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## **A matter of tradition and good advice**

Dialogue analysis and corpus pragmatics in Old Spanish texts

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### **Abstract**

Based on a corpus of Old Spanish texts, the discourse traditions of counselling are analysed within the framework of diachronic corpus pragmatics and dialogue analysis. On a methodological level, the study distinguishes three types of pragmatics and offers a clear-cut distinction between language change and cultural changes in the realm of discourse traditions. In order to clearly define the different interaction patterns in these dialogues, the qualitative approach of traditional philology is combined with quantitative methods that extract lexical clusters which are typical for counselling dialogues. This combination proves to be fruitful in two ways: on the one hand, the philological interpretations have a strong explanatory power for the interpretation of the quantitative findings; on the other hand, corpus-driven quantitative methods have the merit of discovering “blind spots” of traditional hermeneutic interpretations.

### **1. Introduction**

In the following study counselling dialogues in Old Spanish (ca. 950-1400)<sup>1</sup> are the starting point for a reflection about how qualitative and quantitative methods of text interpretation and corpus linguistics can be jointly applied in diachronic corpus pragmatics. The study is founded on a model of language as a cultural competence that combines three types of (historical) pragmatics. Counselling dialogues as a unit of verbal interaction are described against the background of this model and compared in two medieval texts: the *Cantar de mio Cid* and the *Libro del Caballero Zifar*. In order to identify the different traditions of counselling depicted in the texts, qualitative methods of traditional philology and quantitative methods of corpus linguistics with a focus on the lexicon and on lexical clustering are combined.

### **2. Historical pragmatics: The three perspectives of (historical) pragmatics and the traditions of counselling**

From a methodological point of view, historical pragmatics is an interface between historical linguistics and pragmatology as a discipline that was originally focused on contemporary language use.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, historical pragmatics has integrated the methods of traditional historical

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<sup>1</sup> For the periodisation of Spanish, especially Old Spanish, see Marcos Marín (1992: 604-606).

<sup>2</sup> Central concepts of historical pragmatics and historical dialogue analysis are presented e.g. in Jacobs and Jucker (1995: 4–6, 10–13), Fritz (1995: 469–471, 488–489), Jucker et al. (1999: 7–9), Ridruejo (2002: 96–98), Schrott and Völker (2005: 3–6), Schrott (2006), Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007: 13), and Schrott

linguistics in a pragmalinguistic perspective and has merged the methodologies of two hitherto separated disciplines (for the idea of the pragmatic perspective see Fetzer 2011: 25–26; Verschueren 1995: 11, 13–14, and 1999: 1, 6–7).

In the field of historical pragmatics, a history of communication can be understood as a history of language that describes the evolution of a specific language as a means of communication, adding a pragmatic dimension to traditional descriptions of language change. However, in a more radical approach, a history of communication can be understood as the cultural history of interaction types where counselling dialogues are conceived as one small part. As the description of a dialogue type like counselling implicates cultural norms as well as their linguistic realisation, it is essential to establish a clear analytical distinction between linguistic traditions and cultural traditions.

As dialogue types and interaction patterns are situated at the interface of language and cultural traditions, the analysis needs a clear-cut model that describes the relationship between language and culture. For this purpose, I use the model of language as a cultural competence developed by Eugenio Coseriu and reinterpret this model as a blue-print for (historical) pragmatics (see Figure 1).<sup>3</sup> As this newly developed model of pragmalinguistics is not yet well known outside of Romance linguistics, a detailed presentation of the model is included in order to communicate the model and to strengthen the interphilological dialogue in the domain of (historical) pragmatics.

According to Coseriu, language use is a universal activity realised by individual interactants in a specific language like German or Old Spanish. Therefore, linguistic competence can be seen on three levels: the universal level of language use in general, the historical level of speaking a specific language (like Spanish or German), and the individual level of context-dependent individual speech in concrete communicative situations. Therefore, language use and verbal interaction are guided by three types of knowledge located on three levels. On the universal level, we find universal principles or rules of interaction that are supposed to function as general guidelines of language use in all languages, e.g. the Gricean co-operative principle. The historical level is related to specific languages and comprises their language-specific traditions, i.e. the linguistic knowledge that enables us to communicate in a specific language like Spanish or German. On the third, individual level, we find the discourse traditions as a cultural knowledge that guides verbal interactions in individual situations of communication. Discourse traditions play a key role in the selection of adequate linguistic expressions that allow the speakers to perform a communicative task successfully.<sup>4</sup> Interactants follow cultural discourse traditions when they open up a conversation, when they ask for advice or give advice. As all three types of knowledge are omnipresent in verbal interactions, (historical) pragmatics can be seen as a discipline with three perspectives: in a universal perspective, general pragmatics is concerned with general rules and principles of

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(2011: 194–197). The “state of the art” in historical pragmatics has recently been summed up in Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010: 3–7, 15–16).

<sup>3</sup> Coseriu (1988: 70–75). The model of pragmatics presented here is based on Coseriu’s model of linguistic competence that originally does not include a pragmatic perspective. However, as Coseriu centres his model on the concept of language as an activity (*energeia*) the model can be interpreted in terms of pragmalinguistics in the way proposed here. For a more detailed presentation of the model consult Koch (1997: 59, 45–46), Lebsanft (2005: 30–33), Schrott (2006), and Schrott (2011: 194–195).

<sup>4</sup> The concept of discourse traditions is discussed in Koch (1997: 45), Lebsanft (2005: 30–31), and Schrott (2006). For discourse traditions in medieval Spain see also the volume edited by Jacob and Kabatek (2001).

language use;<sup>5</sup> in a historical-linguistic perspective concentrated on specific languages, the pragmatics of language-specific traditions studies linguistic structures and their functions; in a historical-cultural perspective the pragmatics of discourse traditions is centred on the cultural knowledge that influences verbal interactions. For analysis, it is important to separate the three types clearly; however, for text interpretation, the linguist has to be aware that the three knowledge types are closely interwoven in the texts so that to a certain extent the three perspectives are a matter of focus.

<i>level</i>	universal level	historical level	individual level
<i>rules and traditions</i>	general rules and principles of language use	language-specific traditions	discourse traditions
<i>fields of pragmatics</i>	general pragmatics	pragmatics of language-specific traditions	pragmatics of discourse traditions
<i>perspectives</i>	<i>three perspectives of pragmalinguistics</i>		
	general perspective	historical perspectives	
		historical-linguistic perspective	historical-cultural perspective

**Figure 1.** The three perspectives of pragmatics

This tripartite classification of pragmalinguistics is equally valid for a pragmatics centred on contemporary language use as it is for historical pragmatics. In historical pragmatics, the universal perspective is usually in the background, whereas the historical perspectives are on front stage, and studies can either concentrate on the domain of language-specific traditions or on discourse traditions. However, the three perspectives are always co-present in pragmalinguistic research, as the analysis of historical changes always implies reflection on the principles and rules that are not subject to diachronic change. Therefore, the interplay of historical traditions and universal rules is an important focus of (historical) pragmatics. This is equally true for the interaction pattern of counselling that is a blend of universal rules of language use and cultural discourse traditions.<sup>6</sup> Like other interaction types, counselling dialogues are marked by the universally valid principle of co-operation, and they are at the same time influenced by discourse traditions that tell the interactants which speech acts to perform and which lexemes to choose when they seek or give advice. In this view, different types of counselling in medieval texts are not only due to linguistic

<sup>5</sup> The three perspectives of pragmatics presented in the model offer a blue-print that differs significantly from Leech's distinction between general pragmatics, sociopragmatics, and pragmalinguistics (1983: 10–11, 15–17, 76). Therefore, the idea of “general pragmatics” used in my model is not equivalent to the concept of general pragmatics coined by Leech (1983). For the approach of general pragmatics according to Leech (1983) see also Jacobs and Jucker (1995: 10–11) and Fetzer (2011: 31–38).

<sup>6</sup> The cultural dimension of advice is emphasised by Wierzbicka (2012) in her cross-cultural analysis on advice-giving in English and Russian (2012: 309–310, 324–328). The fact that advice is always embedded in cultural contexts is also underlined by Locher and Limberg (2012: 5–6, 22–23).

differences but also to a diachronic change in the domain of the discourse traditions (see also Milfull 2004: 61, 64 for historical forms of counselling in Middle Scots).

For the comparison of counselling dialogues across time or across different cultures, we need a *tertium comparationis* that is as general as possible.<sup>7</sup> This *tertium* is conceived as a minimal pattern of counselling consisting of three dialogue units: the person seeking advice describes a deficit regarding the solution of a problem and asks for help, the addressee gives the missing information, and the person who asked for advice evaluates the given information (most often including an expression of gratitude). This means that counselling as a communicative task can be traced back to the adjacency pair of questions and answers: the person asking for advice has an information deficit and the advice given functions as an answer supposed to fill this deficit. The act of giving advice therefore does not function as a request but as an answer that fills an information deficit.<sup>8</sup>

The fact that questions and answers typically constitute a counselling dialogue implies a transfer of knowledge. At the same time, counselling as a means of problem-solving is supposed to lead to a decision. Thus, knowledge transfer and decision-making are two inherent components of counselling. The following study on counselling dialogues focuses on interactional patterns in a historical view and therefore is primarily located in the frame of a pragmatics of discourse traditions.

### 3. Traditions and good advice: Counselling in Old Spanish texts

#### 3.1 Combining qualitative and quantitative methods in corpus pragmatics

In the same way that historical pragmatics is a merger of historical linguistics and pragmalinguistics, diachronic corpus pragmatics can be seen as a discipline that brings together corpus pragmatics- a discipline originally centred on contemporary language use- with a diachronic perspective.<sup>9</sup> In general, corpus pragmatics can follow two strategies: it can start from linguistic structures in order to infer pragmatic functions (form-to-function) or it can choose types and traditions of verbal interaction as a starting point and analyse their linguistic realisations in specific languages or periods of language history (function-to-form); the latter approach is the one chosen here.<sup>10</sup> The importance of corpus linguistics for historical pragmatics stems from the fact that this branch of pragmatics is often concerned with “text languages” (see Fleischman 2000: 34) where texts form the only basis for the reconstruction of the functional profiles of linguistic forms as well as for the reconstruction of discourse traditions and cultural norms of interaction. Therefore,

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<sup>7</sup> The importance of a *tertium comparationis* is also pointed out by Wierzbicka (2012: 310): “The point is that to compare concepts across languages, we need to have a common measure (*tertium comparationis*)”.

<sup>8</sup> Searle (1969: 66–67) points out that advice is not a form of requesting (ibid., 67): “Contrary to what one might suppose advice is not a species of requesting. [...] Advising you is not trying to tell you to do something in the sense that requesting is. Advising is more like telling you what is best for you.” For a discussion of the illocutionary force of giving advice see also Locher and Limberg (2012: 3–4).

<sup>9</sup> The role of corpus linguistics for historical pragmatics and historical dialogue analysis is already discussed in Jucker et al. (1999: 14–20). For a definition of corpus linguistics as a discipline see Andersen (2011: 588, 590–595).

<sup>10</sup> Both approaches are presented in Andersen (2011: 589) and in Felder et al. (2012: 4–5, 17). The form-based approach and the function-based approach are also a methodological blue-print for (historical) pragmatics in general. In their seminal article, Jacobs and Jucker (1995: 13–14) distinguish between “form-to-function mapping” and “function-to-form mapping” as two different methods in (historical) pragmalinguistics.

historical pragmatics is extremely dependent on an elaborated analysis of text corpora through the methods of corpus linguistics.

In this study I opt for a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods for two reasons. One reason is that in a text language like Old Spanish the text corpus consists of an extremely small and heterogenous set of text genres so that the performance of quantitative studies is limited.<sup>11</sup> But the main reason why I will not rely exclusively on quantitative methods is that the evaluation of a complex pragmatic pattern like counselling in most cases demands a holistic interpretation of the text fragment against the background of the complete text.<sup>12</sup> As speech acts and pragmatic patterns as such are not present on the surface of the text, they have to be deduced from the text and its linguistic material. In this view, corpus pragmatics aims at a reconstruction of speech acts and dialogue forms that is based on the qualitative and quantitative assessment of the lexemes and structures given on the surface of a text (see Scharloth and Bubenhofer 2012: 196, and Felder et al. 2012: 4–5). The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods proposed here is to start with a qualitative, pragmaphilological analysis of counselling dialogues. This approach is then enriched in a second step with two methods operating on a quantitative basis: the tool *Treecloud* and a log-likelihood ratio test.

### 3.2 The philological approach: Counselling between decision-making and transfer of knowledge

The philological analysis is based on two literary texts in which counselling interactions have an important part: The *Cantar de mio Cid* (ca. 1150) and the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* (ca. 1300). The limitation to a small number of texts is part of the qualitative approach that aims at the description of individual text profiles. As the texts belong to different text genres, they represent different types of counselling traditions. Whereas the *Cantar de mio Cid* is an epic poem (*cantar de gesta*) in the tradition of oral poetry, which gives a mimetic representation of the values and conflicts in the medieval feudal society, the *Libro de Caballero Zifar* is a heterogenous literary text which follows the narrative structure of a courtly romance, including a large number of wise examples in the storyline which give the text didactic dimension. The philological approach adopted here understands philology in a very traditional sense as a discipline dedicated to the interpretation of text fragments of by-gone times that have become difficult to understand and need to be commented upon and recontextualised. This tradition is especially useful for historical pragmatics and has led to “pragmaphilology” as a combination of (historical) pragmatics and philological methods (see Jacobs and Jucker 1995: 11). In the same way that philology has been regarded for a long time as the perfect ancillary discipline of historiography (see e.g. Curtius 1953: 10), it can equally be a good companion for a cultural history of communication.

In the *Cantar de mio Cid* counselling dialogues usually take place between the Cid and his liegemen. In example (1), the Cid finds himself surrounded by enemies and gathers his most loyal vassals:

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<sup>11</sup> The data problems in historical pragmatics are summarised in Taavitsainen and Fitzmaurice (2007: 18–22), Taavitsainen and Jucker (2010: 7–11) and Kytö (2010: 33–35, 47–50). The problem of the small corpus becomes even more serious if an analysis concentrates on a phenomenon like counselling that is only documented in certain text genres so that the corpus of available texts is further reduced.

<sup>12</sup> Felder et al. (2012: 4–5) define corpus pragmatics as an approach that studies correlations between linguistic forms, functions and contextual parameters based on electronic corpora; according to them, what is characteristic of this approach is the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods.

(1)

665	A cabo de tres semanas, la cuarta querié entrar,	At the end of the third week, at the beginning of the fourth,
666	mio Cid con los sos tornós' a acordar:	My Cid again took counsel with his men:
667	–El agua nos han vedada, exirnos ha el pan.	“They have cut off our water; our bread will run out.
668	Que nos queramos ir de noch no nos lo consinrán;	They will not allow us to break out at night;
669	grandes son los poderes por con ellos lidiar.	their numbers are great for us to engage them in battle.
670	Dezidme, cavalleros, cómno vos plaze de far.–	Tell me, my knights, what do you think we should do!”
671	Primero fabló Minaya, un cavallero de prestar:	First to speak was Minaya, an excellent knight:
672	–De Castiella la gentil exidos somos acá,	“We have come to this place from our beloved Castile.
673	si con moros non lidiáremos, no nos darán del pan.	If we do not fight with Moors we gain no bread.
674	Bien somos nós seiscientos, algunos ay de más;	There are a good six hundred of us, indeed a few more.
675	en el nonbre del Criador, que non pase por ál:	In the name of the Creator, let us take no other way
676	vayámoslos ferir en aquel día de cras.–	but to attack them tomorrow!”
677	Dixo el Campeador: –A mi guisa fablastes,	The Battler spoke: “What you have said is to my liking.
678	ondrástesvos, Minaya, ca avérvoslo iedes de far.–	You have brought honour on yourself Minaya, which I would have expected of you.”

(*Cantar de mio Cid*, ed. Montaner 1993; English translation by Such and Hodgkinson 1991)

In the dialogue structure, three units can be distinguished. First, the Cid describes the critical situation to his vassals and asks them to propose a solution (lines 667–670). As an answer, Minaya Álvaro Fáñez, his closest companion, gives an assessment of the situation and proposes an open battle with the Moors (672–676). As a reaction to Minaya’s assessment of the situation, the Cid agrees and announces the battle for the following day (667–678). Thus, the dialogue structure contains the essential characteristics of the illocutionary pattern of counselling: a problem is exposed, and a solution is proposed and accepted. The minimal pattern is realised in its most elementary form without any amplifications or elaborations, and this conciseness points to the fact that, from the beginning, the decision for the battle is a “done deal” for the Cid. The extreme brevity of the dialogue indicates that no consensus has to be created between the Cid and his men: the consensus exists already and just needs to be refreshed and confirmed. The dialogue does not reflect the process of finding a solution; moreover, it reflects an already existing consensus and

the fact that the Cid and his men share the same values.<sup>13</sup> Thus, this dialogue, which is representative of the feudal world of the *Cantar*, emphasises that counselling is closely linked to the aspect of decision-making whereas knowledge transfer and problem-solving have a minor part. Counselling in the *Cantar de mio Cid* is an affirmative action that serves to illustrate an ideal companionship that is central in the literary genre of the heroic *cantares de gesta*.

The close link between counselling, decision-making and the affirmation of a community is now contrasted with a different technique of counselling in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* that is closer to modern concepts of counselling as a technique of problem-solving.<sup>14</sup> Whereas counselling in the *Cantar de mio Cid* takes place in the framework of a reunion of liegemen, the dialogue in example (2) from the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* is a private conversation between two individuals. The text describes how the Conde de Turbia, who has been cruel and unjust with his men, is confronted with their extreme hatred and asks the wise Infante Roboán for advice. In his answer, the Infante refers to another counselling dialogue so that two counselling dialogues – a first-order dialogue and a second-order dialogue – are entwined with each other:

(2)

*First-order dialogue: the Infante and the Conde de Turbia*

“Pues, señor –dixo el Conde–, ¿qué es lo que y puedo fazar? Pídivos por merçed que me consejedes, [...]”

“Yo vos lo diré –dixo el infante–. Conviénevus que fagades en este vuestro fecho como fizo un rey por consejo de su mugger la reina, [...]–

“Then what”, said the Conde, “can I do in this affair, my lord? I ask you in your goodness to give me a piece of advice, [...]”

“I will tell you”, said the Infante, “you should act in this affair as did a king, who acted on the advice of his wife, the queen, [...]”

*Second-order dialogue – The king and the queen*

[The Infante tells the example of a king who was so hated by his people that he had to wear his armour day and night; as a part of the story, he renders a conversation between the king and the queen:]

“Señor, pídivos por merced e por mesura que vos que me querades dezir qué es la razón porque esta tan fuerte vida pasades [...]”

„Çertas –dixo el rey–, bien vos lo diría si entendiese que consejo alguno porniedes y poner; mas mal pecado, non cuido que se ponga y consejo ninguno.”

“Señor, no dezides bien –dixo la reina–, ca non ha cosa en el mundo por desesperada que sea, que Dios

“ My lord, I ask you in your goodness and integrity to tell me why you are leading such a miserable life [...]”

The king said: “Certainly, I would like to tell you, if I truly believed that you were able to give advice in this difficult situation, but unfortunately I do not believe that there is a solution to my situation.”

“ My lord, you are wrong to say so.”, said the queen, “for there is no affair in this world, no matter how hopeless it may

<sup>13</sup> The relationship between the Cid and his closest companions is amply described in Harney (1993: 62, 69–73). Deist gives an elaborate classification of “male counsellors” (2003: 175–227) that also includes reflections on counselling and feudal structures (ibid., 204–227).

<sup>14</sup> For a detailed account on counselling in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* see Piccus 1962: 20–24, 29). Different models of counselling in Old Spanish texts (*Cantar de mio Cid*, *Poema de Fernán González*, *Libro de Alexandre*, *Conde Lucanor*) are presented in Schrott (2013). Modern concepts of counselling are discussed by Hindelang (1977: 34), Kallmeyer (1985: 91, 96–97), Kallmeyer (2000: 228, 237) and Muntigl (2004: 115–118).

no pueda poner remedio.” [...] “Señor –dixo la reina–, por el mio consejo vos faredes como fazen los buenos físicos a los dolientes [...], que les mandan luego que tengan dieta [...]; es si veen que la enfermedad es tan fuerte e tan desesperada que non puede poner consejo [...] mándanles que coman todas las cosas que quisieren, tan bien de las contrarias como de las otras.

E a las vegadas, con el contrario guaresçen los enfermos de las enfermedades grandes que han.

E pues [...], tengo que vos conviene de fazer el contrario de lo que fezistes fasta aquí, e por aventura que seredes librado de este reçelo [...].”

“¿E cómo podría ser eso?” – dixo el rey–.

“Çertas, señor, yo vos lo dire –dixo la reina–: que fagades llegar todos, los conosçedes los males y desafueros que les fezistes, e que les roguedes muy omildosamente que vos perdonen, [...].”

“Bien creed –dixo el rey– que es buen consejo e quierólo fazer; [...].”

*First-order dialogue: the Infante and the Conde de Turbia*

“Quando convenie a vos, conde conviene que fagades eso mesmo que aquel rey fizo; [...].”

“Por Dios, señor –dixo el Conde–, dada me avedes la vida, e quiero fazer lo que me consejades, ca me semeja que esto es lo major; [...].”

look, in which God cannot help us.” [...]

The queen said: “My lord, my advice is that you should act as would a doctor towards his patients[...] who they put on a diet [...]; and when they see that the illness is so grave and hopeless that there is no remedy [...], then they tell the patients that they should eat whatever they desire, both food that is recommended and food that is contrary to the diet.

And then sometimes the patients recover through the treatment that was the opposite of what the doctor recommended from their grave illness.

And for this reason [...], I believe you should do the opposite of what you have done so far, and this might cure you of your burdens [...].”

The king said: “But how could this be done?”

“Certainly, my lord, I will tell you”, said the queen. “Let everyone come to you, confess your bad and illegal deeds to them and ask them humbly for forgiveness, [...].”

The king said: “You can be assured that this is a good counsel and that I will act accordingly; [...].”

“ If this pleases you, Conde, then it is advisable for you to do what the king did in this story.”  
 “By God, my lord”, said the Conde, “you have given my life back to me, and I will do as you have advised, for it seems the best course for me; [...].”

(*Libro del Cabellero Zifar*, ed. González Muela 1990 [1982]: 365-367)

In the text, the frame is set by the conversation between the Infante and the Conde de Turbia as a first-order dialogue. When the Conde admits his cruelty and asks the Infante for advice, the Infante refers to the *exemplum* of a king who found himself in the same situation as the Conde and asked his wife, the queen, for advice. This dialogue between the king and the queen forms a second-order dialogue that is rendered in direct speech so that a highly mimetic conversational

effect is achieved. In this second-order dialogue the queen for her part refers once again to an *exemplum* as a means of illustration and persuasion and tells the king the story of a wise physician who, when a certain treatment failed, used to try the opposite method. In her explicit *conclusio* she advises the king to imitate the physician's strategy and adopt a completely opposite conduct by humbly asking the forgiveness of his people. With this conclusion, the text switches back to the first-order dialogue between the Infante and the Conde de Turbia. The Infante explicitly links the king's story to the situation of the Conde and draws a parallel between both situations: As did the king, following his wife's advice, so should the Conde ask the forgiveness of his liegemen. Thus, the structure of the dialogue not only draws a parallel between the critical situation of the Conde and the king, it also juxtaposes the two advisers, i.e. the Infante and the queen, with the effect that the advice given has a double authority: it is the advice of a wise physician as an expert in matters of the body, and it is the advice of a wise queen who is well-experienced in matters of leadership and politics. The advice therefore appears not only as an individual recommendation, but it is presented as the fruit of a whole tradition of counselling.

The comparison shows that the two texts represent different models and discourse traditions of counselling. Whereas in the *Cantar de mio Cid* counselling is a means of demonstrating unity and consensus that contains only the strict minimum of illocutions, the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* offers an amplified and considerably more complex pattern of counselling that has the structure of an elaborated *mise en abyme* of "counselling within counselling" where two counselling dialogues, two *exempla* and two analogous conclusions are combined with the effect that the element of problem-solving is strongly underlined.

The pragmaphilological approach shows that the two texts focus on different components of a general model of counselling, namely the aspect of decision-making in the *Cantar de mio Cid* in contrast to the aspects of knowledge transfer, argumentation and problem-solving that are highlighted in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar*. The question is how these qualitative findings can be enriched with quantitative approaches.

#### **4. Testing the tools: Counselling dialogues, lexical affinities and lexical clustering**

In general, dialogue types can be characterised by linguistic structures and lexemes that are typical for the dialogue in question and thus serve to distinguish a certain dialogue form like counselling from other forms of interaction. Therefore, the starting hypothesis for my quantitative approach is that counselling dialogues contain a lexical inventory that is symptomatic of this dialogue type. In order to test this hypothesis, the *Cantar de mio Cid* as well as the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* have been divided into two parts: one part contains all the contexts where counselling takes place or is discussed, whereas the second part covers the remaining text passages that have no relation to counselling (counselling contexts vs. non-counselling contexts).<sup>15</sup> The hypothesis to be tested is whether counselling dialogues are characterised through lexical affinities and whether we can pin down a cluster of lexemes that occur with especially high frequency in counselling contexts compared to the text as a whole and therefore can function as plausible indicators for counselling dialogues. In order to identify possible candidates for such a lexeme cluster, the lexical stocks of

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<sup>15</sup> The comparison of corpora and their frequency profiles as a technique of corpus linguistics is commented upon in Scharloth and Bubenhofer (2012: 199). In my study, the counselling contexts mostly consist of dialogues, but in order to cover the interaction type as completely as possible, references to counselling (e.g. the discussion of good counselling) were also included.

the two parts will be contrasted in a quantitative analysis accomplished with a log-likelihood ratio test. To prepare the ground for this test, the lexical inventory is classified and visualised with the aid of the tool *Treecloud*.

#### 4.1 The lexicon of counselling: Co-occurrence and visualisation through *Treecloud*

*Treecloud* is a tool that visualises the most frequent words of a text and their co-occurrences in a tree cloud where the arrangement of the lexemes in the branches corresponds to the co-occurrence distance of the selected words in the text. Thus, the tree cloud not only displays the most frequent words of a text but also their proximity in the text and highlights the central topics of a text. On this account, *Treecloud* seems a promising tool to catch the characteristics of the lexicon of counselling contexts “at a glance”.<sup>16</sup>

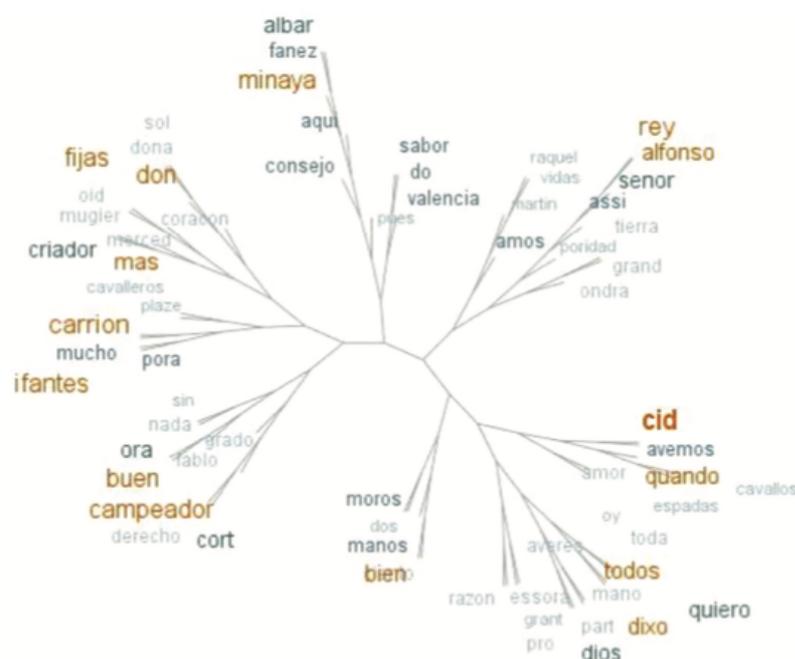


Figure 2. Tree cloud for the *Cantar de mio Cid* (counselling contexts)

The tree cloud in Figure 2 was generated on the basis of the counselling contexts of the *Cantar de mio Cid* and visualises recurrent lexemes and lexematic constellations. As Figure 2 shows, in the counselling contexts *consejo* (‘advice’) figures in the group of the 75 most frequent words.

<sup>16</sup> For further information concerning *Treecloud* see Gambette and Véronis (2010: section 1 “Introduction” and section 2 “Constructing a Tree Cloud”) and Amstutz and Gambette (2010: 227–228). For an introduction to the program *Treecloud* see <http://www2.lirmm.fr/~gambette/treecloud/>. In order to generate the tree clouds, in a first step a frequency list for the lexemes of each text was produced by *AntConc* (version 3.2.4u, see <http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software.html>). In a second step, the 75 most frequent words of each text (according to the *AntConc*-list) were fed into the *Treecloud* program. In order to be able to use *Treecloud* for this study, an Old Spanish stoplist was generated and implemented in the *Treecloud* program; the co-occurrence distance formula used for the calculation was log-likelihood ratio as this formula is considered as very reliable according to Gambette and Véronis (2010: section 3.3). For more information on log-likelihood ratio tests see Dunning (1993: 61) and Grzybek (2007: 198–199). For the generation of the tree clouds, the online version of the program *Treecloud* was used (<http://www2.lirmm.fr/~gambette/treecloud/NuageArbore.cgi>).

Thus, the tree cloud contains the metapragmatic expression *consejo* that is absent from the other tree clouds generated out of the *Cantar*.<sup>17</sup> Moreover, *consejo* appears on a branch that equally hosts the name of the Cid's most important liegeman, *minaya albar fanez*. As the philological interpretation showed, Minaya as the Cid's right hand man is the one who rises to speak in counsel and who acts as the Cid's confidant and advisor. Another branch assembling *carrion*, *ifantes*, and *fijas* ('daughters') illustrates that most of the counselling takes place in order to arrange the marriage of the Cid's daughters with the Infantes de Carrión. An especially illustrative result of the tree cloud is the branch hosting *martin*, *raquel*, *vidas*, and *amos* ('both of them'). This branch corresponds to the conversations held between Martín Antolínez, a messenger of the Cid, and the two merchants Raquel and Vidas who form an inseparable couple in the *Cantar* – the situation is exactly rendered by their extremely close juxtaposition in the tree cloud. In these cases, the visualisation of the tree cloud mirrors central constellations of the protagonists in the *Cantar*. In a comparative view considering counselling vs. non-counselling contexts, the tree cloud gives various hints and indications of values and guidelines of counselling. Thus, the cloud of the counselling contexts contains expressions like *poridad* ('in confidence'), *ondra* ('honour') and *razon* ('common sense') which appear exclusively in this tree cloud but are absent from the tree clouds that were generated in order to provide a comparison from the non-counselling contexts and from the text as a whole. A lexeme that equally deserves attention is the discourse marker *essora* ('now') that is mostly used to signal turn-taking and to introduce conclusions that are pronounced after the counselling.

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<sup>17</sup> For each text, three tree clouds were generated: one for the counselling contexts, one for the non-counselling contexts, and one for the whole text. Electronic versions of the corpus texts were used for the creation of the tree clouds as well as for the log-likelihood ratio tests in the following section; see the References for details.

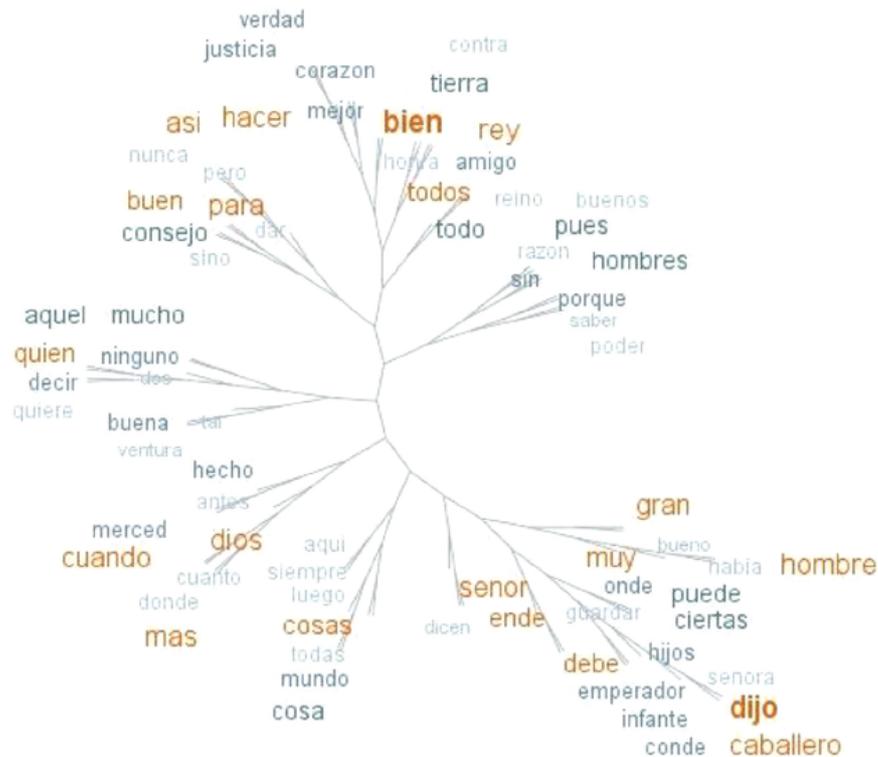


Figure 3. Tree cloud for the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* (counselling contexts)

The tree cloud in Figure 3 visualises recurrent lexemes and lexematic constellations in counselling contexts in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* and highlights some communicative constellations as typical of counselling. Thus, protagonists interacting together are localised on one branch (e.g. *infante*, *conde*). Like in the *Cantar*, the metapragmatic expression *consejo* figures in the group of the 75 most frequent words which appear in the cloud. The treecloud contains values central to the concept of good advice in the *Libro* (*verdad* ‘truth’, *justicia* ‘justice’, *honra* ‘honour’, *razon* ‘common sense’, *saber* ‘knowledge, wisdom’) and indicates their proximity (e.g. *justicia* and *verdad* are in close juxtaposition). Another marked co-occurrence is established for *buen* and *consejo*; in fact, *buen consejo* (‘good advice’) is a frequent collocation in the *Libro*. A lexeme like *debe* (‘one should’) can be interpreted as pointing to the topic of exemplary conduct that is semantically related to seeking and giving advice. The proximity of *caballero* and *dijo* (‘he said’) indicates the importance of conversations in the *Libro* (see also *dicen* ‘they say’) and the pivotal part the Caballero Zifar as the protagonist has in these conversations. The strong dialogic nature of the counselling contexts is further marked by connectors of argumentation (*ende* ‘from that’ and *onde* ‘from that, because of that’), and by the introductory discourse marker *ciertas* (‘certainly, for sure, surely’) that links a new turn to the previous turn with a notion of acknowledgement.

The interpretations of both tree clouds illustrate the possibilities and limits of the tool. If we interpret the performance of the *Treecloud* program against the knowledge of the text, the tool partially captures central topics and constellations and can be an efficient tool to get a quick survey of central lexemes of a text. However, the main limit of the tool is that it can visualise the co-occurrence distance but of course cannot give further information on these distances and proximities. In many cases, an interpretation of the tree cloud is only possible on the basis of a profound philological knowledge of the text. In order to understand even a simple relationship such as the

constellation between the Cid, his sons-in-law (the *Infantes de Carrión*) and his daughters, the linguist has to know the plot of the *Cantar*. This is all the more true for findings that concern more subtle characteristics of the text, e.g. the use of connectors that are typical of argumentative sequences. Moreover, many branches show constellations that do not lead to a deeper understanding of the text, as semantic overlaps or contiguities cannot be deduced from the cloud. This is the case e.g. for the branch in Figure 3 that brings together (among others) the lexemes *hecho* ('done'), *antes* ('before'), *dios* ('God'), *cuanto* ('how much'), and *donde* ('where'). This limitation of the program is also discussed in Amstutz and Gambette (2010: 236–237). On the other hand, tree clouds have the merit of pointing to phenomena that are easily neglected in a qualitative linguistic interpretation. In the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* such phenomena are e.g. the high frequency of the modal verb *deber* (*debe*) and the fact that the *verbum dicendi* 'he said' (*dijo*) and *caballero* form the most salient case of co-occurrence in the *Libro*.

To sum up, *Treecloud* has the advantage of being a tool that generates highly catching visualisations; this "visibility", however, implies a certain vagueness concerning the exact rating of the proximities and distances that turns out to be a disadvantage of the tool. Therefore, *Treecloud* is here considered as a first step that structures the lexicon and clears the ground for more precise methods of quantitative investigation.

#### 4.2 Counselling in contrast: Analysing lexical clusters through log-likelihood ratio tests

In order to avoid the shortcomings of *Treecloud*, the corpus texts are submitted to a second contrastive analysis (counselling contexts vs. non-counselling contexts) that operates on the basis of a log-likelihood ratio test. The aim of this second quantitative analysis is to detect lexemes that are more frequent than expected in counselling contexts and therefore are likely to form a cluster of lexemes typical of counselling dialogues.

As a statistical method, log-likelihood ratio tests serve to qualify the link between two elements or parameters by indicating whether the combination of two factors has statistical significance or whether the combination should rather be regarded as coincidental. In our study, the log-likelihood ratio test functions as a corpus-driven method<sup>18</sup> that compares the frequency of lexemes in counselling contexts and in non-counselling contexts in each one of the two corpus texts.<sup>19</sup> For the contrastive lexical analysis undertaken here, the ratios start from the null hypothesis that counselling contexts are not characterised by a specific choice of lexemes. The ratios calculated are supposed to evaluate this hypothesis and indicate whether a lexeme has a high enough frequency in counselling episodes to be a good candidate for a lexical cluster of keywords which characterise the interaction of counselling.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>18</sup> The difference between corpus-driven and corpus-based approaches is summed up in Bubenhofer (2009: 99–101), Andersen (2011: 588), and Scharloth and Bubenhofer (2012: 197–198).

<sup>19</sup> In the test, for each text the two parts (counselling contexts and non-counselling contexts) were fed into the log-likelihood ratio (llr) calculator, and the ratio was calculated between the counselling contexts on one hand, and the sum of both text parts on the other hand. For the llr calculator ("llr wizard") see <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/llwizard.html>. Rayson and Garside (2000: 3) recommend that the text corpora are analysed by a part-of-speech tagger before calculating the word frequencies. However, as there is no parameter file available for Old Spanish and as the parameter file for Modern Spanish has insufficient results for the Old Spanish texts, this procedure had to be omitted in our tests.

<sup>20</sup> The term "keyword" is used with different meanings in discourse analysis and corpus linguistics; see Bondi (2010: 1, 3) and Stubbs (2010: 22–23, 25). Whereas in cultural studies keywords stand for focal

The log-likelihood ratio test is especially well-suited for the analysis undertaken here, as it is considered the most reliable test with smaller volumes of text and with low word frequencies. Log-likelihood ratio tests typically use a 99 per cent confidence interval, i.e. at the 1 per cent significance level the log-likelihood test statistic has to be greater than 6.6. The higher the number of the log-likelihood ratio, the more likely it is that the linking of the two elements is not due to coincidence.<sup>21</sup> Thus, according to the coincidence interval used here, a number greater than 6.6 indicates that the frequency of a lexeme in the counselling contexts is so high that in all likelihood its use is not due to coincidence but that there is a reason for this affinity, i.e. that the lexeme in question is with high probability linked to the illocutionary pattern of counselling. As to the validity of the test, one restriction has to be made. As the data basis for the calculation is small and word frequencies are low, statistical significance in the strict mathematical sense cannot be attained. Nevertheless, the ratios indicate different degrees of affinity and thus can identify lexemes that have a comparatively high affinity to the concept of counselling.

In the *Cantar de mio Cid*, the ratios indicate that the following lexemes are candidates that could have a marked affinity to counselling contexts: *poridat* ('confidentiality, secrecy', *en poridat* 'in confidence') (16.31), *plazer* ('favour, help') (6.88), and *sabidor* ('sensible, reasonable, wise') (5.48). The result for *sabidor* is below 6.6, but as the list of possible affinities is very short for the *Cantar*, the lexeme is included. Whereas *plazer* captures the fact that advice is given in order to help the interlocutor in a difficult situation, the element of wisdom is present in the semantics of *sabidor*. It deserves attention that the metapragmatic *consejo* does not figure among the group of lexemes that have a marked frequency in counselling contexts according to the log-likelihood ratio test.<sup>22</sup> The most striking result of the test is the high affinity of *poridat*. This affinity confirms (philological) descriptions that highlight secrecy as a characteristic feature of counselling (see Althoff 1990: 153–154, 158; Rieger 1998: 639–643 650). *Poridat* is thus situated in the very centre of a lexical cluster used to describe counselling in the *Cantar*, whereas *plazer* and *sabidor* are localised in the periphery of the cluster.

In contrast to the *Cantar*, in which lexemes with an affinity to counselling episodes were rare and formed only a small cluster, a larger and more complex cluster can be retrieved from the *Caballero Zifar*. The log-likelihood ratio test points to the following lexemes as having an affinity to counselling dialogues: the strongest group is formed by *consejo* (159.77), *buen consejo* (41.06), and *aconsejar* ('to give advice, counsel') (15.09); a very strong affinity marks the connector *onde* ('from that, because of that') (44.16); clear affinities are indicated for *seso* ('wisdom, discretion, judgement') (32.32) and *sabio* ('wise') (20.91) as well as for *puridat* ('secrecy, confidentiality') (22.85), and we have weaker affinities for *pregunta* ('question') (8.34), and *plazer* ('favour, help') (8.37). The most important result is that metapragmatic expressions for counselling are extremely frequent in the *Libro*. This is all the more striking as *consejo* did not figure in the frequency list of the *Cantar de mio Cid* that was established by the log-likelihood ratio test. In the counselling

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cultural concepts, corpus linguistics has a quantitative approach in matters of "keyness". According to Stubbs (2010: 25) "keywords are words which are significantly more frequent in a sample of text than would be expected, given their frequency in a large general reference corpus". For the notion of keywords see also Kytö (2010: 54–55) and Wynne (2008: 730–732).

<sup>21</sup> For more information on the method of log-likelihood ratio tests, especially with small corpora, see Dunning (1993: 61, 65), Manning and Schütze (1999: 172–174), Rayson and Garside (2000: 2), Grzybek (2007: 198–199) and Bubenhofer (2009: 139).

<sup>22</sup> The frequency of metapragmatic terms can be a characteristic of different types of counselling and of different text genres; see e.g. Diederich and Höhn's analysis of the use of the lexemes *advice* and *advise* in the *British National Corpus* (2012: 335, 348–350).

parts of the *Libro*, the significantly high frequency of *consejo* indicates that illocutions and verbal actions are extensively commented upon and explicitly discussed in this literary text. In the *Libro*, *consejo* is not the only word referring to an illocution, as the list also includes the term *pregunta* that points to the speech act of asking for advice. Moreover, the collocation *buen consejo* demonstrates that the protagonists of the *Libro* amply reflect on how to distinguish good from bad advice and how to be a wise counsellor. From these deliberations on good advice it follows that wisdom and good judgement, as reflected in the high frequencies of *seso* and *sabio*, are equally an important issue in counselling contexts. The element of confidentiality (*puridat*) that was most prominent in the *Cantar* is also represented in the *Libro*. A remarkable finding is the high frequency of the connector *onde* that is closely linked to argumentation and introduces conclusions. This result underlines the fact that in the *Libro* the giving of advice includes reasoning and argumentation. From the log-likelihood ratios and their interpretation it follows that the metapragmatic expressions (*consejo*, *buen consejo*) are in the very centre of the cluster; *onde* as well as the component of wisdom (*seso*, *sabio*) and *puridat* can be situated close to the centre, whereas *pregunta* and *placer* are in the periphery of the cluster.

The comparison of the lexical clusters of the *Cantar de mio Cid* and the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* shows a difference in complexity. Whereas the cluster of the *Cantar* is focused on the single concept of confidentiality represented by *poridat*, the cluster of the *Libro* is more complex and has a strong metapragmatic core (*consejo*, *buen consejo*, *aconsejar*) that is accompanied by high-frequency lexemes relating to the concepts of wisdom and argumentation (*seso*, *sabio*, *onde*); the element of confidentiality is also present (*puridat*) but it is far less dominant than in the *Cantar*. Moreover, the higher test statistics in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* also point to the fact that the lexical affinities are much stronger than the ones found in the *Cantar de mio Cid*. Thus, the lexical clusters support the philological interpretations and illustrate that counselling dialogues in the *Libro* have a more elaborated and a more distinctive profile than in the *Cantar de mio Cid*.

## 5. Conclusion

The qualitative philological analysis shows that counselling dialogues vary significantly between the *Cantar* and the *Libro*: whereas the *Cantar* offers a concise minimal pattern of counselling that aims at the confirmation of a consensus, the *Libro* illustrates a far more sophisticated technique of counselling which is presented in an elaborate *mise en abyme* of “counselling within counselling”. The dialogue patterns found in the qualitative analysis are mostly reflected in the quantitative approaches. As for the quantitative tests, *Treecloud* proved to be an effective tool for the visualisation of lexical structures and co-occurrence patterns but it lacks exactitude when it comes to comparing frequencies between a partial text and the text as a whole. For this comparison the log-likelihood ratio test performed much better, as it gives a more precise indication of the different degrees of affinity and thus can be considered a very useful tool for identifying lexical clusters. Whereas the co-occurrences presented in *Treecloud* reveal their deeper relations only in the light of a profound text knowledge, the log-likelihood ratio test discloses affinities that stand for themselves and add useful complements to the qualitative interpretation. In each corpus text, we have a cluster of lexemes that figure more prominently in the counselling sequences than in the rest of the text. Moreover, each text favours a different cluster of lexemes, and these differences strengthen the counselling profile that was established through the philological approach.

Furthermore, the results show that the log-likelihood ratio test is not only a means of confirmation but that it can discover affinities that easily pass unnoticed in a qualitative analysis that is focused on the semantics of the topics treated in a text. The key example here is the connector

*onde* whose marked presence shows that the interlocutors are focused on argumentation and reasoning, and that counselling in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar* is no longer a question of decision-making but a process of argumentation. Thus, *onde* is an indicator for a discourse tradition of argumentation that is representative of the type of counselling we find in the *Libro*. As the case of *onde* demonstrates, the quantitative method has the advantage of giving a purely data-based analysis of the text that is free of any predetermined concept of counselling. This is especially useful for medieval texts in which patterns of counselling differ considerably from modern concepts so that the interpretation must carefully avoid starting from contemporary models of giving advice. Here, quantitative tests can also function as a *regulans* or fail-safe for the philological interpretation.

The lexical clusters established are not only a characterisation of the *Cantar de mio Cid* and the *Libro*: what is more, the lexeme clusters offer the possibility to track counselling dialogues or even specific types of counselling dialogues in large electronic corpora. Whereas a single lexeme alone would not be a trustworthy indicator of counselling dialogues, using clusters increases the probability of identifying counselling dialogues and represents simple and effective search criteria. Therefore, in a next step, the clusters could be used to identify text passages that contain counselling dialogues and they could indicate whether a dialogue type belongs rather to the type prominent in the *Cantar* or to the dialogue profile that dominates in the *Libro del Caballero Zifar*. With counselling dialogues as a testing ground, this study shows that the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods is an asset for both. In interpreting the quantitative findings, the patterns revealed by pragmaphilological analysis have a strong explanatory power. Therefore, a quantitative tool, like log-likelihood ratio tests of co-occurrence, should be accompanied by a qualitative reading; if an analysis of the complete text is not possible, at least representative text fragments should be selected for a holistic philological interpretation. On the other hand, a corpus-driven quantitative method like log-likelihood ratio tests can disclose hidden affinities and discover “blind spots” of traditional hermeneutic interpretations. Thus, the combination of both approaches can serve as a methodological fail-safe for each of them. This is especially useful for the study of small corpora where quantitative methods that are usually based on larger datasets can only have a limited performance. In the case of a small and heterogenous corpus, as it is the case for a text language like Old Spanish, the study leads to the *buen consejo* that qualitative analysis should have a leading role, while quantitative methods should have a supporting function.

As a framework for my study, a model of three perspectives of (historical) pragmatics was introduced. Whereas historical pragmatics can concentrate either on the language and its language-specific traditions (linguistic structures and their functions) or on discourse traditions, diachronic corpus pragmatics always has a natural focus on the linguistic material and is therefore primarily concerned with language-specific traditions. However, corpus pragmatics is at the same time closely linked to the study of discourse traditions. As mentioned above, discourse traditions manifest themselves through the selection of linguistic material that is typical of a text or text genre. In order to characterise a discourse tradition, it is therefore essential to describe that selection as precisely as possible – and this is the point where corpus pragmatics has an important role as its quantitative methods can be used to pin down tendencies of selection. Thus, the fact that *onde* is highly typical of counselling contexts and selected with high frequency in the verbalisation of *consejos*, leads us to the conclusion that strategies of explicit argumentation are an essential discourse tradition for counselling in the *Caballero Zifar*, whereas this cultural tradition is not present in the *Cantar*. Diachronic corpus pragmatics is therefore at the very centre of reflections on how cultural traditions are linked to language-specific traditions and how the interface between language and culture can be reconstructed from texts.

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