"I hope you will write": The function of projection structures in a corpus of nineteenth century Irish emigrant correspondence

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Introduction

The context of this essay is nineteenth century mass emigration from Ireland to America. Specifically, it is interested in how, through letters, Irish emigrants maintained relationships with those back home. Emigrant letters are expressive and indicative of correspondents' identities, values, preoccupations and beliefs; they are a powerful source of information and understanding about migration issues and provide a colourful picture of domestic life from an emigrant perspective. Letters have been used by social historians to investigate push/pull factors and the role of institutions and communities in the process of emigration; they have also been used to explore and understand the conditions and daily lives of emigrants and how individuals and groups adapted to the New World (see Thomas and Znaniecki (1958), Erickson (1972), Miller (1985), Kamphoefner, Helbich, and Sommer (1988) and Fitzpatrick (1994)). More recently, correspondence collections have been used by linguists to shed light on language change and variation as well as to map out the linguistic and structural features of letters (see, for instance, Elspaβ (2002), McLelland (2007), Dossena (2007), Nurmi and Palander-Collin (2008), and Palander-Collin (1999) and (2009)). The present study, also taking a linguistic approach, will examine the interactive nature of letters and how, through language, relationships are enacted and familial bonds maintained.

The data used for this study is a small corpus of correspondence by four sisters – the Lough sisters – from Meelick, Queen's County, Ireland, who emigrated to America in the 1870s and 1880s. In carrying out this analysis I draw on the concept of intersubjectivity in language (Traugott and Dasher 2002). For Traugott and Dasher, intersubjective meaning comes directly from the interaction between a speaker/writer (SP/W) and an addressee/reader (AD/R) and can be characterised as the "SP/W's attention to [and awareness of] the AD/R as a participant in the speech event" (2002, 22). Intersubjective meaning encodes the SP/W's point of view whilst at the same time discursively positioning the AD/R, assigning to them a role to play in the "unfolding of the discourse" (Thompson 2012, 80). Similar to Thompson (2012), who draws on the work of Bakhtin (1986), this study takes a broad, discoursal approach to intersubjectivity, viewing all discourse as dialogistic – that is, "constructed fundamentally in terms of exchanges between interactants in communicative events in which each interactant shapes their message to accommodate and affect the other" (Thompson 2012, 78). In the present study, this means that the linguistic choices found within the letters will "reflect the writer's [or author's] expectations about what the addressee [or recipient] may bring to the text and the kinds of response that the text will elicit from the addressee" (Thompson 2012, 80).

One of the ways that intersubjectivity is realised in language is through what Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) describe as projection structures (such as, *I know you* are doing the best you can or *I suppose you* did not mind). In the letters being examined here, these structures often explicitly speak to the recipient of the letter – *you* – and have the ability to project the author's expectations, desires, or beliefs onto the recipient, thus helping to construct what Thompson and Thetela (1995) describe as "reader-in-the-text". These structures not only express the author's point of view, but they also construct a recipient (or reader-in-the-text) "with certain attitudes, knowledge, assumptions, status, etc." (Thompson 2012, 80). They anticipate reactions

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and seek to elicit certain responses, thus contributing to the interactive nature of the letters and helping to strengthen the relationships those letters embody.

This essay will examine intersubjectivity – as realised through the use of projection structures – in the Lough letters. It will use computational and corpus methods to first identify and extract these linguistic structures before giving a quantitative overview of how they are being employed by the Lough sisters. A closer, more qualitative analysis will then examine the communicative function of these projection structures and how they contribute to maintaining a psychological link between author and recipient.

The Lough letters

The letters used in this study are borrowed from Professor Kerby Miller's (Department of History at the University of Missouri) archive of Irish emigrant correspondence. The collection contains well over 5,000 Irish emigrant letters of which the Lough family correspondence are a small but significant part, having been referred to in several publications (see Schrier (1958), Miller (1985) and Miller, Doyle, and Kelleher (1995)). In the early 1950s, a few of the Lough letters were donated to Arnold Schrier, an American graduate student, by Canice and Eilish O'Mahony of Dundalk, Co. Louth. Schrier, now Professor Emeritus at the University of Cincinnati, employed these and other letters in his book, *Ireland and the Irish Emigration, 1850-1900.* In the 1970s and 1980s, the rest of the Lough letters were donated to Miller by the O'Mahonys and by Edward Dunne and Mrs Kate Tynan of Portlaoise, County Laois. Both Miller and Schrier, who subsequently collaborated on Irish migration research, made transcriptions of the letters, and Miller returned the original manuscripts to the donors. In most cases, Miller's collection contains photocopies of the original manuscripts together with the typed transcripts.

There are 99 letters in the Lough collection, 88 of which are written by the four Lough sisters who emigrated to America in the 1870s/1880s. Of these 88 letters, most are addressed to the mother and the youngest sister Mary (see Table 1), who remained in the family's hometown of Meelick. Elizabeth (or Lizzie) and Alice (or Alisha) Lough were the first sisters to emigrate circa 1870-1871. Elizabeth writes just four letters home when she first emigrates. Alice writes slightly more, sending two letters when she first arrives in America and another three at roughly five-year intervals. Five of Alice's letters are not dated but their content would suggest they were written several years after emigrating. Both sisters settle in Winsted, Litchfield County, Connecticut when they first reach America; however, Alice later moves to Westfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts. Both sisters marry and have children. Annie (or Nan) Lough is the third sister to emigrate circa 1878 and writes the most frequently of all the sisters (39 letters between 1890 and 1928). Annie also settles in Winsted and works as a servant and a housewife. She marries, but does not have any children. Julia Lough – the last of the Lough sisters to emigrate in 1884 – also writes frequently (35 letters between 1884 and 1927). Julia lives with her sister Lizzie to begin with, but then later moves to Torrington, Litchfield County, Connecticut, together with her husband. Julia makes quite a success of her life in America, working as a seamstress to begin with, then an apprentice dressmaker, before becoming a professional dressmaker and opening up her own shop, employing several members of staff. Julia marries and has several children.

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| | No. of letters sent | | | |
Addressee	Annie	Julia	Lizzie	Alice
Mother	9	23	1	3
Sister (Mary Lough)	26	10	0	7
Mother and Sister	1	0	0	0
Nephew - James	1	0	0	0
Niece - Alice	1	0	0	0
Father, Mother and Sisters	0	0	2	0
Father and Mother	0	0	2	0

Table 1: Recipients of the Lough letters

Previous studies

Previous research has looked at the use of pronouns and evidential verbs (evidential verbs being those which express the writer's "attitude to knowledge", such as *know*, *think*, *believe* (Chaf (1986, 262) cited in Palander-Collin (1999, 124)) in personal correspondence to see what these linguistic features might reveal about the author/recipient relationship. Sairio (2005), for instance, explores levels of linguistic involvement in letters by Samuel Johnson. Drawing on the work of Chaf (1985), Sairio makes a distinction between ego- or self-involvement (typically realised through first person pronouns); interpersonal-involvement between author and recipient (typically realised through second person pronouns); and the author's involvement with the topics being discussed in the letter, for which a range of linguistic devices might be employed (see, for example, Simpson's work on style and point of view (Simpson (1993)). Focusing primarily on ego- and interpersonal-involvement, Sairio's findings show how the use of first and second person pronouns as well as evidential verbs are "a relevant indicator of the closeness of the relationship" (2005, 33): the closer the relationship the more likely it is that these linguistic devices will be used. Looking at letters by Samuel Johnson to two of his correspondents: Mrs Thrale (a close friend) and Lucy Porter (Johnson's step-daughter), Sairio found that the level of linguistic involvement generally decreased over time with fewer evidential verbs found in later letters to both Thrale and Porter. Additionally, Sairio's study found a decrease over time in first person pronouns (indicating ego-involvement) in letters to Mrs Thrale and a decrease in second person pronouns (indicating interpersonal involvement) in letters to Lucy Porter. This general decline in levels of involvement might gesture towards possible changes in the relationship between the correspondents although, as Sairio points out, other factors could also be responsible for the change (Johnson's age or life situation, for instance) Sairio (2005, 32).

Also examining the use of first person evidential phrases (such as *I think*), but this time focusing on seventeenth-century letters from the Corpus of Early English Correspondence (CEEC), Palander-Collin found that "women's personal letters show a more involved style than men's letters" Palander-Collin (1999, 139) with female authors using significantly more first person evidential verbs than their male counterparts. (See also studies by Nurmi and Palander-Collin (2008) and Säily, Nevalainen, and Siirtola (2011), both of which suggest gender-based variation in the use of pronouns.) A more recent study by Palander-Collin, which looks at sixteenth century correspondence from CEEC (specifically letters by Nathaniel Bacon, a younger son of Sir Nicholas Bacon), found that "the frequency of self-mention and addressee inclusion varies according to the addressee" with first and second person

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pronouns occurring "…more often when writing to social inferiors, equals and family members, and less often to social superiors" (2009, 65-66).

The studies outlined here show that the level of linguistic involvement in personal letters (as realised through the use of first and second person pronouns and evidential verbs) varies depending on factors such as the author/recipient relationship; the gender of the author and/or recipient; and, quite possibly (although more research is needed here), the amount of time that has passed (with earlier correspondence within a letter series tending to show greater involvement than later correspondence). All of these are potentially interesting areas to explore further with reference to emigrant letters, especially the latter point given the immense pressure emigrants and their loved ones were under to maintain family relationships across distance and time.

Building on this previous research, the present study not only looks at the frequency with which the Lough sisters use linguistic indicators of involvement, but it also attempts to explain the function of those linguistic features and how they help to construct and maintain the relationships embodied within the Lough letters. To do this, the use of pronouns and evidential verbs will be examined within their wider phraseological context, focusing specifically on their use within what Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) describe as types of projection.

Types of projection

In a previous study (Moreton, 2012), the pattern *I + V + you + Md/Aux + V* (as in, *I hope you will write* or *I suppose you will never get over been (sic) lonesome*) was found to be particularly frequent in the Lough letters. In systemic functional grammar (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004) this pattern is described as a type of projection. Other studies have described these structures as clausal epistemic parentheticals (see Huddleston and Pullum (2002); López-Couso and Méndez-Naya (2010, 2011); and Thompson and Mulac (1991)), comment clauses (see Quirk et al. (1985) and Brinton (2008)) or metadiscursive phrases (see Ädel (2012)). Projection structures consist of two main components: the project<u>ing</u> clause (*I hope*) and the project<u>ed</u> clause (*you will write*). In these structures the primary (projecting) clause (*I hope*) sets up the secondary (projected) clause (*you will write*) as the representation of the content of either what is thought, or what is said (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, 377).

There are three main areas to consider when examining projection structures. The first is to do with the **level of projection**. The projection may be a representation of what is thought (as in, *I think she is a good girl*) – such projections are described as "ideas"; or the projection may be a representation of what is said (as in, *I told Annie it would pay her to move down on Main Street*) – such projections are described as "locutions" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004, 443). The second area to consider relates to the **mode of projection**. Is the idea or locution represented as a direct quote (as in, *she said, "I am expecting a letter"*) or as a report (as in, *she said she is expecting a letter*)? Whereas quotes can stand independently of the projecting clause, reports are dependent on the projecting clause and cannot serve on their own. The third area – which is most relevant to this essay – is the **speech function of the projection**. Halliday and Matthiessen make a distinction between the projection of propositions and the projection of proposals. "[P]ropositions, which are exchanges of information [typically statements or questions], are projected mentally by processes [verbs] of cognition – thinking, knowing, understanding, wondering, etc.". "[P]roposals, which are exchanges of goods-&-services [typically offers or commands], are projected mentally by processes [verbs] of desire" (2004, 461). Both propositions and proposals have different response expecting speech functions. Propositions generally require a

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verbal response from the recipient (so in the example, *I Know you never can stop thinking of Dear Annie*, the recipient may agree or disagree with this statement). Proposals generally require a non-verbal response from the recipient (so in the example, *I hope you will try and take very good care of yourself*, the recipient may choose to follow up on this (albeit indirect) command and eat/rest, or not). In the case of proposals, then, what is effectively a command *take care or yourself* or *keep them to school* can be expressed as a statement *I hope you will try and take very good care of yourself* or *I hope you keep them to school all you can*. Through presenting a command (usually an imperative) as a statement (usually a declarative) (a process which is described by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) as mood metaphor) the speaker/writer is able to personalise the command by incorporating a Subject and a Finite, thereby opening up the possibility for negotiation and interaction (for more information about the use of mood metaphor in correspondence see Wei-Ling Wee (2009)).

An analysis of projection structures will, therefore, reveal something about intersubjective meaning: that is, how the author interacts with their intended recipient and the type of response they expect – whether that is a verbal response, requiring the recipient to agree, empathise or object etc., or a non-verbal response requiring the recipient to carry out an action of some description. Both types of interaction (the projection of propositions and the projection of proposals) involve the recipient in different ways, potentially revealing something about author/recipient relationship.

This study will investigate the use of these projection structures in the Lough letters. It first uses Corpus Query Language (CQL) to identify the structures and then uses corpus tools to capture information such as who or what is in the position of Subject in the projecting clause, what is being projected (ideas/thoughts or locutions/speech), and what is the speech function of the projection – to create dialogue between the author and recipient (proposition), or to negotiate a desired action (proposal). Finally, this essay will explore whether there is a correlation between the type of projection used and the author/recipient relationship.

Methods

There are 99 letters in the LOUGH corpus.[1] The letters have been grouped by author, making it possible to examine and compare the language used by each sister. As shown in Table 2, Annie writes the most (39 letters, 20,464 words) whereas Lizzie writes the least (4 letters, 2,920 words). In total, the four sisters write 88 letters between them. Note that eleven of the letters have not been assigned to one of the four subcategories. This is because eight of the letters did not have a sign-off (making their authorship ambiguous) and a further three were written by Lough family friends. Two reference corpora of emigrant correspondence from around the same period were also created: MALE Ref., which contains 141 randomly selected letters (156,031 tokens) by male authors from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and FEMALE Ref., which contains 47 randomly selected letters (35,765 tokens) by female authors. All letters in both reference corpora were addressed to close family members (parents or siblings). The MALE Ref. corpus is roughly three times the size of the FEMALE Ref. corpus, which reflects the overall content of the archive (i.e. there are a lot more letters by male authors). The reference corpora will allow me to see whether findings from the Lough corpus support previous studies regarding gender-based variations in pronoun and evidential verb usage.

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	No of letters	No of words
LIZZIE	4	2920
ALICE	10	3507
ANNIE	39	20464
JULIA	35	13940
TOTAL	99	44179

Table 2: The LOUGH Corpus

To prepare the letters for corpus analysis, they first had to be digitised and then saved in plain text format (a format that is compatible with most corpus tools). The corpora were then loaded into Sketch Engine,[2] which automatically assigns each word a Part of Speech (POS) tag using the Penn Treebank tagset. This allowed me to specify the parts of speech I wanted to search for:

- [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] to select all personal pronouns (PP) and/or possessive pronouns (PP$) and/or proper nouns (NP). (The '|' symbol means 'and/or'.)
- [tag="V.."] to select all forms of a verb.
- [tag="RB"] to select adverbs.
- [tag="MD|V.."] to select modal verbs (MD) and/or all forms of a verb (V…).
- [word="XXX"] to select a specific word (where 'XXX' is substituting the word in question).
- [] to select any word which appears in X position.

Using Corpus Query Language (CQL) it was then possible to create search queries that allowed me to extract the types of projecting structures described earlier. Six main patterns were investigated:

1. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
I began with a search for all personal and possessive pronouns (*I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *me*, *mine*, *his*, *her* etc.) and/or all singular proper nouns (*John*, *Mary*, *Maggie*, *Annie* etc.), to see how often the Lough sisters refer to themselves and others in the letters. Initially, I included plural proper nouns in this search, hoping to identify references to families - *the Deevys* or the *O'Hanlons*, for instance; however it soon became apparent that due to a lack of punctuation in the Lough letters (there is just one apostrophe in the entire corpus and very few full stops) this search produced mostly possessive structures (*Alices*, *Annies*, *Gods*). Plural proper nouns were therefore not included in this search.

2. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] [tag="V.."]
The second search query identified all pronouns and/or proper nouns followed by any verb form to see which verbs tend to co-occur with which Subjects, thus revealing something about who is thinking, feeling, seeing or doing. I decided to search for any verb form (rather than specifying tense and aspect) as I wanted to keep the search criteria as open and inclusive as possible, so as not to miss potential syntactic variations such as pronoun followed by past participle (as in, *I done* or *Maggie seen*) – a structure that occurs (albeit infrequently) in the Lough letters. It was important – given that the letters used in this study are written by lower class, minimally educated authors – that the search criteria were as flexible as possible. Note, that in describing

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the authors as "minimally educated" I am drawing on the work of Fairman who argues that certain linguistic features (chaining and a lack of embedding, lack of punctuation, and more anglo-saxon than latinate words – all of which are found in the Lough letters) might suggest, what he describes as, mechanical schooling (Fairman (2009) and (2012)).

3. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] [tag="V.."] [tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
This search query identified the projection structure this study is interested in: *I hope you*, *I wish you*, *I know you* etc. However this search did not identify projecting clauses containing adverb/verb combinations (as in, *I always hoped*), nor did it identify negative structures (as in, *I do not think*). Therefore, additional searches (see 4, 5 and 6 below) were carried out to identify and extract these patterns.

4. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] [tag="RB"] [tag="V.."] [tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
This search identified projection structures containing adverbs (as in, *I really thought Mag had more sense than that* or *I often wish you had some nice little place to live*).

5. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] [tag="MD|V.."] [word="not"] [] [tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
This search identified all projection structures containing a *modal/auxiliary verb + not* (as in, *she ought not tell you* or *I do not think he*). However, it did not account for those instances where negation is expressed through a contracted form (see 6 below).

6. [tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
[word="dont|dident|didnt|doesnt|cant|couldnt|wouldnt|wount|wont|isnt"] []
[tag="PP|PP$|NP"]
As previously mentioned, punctuation rarely occurs in the Lough letters. It is a similar case in the two reference corpora, with just six apostrophes in the MALE Ref. corpus and none in the FEMALE Ref. corpus. A search for apostrophes, therefore, would not necessarily produce instances of contracted forms. Not only that, spelling variations amongst the different authors meant that a search for *didnt* would miss instances of *dident* and a search for *wont* would miss instances of *wount*. It was therefore necessary to first identify which contracted forms are used to express negation in the LOUGH corpus and the two reference corpora. This involved examining the wordlists for each corpus. *Shouldnt*, *mustnt* and *arent* do not occur in any of the three corpora. Contracted negative structures that do occur are: *dont*, *dident*, *didnt*, *doesnt*, *cant*, *couldnt*, *wouldnt*, *wount*, *wont*, *isnt*. These contracted forms were thus incorporated into the search query.

What follows is a summary of the key findings. In most of the tables there is a column entitled "Freq." which provides the raw (or actual) frequencies and a column entitled "Norm." which provides the normalised frequencies. Normalised frequencies allow meaningful comparisons to be made across datasets of different sizes. It is calculated by dividing the raw frequency by the total number of words in the corpus, times 1000, giving an average frequency of a particular word or phrase per 1000 words.

Findings

The starting point: identifying patterns

In Table 3 the first column, "CQL Ref.", corresponds to the six CQL search queries outlined in the previous section, with the second column showing the

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lexicogrammatical patterns that each search extracts. CQL Ref. 1, for example, uses the CQL search query [tag="PP|PP$|NP"] to extract instances of all pronouns and/or proper nouns (represented as *Pr/N* in column two). The first section of the table gives the raw and normalised frequencies for the LOUGH corpus as a whole as well as the MALE and FEMALE reference corpora. The second section of the table (directly underneath) gives the raw and normalised frequencies for each of the Lough sisters.[3] Throughout this essay I will be referring to the normalised frequencies, unless otherwise stated.

CQL Ref.	Pattern	Example	LOUGH Freq.	LOUGH Norm.	MALE Freq.	MALE Norm.	FEMALE Freq.	FEMALE Norm.
1	Pr/N	*I*	9072	203.65	24271	155.55	6793	189.93
2	Pr/N + V	*I wish*	3695	82.95	7885	50.53	2212	61.85
3	Pr/N + V + Pr/N	*I wish you*	820	18.41	1015	6.51	381	10.65
4	Pr/N + Adv + V + Pr/N	*I never thought I*	39	0.88	68	0.44	23	0.64
5	Pr/N + Md/Aux + not + V + Pr/N	*she did not tell me*	50	1.12	109	0.70	27	0.75
6	Pr/N + (Md/Aux + not) + V + Pr/N	*I dont think I*	23	0.52	26	0.17	10	0.28

CQL Ref.	Pattern	Example	LIZZIE Freq.	LIZZIE Norm.	ALICE Freq.	ALICE Norm.	ANNIE Freq.	ANNIE Norm.	JULIA Freq.	JULIA Norm.
1	Pr/N	*I*	692	236.99	746	212.72	4134	212.82	2841	255.21
2	Pr/N + V	*I wish*	274	93.84	308	87.82	1634	84.12	1219	109.50
3	Pr/N + V + Pr/N	*I wish you*	51	17.47	56	15.97	402	20.69	266	23.90
4	Pr/N + Adv + V + Pr/N	*I never thought I*	6	2.05	3	0.86	17	0.88	12	1.08
5	Pr/N + Md/Aux + not + V + Pr/N	*she did not tell me*	5	1.71	1	0.29	21	1.08	21	1.89
6	Pr/N + (Md/Aux + not) + V + Pr/N	*I dont think I*	3	1.03	5	1.43	8	0.41	4	0.36

Table 3: Frequencies for the CQL searches

Looking at CQL Ref. 1, first of all, the normalised frequencies suggest that the LOUGH corpus contains more pronouns and proper nouns (*I*, *you*, *he*, *she*, *Maggie* etc.) than both the MALE and FEMALE reference corpora: <203.65> occurrences in the Lough letters versus <155.55> for male authors and <189.93> for female authors. There appears to be general tendency for female authors to use pronouns/proper nouns more frequently than their male counterparts, which would support previous studies that have shown similar gender differences in pronoun usage (see McLelland (2007), Nurmi and Palander-Collin (2008), Palander-Collin (1999) and (2009) and Säily, Nevalainen, and Siirtola (2011)). Moving on to CQL Ref. 3, *Pr/N + V + Pr/N* (as in, *I wish you*), the findings indicate that this pattern is used significantly more by the Lough sisters, <18.41>, when compared with both the MALE and FEMALE reference corpora <6.51> and <10.65> respectively. Again, this pattern appears to be gender specific, with female authors using the structure almost twice as frequently as their male counterparts and, in the case of the Lough sisters, almost three times more than the male authors. The first (and older) sisters to emigrate (Lizzie and Alice) use this structure the least, <17.47> and <15.97> respectively. The last (and younger) sisters to emigrate (Annie and Julia) – who also happen to write most frequently – use it the most, <20.69> and <23.90> respectively.

Looking at CQL Ref. 4, *Pr/N + Adv + V + Pr/N* (as in, *I never thought I*), the data suggests that the Lough sisters, and female authors more generally, tend to make greater use of adverbs within this pattern when compared with male authors: <0.88> and <0.64> for the LOUGH corpus and the FEMALE Ref. corpus versus <0.44> for the MALE Ref. corpus – the main adverbs being *always*, *often*, *never*, *ever*. Although

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the difference in frequencies between the MALE and FEMALE reference corpora is not hugely significant, the Lough sisters, on the other hand, use adverbs exactly twice as often as the male authors. This is mainly due to Lizzie who makes particular use of adverbs in her writing with a normalised frequency of <2.05> compared with <0.86> for Alice, <0.88> for Lizzie and <1.08> for Julia. There is a similar trend with regards the use of negation. The LOUGH corpus has twice as many patterns containing negation than the MALE Ref. corpus – <1.64> and <0.87> respectively. Overall, female authors appear to use negation in these patterns slightly more than their male counterparts – a normalised frequency of <1.03> in the FEMALE Ref. corpus – although, again, the difference is not especially significant.

Having got a general overview of the frequency and distribution of these patterns, the next step was to establish exactly how many of these search outputs were, in fact, projection structures. The search query CQL Ref. 3 (*Pr/N + V + Pr/N*), for example, brought up instances such as *you sent me* (as in, *I thank you for the papers you sent me*), *you gave her* (as in, *you gave her a nice name*), and *I let her* (as in, *I let her read your last letter*), all of which are not functioning as projections, but are instead straight forward Subject/Verb/Object constructions. It was necessary, therefore, to sift through each search output qualitatively, identifying those structures that were projecting and those that were not. At this point in the study, any instances that were not functioning as projection structures were discounted. Table 4 summarises the results. CQL Ref. 3 gives the raw frequencies for the projection structure *Pr/N + V + Pr/N* (as in, *I hope you…*), CQL Ref. 4 gives the raw frequencies for those projection structures containing adverbs (as in, *I often wonderd (sic) she…*) and CQL Refs. 5 and 6 give the raw frequencies for projection structures containing negation (as in, *you need not say you forget* and *I dont think she ever will*). The "TOTAL" column provides the total raw frequency of projection structures for each sister and the "Norm." column provides the normalised figures.

	CQL Ref. 3	CQL Ref. 4	CQL Ref. 5	CQL Ref. 6	TOTAL	Norm.
LIZZIE	23	4	2	1	30	10.27
ALICE	35	2	1	4	42	11.98
ANNIE	286	7	3	5	301	14.71
JULIA	199	6	1	4	210	15.06

Table 4: Frequencies for projection structures by sister

Looking at the "Norm." column, the data shows that Annie and Julia – the younger of the Lough sisters, who are the last to emigrate, but are the most frequent writers – make greater use of projection structures in their letters. Lizzie and Alice – the two older sisters, who are the first to emigrate, but rarely write home – make less use of this structure in their letters. The correlation between frequency of writing and the use of projection structures might suggest that this pattern is genre specific and/or indicative of a more experienced writer, which in turn could suggest differences in educational background between the four sisters. These are, however, very tentative hypotheses at this stage.

From parts of speech to lexis: a closer look at nouns and verbs

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Having identified and extracted the patterns that realise the projection structures this study is interested in, the next step was to take a closer look at the lexis. I started by examining the use of pronouns and proper nouns. Table 5 provides normalised frequencies for pronouns/proper nouns in the position of Subject in both the projecting clause (the *I* in *I hope*, described in the table as "P-ing") and the projected clause (the *you* in *you will write*, described in the table as "P-ed"). The most common pronouns are underlined and in bold. [4] "PN" refers to instances of proper nouns.

	LIZZIE		ALICE		ANNIE		JULIA	
	P-ing	P-ed	P-ing	P-ed	P-ing	P-ed	P-ing	P-ed
I	**7.88**	1.37	**10.27**	1.14	**12.80**	0.78	**11.26**	2.30
you	1.37	1.37	0.29	**5.13**	1.08	**6.99**	1.43	**6.17**
he	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.86	0.00	0.44	0.29	0.57
she	0.68	**3.77**	0.29	0.86	0.34	1.56	1.08	2.58
they	0.00	0.00	0.86	1.14	0.10	0.93	0.14	0.36
we	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.57	0.05	0.29	0.07	0.29
PN	0.34	1.03	0.29	1.14	0.34	2.49	0.79	1.29
it	0.00	1.03	0.00	0.29	0.00	0.64	0.00	0.65
me	0.00	0.68	0.00	0.29	0.00	0.39	0.00	0.65
her	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
him	0.00	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
them	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.57	0.00	0.15	0.00	0.00
us	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.00

Table 5: Frequencies for pronoun usage in projection structures

As one might expect, *I* is most typically the Subject of the projecting clause across all four sub-corpora (LIZZIE, ALICE, ANNIE and JULIA). Lizzie and Julia (the oldest and youngest of the sisters to emigrate), however, also show a relatively high frequency of *you* in this position (as in, *you know I am thinking of you* and *you would not think you eaver (sic) seen her*). This places the recipient of the letter in sentence initial position thereby making their (the recipient's) thoughts, needs, wants or desires the central theme. For Alice, Annie and Julia, the most common pronoun in the position of Subject of the projected clause is *you*. For Lizzie, however, *she* is most frequently the Subject of the projected clause. This may reflect Lizzie's role within the family as the older sister. In these structures Lizzie projects her thoughts and desires onto her younger siblings (*I thought she Would look like me but I gess (sic) she Wount* and *I think she ought to be home*) – thereby adopting and asserting the caring, authoritative, older sister role. Figure 1 summarises the interactants, or readers/writers-in-the-text (Thompson 2012, 83) involved in these structures.

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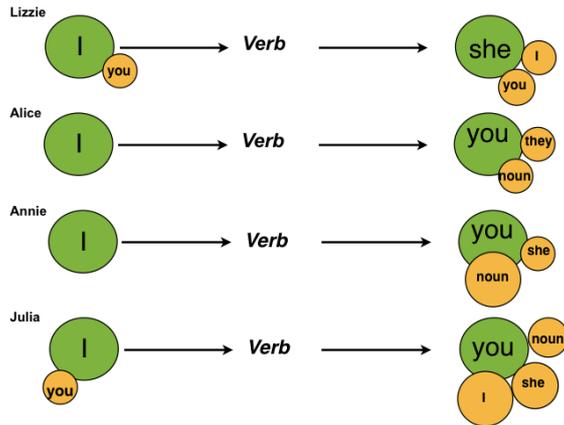Emma.Moreton@coventry.ac.uk

Figure 1: The main (pro)nouns found within projection structures

The next stage was to identify which verbs are used in these structures, to see what is being projected – an idea/thought or a locution/speech. Additionally, if the projection is an idea I wanted to see whether it was a proposition (i.e. an exchange of information thus creating dialogue between the interactants) or a proposal (i.e. an exchange of goods and services where the aim is to negotiate a particular action or outcome). To investigate this a qualitative study of each search output (or concordance line) was needed. Table 6 summarises the main findings. The "Verb" column lists the most frequent lemmas found in these structures. The lemma includes all forms of the verb (regardless of tense and aspect), so HOPE would include *hope*, *hoped*, *hopes*, *hoping* etc. The most frequent lemmas are underlined and in bold.

Verb	LIZZIE	ALICE	ANNIE	JULIA	TOTAL
Idea: proposal					
HOPE	1.03	**4.85**	**7.43**	**4.59**	**17.90**
WANT	0.00	0.29	0.15	0.57	1.01
WISH	0.34	**1.71**	0.69	0.72	**3.46**
LIKE	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.05
TOTAL	1.37	6.85	8.32	5.88	**22.42**
Idea: proposition					
KNOW	0.00	0.29	0.73	**1.22**	**2.24**
THINK	**4.11**	1.14	1.51	**2.65**	**9.42**
SUPPOSE	1.71	**1.71**	2.30	**1.94**	**7.66**
GUESS	0.34	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.34
HEAR	0.68	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.75
SEE	0.00	0.00	0.05	0.29	0.34
REMEMBER	0.34	0.00	0.05	0.00	0.39
WONDER	0.00	0.00	0.20	0.00	0.20
DREAM	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07
REALISE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07
EXPECT	0.00	0.29	0.00	0.00	0.29
CONSIDER	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.14
FANCY	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.07	0.07
TOTAL	7.18	3.43	4.84	6.52	**21.98**

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Locution					
SAY	0.00	1.14	0.68	1.22	3.04
ASK	0.68	0.00	0.10	0.14	0.92
TELL	1.03	0.57	0.78	0.50	2.88
INFORM	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.14	0.14
ASSURE	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.43	0.43
TOTAL	1.71	1.71	1.57	2.43	**7.42**

Table 6: Frequencies for the verbs found in projection structures

Looking at the "TOTAL" column first of all, the data shows that there are more verbs which potentially realise projections of ideas <44.40> than locutions <7.42>, meaning there is very little reporting or quoting of what has been said; rather, the focus is on what is thought or what is desired. There are slightly more verbs of desire (which realise proposals ((indirect) commands) and thus require the recipient to act in some way), <22.42>, than there are verbs of cognition (which realise propositions (statements) and thus require a verbal response from the recipient), <21.98>. Note that HEAR, SEE, GUESS and FANCY seem to be used in a similar way to THINK (as in, *what would you do if you heard Thomas and I was in Queenstown*, *I see you are doing better than ever*, *I gess (sic) she Wount*, *she only fancies she may be sick*) and as such I would categorise these as verbs of cognition.

Focusing on each sister in turn, Table 6 shows that Lizzie (the oldest and first sister to emigrate) uses more verbs which realise propositions <7.18> than verbs which realise proposals <1.37>, THINK being the most frequent verb in Lizzie's letters, <4.11>. Going back to Table 1, which summarises the recipients of the Lough letters, it can be seen that Lizzie writes one letter addressed to her mother, two letters addressed to her mother and father and two letters addressed to her mother, father and sisters. Although there is very little data for Lizzie (just five letters in total), it is interesting to note that there are very few projections of proposals (commands) in her correspondence.

In contrast to Lizzie's letters, Alice has twice as many verbs which realise proposals <6.58> than she does verbs which realise propositions <3.43> – WISH <4.85> and HOPE <1.71> being the most common verbs realising proposals and SUPPOSE <1.71> being the most common verb realising propositions. Unlike Lizzie, Alice writes mainly to her sister (seven letters), with just three letters being addressed to her mother. Annie's letters show a similar pattern to Alice's letters in that there are twice as many verbs realising proposals <8.32> than there are verbs realising propositions <4.84>, with HOPE being used significantly more by Annie when compared to her sisters – a frequency of <7.43>. Again, Annie writes more frequently to her younger sister, Mary (26 letters) than to her mother (nine letters).

Julia's letters contain slightly more verbs which realise propositions <6.52> than verbs which realise proposals <5.88>. KNOW <1.22>, THINK <2.65> and SUPPOSE <1.94> most frequently realise propositions while HOPE <4.59> most frequently realises proposals. As Julia writes more frequently to her mother (23 letters) than her sister (10 letters) one might expect there to be more projections of propositions (following a similar pattern to Lizzie's, Alice's and Annie's letters); however the balance between verbs which realise propositions and verbs which realise proposals is roughly the same. A closer examination of the verbs in context is needed to see whether there is, in fact, a correlation between the use of projection

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structures and the relationship between author and recipient. Specifically, is the author more likely to use projections of propositions (statements) if the relationship between the interactants is unequal (i.e. children writing to parents) and is the author more likely to use projections of proposals (commands) if the relationship between the interactants is equal (i.e. letters between siblings)?

Exploring concordance lines: a closer look at HOPE and THINK

It is not within the scope of this paper to examine all of the verbs listed in the previous section; however what follows are some general observations regarding the use of HOPE in projections of proposals and the use of THINK in projections of propositions.

Starting with Lizzie, Table 1 shows that all of Lizzie's letters are addressed to her mother. Lizzie's father and sisters are also sometimes named as addressees; however the main recipient appears to be the mother, regularly referred to using vocatives (*Dear Mother*) throughout Lizzie's letters. As mentioned previously, there are very few verbs that potentially realise projections of proposals (i.e. exchanges of goods and services – typically offers or commands) in Lizzie's letters compared with verbs that realise projections of propositions (i.e. exchanges of information – typically statements or questions). Focusing on projections of propositions containing the verb THINK, the findings show that in four (of the nine) occurrences (1, 2, 5 and 9, below) the recipient of the letter – (Lizzie's mother) – is in the position of Subject of the projecting clause. In these instances, Lizzie directly involves her mother in the unfolding discourse, eliciting her views on what is being discussed. In the remaining examples (3, 4, 6, 7 and 8) the projection structures are used to make comments and observations about Lizzie's younger siblings – what she thought they might achieve in life and her opinions regarding their behaviour and actions. In writing to her mother, then, Lizzie tends to use projections of propositions to seek out her mother's opinion regarding the topics being discussed or she uses them to pass comment on her younger siblings; she rarely uses projections of proposals to make (indirect) commands.

Concordance lines for Lizzie: THINK
1) Elizabeth you would have had to call it Mary on account of 15 August been the blessed virgin day **dont you think it** is a prettie name Dear Mother I was very busy on account of it for the last few weeks all last week (LOUGH_002_LIZZIE)
2) and Sunday she started to Winsted got to Alices in the evening an Alice was first getting sick **dont you think** she dreamed shure Then she staid a few days untill evrything was right I am shure I dont no what we would (LOUGH_002_LIZZIE)
3) foolish to bother you to read all this that I am writing to you but I no Julia will read it for you **I think she** is a good girl I am much pleased with her Writing I always thought she would be cute what is the matter (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)
4) time my best love to Father I am so glad he is Well my love to Mary Julia an Maggie I miss poor Nan **I think she** ought to be home I hope she is not lonsome you dont no how lonsome I feel to think she is not at home (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)
5) is so small she is not the fiste of your hand it seems as though she is not so late as she used to be **you would not think you** eaver seen her I am shure if you seen her now but still her health is pritty good **I dont think she** (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)
6) you but I no Julia will read it for you I think she is a good girl I am much pleased with her Writing **I always thought she** would be cute what is the matter with Maggie is she sickly or why is she no good I always thought she (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)
7) always thought she would be cute what is the matter with Maggie is she sickly or why is she no good **I always thought she** would be smart I wounder if she Wount let me no what she is best at and you did not say anything about (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)

8) has evrything very nice her Husband is Well an to work evry day he earns a good pay Alice is stingy **I never thought it** untill now she is as saving as if she had a big family (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)
9) Dear Mother **you always thought I** would be the stingy one an illnatured one but you see now I no I am stingy I never buy a stick of candy for myself (LOUGH_001_LIZZIE)

In contract to Lizzie's letters, Alice's letters contain more projections of proposals than propositions, thus requiring some action on the part of the recipient. Focusing on projections of proposals containing the verb HOPE, the data shows that out of 18 occurrences roughly half of these can be found in letters to Alice's younger sister Mary (eleven occurrences in total – an average of 1.57 per letter), with seven occurrences found in letters to Alice's mother (an average of 2.33 per letter). Looking at letters to Alice's mother (see examples 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14, below), the concordance lines show that four of these examples (6, 9, 12 and 13) are formulaic expressions regarding the wellbeing of Alice's younger sisters, godparents and mother. In the remaining examples (10, 11 and 14), the Subject of the projected clause is the recipient of the letter (Alice's mother). It is interesting to note that although these projection structures could be viewed as indirect commands (for instance, *I hope you wont think bad of me* (statement) can be restructured as *dont think bad of me* (command)), they do not require the recipient to physically carry out an action; rather, they require the recipient to cognitively respond in some way (by liking (example 10), thinking (example 11) or excusing (example 14), for instance). There are similar examples of projections of proposals requiring a cognitive response in Alice's letters to her younger sister (3, 7 and 8); however, in these letters there are also examples of projections of proposals requiring a physical response: in examples 1 and 2 Alice instructs her sister to send a letter and in example 5 Alice (indirectly) instructs another family member – Maggie – to visit Mary. To summarise, then, although projections of proposals containing HOPE are found in Alice's letters to both her mother and her sister, she is more likely to use projections of proposals (commands) that require a physical response (i.e. require the recipient to carry out an action) when writing to her younger sibling.

Concordance lines for Alice: HOPE
1) Dear sister received your very welcome letter and the card was very nice I am very glad to get it and **I hope you** will send the paper you promised me I hope you will forgive me for not answering sooner I have had (LOUGH_090_ALICE)
2) and the card was very nice I am very glad to get it and **I hope you** will send the paper you promised me (LOUGH_090_ALICE)
3) **I hope you** will forgive me for not answering sooner I have had great trouble since I wrote you last My oldest (LOUGH_090_ALICE)
4) with a high mass and had a fine funeral we have a months mind mass said the 21 Dear 7 February Sister **I hope you and the family** are very well I was afraid you were sick you were so long without writing I heard from (LOUGH_090_ALICE)
5) lots of snow for xmas how is the winter over there I suppose you are bussey getting ready for xmis now **I hope Maggie** has come to see you before now and that you will have their pictures taken soon seeing I cant see your (LOUGH_093_ALICE)
6) Alicia Elliott write soon Dear Mother I suppose Christmas will be gone before the letter reaches you but **I hope you** will live to enjoy a good many and I wish you and Marry a happy New Year I am sending you a card and (LOUGH_077_ALICE)
7) honour all the family were very pleased about it and I will always remember your kindnes Dear Sister **I hope you** will excuse me for bein so long without writing but we heard so much about the war over there I dident (LOUGH_049_ALICE)

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8) recived your very welcome letter and was glad to hear you were all well we are all well at present and **I hope you** will forgive me for not writing before now my son John that I sent you his Poto was married last (LOUGH_044_ALICE)
9) come I shall forget it Dear mother I suppose Christmas will be gone before this letter reaches you but **I hope you** will live to enjoy a good many and I wish you and Mary a happy new year I am sending you a card and (LOUGH_011_ALICE)
10) likeness I had some taken for I wanted to send home one to you it is 14 years since I had any taken before **I hope you** will like it all though it is many years since I left home I think just as much about it as when I (LOUGH_007_ALICE)
11) many years since I left home I think just as much about it as when I come here Dear Mother and sisters **I hope you** wont think bad of me for not writing I often think of writing but keeps putting it of from time to (LOUGH_007_ALICE)
12) you but I would like to have you write yourself and let me know how you get along or if you are well **I hope Mary and Maggie** is well I suppose they dont remember any thing about me I will send you some of the childrens (LOUGH_007_ALICE)
13) man I wish to be remembered to all the neighbors at home and espesily to my God father and God mother **I hope they** are well so Dear mother I will bring my letter to a
14) close **I hope you** will excuse all mistakes sending (LOUGH_007_ALICE)

Similar to Alice, overall Annie's letters contain more projections of proposals than projections of propositions. Focusing on projections of proposals containing the verb HOPE, the data showed that these structures were slightly more frequent in letters addressed to Annie's younger sister Mary (104 occurrences – an average of 4 per letter) than in letters addressed to her mother (28 occurrences – an average of 3.1 per letter). There was a noticeably high frequency of these structures in the two letters sent to Annie's niece and nephew (15 occurrences – an average of 7.5 per letter). In Annie's letters, the projections of proposals more often require a physical response rather than a cognitive one. Annie instructs her younger sister to write (example 2), get the home fixed (example 5) and keep her children at school (example 9). She also instructs her niece to remain at home (example 7) and her nephew to focus on his studies but – at the same time – not work too hard (examples 3 and 4). Additionally, Annie uses this structure to express her desire for others to act in some way: for her nieces to visit their mother (example 1), for Maggie to visit Mary (example 6) and for Mary's children to work hard at school (example 8).

Annie HOPE (selection)
1) be sure and write very soon if you can **I hope some of the girls** will come that day to cheer you and (LOUGH_088_ANNIE)
2) about this wedding and I send it to you it was Julia made this grand suit for the bride Dear Sister **I hope you** will write soon and let me know how you all are and how Maggie is all friends sends love to you and (LOUGH_083_ANNIE)
3) well] also Father and Mother and **I hope you** are getting along good with your studies and office work (LOUGH_061_ANNIE)
4) **I hope you** are not working too hard you might have taken a vacation in Summer and go and visit your friends. I (LOUGH_061_ANNIE)
5) and babies are all very well I suppose you had Kate home on her vacation and hope she is very well and **I hope you** can have the home fixed up good by cold weather Julie did not say any about home when I was there when (LOUGH_056_ANNIE)
6) many things I remember about home I hope Maggie and family is very well sorry Jim lost his good friend **I hope Maggie** will come to see you often and I wish you could go see her sometimes give my love to them all when (LOUGH_054_ANNIE)
7) well. all friends here are very well and Alice I suppose you are going to school and is at home yet **I hope you** will be at home yet for a long time because it would seem lonesome if you were all gone away. I hope (LOUGH_048_ANNIE)

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8) same age as Lizzie will graduate from the Sisters School next June I am sur Lizzie is very smart and **I hope they** will all make good use of their school days they come but once in a life time and in after years they (LOUGH_041_ANNIE)

9) at home I hope they are [all?--damaged] at Deevys [tell Lizzie?--damaged] she must write to me soon **I hope you** keep them to school all you can when they grow bigger you can not send them very well I suppose there (LOUGH_039_ANNIE)

Unlike her older sisters (Lizzie, Alice and Annie), Julia's letters contain roughly the same amount of projections of propositions as projections of proposals and yet, interestingly, Julia writes more frequently to her mother (23 letters) than to her sister (10 letters). This might indicate that Julia's letters to her mother include more projections of proposals than is typically found in the letters written by her sisters. A closer look at projections of proposals containing the verb HOPE showed 43 occurrences of this structure in the 23 letters sent to her mother (an average of 1.87 per letter) and 20 occurrences in the 10 letters sent to her younger sister (an average of 2 per letter). Similarly, when looking at projections of propositions that contain the verb THINK, the data showed 21 occurrences in letters addressed to her mother (an average of 0.91 per letter) and 7 occurrences in letters addressed to her sister (an average of 0.78 per letter). In other words, Julia uses roughly the same number of propositions (containing THINK) and proposals (containing HOPE) in letters to her mother and her sister.

This observation would perhaps tie in with what is known about Julia Lough. Julia was the last sister to emigrate and appears to have quickly moved up the social ladder starting off as a seamstress and ending up the proprietor of a successful dressmaking business. She is described by relatives as being "strong-willed" and "determined" and these traits are possibly reflected in her style of writing, in which there appears to be a lot of ego-involvement (first person pronouns). In the projections of propositions containing THINK, for instance, Julia typically uses this structure to pass comment on friends and family (see examples 4, 5, 8, 9 and 10 where Julia makes judgements about the behaviours and actions of her siblings and family friends). Julia also uses the structure when reassuring and encouraging those back home (see examples 1, 3, 6 and 11 where Julia encourages her mother to write (1), praises her sister for looking after their mother (3) and for her generosity (6), and reassures her mother that she will never be forgotten (11)). Julia also uses this structure when defending herself and/or justifying her actions: in example 2, for instance, Julia states *I think I keep you well posted* – this comment appears to be in response to an earlier letter perhaps criticising Julia for her lack of correspondence. Again, in example 7, Julia refers back to a previous letter in which, it appears, her mother and sister expressed concerns over her taking on an apprenticeship. Here, Julia directly addresses their concerns, demonstrating a confident and assertive personality.

Concordance lines for Julia: THINK
1) Mother I received all your letters. I was so surprised to get a letter in your own dear hand writing. **I think you** done just splendid it was a very nice letter and I am very thankful to you I shall always treasure (LOUGH_013_JULIA)

2) dollars up to fifty and I am sure Mrs Cleaveland pays one hundred as for letting you know all the News **I think I** keep you well posted. if I did not write but once a year I would be doing well as for Alisha I always (LOUGH_075_JULIA)

3) happy in having such a good husband and Now your own children and having Mother there always but then **I think you** were always the best to Mother and it is only fair you Should receive the reward. Dear Sister we are (LOUGH_105_JULIA)

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4) a letter from Maggie last week. she seems to thing when she goes home she wont go back there again. **I think she** is very foolish now that she is getting good pay and such a good nice place I am sure she will never (LOUGH_089_JULIA)

5) the good chance you are giving them. I am glad you will have white dresses enough for Conformation. **I think Lizzie** is rather stingy about writing I hope she had a lovely visit. I am sure enjoyed Maggies visit how does (LOUGH_085_JULIA)

6) think those things gave her so much pleasure she must be quite slender if those things of mine fit her **I think you** have been more than generous to give her so much of course she knows you have four girls and you need (LOUGH_031_JULIA)

7) take in sewing evenings as it is hard to work all the time I am very glad I made the change although **I think you and mother** did not like it by your letters of course it Seems hard to go and Work for nothing but it (LOUGH_018_JULIA)

8) (sic) Mrs [Odlunn?] got the chance to give Mag notice. I really thought Mag had more sense than that **I think she** was too well off and now to thing (sic) she has to leave when she would have a good time [white] they (LOUGH_015_JULIA)

9) must report to me all about her [ ] - Mother Dear you need not expect to see such style when I go home **I think it** is nonsense I think you ought to burn all the old letters and not let them get into someone elses (LOUGH_015_JULIA)

10) see I hasen to write I am very sorry to thing (sic) Mrs [Odlunn?] got the chance to give Mag notice. **I really thought Mag** had more sense than that I think she was too well off and now to thing (sic) she has to leave when (LOUGH_015_JULIA)

11) sending you ten shillings so you see you are not forgotten here although Liz is a great many years here **I dont think I** would forget you either if I was away so long Indeed I never could forget my darling Mother Winsted (LOUGH_008_JULIA)

Discussion and conclusion

This essay began by asking how, through the language of correspondence, emigrants maintained relationships across distance and time. Previous research that explores the use of first/second person pronouns and evidential verbs in personal correspondence was used as the starting point. In line with this research, the findings of the current study showed that the Lough letters contained a high frequency of these linguistic indicators of involvement, with female authors using more first/second person pronouns and evidential verbs than their male counterparts.

The essay then looked at these linguistic features within their wider phraseological context. Specifically, it focused on their use within projection structures, examining how these repeated patterns serve different communicative functions. By looking at the frequency of verbs that realise projections of propositions and verbs that realise projections of proposals, together with details of the author/recipient relationships, a possible correlation began to emerge. This correlation might be summarised as follows: if the author writes more frequently to a sibling, niece or nephew (a "social inferior") there appears to be more projections of proposals (often realising indirect commands); if the author writes more frequently to a parent (a "social superior") there appears to be more projections of propositions (typically statements, exchanging information). Additionally, letters addressed to siblings, nieces and nephews appear to contain more proposals (indirect commands) that require a physical response (i.e. they require the recipient of the letter to physically do something – send a letter, keep the children at school etc.) than letters addressed to a parent, which tend to require a cognitive response (forgive, excuse or enjoy etc.). Julia is an exception to this hypothesis, using roughly the same amount of projections of propositions and projections of proposals in letters to her mother and letters to her sister.

These conclusions are, however, very tentative and further investigation is needed to see whether these initial observations hold true when looking at a much larger data set. Furthermore, the latter part of this study only looked at the verbs

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HOPE and THINK – a much more detailed study of these and other verbs is required to see how they behave within projection structures. What this essay has attempted to do, however, is to examine the function of projection structures and how they contribute to intersubjective meaning.

Both types of projection can be found in all of the Lough letters, but different types of projection will elicit different responses from the recipient. What is significant about projection structures is their ability to directly address and involve the recipient of the letter, assigning to them a role to play in the communicative event that is taking place and helping to build a psychological link between author and recipient. Projection structures may, therefore, reveal something about the relationships embodied within the letters, how the recipient is constructed and – ultimately – how family relationships are maintained.

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Notes

[1] Note, however, that it is impossible to know how many letters were actually written by the sisters, but were not kept for one reason or another, or were lost/destroyed. The figure stated here relates to the number of letters that were donated to the archive.

[2] Lexical Computing Limited, 'Sketch Engine' <http://www.sketchengine.co.uk>

[3] Note, the accumulative figures for the Lough sisters will not necessarily correspond with the total figures for the LOUGH corpus. This is because the LOUGH corpus includes letters where the author has not yet been established and as such these letters cannot be assigned to a particular sister.

[4] The pronouns *me*, *her*, *him*, *them*, *us* are less common, but they are part of projection structures nonetheless (as in, *I Knew I would read of Mr Fitzs death because you told me was very feeble*).