Historical Dialogue Analysis

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Court Records and Cartoons
Reflections of Spontaneous Dialogue in Early Romance Texts

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1. Introduction

Philology need not be divorced from life. For people with historical interests even written texts from past times are occasionally a window to a wonderful vista of colourful and even earthy forms of communication. It is my intention to demonstrate this with recourse to two text types from the early period of Romance languages, in which "dialogicity" – the meaning of which is to be defined – plays an important role.

2. Orality, literacy, and historical dialogue research

The title of this volume points to two seemingly conflicting domains of language. We generally think of dialogue as a sequence of oral utterances, whereas an historical investigation of the language of past centuries can be based only on written sources. This apparent contradiction becomes resolved, however, in the framework of a more complex conceptualisation of orality and literacy as developed in particular by Ludwig Söll (1985: 17-25). He distinguishes between the phonic and the graphic medium on the one hand and spoken and written conception on the other. If two, in medial terms, totally neutral expressions like "communicative immediacy" vs. "communicative distance" are allocated to the latter contrast, the following combinations of conceptualisation and medium arise (cf. Koch and Oesterreicher 1985: 17-19; 1990: 5-12; 1994: 587f.):
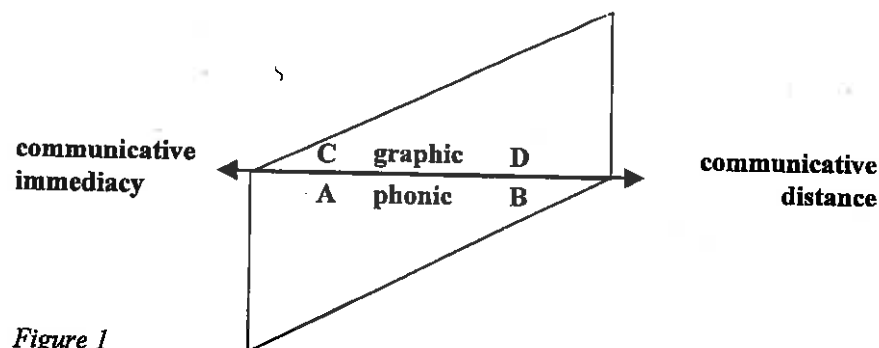
Figure 1

Figure 1 illustrates the medial dichotomy and by comparison the conceptional continuum of linguistic utterances, and it also shows the – indisputable – affinities between medium and conception which, however, are only of a prototypical nature (cf. Koch 1997: 152). The phonic realisation of communicative immediacy, for instance in spontaneous everyday conversation (area A), seems to us just as obvious as communicative distance is in the graphic medium, for example in a legal text (area D). But we also know that communicative immediacy does exist in the graphic medium (area C: e.g. spontaneous private correspondence) and likewise communicative distance in the phonic medium (area B: e.g. funeral oration).[1]

The terms "immediacy"/"distance" may be factorised as they comprise a number of different communicative parameters. Extreme communicative immediacy may be characterised as follows (see Table 1):

Table 1: Parameters of "communicative immediacy"

(i)	physical (spatial, temporal) immediacy
(ii)	privacy
(iii)	familiarity of the partners
(iv)	high emotionality
(v)	context embeddedness
(vi)	deictic immediacy (*ego-hic-nunc*, immediate situation)
(vii)	dialogue
(viii)	communicative cooperation of the partners
(ix)	free topic development
(x)	spontaneity

For communicative distance the opposite values of these parameters will be true, namely: (i) physical distance, (ii) publicness, (iii) lack of familiarity of the partners etc. The values of parameters (i) to (x) may well vary in ratio, thereby contributing decisively to the continual character of the conception of linguistic utterances.[2] On this basis it is easy to see what combination of parameter values and what position in the conceptional continuum may be allotted, for example, to a panel discussion, a newspaper interview, a sermon etc.

Within the framework of the subject under discussion, it is, of course, parameter (vii), "dialogue", which particularly attracts our attention (cf. Table 1 above). To be accurate, it is exclusively the aspect of turn-taking that is meant here: the dialogue as a communication form with completely free turn-taking between the conversation partners, as opposed to the monologue as a communication form in which, without any turn-taking, only one of the communication partners speaks (of course with continual transitions between both extremes: think of discussions, correspondence etc.).

This understanding of the term "dialogue" must not mask the fact that different academic fields (such as linguistics, sociology and philosophy) and specialised areas within these fields sometimes use the terms "dialogue" and "dialogicity" to mean quite different (groups of) communication forms.[3] If the parameters listed in Table 1 are applied, we may arrive at a relatively precise definition of the salient points of the variety in terminology observed here. From the conceptual point of view, we may distinguish between three prototypical concepts of dialogue:

Table 2: Dialogicity

		Dialogue₁	Dialogue₂	Dialogue₃
(i)	physical (spatial, temporal) immediacy	0	0	+
(ii)	privacy	0	0	+
(iii)	familiarity of the partners	0	+	+
(iv)	high emotionality	0	+	+
(v)	context embeddedness	0	+	+
(vi)	deictic immediacy (*ego-hic-nunc*, immediate situation)	0	(*thou*)	+
(vii)	dialogue	+	±	+
(viii)	communicative cooperation of the partners	0	0	+
(ix)	free topic development	0	0	+
(x)	spontaneity	0	0	+

"Dialogue₁" means a whole family of communication forms which have one parameter, i.e. (vii) "dialogue", in common (hence +), whereas all the other parameters are specified at random (hence '0'). This family of communication forms ranges from dialogues characterised by full communicative immediacy, such as spontaneous everyday conversation, to dialogue forms which are essentially distant, such as courtly conversation or official correspondence. (As can be seen here, the medium is evidently indifferent.)

The term "dialogue₂" also appears to be quite widespread. Here "dialogicity" first and foremost means addressee orientation. It thus implies a certain familiarity (iii), a certain emotionality (iv), a certain context embeddedness (v), and a predominant addresse orientation (vi). Dialogicity in the sense of parameter (vii), on the other hand, does not necessarily have to be realised (hence ±); the remaining parameters are likewise conceptionally indifferent here (hence '0').

Finally, there is the concept of "dialogue₃" mentioned at the beginning, which implies spontaneous everyday dialogue; here all the parameters (i) to (x) – of course including (vii) – are specified in the sense of communicative immediacy.

As far as the medium is concerned, dialogue₂ and dialogue₃ undoubtedly have an affinity to phonic realisation (area A in Figure 1). Given the bounds of historical linguistics, however, it goes without saying that we may gain access to these dialogue forms only through written records, in other words via area C in Figure 1. The data I treat below therefore oscillate, within the graphic medium, between the dialogue₂ and dialogue₃ types. In the case of type C data, two questions must necessarily be asked. First, to what happy circumstances do we owe the fact that these written testimonies emerged with a conceptional character which was not totally prototypical? and second, to what degree do these written testimonies reflect features of the communication forms of area A?

Cultural history and linguistic history teach us – more and more over the last few decades – that the communication forms of area C in Figure 1 are definitely widespread. They form one facet of what is labelled "orality in literate cultures", usually without any differentiation (cf. Koch 1997: 152f., 161ff.). Nevertheless, as their specific combination of conceptional and medial aspects is rather ambivalent, it is definitely worth examining how they came into being and how they should be typified. In various publications, Wulf Oesterreicher (e.g. 1995, 1997: 200-206) has designed a typology of "writing characterised by linguistic immediacy" (*nähesprachlich geprägtes Schreiben*) comprising the following eight types:

Table 3: Typology of "writing characterised by linguistic immediacy" (according to Oesterreicher)

(1)	Writing by semiliterate persons
(2)	Writings by (semiliterate) bilingual persons in a di-/triglossic situation
(3)	Sloppy writing (also by educated writers)
(4)	"Documentation" of informal speech
(5)	Writing adapted to the language competence of less educated recipients
(6)	Writing subjected to "simple" discourse traditions or genres (as a pragmatic option)
(7)	Writing in the *stilus humilis* (as a rhetorical-poetic option)
(8)	Mimetic or simulated orality in literature, parody and similar contexts

These types of writing characterised by linguistic immediacy are encountered, for instance, in the Romance languages at widely varying times in the history of the respective languages: we find them in sources relevant for the investigation of the so-called "Vulgar Latin", in the most ancient Romance writings, in Spanish colonial historiography of the early modern period, in sources relevant for the investigation of the history of spoken French, in the French Revolution, in letters from prisoners of war in our own century etc.[4] My data are at the crossroads between the two perspectives "writing characterised by linguistic immediacy" and "earliest Romance writings".[5] As we shall see, Oesterreicher's types (4) and (8) play a particular role here.

Before proceeding I briefly want to add the following basic consideration. Sources characterised by linguistic immediacy – especially dialogue₂/₃ sources – from earlier periods and realised in the graphic medium may be examined for a variety of linguistic reasons. Here it is important to distinguish between the following levels and areas of human language taking up and specifying some of Coseriu's basic ideas:[6]

Table 4: Levels and domains of human language

Level	Domain
universal	language activity
historical	specific language
historical	discourse tradition
individual/actual utterance	discourse

Since linguists use discourse realised in the form of individual and actual utterances merely as data and must not see it as an end in itself, their focal

interest can only remain in the universal and the two historical domains. The analysis of the relevant sources for research into the history of oral varieties, which corresponds to the domain of specific languages, is very widespread.[7] The sources may, however, also be regarded as samples of certain discourse traditions and serve for the study of the history of dialogue traditions ("dialogue forms" in the sense of Fritz 1994 and 1995). Finally – and this is the decisive aspect for what follows – the relevant sources may, of course, also be analysed with regard to the level of language activity, in other words the level of the basic variables of human communication. The problem then arises of the authenticity or the filtering processes to which the texts in area C in Figure 1 compared to area A have been subjected. How much dialogicity$_{2/3}$, how much immediacy is contained in the relevant written testimonies and in what configuration? What are the motives for the conceptional form of these texts? Within the latter perspective, the relation to the discourse-traditional area of the historical level becomes obvious.

I should like to illustrate this point briefly by means of two sample texts which date from outside the period of my research. In example (1), l. 3-4, angry exclamations are quoted which the Romans shouted out when Pope Vigilius, who had made himself extremely unpopular, set sail. In (2) we find an excerpt from eye-witness accounts, in which direct speech is again quoted.

(1) Rome, 545 (Liber Pontificalis, cit. Herman 1990: 147)
    1   *Videntes Romani quod movisset navis, in qua sedebat Vigilius,*
        'When the Romans saw the ship moving on which Vigilius was sitting,
    2   *tunc populus coepit post eum iactare lapides fustes cacabos et dicere:*
        the people began to throw stones, sticks and metal pots at him and to say:
    3   *"famis tua tecum! mortalitas tua tecum! male fecisti cum Romanis,*
        "Hunger to you! Death to you! You did wrong to the Romans,
    4   *male invenias ubi vadis."*
        may evil accompany you wherever you go."'

(2) Siena, 715 (*Breve de inquisitione,* cit. Roncaglia 1965: 146)
    1   *Ego respondi ei: "Cave ut non interroget; nam si interrogatus fuero,*
        'I replied to him: "Prevent him from asking [me], for if I am asked,
    2   *veritatem dicere habeo." Sic respondit mihi: "Ergo tace tu viro ·*
        I will tell the truth." He replied to me: "So, you be silent to a man
    3   *qui est missus domni regi."*
        who is the ambassador of the king!"'

(1) is in principle a purely "Latin" text. As it contains a quotation of the dialogue$_2$ type, its authenticity with regard to the Latin spoken at that time ("Vulgar Latin") has been discussed.[8] Text (2) is likewise basically a Latin

text, but it reveals clear signs of vernacular elements which can, of course, be pin-pointed.[9] All this, however, purely concerns the domain of a specific language as described above, in which there is comparatively little to be seen on the surface. By contrast, the matter looks completely different if – on the level of language activity – the interest lies in the characteristic style of dialogue$_2$ or dialogue$_3$ in the instances of speech quoted here, and from this point of view both texts are relevant to my questions.[10]

3.   Court records

3.1.   The data

Following example (2), let us remain in the law courts and look at excerpts from court records.

My first example comes from the *Atti dei podestà* of Lio Mazor, an island in the Lagoon of Venice destroyed by the Genoese in 1380. They are records relating to trials on disputes. Our text is written in a vernacular variety which is not identical to Venetian, but which is certainly very similar to it. It originated in the year 1312 and thus belongs to the early texts of the region.[11]

(3) Lio Mazor (near Venice), 1312 (*Atti dei podestà di Lio Mazor,* cit. Levi 1904: 17f.; my quotation marks)
    1   *Die martis X mense otubrj Felip Musolin de S.to Nicolò çurà*
        'On 10th October F.M. of S.N. swore
    2   *li comandamenti de miser la potestà et de dir la uerità dela briga*
        obedience to the Podestà and <he swore> to tell the truth about the dispute
    3   *ch'el aue cum Pero Seren et colo Saracho da Maçorbo.*
        which he had with P.S. and S.d.M.
    4   *Lo qual dis ch'el mançà et beuè cum li diti Pero et Saracho*
        He said that he ate and drank with the said P. and S.
    5   *in casa d'Andrea Dalmatin, creçando ch'eli fos sui amisi;*
        at A.D.'s house believing them to be his friends;
    6   *et cusì ne partisem delà dita casa e çesem ensenbra uia.*
        and then we left the said house and went away together.
    7   *Et cum nu fosem a Sto Antolin, et eli s'aurì cum entranbe le barche*
        And when we got to S.A., they moved their boats apart
    8   *et mis-me denter sì, et en questa Pero Seren me dis:*
        and put me between them, and then P.S. said to me:
    9   *"Felipo, el è ça II anni che t'ò uardà d'auerte a sto parti;*
        "F., two years ago I warned you not to show up in these parts;

10 *che se t'aues entes en canal Corno quando tu me dies*
   for if I had heard you say to me in the Corno canal

11 *ch'el me nases lo uermo can, e' t'auraui pur morto!"*
   that you wish a mangy dog on me, I would have killed you!"

12 *et e'dis: "Fra', qua non è grande fato,*
   And I said to him: "Brother, that is no great matter,

13 *se te lo dis per cerchar la uia de uerità*
   I said it to you for the sake of truth,

14 *ch'el me cunpagnun no pares laro!"*
   so that my companion wouldn't appear to be a thief!"

15 *et el dis: "Tu menti per la gula!"*
   and he said: "You are lying through your back teeth!"

16 *et e' li dis: "tu menti per lo cul!"*
   and I said: "You are lying through your arse!"

17 *et en questa el fo a ladi dela mia barcha per uolerme sair en barcha,*
   and then he got alongside my boat in order to get into my boat

18 *et he' me-lo spensi da dos per no uoler briga;*
   and I pushed him off my back because I didn't want an argument;

19 *et en questa el leuà lo rem et uos-me dar ço per la testa; [...]*
   and then he raised the oar and wanted to hit me on the head with it; [...]'

Our interest focuses on dialogue₃ quoted in lines 9-16 (in particular l. 16). Note the textual layers in which this dialogue is embedded (cf. also Figure 2 below):

Level I: Legal framework of questioning with mention of the cause (l. 2: *briga*) and of the swearing of the oath (l. 1: *çurà*).

Level II: Report of the statement by Felip Musolin (from l. 4: *Lo qual dis ch(e) ...*). A noteworthy feature is the abrupt jump in l. 5 from indirect speech in the 3rd person singular (l. 4/5: *el mançà et beuè ... creçando ch'eli fos sui amisi*) to direct speech in the 1st person (l. 6: *ne partisem*).

Level III: Embedded in Level II, a dialogue is rendered as a quotation (l. 9-16).

This threefold layering may serve as a model case for the text organisation of the following documents, too, even if not all the levels are reported, depending on the respective editions (which concentrate on the vernacular passages in the text).

   Our next group of examples comes from court records of statements in slander suits. These records are the *Libri criminali* of Lucca in the period 1330 to 1384. In the context of the emergence of the vernacular in Tuscany, this is actually no longer particularly early (by way of comparison, Dante died in 1321);[12] but even at this point in time in Tuscany numerous discourse traditions were still practised in Latin. As opposed to the case of Lio Mazor, this was apparently also true of court records, so that the fragments of the dialogue₃ type which are of interest to us occur as vernacular quotations within a Latin text (or as in case (4b), even appear partly in Latin). This in itself is particularly pertinent to our purposes: the vernacular brings us closer to the reality of dialogue₃ within texts which are basically still Latin.

(4)   Lucca: 1335, 1330 (*Libri criminali*, cit. Marcheschi 1983: 22, 19)
   (a)   *Sosso cane, ascino fastiggioso.*
       'Dirty dog, puffed up donkey.'
   (b)   *Tu fecisti me predari: oportet q(uod) te int(er)ficiam, soçço ladrone*
       'You wanted to have me robbed; I must kill you, dirty thief,
       che me venisti a robbare, che maledecta scia la pocta che ti cachò.
       who wanted to rob me, damn the whore who crapped you.'

The examples quoted belong to level III of the system defined under (3). (The Latin texts from the other levels are not quoted in the edition available to me.)

   Our third group of examples comes from court registers (*Registres audienciers*) belonging to various administrative districts in the Forez ((5a) Malleval, (5b) Saint-Maurice-sur-Loire, (5c) La Tour-en-Jarez; all in today's Département Loire). Linguistically this is the Franco-Provençal area. According to the documents which have survived, written vernacular in the Forez did not emerge until the 1280s, so documentation in particular from the 14th century may be reasonably considered as "early".[13]

(5)   Forez: 1358, 1385, 1433 (*Registres audienciers de la châtellenie comtale*, cit. Gonon 1974: 391, 372, 384f.)
   (a)   [angry culprit to the bailiff wanting to take his sword off him:]
       Ven la me otiar, quar eo la te balirey par la pointa.
       'Come and take it off me; I'll give it to you with the point.'
   (b)   *tu murras de malveysi mort, comme tes pares.*
       'You will die a nasty death, like your father.'
   (c)   *Johannes Jaquerii Olerii, de Strata, ... quia eidem imponebatur:*
       'J.J.O. of St., ... since he is accused of
       vocasse J. Boniti filias de la tres orra vil puta merdosa, que moz pares
       calling J.B.:. Son of the very dirtiest vilest bloody whore; my father
       a fotu ta mare mais de .c. veis en ung an,
       has fucked your mother more than a hundred times in one year.'

As particularly exemplified by (5c), levels I and II are rendered in Latin (level I: *Johannes ... imponebatur*; level II: *vocasse J. Boniti*). Only level III is again

quoted in the vernacular (and the edition restricts itself mainly to these quotations).

3.2.   Analysis of conceptional aspects

The texts or passages under scrutiny here contain clear reflexes of the dialogue, type. The philologists who have examined these texts unanimously stress the proximity to actual speech.[14] Even if the supposed authenticity of the quotations can only be of a relative nature (see also below 3.3.), salient signs of communicative immediacy may be detected in the quotations or from the respective context in which they are embedded. I should like to define this more precisely using parameters (i)-(x) of Table 1 above:

(i)   Level II of the text reveals that the quoted utterances go back to the physical immediacy of a face-to-face situation – if, that is, this level is visible in the edition. On level II the *I-thou* speech situation can be reconstructed metacommunicatively as in: (3) l. 6 *çesem ensenbra uia* etc.; (5c) *(Johanni Jaquerii Olerii imponebatur) vocasse J. Boniti.*

(ii)   It may be deduced mostly from the content of the insults that these scenes are very private; in (3) this becomes directly visible in the edition through the inclusion of text level II (account of the events).

(iii)   The intimacy between the interlocutors is particularly apparent in (3): after a meal in company – where the wine probably flowed freely – three people, evidently long acquainted with each other, leave the house together. The narrator erroneously considers the others to be his friends: l. 5 *creçando ch'eli fos sui amisi*; anyway, they have had some common – and also unpleasant – experience which is partially referred to quite implicitly in l. 9-14. In other texts, intimacy is also revealed indirectly, such as in the allusion to (supposed) knowledge about the insulted party or his relatives: (5b) how the father of the insulted party died; (5c) alleged sexual intercourse between the speaker's father and the mother of the insulted party.

(iv)   The high degree of emotionality is no doubt the most significant parameter in these texts on slander suits. The purpose of the quotations in the legal context is indeed to reveal that a basic rule of politeness in spoken language has been infringed by the accused: his emotionality has caused him to threaten the plaintiff's negative and positive face and he has brutally invaded the latter's personal territory.[15] Linguistically, this effect arises through certain semantic and pragmatic options.[16]

The choice of words is of prime importance. The expressions are derogatory (in the framework of a characteristic syntactic type of the appellation of the interlocutor: (4a) *sosso cane, ascino fastiggioso*; (4b) *soçço ladrone*; (5c) *filius de la ... puta*). Here and elsewhere, the use of swear words of a faecal and sexual nature flouts language taboos: (3) l. 16 *cul*, (4b)/(5c) *pocta/puta*, (5c) *merdosa, fotre*, (4b) *cachare* (the last example is an extreme dysphemism for 'to give birth'). In (5a) *balir par la pointa* for 'to stab' there is a scurrilous challenge within the linguistic representation of the situation.

Emotional expressiveness is heightened by intensifications which outdo each other, such as in (3) l. 15/16 *mentir per la gula* and *mentir per lo cul*. But this kind of hyperbole concerns not only linguistic expression but often also the content, the immoderacy of which gives rise to a lawsuit as in (5c), particularly in the second part, possibly also in (4b) (where apart from the possibly unfounded accusation of theft, there is the indirect insinuation of descent from a whore).

The speech acts in the individual utterances are also extremely emotional: derogatory address ((4a) and (5c) *filius ... merdosa*); reproach ((3) l. 15/16: *tu menti per la gula/per lo cul*); accusation ((4b) *tu fecisti me predari ... soçço ladrone que me vinisti a robbare*); threat ((4b) *oportet quod te interficiam*; (5a)); curse ((5b)). The speech act of cursing (4b) *maledecta scia ...* is a downright flouting of a taboo.

(v)   The context embeddedness is generally only indirect: as a rule, we are dealing with insults resulting from a conflict of action. By contrast, (5a) is set very directly in an extremely violent conflict, where a speech act of challenge is followed by a speech act that can only through the given situation be interpreted as threat.

(vi)   In the personal deixis, there are unmistakable elements of referential immediacy. The first and second person are well represented in the utterances. A pronounced dialogic, reference to the addressee is, of course, implicitly contained in the abusive appellation (see above under (iv)). There is a marked referential immediacy, too, in (5a) where reference to the sword in the form of an exophoric[17] pronoun in the third person (*la*) may only be understood in the context of the situation. On the other hand, however, a certain degree of referential distance must be conceded if one considers the numerous references to factors extraneous to the situation, i.e. mothers, fathers and (alleged) earlier actions such as robbery, sexual intercourse etc. and even prior communication ((3), l. 9-14).

(vii)   All the relevant passages are dialogical in the sense of this parameter. In (3) this is quite explicit in the threefold layering (I – II – III). But even where the edition does not reveal this fact, we may safely assume that

such accusations, insults, challenges etc. always occurred only in real, lively dialogue.

(x)   When we consider the parameter of spontaneity, it is necessary to distinguish between the marked deliberation of quoting and of record-taking during the trial on the one hand, and on the other the spontaneity of the utterance quoted – a spontaneity which is preserved (or must be preserved; I shall come back to this point in 3.3.) as far as the quoter's memory will allow. From the purely linguistic point of view, certain elements of authenticity cannot be overlooked: for example, the syntax of (5c) reveals the uncomplicated, polyvalent *que* situated between hypotaxis and parataxis, which keeps the logical link implicit;[18] moreover, the wording generally tends towards accumulation or even climax ((4a), (4b), (5c)).

3.3.   Motivation for writing characterised by linguistic immediacy

The records just examined belong to type (4) in Oesterreicher's model for writing characterised by linguistic immediacy (see Table 3): "documentation" of informal speech. Besides the act of reading aloud, Lüdtke (1964) already highlighted records as a communication type in earlier Romance texts. By contrast, Wunderli (1965) gave prominence to reading aloud and assigned a more marginal role to records. Obviously, our texts (3) and (5) do not belong to the central documents of early Romance, but they are at least relatively early in the history of the language in question. Records therefore play an interesting role here, at any rate in certain regions (cf. Koch 1993: 46).

The motivation for the style of immediacy in these court records is of a legal nature. Their starting point is to be found in spontaneous, immediate, dialogue$_3$-type utterances in the phonic medium, which are addressed to a hearer H by a speaker S. Depending on the circumstances, they are experienced by a witness W: S $\rightarrow$ H (W). Once such utterances have been heard, they would normally "die out", but for the fact that they belong to a context which, thanks to H's reaction, later becomes justiciable. Thus, the primary communication act S $\rightarrow$ H (W) triggers off a chain of further communication acts, the textual end-product being a mirror reflection of the layers III – II – I. A perfect model of this is to be found in example (3).
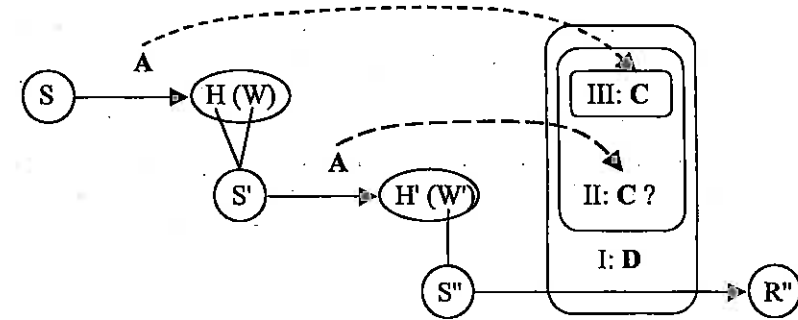

Figure 2 (letters A, C and D refer to the areas in Figure 1)

In the framework of the courtroom, there is a secondary communication S' $\rightarrow$ H' (W') in which S' = H or W makes a statement as the plaintiff or witness. Within the statement by S', the relevant utterance made by S is quoted as literally as possible. Statement (II) and quotation (III) together with the communicative-legal modalities of statement (I) are then recorded in writing by a court clerk S" = W' in a tertiary communication act S" $\rightarrow$ R" for a later reader R".

In a conceptional-medial respect (i.e. with reference to Figure (1)), the tertiary communication act S" $\rightarrow$ R" on textual level I should lean towards communicative distance and thus in the main belong to area D. The secondary communication act of the statement S' $\rightarrow$ H' (W') presumably tends towards communicative immediacy (area A), which under certain circumstances is even perceptible to a certain degree in the graphic medium on textual level II (area C?).[19]

The primary communication act S $\rightarrow$ H (W) was most definitely characterised by a very pronounced communicative immediacy (area A). As it is on account of their emotionality and spontaneity that the utterances themselves become justiciable, the use of Latin on textual level III poses a great problem. By this level at the latest a "translation" into Latin is therefore dispensed with (in Lio Mazor also on all upper levels) and there is an attempt to reproduce the utterances as authentically as possible with regard to the specific language and the conceptional aspects. The lexical level is of particular relevance here. It is therefore the legal context which provides the root for a later written conservation of immediate language, which, as we saw in 3.2., may definitely be allocated to area C in Figure 1.

As it is the spoken facts themselves that are justiciable, philologists generally assume that the texts are highly authentic – authentic, it should be observed, with regard to the writer, S", who records the linguistic part of the secondary communication act S' → H' (W') on textual levels II and III. However, even a record of this kind must be expected to contain a certain degree of mediation and filtering. Indeed, part of a quotation is even translated into Latin at the beginning of (4b).[20] More complex still is the relationship between text passages on level III and the primary (!) "original utterances" S → H (W), because the power of memory and honesty of S' = H or W come into play here, but above all because the communication form used for quoting is different from the quoted communication form itself. We must not forget that a quotation is not the same as a tape-recording.

As confirmed by the analysis in 3.2., the institutional framework, strictly speaking, only guarantees that the wording on level III is sufficiently expressive in its immediacy to become legally relevant at all – no more and no less.

## 4.   Cartoons

4.1.   The data

The second group of data I would like to treat here is of a completely different nature. We now turn our attention to inscriptions from the 11th to the 12th century in northern and central Italy.

Our first example is the famous *Iscrizione di San Clemente* (Rome, late 11th century), which belongs to a fresco – sadly now fading – in the lower basilica of the church of San Clemente. It is one of the ten oldest vernacular documents in Italy altogether (excluding Sardinia) and the third oldest in Rome.[21] The reproduction of the inscription here is the more readily legible watercolour painted by Carlo Tabanelli at the beginning of the 20th century after a negative by Pompeo Sansaini (text (6a)); there then follows a reconstruction by Marazzini of the dialogue, to which I have supplied an English translation (text (6b)).

(6)   Rome: End of the 11th century (*Iscrizione di San Clemente*)
   a.   Facsimile of the Tabanelli watercolour from Rafaelli (1987: Table VI)

   b.   Analytical scheme after Marazzini (1994: 158)
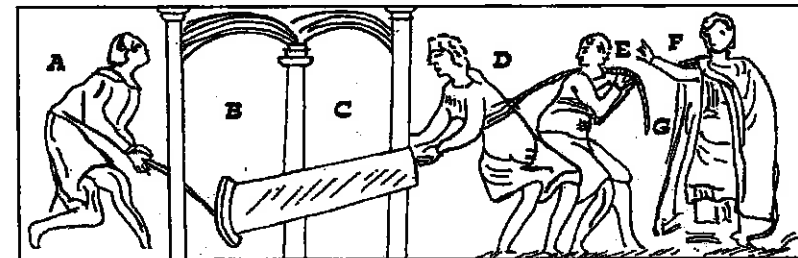
A: "FALITE DERETO/CO LO PALO/CARVON/CELLE"

A: "Go at him from behind with the stick, Carboncello!"

B: "D/U/R/I/TIAM COR/DIS/V(EST)/RIS"

B: "Owing to your hard heartedness ...

C: "S/A/X/A/TRAERE/MERUI/S/TIS"

C: ... you deserve to haul stones."

D: "ALBERTEL/TRAI<TE>"

D: "Albertello, pull!"

E: "GOS/MARI"

E: (Name label)

F: "SISIN/IUM"

F: (Name label)

G: "FILI/DELE/P/U/T/E/TRA/I/TE"

G: "Sons of a bitch, pull!"

The background to this little scene is a legend about Saint Clement (the fourth Pope at the end of the 1st century). Theodora, a Christian convert married to the heathen Sisinnius (a friend of the Caesar, Domitian), goes to Mass, which Clement is celebrating. Sisinnius suspects she has become unfaithful to him and follows her, whereupon he is struck with blindness and deafness. Although

Clement heals him, Sisinnius assumes that it is Clement who visited this evil on him. He orders his vassals to overpower Clement and take him away. Then the miracle depicted in the fresco takes place. While held by the vassals, Clement is transformed into a stone column which they now attempt to carry away.

What we have here is basically a precursor of present-day cartoons,[22] even if the notation conventions are rather different. As the distribution of linguistic elements on the fresco is not easy to follow, they have become a bone of contention. I opt for the interpretation which now appears to be the most likely (cf. Rafaelli 1987: 40ff., 51-53). The mosaic contains two pure name labels, namely *Sisinium* (F) for the person standing on the far right and *Gosmari* (E) for the vassal standing next to him on the left. Sisinnius first cries to the vassals: *Fili dele pute traite!* (G). Then it is either Gosmari or Sisinnius who shouts the following command to the vassal Albertello (the third person from the right): *Albertel trai(te)!* (D). Albertello or Gosmari then calls out to Carboncello (the vassal on the far left): *Falite dereto colo palo Carvoncelle!* (A). Finally, Saint Clement, "offstage" as it were, speaks the, grammatically not totally correct, Latin words: *Duritiam cordis vestris saxa traere meruistis* (B and C).

The next two examples are the oldest vernacular texts from Piemont. Within Italy as a whole, their chronological ranking is just, or at least almost, as high as text (6).[23] The first is a mosaic from the church of S. Maria Maggiore in Vercelli (about 1040):

(7)   Vercelli (Piemont); about 1040 *(Mosaic from the church of S. Maria Maggiore*, illustration from Coppo 1965/66: 245)

This portrays two fighters duelling with shields and swords. The utterances they shout at each other are reproduced in written form: *fol!* 'idiot' on the lefthand edge of the picture and *fel!* 'villain' on the righthand.

The other Piemontese mosaic (mid 11th/early 12th century) used to be in the cathedral of S. Evasio in Casale Monferrato. As the current photograph (8a) reveals, restoration work on the cathedral rendered the inscription illegible; however, it has been passed down to us in the form of a sketch by Mella, (8b):

(8)   Casale Monferrato (Piemont): mid 11th/early 12th century *(Mosaic in the cathedral of S. Evasio;* illustration (a) and reconstruction (b) from Coppo 1965/66: 254)

a.

b.

Here again we are presented with two fighters armed with shields and swords. The lefthand edge of the picture bears the inscription TOSCANA, which presumably should be read as a cartoon-style caption shouted out by one of the fighters. From the purely linguistic point of view, there are two interpretations compatible with the northern Italian character of the vernacular used here: 1. *tö scanna!* (corresponding to present-day standard Italian *to' scanna!*) 'Hey, go on, kill (me)!'; 2. *t'ò scanà!* (in line with present-day standard Italian *ti scannerò!*) 'I'm going to kill you!' (cf. Coppo 1965/66: 258f.; Stella 1994: 78).

4.2.   Analysis of conceptional aspects

Communicative immediacy is clearly apparent in these cartoon-style inscriptions, too. Their immediacy predominantly stems from the iconic component. Let us now run through all the conceptional parameters:[24]

(i)   The physical immediacy of a face-to-face situation is produced by iconic means in all these cases: in (6) between the four protagonists, in (7) and (8) between the two respectively.

(ii)   (7) and (8) are unequivocally private scenes. In (6) this is also the case for the violent part of the story, but the saint's words in Latin *ex cathedra* produce a higher degree of publicness.

(iii)   No conclusions may be drawn about the degree of intimacy in (7) and (8). In (6) the intimacy between the master and his vassals is relatively strong, but the intimacy between the four perpetrators and the saint is not. This links up well with (ii).

(iv)   As is the case with the court records, the high degree of emotionality is poignant here. The choice of words is derogatory (in the frame of the syntactic type of the appellation of the interlocutor): (7) *fol, fel*; (6) *fili dele pute* (the latter case blatantly flouting a taboo). The implementation of *scanà* in (8) is particularly expressive. The negative and positive face of the opposite partner is constantly threatened. In (6) the master can afford to goad on his vassals in this way; in (7) and (8) this verbal violation of territory reinforces the challenge in a fight.

(v)   Context embeddedness, too, is a prominent parameter of the most startling kind. (7) and (8) contain but mere traces of language; everything else concerning the action is expressed in the physical images into which these "speech bubbles" are firmly integrated. Of particular note are the verb forms and the speech acts they express, all of which are distinguished by a strong, direct action reference. Whereas (7) contains no verb form at all, elsewhere it is the imperative which is the most dominant. In (6), *traite, trai(te)* and *falite dereto* stand for directive

speech acts with the additional support of the vocative, which goads into action: *fili dele pute, Albertello, Carboncello*. According to one of the interpretations, *scana* in (8) is an imperative expressing a speech act of challenge, intensified by the discourse particle *tö*.[25] The other interpretation defines this as a future form, with which a speech act of threat (and in the final analysis an overpoweringly directive speech act) is performed.

(vi)   A large proportion of referential immediacy is evident here. Where verbs actually do exist, the only grammatical person is the second person of the imperative: (6) *traite, trai(te), fa(lite)*; (8) *scana* (however, the latter may be understood as a component of the first person singular, *t'ò scanà*, depending on the interpretation).

In the vernacular parts of the inscriptions, the referential expressions all relate explicitly or implicitly only to people or things which are located in the *hic-nunc* area; no reference is made to people or things extraneous to the situation. In (6), for instance, the exophoric reference plays an important role: in *-li-* (in *falite*) in the pronominal form, in *-lo palo* with a definite article + description. The object of *trai* or *traite* remains purely implicit, but of course Saint Clement/the column is meant here on the grounds of his/its presence in the situation. The vocatives *fili dele pute, Albertello* and *Carboncello* refer *eo ipso* to an addressee within the speaking situation (likewise *fel* and *fol* in (7)). A special role has, of course, to be assigned to the saint's dictum in (6) as it is distinguished from the vernacular utterances not only on account of the choice of language, but also owing to its conceptional style. The use here of the abstract *duritia* and the generic plural *saxa* (instead of a singular *saxum*) is an indirect reference to elements of the situation (and the form of the second person plural is, of course, a direct reference to the addressees in the situation), but nevertheless it transcends this situation referentially, simply on account of the generic style. – If we are to adopt the interpretation *t'ò scanà* in (7), we find here a clear exophoric reference to the addressee.

(vii)   It is not easy to speak of "dialogicity" in our three inscriptions in the sense of this conceptional parameter. (6) does not present real turn-taking in the vernacular, but rather shouts fired in all directions. The saint's voice offstage, of course, stands quite apart in its own right. (7) and (8) may well illustrate a constellation of two (in a duel!), but the written text in (7) sketches the bare minimum of an exchange and may be classified as an absolute border case of dialogicity; in (8) there is only one rudimentary utterance without any real exchange of words. However,

these mosaics are indeed examples of dialogue$_{2a}$ characterised by immediacy in many parameters, not least of all thanks to the frequent reference to *thou/ye*.

(x) As we saw in the court records (3.3.), we must again distinguish between two levels when considering the parameter of spontaneity. On the one hand, there are the iconic and graphic elements of the cartoon, due to an artistic act which certainly involves deliberation, and on the other the spontaneity of the communication processes invented by the artist. On the latter level, a high degree of spontaneity is most definitely indicated by the choice of words, the references to the situation and the use of the vocative.

4.3.   *Motivation for writing characterised by linguistic immediacy*

The final parameter considered in 4.2., parameter (x), makes clear the essential difference between the texts examined in sections 2 and 3. Whereas the focus of section 2 was the quoting and recording of dialogues$_3$ in a three-step process (Figure 2), the inscriptions of section 3 do not pretend to be a written record of the occurrence of communication acts; on the contrary, these dialogues$_2$ are a fictional and staged creation in word and illustration. According to Oesterreicher's typology of writing characterised by linguistic immediacy (Table 3), the inscriptions may be categorised as type (8): mimetic or simulated orality in literature, parody and similar contexts.

Cartoons may be considered a form of literature in the broadest sense of the term. Indeed, it is in this form of literature, thanks to the omnipresence of illustration, that the problem of immediacy and distance is posed most drastically. (This does not, however, mean that all cartoons embody the same high level of immediacy.) Both the *Iscrizione di San Clemente* and the mosaic inscriptions are most definitely precursors of cartoons characterised by immediacy of language, and their role in early writing in certain regions of Italy is not to be neglected (cf. Koch 1993: 46).

It is, of course, legitimate to ask why the authors of these texts chose the form of the cartoon to reproduce dialogic$_2$ emotional oral language. The reason in the case of the *Iscrizione di San Clemente* (6) possibly lies in social and ecclesiastical tensions in Rome under Pope Paschalis II (1099-1118). While Paschalis II stood for the traditional power of the Church, at the same time there was a revolting laiety supporting the counter-popes (Theodoricus, Albertus, Silvester IV). It was presumably at this "incorrigible" laiety that the Church propaganda was levelled.[26] The cartoon may well have been implemented as a propaganda device, depicting the contrasts in the Church and society by means of contrasts in language and conception. St. Clement's Latin dictum implying reserve and distance symbolises the traditional power of the Church whereas the spontaneity and immediacy of the vernacular is used to represent the coarse, incorrigible laiety.

The inscriptions of Casale and Vercelli are also Church propaganda, this time as part of a attested moral campaign against the iniquities of *ira*. In those days duels frequently took place as a trademark of *ira*. The Church took up the issue and campaigned for the Christian ideal of *temperantia*. The particularly effective medium of comic-like cartoons was chosen as a persuasive means, the component of caricature applying both to the language and to the illustrations.[27]

If these interpretations are right, it must be assumed that in all three inscriptions, the produced communicative immediacy, supported by vivid illustration, had an ideological-persuasive function. In this framework, Latin would not have been able to reproduce adequately the depravity of the emotionality depicted – particularly as read out to a lay person – and this may well explain the choice of the vernacular, as well as the contrast between the vernacular and Latin in (6).

5.   Conclusion

The paths along which spontaneous dialogical$_{2/3}$ immediacy in early Romance texts reaches the graphic medium belong, as we have seen, first and foremost to types (4) and (8) according to the typology in Table 3.[28] Writing characterised by linguistic immediacy of types (4) and (8) apparently requires a kind of staging, a specific frame, but one which is completely different in both cases.

Where immediacy of type (4) is documented, the setting is institutional, the stage being a courtroom providing a record of the justiciability of the facts treated. In the case of examples (4) and (5), this institutional frame makes its mark on the specific language itself right down to level II (defined in 3.1.), where Latin is used (for the main part not reproduced in the editions used here), whereas the vernacular does not emerge until on level III in quotations within the Latin framework. The pattern in example (3) is different, since the vernacular is already in use on levels II and I. The choice of the specific language apart, the conceptional style of the text is narrative as far down as level II; it is only within this narrative framework that the high degree of dialogicity$_3$ can be implemented on level III.

The mimetic type (8) is set in a frame of persuasive propaganda, which in turn implements the special medium of illustration in order to stage in a comic-strip-like form spontaneous dialogue$_2$ with linguistic immediacy.

Types (4) and (8) both require a motive for a permanent written record of dialogue$_{2/3}$ of the immediate kind, a motive which lies in the nature of the reproduced (type 4) or fictional (type 8) communication itself. In line with parameter (iv), this communication is in both cases highly emotional-expressive since its basis is conflict. The dialogues in the court records and the cartoon-type scenes both revolve around arguments. In example (6), we are assisting at a conflict between Sisinnius in his anger and blindness and the wisdom of Saint Clement, a conflict which is staged by the specific language and conceptional contrast as outlined above.

One point strikes me as being worthy of note. In all the examples analysed here, the writing characterised by dialogic$_{2/3}$ immediacy projects – either implicitly or even explicitly – a negative image of the protagonists. Quarrels and conflicts are the order of the day, whether they are set within the framework of a lawsuit or of persuasive fiction.

Notes

1 In a historical perspective, the affinities between medium and conception can, however, in part be differently represented. Thus, thanks to the omnipresent medial transcoding process of reading aloud/reciting and dictating, communicative distance in the phonic medium (area B) is particularly typical of the European Middle Ages (cf. Koch 1997a: 150, 157-160).

2 Add to this the fact that all communicative parameters bar (i) are of a continual nature.

3 For the situation in current linguistics cf. for example Fritz and Hundsnurscher (1994: XIIIf.); for the accentuation on the connection between dialogue and spoken language cf. Schwitalla (1994). For concepts of "dialogue" with different focusses, cf. for example Mukařovský (1967: 115); Weinrich et al. (1967: 117); Luckmann (1984: 53). Concerning the role of "dialogue" in philosophy, one might think of the Socratic "dialogue" or the Humboldtian view (1979: 137-139, 195f., 200-202 et passim); cf. also Habermas (1971); Bubner (1982: 52 ss, 227-237).

4 Cf. for example Tagliavini (1972: 212-220); Durante (1981: 53ff., 109ff.); Oesterreicher (1994); Schmidt-Riese (1997); Stimm (1980); Balibar (1985: 132-142); Schlieben-Lange (1996: 48-51, 55-59); Spitzer (1921/1976); Bruni (1984: 174-236, 479-517); cf. also note 5.

5 Cf. with special reference to Italian Radtke (1984); on the Romance languages in general: Koch (1993: 43-54).

6 Cf. Coseriu (1973: 6, 1981: 7, 35-47); Schlieben-Lange (1983, 1990); Koch (1988: 343f., 1997b: 43-54).

7 Cf. for example for this viewpoint: Stimm (1980); Radtke (1984); Ernst (1985); D'Achille (1990); Holtus and Schweickard (1991); Schmidt-Riese (1997: 56f.).

8 Cf. the considerations in Herman (1990) and Ineichen (1993: 84f.) – This Latin text is, of course, not included in the *Inventaire* by Frank and Hartmann (1997).

9 Cf. Muller and Taylor (1932: 212 notes 14 and 15); Roncaglia (1965: 146f.); for another excerpt from the same text see also Renzi (1985: 237f.) – Frank and Hartmann (1997: I, 20, 37) exclude this document from their documentation on the grounds of its being too Latin.

10 With regard to text (2), Roncaglia refers quite explicitly to the "vivacità analitica e persino dialogica del fraseggio" (1965: 147).

11 In Lio Mazor itself, these *Atti dei podestà* are the oldest texts of all. In relation to the Venetian area (including the Lagoon), they are not quite at the beginning of the written vernacular, but definitely belong to its early phase. The following vernacular documents are chronologically earlier in this area: *Recordacione di Piero Corner* (3rd-4th quarter of the 12th century; still bears strong Latin elements); *Proverbi de femene* (mid 12th century or after 1216?); 50-60 documents and wills (from 1253); a version of the *Disticha Catonis* and the *Panfilo* (both mid 13th century); a Venetian sonnet (1308 or later). The tract *De regimine rectoris* by Paolino Minorita is from about the same period (1313-15). Cf. Stussi (1965: 1-86, 1980, 1995: 125); Tomasoni (1994: 212-221). None of these texts is included in the *Inventaire* by Frank and Hartmann (1997): in one case (the *Recordacione*) the editors consider the proportion of Latin to be too great (I, 37); in the other cases the date of the surviving manuscript is outside the documented period (up to 1250).

12 Only after having finished the manuscript of this article had I access to Zaccagnini (1909: 124f.), who quotes similar passages in vernacular from the (still not edited) Latin *Condanne di Manetto degli Scali, podestà di Pistoia* going back as far as 1295.

13 Cf. Gonon (1974: particularly XIII-XXV, XXXIII; moreover XIVf. for the sidelined texts No. 1-3 of an earlier date and which belong to Occitan-speaking Midi); Vurpas (1995: 390-398). The documentation in Frank and Hartmann (1997) does not include any text from the Forez before 1250 (No. 9028 belongs to the Lyonnais: Durdilly 1975: No. 1; cf. Vurpas 1995: 394).

14 With respect to Lio Mazor, Tomasoni speaks of a "tipo di scrittura [...] piuttosto immediata", in which "minacce, insulti, imprecazioni realisticamente oscene denunciano l'immediatezza delle registrazioni" (1994: 217 f; cf. also below note 20). D'Achille also categorises these documents "tra i testi più vicini al parlato" (1990: 39). Bongi (1890) calls the subtitle of his edition of insults of Lucca *Saggio di lingua parlata del Trecento* and Marcheschi, too, stresses: "si avvicinano al parlato presumibilmente più di altri testi" (1983: 7; this, however, does not prevent a differentiation in their views: see below 3.3.).

15 For the concepts of "negative" and "positive" face cf. Brown and Levinson (1987: 61ff.); for the concept of "territory": Goffman (1967).

16 In general on communication and emotion: Fiehler (1990). For expressive semantic procedures of communicative immediacy: Koch and Oesterreicher (1990: 114-120; 1996:

68-74); for the 'everyday rhetoric' effective in the latter and especially on hyperbolics: Stempel (1983). For linguistic taboos and dysphemisms (euphemisms are not relevant here!): Ullmann (1962: 204-209); Allan and Burridge (1991).

17 For the difference between exophoric and endophoric relations cf. Heger (1963: 19f.); Brown and Yule (1983: 192f.).

18 Cf. Koch and Oesterreicher (1990: 99f.).

19 Here differences between the individual groups of examples must be expected. (As already observed, the editions of texts (4) and (5) either do not print at all or include only fragments of level II, here in Latin.) As far as the texts from Lio Mazor are concerned, where all three levels are written in the vernacular, Stussi expressly ascribes immediacy also to level II when he speaks of "narrazioni vivacissime [i.e. level II] costellate di energico turpiloquio popolare [i.e. level III]" (1965: LXXIII). An interesting point in this respect is to be found in text (3), l. 4, namely indirect speech "slipping" into direct speech, which itself is responsible for producing level II in its textual and conceptual independence.

20 Gonon remarks on the *Registres audienciers*: "ils [sc. les clercs] préfèrent le latin jusqu'au XVIe s., mais reproduisirent scrupuleusement les dépositions des plaignants et des témoins, lesquels ne parlaient que le dialecte de leurs villages. [...] Le dialecte, vocabulaire surtout, apparaît pour transcrire les 'realia' et les paroles de gens du cru, dont la justice devait apprécier l'exact témoignage" (1974: XXIV). Benincà is a little more cautious in her judgment of the language form of the texts from Lio Mazor: "se non è la trascrizione stenografica del parlato, certamente riflette la lingua usata dal testimone. Le uniche oscillazioni verso una forma leggermente più colta sono di ordine fonetico e talvolta morfologico [...]" (1983: 187f.; these facts concerning the specific language are not, however, relevant to the aspects we are considering here). – Bongi still made a very definite statement on the texts from Lucca: "ne' processi e nelle sentenze per delitti commessi mediante la parola [...] dove una qualsiasi alterazione al corpo del delitto sarebbe stata falsità ed offesa alla giustizia" (1890: 75). Marcheschi (1983: 8) observes on the other hand that we are here dealing with more complex processes of selection, processing and copying.

21 Cf. Castellani (21976: 111-121); Renzi (1985: 298-304); Raffaelli (1987); Marazzini (1994: 156-159); Petrucci (1994: 47, 67-69); Frank and Hartmann (1997: No. 1003).

22 This inscription has indeed frequently been compared with today's *fumetti*: Roncaglia (1965: 219); Renzi (1985: 302); Petrucci (1994: 67); Marazzini (1994: 159). A standard work on comic strips expressly categorises the inscription as a precursor of this modern art form (Strazzulla 21980: 19).

23 Cf. Coppo (1965/66: 244-266); Stella (1994: 77f.); Gasca Queirazza (1995: 100f.); Frank and Hartmann (1997: No. 1002; inscription (8) is missing from the *Inventaire* because the original no longer exists).

24 Cf. the theoretical foundations laid down in notes 15-17 for the following analysis.

25 On the role of discourse markers in communicative immediacy cf. for example Gülich (1970); Schiffrin (1988); Koch and Oesterreicher (1990: 51-72).

26 Cf. Raffaelli (1987: 57f.). – Many points here remain hypothetical and indefinite. The arrest of Paschalis II by Emperor Henry V in 1111 cannot be connected to the fresco as it was created prior to this year. On the other hand, if Paschalis II, who was a cardinal-priest at the church of St. Clemente before being elected pope, really did commission the frescoes in the lower basilica (Frank and Hartmann 1997: II, 13), the inscription would have been too early for the dispute over his papacy.

27 Cf. Coppo (1965/66: 247-253, 257). Apart from the brutality of the fighting, the cartoon style comes to the fore in the fact, for example, that both mosaics depict one of the opponents with black skin. This does not mean that a black man is involved, but rather black is a symbol here of the power of darkness.

28 These early documents – especially in Italy – do also bear testimony to other forms of communicative immediacy (area C in Figure 1), but these cannot be classified as dialogical2/3 to the same extent. Here we should bear in mind the *Graffito della catacomba di Commodilla* (Rome, end of the first half of the 9th century) or the record-like *Testimonianze di Travale* (Tuscany, 1158); cf. Koch (1993: 45f.); Frank and Hartmann (1997: No. 1001 and 73.005).

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