The Evolution of Terms for Addressing the Readership in Late Modern English Cookery and Gardening Manuals

Daniela Cesiri
University of Salento

1. Introduction

The investigation of address systems in English has raised interest in synchronic as well as diachronic studies which have so far proposed linguistic and pragmatic interpretations. In this respect, the analysis of address terms in letters has provided a very popular and extensive source of material because of their being direct means of communication with a distant addressee.

The present paper will however investigate the terms used for addressing the readership in cookery and gardening manuals published in England, mostly during the nineteenth century. These text types have been chosen as case-studies because they present the characteristic – shared with letter-writing – of providing direct contact between authors and readers. The opportunity for giving direct and practical instructions to a specific audience made the authors aware of the possibility for their works to be read by certain categories of readers, who might have evaluated and eventually criticised their style and competence. Probably for this reason, the authors of these books used a carefully-constructed language, especially in their introductions, in which direct address to the readers is more likely to be inserted and in which they might have adopted special strategies in order to meet their readers' expectations.

The terms for addressing the readership will, then, be analysed mainly using a pragmatic approach based on the fundamental work on negative and politeness strategies proposed by Brown and Levinson (1987) as well as with the help of Bell's (1984) model of audience design, according to which speakers tend to 'accommodate' their language in order to meet their addressees' expectations. As Taavitsainen and Jucker rightly affirm "terms of address may differ according to the formality of the situation, the social relationship between the speaker and the addressee, the politeness or deference that the speaker wants to extend to the addressee" (2003: 2).

2. Theoretical framework

Brown and Levinson's theory on politeness strategies (1987) is based on the assumption that language is a form of human interaction influenced by social relationships. In this respect, politeness is seen as a resource used to express closeness to or distance from another person's face, where face is meant to be "the public self-image of a person" (Yule 1996: 60). In particular, Brown and Levinson describe 'positive' politeness as a

> redress directed to the addressee's positive face, his [the speaker's or writer's] perennial desire that his wants (or actions/acquisitions/values resulting from them) should be thought as desirable. Redress consists in partially satisfying that desire by communicating that one's own wants (or some of them) are in some respect similar to the addressee's wants (1987: 101).

At the opposite end of the spectrum lies the concept of 'negative' politeness, whereby the "redress action addressed to the addressee's negative face" expresses the speaker's need for "freedom of action" (129). In other words, "it is the act of respect behaviour, just as positive politeness is the kernel of 'familiar' and 'joking' behaviour" (129).

Within this system, address forms are the most direct means through which either positive or negative politeness are generally expressed. However, three other factors might influence the use of address terms, i.e., the sociological variables of social distance, power and ranking of imposition, also referred to as 'rating', and which indicates the importance or the degree of difficulty attributed by the interlocutors to the situation.

In this article, I will mainly consider the first two variables as probably the most influential in the choice of terms for addressing the readership. The first variable in fact relates to the social position held by both authors and readers, which is linked also to their respective relative power. In the case of the manuals, the latter embodies the opportunity for the writer to influence his/her readers' behaviour at home or during their pastimes. On the readers' part, it represents the power to choose one manual instead of another, hence deciding about the editorial success of the corresponding author.

As will be described in the course of this article, there are actually two different attitudes toward the readership which were adopted by the writers of the cooking and gardening manuals; in fact, if the former show the willingness to establish closer contact, in the latter there is a tendency to avoid direct reference to the readers. I will try to explain these macroscopic differences by using Bell's (1984) model of 'audience design' in order to answer the question of whether these were precise stylistic choices or whether they were rather influenced by the nature of the text types themselves.

Bell's model "assumes that persons respond mainly to other persons, that speakers take most account of hearers in designing their talk" (1984: 159). In this framework, a person's language is influenced by the social level of the addressees who compose their audience. Bell differentiates the audience according to the level of closeness between subject and audience, "whether or not the persons are known, ratified, or addressed by the speakers" (159). People who are directly addressed by the subject are called 'addressees', those who are known to the speakers but are not directly addressed are 'auditors', persons who are not known and are not recognised as participants are known as 'overhearers'. Finally, 'eavesdroppers' are persons who are not known and not ratified by the subject. The relevance of each of these roles is assigned by the subject and it is the social role (and relative power) of the first two levels of audience that actually modifies the subject's language. In fact, the speaker tends to accommodate his/her speech in order to gain the audience's consent according to the amount of social power attributed or shown by the addressee.

This situation is valid for spoken interactions but it can certainly also be applied to cases of written communication. For example, Nevala (2004) applies this model to a corpus of Early Modern English correspondence in which correspondents have precise roles influenced by their social status and relative power.

Within the main framework of negative and positive politeness strategies, in my analysis of terms for addressing the readership I have decided to apply the 'audience design' model as well because the manuals seem to incorporate the presence of different levels of readership which could be ranked according to Bell's categories. The readers who bought the books in the first instance might be considered as the actual addressees of the manuals, since they were known, ratified and addressed by the authors. The readers might then have shared the content of the books with their friends, who appear as auditors, since they are known and ratified – as sometimes the writers refer to the possibility for the readers to read the books aloud with friends. The last two categories of overhearers (known but not ratified) and eavesdroppers (neither known nor ratified) might also be included as an 'audience' for the manuals, since conversations about the books might have been listened to by external hearers.

However, these categories were beyond the intention of the authors. What will be taken into consideration in the present article will certainly be the first two categories, which were closer to the authors of the manuals, since the approval of these categories of readers would be the most influential in determining the wider acceptance of the writers' competence on the subject. As printed books, the manuals fall within the category of 'mass communication' media, and indeed in this regard Bell affirms that "a mass media audience consists of addressees (the target audience), auditors (who are not targeted but are known to be receiver), and overhearers (who are effectively the entire remaining population, since a mass medium is defined by its general availability)" (1984: 177).

3. Victorian England

The period taken into consideration in this article is the so-called Victorian period, which roughly corresponds to the years of Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901). This period was chosen not only because the majority of the manuals were published during these years, but also because of the great changes and advancements towards modernity in scientific, economic and technological knowledge which deeply affected British society and culture. The Victorian period can be considered overall as a time of "growing material prosperity, and a level of industrial production and foreign trade which set England far ahead of all other countries" (Thomson 1981: 100). The benefits brought to many by the Industrial Revolution caused a sense of confidence and optimism leading to economic prosperity, even though these feelings were substituted by uncertainty and doubt after the dissolution of the British Empire. The Victorian Age also saw the creation of political movements, most notably socialism, liberalism and organised feminism. British Victorians were excited by improvements in the means of short- and long-distance transport, by the geographical explorations and the British supremacy in international trade and maritime commerce.

This period has often also been described as an age of sharp contrasts: the improved living conditions of the middle classes parallels the misery of the slums in the urban centres, scientific and technological improvements and social conservatism, and public probity and private vices. Deep modifications occurred in the socio-cultural mindset as well, accompanied by population growth and the spread of literacy among wider layers of the population previously untouched by any form of education (cf. Thomson 1981).

This increased level of literacy stimulated intellectual growth with the enhancement of journalism and the creation of new literary genres such as the novel. The middle-class average citizen showed an increased consciousness in being actively involved in the events of his/her time.

Significant changes also occurred in Victorian class-consciousness, since this period experienced the creation of rules and laws which strictly prescribed and regulated social behaviour differentiated according to social class. "Legal barriers were erected in the path of working-class self-help activity and increasingly harsh sanction was imposed on any personal financial lapse not because of the economic circumstances of manual workers but because of their social class" (Johnson 1993: 147). The main aim of these regulations was social control, which could ensure order and safety for the "bourgeois capitalist society" (Thompson 1981: 189).

The middle- and upper-middle classes in fact were subject to less official legal restrictions substituted by a set of social rules conditioned by the notions of 'appropriate and polite behaviour' which regulated both interpersonal and commercial relations (cf. Del Lungo Camiciotti 2006).

This push towards minute regulation of civil life is one of the reasons for the increasing editorial success of manuals. This success is also to be attributed to the parallel growth of leisure activities and domestic recreations which needed to be regulated as the everyday life of British bourgeois citizens already was.

Manuals regulating cookery and gardening were some of the most popular types of instruction books – after those regulating social etiquette – published during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as can be argued from the number of such publications offered by different publishers (cf. Swinbank 2002). The popularity enjoyed by cookery manuals, in particular, involved a varied audience which could range from professional chefs to middle-class housewives. In this latter case, however, the manuals went beyond a mere series of instructions for preparing a certain dish and also involved housekeeping skills, varying from the correct storage of food and drinks to basic health instructions. We must also take into account that the readership addressed included members of upper- and middle-classes, who were the only ones able to afford a more refined approach to cookery as a form of 'artistic expression' and social bonding. Working-class housewives, in fact, "were overworked and exploited by either patriarchy or capital (or both)" (Bourke 1994: 170), so that they were more concerned with how to 'make ends meet' rather than serving meals with the appropriate decoration or cutlery.

On the other hand, the popularity achieved by gardening manuals coincided with a new inclination in the urban middle classes, which "were moving out of the cramped and unhealthy inner city areas of London and the industrial towns of the North and the Midlands. They escaped to new homes in the suburbs. […] The distinctive feature of these new homes was that they were built with attached private

gardens" (Constantine 1981: 388). These gardens demanded particular care which was taken in the hands of the owners who wanted "'to occupy their hours of relaxation from city business in managing […] their suburban garden'" (*The Gardener* 1867: 1–2, in Constantine 1981:388).

In the following sections, I will proceed with a more detailed description of cookery and gardening manuals as textual types and will analyse the terms for addressing their readership they contain.

4. Cookery books[1]

The cookery books included in this study consist of 21 publications which date from 1755 to 1913 except for two manuals published in 1672 and 1948 respectively. I have decided to include these texts which deviate from the time span of the Late Modern period since they might provide a wider diachronic perspective for the evolution of address terms in this textual typology.

> In addition to offering us an abundant crop of arcane recipes – everything from sheep head's soup to lark stew – nineteenth-century cookery books are self-conscious cultural documents in which we can locate a metaphor for nineteenth-century British imperialism, in which the other presents itself not as a source of threat and contamination but of nourishment. By virtue of their own domesticity, Victorian women could neutralise the threat of the Other by naturalising the products of foreign lands.   (Zlotnik 1996: 53)

This quotation provides interesting insights into the cultural framework in which cookery books were published during the Victorian period. In general, in fact, the books were published in English for an English readership, so that they contain recipes that matched the English taste for food and its preparation. They usually consist of a collection of recipes accompanied by suggestions on health care and housekeeping.

As regards this last point, we can detect a sort of evolution in the composition of cookery manuals. The earlier texts such as Wolley (1672), Moxon (1764), and Clermont (1776), in fact, include indications on how to cook and store food properly in order to avoid any danger to the health of the family. The subtitle usually indicated what kind of content a prospective reader could find in the manual with some additional hint on the target audience. An instance of a typical subtitle can be seen in the following example from Clermont (1776: i):

> A BOOK necessary for Mistresses of Families, higher and lower Women Servants, and confined to Things USEFUL, SUBSTANTIAL and SPLENDID, and calculated for the Preservation of HEALTH, and upon the Measures of Frugality, being the Result of thirty Years Practice and Experience.

In later manuals, especially in those published at the end of the nineteenth century, prominence is given to food preparation and housekeeping with elements of domestic economy, whereas suggestions on health care tend to occupy a less prominent space.

A separate case is provided by Pegge (1780) whose preface to the history of cookery introduces a roll entitled *The form of cury*, a manual allegedly created first in 1390 and compiled "by the Master-Cooks of King RICHARD II, Presented afterwards to Queen ELIZABETH, by EDWARD Lord STAFFORD, And now in the Possession of GUSTAVUS BRANDER, Esq.". This book is particularly interesting in that it provides an example of Middle English cookery instructions which look extremely modern in the processes of food preparation. However, the roll does not contain any advice on either

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[1] The description of the manuals analysed in this article consists mainly of an empirical observation of both kinds of publications. To my knowledge, in fact, there is no specific study which provides a detailed description of either kind of manual from a linguistic and pragmatic viewpoint, if we exclude Görlach's brief accounts (1995, 2001, 2002) of such text types as textual genres flourishing in particular during the Late Modern period. The manuals are all listed in the Appendix section.

health or housekeeping due to the nature of the roll itself which was probably meant to present the prepared food to be served at Court.[2]

In their introductions, the authors usually presented themselves and the audience to which the manuals were addressed and gave an overall description of the content of the books. This information allows for the detection of three different categories to which the authors belonged: the first category includes professional cooks – usually employed in aristocratic or upper-class households – who wrote manuals addressed to other professional cooks with the aim of promoting their most successful recipes. They usually also give indications of the exact procedure for processing food, especially when they considered that the publications available at that time were not suitable for their masters; this is the case of Farley (1811), for instance. The second category of author consists of instructors in training schools where future servants were formed. The authors of these textbooks sought to provide pupils with manuals which were to be useful in the learning process as well as in their future workplace, such as Youmans (1879), for example. Finally, the third category of author contains middle-class women who wrote to instruct other women on how to manage a household and how to enjoy themselves in preparing simple dishes (usually sweet meals) with their own hands. This category includes Barker (1866), for example, even though some earlier attestations are Wolley (1672), the anonymous *Cookery Reformed: OR, THE LADY's ASSISTANT* (Anon. 1755) and Moxon (1764).

The authors of the manuals themselves provided exact indication of their target audience with the aim of directing the readers' specific needs as well as justifying certain authorial choices, as can be seen in examples (1) to (5):

(1) To all Ladies, Gentlewomen, and to all other of the Female Sex who do delight in, or be desirous of good Accomplishments (Wolley 1672: ii);

(2) They have been chosen to meet the needs of well-to-do families, and also those of more moderate means, who must observe a strict economy (Youmans 1879: iii);

(3) The present work, though written upon strictly vegetarian principles, is by no means addressed to vegetarians only (Payne 1894: vi);

(4) This Dictionary has been written with the view of providing a thoroughly practical and reliable hand-book to all classes of cookery (Meyer 1898: vii);

(5) Those who desire to be more amply informed of the domestic economy of the ancient court (Carew 1902: ii).

Figure 1 shows the relations existing between the various categories of author and their readership, as can be extracted from the manuals consulted.
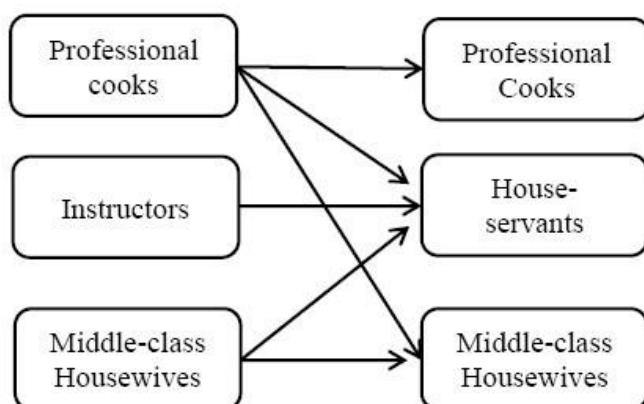

FIGURE1.Authors/Readers Relations

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[2] For the purposes of this study, I will take into consideration only the 1780 introduction to this roll since the author's intention was to give an account of the historical value of the manuscript as well as some hints on the evolution of cooking in England.

As it is clearly shown, the most 'prolific' authors are professional cooks, since they wrote for a wider range of readers. On the other hand, the target audience most frequently addressed is composed of 'house-servants'. The reason for these preferred categories is to be found in their professional field. In fact, professional cooks needed to be renowned for their cooking skills, especially when they served in important households, and this reputation could be gained only by the publication of their most successful recipes.

House-servants were usually trained to be employed in upper-middle-class families and needed to be correctly instructed on how to manage and supervise the organisation of the households. For this reason, they were the preferred readership of the authors of the manuals. The importance of the training of this professional category is evident in Faunthorpe (1876), who was principal of Whitelands College in Chelsea, and commented critically on the quality of domestic books available to his pupils. He observed that "the children addressed are imaginary beings, inhabitants of cloud-cuckoo-land, not real girls of flesh and blood, daughters of labourers and artisans, and the future mothers of labourers and artisans" (Faunthorpe 1876: 869).

This quotation is also particularly interesting because it contains specific information on the gender and the social class to which domestic servants usually belonged: we understand, in fact, that only girls were supposed to attend those schools where domestic economy was taught. They usually were members of the working-classes and lower middle-classes and were supposed to apply the training in their work-places as at home.

It is evident that these different levels of readership that cookery manuals addressed are actually a reflection of Victorian class division. In the manuals in fact, the readership involves all categories of people who needed to manage a household. As confirmed by Swinbank, however, "a culinary hierarchy is a feature of western society in which a higher status is accorded to public professional cooking done usually by male chefs than that accorded to private domestic cooking done by women" (2002:465). In fact, as the same Swinbank further confirms, "even in England, where there was a less marked hierarchy between male and female cooks, men were employed as cooks in upper-class households. In England, cooks of both sexes had a relatively low status, unless the male cook employed was French or at least French trained" (2002: 469).

4.1. The address system in cookery books

If we exclude the subtitles already mentioned, the prefaces and introductions to the cookery manuals are the actual sections of the book where the author tried to build a mutual understanding between him/herself and the public. Achieving this goal would have meant for the authors gaining the public's approval not only in terms of editorial success but also in terms of his/her competence on the topic. For these reasons, the authors addressed the target audience with a direct approach resembling the direct address found in letter-writing. The main strategies adopted in this respect fall within the category of negative politeness, since the expressions used tended to gain the readers' respect and trust. The following examples give some instances of these expressions:

(6) The candid Reader will find the following book in correspondence with the title (Moxon 1764: i);
(7) I beg the Candour of the Public (Clermont 1776: v);
(8) To the curious antiquarian reader (Pegge 1780: 1);
(9) To that indulgent public (Nutt 1808: viii);
(10) Yet we flatter ourselves, that the Readers of this Work will find, from a candid Perusal, and an impartial Comparison, that our Pretensions to the Favours of the Public are not ill founded (Farley 1811: v);
(11) In this way, gentle reader, were the trenches dug, the saps laid for the attack of the great work (Spencer alias Gubbin 1898: xii).

What is noticeable here is that direct appellations applied to the readers include adjectives such as 'candid', 'curious antiquarian' and 'gentle'. They seem to function as honorifics which the authors use

to express deference, another characteristic of negative politeness. As proposed by Brown and Levinson in fact, "by 'honorifics' in an extended sense we understand direct grammatical encodings of relative social status between participants" (1987: 178). In certain situations, honorifics are used to indicate the addressee as socially superior. In the case of the manuals, social power does not come from differences in social position – since authors and addressees belonged usually to the same classes – but derives rather from the role played by the readers in determining the editorial success of a manual.

In particular, the attribute 'candid' occurs more frequently than the others and was used in a sense that has become obsolete in present-day English. As the OED reports, in fact, it was used with a wider range of meanings which included "free from malice; not desirous to find faults" and "gentle, courteous; favourably disposed, favourable, kindly". The last examples given for both these meanings are from 1800. However, another meaning is attributed by the OED to this word, namely "free from bias; fair, impartial, just": this sense was last attested in 1883, hence it might be the case that the authors of the manuals chose to use this adjective in the latter sense since it might have been considered as a successful device to 'flatter' the audience's self-esteem, thus obtaining consent and approval.

In cookery manuals, deference tends to be signalled by a frequent use of these honorific forms of address, even when no direct appellation to the readers' characteristics is present. One instance of such 'indirect honorific form' is illustrated in (12) and indicated in bold type:

> (12) Before we proceed to do this, however, **I should like to endeavour to disabuse** my readers' minds of the idea that economy and stinginess are synonymous terms (Barker 1866: 7).

This example shows that deference is expressed in such a way that the suggestion of the writer encodes a very humble tone, a strategy further confirmed by Brown and Levinson since "the appropriate raising or lowering of the referent by using a honorific or dishonorific label […] can serve to give reference to H [addressee]" (1987: 182),.

Finally, another device worth mentioning in the manuals is the use of 'hedges', which Brown and Levinson describe as "a particle, word, or phrase that modifies the degree of the membership of a predicate or noun phrase in a set" (1987: 145). In particular, they report further details provided by Lakoff (1972: 213), who believed that hedges serve to "modify the force of a speech act", especially with the use of verbs such as "suppose/guess/think" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 145). Instances of hedging devices are indicated in bold type in (13) and (14).

> (13) **I thought that** a Translation [of foreign terms, mainly French] would be both agreeable and useful to many Gentlemen, Ladies, and others (Clermont 1776: ii);
> (14) **It may also fairly be presumed**, that the superior advantages of the present work will immediately be recognized (Eaton 1822: vi).

These examples seem to exemplify one of the functions of hedging devices that is to say, softening the force of a speaker's statements, falling into the category of "quality hedges" (Brown and Levinson 1987: 164) which "may suggest that the speaker is not taking full responsibility for the truth of his utterance" (164). In actual fact, a correct interpretation of the hedges found in the examples above should take into account the main deferential attitude of the author in seeking the readers' approval. In this perspective, then, this use of hedges should be seen as a means through which the writer is lowering him/herself and mitigating the directness of the suggestions provided.

4.2. *Terms of address in the body of the recipes*

As "the recipe offers itself as a case for an investigation into the emergence of conventional forms and their relation to socio-historical change" (Görlach 2002: 745), it is interesting to mention also the characteristics of the terms of address found in the body of the recipes.

However, in the manuals analysed here they do not appear to present great variation, since the predominant form is what can be defined as an 'instructional imperative' which shows no form of direct

address. This feature has already been described by Görlach "recipes can be taken as representatives of a group of genres in which instructions are provided in order to produce a certain result. This similarity serves to explain a number of features shared between them – the use of imperatives (or modal forms considered less direct)" (2001: 210):. The following examples illustrate some instances of such 'instructional imperative' forms, as well as showing that there has been no modification in the textual construction of cookery books from the Late Modern period to present-day publications:

(15) Take three Pints of the best white Wine (Wolley 1672: 2);
(16) Gather the largest green gooseberries of the walnut kind, and slit the tops into four quarters, leaving the stalk end whole (Eaton 1822: 150);
(17) Slice off the outside red part of two or three large carrots, and cut them up into small dice not bigger than a quarter of an inch square (Payne 1894: 33).

This 'imperative form' is always used to indicate the different phases of a recipe. If this is always valid for manuals published since the nineteenth century, earlier manuals contain another – although much less frequent – form of address represented by the generic pronoun 'you'. In such cases, the verb which follows 'you' can have different meanings: if it is a modal, it indicates that for that particular recipe only one among possible variant procedures or kind of food was chosen, such as, for example, in (18), showing also an instance of the use of modals as less direct forms of imperative quoted above in Görlach (2001: 210).

Another case is when the verb is used to list the sequential phases of more complex processes, in particular when one action must necessarily follow another for obtaining successful results, as in (19). Finally, the construction 'you + verb' is used in such fixed expressions as 'what you like, as you please',[3] as in (20) and (21):

(18) you may broil a few slices of the beef upon a grid-iron (Moxon 1764: 1);
(19) When you are about to lay it [the beef] down, paper the top; when it is down, baste it well with fine dripping all the time it is roasting, having first sprinkled fait all over it (Anon. 1755: 51);
(20) Cullis of what you please (Clermont 1776: 8);
(21) adding thereto what Herbs or Roots you please (Clermont 1776: 77).

The relative lack of variation in the body of the recipes might be explained by the features of the recipes themselves which do not require an extensive narrative or descriptive style but rather an instructional one, because it is essential for the reader to have the procedures and processes explained in the most concise and direct form possible.

5. Gardening books

This section analyses the case of gardening manuals: the 17 books taken into consideration date from 1768 to 1919. Like the cookery manuals, they were published in England for an English readership which consisted of either middle-class gardening amateurs or professional gardeners. The manuals are usually concerned with the organisation of a garden and how to cultivate plants in general (as in Loudon 1824 or Earle 1898) or with instructions on the care of particular types of garden, such as Milner (1890) who deals with landscape gardening or Thomas (1914) dealing with rock gardens.

As for the readers, the manuals usually addressed relatively wealthy middle-class males who enjoyed gardening as a relaxing moment after a week of hard work or to spend the time during the rather boring Victorian Sundays (see Constantine 1981), as in the case of the manuals presented in Roberts (1911) or Cook (1914). As already mentioned, another category of readers was constituted by professional gardeners or pupils of training schools, who were supposed to make a living by taking care

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[3] This fixed expression is commonly used in any cookery terminology and is also attested in many other languages, e.g., Italian 'a piacere', French 'à vôtre choix/plaisir', German 'zu Ihrer Wahl'.

of wealthy people's gardens and to whom more specialized publications were addressed, as for example Milner (1890) or Brewer (1913). Finally, manuals also addressed a third category of readership formed by ladies who wanted to take care of a small and mainly decorative garden, as does Johnson (1874). An exception is constituted by Sidgwick and Paynter (1909), who expressly address children in an attempt to introduce girls to gardening at an early age. Manuals such as Loudon (1824), Nicholson (1884) or Hayes (1900) are general dictionaries and encyclopaedias of gardening which were addressed to a non-specified category of readers since they contain detailed illustrations, instructions on how to cultivate plants and some 'scientific' information on the plants themselves.

The authors of the manuals usually belong to the same categories as their readers, so that professional gardeners wrote for other professional gardeners, gardening amateurs to others interested in this activity and ladies writing about their own experience in their private gardens wrote to their peers who might also be interested in this activity.

As in the case of cookery manuals, there is no comprehensive study analysing either the textual or linguistic characteristics of these publications. One possible exception might be Desmond (1977), who describes the editorial history of Victorian gardening magazines. However, this account is useful in that it brings some insight into the textual composition of such publications which contained plates of plants, the descriptions of their features and instructions on how, where and when to plant them. Very limited information is given on the relationship to be established between authors and readers. The few hints to be gathered revealed that this relation was practically non-existent in the sense that the writers limited their work to practical instructions and useful recommendations.

5.1. The address system in gardening books

Compared to the complex 'author/reader' relations observed in cookery manuals, the gardening manuals here analysed present a plainer structure. As confirmed by the gardening magazines of the period the author in fact directly proceeds with the description of the activities and technical procedures which are the topic of the manual. The few prefaces present in the manuals usually contain a general introduction to the topic of the book with no reference to a possible readership, which is generally indicated in the main title or in the subtitle.

The absence of a direct reference to the readership is not a product of a precise authorial choice, nor does it seem to be influenced by the gender of the author, the period of publication or the target readership. Instead, it appears to be typical of this text type. However, four manuals did contain some reference to the readership:

(22) It has been suggested, by an eminent Authority, that many readers would be glad to be informed where reliable Illustrations could be found of those Plants which are not figured in this Work (Nicholson 1884: vi);

(23) I shall very briefly indicate some such deductions that seem to me to afford guidance for the artist of Landscape Gardening (Milner 1890: 5);

(24) The reader will observe that in this book no attempt has been made to write a scientific treatise on gardening (Hayes 1900: vii);

(25) To all plant lovers this works is dedicated (Crocker 1908: i).

The type of address form used in these examples is fairly general, since they do not make any direct reference except for the gardening skills required by their readers. Generally speaking, in fact, an overview of the manuals – both in the introductions and in the body of the texts – shows that the most obvious characteristic is the absence of any direct address to the readers. The books contain detailed descriptions of the plants and the best ways for treating them in the right seasons, but this information is conveyed by third person singular pronouns. This device is generally found in specialised communication as a means to "depersonalise discourse" (Gotti 2005: 99); depersonalisation is generally used whenever the author wants to reduce references to the human element. This feature is exemplified in (22) and (24) above, where the use of the third-person singular pronoun emphasises "the reduction of any direct reference to the interlocutor" (Gotti 2005: 100).

Considering the gardening manuals as possible instances of specialised texts, then, would explain the absence of direct readership reference in these text types. They might indeed be considered as instruction manuals dealing with botanical issues written by and published for an audience which considered itself as a well-defined group of people. If this group was in fact virtually open to everyone its members were required to have specific knowledge of precise procedures and techniques, which had to be explained and transmitted by the use of a specific terminology. In this sense, in fact, the community of 'gardening amateurs' can be considered as a discourse community.

A discourse community is generally described as a cohesive group of people who share the same interest in a certain topic and discuss it with an appropriate language, which is common to the community itself but is also typical of that particular topic. What is essential in the concept of discourse community is that "the features and forms of specialised texts are recognised and shared by the members of specific professional groups" (Gotti: 2005: 24). This notion is related to the definition of the type of specialised discourse used in a community. As Gotti puts it, in fact, a specialised discourse

> reflects more clearly the specialist use of language in contexts which are typical of a specialised community stretching across the academic, the professional, the technical and the occupational areas of knowledge and practice. This perspective stresses both the type of user and the domain of use, as well as the special application of language in that setting. For specialised discourse to develop, all three of these factors need to be present (2005: 24).

This detailed description of what a specialised discourse is can shed light on the nature of the linguistic and textual features observed in the gardening manuals. Indeed, they can be considered as belonging to the specialised discourse of gardening practice since they present all the three principal requirements listed in the quotation: the type of user is well defined in the group of professional/amateur gardeners, and the domain of use is that of gardening with some technical information on plants and vegetables and some practical information on the gardening techniques. Finally, the special application of language in the gardening setting can be observed in the linguistic features present in the manuals, as exemplified in (26), (27) and (28) below taken as representatives of the language used in the manuals themselves:

(26) Pillar Roses. Iron rods with arches of the same material, or small chains hung loosely from pillar to pillar so as to form festoons, will produce a charming effect, making a lovely bower. The pillars can be made either of a single upright post, or four rods can be set at about nine inches distant from each other, thus forming a square pillar, fastened with interlacings of strong copper wire (Johnson 1874: 57);

(27) EBERMAIERA (named in honour of Karl Heinrich Ebermaier, 1767-1825, a German writer on medicinal plants). OBD. Acanthaceae. A genus of about thirty species of stove herbs, widely distributed throughout the tropical regions of both hemispheres. They require similar treatment to Eranthemnm (which see) (Nicholson 1884: n. d.);

(28) The border and show Carnation seed is obtained by placing the plants under glass, and setting the blossoms in July, as in that month the flowers are produced without forcing. The seed will ripen in two months, and the pods must be gathered as soon as the seed is nearly black (Cook 1914: 123).

The linguistic features used throughout the texts also meet many of the characteristics generally attributed to a specialised text (see, e.g., Gotti 2005: 33-102). From the lexical point of view, in fact, we can observe semantic density, with a frequent use of content words as well as a tendency to monoreferentiality whereby "in a given context only one meaning [for each term] is allowed" (Gotti 2005: 33). In fact, in the three examples provided above, terms are used to refer to specific items and procedures of the gardening practice. The syntax used in the manuals is also similar to that adopted in specialised contexts: beside the general conciseness of the style and the 'depersonalisation' devices observed for examples (22) and (24), we may also note the prevalence of a paratactic structure, as in example (28), "the seed will ripen in two months, and the pods must be gathered […]". In the examples,

there is also a tendency to premodification through the device of "nominal adjectivation" (Gotti 2005: 74), as for example in (26) for "iron rods" and "a single upright post", or in (27), "stove herbs".

These features are normally used throughout the texts in all the manuals consulted, so that even though they are present in general language as well, they appear with a higher frequency than that found in general texts. As Gotti confirms, in fact, "the specificity of morphosyntactic phenomena found in specialized texts is not a qualitative but a quantitative one. Certain features may also occur in general language but their higher frequency in specialized discourse makes them typical only of the latter" (2005: 67).

We might consider, then, the authors and the readership of the gardening manuals as belonging to a group of people sharing the same topic-specific knowledge and being familiar with the relevant specialized language. For this reason, the authors of the manuals tend to 'accommodate' – to use Bell's terminology (1984) – their style to that of the group to which they want to be identified.

The almost total lack of direct reference to the readers in the gardening manuals might also be explained in terms of the strategy called "in-group referee design" whereby "a speaker talking to members of an outgroup" reacts "with a shift towards the style of the speaker's own (absent) ingroup" (Bell 1984: 187). This strategy, however, cannot be fully explained at this stage on the mere evidence of linguistic features since "ingroup referee seems to require a general sociopolitical situation in which in- and outgroups and their linguistic codes are in conflict" (187). In fact, the relevant literature does not give any indication on a possible socio-cultural conflict between 'gardening supporters' and 'gardening opponents' at the time of the publication of the manuals. For this reason, the most valid explanation for the difference in direct reference terms between cookery and gardening manuals remains that proposed above, i.e., that the gardening manuals were publications meant by specialists for a peer-group of other specialists who did not need to be specified as the target audience of this kind of specialized text.

6. Conclusions

The comparison between the two different types of manual presented in this study highlighted substantial differences in the address system their authors used to address their readership.

Cookery manuals exhibit a tendency to use negative politeness strategies in order to show deference to the readers and hence to gain their approval and trust as competent authors in the field. By contrast, gardening manuals show a very limited use – if any –of address forms and in some cases even the introduction is missing, whereas more space and prominence is given to the exposition of the contents. This difference in the attitude towards the readership has been explained in terms of Bell's accommodation model (1984). The gardening manuals appear as specialised texts addressed to members of a particular discourse community. My proposed interpretation was, in fact, that – as members of this restricted community – the authors did not specified the addressees of their works because they probably considered themselves as specialists writing to and for other specialists in that discipline.

A further inquiry into the socio-cultural situation of such a group of 'gardening supporters' might lead to a possible interpretation in terms of the 'in-group referee design', especially in the case where their linguistic code might have been somewhat at odds with that of professional botanists.

As a final remark, it should be added that these text types offer larger opportunities for research than those analysed here since they contain important information not only from a linguistic and pragmatic perspective but also in terms of the cultural implications that could be gathered on Victorian British society, considering especially the class- and gender-related issues characterising this period.

Appendix[4]

List of cookery manuals

− Anon. 1755. *Cookery Reformed: or, the Lady's Assistant.*
− Barker, Lady A. 1866. *First Lessons in the Principles of Cooking.* Macmillan.
− Carew, William Hazlitt 1902. *Old Cookery Books and Ancient Cuisine.*
− Clermont, B. 1776. *Professed Cook: or The Modern Art of Cookery, Pastry and Confectionary, made plain and easy.*
− Eaton, Mary 1822. *The Cook and Housekeeper's Complete and Universal Dictionary; Including a System of Modern Cookery.* J. & R. Childs.
− Farley, John 1811. *The London Art of Cookery, AND Domestic Housekeepers Complete Assistant.*
− Hecht, Charles E. 1913. *Rearing an imperial race.*
− Kirk, MRS E. W. 1912. *Tried Favourites Cookery Book With Household Hints and Other Useful Information.* Horace Marshall & Son.
− Lewer, H. W. 1908. *A book of simples.* Chiswick Press.
− Meyer, Ethel S. 1898. *A practical Dictionary of Cookery.* John Murray.
− Moxon, Elizabeth 1764. *English Housewifery Exemplified.*
− Nutt, Frederic 1808. *The Imperial and Royal Cook.* Mathews & Leigh.
− Payne, A.G. 1894. *Cassell's Vegetarian Cookery.*
− Pegge, Samuel 1780. *The Forme of Cury, A Roll of Ancient Cookery. Compiled about A.D. 1390.*
− Sheridan E. 1948. *Artistic Savouries.* Arthur H. Stockwell.
− Spencer, Edward (alias Gubbins, Nathaniel) 1898. *Cakes and Ale.*
− Tegetmeier, W. B. 1876. *The Handbook of Household Management and Cookery.* Macmillan.
− Thompson, Sir Henry 1901. *Food and Feeding.* London and New York: Frederick Warne.
− Youmans, Eliza A. 1879. *Lessons in Cookery, Handbook of the National Training School for Cookery (South Kensington, London).* American Edition. New York: Appleton.
− Wythes, George and Roberts, Harry 1906. *The book of rarer vegetables.* London and New York: John Lane, The Bodley Head.
− Wolley, Hannah 1672. *The Queen-like Closet or Rich Cabinet.* White Lion.

List of gardening manuals

− Amherst, Alicia 1896. *A History of Gardening in England.* Second Edition. Bernard Quaritch.
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− Earle, Mrs. C. W. 1898. *Pot-Pourri From a Surrey garden.* Tenth Edition. New York: E. P. Dutton.
− Hayes, M. C. 1900. *A handy book of horticulture.* John Murray.
− James, Thomas 1852. *The Flower Garden.* John Murray.
− Johnson, Mrs. S. O. 1874. *Every woman her own flower gardener. A handy manual of flower gardening for Ladies.* Fourth Edition. New York: Williams.

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[4] The manuals analysed for this article are to be considered first editions, unless indicated differently. The publishers are indicated after the title, whenever they are clearly stated in the books. The majority of the manuals indicates London as place of publication. For those books that do not indicate any place of publication, the author has decided to follow the traditional convention whereby for books published before 1900, the assumed place of publication remains London, unless stated otherwise. The names of the authors of these books are reported as they appear in the manuals.

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