘cull’ has this specific meaning when it occurs alongside modifiers in the expressions like ‘keeping culls’, ‘flogging culls’, and ‘bleeding culls’.

The definitions of ‘cull’ in the dictionaries listed in Table 3 demonstrate differences and versatility in the lexical meaning of the term, and are a useful indicator of meaning changes of the term (Coleman 2012b: 103). However, we should bear in mind that the inclusion and the labelling of a term as ‘cant’ reflect the perspective of the person compiling the dictionary and glossaries. The dictionary meanings of ‘cull’ suggest the conceptualisation of the term ‘cull’ as ‘cant’ by the individual dictionary compilers, but this is not indicative or representative of how it is used in a particular speech context or in actual use (see Coleman 2004). As Coleman (2012b: 101) notes, the dictionaries are “not representative of wider opinion”. In addition to the dictionary evidence that reflects the popularity of the term ‘cull’ in the eighteenth century, I found evidence of the actual use of ‘cull’ in the London courtroom in my case-study of marginal vocabulary use in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* in Chapter 4. Amongst the list of marginal terms that I looked up, ‘cull’ was one of the most frequent marginal terms that appeared in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* between 1700 and 1800 (34 instances of ‘cull’ and 4 instances of ‘culls’). This finding suggests that the term was well established and commonly used amongst actual criminals and low life members in the period. The speakers in court used the term in their testimonies to refer to their victims, as illustrated in the following example taken from the Sessions Papers:

- (1) John Ecklin. The prisoner, Anthony Whittle, Charles Campbel, Pendigrest and myself, were this same night (it was on Allhallows-day) drinking together at the India Arms in Rag-fair. We all five agreed to come up together to Drury-lane: as we were coming along Moorefields, we saw the prosecutor and his wife before us. Anthony Whittle said to me, there is a **stanch cull, i.e. a man worth while**, if you will we will touch him. I said, with all my heart (Sessions Paper James Field, 16 January 1751)

John Ecklin, the speaker in this excerpt who provides evidence in the case against James Field, the defendant, reports that Anthony Whittle, a companion of Field, used the expression ‘stanch cull’ to refer indirectly to their victims (“the prosecutor and his wife”), as seen from the co-text. The marginal expression is translated either by Ecklin himself in court in direct quotation to ensure that everyone understood it, and/or then the court recorder is concerned that the reader will not be familiar with the term, so adds the very written gloss (we can tell so by the use of ‘i.e.’). “A man worth taking a risk” is metalanguage, which tells us that the audience is not necessarily familiar with the term.

The modifier ‘stanch’ is included to convey the idea that this person is worth taking a risk over (“a man worth while”). The occurrence of the term ‘cull’ in the Old Bailey texts shows that the term was actively used by real-life people in the eighteenth century, in addition to being labelled as a marginal term in the canting dictionaries.

The common reference to ‘cull’ in the dictionaries and its frequent occurrence in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* is evidence of the status of ‘cull’ as a marginal term in the public imagination. This leads us to formulate the hypothesis that ‘cull’ as a common term is more likely to occur in contexts beyond the criminal than mere specialised, infrequent marginal terms such as ‘scamp’, which has a very specific usage and meaning (someone who goes on the highway to commit a robbery). ECCO, given its vast collection of eighteenth-century genres which feature a wide range of topics and characters, offers a good opportunity to test whether ‘cull’ occurs in contexts beyond the dictionaries and the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, and more importantly, the extent to which the term occurs amongst other marginal vocabulary in particular co-texts and contexts. So the aim of this keyword search is to generate contexts in the form of excerpts in which ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary is used, to survey its use in the different genres, and to study the use of marginal vocabulary in specific texts in more detail using a historical pragmatic framework.

### 5.3.2. *Search procedures keyword search ‘cull’*

I carried out a keyword search for ‘cull’ in ECCO in texts between 1700 and 1800 in the subject area ‘Literature and Language’ using the built-in search facility of ECCO. The reason for looking up ‘cull’ in the category ‘Literature and Language’ only is because I expect to find marginal vocabulary in literary, imaginative texts. As previous studies in the literature review in Chapter 2 show, early modern ‘cant’ occurs a lot in literary texts, and we would expect the same for marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth century. Since we have little evidence of how marginal vocabulary is used in eighteenth-century texts, searching for marginal vocabulary in this category provides a good testing ground to check whether marginal vocabulary is used beyond the narrow criminal environment that the Old Bailey texts represent. If so, it will also provide a good contrastive and comparative study of the use of marginal vocabulary in texts that feature real speakers (Old Bailey) and fictional characters (ECCO texts). One question to consider would be: Is marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts also used to represent the speech of low life characters, or do we find its use by other speakers who are not necessarily involved in the criminal lifestyle? I am aware that doing ECCO searches in the category ‘Literature and Language’ only does not allow for generalisations of the use of marginal vocabulary in fiction in the eighteenth century, because it may well be that fictional texts occur in other categories and genres. As far as I know, the editors of ECCO did not systematically label all fictional texts as ‘Language and Literature’. As such, my claims about the use of marginal vocabulary are thus only based on the material found through my keyword searches.

I searched for ‘cull’ the singular form only, because it is the most common spelling variant of the term that is widely recorded in the cant dictionaries (see Table 3) and because other spelling variants of the term (such as ‘cully’) appear to be rare (as I discovered when I did my keyword search for ‘cull’ in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*). Looking up the spelling variant forms and grammatical forms (‘culls’) would be required if I were to do a traditional corpus study which aims to report the exact frequencies of the occurrence of ‘cull’. But as indicated in the previous section, my keyword search is a diagnostic search to find occurrences of marginal vocabulary rather than looking for the use of ‘cull’ only. Looking for the singular form of ‘cull’ only suffices to serve its purpose as a diagnostic search. It would be an idea to use the forms ‘culls’ and ‘cully’ as a keyword in future searches in ECCO.

My pilot keyword search for ‘cull’ in But (2013) was fruitful in yielding occurrences of ‘cull’ in a wide variety of texts in the category ‘Literature and Language’ in the following decades (1700-1710, 1730-1740, 1760-1770, 1790-1800). For this study, I decided to do a full keyword search of ‘cull’ across the whole of the eighteenth century. This keyword search of ‘cull’ generated a list of 4,087 hits in total, which are contexts in which this particular lexical item was used. Each of those hits was checked qualitatively through content analysis. This qualitative assessment of the search results for ‘cull’ was a laborious process because the search facility generated a high number of false results, due to the nature of the ECCO texts. One characteristic of the ECCO texts is that they are facsimile copies of the original texts, and that they are produced from a process called *Optical Character Recognition* (OCR). This involves converting an image of a scanned page from a book into an electronic computer-editable text. The letters of the original texts are made of tiny dots (pixels) that form a picture of text altogether, so the text is not editable or searchable like transcribed texts (see Berland 2006). As a result, the search results that the keyword search for ‘cull’ generated in ECCO included many more ‘false’ results because the term was located on the basis of ‘scanning’. One type of search result that the keyword search for ‘cull’ produced was ‘false’ friends, which are examples of texts in which similar looking forms of ‘cull’ (‘cam’, ‘cum’, ‘dull’) were highlighted but misrecognised for ‘cull’, as in the following example:

- (2) Others have employed themselves on what never entered into the poet’s thoughts, in adapting a **dull** moral to every story, and making the persons of his poems to be only nick-names for such virtues or vices (*Poems on several occasions* 1751: 136)

In the *Old Bailey Proceedings* on the other hand, such false results of ‘cull’ did not occur because the texts have been transcribed, leading to more ‘accurate’ search results. So although in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, each search result had to be checked manually and qualitatively, the qualitative assessment of the search results produced by the search facility in ECCO took much more effort. It did not only produce instances of ‘cull’ in the texts, but also a very high number of ‘false’ results. Another error result that was produced is a “false positive”, a title which did not show a keyword highlighted within the text (Berland 2006: 412). However, the most important implication of the OCR nature of

the ECCO texts on generating evidence of marginal vocabulary use in ECCO is some occurrences of ‘cull’ may have simply gone unnoticed by the search engine, meaning that the evidence of the use of ‘cull’ in ECCO is not complete. The OCR nature of the ECCO texts is thus the key reason for doing qualitative analysis; the OCR technology makes identifying all possible instances of the term ‘cull’ impossible. So, the claims that I make about ‘cull’ in ECCO only account for the data that I managed to produce with this keyword search.

A second round of qualitative assessment involved checking whether the hits that contain ‘cull’ were indeed used as a noun to refer to a person, using the co-text as my guidance. Excerpts which include the use of ‘cull’ as a noun to refer to a person, were rewritten and copied into a Word document (the excerpts could not be directly copied and pasted, because the texts are scanned images). Excerpts that contained the use of ‘cull’ other than a noun were excluded:

- (3) The youthful bard, when first he roves,  
Thus wildly, thro’ Arcadian groves,  
Still longs to **cull** forbidden flow’rs,  
And wanton loose in rosy bow’rs:

*(The Festoon, a select collection of epigrams, panegyric, satirical,  
amorous 1780: 204)*

This example was excluded from my data collection because ‘cull’ is used as a verb here. The co-text reveals that ‘cull’ in this excerpt is used as a verb to refer to gather or plucking flowers.<sup>42</sup> Other excerpts that I did not include in my data collection were instances in which ‘Cull’ was used as a last name.

The searches also generate extracts in which ‘culls’ and ‘cully’ occur, which are related senses.<sup>43</sup> As I did not search for these forms in ECCO, I also did not focus on the excerpts in which ‘culls’ or ‘cully’ would appear in order to remain consistent. I simply focused on the excerpts in which ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary occurred, and did a discourse analysis of how marginal vocabulary is used in these texts, what functions it has, how it relates to the characterisation and so on.

#### 5.4. Types/contexts (co-texts and genres) of use of marginal vocabulary use in ECCO

---

<sup>42</sup> See OED entry for ‘cull’, v.1, sense 2. to gather, pick, pluck (flowers, fruits, etc.) (OED Online 2015)

<sup>43</sup> See OED entry for ‘cully’, n., sense 1. one who is cheated or imposed upon (e.g. by a sharper, strumpet, etc.); a dupe, gull; one easily deceived or taken in; a silly fellow, simpleton. (Much in use in the 17th c.). (OED Online 2015)

The qualitative assessment of each of my search results for ‘cull’ yielded 150 excerpts in which ‘cull’ occurs as a noun to refer to “a person, a man”. This confirms that we do have evidence of the use of ‘cull’ as a noun in a wide range of texts beyond the Old Bailey Proceeding texts, and that we have a widening of the use of ‘cull’ in a number of different genres. If we look at the co-text of these excerpts, we find either the occurrence of ‘cull’ alongside other marginal vocabulary (“That is a rum cull, let us bilk him of his scout”), or used on its own. In 45 out of 150 excerpts we find the occurrence of ‘cull’ alongside other marginal vocabulary. These kinds of co-texts validate the method as the means of diagnosing contexts in which marginal vocabulary is used, not just the term ‘cull’, but also other marginal vocabulary terms. When ‘cull’ does not occur with other marginal vocabulary, it can either occur with a modifying adjective or metalinguistic comment (“He is a rich cull”), or without any modification (“He said he had a cull upstairs”).

In order to get a better sense of the range of genres in which ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary was used in ECCO, I organised the excerpts according to format of the texts, and labelled them ‘prose’ or ‘verse’. These labels seem to be the most “neutral” way of organising the data (cf classifications according to genre, which are time-specific), and they are for heuristic purposes only. If ‘cull’ occurred in a sentence that follows a rhythmical structure and occurs in stanzas, then I would label the excerpt as ‘verse’. If the term occurs in a fully grammatical sentence and follows more or less the structure of natural speech, then I would label the excerpt as ‘prose’. Table 4 shows an overview of the range of texts in which ‘cull’ occurs according to the prose/verse label, and the publication date of these texts in quarter periods. The biggest genre group in which we find the excerpts of ‘cull’ is in verse (N=93), followed by prose (N= 49). Clustering of marginal vocabulary, so the occurrence of more than one marginal term in a particular scene or excerpt, is found in all genres but more often in verse than in prose. As for the period, the highest occurrence of the texts in which ‘cull’ and marginal vocabulary is used is in the middle of the eighteenth century (between 1725 and 1774). The occurrence of this term throughout this century seems fairly consistent.

**Table 4 Distribution text excerpts ECCO (N=150)**

Period	Verse	Prose	Period totals
1700-1724	13	5	18
1725-1749	27	19	46
1750-1774	30	19	49
1775-1800	23	14	37
Total	93	57	150

In the next two sections, I will give an overview of the different titles and works in each category.



5.4.1. Verse

Based on my sample, the majority of the excerpts in which ‘cull’ occurred are written in verse, the most predominant genres being poems and ballads/songs. Excerpt 1 comes from a song called ‘The Bridewell Song’ and is a typical example of a canting song (see Coleman 2004a: 209-216).

- (1) My peepers, who’ve we here now? Why this is sure Black Moll,  
My ma’am, you’re of the fair sex, so welcome to Mill Doll,  
The **cull** with you, who’d venture into a snoozing ken,  
Like Blackamoor Othello, should put out the light and then---  
With my tow, row, &c.

(*The London Complete Songster; or Musical Boquet [sic] 1775: 148*)

Canting songs are known for their concentration of marginal vocabulary in the texts and somewhat resemble the dialect literature that Hodson (2014) discusses. The terms in the ballads function on a literary rather than a practical level. Ballads were widely known among London’s poor in the eighteenth century (Coleman 2004a: 189). They were composed by hack writers or by street singers themselves, rather than criminals, or ordinary people expressing defiance of church and law, but not necessarily leading criminal lives (Coleman 2004a: 189). Other verse genres in which the excerpts occur are epistles (Beau Dapper’s *The Ladies of Pleasure* 1734; Michael Dorset’s *Philosophic Venus*, 1775), satires (*Woman Unmask’d and Dissected* 1740; Edward Thompson’s *The Meretriciad* 1761 and *The Temple of Venus* 1763; *The Triumph of Brutes* 1763; *The Fairy’s Revel: or, Puck’s Trip thro’ London by Moon Light* 1770), ballad operas (Mr Thomas Odell’s *The Patron: or, the Statesman’s Opera* 1729; *The Royal Marriage* 1736; Henry Carey’s *Margery; or, a Worse Plague than the Dragon: A Burlesque Opera* 1738; Henry Potter’s *The Decoy: An Opera* 1744; *The Bow-Street Opera* 1773), pantomimes (Theophilus Cibber’s *The Harlot’s Progress; or, the Ridotto Al’Fresco: A Grottesque Pantomime Entertainment* 1733), plays (Henry Fielding’s *The Covent-Garden Tragedy* 1732; *The Humours of Whist* (1743); and Mr (Theophilus) Moss’s *The General Lover. A Comedy* 1749). An overview of all the verse titles can be found in Appendix IV.

In my discussion of marginal vocabulary use, I will not look at the verse excerpts in more detail for the following reasons. Firstly, the wide variety of verse texts provides enough material for a completely different research project. The ballads and songbooks presuppose a familiarity with printed ephemera and the single sheet. In order to do a thorough historical pragmatic analysis, one requires a broad and thorough understanding of the oral tradition, folklore and street culture in the course of the eighteenth period.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup> For more information about eighteenth-century oral literature and ballads, see Bertelsen (2012) on popular entertainment, Mullan and Reid (2000) on popular literature, Fumerton, Guerrini and McAbee (2010) on ballads and broadsides, and McShane (2011) on political broadside ballads in the seventeenth century. Well-known databases that contain large collections of broadside ballads are the University of California *English Broadside Ballads Archive* (<http://ebba.english.uscb.edu>) containing seventeenth century broadside ballads, and *Broadside Ballads Online*

This goes beyond the scope of the current thesis, but it will be an interesting line of inquiry for future research. Secondly, it appears that we find the same set of marginal vocabulary in a number of the verse excerpts, because many of the songs were reproduced in different book titles. ‘The Bridewell Song’ which featured in example (1) was reproduced in 17 song books including *The Festival of Momus, a Collection of Comic Songs* (1780), *The Charms of Cheerfulness; or Merry Songster’s Companion* (1781), *The Bacchanalian Songster* (1783), *The Jovial Songster, or Sailor’s Delight* (1792). If we look at the clustering of marginal vocabulary in these texts, then we would find many of the same words in different titles. In order to remain consistent, I focus on the use of marginal vocabulary in the prose texts in ECCO only and compare/contrast its use with the Old Bailey texts, which are also written in prose.

#### 5.4.2. Prose

In Table 5, I present an overview of the kinds of prose texts in which ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary is used. The categorisation of the excerpts into ‘prose fiction’, ‘life narratives’, ‘drama’, ‘dictionaries’ and ‘essays’ is based on a qualitative assessment of the co-text, the textual layout and the paratexts (such as the front page) to check what the texts are about. The motivation for using these labels is for heuristic purposes only, namely to get a better sense of the kinds of the texts in which we find the use of marginal vocabulary. These labels should not be taken at face value. I am well aware that many of the excerpts exhibit features which are not strictly linked to a particular genre only. Also, categorical labels like ‘novel’, ‘comedy’, or ‘histories’ are time- and culture specific. Our understanding of what a novel is is different from the eighteenth-century understanding of what a novel is. In the period itself, many fictional narratives about the ordinary lives of people were called ‘histories’, as well as ‘romances’, ‘adventures’, ‘lives’, ‘tales’, ‘memoirs’, ‘expeditions’, ‘fortunes and misfortunes’, and ‘novels’ (Paul Hunter 1996: 9). Therefore I have resorted to labels which may have less specific connotations, such as ‘prose fiction’, ‘life narratives’, ‘drama’, ‘dictionaries’, and ‘essays’.

**Table 5 Distribution text excerpts prose ECCO (N=57)**

Period	Essays	Dictionar- ies	Drama	Life narratives	Prose fiction	Period totals
1700-1724	0	0	0	1	4	5
1725-1749	2	4	4	3	6	19
1750-1774	1	0	3	5	10	19
1775-1800	2	4	4	2	2	14
Total	5	8	11	11	22	57

(<http://ballads.bodleian.ox.ac.uk>) containing English printed ballad-sheets from between the sixteenth and twentieth centuries.

If we look at Table 5, we find the occurrence of ‘cull’ in my sample most often in prose fiction, followed by life narratives and drama. It is also in these genres that we also find ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary terms, and I will come back to the discussion of this clustering of marginal vocabulary in section 5.5. The occurrence of ‘cull’ confirms the fact that ‘cull’ is used in eighteenth-century texts other than the dictionaries and the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, so we find indeed a widening of genres. It is expanded into the universe of discourse that might have been popular with the general readership in the eighteenth century. Some text excerpts in which marginal vocabulary occurs are similar to the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, such as the life narratives (and especially the criminal biographies such as *Villany Exploded: or, The mystery of iniquity laid open* (1728), *The Life and Adventures of Bampfylde Moore Carew* (1745), *The Discoveries of John Poulter* (1761), and *The Life of Patrick Madan* (1781)), which is not surprising given that they share the same topic and focus on the life narrative of a particular person. Other texts are different from the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, such as prose fiction and plays, in which a fictional world is portrayed that includes both characters from all ranks of society, not just the low life. Some titles were written by well-known authors (see Henry Fielding’s *Miscellanies* (1743), *The History of Tom Jones* (1749), and *Amelia* (1752), Edward Ward’s *The London Terraefilius: or, the Satirical Reformer* (1707), Thomas Brown’s *Amusements Serious and Comical* (1725), and Francis Coventry’s *The History of Pompey the Little; or the Life and Adventures of a Lap-Dog* (1751) who may have professional or real-life experience of the low life and criminal lifestyle. Other texts like *The Auction, a Modern Novel* (1760), *The Prudential Lovers, or the History of Harry Harper* (1773), *Siberian Anecdotes* (1783) and *Jack Sprit-Sail’s Frolic* (1791) were published anonymously. The topics or themes that feature in these titles are wide-ranging and the purpose of these texts may be to entertain, satirise or teach a lesson, depending on the specific text themselves. Some plays, for example, are about ‘low life’ themes such as whoring (*The Courtezans* 1760), or take place in low life settings (London in *The Informers Outwitted* 1738). Other dramatic texts feature themes such as love intrigues (*The Citizen* 1763), and marriage (*The Belle’s Stratagem* 1781). Often they involve situations in which some form of deception takes place. Other texts such as essays (*An Essay against Too Much Reading* (1728), *Fugitive pieces, on various subjects* (1761), James Beattie’s *Essays. On Poetry and Music, as they affect the Mind* (1776)) are about different kinds of topics (love intrigues, marriage, gambling and poetry) that are of general interest to an eighteenth-century reader. An overview of all the prose titles can be found in Appendix V. In other words, we have evidence of the widening of its use in texts/genres that are not necessarily concerned with the low life or characters at all. The keyword search for ‘cull’ thus shows that the term is used in a wide range of different genres. In the next section, I will focus more closely on how marginal vocabulary is used in a number of these texts. and back up my argument with a qualitative study of a selection of the excerpts that I found through the keyword search. Because I am interested in not just the use of ‘cull’ but in the use of other marginal terms as well, my discussion will focus predominately on those excerpts in which we find a clustering of marginal terms. I will focus more closely on how marginal vocabulary is used in these texts, what their communicative functions are and how they

relate to the topic and the overall purpose of the texts and whether their lexical and social meanings changed.

### 5.5. Marginal vocabulary use in ECCO texts

The occurrence of marginal vocabulary in a wide variety of genres in ECCO shows that these terms are used beyond the Old Bailey texts and are part of the public awareness in the eighteenth century. The marginal vocabulary terms are ‘public words’, phrases that circulate widely across communities, and are remembered, repeated, and quoted long after their first utterance (see Spitulnik 2001: 99). This also relates to the ‘enregisterment’ of marginal vocabulary, the idea that linguistic forms become a socially distinctive register in the public domain (Agha 2003: 231). Marginal vocabulary becomes enregistered through a number of steps – it originated on the streets and then it is used in the Old Bailey courtroom. Then canting dictionaries boil that specialised knowledge down and then we see the occurrence of this language in novels. I argue that these marginal terms are reproduced, discussed metalinguistically and appropriated in eighteenth-century texts, and that these processes continue and maintain the public status of marginal vocabulary and its widespread use in the period. I will start my discussion with the reproduction of marginal vocabulary of criminal biographies, because they are most similar to the Ordinary’s Accounts that we have discussed in the previous chapter.

#### 5.5.1. *Reproduction of marginal vocabulary*

Apart from the Sessions Papers and the Ordinary’s Accounts, we find the reproduction of marginal vocabulary in the criminal biographies and dictionaries. Criminal biographies, a subgenre of life narratives, are a type of creative nonfiction in which the content is based on real life people and events, but transformed and presented in first or third person narration. They are similar to the Ordinary’s Accounts in that they focus on the life of a real criminal, one who is particularly notorious and who was tried at the Old Bailey. Some of these criminal biographies purport to be ‘autobiographies’, written from first person perspective to give the impression that the text was written by the criminal himself. Others were presumably written by hack writers, who like the Ordinary, went to prison to interview prisoners, and were trying to make their own profit from sharing the lives of these prisoners with a general readership (McKenzie 1998, as cited by Shoemaker 2009: 15). Sometimes the identities of the authors remain anonymous, as in *The Life and Adventures of Bampfylde Moore Carew* (1745) and *The Life of Patrick Madan* (1781). The life stories that were told by the prisoners were then taken down and reproduced by the hack writer and published in written form. Unlike the Ordinary’s Accounts, the hack writers of these biographies are generally interested in making profit and to capitalise on the success of earlier publications and less interested in communicating a moral or religious message to the reader. The criminal biographies were targeted to a popular audience and many of

these biographies were reprinted multiple times. Like the Ordinary's Accounts, marginal vocabulary in criminal biographies is reproduced to give a flavour of the language used by criminals and their social circle. This is not surprising given the close resemblance between the criminal biographies and Ordinary's Accounts in topic matter and format. Also like the Ordinary, the writer of these criminal biographies is selective in his reproduction of marginal vocabulary in that only certain sections of the account contain a clustering of marginal vocabulary. In other places, we find the reproduction of single marginal terms only. The type of marginal vocabulary reproduced in these life narratives is similar to the terms found in the Ordinary's Account, namely thieves' jargon. The terms tend to be visually foregrounded in the co-text through italicisation. However, unlike the Ordinary's Account, the thieves' slang tends to be not glossed, which suggests that the author of the criminal biography assumed that the eighteenth-century reader would be familiar with these terms.

An example of the reproduction of thieves' jargon in a criminal biography is *The Life of Patrick Madan* (1781). This work focuses on the criminal adventures of Patrick Madan, one of London's notorious criminals of Irish descent in the 1770s who had been convicted multiple times at the Old Bailey, but escaped justice (Christopher 2014: 173). The identity of the biographer is unknown. In the following excerpt, we find the reproduction of marginal vocabulary used by one of Patrick Madan's friends (or gang members) in a speech on how to save Madan from a wrongful accusation. The background event that relates to Madan is that Madan was wrongfully accused of a highway robbery on two men – William Beckenham and John Dobbs, on the 9<sup>th</sup> of April near the Shepherd and Shepherdess pub in North London. Five weeks later, Patrick Madan and his associate Michael Brannen were arrested, taken to court and sentenced to hanging (Christopher 2014: 176).<sup>45</sup> However, on the day of the sentence, Madan was 'saved' by Amos Merrit, a known criminal who either deliberately chose or was forced by the other underworld members to turn himself in order to save their leader (Christopher 2014: 177).

- (1) The night preceding the fatal morning, had now arrived, when every one of Madan's friends, expressed their sorrow for what they could not prevent, and were on the point of breaking up their counsel, as their different avocations directed; when one of them, an old staunch member, started up, (what we are not relating, we can assure our readers, is near literally fact) and said, he had hit upon a method that would inevitably save their friend; a faint gleam of joy, mixed with an anxious doubt, was visible in every face, and everyone at the same time, swore they would do every thing in their power to effect so desirable a purpose; silence being vociferously called for, the man just before mentioned, broke forth as follows: My worthy *palls*, we have all of us seen a great deal of danger; there is scarce one of us, but what has *worked* with Madan, and there is some of us *that is* here present, that knows what it is to *be knocked down for the crap*, without any *hopes of coming off*, now you *knows* the *bloody cull*, that *did him over*, must have *busst home*, or he must have been *turned up*. You see the prosecutor can't come it home a second time,

---

<sup>45</sup> The case of Michael Brannen and Patrick Madan is found in the Sessions Papers of 6 July 1774 (t17740706-18)

therefore Amos Merrit must go to the place of execution to-morrow morning, and own he did the robbery (*The Life of Patrick Madan* 1781: 26, italics in original)

The marginal terms that are reproduced in this scene are ‘palls’, ‘worked’, ‘knocked down for the crap’, ‘coming off’, ‘bloody cull’, ‘did him over’, ‘busst home’, and ‘turned up’. Some of these terms also occur in the Old Bailey texts: ‘palls’ (“mates, friends”), ‘crap’ (“hanging”), ‘bloody cull’ (“bad person”), ‘did him over’ (“to apprehend someone”). The speaker uses these marginal terms in direct speech, but does not gloss them which suggest that the hearers of the speech (Madan’s friends) are supposedly familiar with the marginal vocabulary and that we are dealing with a close-knit social circle here. The terms are also not glossed by the author of the text, which implies that the author assumes that the reader of the biography may be familiar with these marginal terms. Even if we do not find direct metalanguage, it is apparent from the context what is being promised. However, the author does draw visual attention to the special nature of the marginal terms through italicisation. By doing so, the author draws the reader’s attention to the fact that the criminals like Patrick Madan have a language of their own, one that is distinctively marked. The terms have a stylistic purpose, namely to the characterisation of Patrick Madan and his social circle as a close-knit group who do not shy away from violence and breaking the rules. Their use of special terminology which is unintelligible to someone who is not part of that social circle strengthens their close knitted bond. Intelligibility to the outsider (the reader) is unimportant – the force of the italics and the possibly unfamiliar language is to mark the nature of this circle.

Another form of the reproduction of marginal terms is found in the dictionaries. In the eighteenth century, the term ‘cull’ was recorded in a number of canting dictionaries (see Table 3). Some excerpts are from canting dictionaries such as *A New Canting Dictionary* (1725) and Francis Grose’s *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* (1785). Some compilers of these dictionaries claimed that they had first hand experience of these terms, but more often they based the content of their dictionaries on other dictionaries, as see in Chapter 2. Coleman (2004a, 2004b) notes about the compilation of these canting dictionaries, that it was common practice for the compilers to reproduce partly or fully the content of canting dictionaries, and they were very explicit about acknowledging their previous sources. Francis Grose notes in the Preface to *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) that he made use of the following sources to compile his dictionary: “Bailey’s, and the new canting dictionary have also been consulted, with the History of Bamfield More Carew, the Sessions Papers, and other modern authorities” (Preface: v). Grose has not only consulted other dictionaries (Bailey’s and the *New Canting Dictionary*), but also criminal biographies (History of Bamfield More Carew), and the Old Bailey texts (the Sessions Papers). A close look at the dictionary definition of ‘cull’ in *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) shows that Grose’s definition of ‘cull’ is clearly inspired by the definition of ‘cull’ in the *New Canting Dictionary* (1725).

- (2) Cull, a Man either Honest, or otherwise. *A Bob-Cull*, a Sweet-humour'd Man to a wench. *The Cull naps us*; The Person robb'd, apprehends us. *A curst Cull*, an ill-natured Fellow, a Churl to a Woman (*New Canting Dictionary* 1725)
- (3) Cull, a man, honest or otherways; (cant) (A bob cull, a good natured quiet fellow) (Francis Grose, *A Classical Dictionary of the Vulgar Tongue* 1785)

Francis Grose was certainly not the only lexicographer who reproduced the content of other dictionaries into his own dictionary; *A Classical Dictionary* (1785) became an authoritative source for other dictionary compilers. James Caulfield, for example, has reproduced his definition of 'cull' either from the *New Canting Dictionary* (1725) or *A Classical Dictionary* (1785).

- (4) Cull, a man, honest or otherways; (cant) (A bob cull, a good natured quiet fellow) (James Caulfield, *Blackguardiana* 1795)

In addition to the canting dictionaries, we find 'cull' recorded in non-specialist/mainstream dictionaries such as B.N. Defoe's *A Compleat English Dictionary* (1735) and Nathan Bailey's *The New Universal Etymological English Dictionary* (1775), and smaller works (William Tans'ur the younger's *The Beauties of Poetry* (1776), a poetic dictionary, G.L.'s *The Amorous Gallant's Tongue* (1741), about etiquette and refined manners, and Isaac Cousteil's *A French Idiomatic and Critical Vocabulary* (1748)), which suggests that the term has entered the wider public discourse. This corroborates Gotti and Beier's observation of the inclusion of these marginal terms in "dictionaries of general English" such as Elisha Coles' *An English Dictionary* (1676) in the seventeenth century (Gotti 1999: 120; Beier 1995: 68). In B.N. Defoe's *A Compleat English Dictionary* (1735), the marginal expression 'bleeding cull' is recorded as a head word and has a specific referential meaning:

- (5) Bleeding cull, one who, when he has lost a little Money will not leave off till he has lost all (B.N. Defoe, *A Compleat English Dictionary* 1735)

In this dictionary, the term 'cull' along with the modifier 'bleeding' signifies a type of gambler who does not stop until he loses all his money. These dictionaries help to shape the status of these specific words as marginal and their reproduction in numerous publications helps to fossilise the terms as being marginal.

#### 5.5.2. *Metalinguistic awareness, discussion and evaluation*

The reproduction of thieves' marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* and the criminal biographies contributes to the wider exposure of these terms amongst a wider audience. Reproduction is part of the enregisterment process whereby the marginal terms become a "socially distinctive register" (Agha 2003: 231). I argue that marginal vocabulary has a public status now and they are 'public words' (see Spitulnik 2001: 99). This means that the terms which are originally associated with specific groups in society, are no longer

'marginal', but then find their way into the public domain and discourses. That is, knowledge of the terms is no longer exclusive to the low life or the underworld, but expanded amongst a wider group or society. The wider accessibility of the term 'cull' means that it becomes a term that people become aware of, that people can use passively or actively, and which is talked about in metadiscourses. As Agha (2003: 237) notes, "much of the experience of its forms in the public sphere is accompanied by metadiscursive activity typifying lexical forms and values". Metadiscourse, such as descriptions of people and their accents, plays an important role in spreading messages about language which is linked to a set of a particular social persona (Agha 2003: 237). In Agha's study, experiences of RP in Britain are mediated by metadiscursive practices that bring register-dependent images of a person into wide circulation in the public sphere (2003: 235). Similarly we find metalinguistic discussions in eighteenth-century texts in which authors would express their views on marginal vocabulary, such as essays and commentaries, either for its own sake or to persuade the reader to adopt the same attitudes. The texts vary in length, and the subject matter covered in these kinds of texts are wide ranging. Both established and changing attitudes towards marginal vocabulary are shaped and expressed in texts like dictionaries, essays and prose fiction (see Coleman 2012b: 264, Agha 2003). These texts play an important role in promoting and preserving current stereotypes about marginal vocabulary and its users (namely the criminals).

An example of a metadiscursive text in which 'cull' and other marginal terms are discussed and metalinguistically evaluated upon is in James Beattie's *Essays. On Poetry and Music* (1776).<sup>46</sup> In this particular essay, Beattie (1735-1803), poet and philosopher, comments on the language associated with Bridewell in order to draw a comparison with poetic language. He also makes use of linguistic and visual foregrounding to invite inferences about the markedness of these Bridewell terms:

- (6) Poetical words that are either not ancient, or not known to be such, have however a pleasing effect from association. We are accustomed to meet with them in sublime and elegant writing; and hence they come to acquire sublimity and elegance: - even as the words we hear on familiar occasions come to be accounted familiar; and as those that take their rise among pickpockets, gamblers, and gypsies, are thought too indelicate to be used by any person of taste or good manners. When one hears the following lines, which abound in poetical words,

The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,  
The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,  
The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,  
No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed

-one is as sensible of the dignity of the language; as one would be of the vileness or vulgarity of that man's speech, who should prove his acquaintance with Bridewell, by

---

<sup>46</sup> The excerpt appears in the second part of *Essays 'On Poetry and Music, as they affect the Mind'*, which is about language use in poetry and music (Beattie 1776: 229). Beattie's main argument is that poetic diction can be improved through the use of poetical words, words which are rare in prose (Beattie 1776: 229).



interlarding his discourse with such Terms as *mill-doll*, *queer cull*, or *nubbing cheat*\*; or who, in imitation of fops and gamblers should, on the common occasion of life, talk of being *beat hollow*, or *saving his distance*.

\*See the Scoundrel's Dictionary † Language of Newmarket

(James Beattie, *Essays. On Poetry and Music* 1776: 249-250, italics in original)

Beattie shows his awareness and acquaintance with these marginal terms by giving explicit examples of these terms. He associates terms like 'mill-doll', 'queer cull', and 'nubbing cheat' with someone who is acquainted with Bridewell.<sup>47</sup> Bridewell (which was also mentioned in the Bridewell song in section 5.4), is a metonym that represents the whole of the low life (that is, prison as metonym for whole criminal life). Beattie guides the reader by adding a reference to the *Scoundrel's Dictionary* (1754) a popular eighteenth-century canting dictionary. Such a gloss suggests that an eighteenth-century reader of this audience may be familiar with this kind of dictionary and that he would be able to look up these words in this dictionary if he were interested in these terms. In addition to these prisoner's terms, Beattie refers to another type of marginal vocabulary, namely the kind of language used by "gamblers and fops": 'beat hollow' and 'saving his distance'. In a footnote, Beattie notes that these terms are associated with Newmarket, which is associated with horse racing. Like Bridewell, Newmarket is a metonym to signify something bigger, namely for gambling and betting money. It is clear from Beattie's discussion that the marginal expressions that he refers to in this essay have strong connotations with particular types of people and that this language awareness is shared by his readers.

Apart from linking marginal vocabulary to a particular type of person, Beattie also evaluates the language of Bridewell and Newmarket in his commentary, namely that the words that are used by "pick pockets, gamblers and gypsies" are "too indelicate" and should not be used by "any person of taste and good manners" (Beattie 1776: 249). In contrast, poetical words occur in "sublime and elegant writing", hence carry connotations of "sublimity and elegance". An eighteenth-century reader would be sensible of both the "vileness" of the Bridewell and Newmarket terms, as well as the "dignity" of poetic language (Beattie 1776: 249). In doing so he constitutes an implicit metapragmatic commentary that both sets of language are equally specialist registers; poetic language is dignified and elegant, whereas Bridewell and Newmarket terms are vile (Agha 2003: 237). Metadiscourse such as Beattie's essay makes the marginal expressions more transparent, accessible and recognisable, and they also help to construct, maintain, and spread language ideologies (see Spitulnik 2001: 100).

Another genre in which we find metadiscourse about marginal vocabulary is prose fiction (see Agha 2003: 255; Hodson 2014: 157). Prose fiction are texts that represent fictional

---

<sup>47</sup> See OED entry for Bridewell, n., sense 1. A house of correction for prisoners; a place of forced labour; a gaol, prison. Also *fig.* (OED Online 2015)

people and places and makes use of story telling techniques like dialogue, narrative, and exposition. It is also the biggest category in which we find the occurrence of ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary. In such works, the author attributes metalanguage about marginal vocabulary to characters, which gives the reader clues about the character’s attitudes and beliefs, as well as the type of social work that the characters want to do (Hodson 2014: 157). As Agha (2003: 237) notes, in literary treatments, characters are made palpable to the reader through depictions of “deviated” speech. This kind of metadiscourse may or may not directly express the author’s view on these social groups but they do give some indication of the kind of language perceptions that were prevalent in the period, and also how certain language forms were evaluated. A nice illustration of this can be found in the following scene of Henry Fielding’s *The History of Tom Jones* (1749). The scene appears in an encounter between Tom Jones, Partridge and the Man of the Hill, (a stranger who walks at night) during one of their adventures. After Jones and Partridge save The Man of the Hill from two robbers, the Man of the Hill shares his life narrative with Tom Jones and Partridge. In this particular scene, the Man of the Hill recounts one of the low points in his life when he got acquainted with a certain Mr Watson, who introduced him to his gambling crowd. As he is telling his story, he is interrupted by Partridge, who asks for the meaning of ‘nubbing cheat’, a marginal expression also mentioned by Beattie earlier:

- (7) “Here”, said he [Mr Watson], taking some dice out of his pocket, “here’s the stuff: here are the implements; here are the little doctors which cure the distempers of the purse. Follow but my counsel, and I will shew you a way to empty the pocket of a queer cull, without any danger of the nubbing cheat.”  
 “Nubbing cheat!” cries Partridge; “Pray Sir, what is that?”  
 “Why that, Sir,” says the stranger [Man in the Hill], “is a cant phrase for the gallows; for as gamesters differ little from highwaymen in their morals, so do they very much resemble them in their language.” (*The History of Tom Jones* 1749: 254-255)

In excerpt (7), the Man of the Hill provides the explanation and explicitly comments that this is a marginal expression used by gamblers and highwaymen to refer to the gallows. The labelling of ‘nubbing cheat’ as a cant phrase, and its association with gamblers and highwayman, is parallel to Beattie’s view of ‘nubbing cheat’ as a Bridewell term. Moreover, the Man of the Hill comments that gamblers are familiar with the same language as highwaymen because both types of people share the same morals (or their lack thereof). Such metalinguistic evidence in eighteenth-century print demonstrates that marginal expressions like ‘nubbing cheat’ are in the public awareness of the eighteenth-century reader and that they are associated with a particular social persona, namely people from the low life.

### 5.5.3. *Characterisation and mixture of registers: Marginal vocabulary as a source of appropriation*

The metalinguistic evidence of marginal vocabulary, as well as the exposure of the actual terms in criminal biographies makes the general eighteenth-century public more familiar with this kind of language. Eighteenth-century readers can either acquire passive knowledge of these terms, meaning that they will recognise the term as a marginal term when they come across these terms in printed sources, but they would not use it themselves, or they may remember and use the term actively (see Coleman 2012a: 237). In the latter case, the terms may be used as a source of appropriation, a process that also contributes to the enregisterment of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. Readers of the eighteenth-century texts may pick up marginal vocabulary from any source (dictionaries, essays, Old Bailey texts), detach them from this one context, and appropriate them for use in a new communicative context. Appropriation differs from reproduction in that the terms are taken from any (unspecified context), detached from the co-text in which they are used and inserted into a new co-text and context. It does not really matter what the original source is, the main point is that the terms are appropriated for specific purposes by a particular person.

Authors appropriate marginal vocabulary in eighteenth-century texts for the purpose of speech representation and characterisation, namely to portray a character in a certain manner. This is similar to how dialect is appropriated in dialect literature to give a flavour of the speech of a particular region or social group (Hodson 2014: 141). Despite the risk of reader's incomprehension, authors are generally motivated by the fact that these unfamiliar terms added interest and authenticity to the representation of their fictional worlds and characters (Coleman 2004b: 263; and Hodson 2014). While marginal vocabulary was also reproduced in the Old Bailey texts for the purpose of representation and characterisation, the important difference is that the representation of a particular group of speakers through the use of marginal vocabulary is more diverse in ECCO than in the Old Bailey texts and the criminal biographies. Marginal vocabulary is attributed to a much wider range of people of all ranks (prostitutes, courtesans, gamblers, keepers of public houses, thief takers and informers), who may or may not play a central role in the ECCO texts. In prose fiction and drama, we find a mix of characters who interact with each other, high or low. Some characters (gamblers, keepers of public houses, thief takers, informers) are not necessarily associated with the low life, but are rather middle class people who interact with lower class people. Others like sailors and army officers, may exhibit low life behaviour when they are drunk. In the life narratives, we find the appropriation of marginal vocabulary to describe the adventures of a courtesan. The courtesans portrayed in the life narratives are similar to the low life prostitutes and criminals in that they lived a scandalous and turbulent lifestyle; the difference is that they were part of the high life and had well-established reputations.

The reason why marginal vocabulary is attributed to a wider range of characters in the ECCO texts is because of the purpose of the different genres. In the ECCO texts, the terms are not reproduced from an earlier context, but rather appropriated for new purposes. It is not attached to an anterior co-text but can be attributed to new situations,

new speech and new speakers. Therefore it can be appropriated for new characters. In contrast, the Old Bailey texts are very specific and represent language use in court, so we only find the language use of offenders in the courtroom. Marginal vocabulary is reproduced in the Old Bailey texts and the criminal biographies to represent the speech of the people in the courtroom (Sessions Papers) or the prisoner (Ordinary's Accounts), and so the terms are not attached from the co-text. In the Old Bailey texts, the people who use marginal vocabulary evoke associations of mercilessness. In contrast, the language that is marked as marginal in the Sessions Papers (as seen in Chapter 4) indexes the exotic nature with danger and threat, and contributes to the representation of the people in court as dangerous, violent and threatening; they deserve to be punished for their criminal deeds. The aim of these texts is to persuade the reader that the City authorities had good control in maintaining order and fighting crime, and to show that people tried in the court would get prosecuted for their crimes. The use of marginal vocabulary to represent the criminals in a negative light is part of the moral purpose of these texts. The ECCO texts, on the other hand, are produced for a popular audience who likes to read about sensational topics and people, and so the marginal vocabulary marked in the text evokes a sense of exoticism, and an air of excitement and titillation. The ECCO texts serve a more entertaining purpose and the people and the characters represented in these texts evoke sympathy and/or ridicule. Even though the characters in the ECCO texts may be described as violent and aggressive, they do not come across as such, but rather as someone to laugh at. Marginal vocabulary is used as a pragmatic means to let the reader sympathise with or laugh at the characters who use marginal vocabulary in the fictional world.

The authors of prose fiction and drama appropriated marginal vocabulary in their texts to signal humour and ridicule of the characters who use these terms in the fictional world. Marginal vocabulary is used by the author as a pragmatic device for comic effect and linguistic stereotyping, and to point out to the reader that we are dealing with a comic character, someone who we should not take too seriously. One of the techniques that the author employs is to appropriate a cluster of marginal terms in particular excerpts of the text (stylistic). Clustering of marginal vocabulary was also found in the Ordinary's Accounts and the criminal biographies, but the difference between the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in these texts and the ECCO texts is in the type of marginal vocabulary being concentrated. In the Old Bailey texts and the criminal biographies, we typically find the marginal vocabulary used by the low life and thieves represented. However, in the ECCO texts, we find a mixture of the type of marginal vocabulary represented. That is, we find thieves' jargon mixed with a wide variety of registers, namely other professional jargon, swear words, euphemisms, Latin or French, and other non-standard features. One striking feature here is that the thieves' jargon appears to be unmarked, that is, it is not linguistically foregrounded, whereas the other type of marginal vocabulary is visually foregrounded through italicisation. This clash of registers has a comic effect because it goes against normal expectations, and we would not expect the use of

marginal vocabulary associated with the low life, with for example Latin and French, which were held much higher in esteem and part of accepted mainstream culture.

In the anonymous novel *Jack Sprit-Sail's Frolic* (1791), marginal vocabulary is appropriated for characterisation of seaman Jack Sprit-Sail (the main character) and to create a comic scene. In the following excerpt, the narrator describes how Jack wanders in St George Fields, an area in South London, and encounters a group of people in a “well-known building”, presumably a public house or a tavern:

1       (8) He was bustling through St. George's Fields, when seeing a train of hacks stand before a  
2       certain well-known building in that quarter, he peeps at the windows, and perceiving the  
3       meretricious promenade in full feather, taking their accustomed round – In he marches,  
4       calling out, *Avast my lads! If I haven't run my jib-boom right in harbour at once.* This  
5       exclamation drew all eyes upon him, the Flashmen tip their Blowings the wink, who were  
6       all ambitious of taking in the cull, whose profession and business they easily guess'd. Jack  
7       for some time minded none of them, but gaz'd this way, and that way, and every way;  
8       now surveying the waiters *servng out the allowance*, as he humorously termed it—and then  
9       walking up to the man at the organ, whose nimble fingers he swore would *strap a block*  
10      nation well.—His observations finished he coolly sat himself down bawling for a *can of*  
11      *grog*, in lieu of which, as its nearest substitute a shillingworth of rum and water was  
12      brought him, tho' unfortunately by putting sugar, they had disqualified it from the  
13      honourable title of that beverage Jack had demanded.

*(Jack Sprit-Sail's Frolic 1791: 6, italics in original)*

In this scene we find the appropriation of three types of registers of marginal vocabulary namely sailor's jargon, low life London city marginal vocabulary, and other informal marginal vocabulary. The occurrence of this wide mixture of registers in this scene suggests that those terms are deliberately and selectively appropriated for the purpose of linguistic stereotyping. The whole point of this is to make Jack look like a foreigner, as opposed to the London natives who are portrayed as wise and canny people. The appropriation of these kinds of marginal vocabulary contributes to the portrayal of Jack as a visitor and outsider in the city, who speaks in the sailor's jargon. Examples of sailor's jargon are found in his exclamation “Avast my lads! If I haven't run by jib-boom right in harbour at once” (line 4), which is visually foregrounded through italicisation. ‘Avast’ is a stereotypical greeting term used amongst seaman for “stop, hold”, whereas ‘jib-boom’ is a nautical term referring to “a spar used to lengthen the bowsprit of sailing ships” (OED Online 2015). Jack's use of sailor's jargon is visually foregrounded in contrast with the speech of the London natives. The language use in London is presented as the norm, as evidenced from the unmarked use of the terms ‘flashmen’ (line 5), ‘blowings’ (line 5) and ‘cull’ (line 6) which are not visually foregrounded. Jack's use of sailor's slang is visually foregrounded and therefore marked, and it causes him to become the subject of deception and misunderstanding. First of all, Jack's exclamation gives away his profession as a sailor (“whose profession they easily guessed”, line 6) and attracts the attention of the whole crowd (‘the flashmen’ and ‘the blowings’, line 5) who happens to be in the same building

as himself. The blowings (marginal term for prostitute, cf 'blowen' for "woman" in Parker's *Life Painter* 1790: 152) are especially interested in Jack as a their client, as we are told that "they were all ambitious of taking in the cull" (line 6), 'cull' referring to Jack. Secondly, when Jack uses the expressions 'serving out the allowance' (line 8), 'strap a block' (line 10) and 'can of grog' (line 10-11) in the public house, he is accidentally served the wrong type of drink (tho' unfortunately by putting sugar, they had disqualified it from the honourable title of that beverage Jack had demanded, line 12-13). This suggests that Jack's language was so exotic that it is misunderstood by the waiter. In addition, the narrator of the scene also comments upon Jack's use of 'serving out the allowance' as funny and comic ("as he [Jack] humorously termed it", line 8). Marginal vocabulary in this scene serves as a pragmatic means to ridicule the stereotypical sailor Jack who has come to London to squander his money.

In addition to speech representation and characterisation, the appropriation of marginal vocabulary can also index a particular kind of behaviour. Authors can make use of marginal vocabulary to characterise and ridicule the kind of behaviour that indicates coarseness, wickedness, transgression and impoliteness. Using particular types of language is one way to manifest impolite behaviour; examples include swearing, and being loud and aggressive. In another scene of Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones* (1749), we find the appropriation of a number of marginal terms to represent the speech of a minor character called Northerton to ridicule his impolite behaviour. Northerton is deliberately presented as a bad-mouthed, violent, unmannered character and a villain, who in a later scene curses and insults Tom Jones's lover Sophia, calling her a prostitute. Northerton is a military officer who is part of a company of officers whom Tom meets on his journey after he is expelled from Squire Allworthy's estate. Northerton's character is introduced in the following scene, which presents a conversation between Northerton and a Lieutenant:

(9) 'D—n Home with all my Heart,' says Northerton, 'I have the Marks of him in my A— yet. There's Thomas of our Regiment, always carries a Homo in his Pocket: D—n me if ever I come at it, if I don't burn it. And there's Corderius, another d—n'd Son of a Whore that hath got me many a Flogging.'

'Then you have been at School, Mr. Northerton?' said the Lieutenant.

'Ay d—n me, have I,' answered he, 'the Devil take my Father for sending me thither, The old Put wanted to make a Parson of me, but d—n me, thinks I to myself, I'll nick you there, old Cull: The Devil a Smack of your Nonsense, shall you ever get into me. There's Jemmy Oliver of our Regiment, he narrowly escaped being a Pimp too; and that would have been a Thousand Pities. For d—n if he is not one of the prettiest Fellows in the whole World; but he went farther than I with the old Cull: For Jimmy can neither write nor read.' (*The History of Tom Jones* 1749: 139-140)

Even though Northerton is portrayed as a violent and aggressive character, he does not come across as a dangerous character in the same way that the convicts in the Old Bailey courtroom are represented in the texts. He is only aggressive through his language use which is marked by a number of marginal terms. Northerton uses the expression 'old cull'

to refer to his father as a somewhat foolish man: “The old Put wanted to make a Parson of me, but d—n me, thinks I to myself, I’ll nick you there, old Cull”. Apparently, Northerton’s father wanted his son to become a parson, but Northerton thought otherwise. Other speech features that mark Northerton’s language use as rude and impolite are his recurrent use of ‘damn’ (“damned son of a whore”), references to the Devil, and another marginal term (‘flogging’ for “beating”). The appropriation of swear words is known to be a conventional way of signalling that a character has a particular emotion or attitude (Culpeper 2001: 192). As we have seen in the Sessions Papers, the term ‘d—n’ is visually foregrounded as their full spelling does not appear in print, but everybody knows that those are swearwords. Swearing is immediately recognisable so authors do not fill them in. In such way, they censor the language use and the term appears to be opaque. Northerton thinks he is cool by using these swear words but the fact is that he is not, as evidenced by the metalinguistic commentary in example (10). Northerton’s impolite speech is also commented upon by the lieutenant, and his metalinguistic comment marginalises Northerton’s language use:

- (10) ‘You give your Friend a very good Character,’ said the Lieutenant, ‘and a very deserved one, I dare say; but pritheee, Northerton, leave off that foolish as well as wicked Custom of swearing: For you are deceived, I promise you, if you think there is Wit or Politeness in it. I wish too, you would take my Advice and desist from abusing the Clergy’  
(*The History of Tom Jones* 1749: 139-140)

The lieutenant explicitly comments that Northerton should tone down his language use, telling him that swearing is “foolish” and “wicked”, and that it does not reflect any “wit” or “politeness”. Northerton’s use of marginal vocabulary can be interpreted as a form of foolish behaviour rather than an expression of violence or aggressiveness.

One of the texts in which marginal vocabulary is extensively appropriated for comic purposes is the play *Belle’s Stratagem* (1781) inspired by George Farquahar’s play *The Beaux Stratagem* (1707). The play was written by Hannah Cowley (1743-1809) poet and playwright, though she did not publish it under her name, possibly because she was a woman (Mahotière 2015). *Belle’s Stratagem* (1781) is a romantic comedy of manners about marriage and how women strive to overcome the injustices imposed by family life and social customs. In one of the scenes, the playwright has strategically appropriated a mix of registers, characteristic of or associated with particular settings or situations of use, to create an amusing scenario.

- (11) SCENE VII.  
Mrs. RACKET and COURTALL discovered over a Bottle of Wine.

1 Mrs. RACKET. Strike me lucky, Courtall, if these *flams* will do with me!—I  
2 know you still dangle after that painted sepulchre Letitia, and  
3 now you come to *kick* me for the *ready*—but it won't do.

4 COURTALL. May I be struck with the *staggers*, *fiery-buds*, and *moon-blindness*,  
5 Bet, if I've cross'd her these months!

6 Mrs. RACKET. Come, come, none of your Newmarket oaths here, Courtall—  
7 I'd have you to know in whose company you swear, strike me  
8 plump!—Push about the jorum, and be jolly—but none of your  
9 rhino riggs—darken my day-lights but I'd give you up all your  
10 notes for half the ready.—Hand me down them cards, that I  
11 may see what luck's coming—

12 COURTALL. Shall I cut your fortune, Bet?

13 Mrs. RACKET. Cut my fortune, strike me comical!—You've cut it in tatters  
14 enough already, but curse me if you cut it any more.—Come,  
15 here's to every up-right member that enters the House of  
16 Commons! (*Drinks.*)

17 COURTALL. With all my heart, Bet—and to every upright member who  
18 enters houses that are not common! (*Drinks.*)

19 Mrs. RACKET. Bar that—unless it be to make them common.

20 COURTALL. Certainly Bet.—I mean such lads as we that are trainers for the  
21 town—Rough riders, Bet, who wou'd rather break filly than the  
22 head of a Frenchman—

23 Mrs. RACKET. Now since you're talking of breaking, pray what's become of  
24 Clara—she that was broke, or rather blown up with  
25 gunpowder—

26 COURTALL. Why she gallopp'd off lately to Scotland, to be made an honest  
27 woman by marriage—but flog me Bet, if it wont be her ruin!

28 Mrs. RACKET. Strike my odd joints, married!—the girl's ruin'd for ever, if she  
29 attempts to be an honest woman—all her culls will withdraw  
30 their allegiance—she'll be as poor as Job—and die like the snuff  
31 of a farthing candle at an unfortunate frail sister's funeral—  
32 strike me flat.

33 COURTALL. Ay, but Bet, if she should ride in the track of Letitia, she may  
34 still be kept on the Cyprian turf?

35 Mrs. RACKET. Ay, that indeed!—But blow me out o'the water, Courtall,  
36 you've always the one or the other at your chop's-end—either  
37 Clara or Letitia—blow them up!

38 COURTALL. You know, my dear Bet, Lord Flutter keeps Letitia—and as for  
39 the other, she's so close confin'd in the matrimonial stud,  
40 there's no riding there now—but come, Bet—lug out—give me  
41 your draught for five hundred more, which will make three  
42 thousand neat—and spur me to death—if I don't tip you cent.  
43 per cent. for your bit in less than a twelvemonth.

44 Mrs. RACKET. Who are you crossing and jostling, strike you plump?—Do you  
45 think I've *work'd* the pockets of so many of the nobility to supply



46 you in horses and wh—s?—Why don't you marry me, as you  
 47 promis'd? (*snapping her fingers.*)—I heard you was paying your  
 48 addresses to a modest country wench---that you drive her about  
 49 town in your phaeton---but strike me stiff, if ever I meet you,  
 50 I'll blow you up to her---I'll give you a character—  
 51 COURTALL. Don't mount up to such a passion, Bet--- 'tis all false—  
 52 Mrs. RACKET. Come, come,---keep your fore-hoofs off!--- don't think to come  
 53 over me as you have done---the ground, you'll find, is too rough  
 54 now for you---once for all, either marry me directly, or may I  
 55 never pluck another cull, if I don't make Sir Robert Petres, one  
 56 of his Majesty's *staff officers* on the *civil* establishment, take you  
 57 into immediate custody---and I'll take care you shan't tip me any  
 58 of your queer bail.

(*The Belle's Stratagem* 1781: 12-15, italics in original)

The scene in question depicts a dialogue between Mrs Racket and Courtall, two minor characters in the play. Their names are clever wordplays and provide clues to the function and the personality of the characters. Mrs Racket refers to a business of ill repute and she is possibly a madam who runs a brothel and takes care of the ladies.<sup>48</sup> Mr Courtall is a word play on “court all ladies”, to refer to a person who is a player and a rake.<sup>49</sup> These characters are acknowledged to be wicked on the side; they are ironic and use tongue in cheek. Marginal vocabulary is appropriated as an extended frame for these two characters to talk to one another to entertain the audience and to avoid being obscene. The whole excerpt is a big joke and they do so in terms of being opaque, including the use of marginal vocabulary, puns and double entendres. This is similar to the use of polite banter, puns and sexual innuendos in Swift's *Polite Conversation* to parody eighteenth-century polite manners (see Fitzmaurice 2010a: 104-105). The conversation in *The Belle's Stratagem* (1781) evolves around Courtall's latest adventures of chasing wenches and his promise of marrying Mrs Racket. They also talk about Mrs Racket's business and Mr Courtall's part in it, and the fact that he relies on her for money. Marginal vocabulary is adopted in order to build a metaphor for bad behaviour in terms that everyone would recognise as being associated with low life, gambling on the one hand and whoring on the other. It does not matter if nobody understands the terms, but the scene would be hilariously funny if they do understand it. The comedy is borne along by the vocabulary, and it has a really cumulative effect.

In the dialogue we find a complex interaction between different varieties of marginal vocabulary: the specialised marginal vocabulary associated with the thieves, Newmarket and the colloquial marginal, fashionable language of the period. The terms are part of a

<sup>48</sup> See OED entry 'racket', n.2, sense 3a. orig. *Brit.* A dishonest or fraudulent line of business; a method of swindling for financial gain; a scam. Freq with preceding modifying word. (OED Online 2015)

<sup>49</sup> See Derek Brewer (1997) on the figure of the rake.

rather elaborate exchange between the two characters involving a lot of bantering about sex, prostitution, chasing women and marriage. The bantering starts with Racket's mention of the "Newmarket oaths", which refers to the false promises that Courtall made to Mrs Racket. Mrs Racket is convinced that Courtall is still pursuing Letitia, one of Courtall's love interests, who is described as a "painted sepulchre", label for a hypocrite.<sup>50</sup> So in addition to the language of Newmarket, we also find the curious pairing of this language with biblical register, which is highly evaluative from a moral standpoint. Courtall tries to deny that he had seen her, and that she can stab him to death ('stagers', 'fiery-buds' and 'moon-blindness') if he has seen her at all these months. Racket then tries to discourage Courtall from making false promises ('Newmarket oaths'). The collocation 'Newmarket oaths' suggests a type of empty or false promise, in the same way that Newmarket connotes gambling and cheating. Newmarket is notorious as a place where people gamble in the hope that their bets will return money, but this is always contingent on something happening which they have no control over. The label Newmarket is thus a shorthand for the pragmatic content of the collocation 'Newmarket oaths'. This expression sets up the whole exchange into bantering, using a mixture of different registers of marginal vocabulary. Racket continues her speech using thieves' slang ('rhino riggs', meaning "fraudulous trick") to talk about cheating someone of money and makes reference to fortune telling ("hand me down them cards, and see what luck is coming").

In lines 13-19, the characters make use of double entendres and doublespeak to make a sexual joke. The characters make a toast and play on the expression 'House of Commons'. In line 14-16, Mrs Racket makes a toast to people ('up-right member') who enter the parliament ('House of Commons'). However, 'up-right member' here is used as doublespeak and can refer to two things. It can literally refer to a member of parliament, but the figurative reading is "an erect penis". So Mrs Racket plays on the word 'member', and ridicules members of parliament as men who pay too much attention to their penis. Courtall then picks up on the wordplay and continues the bantering by commenting that they should also toast to "upright members that enter houses that are not common" (line 17-18), a metaphorical way of referring to sexual intercourse. 'Upright member' here refers to an erect penis which enters the vagina (elegantly described as "a house that is not common"). In other words, Courtall celebrates the art of sexual intercourse. Racket then expresses the hope that prostitution and sexual encounters become less of a taboo and more openly acceptable ("unless it be to make them common", line 19), playing on the word 'common'. 'Common' here refers both to "making it more open and public" and "more ordinary".<sup>51</sup> So on the surface the language use of the characters appears to be innocent, but upon closer reading it actually reads as a metaphor for sexual intercourse.

---

<sup>50</sup> See OED entry for 'sepulchre', n., sense 2b. 'whited (painted) sepulchre': in biblical language, used fig. for a hypocrite, or one whose fair outward semblance conceals inward corruption. (OED Online 2015)

<sup>51</sup> See OED entry for 'common', adj. and adv. A. adj. I. Of general, public, or non-private nature. 4. Of general application, general. 6. Free to be used by everyone, public II Of ordinary occurrence and quality; hence mean, cheap. 10a. In general use; of frequent occurrence; usual, ordinary, prevalent, frequent. (OED Online 2015)

The terms 'House of Commons' and 'upright member' are cleverly appropriated to build this sexual joke.

In the next segment, the bantering and the use of opaque expressions mask the fact that the characters are talking dirty and rude. Courtall uses many expressions related to Newmarket, horse-racing and gambling as a way of talking about chasing women, marriage, and prostitution. In line 20, Courtall adapts the horse-racing term for the men who prepare young horses to race on the track, namely, 'trainers' in the expression 'trainers for the town' to refer to himself, people who prepare young women so they can serve as prostitutes. Courtall claims that men like himself rather like to have sex with young virgins than being involved in politics and fighting wars ("breaking the head of a Frenchmen", line 20-22). He also plays on the word 'break', which has two meanings here, namely a) to have sex with virgins, and b) to physically assault Frenchmen. 'Filly' refers to a young female horse and is a metaphor for a young virgin girl. 'Breaking in these fillies', means taking away her virginity, and to get her ready for prostitution. In other words, the expression is an opaque way of describing how rakes have sexual intercourse with young virgins.

Mrs Courtall picks up Courtall's metaphorical use of 'breaking' to describe a woman named Clara who got broke through marriage (line 23-25). She then makes use of Newmarket terminology ("galloping", "following the same track", "being on the Cyprian turf", "being in the matrimonial stud") to express her opinion of how marriage makes women worse than prostitution. Clara apparently went to Scotland ("galloped") to escape her fate as a prostitute by becoming an "honest" woman by marriage (line 26). Both Mrs Racket and Courtall think that marriage will ruin her as a woman, because no men will ever pursue her again for payment ("all her culls will withdraw their allegiance"), and will be penniless ("as poor as Job"), meaning that she will not receive any payment for her sexual services (lines 27-32). So Racket believes that marriage and being a wife will make Clara poor. But then Courtall comments that if she would do the same as Letitia (follow the same track), she would still be kept on the Cyprian turf (line 34-35). 'Cyprian' is applied to prostitution to describe something licentious or lewd, and 'turf' is the word for racetrack.<sup>52</sup> Here the horse racing metaphors are appropriated to describe prostitution. If Clara were to do the same thing as Letitia, then she would be still on the racetrack, and the object of attraction for other men. Being on the racetrack here means being available for performance, namely, still being able to be chased by the men ('culls'). On the other hand, when it comes to marriage, women are confined in the matrimonial 'stud', a reference to the place where racehorses are bred; by extension, this refers to the expectation that marriage entails producing children (line 39). As Courtall notes, 'being in the stud' means that there is no riding, racing and chasing involved, but rather the house of 'breeding' horses (the place where a married woman should stay and where she has to

---

<sup>52</sup> See OED entry 'Cyprian', *adj.* and *n.*, sense 2: *transf.* licentious, lewd; in 18-19<sup>th</sup> c. applied to prostitutes (OED Online 2015)

give birth and take care of children). It is also a place where women would not be chased after by someone like a rake.

In the last part of the dialogue, Mrs Racket and Courtall discuss Mrs Racket's brothel business, using a mix of Newmarket terminology, 'flash' and thieves' slang. She refers to her business in opaque terms ("worked the pockets of so many of the nobility") and also plays on the words "horses and wh—s" (lines 44-46). 'Horses' here refers to ladies. Note that 'whores' is visually foregrounded and the full spelling is not given so as to appear opaque, which suggests that this word is taboo, akin to swearing (like 'd—mnd'). Courtall pleads Mrs Racket for money ("give me your draught") and ensures that he will reward Mrs Racket richly by adding an interest for her bit. However Mrs Racket does not budge, saying that she has not worked so hard simply to support him and she becomes slightly verbally aggressive. Courtall should not expect Mrs Racket to part with her money, unless she marries him. She draws attention again to Courtall's false promises ("Why don't you marry me, as promised?", line 46-47) Her verbal aggression is conveyed through the use of the expressions 'strike me stuff' for "don't you dare", and 'blow you up' for "give me away", meaning "I will tell her your secrets and I will give you a (bad) character". In fact, Mrs Racket is presented as a stock character who uses the construction 'strike me + adjective' throughout the conversation: "strike me lucky", "strike me plump", "strike me comical", "strike my odd joints", "strike me flat", "strike me stiff" for comic effect. In addition, Mrs Racket uses terms related to horse-racing in her threat to Courtall. She compares Courtall to a horse who drives around in a 'phaeton' (carriage) picking up wenches. Mrs Racket threatens to give Courtall a bad name in front of the wench that he met (line 47-50). She also tells Courtall to back off (keep your fore-hoofs off), and that he will be unable to run and get hold of Mrs Racket and her money (the ground is too rough) (lines 52-54). In the last lines (54-58), she resorts to thieves' slang in her threat to report Courtall to Sir Robert Petres, one of the Majesty's staff officers on the civil establishment, ("you shan't tip me any of your queer bail"). In conclusion, in this scene we find the appropriation of marginal vocabulary related to Newmarket and London low life, alongside puns and double entendres in order to build a clever metaphor to talk about prostitution and sex in opaque ways. An eighteenth-century audience who would be attentive of those metaphors and word play would find this scene hilarious.

\*\*\*

The appropriation of 'cull' in combination with other registers of marginal vocabulary in the prose fiction and drama suggests that a term like 'cull', which was initially used amongst thieves (as we have seen in the Old Bailey texts) started to become part of the common marginal vocabulary in the period. This corroborates the observation that marginal vocabulary associated with criminals underwent a change from something specific and inherently criminal to language that becomes more common and available for a wider general audience (see Gotti 1999; Sorensen 2004). According to Gotti (1999), 'cant' expanded its meaning which included not only the secret language used by thieves

and beggars, but also other types of specialised vocabulary and social dialects. Francis Grose comments in *A Classical Dictionary* that ‘cant’ is part of the wider idea of a “vulgar tongue”:

The Vulgar Tongue consists of two parts: the first is the Cant Language, called sometimes Pedlar’s French, or St. Giles’s Greek; the second, those Burlesque Phrases, Quaint Allusions, and Nick-names for persons, things and places, which from long uninterrupted usage are made classical by prescription (Grose 1785; Preface iii)

The burlesque phrases referred to the terms used by “soldiers on the long march, seamen at the cap-sterm, ladies disposing of their fish, and the colloquies of a Gravesend-boat”, the type of vocabulary that we saw in *Jack Sprit-Sail’s Frolic* (Grose 1785: Preface vi). These terms may have become part of ‘flash’, the language used by the fashionable world of London society (Coleman 2004b: 259, see Fitzmaurice 2010a, Berry 2001; But 2010). The danger with ‘flash’ is that it crosses the boundaries between the different classes – between the respectable and non-respectable groups in society (Coleman 2004b: 260; see Berry 2001). ‘Cant’ respected class because its users would be careful in exposing these terms outside the criminal sphere, but ‘flash’ was not bound to class; instead it actually brought the “disreputable, immoral world of gambling, drinking and prostitution” closer to people’s own drawing rooms (Coleman 2004b: 260).

According to Fitzmaurice (2010a: 109), the upper classes of London would have adopted the marginal vocabulary used by thieves to engage in their immoral lifestyle and to act impolitely in places like Molly’s coffee house. However, my sense is that marginal vocabulary is not always and not necessarily used as “an expression of defiance” (Coleman 2004b: 260; Berry 2001). As we have seen in the texts so far, the marginal vocabulary carries humorous connotations and contributes to the creation of a comic scene. One of the texts in which we find the use of ‘cull’ as an informal expression in a text that depicts the high life is *The Authentic Memoirs of the Life, Intrigues and Adventures of the Celebrated Sally Salisbury* (1723). As the title reveals, this memoir resembles a present-day gossip magazine which details the lives and scandals of a famous person, namely Sally Salisbury (1690/92-1724). It is a so-called prostitute narrative, which focuses on the life of well-known and celebrated courtesans. These prostitute narratives are similar to the criminal biographies in that they were written by hack writers, who shared details of the scandalous life of a particular person, in this case the courtesan, for entertainment purposes. The difference however, is that the central character in these life narratives is a person of high rank, as opposed to the pick pockets and whores associated with the low life. As one of the celebrated courtesans of her day, Sally was in constant demand among the titled and the powerful, because of her great and charismatic beauty (White 2004). Her reputation earned her much publicity and her life was featured in a number of biographies, including the *Authentic Memoirs*. The *Authentic Memoirs* was written by Captain Charles Walker, but there is not much information about him. The *Authentic Memoirs* are composed in the form of a letter exchange between the Captain author and a certain W Ryder. The following

excerpt is from a letter to Charles Walker in which W Ryder informs his correspondent of the following interesting anecdote about Sally:

1           (12)       But to have done with Morals and Reflections, and return to Sally's Count,  
2           whose Eyes were incessantly gazing upon her, and every now and then would approach  
3           her, his Joints trembling and squeezing her fair Hand with an Exstasy, would break out  
4           into rapturous Exclamations, in very indifferent *English*, calling her *his Angel! His Venus!*  
5           *His Earthly Goddess!* And what not? Giving his Introducer to understand, *in French*, to  
6           which Language Sally is an entire Stranger, That the Brightness of that enchanting  
7           Nymph's Eyes had quite charm'd his Soul; and that, unless he enjoy'd, 'twas wholly  
8           impossible for him to live; looking at the same time he spoke with an Air so languishing,  
9           as if, in Reality, he was melting away and just expiring His Companion, who, as I hinted  
10          above, was a true Champion of *Venus*, and had liv'd as we say *pretty fast*, had a great  
11          Veneration for SALLY's engaging Person himself; but having, like many more of our  
12          unbridled Youth, out-run his Allowance in pursuit of Pleasure, his Purse could not always  
13          keep Time to the Motions of his Heart, and SALLY was too much what she is and ever  
14          will be, to grant him Love Gratis, or *upon Tick*; so that, to ingratiate himself with her, he  
15          had been forc'd to promise to bring her some Rich Cull, whom she might *Milk* to good  
16          Advantage; and as a Gratification for that Piece of Service she engaged herself to bless him  
17          with now and then a *spare Night's* Revelling in her delicious Embraces.

(*Authentic Memoirs* 1723: 92, italics in original)

This scene describes an encounter between Sally Salisbury and a foreign nobleman, who is obviously very interested in Sally and her services. Marginal vocabulary is stylistically incorporated into the text to spice up the life narrative of Sally, in the same way that marginal vocabulary was used in Jenny Diver's account to make her narrative more interesting. Like the Ordinary of these Accounts, the author of the *Authentic Memoirs* made a strategic decision to include marginal vocabulary in different places in the accounts to make the story more exciting. However, the clustering of marginal vocabulary in this excerpt is not the same as the marginal vocabulary found in the Old Bailey texts. In the Ordinary's Accounts, we predominately find clustering of criminal's jargon whereas in this excerpt, we find the use of informal vocabulary other than those specifically associated with thieves. Examples include euphemisms to talk about taboo issues related to the services of a high-class courtesan ('upon tick', 'milk', 'spare night'), informal slang ('pretty fast') and terms of endearment (my Venus!). I argue that the use of 'cull' and other marginal vocabulary in this excerpt is designed to give a flavour of the kind of language used by prostitutes, which is highly informal and that the clustering of different types of marginal vocabulary contributes to the creation of a funny scene. The scene depicts the count's overly romantic attempts to win Sally's heart and spend a night with her. The count is made fun of because of his exaggerated expressions and behaviour as a lover of Sally ("he spoke with an Air so languishing", line 8) and by putting Sally on a

pedestal. An example of this is the fact that the count addresses Sally “his Angel! His Venus! His Earthly Goddess!!” (line 4-5). The narrator attributes this to the count’s foreign background, and comments upon the language use of the count as “rapturous Exclamations” (line 3-4) and “indifferent English” (line 4). So the count makes use of these exaggerated expressions of admiration to win over Sally’s heart, but Sally is not convinced that easily. Like everyone else, he needs to pay for Sally’s services, which are described through the use of euphemisms. These terms are visually foregrounded and strategically used to talk about Sally’s services. “To grant love gratis” is used to refer to free sexual services, whereas ‘upon tick’ refers to love on credit.<sup>53</sup> Because it turns out that the count has run out of money (“out-run his Allowance in pursuit of Pleasure”), Sally offers him the deal that if he can bring her a client with a lot of money (“rich Cull”, line 15), whom she could exploit (‘milk’) to good advantage (line 15), then she would offer him a ‘spare night’ (line 17), which refers to an evening together with the prostitute for free. Sally’s turbulent lifestyle is described by the narrator as ‘pretty fast’ (line 10), and through the inclusion of the metalinguistic comment “as we say” the narrator creates a social bond between himself and the reader. So in this text, we see the use of marginal vocabulary to depict the lifestyle of a high-class courtesan for humorous effects rather than as an expression of transgression.

#### 5.5.4. *Word meaning: The contingent polysemous nature of ‘cull’*

We have seen that marginal vocabulary that is associated with thieves acquire a more public status in the period as a result of reproduction, metalinguistic discussions, and appropriation. One final point that I would like to address is whether there is a relation between the widespread use of marginal vocabulary and meaning change, and how the processes of reproduction and appropriation affect the meanings of the terms. The hypothesis I posed for the term ‘cull’ was that if ‘cull’ appears in a wide range of texts, that it would also exhibit different meanings and increasingly widen its meaning over the course of the period. My evidence of the use of the term ‘cull’ shows that the term is contingent polysemous; it has multiple meanings in the eighteenth century. As Table 3 in section 5.3 shows, ‘cull’ can be used to refer to a particular type of person (good, bad, victim) or a man more generally. Both specialised and general senses of ‘cull’ have currency all the way through the period; the use of ‘cull’ to refer to a client of a prostitute occurs in texts across the whole period (see Appendix V for an overview of all prose titles in which ‘cull’ is used). Likewise, the use of ‘cull’ to refer to a man more generally was found as early as in the beginning of the century (1714) as towards the end of the century (1792). I argue that, the nature of the polysemy, the order of the meaning depends on the nature of the context in which that utterance is used and how it is used rather than time.

---

<sup>53</sup> See OED entry ‘tick’, *n.4. colloq. or slang*. 1. Phrases. *On or upon (the) tick*, on credit, on trust (OED Online 2015)

'Cull' is appropriated in a number of texts to refer to a client of a prostitute (as seen in the *Authentic Memoirs of Sally Salisbury*), which is not surprising given that many of the ECCO texts feature characters that are prostitutes or courtesans such the courtesan narratives (*The Juvenile Adventures of Kitty F-r* (1759), and *Memoirs of the Celebrated Miss Fanny M-* (1759)), prose fiction (*The History of Pompey the Little* (1751), *The Auction, a Modern Novel* (1760)), and prose texts which offer a satire of London society (Thomas Brown's *Amusements serious and comical* (1725)). The fact that the term 'cull' occurs in a wide range of genres to refer stereotypically to a victim of a prostitute suggests that most eighteenth-century readers were familiar with the specialised sense of this term. Another clue to support this is that the term is not linguistically foregrounded through glossing. Unlike the Ordinary's Accounts, the term 'cull' is generally not glossed by the author or "translated" by the one of the characters, which suggest that the term 'cull' in the sense of "a victim" or "person" would be familiar to most eighteenth-century readers. The expression 'rich cull' in the life narrative of Sally Salisbury was not visually foregrounded, whereas the other registers were foregrounded. Sometimes, however, 'cull' is visually foregrounded to draw attention to the specialised sense of the term. Consider the appropriation of 'cull' in Edward Ward's *The London Terraefilius* (1707), a satirical reforming text about London society:

- (13) Pray take Notice of yonder *Marmolet* Madam, that Trips it along as Maidenly, as if her great Toes had taken the Solemn League and Covenant, never to let Man pass the Milky-way to *Loves-Paradice* without *Church Security*; you see in what Rich Splendour she appears, set off with all the Advantages of an *Alderman's* only Daughter, and looks as Demurely and Reserv'd, as if just bolted from from a *Conventicle*; yet is that Angelical Phubsie the very Lais of the Age, and has more Subtile Tricks and Contrivances to decoy an Amorous *Cull* into her Ruinous Embraces, than the Devil ever us'd in the beginning with the Original of her Sex (*The London Terraefilius* 1707: 20-21, italics in original)

In this excerpt the narrator warns the eighteenth-century reader of meeting a prostitute, who is described as a "Marmolet Madam" and does not appear who she seems. While she may appear rich in appearance ("set off with all the Advantages of an Alderman's only Daughter"), modest ("demurely and reserved") and innocent, she has ill intentions of seducing an "Amorous Cull into her Ruinous Embraces", possibly robbing him of his possessions, the type of deception that we also saw in the Sessions Papers. The term 'cull' is not glossed, but it is visually foregrounded through italicisation. Also, the modifier 'amorous' gives away that this type of person is someone who would spend the night with the lady in question. So, the appropriation of 'cull' in this text is part of the elaborate and euphemistic register in which the text is written (as seen in Sally Salisbury's narrative). The term here retains its specific connotations as a technical term used by prostitutes, because it is appropriated into a context that describes whoring and prostitution.

Because appropriation involves the use of a lexical item in new contexts featuring new people, new characters and new topics, the term 'cull' is also appropriated in a text which may not involve the typical underworld/low life. In these texts, 'cull' is appropriated in a



context where it is used to refer to a man more informally, especially one who is foolish. Instead, we find characters which are middle class, but with an interest in keeping mistresses. Again it is the context that allows us to infer that the term is used in its general sense. For example, the term ‘cull’ is appropriated by Arthur Murphy in *The Citizen* (1763), a farce about deception and marriage in the scene below.

(14) Act II, Scene I

G. Phil.	What an imp of hell she [Corinne] is.	[Aside.
Wild.	Come, get up, Sir; you are too old to be beat.	
Old Phil. [rising]	In troth, so I am—But there you may exercise yourself again if you please—	
G. Phil.	No more for me, Sir—I thank you.	
Old Phil.	I have made but a bad voyage of it—The ship sunk, and stock and block lost	[Aside
Wild.	Ha, ha! Upon my soul, I can’t help laughing at his old square toes—As for you, Sir, you have had what you deserv’d—Ha, ha! You are a <b>kind cull</b> , I suppose—Ha, ha! And you, reverend dad, you must come here tottering after a punk, ha, ha!	
Old Phil.	Oh! George! George!	
G. Phil.	Oh! Father! Father!	
Wild.	Ha, ha! What, father and son! And so you have found one another out, ha, ha!—Well you may have business; and so, gentlemen, I’ll leave you to yourselves	
	[Exit	

(*The Citizen* 1763: 28-29)

The scene describes a humorous and embarrassing moment between father and son, Old Philpot and Young Philpot. Old Philpot, who is a wealthy skinflint, is unaware that his son had lost of a fortune through gambling. The latter has thus used some of his father’s money to cover things up. Also, both father and son happen to share the same interest in Corinne, a lady of loose virtue and thus a prostitute. The moment of mutual discovery and embarrassment is revealed in this scene, and witnessed by Young Wilding, the son of a fox hunter. Young Wilding uses the term ‘kind cull’ to describe Young Philpott, and that he had made a fool out of himself since he is discovered by his own father (namely that Old Philpot finds out that he was fooled by his son into giving money). The other discovery made is that both Old and Young Philpot share the same interest in Corinne. Even though the situation involves whoring (‘punk’ is a slang term for “prostitute”, see OED Online 2015), the term ‘cull’ in this case, is not used in the specialised sense to refer to a victim of a prostitute, but as a common term to refer to a man more informally, who may or may not be foolish.

So in some texts, the term ‘cull’ is appropriated to refer to a victim of a prostitute. In this use the term is used in its specialised sense and carries connotations with the underworld. However in some texts, we do see an expansion in the referential meaning of ‘cull’ to refer to a foolish person more generally. The term ‘cull’ is contingent polysemous and I argue that the language users themselves, meaning the authors of the texts, are the agents of priming one particular sense of ‘cull’ when they appropriate the term. The term may or may not necessarily refer to a victim. When the term ‘cull’ is appropriated to refer to “a ‘man” more generally, the author may or may not include a modifier to highlight a specific character trait of the referent, such as foolishness. We have already seen that ‘old cull’ can refer to someone’s father (Henry Fielding’s *The History of Tom Jones* 1749). In Richard Griffith’s *The Triumvirate* (1764), we find ‘Weeping Cull’, the latter labelling a sad and foolish character who performed a bizarre ritual re-enacting the death scene of his lover. The term is foregrounded because of his bizarre behaviour:

- (15) But in a short time, he became so well known on the Strand, that he was stiled The **Weeping Cull**, and whenever he appeared, all the long, ghost-like gingers, used to crowd about him, and offer themselves voluntarily, to perform a scene in his tragedy; which reduced the price, at length, to a supper and a guinea (Griffith, *The Triumvirate* 1764: 156)

In the play *The Informers Outwitted* (1738), on the other hand, ‘cull’ refers to a person who is the victim of deception, but is not modified:

- (16) Scuff. I shall nail the **Cull** presently; he’s a good Mouth (*The Informers Outwitted* 1738)

In other words, the specialised and general meaning of ‘cull’ has both currency throughout the period, and the type of meaning that is prominent depends on the linguistic and socio-historical context in which it is appropriated. Appropriation of ‘cull’ may or may not involve a meaning change.

## 5.6. Conclusion

In this chapter I have explored the use of marginal vocabulary beyond the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, and examined (1) the extent to which marginal vocabulary was used in these texts, and how it was used, and (2) the extent to which marginal vocabulary undergoes a change in meaning over the course of the eighteenth century. I conducted a keyword search of ‘cull’ as a diagnostic way into the ECCO database, in order to assess the feasibility for locating marginal vocabulary in a wide array of texts. The occurrence of ‘cull’ and other marginal vocabulary items in excerpts from a number of texts confirms that the diagnostic search is a fruitful way of locating marginal vocabulary use in the ECCO resource. This diagnostic search does generate both contexts in which ‘cull’ is used along with other marginal vocabulary, as well as contexts in which ‘cull’ does not occur with other marginal vocabulary. Evidence of the use of marginal vocabulary in a wide

range of texts (including the Old Bailey) demonstrates that 'cant' was a popular topic in eighteenth-century texts in the same way that 'cant' was popular in the early modern texts. We find indeed marginal vocabulary in dictionaries and in literary texts. This shows a continuation of the popularity of this kind of language in the period, not just in the canting works that Coleman discusses, but also in texts where 'cant' is not the main topic. Printed texts serve as a vehicle for the widespread use of marginal terms and the social stereotypes that are associated with it. My study has demonstrated an expansion of the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century, and that 'cull' and other marginal vocabulary are used in other genres than the *Old Bailey Proceedings*.

The rich evidence of marginal vocabulary produced by the keyword search allows for an extensive analysis of how this language is used in a wider range of texts in the eighteenth century. As for its function and uses, marginal vocabulary is reproduced, metalinguistically discussed and appropriated for various purposes, depending on the genre, topic represented, the author and the intended readership. Reproduction of marginal vocabulary was found in criminal biographies. Given their resemblance to the Ordinary's Accounts, it is not surprising to find reproduction of marginal vocabulary in these texts from an earlier context to represent the speech and the life narrative of prisoners. The terms are reproduced to give a flavour the criminal's speech and contribute to the creation of an entertaining life story. There is a strong attachment of the marginal vocabulary to the real criminals who used it. Marginal terms are also reproduced in the canting dictionaries, which claimed to borrow from each other. In these texts, marginal vocabulary is fossilised and the criminal slang is strongly preserved.

Then, we also see the appropriation of marginal vocabulary in a wide variety of texts (prose fiction, drama, life narratives) for the purpose of speech representation and characterisation. Obviously, marginal vocabulary was reproduced in the Old Bailey texts for the same purpose, but the difference with the Old Bailey texts is that marginal vocabulary is attributed to a wide range of characters. We find the attribution of certain marginal vocabulary to represent stereotypical low life, but we also see an expansion of its attribution to characters like drunken sailors, gamblers, shop keepers, ladies of the brothel, who are not low life by default. The marginal vocabulary is used by authors to represent a fictional world in which the characters are represented as fools, to be ridiculed and laughed at (link to character stereotyping). Appropriation in the ECCO texts is a creative process and all kinds of marginal vocabulary are appropriated to create a particular funny scene. What is remarkable is that we see the appropriation of a wide register of marginal vocabulary, not just the thieves' slang that we encountered in the Old Bailey texts but also the appropriation of other types of marginal vocabulary which are more vulgar and informal of the period. Like the early modern play, we see the appropriation of marginal vocabulary to describe sexual matters without being explicit about it, such as innuendos and euphemisms. In contrast, the marginal vocabulary reproduced in the Old Bailey texts is used to represent the speakers in court and the prisoners as dangerous, violent and threatening.

I argue that the reproduction and appropriation of marginal vocabulary contribute to the 'enregisterment' of marginal vocabulary in this period, similar to the enregisterment of RP in Agha's study. Due to its wider exposure in the various texts, these terms are 'public words' and they are no longer exclusive to the secret underworld only. Instead, we have actual members from the low life sharing and exposing these terms to an external party (either in court or in prison) and which is then reproduced in written form. Then it gets picked up by people who are not necessarily thieves but gain knowledge of this language and can talk about it in the form of metalinguistic comments and they can also appropriate this language for their own communicative purposes. The terms are 'public words', and a socially recognised register which is widely circulated across communities and texts. This wider exposure of marginal terms in the various texts makes these terms more accessible to a wider audience and they are also the topic of discussion in metadiscourses found in the prefaces to the dictionaries and essays. Metalinguistic discussions occur in dictionaries, as well as essays and literary texts, for example when two characters in a text comment on each other's language. In this case, the author tries to indirectly influence the reader's interpretation of the text, and he might indirectly try to communicate his attitudes and beliefs about language to the reader. These kinds of metalinguistic discussions reinforce some of the stereotypes about 'cant' and low life speakers, and they add more information about certain marginal forms. The eighteenth-century mass print media do contribute to the construction and maintenance of the linguistic indexed difference between 'cant' and non-cant through reproduction, metalinguistic discussion and appropriation of these terms. The terms continue to live on in the texts when authors reproduce and appropriate these terms to represent speech, characters and behaviour.

Finally, in terms of language change, my study has provided linguistic evidence to the claim that there was a change in the conception of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century in the form of how these terms were actually used. As for the status of marginal vocabulary, we find both fossilisation and weakening of the lexical and social meanings of 'cull'. On the one hand they may retain its specialised meanings when the terms are reproduced and appropriated to represent the criminal people stereotypically. We find the persistence of the specialised meaning in that in the world of the characters, the term is attributed to the language of prostitute characters to refer to their clients. This use is stereotypical to represent the speech of a prostitute. The lack of glossing seems to indicate that the eighteenth-century reader was highly familiar with this term and no longer a secretive, specialised term used by criminals specifically. On the other hand, when the terms are appropriated, they may or may not change the meaning. When the term is appropriated, the lexical meaning either retains its specific meaning, or changes its meaning to become more general, depending on the situation and who is appropriating the term and for what purpose. For example, 'cull' weakens its lexical meaning from a client of a prostitute, to a person more generally who may or may not be foolish in texts that does not feature criminals or which does not describe a criminal scene. In these cases, the term has lost its specific connotations and social meanings with the low life. Changes of meaning thus result from subtle shifts of use and the people themselves are the agents of

this change in meaning. The meaning change depends on the communicative intentions of the speaker/writer; in some contexts the specialised meaning is foregrounded, whereas in other contexts, the general meaning is more appropriate to suit the situation.

So, overall, we do see a widening of the use of marginal vocabulary in different kinds of genres as a result of reproduction, metalinguistic discussion and appropriation. Appropriation, specifically, is linked to the the kinds of characters that the terms are attributed to, a widening in its pragmatic force, and a widening in its lexical meaning to refer to a fool or man more generally. Yet at the same time we see the attribution of marginal vocabulary to low life stock characters and a fossilisation of the specialised meaning of 'cull', attributed to prostitute characters when they are reproduced or appropriated in such context.

## Conclusion

### 6.1. Key findings

The thesis reported the findings of a historical pragmatic study on how marginal vocabulary is used in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* (Chapter 4) and other eighteenth-century texts (Chapter 5) and what happens to this language over the course of the century. The aim was to make a contribution to current research on marginal vocabulary in this period and to gain more insights into how this language is used in the eighteenth century. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, evidence of the canting dictionaries in this period shows that this topic was widely featured in the eighteenth-century popular texts and that it existed, but little is known about whether and how these terms were used outside these dictionaries, who used these terms and what communicative functions they served. Also, the dictionaries hinted at changes in the conception of marginal vocabulary in the period as something which was not exclusively associated with thieves but which became more widely available amongst the general public (see e.g. Gotti 1999 and Sorensen 2004). Another aim of this study was then to shed more light on the status of marginal vocabulary in this period and whether changes in the conception of marginal vocabulary were also reflected in the way that these terms were used in other eighteenth-century texts. My historical pragmatic approach to this topic has, on the one hand, elucidated the range and extent of marginal vocabulary in texts that represent the marginal, namely the *Old Bailey Proceedings*, and, on the other hand, has shown the expansion of marginal vocabulary into the mainstream texts as evidenced in ECCO.

At the end of Chapter 2, I set out the following research questions that would be explored in this thesis and which we can now answer in light of the findings from Chapters 4 and 5:

1. How is marginal vocabulary used in eighteenth-century texts?
2. Do we find a change in the status and meanings of marginal vocabulary over the course of the eighteenth century?

With regard to the first research question, marginal terms are used in a wide range of eighteenth-century genres, such as courtroom documents, criminal biographies, prose fiction, drama and prostitute narratives for different purposes, depending on who is using the terms, the topic and content of the text, and the implied audience. Evidence of marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts demonstrates that marginal vocabulary was used by real people in the eighteenth century and that it was attributed to the language use of the low life. As I argued in Chapter 4, marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts serves different communicative purposes depending on who is using it and in what kind of genre it is used. In the Sessions Papers, the use of marginal vocabulary was considered from the point of the view of the speakers who were represented in the Sessions Papers, as well as the court recorder, who reported what was said in the courtroom. The speakers in

the courtroom, whose language use was represented, reproduced marginal vocabulary strategically to present their testimonies in a particular way. Depending on which side they represented, they had to provide evidence against or for the defendant under trial. For example, the witnesses and the victims attribute marginal vocabulary to the defendant in their testimonies to demonstrate that he used these specialised terms to commit a crime without being overheard by others. Their use of marginal vocabulary can serve as evidence that the defendant had committed a particular crime. The court officials on the other hand, draw attention to the marginal terms by inquiring into the lexical meanings of these terms. Sometimes, lawyers use marginal vocabulary strategically to get a particular response from the person they interrogate, as William Garrow does. I also demonstrated that marginal vocabulary does important social and identity work for the speakers in the courtroom. In other words, people use marginal vocabulary especially to create social distance between themselves and the topic of their speech (in this case, events and people related to a criminal offence). The defendant for example, dissociated himself from the identity of a criminal in denying that he knew the meaning of the marginal terms. The marginal vocabulary that was reportedly used in the courtroom was then reproduced by the courtroom in the printed Sessions Papers to present a newsworthy report of the content of what was said in the courtroom. The marginal terms had to be reproduced in the printed Sessions Papers because they are content words and refer to specialised concepts related to crime. Apart from necessity, I also argued that the reproduction of marginal vocabulary in the Sessions Papers contributes to the negative representation of the criminal offenders. This relates to the ideological agenda of the Sessions Papers, namely to demonstrate that the City was in good control of crime detection. By representing the criminal offenders as people who used this special code to talk about their criminal activities, the texts draw attention to the fact they are dangerous, violent, and a threat to society, and that they need to be punished for committing such deeds.

In the Ordinary's Accounts, marginal vocabulary was also reproduced from a real life context to represent the prisoner's life story that was told to the Ordinary. The key argument here is that the terms were reproduced for the purpose of stylisation, and to reconstruct an entertaining account of the prisoner's life story which also had a moral undertone. The terms are carefully selected and reproduced to give a flavour of the prisoner's language and to represent the prisoner as an 'exotic' type of anti-hero. The terms also contributed to the dramatisation and romanticisation of the life events of the criminal in order to present a life story that would sell well to people. The Ordinary plays an important role as a mediator between the world of the prisoner and the world of his readership in that he makes use of his 'first-hand' knowledge of marginal vocabulary to share this exclusive knowledge of the secret language of the thieves to the general public. He does so by adding glosses to the marginal terms to make sure that the reader understands these terms. In addition, he makes use of his mediator position to make evaluative judgements about the prisoner and his language use by offering metalinguistic commentary in the texts. The Ordinary is then predominately highlighting the fact that the prisoner represented in the text is 'exotic' and different from himself and the general

public. Marginal vocabulary and metalinguistic commentary serve an important social and identity function for the Ordinary, namely to create social distance between himself and the topic represented.

Some of the marginal terms that were used in the Old Bailey texts also find their way into other eighteenth-century genres, such as criminal biographies, life narratives, drama and prose fiction. In these texts, the terms are reproduced and appropriated for various purposes depending on the purpose of the text, who was writing the text, the topic or speaker that is being represented. Reproduction of marginal vocabulary was found in the criminal biographies to give a flavour of the criminal's speech. The terms are used in similar ways as in the Ordinary's Accounts because they both represent the speech of the criminals and they are taken from a real life context. The type of marginal vocabulary found in these texts has strong criminal associations. Marginal vocabulary is also reproduced in the canting dictionaries of the period, similar to the dictionary practices in the early modern period. The eighteenth-century dictionaries, like their early modern predecessors, show that dictionary compilers reproduced the content of other dictionaries in their compilation of a new work. The evidence that supports this is the comparison of the different kinds of word lists as well as the metalinguistic commentary provided by the dictionary compiler about the creation of the dictionary. Furthermore, in texts like prose fiction and drama, we find the appropriation of marginal vocabulary which is used for new purposes and new effects. Marginal vocabulary in these popular texts is appropriated for speech and characterisation in the creation of a comic scene. What is striking is that marginal vocabulary in these texts is attributed to a wider range of speakers, such as sailors, army officers, prostitutes and rakes. This is also evidenced by the fact that we see the appropriation of not only typically thieves' slang, but a wide variety of other registers, such as swear words, other technical language, word play, and other fashionable phrases of the time. In the prose texts *Jack Sprit-Sail's Frolic* (1791) and Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones* (1749), we find a mixture of thieves' slang with specialised terminology of the navy and/or swear words to represent the characters in stereotypical ways (being clueless, lost in the city, loving their drink and rowdy and loud) and also in comic situations when they interact with other characters who do not use marginal vocabulary. They are also ridiculed by the other speakers. In other texts such as drama or life narratives, we see the mixture of thieves' slang with other jargon as well as the more informal and fashionable language of the period to talk about taboo topics and themes in opaque terms. Authors make use of the unintelligible nature of the marginal terms to create amusing scenes with lots of culture-specific references to things that would be familiar and hilarious to an eighteenth-century audience. For example, in *The Belle's Stratagem* (1781), the marginal vocabulary use of thieves and Newmarket is used in combination with double entendres and double speak to discuss taboo topics like prostitution, whoring and to make other inappropriate jokes that could not be explicitly told. Similarly, in Sally Salisbury's text, which is a prostitute narrative about a well-known high class courtesan, we find the appropriation of marginal vocabulary, and especially the fashionable language of the period to depict a humorous encounter between Sally and one of her foreign suitors. The fact that



we find this interesting mixture of marginal vocabulary associated with the low life and marginal vocabulary associated with the high life makes the scene depicted striking and incongruous.

As for what happens to marginal vocabulary over the course of the eighteenth century, I argue that marginal vocabulary are 'public words' and become enregistered as a socially distinctive register. That is, marginal vocabulary is no longer confined to the criminal underworld, but finds its way into general discourse of the period. The reproduction of marginal vocabulary associated with the thieves in the Old Bailey texts, as well as the publication of dictionaries, plays an important role in that process because the authors of these texts reproduced the terms from a real life criminal context. They gained knowledge of these terms and then exposed this exclusive language of a particular social group to a wider audience. The goal of these people was to make the eighteenth-century public familiar with this kind of language for the greater good, namely to arm themselves against the risk of being robbed or being the victim of a criminal attack. Once it was in the open domain, marginal vocabulary became part of the public imagination; it was part of the public awareness and it was also something that could be metalinguistically discussed in dictionary prefaces, commentaries or in popular prose fiction. Such metalinguistic discourse played a crucial role in raising awareness of the special nature of the marginal terms, and these texts were also responsible for creating, maintaining and disseminating knowledge of this language as well as stereotypes about this language. The wide exposure of marginal vocabulary in the public domain meant that the terms could be further reproduced or appropriated into a new text for new purposes. Especially with appropriation, authors could carefully select what kinds of marginal vocabulary they wanted to appropriate, how much of this language they wanted to represent in the texts in order to create their literary world. Particularly with the term 'cull', which was originally associated with criminal language, its appropriation shows that this term became part of the popular and common informal language of the eighteenth century. This was evidenced when looking at the clustering of this term with the other registers of marginal vocabulary. The term 'cull' was not visually and linguistically marked in the text, which suggests that the term must have been familiar with the general audience. On the other hand, the other marginal terms were visually foregrounded and highlight the fact that this speaker uses marginal vocabulary. The marginal terms maintained their status as 'public' words because they were reproduced, appropriated and metalinguistically commented upon. These uses of marginal vocabulary played a crucial part in the enregisterment of marginal vocabulary in this period.

The example of 'cull' in particular shows how a marginal term that is associated with a particular and exclusive social milieu finds its way into the wider public domain and becomes part of the broader popular language use of the period. In terms of its meaning, the dictionaries of the period showed the term 'cull' had a specialised meaning and a general meaning but we did not know what kind of meaning the term 'cull' had in other eighteenth-century texts. I hypothesised that if this term was found in a wide range of

eighteenth-century public discourse, it would be more likely used in a general sense and would lose its criminal associations. My study of the use of this term in the Old Bailey and the ECCO texts however, shows that the term 'cull' does not undergo such a change; instead the term was used both in its specialised sense and general sense throughout the whole of the eighteenth century. In other words, the term 'cull' is contingent polysemous, namely, it has different kinds of meanings and the kind of meaning that it has in a text is dependent upon the situation in which it is used. Depending on how it is used and what purposes it serves, the term may be used in its specialised sense or in a general sense. The term 'cull' generally tends to retain its criminal and specific connotations, that is, used in a technical sense to refer to the victim of a thief when it is reproduced in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* and in the criminal biographies. This is because the texts aim to report the speech of the low life in the courtroom, so we would expect the use of the term in its specialised sense. In addition, we find the appropriation of 'cull' in its specialised sense in the texts that depict the low life or take place in low life settings. For example, the term 'cull' refers to the client of a prostitute in prose fiction, plays and prostitute narratives that feature prostitution and whoring. But on the other hand, we also see the use of the term in a more general sense, namely to refer more informally to a man in contexts that feature a comic scene but do not necessarily involve characters of the low life. In such cases, the term does not carry criminal or technical specificity, but the specificity of the person depends on the modifier. For example, the expression 'old cull' is used in *Tom Jones* to refer to the father of one of the characters. Also, in the play *The Citizen* (1763), the expression 'kind cull' is used ironically to describe a man who was foolish. So 'cull' retains all its lexical meanings, and it depends on the kind of text in which it used, as well as the content of the text whether the term is used in its specialised or general sense.

## 6.2. Historical pragmatics: Some reflections on methodology and methods

In this section, I offer some thought and reflection on the use of historical pragmatics for the study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. I comment on data sources and the methods used, specifically the corpus-linguistic search methods and conducting historical discourse analysis.

### 6.2.1. *Historical discourse analysis*

One of the key strengths of historical pragmatics for my study of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century is the historical discourse analytical framework. In adopting this analytical framework I have been able to examine in detail how marginal vocabulary was used in context, taking into account the linguistic co-text and the situational context in which the term was used. As I pointed out in the literature review in Chapter 2, a contextually rich approach is necessary in order to shed light on the complexities of the

use of marginal vocabulary in written and spoken discourse. Studies on marginal vocabulary both in the early modern period and the present day have demonstrated the effectiveness of a contextual approach to our understanding of marginal vocabulary. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period are mainly literary-historical and consider marginal vocabulary in relation to matters such as the content of the text, the representation of characters in the texts and the author's intentions of creating the text. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the present day have stressed the importance of context in uncovering the social meanings of these terms. Linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists have used conversation analysis to study how marginal vocabulary fulfils important social and identity work for its speakers. Based on this review, I adopted historical discourse analysis as my analytical framework to gain better insight into how marginal vocabulary is used in my eighteenth-century texts. I adopted the social and functional approaches that linguistic anthropologists and sociolinguists have used to uncover the social meanings and functions of marginal vocabulary in the present, with the expectation that marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century could also fulfil social work for its users. But because I look at marginal vocabulary in past contexts, I also make use of the close reading techniques of studies on early modern marginal vocabulary to situate marginal vocabulary use within the social and historical setting in which this language was used. Such an in-depth analysis requires a thorough understanding of the linguistic co-text in which the term is used, as well as the production circumstances of the text, the author who used the text and the implied audience of the text.

Historical discourse analysis proves to be an effective analytical tool in illuminating the communicative functions and meanings of marginal vocabulary in eighteenth-century texts. Context is key to our understanding of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century and there are many contextual clues within the co-text (clustering of marginal vocabulary use, metalanguage and visual clues) that help us to identify and interpret the use of marginal vocabulary in the texts. In addition, making use of secondary sources about particular eighteenth-century texts helps us to understand better why marginal vocabulary was used in those texts. Some of the communicative functions and meanings of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century are similar to the use of marginal vocabulary in the early modern and the present day. For example, marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century was as popular as marginal vocabulary in the early modern period. Also, like the early modern period, marginal vocabulary is used for literary representations to depict the low life in the eighteenth-century texts (as well as other types of characters). The difference however between my study of marginal vocabulary and studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period is that I supported my claims about marginal vocabulary by using linguistic evidence in addition to contextual readings. In the Old Bailey texts, I have uncovered the linguistic strategies of the use of marginal vocabulary as jargon by the speakers in the courtroom who are represented in the texts. I also demonstrate that marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century fulfils social and identity work in the same way that present day 'slang' is used by teenagers to construct their social identity. I agree with Reyes (2005) and Bucholtz (2009) that

contextual readings of marginal vocabulary in use and the metalinguistic evidence are crucial for understanding how this special kind of language is used pragmatically. Historical discourse analysis is thus a suitable analytical framework for the study of marginal vocabulary in the past which combines linguistic approaches and literary-historical readings to interpret how it is used.

Historical discourse analysis is an excellent framework for the reconstruction of communicative meanings and functions of marginal vocabulary in the past, but doing this kind of analysis can also be challenging at times (Jucker and Taavitsainen 2013: 34). The biggest challenge that historical linguists face is trying to familiarise themselves with the language use of the period and accessing the minds of an eighteenth-century author and reader, whether they were familiar with the marginal vocabulary of the time and how they would have interpreted it. What were the communicative aims of using marginal vocabulary in a text? How would an eighteenth-century reader make sense of this marginal vocabulary? While most of the time we might infer the communicative meanings and functions from the co-text in which it is used, sometimes there are no explicit clues in the co-text that can help us interpret the use of these terms. This is especially the case with examples which do not provide any linguistic or visual clues about the use of a particular term. The topic of marginal vocabulary complicates this even further as it is not always obvious whether a term was considered marginal vocabulary and whether people would have understood these marginal terms. In addition, eighteenth-century writers often convey implicit meanings through the use of this language in the text, which can easily be missed or misinterpreted. For example, my analysis of *The Belle's Stratagem* excerpt showed the use of Newmarket terminology to convey sexual jokes about prostitution and whoring. An eighteenth-century audience who were not familiar with the marginal vocabulary of Newmarket would be as clueless as a reader from the twenty first century person who reads the texts. For my analysis of this excerpt I had to investigate both the language of racehorse breeding and training as well as popular and print culture to reconstruct how marginal vocabulary in this excerpt was used to build this sexual joke.

I would like to suggest more interdisciplinary collaboration between linguists and historians and literary historians, which would be beneficial to our understanding of a complex topic like marginal vocabulary use in the past. The kind of work that historical pragmatics do requires much knowledge of the literary and historical background in which a text is used. But because we tend to be trained as linguists we may lack the historical expertise to make sense of what happens in the texts. In order to analyse marginal vocabulary in the Old Bailey texts, I had to familiarise myself with the Old Bailey texts and consult the works of historians (Shoemaker 2008) as well as other works on courtroom documents (e.g. Archer 2002, 2005 and 2007) to understand the texts themselves. For the individual texts in ECCO, it was necessary to research biographical information about the author of the text, as well as secondary sources about the texts to understand what the text was about. Even though we can rely on these secondary sources, sometimes this is not enough because the use of this language is not straightforward in the

text and there may be multiple layers of meaning behind the use of marginal vocabulary. I believe that the work of historical pragmatics can greatly benefit from actual conversation and collaboration with historians and literary critics, who can provide the kind of expertise that is required to offer a more nuanced and complex reading of how marginal vocabulary is used in historical texts.

Furthermore, the linguistic work that historical pragmatics do is also beneficial for historians and literary historians in that we provide a linguistic interpretation of the historical texts that historians study. For example, Shoemaker (2008) looked at the representation of crime in the Sessions Papers and argued that these texts provide a biased picture of what was said in the courtroom in that the speech of many people in the courtroom was edited out. My study of marginal vocabulary use in the Old Bailey texts corroborates this idea in showing that the reproduction of marginal vocabulary in these texts contributes to the reconstruction of criminals as dangerous and violent who speak in code and who disrupt the social order. My analysis of marginal vocabulary in the ECCO texts has offered a more nuanced insight into the functions of this kind of language in fiction as well as a wide range of texts. I have also extended Berry's work on the use of 'flash' in Moll King's pamphlet by looking at the use of marginal vocabulary in other eighteenth-century texts from a linguistic perspective. My findings show that marginal vocabulary was used as an expression of impolite behaviour in other eighteenth-century texts, but the difference between my approach and Berry's approach is that I have paid close attention to the co-text in which this language is used. When historical pragmatics and historians work on similar material, we should make the best of both worlds and make use of the expertise of other related fields to enhance the integrity of our work.

#### 6.2.2. *Use of electronic databases and search procedures*

Through the search methods of historical pragmatics, I was able to identify and generate evidence of the use of marginal vocabulary in historical texts selected from the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO. As I pointed out in Chapter 2, studies on marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century have mainly studied the use of marginal vocabulary in canting dictionaries (Coleman 2004a, Coleman 2004b, Gotti 1999) and Moll King's pamphlet (Berry 2001, Fitzmaurice 2010a), but there was little evidence of how marginal vocabulary was used in other eighteenth-century texts. Other scholars have pointed to the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in a wide range of texts without providing actual evidence of how many of the terms were used and where they are used. Coleman (2012a: 141) notes that we have independent evidence of marginal vocabulary use in texts like the *Proceedings of the Old Bailey*, and independent works like *Hell on Earth* (1703) and the *Discovery of John Poulter* (1754) but does not elaborate how these terms are used. This was the motivation to see to what extent marginal vocabulary was genuinely used in eighteenth-century texts.

The availability of the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO provided an excellent opportunity to trace the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in a wide range of eighteenth-century texts. Both electronic resources contain a large collection of eighteenth-century texts in which we would expect the use of marginal vocabulary. The *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* contains records of everything that was said in court between 1674 and 1913. The real value of this set of texts is that it records the language of real people who lived in the eighteenth century and were tried in the Old Bailey court. Because the texts represent the language of defendants and witnesses and people living on the lower margins of society, I expected to find examples of marginal vocabulary in these texts. This kind of evidence would then suggest that the marginal vocabulary associated with thieves (that is ‘cant’) would also be used by real people. ECCO on the other hand, was a very useful resource to use in addition to the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. Because of its vast size and the different genres included, this electronic resource allows us to assess the extent to which marginal vocabulary was used in other eighteenth-century texts beyond the Old Bailey texts. Because ECCO includes a wide range of texts, especially fiction, we would expect the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in a wide variety of texts. Another important reason to use ECCO was that it allowed us to examine the use of marginal vocabulary in individual texts, as well as over an extended period of time.

In order to search for marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO, I used corpus-based methods, specifically lexical searches, using the built-in search facilities in both electronic resources as a diagnostic tool. The biggest advantage of this built-in search facility is that instances of marginal vocabulary in the texts would be produced in seconds. Those keyword searches were diagnostic in function because we did not know beforehand how many of these terms would occur in these large resources. The outcome of those keyword searches was fruitful for both cases. For the Old Bailey, the search for ‘cant’ yielded metalinguistic evidence (= excerpts) in which the term ‘cant’ was used, as well as the use of actual marginal vocabulary words that were termed ‘cant’ (e.g. ‘going upon the scamp’ is ‘cant’ for “going upon the highway”). However, the ‘cant’ keyword search for did not yield instances of marginal vocabulary which were not explicitly labelled as ‘cant’. So I also conducted keyword searches of specific terms (‘scamp’, ‘tick’, ‘ding’) to elicit evidence of the uses of terms that were not explicitly labelled ‘cant’ in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*. I looked up two lists of marginal vocabulary terms. The first list was based on the results from the keyword search for ‘cant’, since a number of excerpts contain lexical items which were labelled ‘cant’ in the Old Bailey texts (such as “going upon the scamp” in the example above). The second list of marginal terms was based on an external source, namely George Parker’s *Life Painter*. This work contains a small word list of marginal vocabulary and offered access to a number of terms that were perceived as marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century, but which are different from the terms that were identified as ‘cant’ in the Old Bailey. The search for individual item from both lists in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* generated metalinguistic evidence and excerpts in which the terms were actually used in the Old Bailey texts. Some of the terms which were labelled ‘cant’ in the Old Bailey texts also occurred elsewhere in the texts without the

metalinguistic marker ‘cant’. Also, a great number of terms that were listed in Parker’s word list also occurred in the Old Bailey texts. Like Berry (2012), we were able to verify the correlation between terms recorded in the dictionaries as well as how they are used in texts that represent real language use. The evidence showed that there was an awareness of this special kind of language in the Old Bailey courtroom and that the speakers represented in the texts actually used this language in the courtroom to refer to concepts related to the criminal underworld and lifestyle.

For ECCO, I conducted one keyword search as a diagnostic to identify the use of this term in a wide variety of texts, but more importantly the occurrence of this term with other marginal vocabulary terms. The term ‘cull’ was chosen for two reasons. Evidence of the occurrence of this term suggested that ‘cull’ was a good diagnostic term for the discovery of other terms. In addition, its common occurrence suggested that it might be a candidate for exploring meaning change. The outcome of this search was also highly productive, in that I found ‘cull’ in many different kinds of texts. More importantly, this search generated instances or excerpts in which ‘cull’ was used in a cluster of other marginal vocabulary terms. These terms were not necessarily thieves’ slang, but were a wide range of registers, including ‘flash’, or popular expressions of the period, as seen in the excerpts discussed in Chapter 5. This shows how a single keyword search of a marginal term can lead to very rich data that we can analyse in more detail qualitatively. We would not be able to find these rich examples of the occurrence of different types of marginal vocabulary without doing such a keyword search.

One of the challenges of using *The Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO as my resources was checking the search results that were generated by the keyword searches. Though the resources provide us with direct access to these texts from anywhere in the world, and the search engine will produce instances of excerpts in which marginal vocabulary is used, we should not underestimate the laborious and time-consuming process of checking manually each and every search result that the search engine produces. My experience of checking the search results generated by the search functions of the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO proved to be a very laborious and time-consuming task. For example, the keyword search for ‘cant’ produced many instances of the use of ‘cant’ as ‘can’t’. ECCO was particularly challenging in that respect because of the OCR technology of the texts, which generated a lot of false results. The keyword search for ‘cull’ produced 4,087 results, but after qualitative assessment I was left with 150 results in which ‘cull’ was used as a noun to refer to a person. Compared to ECCO, the search engine of the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* produced more accurate results because the courtroom texts have been transcribed in addition to their scanned images. The eighteenth-century texts in ECCO on the other hand are accessible as scanned images only. Therefore the search engine is more prone to elicit inaccurate results of ‘cull’, including forms that look similar to ‘cull’ such as ‘cum’. Also, because of the OCR technology and the fact that the search engine identifies the occurrence of a particular keyword through ‘scanning’, it was very likely that the search engine had missed a number of instances of ‘cull’. While these corpus-search based

searches are currently the only way to access marginal vocabulary in large electronic resources like the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO, researchers should bear in mind that the process of identifying and generating marginal vocabulary in these electronic resources requires as much time as the qualitative analysis of this evidence.

In conclusion, historical pragmatics has offered some really useful tools and methods for identifying and interpreting marginal vocabulary use in the eighteenth century. My work has demonstrated the effectiveness of doing keyword searches to access and identify marginal vocabulary in historical data. This method has provided us with excerpts of marginal vocabulary use which we can then study in more detail using a historical discourse analysis. Historical discourse analysis allowed us to study marginal vocabulary use in detail, namely in the co-text and the situational context in use. This enables us to produce a more nuanced and refined reading of how marginal vocabulary is used in historical texts.

### 6.3. Future research

My study has been fruitful in identifying and analysing marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. I have applied the tools and methods of historical pragmatics to explore the linguistic strategies that people use when they choose marginal vocabulary in a particular setting. Such an outcome appears promising for future research and there are a number of ways in which the current research can be taken forward.

One way in which this study can be further expanded is to investigate the use of marginal vocabulary in texts other than the Old Bailey texts and the ECCO texts that I found. In this study I have only been able to look at a selection of examples in which marginal vocabulary is used in the various texts. My keyword searches of marginal vocabulary in the Sessions Papers generated many excerpts in which this kind of language is used, but I was only able to analyse some of these excerpts in detail. As for the analysis of marginal vocabulary in the Ordinary's Accounts, I have looked at the use of marginal vocabulary in Jenny Diver's account in detail only. There were a number of other Ordinary's Accounts in which marginal vocabulary was used in a cluster and analysing marginal vocabulary in these Ordinary's Account can shed further light whether the use of marginal vocabulary was also stylised in these texts. With regard to the ECCO material, one of the genres in which I have not studied the use of marginal vocabulary are the ballads. My keyword search of 'cull' produced evidence of marginal vocabulary in these texts, but because the study involves a thorough understanding of the popular oral culture in the period, it was not possible to study the vocabulary use in much detail given the time frame that I had for the research. I believe that these ballads would make a really interesting case study for how marginal vocabulary is used in these texts and what role these ballads play take in the history of marginal vocabulary use in the period. Such a study should ideally involve a collaboration between literary critics and historical linguists to enrich the analysis. Literary



critics can provide important insights into the literary and cultural context in which these ballads are used. Their insight will be valuable in enriching the historical discourse analysis that historical pragmatics do. Historical linguists can contribute their linguistic tools and relate their linguistic knowledge to the production circumstances of the ballads.

Another way in which this study can be taken forward is in generating more evidence of marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* and ECCO. In this study I have only looked at the use of marginal vocabulary in the *Old Bailey Proceedings* that were published between 1700 and 1800; it would be worth searching for and locating evidence of marginal vocabulary in the *Proceedings* which were published before and after the eighteenth century. Also, I have only selected the keywords from a small canting word list, namely George Parker's *Life Painter of Variegated Characters* (1790). My study has shown that a great number of terms in this dictionary were indeed used in the Old Bailey texts, but it would be interesting to trace the occurrence of other marginal vocabulary terms taken from other eighteenth-century dictionaries to verify the extent to which terms that were recorded in the canting dictionaries were used in real contexts. In ECCO, I have only searched for an individual item in the universe of discourse. Similarly, more keyword searches of marginal vocabulary could be conducted in ECCO. The search of 'cull' was a diagnostic search in ECCO and opened new opportunities for exploring marginal vocabulary more deeply (it has only identified the tip of the iceberg). One can expand the search by concentrating on the term 'cull' and its alternatives, or one might want to conduct lexical searches of different marginal terms to assess the extent to which those terms enter the wider discourse. Another search term would probably have led us to different kinds of evidence. It is possible that other terms are not contingently polysemous like 'cull', but are more specific and have fewer different connotations. Some terms might not survive in the literature and fall out of use. I would be very curious to see the extent to which some well-known marginal terms that were recorded in the dictionaries are used in the ECCO texts and whether they occur in similar contexts as 'cull' and what would happen to the lexical meanings of these terms.

In terms of the framework, I believe that a historical pragmatic approach can be successfully applied to the study of marginal vocabulary in the early modern period. Studies on marginal vocabulary in the early modern period have provided rich insights on the topic from a literary-historical perspective, but it would be worthwhile to reconsider marginal vocabulary use in this period from a linguistic perspective. The availability of the *Early English Books Online* (EEBO), the early modern equivalent of ECCO offers the possibility of replicating the work I did for searching marginal vocabulary in ECCO in EEBO. Apart from the well-known titles in which marginal vocabulary was predominately featured (Harman's *A Caveat*, Dekker's *Bellman of London* series but also plays like *Beggar's Bush* and Richard Brome's *Jovial Crew*), conducting keyword searches of marginal vocabulary in EEBO may also lead to the occurrence of marginal vocabulary in less well-known titles of the early modern period.

An important task for historical pragmaticians is to keep refining the tools and methods of a historical pragmatic framework (see Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice 2007: 29). Historical pragmatics does not have a fixed set of interpretative tools, so we need to constantly look for alternative tools, both within our research field, and also across other disciplines. My interpretation of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century was informed by some of the tools taken from present day linguistic studies. These insights helped to illuminate the communicative functions and meanings of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century, but also to refine some of these concepts. ‘Appropriation’, for example, was a term that was used in both studies on marginal vocabulary use in the early modern period and the present day to refer to the use of marginal vocabulary for new purposes and new effects. Similarly, I demonstrated how marginal vocabulary was appropriated in the eighteenth-century texts and added linguistic evidence to support my case. Another example is that I adopted the concepts ‘enregisterment’ and ‘public words’ to interpret the public status of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth century. This shows that some of the interpretative tools used for our understanding of language use in the present day also apply to language use in the past. Hodson’s (2014) insights into the role of dialect representation in film and fiction in particular provide good support for my interpretation of marginal vocabulary in the eighteenth-century texts that I study. Obviously, as scholars of the twenty first century we need to be careful not to view the use of marginal vocabulary entirely through a modern lens, but we can test and do collaborative work with scholars in other disciplines to make sure that we consider our sources for what they are, and to take into account the special nature of our sources and some of their genre conventions. We can do so by critically testing and evaluating our interpretative tools, but also our data sources and methods. In such way, we can develop and refine the historical pragmatic framework which can be extended to the study of other ‘marginal’ language features, or to any pragmatic phenomenon of the past for that matter.

# Bibliography

## Electronic resources

*Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)* <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>

*Old Bailey Proceedings Online* <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>

*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (ODNB)* <http://www.oxforddnb.com>

*Oxford English Dictionary (OED)* <http://www.oed.com>

## Primary sources

### Old Bailey texts

*OBP*, January 1708 (a17080115-1)

*OBP*, June 1717, Henry Sewel (t17170606-10)

*OBP*, July 1726, William Atkinson (t17260711-27)

*OBP*, May 1728, William Russell, William Holden, Robert Crouch (t17280501-22)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 20 May 1728 (OA17280520)

*OBP*, April 1729, Robert Cane (t17290416-46)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 22 May 1732 (OA17320522)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 22 May 1733 (OA17330522)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 22 September 1735 (OA17350922)

*OBP*, January 1741, Mary Young and Elizabeth Davis (t17410116-15)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 18 March 1741 (OA17410318)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 31 July 1741 (OA17410731)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 13 January 1742 (OA17420113)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 12 April 1743 (OA17430412)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 21 November 1743 (OA17431121)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 26 July 1745 (OA17450726)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 1 April 1754 (OA17540401)

*OBP*, Ordinary's Account, 17 March 1755 (OA17550317)

*OBP*, January 1761, Nicholas Campbell (t17610116-29)

*OBP*, October 1761, Thomas Wisely (t17611021-21)

*OBP*, May 1770, John Underwood, William Wharton (t17700530-23)

*OBP*, July 1771, John Holland, William Green, Mary Chymist, Ann Pennick (t17710703-62)

*OBP*, July 1771, William Leegroves, John Bailis, Joseph Lyons (t17710703-61)

*OBP*, June 1772, William Barrett, William Cherry, James Smith (t17720603-9)

*OBP*, September 1773, Thomas Ashby, Edward Lundy M'Donald, Andrew Latimer (t17730908-2)

*OBP*, December 1775, George Lee (t17751206-44)

*OBP*, September 1777, James Coomes (t17770910-16)

*OBP*, April 1781, William Archer, Thomas Roberts (t17810425-67)

*OBP*, July 1781, Samuel Stevenson, William Gregory (t17810711-6)

*OBP*, December 1784, William Stewart (t17841208-9)

*OBP*, January 1785, Sarah Aberdeen (t17850112-11)

*OBP*, February 1786, Thomas Burdett, Samuel Armstrong, William Brown (t17860222-45)

*OBP*, October 1786, William Davis, William Rayner (t17861025-10)

*OBP*, January 1787, Richard Notely, Robert Richardson, Luke Hurst (t17870110-53)

*OBP*, June 1789, Thomas Denton, John Jones (t17890603-50)

*OBP*, September 1790, Mary Farrell (t17900915-63)

*OBP*, December 1792, Martha Lipney (t17921215-25)

*OBP*, December 1795, James Leonard (t17951202-24)

*OBP*, February 1797, Ann Crocker, Sarah Crutchley (t17970215-58)

*OBP*, September 1799, Thomas Robertson, Frederick Smith (t17990911-42)

Other printed texts

- Anonymous. 1725. *A new canting dictionary: Comprehending All the terms, Antient and Modern, Used in the Several tribes of Gypsies, Beggars, Shoplifters, ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1738. *The informers outwitted: a tragi-comical farce. As it has been rehears'd at the New-Exchange in Rag-Fair. Written originally in Hebrew, and ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1775. *The London complete songster; or musical boquet [sic]. A selection of the modern and approved songs, glees, airs, &c. that are sung at the ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1779. *The malefactor's register; or, the Newgate and Tyburn calendar. Containing the authentic lives, trials, accounts of executions, and dying ...* Vol 2 of 5. London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1780. *The festoon, a select collection of epigrams, panegyric, satirical, amorous. Moral, humorous, monumental. With an essay on that species of ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1781. *The belle's stratagem: a comedy. As it is acted by his Majesty's servants, with universal applause.* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1781. *The life of Patrick Madan; Exhibiting a Series of the most extraordinary Transactions, notorious Villanies, and wonderful Escapes, that ever ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Anonymous. 1791. *Jack Sprit-Sail's frolic; or, sailor's humourous cruise; in the latitude of London. ... To which is added Jack Sprit-Sail's flowing can, being a ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Addison, Joseph. 1751. *Poems on several occasions. By the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq;* Glasgow. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Beattie, James. 1776. *Essays. On poetry and music, as they affect the Mind. On laughter, and Ludicrous Composition. On the utility of classical learning. By James ...* Edinburgh. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Caulfield, James. 1795. *Blackguardiana: or, a dictionary of rogues, bawds, pimps, whores, pickpockets, shoplifters, ... illustrated with eighteen portraits of the most ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]
- Defoe, B.N. 1735. *A compleat English dictionary. Containing the true meaning of all words in the English language: also the proper names of all the kingdoms, Towns, ...* Westminster. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Dickens, Charles. 2003. [1837/8; 2002] *Oliver Twist, or the Parish Boy's Progress*. Edited by Philip Horne. London: Penguin Classics.

Fielding, Henry. 1749. *The history of Tom Jones, a foundling. In four volumes. By Henry Fielding, Esq*; London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Griffith, Richard. 1764. *The triumvirate: or, the authentic memoirs of A. B. and C. In two volumes, ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Grose, Francis. 1785 *A classical dictionary of the vulgar tongue*. London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Murphy, Arthur. 1763. *The citizen. A farce. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. By Arthur Murphy, Esq*; Dublin. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Parker, George. 1790. *Life's painter of variegated characters in public and private life, with political strokes on the ticklish times; containing a novel display of ...* Dublin. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Potter, Humphry Tristram. 1795. *A new dictionary of all the cant and flash languages, both ancient and modern; used by gipsies, beggars, swindlers, shoplifters, ... Dedicated to ...* London. Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Walker, Captain Charles. 1723. *Authentick memoirs of the life intrigues and adventures of the celebrated Sally Salisbury. With true characters of her most considerable gallants. ...* Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

Ward, Edward. 1707. *The London Terraefilius: or, the Satyrical Reformer. Being Drolling Reflections on the Vices and Vanities of Both Sexes. To be Continu'd. By the ...* Available from <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco> [Accessed 26 September 2015]

## Secondary sources

Adams, Michael. 2009. *Slang. The People's Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Agha, Asif. 2003. 'The Social Life of Cultural Value', *Language and Communication* 23, 231-273. Available from <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0271530903000120> [Accessed 28 November 2013]

- Anipa, Kormi. 2012. 'The Use of Literary Sources in Historical Sociolinguistic Research', In Hernández-Campoy, Juan M., and J Camilo Conde-Silvestre (eds), *The Handbook of Historical Sociolinguistics*. Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 170-190.
- Archer, Dawn. 2002. "Can Innocent People Be Guilty?": A Sociopragmatic Analysis of Examination Transcripts From the Salem Witchcraft Trials', *Journal of Historical Pragmatics* 3 (1), 1-29. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Company Publishing.
- Archer, Dawn. 2005. *Questions and Answers in the English Courtroom (1640-1760). A Sociopragmatic Analysis*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Archer, Dawn. 2007. 'Developing a More Detailed Picture of the English Courtroom (1640-1760): Data and Methodological Issues Facing Historical Pragmatics', In Fitzmaurice, Susan and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Methods in Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 185-217.
- Archer, Dawn, Karin Aijmer and Anne Wichmann. 2012. *Pragmatics: An Advanced Resource Book for Students*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Archer, Dawn. 2012. 'Assessing Garrow's Aggressive Questioning Style', In Mazzon, Gabriella (ed), *English Historical Dialogue Studies*. Milan: FrancoAngeli, 301-20.
- Archer, Dawn. 2014. 'Historical Pragmatics: Evidence from the Old Bailey', *Transactions of the Philological Society* 112 (2), 259-277. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.
- Aydelotte, Frank. 1967. *Elizabethan Rogues and Vagabonds*. London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd.
- Beal, Joan. 2012. 'Evidence from sources after 1500,' In Nevalainen, Terttu, and Elizabeth Closs Traugott (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of The History of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 63-77.
- Beattie, J. M. 2004. 'Garrow, Sir William (1760-1840), Barrister and Judge', In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available from <http://www.odnb.com/view/printable/10410> [Accessed 16 February 2015]
- Beier, Lee. 1995. 'Anti-language or Jargon? Canting in the English Underworld in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries', In Burke, Peter and Roy Porter (eds), *Languages and Jargons: Contributions to a Social History of Language*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 64-101.
- Beier, Lee. 2003. 'On the Boundaries of New and Old Historicisms: Thomas Harman and the Literature of Roguery', *English Literary Renaissance* 33 (2), 181-200. Available from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1475-6757.00024/> [Accessed 12 October 2013]
- Bennett, Joe. 2012. "And What Comes Out May Be a Kind of Screeching": The Stylization of *Chav*speak in Contemporary Britain', *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 16 (1), 5-27.

Available from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9841.2011.00521.x> [Accessed 23 February 2012]

Berland, Kevin. 2006. "Formalized Curiosity in the Electronic Age and the Uses of On-Line Text-Bases," *The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly Annual* 17, 391-413. New York: AMS Press, Inc. Available from <http://pennstate.academia.edu/KevinJoelBerland> [Accessed 15 November 2012]

Berry, Helen. 2001. 'Rethinking Politeness in Eighteenth Century England: Moll King's Coffee House and the Significance of 'Flash Talk'', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society (Sixth Series)* 11, 65-81. Available from: [http://journals.cambridge.org/article\\_S0080440101000044](http://journals.cambridge.org/article_S0080440101000044) [Accessed 28 November 2013]

Berry, Helen. 2012. 'After Moll: Eighteenth-Century Slang and the Uses of Linguistics in Historical Research'. (Unpublished) Seminar paper presented at Northumbria University. 31 January 2012.

Bertelsen, Lance. 2012. 'Popular Entertainment and Instruction, Literary and Dramatic: Chapbooks, Advice Books, Almanacs, Ballads, Farces, Pantomimes, Prints and Shows', In Richetti, John (ed). *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660-1780*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 61-85.

Blank, Paula. 1996. *Broken English. Dialects and the Politics of Language in Renaissance Writings*. London: Routledge.

Blank, Paula. 2007. "Niu Ureiting" The Prose of Language Reform in the English Renaissance', In Fowler, Elizabeth, and Roland Greene (eds), *The Project of Prose in Early Modern Europe and the New World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 31-47.

Bucholtz, Mary. 2001. 'Word Up: Social Meanings of Slang in California Youth Culture', Working paper presented at the Language & Culture Symposium 7. Available from <http://language-culture.binghamton.edu/symposia/7/> [Accessed 21 September 2011]

Bucholtz, Mary. 2009. 'From Stance to Style. Gender, Interaction, and Indexicality in Mexican Immigrant Youth Slang', In Alexandra Jaffe (ed), *Stance. Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 146-170.

Burke, Peter. 1995. 'Introduction', In Burke, Peter, and Roy Porter (eds), *Languages and Jargons: Contributions to a Social History of Language*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1-21.

But, Roxanne. 2013. 'The Role of Context in the Meaning Specification of Cant and Slang Words in Eighteenth-Century English', In Jucker, Andreas H., Daniela Landert, Annina Seiler and Nicole Studer-Joho (eds), *Meaning in the History of English. Words and Texts in Contexts*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 129-154.



- Chartier, Roger. 1995. *Forms and Meanings. Texts, Performances, and Audiences from Codex to Computer*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Christopher, Emma. 2014. 'From Ireland to Africa: the Criminal Career and Punishment of Patrick Madan', In Meuwese, Mark, and Jeffrey A. Fortin (eds), *Atlantic Biographies: Individuals and Peoples in the Atlantic World*. Leiden: Brill, 173-192.
- Coleman, Julie. 2004a. *A History of Cant and Slang Dictionaries. Volume I: 1567-1784*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coleman, Julie. 2004b. *A History of Cant and Slang Dictionaries. Volume II: 1785-1858*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coleman, Julie. 2008. 'Slang and Cant Dictionaries', In Cowie, A.P. *The Oxford History of English Lexicography. Volume II Specialized Dictionaries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 314-336.
- Coleman, Julie. 2012a. *The Life of Slang*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Coleman, Julie. 2012b. 'Using Dictionaries and Thesauruses as Evidence', In Nevalainen, Terttu, and Elizabeth Closs Traugott (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of The History of English*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 98-110.
- Coupland, Nikolas. 1999. 'Other Representation', In Verschueren Jef, Jan-Ola Östman, Jan Blommaert and Chris Bulcaen (eds) *Handbook of Pragmatics 1999 Installment*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1-24.
- Coupland, Nikolas. 2001. 'Dialect Stylization in Radio Talk', *Language in Society* 30 (3), 345-375. Available from <http://journals.cambridge.org/> [Accessed 8 September 2013]
- Coupland, Nikolas and Adam Jaworski. 2004. 'Sociolinguistic Perspectives on Metalanguage: Reflexivity, Evaluation and Ideology', In Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland and Dariusz Galansinski (eds) *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological perspectives*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 15-51.
- Coupland, Nikolas. 2009. 'The Mediated Performance of Vernaculars', *Journal of English Linguistics* 37 (3), 284-301. Available from: <http://eng.sagepub.com/content/early/2009/07/23/0075424209341188> [Accessed 22 August 2013]
- Culpeper, Jonathan. 2001. *Language and Characterisation: People in Plays and Other Texts*. Harlow: Longman.
- Culpeper, Jonathan, and Merja Kytö. 2010. *English Modern English Dialogues. Spoken Interaction as Writing*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Doty, Kathleen. 2010. 'Courtroom Discourse', In Jucker, Andreas H. and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 621-650.

Dumas, Bethany K. and Jonathan Lighter. 1978. 'Is Slang a Word for Linguists?' *American Speech* 53 (1), 5-17. Available from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/455336> [Accessed 13 December 2013]

"Eighteenth Century Collections Online FAQ's." *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning. Available from <http://findgalegroup.com/ecco/researchTools> [Accessed 1 December 2013]

"Eighteenth Century Collections Online: Origins and Contents." *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2009. Available from <http://findgalegroup.com/ecco/researchTools> [Accessed 1 December 2013]

"Eighteenth Century Collections Online Overview." *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2008. Available from <http://findgalegroup.com/ecco/researchTools> [Accessed 1 December 2013]

"Eighteenth Century Collections Online for Teaching and Research." *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Detroit: Gale Cengage Learning, 2008. Available from: <http://findgalegroup.com/ecco/researchTools> [Accessed 1 December 2013]

Elbe, Connie. 1996. *Slang and Sociability: In-Group Language among College Students*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Elk, Martine van. 2008. "'She Would Tell None Other Tale': Narrative Strategies in the Bridewell Court Books and the Rogue Literature of the Early Modern Period', *Early Modern Culture* 7. *Special Issue: Vagrant Subjects*. Available from [http://emc.eserver.org/1-7/van\\_elk.html](http://emc.eserver.org/1-7/van_elk.html) [Accessed 7 November 2013]

Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Advertisements in the Proceedings', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.1, 22 April 2014)

Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Associated Records', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.1, 22 April 2014)

Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Ordinary of Newgate Accounts', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.1, 22 April 2014)

Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Publishing History of the Proceedings', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.1, 22 April 2014)

- Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker. 2013. 'Trial Procedures', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online*, version 7.1, April 2013. Available from <http://www.oldbaileyonline.org> [Accessed 13 March 2015]
- Emsley, Clive, Tim Hitchcock, and Robert Shoemaker, 'The Value of the Proceedings as a Historical Source', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.1, 22 April 2014)
- Fitzmaurice, Susan. 2004. 'Orality, standardisation and the look of Standard English in the eighteenth century', In Dossena, Marina, and Roger Lass (eds), *Methods and Data in English Historical Dialectology*. Bern: Peter Lang, 351-383.
- Fitzmaurice, Susan, and Irma Taavitsainen. 2007. 'Introduction', In Fitzmaurice, Susan and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Methods in Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 1-10.
- Fitzmaurice, Susan. 2010a. 'Changes in the Meanings of Politeness in Eighteenth-century England: Discourse Analysis and Historical Evidence', In Culpeper, Jonathan, and Dániel Z. Kádár (eds). *Historical (Im)Politeness*. Berlin: Peter Lang, 87-115.
- Fitzmaurice, Susan. 2010b. 'Literary Discourse', In Jucker, Andreas H. and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 679-704.
- Fitzmaurice, Susan. 2015. "Ideology, Race and Place in Historical Constructions of Belonging: The Case of Zimbabwe". *English Language and Linguistics* 19 (2), 327-354. Available from <http://journals.cambridge.org/> [Accessed 22 September 2015]
- Fludernik, Monika. 1993. *The Fictions of Language and the Languages of Fiction: The Linguistic Representation of Speech and Consciousness*. London: Routledge.
- Fox, Adam. 2002. *Oral and Literate Culture in England 1500-1700*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Fumerton, Patricia. 2006. 'Making Vagrancy (In)Visible: The Economics of Disguise in Early Modern Rogue Pamphlets', In Dionne, Craig, and Steve Mentz (eds), *Rogues and English Modern Rogue Culture*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 193-210.
- Fumerton, Patricia, Anita Guerrini, and Kris McAbee. 2010. *Ballads and Broadsides in Britain, 1500-1800*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing.
- Görlach, Manfred. 1999. 'Regional and Social Variation', In Lass, Roger (ed). *The Cambridge History of The English Language. Volume III 1476-1776*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 459-538.
- Gotti, Maurizio. 1999. *The Language of Thieves and Vagabonds. 17th and 18th Century Canting Lexicography in England*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag.

- Green, Jonathon. 1997. *Chasing the Sun. Dictionary-makers and the Dictionaries They Made*. London: Pimlico.
- Halliday, M.A.K. 1978. *Language as Social Semiotic. The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Hill, Jane H. 2008. *The Everyday Language of White Racism*. Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Hitchcock, Tim, Sharon Howard, and Robert Shoemaker, 'For Schools', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.0, 21 November 2012)
- Hitchcock, Tim, Sharon Howard, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Getting Started', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.0, 21 November 2012)
- Hitchcock, Tim, Sharon Howard, and Robert Shoemaker, 'Guide to Searching', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.0, 21 November 2012)
- Hitchcock, Tim, Sharon Howard, and Robert Shoemaker, 'How are the Proceedings Different when Read Online?', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.0, 21 November 2012)
- Hitchcock, Tim, Sharon Howard, and Robert Shoemaker, 'How to Read an Old Bailey Trial', *Old Bailey Proceedings Online* ([www.oldbaileyonline.org](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org), version 7.0, 21 November 2012)
- Hodson, Jane. 2014. *Dialect in Film and Literature*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Holt, Elizabeth, and Rebecca Clift. 2003. *Reporting Talk: Reported Speech in Interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huber, Magnus. 2007. 'The Old Bailey Proceedings, 1674-1834. Evaluating and Annotating a Corpus of 18th and 19th – Century Spoken English', In Anneli Meurman-Solin & Arja Nurmi (eds), *Annotating Variation and Change* (Studies in Variation, Contacts and Change in English 1). Helsinki: VARIENG. Available from <http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/series/volumes/01/huber/> [Accessed 21 September 2011]
- Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland, and Dariusz Galasinski. 2004. 'Metalanguage: Why Now?', In Jaworski, Adam, Nikolas Coupland and Dariusz Galansinki (eds) *Metalanguage: Social and Ideological perspectives*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 3-8.
- Jucker, Andreas H., and Irma Taavitsainen. 2013. *English Historical Pragmatics*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Jucker et al. 2013. 'Uncovering Layers of Meaning in the History of the English Language', In Jucker, Andreas H., Daniela Landert, Annina Seiler and Nicole Studer-Joho

- (eds), *Meaning in the History of English. Words and Texts in Contexts*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1-15.
- Kahlas-Tarkka, Leena, and Matti Rissanen. 2011. 'Attitudes of the Accused in the Salem Witchcraft Trials', In Pahta, Päivi, and Andreas H. Jucker (eds), *Communicating Early English Manuscripts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 241-258.
- Kewes, Paulina. 1998. *Authorship and Appropriation. Writing for the Stage in England, 1660-1710*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Kiessling Roland, and Maarten Mous. 2004. 'Urban Youth Languages in Africa', *Anthropological Linguistics* 46 (3), 303-341. Available from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30028964> [Accessed 24 October 2013]
- Kinney, Arthur F. 1990. *Rogues, Vagabonds & Sturdy Beggars. A New Gallery of Tudor and Early Stuart Rogue Literature*. Amherst: The University of Massachusetts Press.
- Kytö, Merja and Terry Walker. 2003. 'The Linguistic Study of Early Modern English Speech-Related Texts. How "Bad" Can "Bad" Data Be?', *Journal of English Linguistics* 31 (3), 221-248. Available from <http://eng.sagepub.com/> [Accessed 24 February 2015]
- Kytö, Merja. 2010. 'Data in Historical Pragmatics', In Jucker, Andreas H. and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 33-67.
- Kytö, Merja, and Päivi Pahta. 2012. 'Evidence from Historical Corpora Up to the Twentieth Century', In Nevalainen, Terttu, and Elizabeth Closs Traugott (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of the History of English*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 123-133.
- Leech, Geoffrey, and Mick Short. 2007 [1981] *Style in Fiction. A Linguistic Introduction to English Fictional Prose*. 2nd ed. Harlow: Pearson Longman.
- Lighter, John E. 2001. 'Slang', In John Algeo (ed), *The Cambridge History of The English Language. Volume VI English in North America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 219-252.
- Linder, Daniel. 2000. 'Translating Slang in Detective Fiction', *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology* 8 (4), 275-287. Available from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0907676X.2000.9961396> [Accessed 19 July 2013]
- Linebaugh, Peter (P.). 1977. 'The Ordinary of Newgate and his Account', In J. S. Cockburn (ed), *Crime in England 1550-1800*. London: Methuan & Co Ltd, 246-269.
- Lucy, John A. 1993. *Reflexive Language: Reported Speech and Metapragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Machan, Tim William. 2011. 'The Visual Pragmatics of Code-Switching in Late Middle English Literature', In Schendl, Herbert, and Laura Wright (eds) *Code-Switching in Early English*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 303-334.
- Mahotièrre, Mary de la. 2004. 'Cowley, Hannah (1743-1809)', In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/6500> [Accessed 26 September 2015].
- Mattiello, Elisa. 2008. *An Introduction to English Slang. A Description of its Morphology, Semantics and Sociology*. Monza: Polimetrica.
- McKenzie, Andrea. 2005. 'From True Confessions to True Reporting? The Decline and Fall of the Ordinary's Account', *London Journal* 30 (1), 55-70. Available from <http://www.maneyonline.com/> [Accessed 21 April 2014]
- McKenzie, Andrea. 2006. 'The Real Macheath: Social Satire, Appropriation, and Eighteenth-Century Criminal Biography', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 69 (4), 581-605. Available from [http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525.hlq.2006.69.4.581](http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1525/hlq.2006.69.4.581) [Accessed 17 January 2013]
- McShane, Angela. 2011. *Political Broadside Ballads in Seventeenth-Century England: A Critical Bibliography*. London: Pickering and Chatto.
- Mendoza, John, and Anne Foundas. 2007. *Clinical Neuroanatomy: A Neurobehaviour Approach*. New York: Springer Science & Business Media.
- Mullan, John, and Christopher Reid. 2000. *Eighteenth-century Popular Culture: A Selection*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nevalainen, Terttu. 1999. 'Early Modern English Lexis and Semantics', In Lass, Roger (ed). *The Cambridge History of The English Language. Volume III 1476-1776*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 332-458.
- Paul Hunter, J. 1996. 'The Novel and Social/Cultural History', In John Richetti (ed) *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth Century Novel*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2-40.
- Pugliatti, Paola. 2003. *Beggary and Theatre in Early Modern England*. Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Rawlings, Philip. 1992. *Drunks, Whores and Idle Apprentices. Criminal Biographies of the Eighteenth Century*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Reyes, Angela. 2005. 'Appropriation of African American Slang by Asian American Youth', *Journal of Sociolinguistics* 9 (4), 509-532. Available from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1360-6441.2005.00304.x/> [Accessed 13 July 2013]

- Reynolds, Bryan. 2002. *Becoming Criminal. Transversal Performance and Cultural Dissidence in Early Modern England*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Sanders, Julie. 2006. *Adaptation and Appropriation*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Schilling-Estes, Natalie. 1998. 'Investigating "Self-conscious" Speech: The Performance Register in Ocracoke English', *Language in Society* 27 (1): 53-83. Available from <http://journals.cambridge.org/> [Accessed 16 March 2015]
- Shoemaker, Robert B. 2008. 'The Old Bailey Proceedings and the Representation of Crime and Criminal Justice in Eighteenth-Century London', *Journal of British Studies* 47 (3), 559-580. Available from <http://journals.cambridge.org/> [Accessed 22 December 2012]
- Shoemaker, Robert. 2009. 'Print Culture and the Creation of Public Knowledge About Crime in 18th-Century London', In Knepper, Paul, Jonathan Doak, and Joanna Shapland (eds), *Crime Prevention, Surveillance, and Restorative Justice. Effects of Social Technologies*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press, 1-22.
- Short, Mick. 1996. *Exploring the Language of Poems, Plays and Prose*. Harlow: Longman Pearson Education Limited.
- Sorensen, Janet. 2004. 'Vulgar Tongues: Canting Dictionaries and the Language of the People in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37 (3), 435-454. Available from: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25098068> [Accessed 18 January 2013]
- Sornig, Karl. 1981. *Lexical Innovation: A Study of Slang, Colloquialisms, and Casual Speech*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing.
- Spedding, Patrick. 2011. '“The New Machine”: Discovering the Limits of ECCO', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 44 (4), 437-453. Available from <http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/ecs/summary/v044/44.4.spedding.html> [Accessed 18 May 2015]
- Spitulnik, Debra. 2001. 'The Social Circulation of Media Discourse and the Mediation of Communities', In Alessandro Duranti (ed), *Linguistic Anthropology. A Reader*. Malden, Mass. and Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 95-118.
- Taavitsainen, Irma, and Gunnel Melchers. 1999. 'Writing in Nonstandard English: Introduction', In Taavitsainen, Irma, Gunnel Melchers and Päivi Pahta (eds), *Writing in Nonstandard English*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1-26.
- Taavitsainen, Irma. 2005. 'Genre and the Appropriation of Science: *Loci Communes* in English in the Late Medieval and Early Modern Period', In Janne Skaffari, Matti Peikola, Ruth Carroll, Risto Hiltunen, and Brita Wårvik (eds), *Opening Windows on Texts and*

*Discourses of the Past. Pragmatics & Beyond New Series*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 179-196.

Taavitsainen, Irma, and Susan Fitzmaurice. 2007. 'Historical Pragmatics: What It Is and How to Do It', In Fitzmaurice, Susan, and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Methods in Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter, 11-36.

Taavitsainen, Irma, and Andreas H. Jucker. 2010. 'Trends and Developments in Historical Pragmatics', In Jucker, Andreas H. and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Historical Pragmatics*. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter Mouton, 3-30.

Traugott, Elizabeth Closs. 2011. 'Constructing the Audiences of the Old Bailey Trials 1674-1834', In Pahta, Päivi, and Andreas H. Jucker (eds), *Communicating Early English Manuscripts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 69-80.

West, William N. 2003. 'Talking the Talk: Cant on the Jacobean Stage', *English Literary Renaissance* 33 (2), 228-251. Oxford: Blackwell. Available from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1475-6757.00027/> [Accessed 11 November 2013]

White, Barbara. 2004. 'Murray, Frances (1729-1778)', In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/67089> [Accessed 22 September 2015]

White, Barbara. 2004. 'Salisbury, Sally (1690x92-1724)', In *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Available from <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/67088> [Accessed 22 September 2015]

Williams, Graham. 2012. 'Searching For Verbal Irony in Historical Corpora: A Pilot Study of 'Mock' and 'Scorn' in the Corpus of Middle English Prose and Verse', In Suhr, Carla, and Irma Taavitsainen (eds), *Developing Corpus Methodology for Historical Pragmatics (Studies in Variation, Contacts and Change in English 11)* Helsinki: VARIENG. Available from <http://www.helsinki.fi/varieng/journal/volumes/11/williams> [Accessed 13 March 2015]

Woodbridge, Linda. 2003. 'Jest Books, the Literature of Roguery, and the Vagrant Poor in Renaissance England', *English Literary Renaissance* 33 (2), 201-210. Available from <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/1475-6757.00025/abstract> [Accessed 14 October 2013]

Young, James O. 2010. *Cultural Appropriation and the Arts*. Malden, MA and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.



**Appendix I: Specific tokens of lexical items that were found through the metalinguistic keyword search for ‘cant’ in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online***

Bilk	Monisher
Bob	Ooro
Boned	Pastry-cook
Buck	Pattern measure
Bulls	Prad
Buttons	Quid
Calm	Sall
Clacking	Scamp
Dubbs	Scout
Father	Shade
Fence	Sham
Flat	Sophia
Gambler	Stag
Gammon	Stamp
Jew	Tale
Knowing	Thrums
Lay	Toge
Lobster	Traps
Lock	Wack
Mark	Wedges
Mary Cut and Come Again	

**Appendix II: Cant words selected from Parker's word list which I searched for in the *Old Bailey Proceedings Online***

Academy	Dobbin
Adam'd	Dorsed
Ballooning	Drop
Beak	Fam
Bit	Fawny
Blowen	Flag
Blue pigeon flying	Flash
Bobstick	Frisk
Bub	Glanthem
Chaunt	Glim
Cligh	Gropers
Clink	Grub
Clout	Hobbled
Cockabrag	Hop the twig
Copper clinking	Hornies
Cove	Hot
Crap	Ken
Crooks	Kid
Cull	Kilter
Daddles	Knuckle
Darkey	Lap
Did him over	Leer
Ding	Lightning
Dish	Lip

Lully	Screen
Lumber	Sharp
Mag	Shove the trunk
Mizzle	Sky larking
Mosque	Slang
Nap	Slim
Ned	Smiters
Nicks	Snack the bit
Noggin	Snitch
Pals	Snoozed
Patter	Squeeze
Prigg'd	Spell
Queer	Tick
Reader	Trunk
Rig	Twang
Roue	Wipe
Rum	

### Appendix III: Overview frequencies keyword searches List 1 and List 2

#### List 1

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Sessions Papers</b>	<b>Ordinary's Accounts</b>
Bilk	22	22
Bob	7	1
Boned	7	0
Buck	2	0
Bulls	7	1
Buttons	1	0
Calm	0	1
Clacking	1	5
Dubbs	3	0
Father	0	1
Fence	24	14
Flat	6	1
Gambler	2	0
Gammon	5	0
Jew	1	0
Knowing	0	1
Lay	3	13
Lobster	1	1
Lock	3	6
Mark	1	0
Mary Cut and Come Again	0	1
Monisher	1	0
Ooro	1	0
Pastry-cook	1	0
Pattern measure	1	1
Prad	1	0
Quid	4	0
Sall	1	0
Scamp	16	5
Scout	10	8
Shade	6	2
Sham	100	27
Sophia	1	0
Stag	11	2
Stamp	1	0
Tale	2	2
Thrums	2	0
Toge	0	1
Traps	13	0
Wack	3	0
Wedges	5	3

## List 2

<b>Keyword</b>	<b>Sessions Papers</b>	<b>Ordinary's Accounts</b>
Academy	17	2
Adam'd	0	1
Ballooning	0	0
Beak	0	1
Bit	2	0
Blowen	0	0
Blue pigeon flying	1	0
Bobstick	0	0
Bub	0	0
Chaunt	0	0
Cligh	0	0
Clink	3	1
Clout	0	0
Cockabrax	0	0
Copper clinking	0	0
Cove	0	4
Crap	2	0
Crooks	0	0
Cull	25	14
Daddles	0	0
Darkey	0	0
Did him over	1	0
Ding	13	1
Dish	3	1
Dobbin	0	0
Dorsed	0	1
Drop	0	0
Fam	0	0
Fawny	0	0
Flag	0	0
Flash	10	1
Frisk	7	0
Glanthem	0	0
Glim	1	1
Gropers	0	0
Grub	1	0
Hobbled	13	2
Hop the twig	1	0
Hornies	0	0
Hot	113	5
Ken	6	7
Kid	3	1
Kilter	0	0
Knuckle	0	0
Lap	0	0

Leer	0	0
Lightning	0	0
Lip	0	0
Lully	2	0
Lumber	0	0
Mag	3	0
Mizzle	0	1
Mosque	0	0
Nap	8	0
Ned	2	0
Nicks	0	0
Noggin	2	0
Pals	0	1
Patter	1	1
Prigg'd	3	0
Queer	4	2
Reader	0	0
Rig	5	0
Roue	0	0
Rum	5	2
Screen	0	0
Sharp	12	5
Shove the trunk	2	0
Sky larking	6	0
Slang	7	4
Slim	0	0
Smiters	0	0
Snack the bit	11	5
Snitch	6	0
Snoozed	1	0
Squeeze	0	0
Spell	5	0
Tick	5	0
Trunk	2	0
Twang	0	2
Wipe	4	0

---

## Appendix IV: Overview verse titles in which ‘cull’ appears in ECCO

Year	Author (if known)	Title
1701	Edward Ward	A walk to Islington: with a description of New Tunbridge-Wells, and Sadler’s musick. By the author of The poet’s ramble after riches
1704	Duke of Buckingham, George Villiers	Miscellaneous works, written by His Grace, George, late Duke of Buckingham. Collected in one volume from the original papers. Containing Poems on ...
1705	T.H.	A glimpse of hell: or a short description, of the common side of Newgate
1707		The diverting muse, or The Universal medly
1707	Edward Ward	Hudibras redivivus: or, A burlesque poem on the various humours of town and country. Part of first, Vol. II.
1710	William Shakespeare	Macbeth. A tragedy. With all the alternations, amendments, additions, and new songs. As it is now acted at the Queen’s-Theatre
1710	Edward Ward	Nuptial dialogues and debates: or, an useful prospect of the felicities and discomforts of a marry’d life, incidents to all degrees, from the ...
1712	Edward Ward	The quack-Vintners: or, a satyr against Bad Wine. With Directions where to have Good. Inscrib’d to B-ks and H-r
1713		The new academy of complements, erected for ladies, Gentlewomen, Courtiers, Gentlemen, Scholars, Soldiers, Citizen, Countrymen; and all Persons...
1715	Hugo Gasper van Lunatus	Homunculus: or, the character of Mezereon, The High-German Doctor. An Hudibrastick poem. By Van Hugo Gasper Lunatus
1717		Bartholomew fair: an heroi-comical poem
1718		The saints congratulatory address: or, Th---s B---dbury’s speech, in the name of all the Prot-nt Diss-rs, to the B---p of B---r’s Jesuit; with...
1722		The Richmond maidenhead, a tale
1725		A New flash song-book or the Bowman Priggs delight. Being a collection of songs adapted to the humours of the blades of the town
1729	B. Lacy	Miscellaneous poems compos’d at Newfoundland, on board His Majesty’s ship the Kinsale. By B. Lacy, A.M. then chaplain to said ship

- 1729 Mr (Thomas) Odell The patron: or, the statesman's opera. As it is acted at the theatres in London. By Mr. Odell. Dedicated to the Right Honourable the Early of ...
- 1730 Samuel Butler The posthumous works of Mr Samuel Butler, (author of Hudibras) compleat in one volume: written in the time of the grand rebellion, and in the ...
- 1730 Peter Farmer, Esq. A new model for the rebuilding Masonry on a stronger basis than the former; with a sound constitution, and a curious catechism drawn from Rules ...
- 1732 Author of the Harlot's progress The progress of a rake: or, the Templar's exit. In ten cantos, in hudibrastick verse. Containing I. His coming out of the West of England, being ...
- 1732 Henry Fielding The Covent-Garden tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. By His Majesty's servants
- 1732 The harlot's progress: or, the humours of Drury-Lane. Being the life of the noted Moll Hackabout, in six hudibrastick cantos, with a curious ...
- 1732 A hymn to the chair: or, lucubrations, serious and comical, on the use of chairs, Benches, Forms, Joint-Stools, Three-Legged Stools, and ...
- 1732 The ladies delight. Containing, I. An address to all well provided Hibernians. II. The arbor vitae; or, tree of life. A poem. Shewing whence it ...
- 1733 John Bancks Poems on several occasions: consisting of tales, epistles, songs, odes, epigrams, and other miscellaneous pieces, upon subjects of humour, and ...
- 1733 Theophilus Cibber The harlot's progress; or, the ridotto al'fresco: a grotesque pantomime entertainment. As it is perform'd by his Majesty's Compnay of comedians ...
- 1734 Beau Dapper The ladies of pleasure. In a familiar epistle. From Beau Dapper to Miss Witless.
- 1736 Gentleman of the University of Oxford The royal marriage, a ballad-opera of three acts, as it is perform'd by a private company of gentlemen near St. James's; occasioned by the ...
- 1737 Bacchus and Venus: or, a select collection of near 200 of the most witty and diverting songs and catches in love and gallantry, Many whereof ...
- 1738 Henry Carey Margery; or, a worse plague than the dragon: a burlesque opera. As it is perform'd at the Theatre-Royal in Covent-Garden. Altered from the ...
- 1740 Woman unmask'd, and dissected; a satire
- 1741 The Musical companion: or, Lady's magazine. Being a



- complete collection of the choicest and most approved English and Scotch songs, airs, catches, ...
- 1741 Philo-Britanniae The potent ally: or succours from Merryland. With three essays in praise of the cloathing of that country; And The Story of Pandora's Box. To ...
- 1742 William Bewick Several letters and miscellany poems. At the request and invitation of several ingenious and learned persons. The second edition, with an ...
- 1743 The humours of whist. A dramatic satire, as acted every day at White's and other coffee-houses and assemblies
- 1744 Henry Potter The decoy: An opera. As it was intended to be acted at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn Fields
- 1744 The review. A poem. Inscib'd to the Right Honourable the Earl of Litchfield
- 1747 Covent Garden in mourning, a mock heroic poem. Containing some memoirs of the late celebrated Moll King, and anecdotes of some of her sisters, ...
- 1748 Beaumont Brenan A congratulatory letter from one poet to another, on the divorcement of his wife. Written some Years since, and now made Publick. To which is ...
- 1749 Mr (Theophilus) Moss The general lover. A comedy. By Mr. Moss
- 1750 The aviary: or, magazine of British melody. Consisting of a collection of one thousand four hundred and seventeen songs, With Titles of the ...
- 1750 A book to help the young and gay, To pass the tedious hours away, Containing things, not often read, And some that ne'er were Published, Here ...
- 1750 Fables and tales for the ladies. To which are added, Miscellanies, by another hand.
- 1750 The modern courtesan, an heroic poem. Inscib'd to Miss F--y M--y. With notes, critical, historical, explanatory, and comical, prefix'd
- 1753 The lover's manual being a choice collection of poems from the most approv'd modern authors. With several original pieces. In five books. ...
- 1753 John Marchant Lusus juveniles: or, youth's recreation. Digested under the following heads: I. The natures. Actions, and employments of birds, animals, &c. ...
- 1758 The Bacchanalian: or, Choice spirits feast. Containing all the most celebrated new songs, and favourite airs, duets,

- cantatas, &c. Sung at the ...
- 1758 A collection of poems in six volumes. By several hands.
- 1760 H. Harrison A tragicomic, heroical, satirical burlesque poem in three canto's on the hyperbole. The first canto Being a brief Account of Taste A-la-Mode; ...
- 1760 The humours of rag-fair: or the countryman's description of their several trades and callings
- 1761 Edward Thompson The meretriciad
- 1762 Thomas Bridges Homer travestie: being a new translation of the four first books of the Illiad. By Cotton, Junior. To which is prefix'd, some small account of the ...
- 1763 The London polite songster: being, a new and choice collection of the most approved English and Scotch songs, airs, catches, &c. now in vogue, ...
- 1763 Edward Thompson The temple of Venus. A gentle satire on the times. By the author of the meretriciad. Part the first.
- 1763 Edward Thompson The temple of Venus. Part the second
- 1763 The triumph of brutes, a satire on this Caledonian age.
- 1764 The contest. A poem.
- 1764 An essay on woman
- 1765 John Ferrar Poems on several subjects, by John Ferrar ...
- 1765 The Merry medley; or Universal chronicle of wit and humour. Consisting of Entertaining stories. Remarkable anecdotes. Ingenious poems. Laughable ...
- 1765 Edward Thompson The courtesan. By the author of The meretriciad.
- 1766 The buck's merry companion. An entire new and choice collection of the most excellent, joyous songs, catches and cantatas, sung by several select ...
- 1766 A caveat to the will of a certain northern vicar. Addressed to the Reverend W.C\*\*\*\*\* rector of K\*\*\*\* W\*\*\*\*\*
- 1766 John Cunningham Poems, chiefly pastoral. By John Cunningham
- 1767 George Coleman The connoisseur. By Mr. Town, critic and censor-general ...
- 1767 Horace The works of Horace, translated into verse. With a prose interpretation, for the help of students. And occasional notes. By Christopher Smart, ...
- 1770 The Fairy's revel: or, Puck's trip thro' London by moon light. A satire.

- 1770 The humourist. Being A Choice Collection of songs, Containing, 1. I like the Man whose soaring Soul. 2. Come all ye Buffers gay. 3. Young ...
- 1771 Adam Moses Emanuel Cooke The hermit converted: or, the maid of Bath married. By A.M.E.C-
- 1772 Thomas Bridges A burlesque translation of Homer
- 1773 The bow-Street opera. In three acts. Written on the plan of The beggar's opera. All the most celebrated songs of which are parodied; And The ...
- 1775 Michael Dorset Philosophic Venus, an ethic epistle, addressed to a young nobleman; with notes and illustrations.
- 1775 The London complete songster; or musical boquet [sic]. A selection of the modern and approved songs, glees, airs, &c. that are sung at the ...
- 1775 Modern midnight conversation, or matrimonial dialogues; adapted to the times. Describing the secret intrigues, private thoughts, and prevailing ...
- 1777 The adventures of Robert Earl of Huntington, vulgarly called Robin Hood. Being a complete history of all his merry adventures ...
- 1780 Ralph Tomlinson A slang pastoral: being a parody on a celebrated poem of Dr. Byron's [sic]. Written by Ralph Tomlinson, Esq
- 1782 The most agreeable companion; or, a choice collection of detached and most approved pieces, ... in prose and verse. Taken from a variety of ...
- 1783 Nauticks; or, sailor's verses. In two volumes. ...
- 1783 William O'Brien A fest for the votaries of Comus – Critical review, Jan. 1783. The Lusorium; being a collection of convivial songs, lectures, &ct. entirely ...
- 1784 Charles Dibdin Royal Circus epitomised
- 1784 The Pimp. A poem.
- 1784- The Wit's magazine
- 1785
- 1785 Titus Caps well fit: or, select epigrams. Serious and comic. By Titus, in Sandgate, and Titus, everywhere.
- 1789- The attic miscellany; or, characteristic mirror of men and things
- 1792
- 1789 The musical miscellany: or, songster's companion. Being a collection of new humorous songs, duets, catches, glees,

		&c. sung at the theatres and ...
1790		The festival of Anacreon. Containing a collection of modern songs, written for the Anacreontic Society, the Beef-Steak, and Humbug Clubs. By ...
1790	John Freeth	The political songster or, a touch on the times, on various subjects, and adapted to common tunes, the sixth edition, with additions. By John Freeth.
1794	John Devonshire	Songs, political, satirical and convivial, dedicated to the laughter loving goddess Vestina, calculated to inspire mirth and set the festive table ...
1797	Robert Buchanan	Poems in several occasions, by Robert Buchanan
1797	J. Guy	Songs, by J. Guy. Consisting of political, convivial, sentimental, pastoral, satirical, and masonic, none of which have ever before been ...
1797	Mr Nobody	A pamphlet entitled Two songs. Ah! Songs without Tunes; as none to them set, For Singers like me who'll Tunes for 'em get: Not for Maidens or ...
1798	Edmund John Eyre	Miscellaneous poems, by E. Eyre
1798	John Majoribanks	Trifles in verse: volume fourth. Being the Posthumous poems of Captain John Marjoribanks, of a late independent company
1800	Thomas Dutton	The wise man of the East; or the apparition of Zoroaster, the son of Oromases, to the theatrical midwife of Leicester Fields. A satirical poem, ...

---

## Appendix V: Overview prose titles in which ‘cull’ appears in ECCO

Year	Author (if known)	Title
1703	Charles Sorel	The comical history of Francion, Satyrically exposing folly and vice, in variety of humours and adventures. Written in French by the Sieur de ...
1707	Edward Ward	The London Terraefilius: or, the Satyirical Reformer. Being Drolling Reflections on the Vices and Vanities of Both Sexes. To be Continu'd. By the ...
1714	Saint-Evremond	The works of Monsieur de St. Evremond, made English from the French original. With the author's life, by Mr. des Maizeaux. To which are added, ...
1719		Love in masquerade: or, Seeing is not believing. Containing several pleasant adventures in the masquerading way
1723	Capt. Charles Walker	Authentick memoirs of the life, intrigues and adventures of the celebrated Sally Salisbury. With true characters of her most considerable gallants. ...
1725	Captain Anstruther of Spencerfield	A letter from the man in the moon, to Mr. Anodyne Necklace; containing an account of a robbery committed in hell, and the breaking open the ...
1725	Thomas Brown	Amusements serious and comical. By Mr. Thomas Brown. With his walk round London and Westminster, exposing the vices and follies of the town. To ...
1725		A new canting dictionary: Comprehending All the terms, Antient and Modern, Used in the Several tribes of Gypsies, Beggars, Shoplifters, ...
1728	Author of Dalton's Narrative	Villany exploded: or, The mistery of iniquity laid open: In a faithful relation of all the street-robberies, committed by the notorious gang now ...
1728		An essay against too much reading. With The whole Lives and Proceedings of Sancho and Peepo, at Aix la Chapelle in Germany. And A true account ...
1730	Henry Fielding	The letter-Writers: or, a new way to keep a wife at home. A farce, in three acts, As it is acted at the theatre in the Hay-Market, Written by ...
1735	B.N. (Benjamin Defoe)	A compleat English dictionary. Containing the true meaning of all words in the English language: also the proper names of all the kingdoms, Towns, ...
1736	J.A. Purves	Law-Visions; or, pills for posterity

- 1737 William Hunt, gauger The projectors. A comedy. As it was intended to be acted at one of the theatres
- 1737 O. Sedgewick The world turn'd inside-out; or, humankind unmask'd. Vol. I.
- 1738 The informers outwitted: a tragi-comical farce. As it has been rehears'd at the New-Exchange in Rag-Fair. Written originally in Hebrew, and ...
- 1741 G.L. The amorous gallant's tongue tipp'd with golden expressions: or, The art of courtship refined, being the best and newest academy. Containing I. ...
- 1741 Abbé Prévost The history of a fair Greek, who was taken out of a Seraglio at Constantinople, and brought to Paris by a Late Ambassador At The Ottoman Port:
- 1741 Jeremy Sharp The English rogue: or, the life of Jeremy Sharp, commonly called, Meriton Latroon. Shewing, his birth and parentage; the many pranks he play'd
- 1743 Henry Fielding Miscellanies, by Henry Fielding Esq; In three volumes
- 1744 A select collection of old plays. Volume the First
- 1745 The life and adventures of Bampfylde-Moore Carew, the noted Devonshire stroller and dog-stealer; as related by himself, during his passage to the ...
- 1748 Isaac Cousteil A French idiomatic and critical vocabulary, alphabetically digested. Wherein is contained, An extensive Variety of Words, so disposed, that a ...
- 1749 Henry Fielding The history of Tom Jones, a foundling. In four volumes. By Henry Fielding, Esq;
- 1751 Francis Coventry The history of Pompey the little: or, the life and adventures of a lap-dog
- 1752 Henry Fielding Amelia. By Henry Fielding, Esq;
- 1753 François Génard The school of man. A moral, critical, and anecdotal work. Translated from the French. To which is added, a key to the characters, which ...
- 1754 William Dodd The sisters; or the history of Lucy and Caroline Sanson, entrusted to a false friend. In two volumes. ...
- 1755 Ghost of Shakespeare Memoirs of the Shakespear's-Head in Covent Garden: in which are introduced many entertaining adventures, and several remarkable characters. By ...
- 1755 Ghost of Shakespeare Memoirs of the Shakespear's-Head in Covent Garden: in which are introduced many entertaining adventures, and several remarkable characters. By ...

- 1758 Chiron: or, the mental optician ...
- 1759 The juvenile adventures of Miss Kitty F-r
- 1759 Memoirs of the celebrated Miss Fanny M-. Vol. II. Vol. II
- 1760 The Auction: a modern novel. In two volumes.
- 1760 Charles Townly The courtezans: a comedy of two acts: founded on truth; and acted every night at Drury-Lane and Covent-Garden. By Charles Townly, Esq;
- 1761 Fugitive pieces, on various subjects. By several authors. In two volumes. ... . Containing I. Crito: or a dialogue on beauty. II. An account of ...
- 1761 John Poulter The discoveries of John Poulter, alias Baxter; who was apprehended for robbing Dr Hancock, of Salisbury. ... Written wholly by himself. ...
- 1763 Arthur Murphy The citizen. A farce. As it is performed at the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden. By Arthur Murphy, Esq;
- 1764 Phoebe Gibbes The life and adventures of Mr. Francis Clive. In two volumes. ...
- 1764 Richard Griffith The triumvirate: or, the authentic memoirs of A. B. and C. In two volumes, ...
- 1765 Pierre Carlet de Chamblain de Marivaux The virtuous orphan; or the life, misfortunes, and adventures, of Indiana. Written by herself. In two volumes.
- 1773 The prudential lovers, or the history of Harry Harper. In two volumes. ...
- 1774 Hugh Kelly The school for wives. A comedy. As it is performed at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane. Embellished with an etching, by Mr Louthembourg
- 1775 N (Nathan) Bailey The new universal etymological English dictionary: Containing An Additional Collection of Words, with their Explications and Etymologies from the ...
- 1775 The fortune-Hunter: or, the Gamester Reclaim'd. A play. With an entertainment of the millennium. Representing Paradise lost: or, the fall of man.
- 1775 A True explanation of the vices of the age; Wherein is contained the roguery of those pluck'em in landlords and quack doctors; also the tricks of ...
- 1776 James Beattie Essays. On poetry and music, as they affect the Mind. On laughter, and Ludicrous Composition. On the utility of classical learning. By James ...
- 1776 William Tans'ur the younger The beauties of poetry: or, a portable repository of English verse, on an entire new plan. In three books. Grammar display'd, Classes of Rhymes: ...

1781		The belle's stratagem: a comedy. As it is acted by his Majesty's servants, with universal applause.
1781		The life of Patrick Madan; Exhibiting a Series of the most extraordinary Transactions, notorious Villanies, and wonderful Escapes, that ever...
1783		Siberian anecdotes, a novel. In two volumes. Containing real histories and living characters.
1785	Francis Grose	A classical dictionary of the vulgar tongue
1788	Daniel Defoe	Fortunes and misfortunes of the famous Moll Flanders, Who was born in Newgate: and, during a life of continued variety for threescore years, ...
1790	William Shakespeare	The plays and poems of William Shakespeare, in ten volumes; collated verbatim with the most authentick copies, and revised: with the correction ...
1791		Jack Sprit-Sail's frolic; or, sailor's humourous cruise; in the latitude of London. ... To which is added Jack Sprit-Sail's flowing can, being a ...
1792	Colley Cibber	The refusal; or, the ladies' philosophy. A comedy. By Colley Cibber, Esq. Adapted for theatrical representation, as performed at the ...
1795	Humphry Tristram Potter	A new dictionary of all the cant and flash languages, both ancient and modern; used by gipsies, beggars, swindlers, shoplifters, ... Dedicated to ...

---