**Abstract**

This paper uses corpus-stylistics to examine gender roles in the characterisation style of Agatha Christie’s two famous detectives, Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple. The object of the analysis was two corpora, each consisting of five novels featuring one of the detectives.

In order to assess the representation of gender in these characters, the theoretical framework is divided into four sections: a description of the theory of stylistics, including feminist stylistics and narrative stylistics; an account of the changing gender roles in England from 1980 until after the Second World War; an explanation of the theories of social and discursive construction of gender; and a description of the principles of characterisation, together and account of the stereotypical fictional male and female characters.

The methodology section described corpus stylistics as being a combination of stylistics and corpus linguistics. One of the advantages of this method is that it enables both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis, which enriches the findings and increases their level of objectivity.

The results of the analysis presented tendencies in the characterisation of the two detectives which confirmed the critics’ claim that although Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple are mostly characterised following gender stereotypes, they also redefine gender relations by presenting some atypical gender traits.

The style in the characterisation was found to be based on comparative structures, metaphors, and repetition of lexical items that trigger schemata in the reader.

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**Introduction**

Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple are two of the most well-known fictional detectives around the globe. They were created by Agatha Christie (1890-1976) during the British golden age of detective fiction between 1920 and 1930, and they starred both in novels and short stories, as well as in films and TV-series that were produced based on Christie’s books. There is no consensus among critics as to whether she is the best crime writer, but her popularity is not debatable: as Sander and Lovallo (1985, p. xix) put it, “she is second only to the Bible in the number of tongues in which she can be read”.

Throughout her life, Christie witnessed drastic changes regarding gender roles and women’s rights. During her childhood, the Victorian Ideal of the Angel in the House and the separation of spheres, so praised by many, started encountering opposition. The Woman Question became a heated topic at a time when conventions were being challenged. Both World Wars played a crucial role in women’s emancipation: since men served as soldiers, women were needed in the labour market, which meant that they were allowed to leave their private sphere and move around men’s world of business. However, after the wars were over, women did not wish to relinquish the freedom gained; an attitude not welcomed in society. These changes meant that women went from a situation where they were subordinated to men, to a situation where they could vote, own property, work for a living, and remain single if they wished so. This also meant that society in general needed to digest and readjust to modern times, and men in particular needed to redefine their masculinity and role in society (Kungl, 2006, pp. 8-12, 35; Heyck, 2008, pp. 109, 230-233). Since it was in this context that Christie wrote her novels, it can only be expected that concerns regarding gender are observable in her work. Poirot and Miss Marple, her two main characters, are respectively remembered as an eccentric, but brilliant Belgian detective, and as an old spinster, who is good at solving mysteries. Consequently, the initial hypothesis is that these two characters would reflect the traditional characteristics usually associated to being a man and to being a woman. That is to say, the expected result of an examination of these characters’ characterisation would be that the two detectives’ success in solving mysteries is closely connected to capacities usually associated to gender roles. This for example would entail a Mr Hercule Poirot being analytical, logical, and decisive, and a Miss Jane Marple being sweet, curious and intuitive.

However, critics note that there is more to Poirot and Miss Marple’s characterisations than that. Poirot and Miss Marple seem to be aware that ‘gender is one of the central organizing principles around which social life revolves’ (Kimmel, 1987, p. 5 in Holmes, 2009, 186). They therefore challenge stereotypes both by reworking them and by using them to their own advantage during their investigations (Evans, 2009, p. 59; Kungl, 2006, p. 113).

The goal of this thesis is to assess the critics’ claim by examining Christie’s language style in representing gender so as to reveal the way in which Poirot and Miss Marple are depicted in the novels. More precisely, and inspired by the research questions in Ortells and Posteguillo’s study (2002), this thesis intends to answer three questions:

* What linguistic strategies are used in the characterisation of the two detectives?
* Do Poirot and Miss Marple follow the gender stereotypes of the “strong, silent, long-suffering man” and the “trivial chattering, nagging woman” (Carter, 1997, p. 292 in Ortells and Posteguillo, 2002, p. 154)?
* Are Poirot and Miss Marple portrayed as the typical fictional detective from before the First World War?

In order to achieve this aim, the main framework will be stylistics, also called literary linguistics. This interdiscipline enables the study of language and literature, by “relating linguistic facts (linguistic description) to meaning (interpretation) in as explicit a way as possible” (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 142). As Simpson (2004 p. 101) puts it, “stylistics is about interrogating texts, about seeing a text in the context of its other stylistics possibilities”.

To achieve this goal, 10 detective novels written by Agatha Christie will be analysed following a corpus stylistic methodology, which enables both a quantitative and a qualitative study. As it will be elaborated in the methodology chapter, corpus stylistics makes it possible to approach the study of a large sample of language data, using computer software. This increases the level of objectivity in a study because it provides quantitative results including, for example, common collocations or clusters used in a given corpus, as well as unusually frequent words in relation to another corpus. Selected results can be further analysed qualitatively, following the principles of stylistics (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 25).

The 10 novels are divided into two corpora: the Poirot corpus (PC) consists of the novels *The mysterious affair at Styles* (1920), *Murder on the Orient express*. (1934), *Hercule Poirot's Christmas*. (1938), *Taken at the Flood* (1948), *and Elephants Can Remember* (1972). The novels conforming the Miss Marple corpus (MC) are *The Murder at the Vicarage*. (1930), *The body in the library* (1942), *The moving finger* (1943), *4.50 from Paddington* (1957), and *At Bertram's hotel*(1965).

With the intention of providing theoretical tools to analyse linguistic aspects in the characterisation of Poirot and Miss Marple regarding gender, chapter one offers a theoretical framework consisting of four sections: section 1.1. is devoted to an account of stylistics as a theory, including a description of feminist stylistics and narrative stylistics, both of which are relevant for the linguistic study of gender in literature. Section 1.2. is concerned with exploring gender relations in the context in which Agatha Christie’s work was produced. Section 1.3. deals with the difference between the concepts of ´sex´ and ´gender´ by examining how gender is socially and discursively constructed. Section 1.4. treats the relation between gender and characterisation, and offers an account of typical portrayals of gender in detective fiction.

As mentioned before, chapter two deals with corpus stylistics, which is the methodology chosen to approach this study. The chapter also offers a description of the corpora, as well as an explanation of the tools available in AntConc (Anthony, 2014), the computer software used in the analysis. Chapter three is devoted to the analysis of the novels. The chapter is divided into two sections: the former explores the setting in place of the novels, while the latter studies characterisation and gender. Finally, in the conclusion, the results are discussed and the research question is addressed.

1. **Theoretical Framework**
   1. **Stylistics**

Simply put, stylistics is the style of style in language use. The term ´style´ itself can have a variety of associations. It can be used in relation to music or fashion, referring to an ideal aesthetic value: “In the neutral sense of style, the choice of elements and the rules by which they can be combined may be analysed as semiotic codes. Thus, styles may be understood as expressive of the values and identity of social groups” (Edgar and Sedgwick, 2002, p. 340).

Verdonk (2013, pp. 135-136) traces down the origins of the term to show that it has always been related to language, for it was the Latin name of an instrument for writing. He clarifies that now the term is used to describe items that have been humanly produced, and he defines it as having “a perceived outward appearance”, the form, and “some assumed intrinsic value”, the content (p. 37). Stockwell (2006, p. 746) notes that, in modern stylistics, the content is not divided from its form. Greenblatt (2006, p. A74) defines style as “the manner in which something is expressed” in a literary work and which “contributes substantially to its meaning”, producing its tone. The analysis of the style of a text, according to Greenblatt (2006, pp. A74-A84), consists of examining a range of stylistic features, which are grouped under the labels of diction, rhetorical figures of speech and thought, meter and rhythm, verse forms, syntax, and point of view.

Verdonk (2013, p. 148) expands his definition of style stating that it is the result of choosing certain linguistic forms or structures instead of other ones. These choices, called stylistic markers, can be either conscious or unconscious, but they are always context dependent. Since these stylistic variants can be found in all levels of language, to organise the work of the analyst, stylisticians have introduced a schema which divides language in six levels: phonology, graphology, morphology, syntax, lexicology, and pragmatics. However, Verdonk points out that that these levels are not clear-cut: they are interconnected and interdependent.

Briefly, and following Simpson’s (2004, pp. 5-8) explanations, the *graphological level* looks at indentation, punctuation, font, and the overall arrangement of words on the page in order to analyse the visual appearance of the text. The phonological level examines features like sounds, rhythm, and rhyme. The *morphological level* of language is concerned with the use of affixes for inflection and derivation purposes. The *lexical level* focuses on the meaning of words, and involves studying deictic elements, figures of speech and thought, collocations, and the lexical fields represented in the text, which trigger schemata by associating the single words to the cognitive structures used to understanding the world (Emmott, Alexander and Marszalek, 2014, p. 268). The *syntactic level,* Simpson (2004, pp. 5-8) continues, studies grammatical structures, including the use of tense and aspect, mood and modality, and voice. It also examines whether certain constituent are placed in a position of focus, or whether there is an overuse of certain types of constituents. Lastly, the *pragmatic level* examines the meaning of words in context.

According to Stockwell (2006, p. 743-744), stylistics emerged in the 1960s, influenced by formalism, literary criticism, and linguistics. It was first in the 1970s that stylistics gained more recognition due to accounting for deviant forms in the study of poetry and prose. Stylistics concerned itself with the linguistic study of literature, while the linguistic study of non-literary pieces was referred to as, for example, ´critical linguistics´, ´critical discourse analysis´, ´text linguistics´, etc. Thus, stylistics is referred to as literary stylistics, though Burke (2014, p. 1) points out, that stylistics can be applied to the study of non-literary texts, which, as mentioned towards the end of this section, is something that feminist stylistics argues for. Verdonk (2013, pp. 12-13) defines stylistics as an interdiscipline concerned with the study of “the relationship between literary effects and linguistic means”. The interdisciplinary quality proves that contemporary stylistics has gone beyond the classical rhetoric to include now a number of other approaches such as cognitive, pragmatic, corpus, pedagogical, multimodal, gender, etc. (Burke, 2014, p. 2). Simpson (2004, p. 2) notes that feminist stylistics and cognitive stylistics are two examples of established branches of stylistics that have contributed to enriching the stylistic methods.

Simpson (2004, p. 3) states that doing stylistics enables us to have a better understanding of language and of literary text because “to do stylistics is to explore language, and, more specifically, to explore creativity in language use”. He adds that the methodology for a stylistic analysis must follow three principles: it must be rigorous, retrievable, and replicable. This aims at assuring a scientific result by allowing other stylisticians to verify the study (p. 4). To exemplify the stylistic methodology, Burke (2014, pp. 2-3) compares the stylistician to a language detective who uses the text as the crime scene and the stylistic methodology as the magnifying glass to find linguistic clues in order to produce an interpretation of the text that that other language detectives can verify. In Burke’s words:

Armed with her stylistic toolkit, our ´Sherlocke Stylistica´ sets out to see whether there might be, for example, an over-representation of such linguistic phenomena as closed vowels, mono-syllabic words, abstract nouns or minimalistic syntax in the text, because if there is, the combination of such ´restrictive´ or ´plain´ linguistic features might be adding to, or even helping create, the overall effect or perceived ´claustrophobia´ in the reader. The stylistic detective can then present the linguistic data acquired by her systematic investigation to other stylisticians, and can offer a plausible and relatively objective interpretation for her fellow linguists to evaluate or corroborate by repeating her analysis.

Following this view, stylistics can be thought of as a “kind of linguistic-forensic, literary discourse criticism” which enables a more objective analysis based on facts and not just opinions (Burke, 2014, p. 3).

However, Stockwell (2006, p. 747) remarks that the principle of replicability “is problematic, since the reading experience is unrepeatable”. He sustains his statement by affirming that interpretation does not only depend on the written piece, and on the author and his or her context, but also on the reader’s context, including “memories, beliefs, and both personal and social objectives” (p. 747). Verdonk agrees with Stockwell’s remark, and quotes Thurley (1983, p. 58, in Verdonk, 2013, p. 14) claiming that “there is no such thing as a fully objective or intrinsic criticism”, and therefore, an analysis should aim at describing results and suggesting a possible reading, without drawing general conclusions. A way to increase objectivity is to follow a corpus stylistics methodology since, as it will be described more thoroughly in the methodology section, corpus stylistics provides material for quantitative analysis. This makes the analysis less subjective compared to other more introspective analyses, (Jensen, 2014b, p. 5).

In addition, as seen in Stockwell’s statement, a stylistic analysis also involves taking into account the context in which the material was produced. This is a point Verdonk (2013, p. 9) pays significant attention to, which is evidenced in his consistent use of extra-textual information in the analysis of poems throughout his book, *The Stylistics of Poetry*. According to him, the understanding of a text requires a study of its background, apart from the linguistic analysis of the text itself (p. 14). Context, he explains, entails “the whole environment in which a discourse occurs, ranging from the narrower context of the utterance, that is, the more immediate situation of the discourse, to the much wider context of social, cultural or historical factors” (p. 99).

Simpson (2004, p. 2) mentions that stylistics has been prominent not only in creative writing courses due to its focus on creativity and invention, but also on language teaching and learning. Stockwell (2006, p. 748) agrees, and elaborates by referring to Toolan (1996, pp. 42-46), who states that stylistics can be used for teaching language and literature, acknowledging different readings of a same piece, and discovering hidden information that had not been noticed before. In Stockwell’s (2006, p. 748) words, “Stylistics can thus be used both as a descriptive tool and as a catalyst for interpretation”.

Corpus stylistics, feminist stylistics and narrative stylistics are three relevant branches of stylistics with for the ´corpus stylistic´ analysis of ´gender´ in the ´characterisation´ of Poirot and Miss Marple. The first branch is described in the second chapter of this study. Feminist stylistics and narrative stylistics are briefly explained in the following subsections.

* + 1. *Feminist Stylistics:*

Page (2007, pp. 94-95) places the beginning of feminist stylistics in the 1980s, influenced by three decades of feminist studies, and with the aim of focusing on sexism as seen in micro-level features, while also paying attention to the context of the text.

Mills (1995, p. 17) states that “literature is one of the many forms of writing which play a role in the constitution of the subject, and the reproduction of messages about what women and men are like in society”. She acknowledges the relevance of content analysis, but highlights that need of examining the language of texts within the context in which they were produced. In the western world, there are an overwhelming number of things that are divided according to sex and promoted following a socially constructed idea of gender. Language is used in this process to mark the differences and reproduce them, both consciously and unconsciously. There is therefore an imperative need to analyse language, not just in literary texts, but language in general following a feminist approach (p. 18). The aim is to analyse the gender differences that are encoded in texts, especially the ones that are naturalised and therefore need foregrounding in order to be seen under a new light. The linguistic analysis of a text can point out at these differences that are considered ´normal´ and offer alternatives that can improve the situation, making the difference between genders smaller (21).

* + 1. *Narrative Stylistics*

Simpson (2004, p. 19) expresses the relation between narratology and stylistics saying that “narrative requires development, elaboration, embellishment; and it requires a sufficient degree of stylistic flourish to give it an imprint of individuality or personality”. He suggests a model of narrative structure consisting of six categories, three of which are worth mentioning in relation to the present study: sociolinguistic code, characterisation through actions and events, and characterisation through point of view (p. 20).

The sociolinguistic code refers to setting the narrative in time and place by expressing the historical, cultural, and linguistic context through language. The first way of achieving characterisation remarks the importance of how the semantic processes of doing, thinking, and saying relate to the characters. To see how these experiences are captured in language, Simpson (2004, p. 22) suggests using the functional model of transitivity, which entails looking at the use of verb phrases, noun phrases, and prepositional or adverb phrases, for they reveal the actions, the participants, and the adjuncts. The second way of characterising highlights the role of speech and thought representation in the mode of narration and the type of point of view. Here, deixis and some types of adjuncts are also relevant because they position the characters in relation to other characters or situations. Regarding speech and thought, they can be represented in three ways: directly, indirectly, and in a freer style, where the rules for direct or indirect speech or thought are not followed. Speech and thought can also be reported narratively: the narrator retells what has been said or thought, but without using the exact words (Simpson, 2004, pp. 30-32). In connection to the study of point of view, it is helpful to mention Stockwell’s (2006, p. 749) example of what its analysis could concentrate on: lexical choices, modal expressions, the directionality of verbs and other deictic features to produce the overall effect and characterisation”.

* 1. **Experiencing Gender**

This brief overview of the social context to Agatha Christie’s work takes a starting point in the late Victorian Age because of two reasons: first, as Sanders and Lovallo (1985, p. xvii) put it, Christie had an “affluent late-Victorian upbringing”, with home education, services of a nursemaid, and a non-working mother, who had to rent out their residence to get a profit after Christie’s father died. Secondly, the last decades of the 19th century witnessed the rise of the New Woman, which was a crucial point in the fight for women’s rights, having consequences in the conception of gender roles and causing a feeling of uneasiness in society that continued through to the 20th century. Therefore, section 1.2.1 offers an account of changing conceptions regarding gender roles during late-Victorian years, while section 1.2.2 describes how the conflict that started around 1890 developed through the 20th century, when Christie actually wrote her novels.

* + 1. **Gender Roles in Late-Victorian England**

As M. H. Abrams (2008, p. 380) points out, the term ‘Victorianism’ has negative connotations because of being associated with “narrow-mindedness, sexual priggishness, the determination to maintain feminine ‘innocence’”, values rooted in Puritanism.

It was in 1868 that Eliza Lyn Linton published an article in *The Saturday Review* where she heavily criticized the behavior of some women who were disregarding the social conventions associated to gender roles. The article, named “The Girl of the Period”, categorized as ´Wild´ all upper and middle class girls who dared engage in activities that could make them be mistaken for prostitutes. By going out on their own, dying their hair, or having inappropriate conversations with men, these girls were acting against the Victorian Ideal of womanhood (Cooper 2001, p. 64; Bilston, 2004, p. 176).

This ideal is usually referred to as “The Angel in the House”, following an extensive poem written by Coventry Patmore in 1862, where he untiringly praises his wife’s submissiveness, goodness, beauty, and unconditional love: “Man must be pleased; but him to please / Is woman’s pleasure (…); “And let the sweet respective sphere / Of personal worship there obtain / Circumference for moving clear, / None treading on another’s train” (pp. 68, 108).

Patmore was not a pioneer in his description of the “perfect woman”. Already in 1839, *The* *Women of England* by Sarah Stickney Ellis linked womanhood to nationality, reminding women that they had the responsibility of educating men and being their moral support and guidance, because they are too weak to tell right from wrong. She therefore strongly advised women to forget themselves and devote their whole existence to family life (chapters II and III).

Upper class families could afford their women’s idleness without inconvenience. For middle class families, however, it sometimes meant an extra effort to keep an ´Angel in the House´, but they followed the Victorian Ideal, as it was a sign of status which differentiated them from the working classes (Kungl, 2006, p. 10). The aim in life of any respectable middle or upper class woman was to get married and be economically sustained by a man. Accordingly, a successful man was one that managed to provide for his family, without needing to send his wife to work (Neff, 1929, p.187). While boys were sent to school at the age of seven, girls were educated at home: “All her education was to bring out her natural submission to authority and innate maternal instincts”. Although they received some academic instruction, they were not to get stressed studying, since a little ignorance and lack of informed opinion was appreciated (Vicinus, 1973, p. x). The situation for working class women was not that different, except for the fact that they did work. Heyck (2008, p. 18) mentions that these women suffered inequality both at home and at work: their salaries were lower than men’s, and they were rudely subordinated to their men, who tried to “assert their independence and manliness by dominating their wives in a world that otherwise kept them powerless”.

‘The Fallen Women’, the ones who did not conform to the Ideal, included the prostitute, the lesbian, the spinster and the intellectually thirsty woman, who wanted to learn and do something beyond sewing and taking walks. Not getting married, either because of not having a suitor, or because of personal choice, was seen as a failure. These women became spinsters, and in order to survive, they depended on charity or paid work, which was much frowned upon. Their possibilities included becoming a governess, writing, or emigrating to the empire’s colonies (Young, 1999, pp. 120-123).

By the middle of the century, many women started feeling suffocated by the dos and don’ts the Ideal imposed on them. This was evidenced in the writings by some female authors who manifested their anguish, boredom and indignation. In *Cassandra* (1859), Florence Nightingale described a woman’s life as a poor existence because of having to renounce her freedom (Nightingale & Poovey, 1992). Similarly, in 1855 Harriet Martineau complained about not having time to write or to be on her own due to having to participate in expected social gatherings like sewing or taking walks (Greenblatt, 2006, p. 1589). On her part, in 1848 Elizabeth Gaskell clearly stated “I’m myself and nobody else, and can’t be bound by another’s rules” (Chapple and Pollard, 1997, p. 64). In addition, it seems that some men felt imprisoned by the constraints of the stiff Ideal: Trollope (2006, pp. 23-24) suggests that the shortage of marriageable men during Victorian times could be due to men either delaying the point to get married, or fleeing altogether to work abroad. In Mark Girouard’s words, “[a]ll gentlemen knew that they must be brave, show no sign of panic or cowardice, be courteous and protective to women and children, be loyal to their comrades and meet death without flinching. They knew it because they had learnt the code of the gentleman in a multitude of different ways, through advice, through example, through what they had been taught at school or by their parents, and through endless stories of chivalry, daring, knights, gentlemen and gallantry which they had read or been told by way of history books, ballads, poems, plays, pictures and novels.” (Schwab, 2005, p. 218).

This social upheaval came to be known as The Woman Question, and because of the uneasiness it caused, it prompted male writers to express their position either in favor or against the Victorian Ideal. In *Of Queen’s Gardens* (1865), John Ruskin advocated for the separation of the spheres, eloquently describing how men and women are innately different. Therefore each sex should use their natural aptitudes to cooperate and optimize life in the family and in society in general (Greenblatt & Abrams, 2006, pp. 1587-1588). According to him, men are doers because of their active nature, and women, being naturally passive, should remain at home, “away from all danger and temptation” (Vicinus, 1973, p. 126). John Mill strongly disagreed with Ruskin, and in *The Subjection of Women* (1869), he stated that men and women are equal, and that therefore women should receive education and have the right to work, vote and own property (Fernando, 1977, p. 11).

By the end of the century, two years after Agatha Christie was born, Mona Caird (1895) wrote a public response to Linton’s criticism of daring women. Titled “A Defense of the so-called ´Wild Women´”, the article encouraged women to fight for what they wish to do, be it to remain at home, or to go out and be a part of the public sphere. However, she stated that “the woman who has no interest larger than the affairs of their children is not a fit person to train them” (p. 819). She also condemned society for thinking it had the right to enslave women, depriving them of the possibility of exercising their intellect and body.

In general, there was not always agreement as to how to challenge the Victorian Ideal of The Angel in the House. However, during the Victorian period, women were mostly trying to make it clear that they were not attempting to steal men’s place in society. Rather, their aim was to show that they could be put to good use in some professions where they could excel because of using their domestic skills (Kungl, 2006, p. 29). They did not wish to reject the Victorian Ideal of the Angel in the House in its totality, but they firmly argued that if women were weaker and of an inferior intelligence, it was only because they were not allowed to exercise their physical and intellectual capacities. This was combined with the fact that by 1910 there were over a million more women than men in England, which meant that not all of them would be able to get a husband and become the Angel in the House. If these women were allowed to work, then they would not be a burden to society.

During the last decades of the Victorian Period, women won some battles they had long been fighting for. While the goal for most of them was still to get married, the shortage of men made it necessary for ‘respectable’ middle-class women to start working in the public sphere, although it was usually low-paid jobs as clerks, shop assistants, or secretaries, apart from the well known positions as teachers, nurses and governesses. Through the Education Reform Act (1870), they also managed to get access to elementary education, and in time, they were allowed to attend university, though at the beginning without getting the corresponding certificate when they finished. In addition, women gained the right to own property, and to get the custody of the children, in the case of divorce (Greenblatt, 2006, pp. 1827-28; Kungl, 2006, pp. 32; Heyck, 2008, pp. 13-14).

* + 1. **Gender Roles Before, During and After the World Wars**

***World War I***

The beginning of the 20th century showed a change in the traditional attitudes and values concerning society and religion due to the pressing force of modernity, which entailed technological progress, cultural clashes and migration (Greenblatt, 2006, p. 1828).

The time span between the Victorian Age and the beginning of the First World War is divided into two periods, the Edwardian, and the Georgian, each called after the ruling king of the time, Edward VII, and George V respectively. The Edwardian period (1901-1910) is characterized as “vulgar” due to the wealthy engaging in “conspicuous enjoyment”. It is also a time where the traditional stabilities of the previous age were kept on the surface level, though airs of change could be sensed. The Georgian period (1910-1914, when the war broke out, though the king reigned until 1936) is today seen as the lull before the storm, where the constraints of the Victorian Age and the extravagancies of the Edwardian period were balanced (Greenblatt, 2006, p. 1828).

Although disputes regarding gender roles had been ongoing for more than 50 years, Kungl (2006, p. 43) asserts that the First World War was a crucial cause determining the insertion of women in the public sphere, gaining liberation from the stiff Victorian Ideal. Agreeing with her, Heyck (2008, p. 109) states that although “this period encompassed Britain’s lowest moments, it also included some of its finest hours”, leading up to democracy and social welfare.

With Britain losing an average of 1,500 soldiers a day, almost every family felt the horrors of the war first-hand. Regarding men, in their capacity of brave protectors and fighters, they were sent to war, first on voluntarily bases, and later through a compulsory conscription, which made eligible as soldiers all men between 18 and 41, later extended to 51 years of age (Heyck, 2008, p. 118). With men gone, labor demand grew in almost every sector, making it possible for women to enter the work market (p. 19).

Kungl (2006, pp. 41-43) explains that many of the jobs available were of the kind some women had been performing for years, though without much social consent. These jobs were now advertised as a possibility for middle-class girls to learn and prepare for marriage. However, women were also needed in ‘unwomanly jobs’. Calling for female help here was not an easy decision to take, but as it was necessary, it was merchandised as a patriotic sacrifice women were asked to do. This, combined with a prominent emphasis on the fact that women would be able to add a “feminine touch” to otherwise manly jobs, made it socially acceptable that women would work. Women needed not be insisted since “patriotism coincided with a unique chance for independence and difference for women” (p. 42).

In this way, middle-class girls started occupying posts as “´quasi-professional´ supervisors, inspectors, welfare workers, or women police or patrols” (p. 42). Heyck (2008, pp. 119-120) adds that 1.5 million girls worked in clerical posts, in commercial and government offices, and that many of these girls even moved from one part of the country to another in order to take those positions. In addition, women saw another possibility for activities in the public sphere by participating as volunteers in war auxiliary forces. Kungl (2006, p.44) notes that these women moved in what had been “an exclusively male institution”, excelling in the performance of their tasks, and allowing men to concentrate on fighting instead. Moreover, war production being a vital part of the war, around 800,000 working-class women started working at munitions industries, and over a thousand female house servants moved to the industrial sector as well, where they could enjoy higher salaries and more freedom (Heyck, 2008, pp. 119-120).

Some of the immediate consequences of this changing social situation were related to the way in which women dressed and the speed with which they were intimate with men. The first change had to do with them working long hours outside the house, and therefore abandoning the stiff clothes they customarily wore before the war. The latter was a consequence of the appalling number of young men being killed on daily bases: as historian Correlli Barnett puts it, “Love affairs with men so likely soon to die in battle made nonsense of Victorian ideas of female chastity” (Heyck, 2008, p. 120).

All in all, women participation in the public sphere during the time of war was generally praised by men. As the Conservative editor of the *Observer* noted it in 1916,

“Time was when I thought that men alone maintained the State. Now I know that men alone could never have maintained it, and that henceforth the modern State must be dependent on men and women alike for the progressive and vitality of its whole organization.” (Heyck, 2008, p. 120).

However, as soon as The Great War was over, women were expected to either quit working, or go back to their previous ‘womanly jobs’. In general, society reacted negatively to feminism, and conservative view of how to achieve peace and order after war: the conventional division of gender roles had to be restored (Heyck 2008, pp. 131, 156; Kungl, 2006, pp. 12, 25-26). That women were not willing to give up their freedom was not welcomed in society and originated the idea that women were trying to take over men’s activities, displacing them from their natural role as breadwinners for the family. Consequently, as a sort of measure to ensure that women would at least quit their jobs after getting married, women’s jobs were low-paid. In addition, when women excelled at specific jobs, those positions became feminized, which meant that men did not want to take them any longer, and the job, being low-paid, lost its worth: “if women are doing it, it must not be that important since they aren’t serious about work” (Kungl, 2006, p. 35).

As clearly seen, women had a broader spectrum of possibilities in their hands, but were still at a disadvantage in relation to men. Heyck (2008, pp. 131, 157) quotes historian Trevor Wilson saying that “the war left women ‘second-class citizens, but had improved the quality of second-class travel’”. In other words, although women were still subordinated to men, they now enjoyed more freedom in general, which could be observed in the fact that they could work outside the home in certain posts, they were allowed in the legal profession and into Parliament in 1919, and in 1918, some women over 30 got the right to vote.

***World War II***

The Second World War produced a feeling of unity in society: people were willing to help and protect each other and worked long hours for the sake of the country, both in their ordinary jobs, and as volunteers to spot imminent attacks (Heyck, 2008, p. 203).

As it was the case during the First World War, women were needed to fill in work positions that men had to leave because of serving as soldiers. This included jobs both in the industrial and commercial sectors, with 34 and 62 percent female workers in each. In addition, it was now not only men that had to be conscripted: the government had to make use of all the population over eighteen, men and women alike. In the case of women, however, they could choose the branch in which they wanted to work: “the women’s branches of the armed forces, civilian defense, or war work” (p. 204).

Another fact that is both relevant and amusing is the resentment some British had for the over 1.5 million American soldiers that were based in Britain from the middle of 1944. Although Britain had long needed and waited for USA to join the war, the common British men tended to dislike the Americans due to their modernity, their higher economic affordability, and their more extrovert personality, which soon made them popular among British girls. Heyck (2008, p. 204) highlights a popular saying at the time which explained that “the trouble with the Americans was that they were ´over-paid, over-sexed, and over here´”. The clash between the two cultures remarks the British’s conservative attitudes concerning social and sexual interaction.

An article published in the British newspaper *The Telegraph* (Williams, 2009) retells the story of some women who actively participated in the Second World War. Freydis Sharland became interested in flying at the age of 21 and after studying, she joined the Air Transport Auxiliary becoming the only woman pilot in her group, outnumbered by 20 men. However, not everyone was comfortable with the idea of having a woman pilot, and at one point a male colleague actually refused to fly with her. Fortunately for her, she was usually flying on her own, delivering Spitfires to places like France and Italy. She expressed her annoyance at gender inequality by saying “It was the sort of interesting job men like to do and not let women in (…) But we were very fortunate. The war gave us an opportunity”. She had mixed feelings when the war ended since although it meant that people would have peace, it also meant her job as a pilot would cease. However, she was lucky enough to become a freelance commercial pilot after the war, a profession she had to give up in 1955 after marrying a farmer who was afraid that he would have to take care of the children himself if she crashed and died. A similar story is that of Myra Collyer, an 18-year-olod shorthand typist, who, as a way of escaping home, became a conscript and ended up working in the Cabinet War Rooms, the government’s bunker. Just as the pilot, she kept working after the war, but quitted in 1949 when she got married. Another account worth mentioning is the heroism of Margaret Pawley, who, at 21, became a spy in Italy, intercepting German’s radio messages. The case of Emma Smith was slightly different: she escaped the constraints of upper-class stiffness, a traumatic childhood, and gender roles by becoming a canal boat woman in times of war. At the age of 18, she became a working-class girl, dressed as she liked and did what she wanted.

***Post-World War II***

Heyck (2008, pp. 230-233) states that the percentage of working women who were married rose from 40 to over 50 during the decade of 1950’s. This rise was the consequence of a mixture of factors: families started getting fewer children, which implied fewer years employed in raising them; modern technology made it possible for heavy household chores to be replaced by machines, allowing women to dispose of more free time; people in general started being guided by a materialistic drive, which meant that women rushed to the job marked to be able to afford more things for the family.

Work made women feel liberated both at an economic and a personal level, and in addition, the fact that they were working triggered higher levels of equality regarding gender roles. As a way to enhance more equality, a number of legal Acts were sanctioned in 1969 and 1970: men and women were to receive equal pay for equal work, and in case of divorce, women’s contribution to the marriage in kind and in money were to be recognized.

Within the family, the roles performed by men and women were tied to social classes: Heyck points out that in the 1960’s, only some men belonging to middle-class started collaborating with household activities like repairing the house and keeping the garden, while women cooked and took care of the children. In this way, a new division of spheres was set.

Lastly, attitudes towards sex had also changed, though still showing gender differences. More women than men kept virgin until their wedding day: in a survey done in 1969, 37 percent of women and 74 percent men admitted having had sex before getting married. However, this number changed, influenced not only because contraceptives were readily available, but also because women started thinking sex was also for them to enjoy. A survey from 1970 showed that after their third year at university, fewer than half of the female students were virgin.

* 1. **Constructing Gender**

This section concentrates on what gender is and how it is constructed since understanding this will shed light on the reasons why men and women were expected to behave in certain ways, making the division of spheres so rigid in Victorian times and the years that followed. Gender can be constructed and reinforced socially and discursively, which is why the first subsection focuses on the role of social interaction, while the second one is devoted to how language is used in relation to gender.

* + 1. **The Social Construction of Gender**

Confidence, self-reliance, success, toughness, and aggression are the traits that have traditionally been associated to men. Women, on the other hand, have been expected to be men’s counterparts, which is why the desired traits they should possess have conventionally been weakness, dependence, shyness, piety, and purity (Brannon, 2004, p. 162, Sellers, 2001, p. 22). These known characteristics highlight the existence of stereotypes, as well as the employment of binary opposites to determine the classification. A woman’s expected femininity and a man’s expected masculinity have traditionally depended on exhibiting those traits.

This shows that the notions of ´sex´ and ´gender´ have been used as if they meant the same: if biologically speaking, a person was a female, then it followed that she should be feminine, which entailed being The Angel in the House. Even today, both terms tend to be used as if they were interchangeable. However, as West and Zimmerman (Lorber and Farrell, 1991, p. 13) clarify, there is a distinction between the two concepts: ´sex´ relates to a biological difference, while ´gender´ refers to a status achieved that is psychologically, culturally and socially constructed. To elaborate, Freud (1994, pp. 37-38) states that gender is the result of the social construction of categories and dualities, which are used to make sense of the world. This implies that gender is the product of a historical process, and not a biological determination. The social world has been constructed in such a way that there is a division in the physical labour and emotional attitudes expected from men and women. The author says that this was men’s doing, but that some women helped both installing the differences and guaranteeing the system’s validity. These women are called codependents in clinical terms within psychology. (Freud, 1994, p. 45)

Various possibilities have been suggested as an attempt to explain why women ended up being subordinated by men, and kept at home. Griswold (2007, p. 3) posits that men, not being able to become pregnant and give birth, needed to find characteristics that would define them and make them equally important for human survival. In this way, men started to be in charge of dangerous tasks, preserving women’s lives. Being brave and active became core characteristics a man needed to possess. Similarly, Ruspini (2011, p. 6) speculates that the division of roles might be due to the fact that women tended to spend a large part of their lives being pregnant and nursing their children, which implied that men were the ones working to bring food home. In the same way, Freud (1994, pp. 42-43) has also questioned why, when all human beings bear different characteristics, was it our sexual organs that had to be the parameter for categorization and stereotyping. Agreeing with Griswold and Ruspini, Freud explains that the answer lies in ensuring the survival of the species through. However, she protests that survival is far from being an issue in today’s world, and that therefore, attitudes towards sex and gender need to change so as not to let anatomy determine our identity and opportunities in life.

According to Lorber and Farrell (1991, p. 11), “we can ´do´ gender in ways that maintain existing gender relations, or we can challenge them”. Risman and Davis (2013, p. 747) indicate that “gender inequality is produced, maintained, and reproduced at each of the three levels of social analysis”: the individual, the interactional and the institutional. At the individual level, the person identifies him- or herself as either male or female on biological basis. ‘Enculturation’ (i.e. the process of adapting to the culture in which one lives), the authors clarify, might make women feminine and men masculine, though not always. It is at the interactional level that categorizations are used and stereotypes of men and women are created. At the institutional level these stereotypes are engraved through various practices.

Nieto (2004, p. 27) and Ruspini (2011, p. 5) elaborate on the interactional and institutional levels to describe how gender conventions are transmitted socially through interaction, from one generation to the next. Parents and family members tend to assign a specific gender to a baby even before birth by buying certain clothes and toys as soon as they know what the biological sex is. During childhood, boys and girls are usually encouraged to behave in certain ways. For example, in order to become “proper men”, boys might be told to show braveness and confidence, and to avoid crying. Later in life, the expected traits and roles associated to gender are strengthened by different institutions like the school and the church, and reinforced through exposure to mass media and society in general.

The identity that is formed by acquiring certain traits becomes the “essential nature” of the person. This “essential nature” is unconsciously used in social interactions as a parameter to judge and discern people (Lorber and Farrell, 1991, pp. 16-17). According to Brannon, (2004, pp. 169-170) when having to assess whether a person is a man or a woman, we instinctively compare the observable characteristics against a system with four categories: “traits, behaviours, physical characteristics and occupations.” This supports the argument that through interaction people stereotype and are stereotyped, making it a cyclical process.

Freud (1994, p. 39) is interested in the idea of subverting the stereotypes. When we are born, we come into a world that is already organized, consisting of specific beliefs, rules, customs and expectations that have long been agreed upon. Changing these established patterns can be a slow process, entailing severe resistance. Through categorization, people are grouped together and, in time, they share a common history. When individuals that are categorized as belonging to a certain group do not behave according to expectations, they come out of the norm, causing the consensual social constructions to shake. Therefore, deconstruction needs to be carried out by large groups, and not by single individuals, who would be categorized as rebels, or mentally ill because of defying social standards.

Juliano (2008, p. 20) remarks that the emancipation of women triggered a need to readjust the social roles typically associated with men and women. This makes it possible to regard the concept of gender as consisting of more than binary opposite characteristics. Instead, men and women can identify themselves with a variety of femininities and masculinities according to their own preferences and situations in life.

* + 1. **Discursive Construction of Gender**

The discursive construction of gender refers to the role of language in ´doing gender´. Baker and Ellece (2011, p. 52) describe Butler’s (1991, p. 21) gender performativity theory by asserting that gender is performative and repetitious: “Language is one way (out of many) that people perform gender- by accessing society’s gendered discourses about acceptable ways of being male or female, most of us develop gendered linguistic performances, based on features including pitch, speed, lexical choice and topic.”

As appreciated throughout the previous sections, differences between men and women can be observed at the biological, the evolutionary and the social level. In addition, various authors have asserted that men and women also differ linguistically: “females are supposed to be more gossipy, involved and cautious about offending others than males who engage in more joke-telling, report talk, problem solving, giving orders and talking about themselves” (Baker and Ellece, 2011, pp. 50-51). In 1922, Jespersen declared that “women’s language use is deficient to men’s” (p. 158). On the other hand, Baker and Ellece also point out that, in her book *Language and Women’s Place* (1975), Lakoff claimed that women’s language being “polite, hyper-correct and concerned with ensuring that conversations run smoothly” is a result of men’s exerting dominance through language. Based on both Lakoff (1975) and Spender’s (1980) description of women’s language, Mills (2012, p. 17) adds that, in comparison to men, women show less confidence, fluency and logic, and they use more tag questions, modal verbs, and co-operative strategies in conversations. They also interrupt less, and are less competitive. Baker and Ellece (2011, p. 158) remark that these views have been criticized because of being over generalized conclusions to studies that lack representative samples of empirical evidence. Recent studies show that differences in language depend on more variables than the man-woman sexual difference.

As Mills (2012, pp. 18-20) remarks, Virginia Woolf and French feminists had already made the point that the language used by men and women was different. Woolf (in Cameron 1998, p. 37) complained that the ´male´ sentence was unfitting for a woman writer because of being full of nominalizations, formalities and impersonal statements (Woolf, 1965, pp. 204-205). Thus, she argued for a ´female sentence´ which should be less heavy, less pompous, and “of a more elastic fibre”. Similarly, Cixous (Wilcox, 1990) assigned a new positive value to the negative characteristics usually associated to women. Therefore she proposed *écriture féminine*, which “appeals back to the bodily experience that is prior to the separation of the child from the mother, and thus to that which is prior to the imposition of the father’s law.” (Edgard and Sedgwick, 2002, p. 103). Mills’ (2012, p. 20) criticism to Woolf and Cixous includes marking that Woolf seems to over generalize formal register triggered by usage in the public sphere, and that Cixous’ suggestion of female language is reactive, and therefore still involving dualisms. There is a need for subversion, not inversion.

*Sexist Language*

According to the more extreme views, men use language to subordinate women, and women respond by tiptoeing around men in their language use. This reveals the existence of sexism in language, and it can be observed in a range of ways, for example by referring to stereotypes, by using generic terms, by employing derogative or offensive words, or terms that imply objectification (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 129). Mills (2012, pp. 8-9) states that women do feel discriminated by these linguistic patterns, but assures that feminists see language as an arena of negotiation of power. Mills (1995, p. 83) offers Vetterling-Braggin’s definition of sexist language: “[a statement] is negative if its use constitutes, promotes or exploits an unfair or irrelevant or impertinent distinction between the sexes.” Sexist language can cause participants in a communication act to feel discriminated or confused. Therefore, it is necessary that the speaker or writer makes a conscious choice to use non-sexist language. However, some feminist suggest that discrimination through the use of sexist language is often unintentional due to being unconscious. This means that sexist language could be reformed, but the change in sexist patterns in language has to be done at the institutional level so as to be able to reach larger sectors more uniformly and consistently. Thus, feminists have encouraged institutions to adopt sexist-free language policies when producing official documents (p. 87). Mills goes through some of the linguistic points that need to be considered in order to develop non-sexist language policies.

The use of gender-specific generic pronouns should be avoided for two reasons: first of all, they discriminate by excluding the possibility of a female being addressed. In addition, they confuse the reader or listener because of not knowing whether the pronoun is being used generically, or with a real gender reference. Mills illustrates with an example where ´he´ and ´his´ are supposed to be used generically, though it can also be interpreted as an overgeneralization that authors can only be men: “When an author has completed his manuscript, he can send it to the publishers”. Mills adds that “professors, scientists and engineers tend to be labelled as necessarily male, and nurses, librarians, secretaries and models as females” (pp. 87-88). A similar phenomenon occurs with generic nouns, where the use of ´man´, in a phrase, or as an affix excludes women or causes confusion. As Mills illustrates, “Prehistoric Man” refers to human beings, though leaving women linguistically out of the picture. The same is the case in ´man-power´, ´fireman´, and ´policeman´, where, although they might be meant to have generic reference, it is usually understood as referring to a man. Here, Mills highlights, there are sometimes truly generic nouns that can be used as alternatives, for example ´fire-fighter ´ and ´police officer´. The author also comments that the usage of ´-man´ is so spread that even when naming a relatively new item as ´walkman´, sexist language was used (pp. 89-91). Likewise, using affixes for the female equivalent of a male occupation makes the female term marked, and therefore a deviation from the norm: ´actress´, ´lady poet´ or ´poetess´ (p. 95).

Among the suggestions for moving towards a gender-free language, Mills (pp. 96-97) includes using ´Ms´ instead of ´Mrs´ or ´Miss´ so as not to be compelled to reveal the marital status of a woman. She also urges people to use generic terms (to refer to both men and women) instead of the gender biased ones (e.g. ´chairperson´ instead of ´chairman´). As alternatives to generic pronouns, the author proposes using plural pronouns, or writing ´s/he´ to include both a male and a female audience; using the female pronoun as generic, or using the masculine pronoun, but explicitly indicating that it has generic reference. Another option, she suggests, is to write the sentence in the passive form.

*Politeness*

As expressed above, Lakoff claimed that men dominate through language and that women do their best to make the communicative act run smoothly. Moreover, Mill asserted that feminists viewed language as an opportunity to negotiate power. These practices can be observed as taking place in the performance of politeness and impoliteness.

In order to present Brown and Levinson’s (1987) model of ´politeness´, Mills (2002, p. 75) explains that during an interaction, each participant wants to maintain a particular self-image, which is referred to as *face*. *Positive face* and *negative face* are two sides of the same coin, the first one consisting of “our desire for appreciation and approval”, and the latter one relating to “our desire to remain autonomous and not be imposed on” (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 45). A *Face Threatening Act* is a threat to a person’s face, which, as it is emotionally charged, requires repair, or else the communication act might come to an end. Maintaining or enhancing the person’s face is called *facework* and can be preventive or restorative, which requires politeness (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 45). Mills highlights that politeness can be positive or negative, the first one producing closeness, for example by using compliments, while the second one triggers distance by showing deference. In Bousfield’s words (2007, pp. 211-212), impoliteness is “the issuing of intentionally gratuitous and conflicting face-threatening acts”. Impoliteness can be explicit (attacking, producing uneasiness, or denying the person’s needs) or implicit (for example by being sarcastic or being impolite in an ambiguous way). Bousfield notes that, for impoliteness to work, it must be understood as a face-threatening act by somebody else apart from the author or speaker.

*Detective Talk*

Inspired by the differences in male and female language described so far, Ortells and Posteguillo (2002) conducted a study of speech interaction between men and women in detective fiction. The material they analysed consisted of 79 on-to-one dialogues taken from eight novels, two by male authors, and two by female authors. Their aim was to check the presence or absence of the male and female stereotypes of “the trivial chattering, nagging woman” and “the strong, silent, long-suffering man”. They also wanted to find out whether male and female detectives talked similarly or differently, whether their way of talking differed from other male and female characters, and whether the author’s sex influenced the results.

As part of their theoretical framework, they noted that women had generally been associated with using certain linguistic features like questions, tag questions, and lexicalized expressions as ´well´, and ´you know´. Tag questions, the authors clarified, can have modal or affective meaning, expressing a degree of certainty, or an attitude towards the listener respectively. The first kind of tag questions is typically used by men, while the second one is common among women.

The results found in the analysis included, first of all, that the depiction of detective talk might have been influenced by whether the author was a man or a woman. Moreover, neither male nor female stereotypes were depicted in the material analysed; and, although it was found that men and women talk differently, they do so opposing the expected patterns: female detectives ask fewer questions than men since “female detectives in female written novels only ask more questions when talking to other women”. However, their speech differs from the speech of other female characters: female detectives do not use as many question tags, or lexicalized expressions.

The authors concluded that there might be some indication that female detectives come closer to using their male colleagues’ language. Detective fiction “tends to eliminate gender differences because female writers intend to introduce their leading female detective characters into the typically male domain of the detective profession”. However, the fact that female detectives ask fewer questions than male detectives shows that these female characters do not enjoy complete equality to their male colleagues.

* 1. **Characterising Gender**
     1. **Characterisation**
        1. **Principles in characterisation**

Abrams (2009, pp. 42-43) defines *characters* as the portrayal of persons in fictional works and *characterisation* as the way in which a fictional person receives a distinctive character. Child (1966, pp. 4, 7) notes that the way we know a character in fiction differs from the way in which we form impressions of people’s characters in real life. This is because the characterisation of a character in a novel depends absolutely on the author’s verbal descriptions. Characters are then characterised as “possessing particular moral, intellectual, and emotional qualities” which can be perceived in their actions and dialogues, that is to say, what they do, what they say, and how they say it (Abrams, 2008, p. 42). The way in which the characters of Poirot and Miss Marple are characterised in the novels might shed light on the conception of gender at the time, as well as Agatha Christie’s stance on them.

In *A dictionary of Narratology,* Prince (2003, p. 1957) distinguishes between *direct* and *indirect* characterisation. The former involves a straightforward retelling of the character’s traits by himself, by another character, or by the narrator. In the latter, the reader is required to infer those traits through the “character’s actions, reactions, thoughts and emotions”.

Abrams (2008, p. 43) adds two other strategies in which characterisation can be achieved: *telling* and *showing*. Telling consists in the narrator providing the reader with descriptions of the various characters. This method is considered subjective because the reader needs to trust the narrator’s appreciations. Showing, on the other hand, is believed to be more objective as it consists in presenting the characters’ actions, dialogues and thoughts in a non-intrusive way. It is also known as “dramatic mode”, which captures its nature as it equates it to a play. Agreeing with Abrams, Child (1966, p. 20) marks that “when an author wants to display his people, he puts them together and sets them to talking”. This means that we have access to the character’s mind through their verbal interactions, either with other characters in the form of dialogues, or with themselves in the form of soliloquies. The repetition of certain actions, thoughts and ideas become mannerisms that characterise the character (p. 18). Regarding how objective or subjective these methods are, Booth (1983, pp. 8, 20) reminds us that although showing puts the reader in a spying or eavesdropping situation, getting the information first-hand, it is the author of the work’s decision what kind of information the reader will collect. Both methods of characterisation, whether subtle or not, unveil the author’s message concerning social situations, and are therefore highly relevant for this study.

Child exemplifies the concept of characterisation by referring to detective stories and the tendency that readers rereading a story after many years can generally remember some of the main characters, but not how the story ends. This, the author suggests, is a consequence of the combination of characterisation and the element of surprise at the end of a detective fiction: characters are portrayed throughout the story, and the reader forms an idea of their motives based on what they do, say and think. However, the conclusions the reader draws about one or more of the characters turn out to be false as evidence reveals who the criminal is during the last few pages of the story. Because of this late change in characterisation, the reader does not have a chance to reformulate the image of the character responsible for the crime, and therefore tends to remember its more salient traits (Child, 1966, p. 27-28).

* + - 1. **Gender in characterisation**

Hourihan (1997, pp. 15-19) states that slaves and women have historically been considered to be lacking intellectual capacities. This has been both reflected and naturalized in narratives, which are plagued with masculine discourses of power, where female characters play the part of helping or complicating the life of the hero. The author describes three mechanisms usually employed to achieve the subordination of women in literature: dualism, female character types, and the hero’s point of view.

As described in section 1.3.1, dualism refers to the binary opposite characteristics men and women are supposed to have due to their sex. These traits have been observed in fictional characters from the 16th and 17th centuries, when there was a change in the attitudes towards gender roles: reason, temperance, and sovereignty became male qualities, while women were associated with irrationality, passivity and deviance (Zipes, 1991, p. 33). Sunderland (2011, p.94-95) exemplifies this by underlining the active-passive dichotomy between fictional princes and princesses characters.

The female character types are also defined in terms of opposition to their male counterparts: a wife or mother is good, nurturing and stays at home; a bride is a young virgin, eligible for marriage due to her passivity and delicacy; and the wicked is ugly, jealous and active. Beauty triggers jealousy and competition among female characters because it is the valuable virtue that leads to marriage, which is women’s fulfilment. On the other hand, men’s accomplishment involves monetary success (Hourihan, 1997, pp.161, 193-198; Sunderland 2011, p.92-95). Plain (2001, p. 46-47) observes that several studies on acceptable and unacceptable modes of femininity after the First World War show that stereotypes include the expected virgin, the famous prostitute, the admired Angel in the House, and the inappropriate New Woman. According to the author, Christie, among other women writers, defies conventions by depicting psychotic tendencies in “the respectable mother” character, instead of the unfulfilled childless spinster. Because of this Christie is considered to have contributed to a reworking of the female stereotype through her novels.

A first-person point of view triggers the reader’s sympathy with the hero (Hourihan, 1997, pp.38, 41, 44). However, since hero stories tended to be male stories, both male and female readers are made to agree with the hero’s values, naturalizing subordination. According to Fries (2000, p. 60-68), a *hero* and a *heroine* are a male and a female character respectively who comply with the social expectations for their own sex (e.g. a man being strong, a woman being weak). This means that a hero is expected to be brave and protective, while a heroine is to stay at home and wait. The concept of a *female hero* covers the female character who ventures forth, disregarding her “assigned place in society” and assuming aspects of the male role. The author classifies Snow White as a heroine, and Jane Eyre as a female hero.

Rhennhak (2010, pp. 2-3) affirms that women writers “have always written about men”, deconstructing patriarchal structures by portraying gender interactions according to their interests, and delineating new types of masculinities that could appeal to women. The author complains that female-authored masculinity has not been sufficiently studied which helps perpetuate the idea that masculinity can only be constructed by men writers. “The male characters of female novelists represent the authors’ negotiations with the ideologies of gender, class, and sexuality, as much as their female characters”. Hourihan (1997, pp. 205-206) agrees with this and remarks that inversion and subversion are not the same: to make a change in binary opposite gender roles, alternative ideals should be offered.

* + 1. **Detective Fiction and Gender**

Although detective fiction has been associated with puzzle tales from the Enlightenment period, there is a general consensus that the figure of the detective emerged in the 19th century. Before this moment, crime was unmasked through social events, but readers received with enthusiasm a fictional detective who went out to investigate, found clues, and identified criminals (Evans, 2009, p. 4; Pittard, 2011, p. 211). The detective was usually accompanied by an official or an unofficial partner who was “less intelligent but better integrated into the social world” (Evans, 2009, p. 52). Readers enjoyed the narrative game for it entailed an intellectual challenge that functioned as “as an anaesthetic for the horrors of war” (Pittard, 2011, p. 214). This earned the genre the label of “literature of convalescence”.

According to Knox and other writers part of the Detection Club, “detective fiction should be concerned with puzzles rather than crimes as such, and it should elaborate its puzzles in strict obedience to the rules of logic and fair play” (Ousby, 1994, p. 254), which meant that the reader and the detective should have access to the same kinds of clues to solve the case (Evans, 2009, p. 56; Pittard, 2011, pp. 21-214).

Ousby (1994, p. 253) quotes W. H. Auden’s summary of the plot of a detective fiction: “a murder occurs; many are suspected; all but one suspect, who is the murderer, are eliminated; the murderer is arrested or dies”. Evans (2009, p. 17) adds that the solution of the crime usually restores order in society. It was precisely this social order, together with morality (“its limits, its meaning and its value”), and tension among social classes that preoccupied writers. Detective fiction deals with people’s fears of the crimes that could be committed against individual people or society in general (Evans, 2009, pp. 2-3, 7). In Plain’s words (2001, p. 3), “Crime fiction in general, and detective fiction in particular, is about taming the monstrous”.

The ´golden age´ of detective fiction (1920-1930) encompassed both men and women writers. Evans (2009, p. 56-59) contends that women authors tended to not allow their female characters more independence than what was usual at the time, which might be due to these authors already being the target of enough prejudice because of working for money in a men’s world. The First World War did trigger changes regarding gender roles, but there was still much scepticism as to how to react to the new situation. This mixture of hope for more independence and fear of social reactions to the change is reflected in many detective stories by women writers. However, some women writers explored some of the new possibilities for female characters, leaving behind “the heroines of nineteenth-century fiction whose only work is the work related to marriage and the home” (p. 59).

Evans (2009, pp. 58-59, 62, 68-69) compares Agatha Christie to Dorothy Sayers by affirming that Christie welcomes modernity in her work, while Sayers displays a conservative nostalgia, keeping social conventions and gender ideals. Although Christie stays within the European racial boundaries, she is more pluralistic regarding social classes, reflecting a lack of veneration to the ruling class: she is ready to portray criminals among the aristocrats, showing that upper-class does not mean higher moral values. As for gender roles, Christie shows men and women can be moral and intellectual equals, which is illustrated in the fact that female characters are just as likely to be murderers as men, for they are equally capable of being greedy. In addition, in Christie’s world, female characters enjoy working for money, for example being nurses, actresses, or secretaries. Evans claims that both Poirot and Miss Marple are keen on “happy endings being happy marriages”, though clarifies that Christie is not so rigid about gender stereotypes since she depicts situations where women are not so skilled at domestic work, and men are not so intellectually smart. On the other hand, Evans notes that women who are young and attractive are usually the victims: they are killed because their beauty is associated with sexual seduction and disruption of both social conventions and patterns of inheritance.

Evans (2009, p.74) remarks that Christie’s positive attitude towards modernity can also be seen in her novels written after the Second World War. She did not see the second half of the 20th century as problematic for women, and she encouraged two characteristics within the genre: comfortable spinsterhood free from negative stereotypes, and female intelligence based on domestic and local knowledge.

* + - 1. **The Male Detective**

“Whether the detective is male or female, straight or gay, she or he always exists in negotiation with a series of long-established masculine codes” (Plain, 2001, p. 11). As mentioned in previous sections, this highlights the fact that ´the masculine´ is the norm, and ´the feminine´ is defined as opposing or deviating from it.

Ousby (1994, p. 254) observes that the characterisation of detectives followed “well-worn paths”, and adds that instead of being policemen or private enquiry agents, they were usually gentleman amateurs. According to Ortells and Posteguillo (2002, p. 156), these male protagonists tended to be isolated and individualistic bachelors, who were unbendingly honest, and had a dislike for political and social institutions because of their propensity for corruption. Cranny-Francis (1988, p. 70) points out that the male detective usually showed little personal interest in the case he was solving, and that he tended to reveal the identity of the criminal either ceremonially or heroically.

During the first part of the 20th century, the fictional detective was characterised following one of two main models: the classical and the hard-boiled detective. The classical detective is described as restoring stability to the community by discovering the criminal with outstanding precision making use of an almost omniscient knowledge of the case. On the other hand, the hard-boiled detective is described as living in a “hostile urban environment”, without the class or money the classical detective enjoys, and his method for solving crime is more connected to violence than deduction. Agatha Christie’s detectives, Plain (2001, p. 4) marks, belong to the classical tradition. Despite their differences, both traditions seem to be on conservative side as far as gender is concerned due to an overrepresentation of the fictional male detective in the interwar period (p. 25).

Kungl (2006, p. 12) refers to Light’s account of how the characterisation of the male detective changed after the First World War, going from being a “confident British middle-class hero in the old mould” to one perceived as “garrulous and full of badinage and banalities”. This, the author explains, followed a need of presenting a male protagonist as less victorious and more humble, with an “agonised sense of English manliness”.

In connection to this, Griswold (2007, pp. 1-4) investigates the perceived masculinity in four fictional detectives belonging to different eras: Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey, Mike Hammer and Kate Martinelli. Here only the first three detectives will be referred to since they are the ones that are contemporaries to Agatha Christie.

Griswold posits that crimes show what a society fears, and that therefore, detectives need to possess certain qualities to defend society against different kinds of crimes. She explains that the changes in the role of men mirror the changes in society, and that therefore sociologists Pleck and Pleck (1980) have classified the roles of men in five different periods, each with a different definition of what masculinity is: “The Agrarian Period (1630-1820), the Commercial Period (1820-1860), the Strenuous Life Period (1861-1919), the Companionate Providing Period (1920-1965), and After 1965” (p. 4). Although this classification is based on masculinity in USA, Griswold describes Holmes explicitly, and Wimsey and Hammer implicitly following this framework.

Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes is the first fictional male detective Griswold (2007) examines. She highlights the relevance of the social context that preoccupied the Victorians around the time this detective made its appearance: men were undergoing a “crisis of masculinity”. Concerns regarding the role of men were mainly triggered by “the woman question”, and the roles that the New Woman started performing in the public sphere (p. 2). Analysing Holmes according to the He would be classified as belonging to ‘The Strenuous Life’ period, which is described as a time in which although men were known to have double moral standards, they were expected to honour all ladies and stay pure until marriage. In addition, masculinity in this period involved being physically active, showing bravery, and having control in the public sphere (pp. 4-5). She compares Sherlock Holmes to a hunter because of his urge to preserve the society from moral damage. She describes him as a thinking, rather than emotional character (p. 23), whose situation as a bachelor allows him the freedom of choosing which cases he wants to take, without having the responsibility of earning an income for the family (p. 19). He uses “the newest and most intellectual weapons available to the Victorian- the sciences of logic, psychology, and chemistry”. This, combined with his disregard for physical danger, makes him a model of masculinity for Western culture according to Griswold (pp. 2-3).

The second detective under Griswold’s (2007) magnifying glass is Sayers’ Lord Peter Wimsey, who belongs to a period that felt the repercussions of the war. He is described as a warrior who experienced horror, and he therefore represents the generation by being “polite, charming, unemotional, and urbane” (p. 35). The ideal of masculinity here forbids any social display of emotional distress because of the war (p. 40). Just as Holmes, Wimsey embodies intelligence, persistence and bravery, though he is humble about it, instead of showing off (p. 35). In addition, Wimsey is portrayed as practicing sports, which was now a new demand for proving masculinity, after women had started invading men’s public sphere (pp. 42-43).

Spillane’s Mike Hammer, the third detective Griswold (2007) analyses, represents the generation of the Second World War. This hard-boiled American detective demanded justice in the form of an eye for an eye. He proves masculinity in his independence, in his interest in women, and in his high level of pain tolerance: being masculine implied being “the biggest predator in the jungle” (p. 78). As opposed to Holmes and Wimsey, this character almost does not follow any reasoning process to solve crime. The only three emotions he displays are self-contempt, anger, and lust. This represents the tough-guy stories that gained popularity during the 1920s and 1930s (p. 75).

Concentrating now on critics’ appreciations of Hercule Poirot, it should be first noted that he is considered to be significantly less masculine than other detectives of his time (Plain, 2001, p. 26). He is not interested in proving his masculinity by being active, adventurous or engaging in men’s sports (Evans, 2009, p. 73). Pittard (2011, p. 216) observes that the thematic concerns of post-World War I regarding “dirt, impurity and contamination” influenced Poirot’s depiction as fastidious. However, Poirot’s success as a detective is based on three skills: his ability to decode women, his understanding of motives, and his accurately reading of corpses (Plain, 2001, p. 31).

* + - 1. **The Female Detective**

Kungl (2006, pp. 7-11) offers a valuable account of the development of the fictional female detective, linking the changes in her characterisation to the changes in the detective fiction as a genre, and the social changes in late Victorian England. She explains that industrialization and urbanization shook the established order in British society, producing uneasiness regarding modernization and imperialistic goals. In addition, as mentioned in section 1.2.1, ´The Woman Question´ had already been worrying various sectors of the population for some decades, and it could only be accentuated during the changes in the late Victorian Age.

Victorian women writers were of course not foreign to the place a woman occupied in society, and as a matter of fact, these writers had long been using their writings to express opposition to the Victorian ideal, although their own situation as working women was usually questioned and looked down on. The influence of the social turmoil of the time can be appreciated in the female characters of sensation fiction written in the middle of the 19th century. These characters followed the stereotypes of the so-called *Fallen Women* (i.e. the prostitute, the spinster, the lesbian, and the intellectually thirsty woman) who were put in unusual situations according to the standards of the time. In this way, women writers could fight against the considered “unaccepted” roles women played in society either willingly or unwillingly. Writers of detective fiction went a step further to depict women working as detectives, thereby placing them in a position of power, which could, according to Kungl’s belief, show that women writers used the fictional female detectives to establish their own professional authority in fiction.

Yet, compared to men’s high literature, sensation fiction was regarded popular, mass-produced, target to women, and narratively weak due to a focus on emotions. This categorization, combined with the fact that the protagonists of this fiction fell outside the expected ideal, put women writers in an uneasy position. However, the detective fiction as a genre soon started to show changes, demanding now plausible plots, character development, and fair play, as mentioned in the previous section. These new rules necessarily meant that the fictional female detective would undergo some developments.

*The pre-war fictional female detective*

It was the First World War that was a decisive factor in the change of characterisation of the fictional female detective. As mentioned in section 1.2.1, before the war, it was only women belonging to the working-class who could be employed as industrial or domestic workers. Middle-class families, in an attempt to resemble the upper-classes, were customarily following the Victorian Ideal of the Angel in the House. This implied that women were heavily discouraged from any kind of work outside the private sphere, even in cases where they needed to work because of not having a man who could sustain them financially. In such situations, women were allowed to take jobs as teachers or governesses, or sell homemade decorations (Kungl, 2006, p. 27).

As women were being kept within the private sphere, there were no female officers in the police force. This meant that there were no parameters of such a situation in real life to be imitated in a fictional portrayal. As a consequence, women writers could create a character completely out of their imagination without needing to follow a certain form. The result was a character who could possess characteristics, skills and responsibilities that were not usually associated to women at those times, but which many women fought to gain: they were “young, attractive, single, middle-class women thrown on hard times (…) They solved crimes using their immense knowledge of the domestic sphere and social world, in which they had been forced to become experts” (Kungl, 2006, p. 12). They were women making a living out of their profession.

*The post-war fictional female detective*

It was during the war that women’s help was required in the public sphere in jobs that they had never performed before. The first women police appeared therefore during this period, and consisted of unmarried volunteers in their 30s, mostly aristocrats, who had other means of sustaining themselves. There were also middle-class women who had already been working as a nurse, a teacher or a writer (Kungl, 2006, pp. 51-52). They performed their job successfully, and their help was appreciated.

However, once the war was over, they were expected to return to their private sphere and leave the money-earning activities to men. This was not something that women were willing to do, and it was met with a feeling of uneasiness in society since it was taken as if women wanted to displace men from their natural environment. Thus, the image of the woman police became negative, and the image of the young fictional female detective needed to be destroyed as both the real and the fictional image implied a threat to society (Kungl, 2006, pp. 25-26). The fictional female detective needed to be reinvented as a character. As a reaction to these social concerns, during the golden age of detective stories, women writers portrayed a conservative society, where the detective belonged to the middle or upper-class, and kept her femininity and moral values intact. “She is elderly, often amateur, or if she works at all, works in another profession and falls accidentally into detection” (p. 12).

In order to make the fictional female detectives succeed in solving crimes, women writers took advantage of the fields of knowledge women were considered experts in: knowledge of the domestic sphere and knowledge of the human nature. As a matter of fact, Kungl (2007, p. 60) refers to Bargainnier (1981) saying that the setting of these novels tends to be a house, where the female characters are necessarily a part of the plot. These heroines manage to find clues male detectives could not observe because of their lack of training regarding the running of a household, including the servants’ schedule, the organization of items, rules of etiquette and dress, and other habits such as prayers, house-to-house visits, and food traditions (Kungl, 2006, pp. 58-60). In the same way, female intuition –independent of whether considered an innate characteristic, or a socially acquired trait- was also used to the advantage of the female detective, who “could use their intuitive insights to peer into the hearts of the fellow creatures and see hidden truths” (p. 75). Intuition was then employed as a tool to accentuate femininity in female detectives. However, Kungl points out that this tendency started declining during Britain’s golden age of detective fiction since authors started aiming at depicting detectives with more unisex skills for solving crime.

Usually, by solving the crime, the female detective helps to restore social order and values in the community. The author exemplifies with famous female fictional detectives such as Christie’s Miss Marple and Wentworth’s Miss Silver (Kungl, 2006, pp. 12-13). Indeed, when comparing Miss Marple to modern female detectives depicted by women writers, Cranny-Francis (1988, p. 70) states that Christie’s heroine fits the stereotype by being “the moderately well-off gentlewoman with the leisure time to indulge her hobby of sleuthing”. Ortells and Posteguillo (2002, p. 156) note that it was first in 1977 that “the figure of a hard-boiled woman detective made its appearance. Nonetheless, Cranny-Francis (1988, p. 70) emphasizes that even women writing in the 1980s did not escape facing the same concern about femininity and masculinity when depicting their female detectives.

By portraying female characters who were working and using their intellect, and yet still adhered to Victorian values, women writers managed to expand the idea of what a lady could do, without necessarily breaking the norms (Kungl, 2006, p. 57): “The women writers who created these detectives ultimately were able to explore the ways in which women could negotiate and command authority within a male-dominated culture, creating new routes to women’s authorities in the detective fiction genre” (p. 23). As Cranny-Francis (1988, p. 70) notes, the ´re/construction´ of gender is a fascinating practice since it involves making changes, without risking credibility.

In addition to this, these detective novels helped rethink the stereotype of the old spinster, who was regarded as a burden for society. This ´fallen woman´, usually defined by what she did not have (a husband, a family, fulfilment, etc.), was now portrayed with an emphasis on what she did possess: independence and fulfilment through solving cases (Kungl, 2006, pp. 79-80). Moreover, by having an elderly woman solving the puzzle, women writers made a clear point regarding the worth of women at all ages. As it was, members of the community could regard these spinsters as a kind of ornament in the village, and could carelessly commit crimes under the old woman’s nose, underestimating the spinster’s deducting faculties as well as her brave attitude. However, having spinsters starring as amateur detectives proves that their presence in society is not inconsequential (Kungl, 2006, pp. 96-97; Evans, 2009, pp. 59-60).

1. **Methodology and Data**
   1. **Corpus Stylistics**

Corpus stylistics is the methodology chosen to carry out the analysis of gender in the discursive characterisation of Agatha Christie’s Hercule Poirot and Miss Jane Marple.

In a clear and concise way, Bettina (2010, p. 1) explains what corpus stylistics is by relating it to stylistics and corpus linguistics: “Stylistics is the linguistic analysis of literary texts. Corpus linguistics is the electronic analysis of language data. The combination of both disciplines is corpus stylistics, the linguistic analysis of electronically stored literary texts”. Expanding on Bettina’s description of corpus linguistics, Kirk (1996 p. 4) mentions that “it focuses on linguistic performance rather than on competence, (b) it focuses on description rather than on linguistic universals, (c) it focuses on quantitative – as well as qualitative - models of language, and (d) it presents a more empiricist rather than a rationalist view of scientific inquiry.”

As expressed in the stylistics section of the theory chapter, Jensen (2014b, p. 5) highlights the quantitative aspect of a corpus analysis. He explains that corpus stylistics offers the possibility of conducting a study that is both quantitative and qualitative in nature because of combining corpus methodology with the typically qualitative methodology followed in stylistics. In this way, the analyst obtains empirical material that can be analysed in detail.

The texts analysed form a corpus, and, in Jensen’s (2014a, pp. 117, 120, 121) words, corpora are “principled collections of texts that document naturally occurring spoken or written language”. He clarifies that a corpus cannot consist of a collection of random text archives: a corpus needs to be carefully designed for linguistic analysis, which means that it needs to be representative of the language used in general, as the *British National Corpus* (Davies, 2014), or in a specific domain, as the *Corpus of American Soap Operas* (Davies 2014), or texts by a particular author.

* 1. **Corpora Description**

The analysis is based on ten novels by Agatha Christie, half of them featuring Poirot as the detective, while in the other half it is Miss Marple who solves the case. This means that the data represent language use in a specific domain, i.e. Agatha Christie’s writing. The material is divided into two corpora, a Poirot corpus (PC), consisting of 307,159 words, and a Miss Marple corpus (MC), containing 303,513 words. Because of the difference in the number of words, their frequency is normalised to frequency per 300,000.

Regarding the criteria for selecting the texts, two points have been fundamental: firstly, the novels needed to be electronically available, and the files needed to be converted to text files, for which the AntFileConverter 1.0.0 (Anthony, 2013) has been useful. Secondly, the data needed to be representative of Christie’s detective novels, where the two detectives in question star. According to the information provided by Campell (2001, pp. 14-16, 18, 34), Miss Marple is the main character in 12 of Christie’s detective novels and 20 of her short stories, while Poirot stars in 33 of Christie’s detective novels and 53 short stories. Although Poirot dies in *Curtain*, published in 1975, and Miss Marple retires in *Sleeping Murder*, published in 1976, both novels were written “during the London Blitz in the early years of World War II” (Sanders and Lovallo, 1985, p. 373). This means that, chronologically speaking, the last novel featuring Poirot is *Elephants Can Remember* (1972), and the last one featuring Miss Marple is *Nemesis* (1971) (Hack, 2009, pp. 225-226). The novels selected for the analysis were published between 1930 and 1965 in the case of Miss Marple, and between 1920 and 1972 in the case of Poirot. This makes the data diachronic, which enables the possibility of gaining insights into the characterisation of the two detectives as a whole, and not only during a specific novel, or a certain period of Agatha Christie’s writing career. The following table presents an overview of the novels in each corpus. Before each novel, the abbreviation codes for reference throughout the analysis have been specified.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PC**( Poirot Corpus) | **MC** (Miss Marple Corpus) |
| **MAS:** *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (Christie, 1920)  **MOE:** *Murder on the Orient Express* (Christie, 1934)  **HPC:** *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* (Christie, 1938)  **TAF:** *Taken at the Flood* (Christie, 1948)  **ECR:** *Elephants Can Remember* (Christie, 1972) | **MAV:** *The Murder at the Vicarage* (Christie, 1930)  **BIL:** *The Body in the Library* (Christie, 1942)  **TMF:** *The Moving Finger* (Christie, 1943)  **FPA:** *4.50 from Paddington* (Christie, 1957)  **ABH:** *At Bertram's Hotel* (Christie,1965) |

As Stockwell (2011, p. 10) notes, “any stylistic analysis of readable length cannot possibly be exhaustive”, which is why it is necessary to select which parts and aspects of the texts are to be analysed. Consequently, the analysis of characterisation will be narrowed down to examining the lexical level of language, with a focus on the semantic fields that appear in each corpus, and the schemata they trigger. The grammatical level of language will also be of used in order to explain certain structures that convey specific meaning.

In addition, inspired by Mahlberg and McIntyre’s (2011, p. 4) statement that “keywords can be analysed into categories that are provided by a specific theory”, this study will take a starting point in the concepts that have been mentioned throughout the theory chapter as being associated to masculinity and femininity. Accordingly, the following list provides an overview of such concepts.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Women related** | **Men related** |
| **Concepts** | Asexual  Beauty  Curiosity  Dependence  Devotion  Femininity  Goodness  Human nature  Ignorance  Innocence  Insecurity  Intuition  Maternity  Morality  Passiveness  Patience  Piety  Purity  Sacrifice  Shyness  Weakness | Activeness  Adventurousness  Aggression  Braveness  Competition  Confidence  Double moral standards  Emotional toughness  Income/money/pay  Intelligence  Knowledge  Logic  Masculinity  Ownership  Persistence  Protection  Science  Self-reliance  Sexual  Strength  Success  Unemotional  War |
| **Spheres** | Church  Hospital  House  Library  School  Village stores | Bank  Men’s stores  Outside areas  Transportation  Work place |
| **Action**  **And**  **Speech** | Domestic skills  Feel  Hear-overhear  House related work  House-to-house visits  Idle  See / look / watch  Talk / chat  Voluntary work  Work  ***Language use***: rapport, questions, use of modality, affective use of tag questions, politeness | Deduce  Fight  Interrupt  Investigate / Analyse  Observe  Say  Sports  Think  Work for money  ***Language use***: report, formal, interruptions, joke-telling, modal use of question tags. |
| **Characters** | Angel  Bride / virgin - Miss  Lady  Lesbian  Nurse  Office girls  Prostitute  Spinster  Teacher / governess  Wife / mother - Mrs  Witch / wicked  Writer  ***Detectives***: young, attractive, single, middle-class women using their immense knowledge of the domestic sphere and social world; vs elderly, often amateur using knowledge of the domestic sphere and knowledge of the human nature. | 1st person point of view  Breadwinner  Doer  Fighter  Gentleman  Hero  Mr  Police officer  Soldier  Worker  ***Detectives***: isolated, individualistic bachelor,  Classical detective vs hard-boiled detective, “confident British middle-class hero in the old mould” vs “garrulous and full of badinage and banalities” |

In relation to the list, some points should be noted: the list is not exhaustive, which means that the novels might include extra concepts associated to masculinity and femininity, as well as synonyms or negated antonyms of the listed concepts. Considering this, the list plays the role of brainstormed ideas to begin the searches, as well as parameters to check the results. In addition, the fact that these words appear in the corpora does not mean that they are used to characterise Poirot or Miss Marple, which is the reason why Mahlberg and McIntyre’s idea of using theoretical categories to check keywords will be expanded to checking the results provided by searches using the wordlists, n-grams, clusters, and concordance tools.

The general approach to the analysis in each section consists in starting with wide searches (i.e. keywords or n-grams) to develop a general picture of the content of each corpus. Then, either based on the results of those wide searches, or inspired by the list of words elicited from the theory chapter, the analysis becomes more specific, both by using the wordlist, concordance, collocates and clusters tools, and by looking at selected examples in contexts. In this way, the quantitative results from initial searches can be analysed qualitatively.

For specific searches in tools like wordlist, and clusters, a number of lists of words are used as a means to filter information. These lists were constructed based on the words elicited from the theory section, as seen in the chart above, and they were expanded using inspiration from language learning websites which offer lists of vocabulary areas (Vocabulary.com, 2015; EnchantedLearning.com, 2015). The lists of words used in the analysis are attached as an appendix at the end of this study.

* 1. **The Program**

The computer software used to do the corpus stylistic analysis is called AntConc 3.4.3 and was developed by Anthony in 2014. The program offers eight tools, most of which can be combined with advanced settings to filter and sort results.

The wordlist tool provides a list or all the words present in the corpus. It provides information regarding the frequency of each word, the total number or words, and the total number or different words. It also enables the search for a specific word, and the use of stop lists and lists of words or lemma lists to filter the desired information. The keyword list relies on a reference corpus to provide a list of words that are unusually frequent in comparison to the reference corpus. The Keynes value is an indicator of how infrequent a word is in relation to the same word in the reference corpus. The concordance tool makes it possible to search for a word and obtain a list of results where that word appears in context. The size of the context can be determined by the size of the window (i.e. the number of characters surrounding the word), and the number of words to the left and to the right from the searched term. The plot tool is a visual representation of the occurrence of a term in the different subsections of a given corpus. The clusters tool enables the search of a word to obtain word clusters where the searched term is included. The n-grams tool is similar to the clusters tool, although no search term is used. It presents a list of all clusters of a given size.

1. **Analysis: Gender in Poirot and in Miss Marple**

This chapter is devoted to the corpus stylistics analysis of the selected novels by Agatha Christie. The methodology and data have been explained in chapter two, and the theoretical framework described in chapter one will serve as the parameter to contrast the results of the study and provide interpretations. In order to organise the analysis, the chapter is divided into two sections

The first one is concerned with examining the setting of the novels in order to assess whether Miss Marple and Poirot tend to move within the private or the public spheres. The second section is devoted to the study of characterisation and gender, including the use of titles like Miss and Mr to address people (section 3.2.1), the characters’ characterisation according to the traditional dual traits usually attached to men and women (section 3.2.2), and the skills associated to male and female fictional detectives (3.2.3).

**3.1. Spheres and Settings**

From the titles of the novels, it is already possible to guess some of the settings of the stories: Miss Marple seems to be involved in cases that have something to do with a vicarage, a library, a hotel, and a train. The settings of Poirot’s cases, on the other hand, are not as evident, apart from the reference to the long-distance train, Orient Express.

A glance at the first 200 hits provided by the keyword list of both corpora presents the following physical locations.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PC** | **MC** |
| Warmsley, Vale, America, Africa, Furrowbank, India, Stambul, coach, boudoir, restaurant, corridor, Tadminster, Vincovci | hotel, vicarage, Brackhamton, barn, library, Lucerne, Mead, lane, study, studio, Danemouth, car, road, Gossington, village, St, gate, Boar, bus, street, kitchen, hall, Benham, Athenaeum, barrow, elevator, embankment |

Compared to the PC list, the MC list is more extensive and varied, including locations related to buildings (e.g. hotel, studio, kitchen, elevator), open areas (e.g. village, St.[ Mary] Mead, road, barrow) and transportation (e.g. car, bus). The high rank of these words underlines their significant absence in the PC: Poirot does not appear to be involved with barns, busses or streets. The PC seems to include more international locations, being ´boudoir´ the only actual reference to a private place, which, because of being in French, is impregnated with some sophistication.

In order to increase the reliability of the results observed so far, five lists with different kinds of locations were used as filters in the wordlist tool: countries, cities, transportation, places in town, and parts of a building. The goal of these searches was to examine whether the main characters seem to be more international or more local, which would mark a tendency to them being more involved in the public or the private sphere. Therefore the following tables provide the results obtained from each search with a marker indicating the number of times the main character is associated to the specific item on the list.

Naturally, these results show a tendency, and not a direct indication of a strong connection between the characters and the places involved. This is because it might be that a character’s association to a certain location is due to other reasons than having visited the place. In the same way, it might be that a mentioned country is referenced later in the text by using a pronoun, which would increase the frequency of the location in question. Similarly, locations tend to be mentioned once to establish the setting in place of a story, and characters are usually mentioned within that setting, although the location is not repeated for each of the characters.

***Public Sphere***

A wordlist using a list of countries and continents as a filter shows 56 hits in the PC, and 42 hits in the MC. However, a closer look at both lists indicates that not all of those occurrences refer to actual countries since some of the hits include a part of the name of a country (e.g. ´the´, ´new´, ´united´, ´states´). Additionally, a reading of the context in which words like ´turkey´, ´china´, and ´guinea´ are used proves that they refer to the animal, to the porcelain set, and the currency respectively.

After the irrelevant hits were filtered, the resulting list for the PC consists of 22 countries depicted below with normalised frequencies, 2,93 of which relate to Poirot because he either is there or has been there. The rest of the countries tend to relate to the actual or previous location of other characters in the novels. In the case of the MC, the final list presents 15 countries presented below with normalised frequencies, none of which relate directly to Miss Marple. Compared to the MC, the PC seems to present more characters that are well-travelled, including Poirot himself, whereas Miss Marple has not been mentioned in connection to other countries. This supports the initial claim based on the keyword search that the PC has an element of internationality.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | |
| **Freq** | **Country** |  | **Freq** | **Country** |
| 41,02  38,09  10,74  10,74  9,77  7,81  6,84  4,88  3,91  3,91  2,93  2,93  2,93  2,93  1,95  1,95  1,95  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98 | Africa  India  Spain  Switzerland  Egypt  (united) states  France (\*0,98)  Nigeria  Ireland  Syria (\*3,91)  Canada  Germany  Italy  Belgium (\*1,95)  Hong Kong  Russia  Singapore  Bermuda  Iraq  Norway  New Zealand  Sweden |  | 25,70  14,83  11,86  10,87  2,97  2,97  1,98  1,98  1,98  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99 | France  Italy  Switzerland  Ireland  India  Jamaica  Africa  Greece  (United) states  Belgium  Bermuda  Germany  Kenya  Morocco  Portugal |

The wordlist results generated using a list of the 450 largest cities in the European Union were checked for context using the concordance view with a search window size of 200. The advanced search tool was set to include either Poirot or Miss Marple within a context horizon of 20L and 20R, and each city provided by the wordlist result was used as a search term.

As the following tables show using a normalised frequency, although there is not a significant difference, Poirot seems to be more international compared to Miss Marple, who has been only to one city outside of England. It is worth mentioning that, contrary to the results from the country search, the city search tends to show less connection between the locations and the principal characters actually having been there.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | |
| **Freq** | **City** |  | **Freq** | **City** |
| 108,41  15,63  10,74  9,77  2,93  1,95  1,95  1,95  1,95  1,95  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98 | London(\*6,84)  Paris(0,98)  Athens(\*0,98)  Bucharest  Bournemouth  Milan  Newcastle  Oxford  Sheffield  Vienna  Antwerp(\*0,98)  Brussels(\*0,98)  Cambridge  Madrid  Seville  Trieste |  | 118,61  16,80  15,81  7,91  4,94  3,95  2,97  2,97  2,97  1,98  1,98  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99  0,99 | London(\*3,95)  Paris(\*0,99)  Oxford  Milton  Bournemouth(\*0,99)  Eastbourne(\*1,98)  Amsterdam  Dresden  Leeds  Brighton  Swansea  Birmingham  Cambridge  Cardiff  Newport  Norwich  Nottingham  Rome  Verona  Wolverhampton |

The following tables expressed in normalised frequency illustrate the results provided by an examination of the means of transport and travel related vocabulary used both in the corpora in general, and in connection to the detectives in particular. Although both corpora include a vast number of references to the searched items, there is a relevant difference in the number of associations between transportation and Poirot and Miss Marple. This difference agrees with the results discussed regarding cities and countries: as opposed to Miss Marple, Poirot appears to be a man of the world.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | |
| **Freq** | **Transport** |  | **Freq** | **Transport** |
| 199,25  103,53  42,00  42,97  13,67  13,67  13,67  12,70  11,72  11,72 | Train(\*37,11)  Car(\*38,09)  Wagon  Carriage(\*6,84)  Drive(\*0,98)  Journey(\*3,91)  Plane(\*0,98)  Road(\*2,93)  Boat(\*0,98)  Travel(\*0,98) |  | 212,51  149,25  62,27  43,49  29,65  19,77  13,84  11,86  10,87  5,93  5,93 | Car(\*15,81)  Train(\*5,93)  Road  Taxi(\*4,94)  Drive(\*0,99)  Railway  Plane  Travel  Journey(\*0,99)  Cruise  Wagon |

***Private Sphere***

The result tables for places in town and for parts of a building do not show a striking difference between the two corpora, except for the fact that there appears to be a connection between Poirot and men’s places (club, office, and garage).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | |
| **Freq** | **Places** |  | **Freq** | **Places** |
| 248,08  165,06  38,09  38,09  34,18  34,18  32,23  25,39  22,46  16,60  14,65  12,70  11,72  11,72  10,74  9,77  8,79  7,81  6,84  5,86  4,88  3,91  2,93  2,93  2,93  1,95  1,95  1,95  1,95 | House(\*24,42)  Home(\*2,93)  School  Station(\*7,81)  Hospital  Restaurant(\*13,67)  Garden(\*1,95)  Farm  Shop  Club(\*0,98)  Yard  Cottage(\*5,86)  Bar  Market(\*1,95)  Church  Prison  Bank  Hotel(\*4,88)  Park(\*1,95)  Lodge(\*0,98)  University  Cinema  Bridge(\*0,98)  Embassy  Parliament  Bazaar  Chateau  College  Store |  | 304,44  182,86  172,97  76,11  70,18  66,22  41,51  38,55  36,57  36,57  31,63  23,72  21,75  21,75  19,77  15,81  13,84  12,85  11,86  9,88  7,91  6,92  4,94  4,94  4,94  3,95  3,95  2,97  1,98 | House(\*0,99)  Hotel(\*9,88)  Home(\*2,97)  Garden(\*21,75)  Vicarage(\*0,99)  Station(\*1,98)  Barn  School  Church(\*0,99)  Cottage(\*0,99)  Yard  Bridge(\*1,98)  Park(\*0,99)  Shop(\*2,97)  Bank  Club(\*0,99)  Hospital  Bar  Airport  Lodge  Farm  Prison  Courtyard  Museum  Restaurant  Castle  Store  Cathedral  Cinema |

The high number of hits connecting the term ´garden´ with Miss Marple led to a more specific examination of the contexts in which the location appeared. The reason is well captured in the following excerpt where it is possible to see that gardening is both her hobby and her tool for investigating.

Miss Marple always sees everything. Gardening is as good as a

smoke screen, and the habit of observing birds through

powerfull glasses can always be turned to account. (MAV in MC)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | | |
| **Freq** | **Rooms** |  | **Freq** | **Rooms** | |
| 432,67  78,14  82,04  66,42  56,65  28,32  23,44  20,51  19,53  12,70  10,74  7,81  4,88  4,88  4,88  3,91  2,93  2,93  2,93  1,95  1,95  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,98  0,981 | (X) room\*\*  Hall(\*14,65)  Study(\*4,88)  Dining room(\*2,93)  Drawing room(\*9,77)  Bedroom(\*2,93)  Boudoir(\*0,98)  Office(\*0,98)  Kitchen(\*0,98)  Pantry  Nursery  Attic  Library(\*0,98)  Lounge(\*2,93)  Garage(\*1,95)  Ballroom(\*1,95)  Basement  Sitting room  Bathroom  Suite  Showroom  Assembly  Chamber  Porch(\*0,98)  Salon(\*0,98)  Cabin |  | 334,09  155,18  83,03  65,24  60,29  59,31  31,63  28,66  24,71  17,79  12,85  10,87  8,90  3,95  1,98  1,98  1,98  0,99  0,99  0,99 | | (X) room\*\*  Hall(\*2,97)  Study(\*6,92)  Kitchen(\*0,99)  Office  Library(\*3,95)  Lounge(\*4,94)  Studio  Bus(\*3,95)  Bedroom(\*0,99)  Nursery  Bathroom  Ballroom  Suite(\*0,99)  Loft  Porch  Showroom  Assembly  Conservatory  Parlor |

\*\*This result includes every two-word room (for instance sitting room) as well as just the concept ´room´.

**3.2. Dichotomous Traits and Characterisation**

**3.2.1. Miss and Mr: titles used in the corpora**

A keyword search in both corpora having each other as reference corpus places both ´poirot´ and ´marple´ at the top of the lists. This is not surprising, taking into account that they are the main characters in the novels. However, what is worth considering is their keyness value since the keyness value of ´poirot´ is more than double the keyness value of ´marple´: ´poirot´ has a normalised frequency of occurrence of 1987,57, while ´marple´ occurs 981,51 times. This could be interpreted as an indicator that Hercule Poirot is a more star-like character than Miss Marple. It is true, however, that Miss Marple might be addressed or referred to in other ways, but the same phenomenon can occur in the case of Poirot. Moreover, even if it turned out that Miss Marple is mentioned more times than Poirot, but in other ways (e.g. ‘the sweet lady’), the relevance of the name should not be underestimated because of two reasons: the connection of a name to a person’s identity, and the added classifying value the interlocutor places on the reference expression (e.g. ´the sweet lady´ instead of ´the old lady´).

In addition, the keyword list search in the PC shows that, in comparison to the MC, relevant words are of French origin: ´monsieur´, with a frequency of 237,34; ´madame´ with a frequency of 167,99; and ´mademoiselle´, with a frequency of 132,83. These words, as shown in the concordance plot tool, are used in the five novels. The concordance tool shows a strong tendency that these words are spoken by Poirot or used by other characters to address Poirot, which reveals an aspect of Poirot’s identity as an immigrant. The following example illustrates how Poirot addresses a girl by calling her ´Mademoiselle´, while the narrator refers to that character as ´Miss´:

“You are the only patient one, Mademoiselle,” said Poirot to Miss Debenham.

(MOE in PC )

It is worth pointing out that these titles are also used by the narrator to refer to French characters:

"There's no sense in that," said Mademoiselle Meauhourat.

(ECR in PC )

Of the French words, it is only ´madame´ that is present in the MC: it has a frequency of 15,81, where one occurrence is as a part of the name of the museum, Madame Tussauds, and the remaining occurrences refer to a specific character, Madame Joliet, of French origin. A search for the equivalent English terms in both corpora using the wordlist tool shows the following results:

Table 1- Wordlist results of titles in the PC

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **English** | | | **French** | | |
| Word | Rank | Frequency | Word | Rank | Frequency |
| Miss | 173 | 244,17\* | Mademoiselle | 290 | 132,83 |
| Mrs/ mistress | 48 / 773 | 1035,29/39,07 | Madame | 248 | 167,99 |
| Mr/mister | 74 / 6232 | 663,17 / 1,95 | M/Monsieur | ?/243 | 336,06/237,34 |

Table 2- Wordlist results of titles in the MC

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **English** | | | **French** | | |
| Word | Rank | Frequency | Word | Rank | Frequency |
| Miss | 28 | 1497,46\* | Mademoiselle | 0 | 0 |
| Mrs/Mistress | 60 / 1750 | 776,90/12,85 | Madame | 1509 | 15,81 |
| Mr/Mister | 69 / 0 | 710,68 / 0 | M/Monsieur | 0 | 0/0 |

\*´miss´: only the hits referring to the title are included here.

As it can be observed, the English terms prevail in both corpora, also in the Poirot one, despite the high number of French titles. Comparing the number of times that male and female characters are addressed as a whole in the ten novels, the group Mr/Mister/Monsieur has a total normalised occurrence of 1949,2, while the group Miss/Mademoiselle/Mrs/Mistress/Madame occurs 3922,37 times. This seems to point out at a situation where women tend to be addressed by their marital title more often than men are addressed by a title at all. Here it is especially relevant to note that the term Ms, recommended as an alternative to Miss and Mrs, is not present in either of the corpora.

However, it should be marked that these titles are not the only ways to address people since noble titles and work positions are also used, as illustrated in the following table. The high frequency of occurrence of ´sir´ and ´inspector´ in both corpora seems to compensate for the difference shown between Mr/Mister/Monsieur and Mrs/Miss/Madame/Mademoiselle. In addition men tend to be addressed by their job title as a premodifier of their surname.

Table 3- Wordlist results of honour titles and job position in both corpora

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Normalised frequencies** | |
|  | **PC** | **MC** |
| Lady | 222,69 | 248,09 |
| Gentleman | 57,62 | 29,65 |
| Sir | 358,45 | 432,93 |
| Inspector | 12,70 | 489,27 |
| Doctor | 115,25 | 115,65 |
| Superintendent | 247,10 | 109,72 |

These words are used to maintain the level of politeness and, in the case of the reference to Madame Joliet, and the references to Monsieur Poirot, it could be argued that the facework includes accommodating the interlocutor and acknowledging their identity.

Regarding ´miss´, the high frequency of occurrence (1501,42) in the MC is obviously due to the main character’s title. Her surname, Marple, occurs 981,51 times, and by searching for it using the clusters tool with a size of 2 to 2, the results show that 958,77 times, ´miss´ occurs directly to the left of Marple. This could be interpreted as an emphasis to specify her status as a spinster.

An N-gram search for the most frequent two word strings in each corpus reveals that, sorted by frequency, the string ´Miss Marple´ ranks 2ndin the MC, while the first hit that includes ´Poirot´ in the PC is ´said Poirot´, raking 16th. In order to find ´Mr Poirot´ or ´Monsieur Poirot´, which would be the equivalent hit to ´Miss Marple´, it is necessary to go down to ranks 622 and 816 respectively. This supports the claim that Miss Marple is defined in terms of being single, while Poirot does not to be defined using ´Mr´ or ´Monsieur´ before his name. An N-gram search of frequent three word strings shows that both characters are rarely addressed by their full name preceded by their title.

Table 3- N-grams results of two and three word strings containing ´Marple´ and ´Poirot´.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **PC** | | | **MC** | | |
|  | **Rank** | **Normalised**  **Freq** |  | **Rank** | **Normalised**  **Freq** |  |
| 2-2  words | 622  816 | 46,88  38,09 | Mr Poirot  Monsieur Poirot | 2 | 961,74 | Miss Marple |
| 95 | 168,97 | Hercule Poirot | 2248 | 15,81 | Jane Marple |
|  | ? | 130,88 | M Poirot |  |  |  |
| 3-3  words | 5657 | 3,91 | Mr Hercule Poirot | 4600 | 4,94 | Miss Jane Marple |

The difference between the usage of ´mistress´ and ´Mrs´ is also worth mentioning. A clusters search shows that Mrs is exclusively used combined with surnames in both corpora, while a concordance search for ´mistress´ shows a woman in the position of power within the private sphere. The following example illustrates its use:

‘It was nothing to do with me.’

‘But you are the mistress of the house, madame. The servants are your

concern?’

‘Oh yes, of course. But Horbury was my father--in--law’s personal attendant. He did not come under my jurisdiction.’

(HPC in PC)

This example also shows a relevant aspect in the characterisation of Poirot since through his own speech he indicates he expects a married woman to be in charge of how the house is run. This, together with the fact that the woman answered not by rejecting Poirot’s expectations, but by excusing her lack of knowledge, contextualises the novel and the characterisation of the characters according to the context in which the novel was written.

**3.2.2.N-gramming Miss Marple and Poirot**

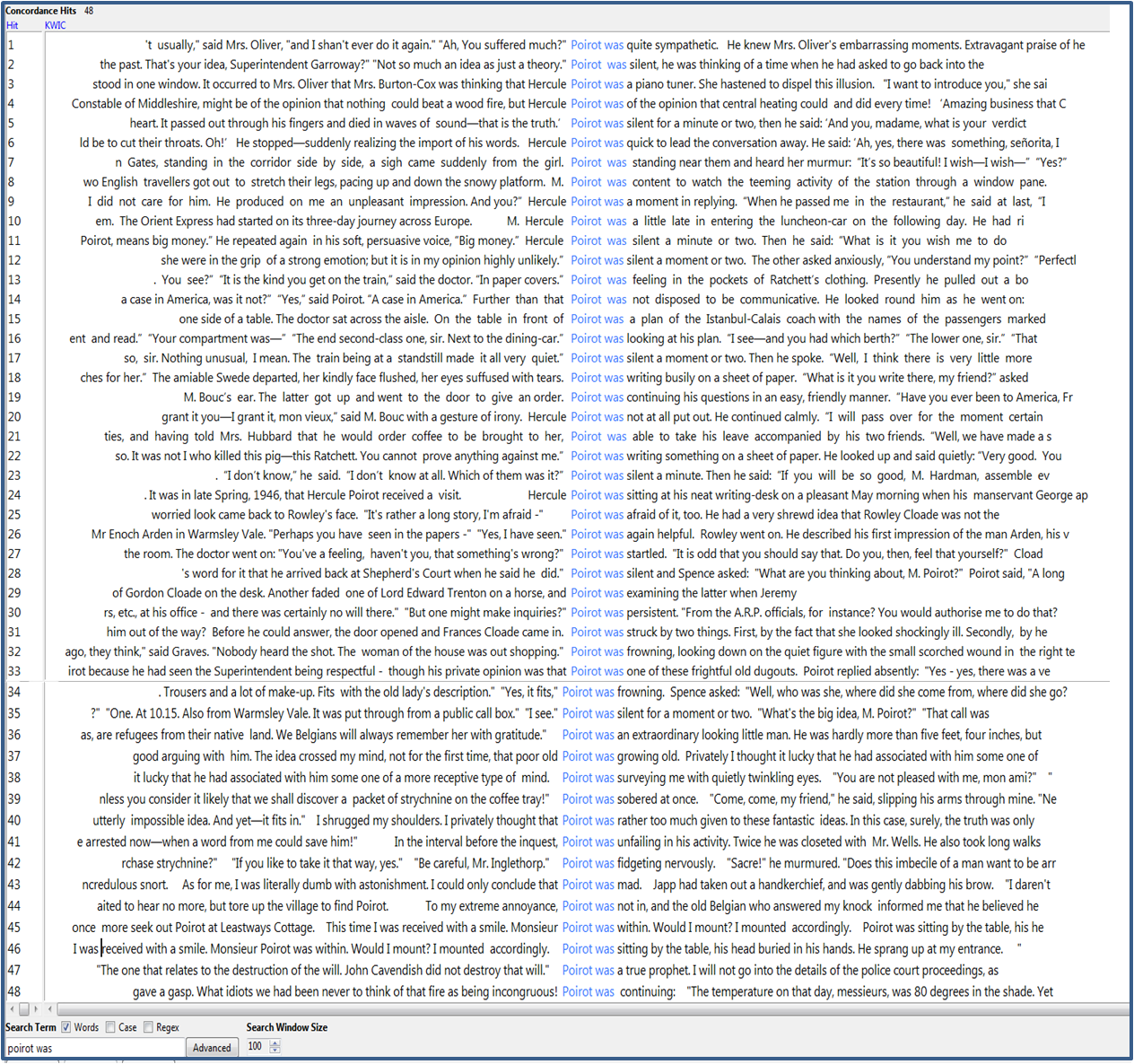
A series of N-gram searches were carried out to see what the most common two-, three-, four- and five- word strings are in each corpus. It is interesting to see that the second most frequent three words occurring together in the MC is ´said Miss Marple´ with a normalised frequency of 281,70. The equivalent structure in the PC, ´said Mr Poirot´ or ´said Monsieur Poirot´ is not part of the result list. However, ´said Poirot´ ranks 16th, with a normalised frequency of 432,67 in the result list for two-word strings in the PC. This, apart from supporting the argument that Poirot does not need to be defined by a title, seems to indicate that Poirot makes more remarks than Miss Marple does. Although there are other reporting verbs that can be used, a glance at the result list of three-word strings in the MC shows that the next frequent reporting structure is ´asked Miss Marple´, ranking 914, with a frequency of 11,72. The equivalent structure in the PC ´asked Mr Poirot´ occurs only once, while ´asked Poirot´ has a frequency of 29,30, ranking 1085th. The difference between ´Poirot said´ and ´Miss Marple said´, and between ´Poirot asked´ and ´Miss Marple asked´ shows the same tendency. Smiling, nodding, and shaking heads seem to be common body reactions among Agatha Christie’s detectives, although Poirot appears to have a higher tendency to behave in this way as well.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | |  | **MC** | |
| **Freq** | **String** |  | **Freq** | **String** |
| 0 | ‘said Mr Poirot’ |  | 281,70 | ´said Miss Marple´ |
| 0 | ´said Monsieur Poirot´ |  |
| 432,67 | ‘said Poirot’ |  |
| 147,48 | ´Poirot said´ |  | 46,46 | ´Miss Marple said´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 29,30 | ´asked Poirot´ |  | 11,86 | ´asked Miss Marple´ |
| 14,65 | ´Poirot asked´ |  | 3,95 | ´Miss Marple asked´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 11,72 | ´Poirot murmured´ |  | 3,95 | ´Miss Marple murmured´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 31,25 | ´Poirot shook his head´ |  | 10,87 | ´Miss Marple shook her head´ |
| 48,83 | ´Poirot nodded´ |  | 15,81 | ´Miss Marple nodded´ |
| 19,53  7,81 | ´Poirot smiled´  ´Poirot smiling´ |  | 11,86  0,99 | ´Miss Marple smiled´  ´Miss Marple smiling´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 41,02 | ´Poirot looked´ |  | 15,81 | ´Miss Marple looked´ |
| 7,81 | ´Poirot thought´ |  | 3,95 | ´Miss Marple thought´ |
| 15,63 | ´Poirot thoughtfully´ |  | 10,87 | ´Miss Marple thoughtfully´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 46,88 | ´Poirot was´ |  | 28,66 | ´Miss Marple was´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| 15,63 | ´Poirot did not´ |  | 2,97 | ´Miss Marple did not´ |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Sorting N-grams by word made it possible to find string of words that start with the name of the characters. This led to the analysis of two sets of parallel structures: ´Poirot was´ and ´Miss Marple was´, with a normalised frequency of 46,88 and 28,66 respectively; and ´Poirot did not´ and ´Miss Marple did not´, the former occurring 15,63, and the latter 2,97 times.

In each of the four cases, the structure was further looked into using the concordance tool with a window size of 100 to allow a quick glance at the context surrounding the N-gram result. The next subsections include an image of the concordance result window, together with an analysis of relevant examples.

***´Poirot was´***



The examples containing ´Poirot was´ can be divided into three semantic fields, according to the schemata they trigger: personality traits, communication, and investigation.

*Personality traits*

These examples were grouped together because they tend to follow the grammatical structure “subject - copula verb - subject complement”, which enables the description of the subject. The depiction of

In example 30, the subject complement is realised by the adjective ´persistent´, a description that is emphasised both in example 41, “Poirot was unfailing in his activity” (MAS in PC), and in example 26, “Poirot was again helpful” (TAF in PC), where the adverbial emphasises repetition. In addition, although in examples 27 and 31, Poirot is described as being shocked by certain situations, he is also depicted as being unaffected by irony in example 20. The character is further described as being “quite sympathetic”, where it could be argued that the premodifier ´quite´ conveys the meaning of ´sympathetic enough for being a man´. This last example is taken from ECR, the last novel written by Agatha Christie where Poirot solves the mystery.

For the sake of contrast, it is worth quoting the context of example 36 since it is taken from the beginning of MAS, the first novel featuring Poirot. The fist-person narrator establishes Poirot’s profession as a detective, and uses repetition and contrast to depict the character. Poirot is twice described as being ´little´, which is a characteristic that clashes with the expectations of what a man should look like. Emphasising this unmanly figure, the narrator describes Poirot in terms of ´neatness´, a quality traditionally connected to women. However, by using of the coordinating conjunction ´but´ and the conjunct ´yet´, the narrator contrasts the given information, providing lexical items that trigger schemata related to the world of men and success: moustache, military, police, detective, triumphs. There is also contrast between ´little´ and ´great´ in the first two lines, and emphasis in the in the use of the adjectives ´incredible´ and ´extraordinary´, the latter repeated twice. These adjectives, together with the use comparative structures, serve the purpose of singling the character out as being out of this world.

Poirot was an extraordinary looking little man. He was hardly more than five feet, four inches, but carried himself with great dignity. His head was exactly the shape of an egg, and he always perched it a little on one side. His moustache was very stiff and military. The neatness of his attire was almost incredible. I believe a speck of dust would have caused him more pain than a bullet wound. Yet this quaint dandified little man who, I was sorry to see, now limped badly, had been in his time one of the most celebrated members of the Belgian police. As a detective, his flair had been extraordinary, and he had achieved triumphs by unravelling some of the most baffling cases of the day.

(MAS in PC)

The context of example eight shows consistency in the description of the character since Poirot is depicted as meticulous: he is ´careful´, he has ´neat boots´, and he moves ´gingerly´.

They arrived at Konya that night about half-past eleven. The two English travellers got out to stretch their legs, pacing up and down the snowy platform.

M. Poirot was content to watch the teeming activity of the station through a window pane.

After about ten minutes, however, he decided that a breath of air would not perhaps be a bad thing after all. He made careful preparations, wrapping himself in several coats and mufflers and encasing his neat boots in goloshes. Thus attired, he descended gingerly to the platform and began to pace its length. He walked out beyond the engine.

(MOE in PC)

Furthermore, Poirot is characterised as not being particularly inclined to do physical activity. This is achieved by contrasting him against two other characters who decided to stretch their legs after a journey, while Poirot stayed in the train and watched through the window. His attitude is described as being ´content´ with the situation of observing activity instead of performing it.

It is interesting to comment on the narrator’s strategies to describe the moment in which Poirot decides to go out anyway. To begin with, the adverbials ´however´ and ´after all´ express contrast, and the adverbial ´after about ten minutes´ makes it clear that Poirot did stick to his initial decision of observing the station through the window before he changed his mind. In addition, ´a breath of air´ is provided as the reason to excuse him going out, and the argument is presented as a good idea through the use of modality (´would´ and ´perhaps´) and double negation (´not – a bad thing´).

*Communication*

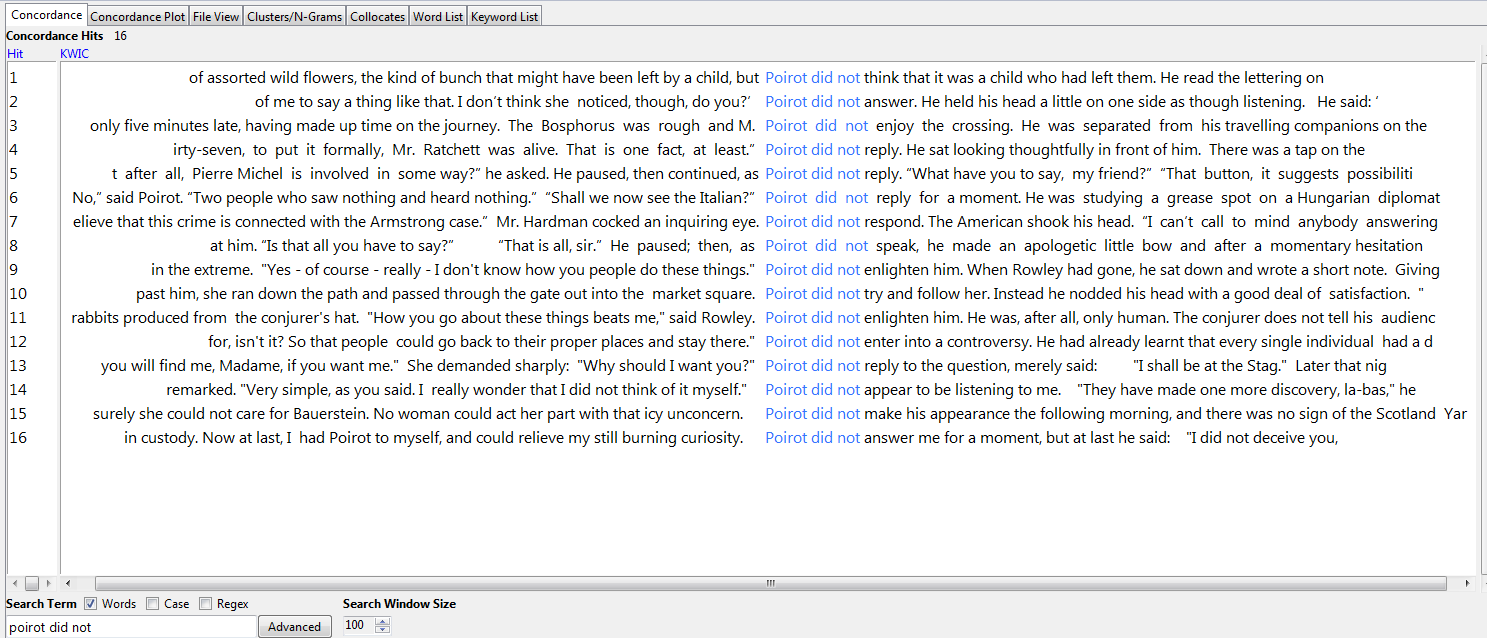
Out of the 48 hits of the two-word string ´Poirot was´, eight are immediately followed by ´silent´ (examples 2, 5, 11, 12, 17, 23, 28, and 35) and a ninth hit conveys the meaning that Poirot took time to reply (example 9). In most of these examples, the interlocutor is expecting Poirot to provide an answer and therefore prompts him to respond. In example 6, the narrator describes Poirot as having conversational skills.

These examples trigger the communication schema, depicting Poirot as a wise and dominant interlocutor, who thinks before talking, and decides when to do so. This image of Poirot is accentuated in example 14, where he does not wish to talk, and in example 25, where he does not wish to listen to a long story.

*Investigation*

The investigation schema is invoked by the presence of lexical verbs and their complements connected to detectives: ´standing (...) and heard´, ´feeling in the pockets´, ´writing busily´, ´continuing his questions´, and ´examining´ (examples 7, 13, 18, 19, and 29). These lexical verbs are in the present participle form, following the auxiliary verb ´be´, which is a grammatical structure that conveys progression: Poirot is actively engaged in solving the crimes.

***´Poirot did not´***



Of the 16 hits of the three-word string ´Poirot did not´, there are 12 instances of examples where Poirot refuses to engage in conversation. This is mainly achieved by negating five different lexical verbs: reply (e.g. 4, 5, 6, and 13), answer (e.g. 2 and 16), enlighten (e.g. 9 and 11), speak (e.g. 8), and respond (e.g. 7). In addition, by means of a metaphor, the structure ´not enter into a controversy´ expresses Poirot’s unwillingness to argue. The last indicator of Poirot’s refusal to communicate can be seen in example 14, where ´did not appear to be listening´ portrays Poirot not only as not wanting to produce statements, but also as not wanting to intake information.

***´Miss Marple was´***



As it can be observed, examples 6, 7, 24 and 25 depict a Victorian Miss Marple, who is passive, sitting and doing needlework. However, she is also ´looking´, which means that she is attentive and might observe something that can prove helpful to solve a case. The same Victorian fashion seems to be represented in example twenty-seven, where Miss Marple blushes and looks confused. However, the example in context provides another depiction of the character:

Miss. Marple was pink and confused and looked unusually dithery.

“Dear Sir Henry,” she murmured. “Always so kind. Really I’m not at all clever ‐ just,

perhaps, a slight knowledge of human nature ‐ living, you know, in a village ‐”

(FPA in MC)

Through her own speech, Miss Marple humbly describes herself as not being clever, but having some knowledge of “human nature”, and she bases this knowledge on her being a local. Following this reasoning, if the village was compared to the world, Miss Marple’s knowledge could be classified as domestic. In addition, a point should be made about Miss Marple’s politeness: she maintains Sir Henry’s positive face by calling him ´dear´, by acknowledging his kindness, and by murmuring, as if not daring to speak her mind. Also, the fact that she is humble about her knowledge proves that she is not trying to be better than her interlocutor by openly showing that she is wiser, although she says it anyway.

This contrast between appearing to be something and being something else is also evidenced grammatically. In the first example, although the subject complement portrays the character in a negative light, the use of the adverbial ´here´ appears to indicate a contradiction: in this case she was quite wrong, but otherwise, she is usually right. Similarly, examples five and sixteen consist of compound sentences coordinated by the contrastive conjunction ´but´. Miss Marple is presented as lacking knowledge and being confused in the first conjoint clauses, while she is rectified in the second clauses as having the situation under control. Contrast is also shown in example eight, where the narrator compares Miss Marple to Chief Inspector’s ´pet performing dog´ by using a second type conditional sentence, which conveys hypothetical meaning.

In the same way, in the 21st example, a complex sentence sets two aspects as opposites:

“Though in speech Miss. Marple was woolly and diffuse, in mind she was clear and sharp.” (FPA in MC)

The two clauses have a parallel structure, which helps making the contrast more obvious: an adverbial prepositional group, a subject nominal group, a copula verb as predicator, and a compound group functioning as the subject complement. The predicators are identical in form, and the subjects have the same reference. The prepositional groups and the compound units also have mirrored internal structures in both clauses. The difference lies in the content: the negative description, “woolly and diffuse”, is part of the concession clause, while the positive characteristics, “clear and sharp”, are in final position in the main clause. Using the direct and telling modes of characterization, and following the principle of end-focus, the narrator describes Miss Marple in a positive way, contrasting her ´female language´ to her ´wise intellect´.

The nineteenth example is worth quoting from the text:

The superintendent's eyes twinkled a little. "That's the theory. She'd got a date with someone, a boy friend, as the saying goes."

"Then why," demanded Miss Marple, "was she wearing an old dress?"

The superintendent scratched his head thoughtfully. He said, "I see your point. You think she'd wear a new one?"

"I think she'd wear her best dress. Girls do."

(BIL in MC)

Miss Marple’s question is rhetorical, rather than genuine. She asks a question to cause an effect in the Superintendent, and she succeeds because the Superintendent rethinks the situation. The choice of reporting verb is also peculiar here: Miss Marple does not ask, but demands. She is placed in a position of authority because she has knowledge in the topic: the feminine is her department. In this case, Miss Marple is characterised indirectly through the technique of ´showing´.

Examples 22 and 23 are also quoted here because they characterise Miss Marple directly and telling by accessing another character’s thoughts:

For a moment the suspicion crossed Lucy’s mind that Miss. Marple

was mentally unhinged, but she rejected the idea.

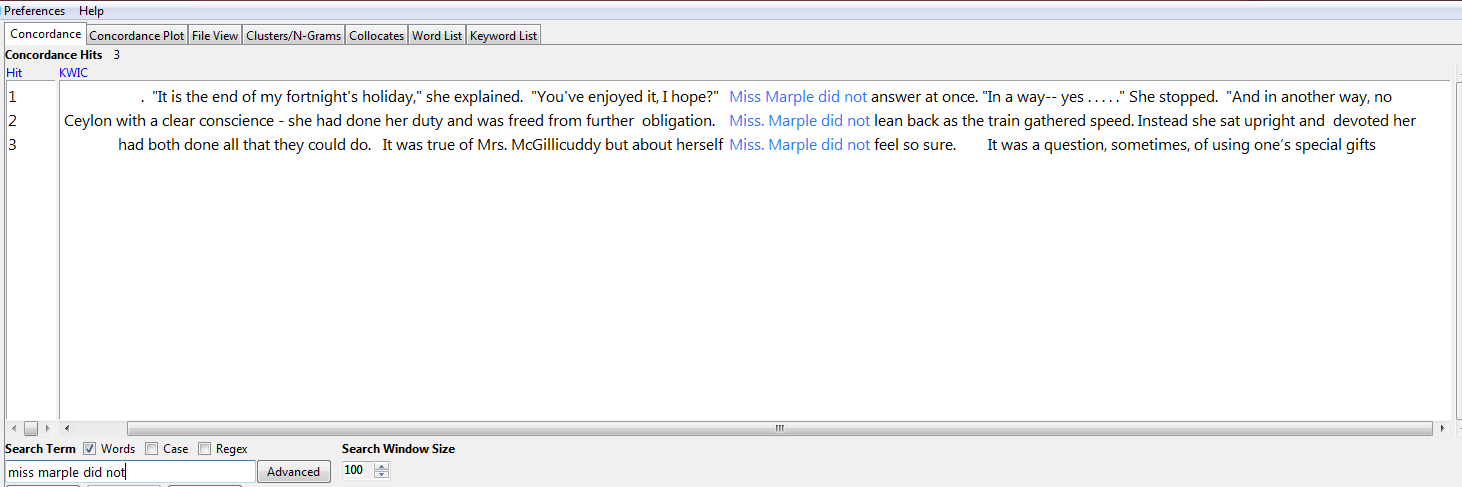
Miss. Marple was eminently sane. She meant exactly what she had

said.

(FPA in MC)

As can be appreciated, Agatha Christie’s strategy in portraying Miss Marple seems to involve the use of contrastive structures. In this way, she manages to depict a woman who can be single, feminine, and clever at the same time.

***´Miss Marple did not´***

****

Although the string ´Miss Marple did not´ has scored only three hits, it does provide interesting excerpts to examine her characterisation. The first example, ´Miss Marple did not answer at once´, appears to equate her with Poirot. However, considering the evidence collected in these searches, there are only two occasions where Miss Marple refrains from talking, whereas Poirot does this consistently.

The second and third examples are part of the same context: Miss Marple is considering whether or not she should become involved in a new investigation. In ´Miss Marple - lean back´, the narrator appeals at a ´relaxing´ schema in the reader’s mind. However, since the predicator is negated, the reader knows that Miss Marple cannot relax: something is troubling her, and it is expressed in detective terms: ´a problem to solve´.

´Miss Marple did not feel so sure´ could be interpreted as her being insecure. However, an analysis of the excerpt indicates that she is sceptic, rather than insecure, and that she believes that more can be done.

She is portrayed not as somebody who is absolutely enthusiastic about playing detectives, but as somebody who has the moral responsibility to service humanity by putting to good use the gift she has.

The narrator describes Miss Marple’s decision making process in terms of traditional men’s standards: she constructs an objective argument, reviews it, and approves it. The fact that the adverbial ´dispassionately´ is in initial position places focus on Miss Marple’s method not being biased by passion, and the comparative structure equates her with male professionals.

It is also relevant to comment on her arguments for taking part in the case: to begin with, she mentions her gift: her knowledge of human nature. Her three other arguments consist of mentioning male acquaintances she has, who, because of their work position or knowledge, can help her solve the case.

This characterisation is achieved by the narrator’s direct and indirect telling of Miss Marple’s actions and thoughts.

Miss. Marple did not lean back as the train gathered speed. Instead she sat

upright and devoted herself seriously to thought. (...)She had a problem to

solve, the problem of her own future conduct; and, perhaps strangely, it

presented itself to her as it had to Mrs. McGillicuddy, as a question of duty.

Mrs. McGillicuddy had said that they had both done all that they could do.

It was true of Mrs. McGillicuddy but about herself Miss. Marple did not feel so sure.

It was a question, sometimes, of using one’s special gifts... But perhaps that

was conceited... After all, what could she do? Her friend’s words came back to her, “You’re not so young as you were...”

Dispassionately, like a general planning a campaign, or an accountant assessing a businessMiss. Marple weighed up and set down in her mind the facts for and against further enterprise. On the credit side were the following:

1. My long experience of life and human nature.

2. Sir Henry Clithering and his godson (now at Scotland Yard, I believe), who

was so very nice in the Little Paddocks case.

3. My nephew Raymond’s second boy, David, who is, I am almost sure, in

British Railways.

4. Griselda’s boy Leonard who is so very knowledgeable about maps.

Miss. Marple reviewed these assets and approved them. They were all very

necessary, to reinforce the weaknesses on the debit side ‐ in particular her own bodily weakness.

(FPA in MC)

**3.2.3. Dualism and Detective Skills**

In order to assess if Miss Marple and Poirot’s detective skills are related to gender, a wordlist search was carried out using as a search filter a list of selected words based on the theoretical description in section 1.4.2. The following table presents the results, providing the normalised frequency of occurrence (NF), and the real frequency (RF).

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **PC** | | **Detective Terms** | **MC** | |
| **NF** | **RF** | **RF** | **NF** |
| 37,11 | 38 | Detective | 29 | 28,66 |
| 0,98 | 1 | Sleuth | 4 | 3,95 |
| 26,37 | 27 | Nature | 32 | 31,63 |
| 0,98 | 1 | Intuition | 3 | 2,97 |
| 1194,50 | 1223 | Know | 1196 | 1182,16 |
| 1006,97 | 1031 | Think | 1002 | 990,40 |
| 108,41 | 111 | Feel | 134 | 132,45 |
| 55,67 | 57 | Curious | 56 | 55,35 |
| 170,92 | 175 | Evidence | 53 | 52,39 |
| 34,18 | 35 | Curiosity | 25 | 24,71 |
| 21,49 | 22 | Clue | 18 | 17,79 |
| 7,81 | 8 | Hint | 18 | 17,79 |
| 5,86 | 6 | Test | 14 | 13,84 |
| 4,88 | 5 | Moral | 12 | 11,86 |
| 8,79 | 9 | Trace | 11 | 10,87 |
| 27,35 | 28 | Prove | 8 | 7,91 |
| 10,74 | 11 | Investigation | 6 | 5,93 |
| 11,72 | 12 | Investigate | 5 | 4,94 |
| 2,93 | 3 | Scientific | 4 | 3,95 |
| 16,60 | 17 | Examine | 3 | 2,97 |
| 4,88 | 5 | Hunch | 3 | 2,97 |
| 5,86 | 6 | Intelligence | 3 | 2,97 |
| 2,93 | 3 | Intuition | 1 | 0,99 |
| 3,91 | 4 | Science | 3 | 2,97 |
| 3,91 | 4 | Intellect | 2 | 1,98 |
| 0,98 | 1 | Deduce | 1 | 0,99 |

Some of the items on the list have been selected for qualitative analysis. This is the case for ´sleuth´ and ´detective´ since their concrete reference to Miss Marple and Poirot’s occupation defines them as characters. Similarly, the terms ´intuition´ and ´[human] nature´ have been chosen because of they have been used to describe a fictional female detective in the theory section.

***Detective and Sleuth***

In the MC, out of the four real occurrences of ´sleuth´, three relate to Miss Marple, where it is another character that refers to her as sleuth. In the PC, the only occurrence of sleuth refers to an American detective. In comparison to ´sleuth´, the term ´detective´ is much more frequent in both corpora. It refers to detective stories, or professional detectives, including Poirot, who is retired. In the MC, when the term does not have these references, it is premodified by ´amateur´ in order to make the distinction clear.

The following example illustrates the use of both terms. In a conversation among three police officers, Miss Marple is categorised as ´sleuth´, and her presence does not appear to be required by the gentlemen. This can be sensed by the ´send for´ structure in chief constable’s question, as well as in the ´slight chuckle´ before Colonel Melchett’s remark. It should be noted that although the structure ´quite the´ adds some importance to the activity, the term ´sleuth´ is premodified by ´local´, which delimits Miss Marple’s adventures to the village.

"Miss Marple?" The chief constable stiffened. "Why did she send for her?"

"Oh, a woman wants another woman don't you think so?"

Colonel Melchett said with a slight chuckle, "If you ask me, your wife's going to try her hand at a little

amateur detecting. Miss Marple's quite the local sleuth.

(BIl in MC)

As a way of comparing both characters, this excerpt illustrates how Poirot describes categorises himself as a detective when he introduces himself to another character. He does this with honour, giving his full name, and validating his presence by mentioning which party he represents. The narrator’s use of a conditional clause to express that Poirot might have expected a positive reaction from his interlocutor characterises Poirot as conceited.

MacQueen hesitated. “I must get this clear,” he said. “Who exactly are you? And where do you come in?”

“I represent the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits.” Poirot paused, then added, “I am a detective. My name is Hercule Poirot.”

If he expected an effect he did not get one. MacQueen said merely, “Oh! yes?” and waited for

him to go on.

(MOE in PC)

***The Detective’s Methods***

The following excerpt was worth analysing because it contains the only instance of the term ´intuition´ in the PC. Looking into the text in detail, it is possible to detect a considerable number of lexical items related to the detective lexical field: mind, police, investigate, deduction, routine work, probabilities, false, passport, suspicion. All these items are part of Poirot’s speech and trigger a schema related to detective work procedures. However, because some of these items are negated, his interlocutor interprets that Poirot’s method of investigation is based on intuition instead of evidence. To this, he answers ´not at all´, which is a concise and absolute reply. He expands by means of a simple sentence where he employs the term ´probabilities´ which triggers a scientific schema.

“What to my mind is so interesting in this case is that we have none of the facilities afforded to the police. We cannot investigate the bona fides of any of these people. We have to rely solely on deduction. That, to me, makes the matter very much more interesting. There is no routine work. It is all a matter of the intellect. I ask myself: Can we accept Hardman’s account of himself? I make my decision and I answer ‘Yes.’ I am of the opinion that we can accept Hardman’s account of himself.”

“You rely on the intuition? What the Americans call ‘the hunch’?” asked Dr. Constantine.

“Not at all. I regard the probabilities. Hardman is travelling with a false passport—that will at once make him an object of suspicion.

(MOE in PC)

In another of his speeches, Poirot reflects on ´human nature´. He categorises a group of people he observes by calling them ´the Cloades´. His parameter for his classification is ´common interest´, but he notes that within the group these people have differences regarding ´characters´, ´thoughts´, and ´feelings´. It is relevant to mark that he uses the lexeme ´interest´ twice, once to refer to himself, and once to refer to ´the people´. This includes him as a part of ´human nature´, though excludes him from the group ´the Cloades´ since he is observing them, yet not being together with them.

"Yes," said Poirot. "Human nature. That, I think, is perhaps the real answer as to why I

am interested in this case. I was looking round the Coroner's Court, looking at all the

people, looking particularly at the Cloades - so many of them, all bound by a common

interest, all so different in their characters, in their thoughts and feelings.

(TAF in PC)

***The Sleuth’s Methods***

In her own words, Miss Marple states that her method of detection is intuition and she validates it by comparing it to reading, a schema everyone can relate to. Her style in explaining her method is informal (using words like ´fuss´, ´laughing´, ´dear´, and ´you catch me´), direct (using simple concepts instead of eloquent language), and pedagogical (using comparisons). The key words she employs mark parallels between the two schemata she triggers: ´reading´ represents intuition or investigation; ´grown-up´ and ´child´ stand for being experienced and lacking experience respectively; and ´reading a word´ symbolises understanding truth. This last item is also part of her pedagogical explanation since she conceptualises it in terms of a metaphor. By saying “a way of arriving at the truth”, ´truth´ becomes a concrete location and getting to it implies following ´a sound´ path. This points out that there might be other paths that do not lead to the truth. Her being old, and thus having more experience, which puts her on the right path.

"You're laughing, my dear,"said Miss Marple, "but after all, that

is a very sound way of arriving at the truth. It's really what

people call intuition and make such a fuss about. Intuition is like

reading a word without have to spell it out. A child can't do that

because it has had so little experience. But a grown-up person

knows the word because they've seen it often before. You catch

my meaning, vicar?"

(MAV in MC)

As it was shown in a previous excerpt, Miss Marple regards her knowledge about human nature as her especial gift. In the following example she explains that she gained that gift through study and time. The lexical fields present in her speech include: living beings (people, birds, flowers), career (proficient, study, mistake, to class), free time (hobby, woolwork, Guides, Welfare, sketching) and location (living alone, out-of-the-way part of the world, small village, nothing to distract). Her explanation takes the form of another parallel by using the comparative structure “as though” followed by a past subjunctive form: she compares people to birds and flowers in that they are classifiable. She also describes ´knowing people´ by triggering a career or profession schema, which ´certifies´ her skill and equates her to a professional.

Finally, it is also worth noting her references to gender, spinsterhood and private sphere: the free time semantic field includes activities which are associated to ´The Angel in the House´, and the location semantic field places her in the private sphere. These two semantic fields together with her age (´as time goes on´) classify her as a spinster.

"You see," she began at last, "living alone, as I do, in a rather

out-of-the-way part of the world one has to have a hobby. There

is, of course, woolwork, and Guides, and Welfare, and

sketching, but my hobby is — and always has been — Human

Nature. So varied — and so very fascinating. And, of course, in a

small village, with nothing to distract one, one has such ample

opportunity for becoming what I might call proficient in one's

study. One begins to class people, quite definitely, just as though

they were birds or flowers, group so-and-so, genus this, species

that. Sometimes, of course, one makes mistakes, but less and

less as time goes on.

(MAV in MC)🡪 in another character’s words

1. **Discussion**

This section sums up the results obtained through the quantitative and qualitative analyses performed, and compares those results with the theoretical framework described in chapter one.

One of the main concerns during Victorian and post-Victorian England related to the division of spheres, by which women were supposed to stay within the private sphere of the house, and men were to be part of the public sphere in order to work and sustain the family. The quantitative analysis carried out in the section called Spheres and Settings shed light on the tendency regarding the locations where novels involving the two detectives take place. According to the results, both Poirot and the characters in the PC appear to be more travelled than the characters in the MC. This seems to indicate that Poirot is portrayed as being more international, whereas Miss Marple tends to stay within the area. If a parallel can be drawn between England and ´home´ and the rest of the countries and ´the outside world´, then Miss Marple can be said to have a tendency to remain in the private sphere, whereas Poirot has the choice of travelling back and forth. This coincides with the fact that Miss Marple frames herself as a spinster belonging to the private sphere.

Regarding characterisation, to begin with, it could be argued that Poirot has a tendency of being more popular than Miss Marple because his surname has a higher normalised frequency than Marple’s. In addition, the quantitative study of titles used in both corpora reveals not only that Ms, the gender neutral title for women, was not used, but also that Mrs and Miss tended to be overrepresented in the corpora in comparison to Mr. This indicates an apparent need to specify the marital status of the woman in question, whereas men do not need such specification. This was mostly seen in the fact that the female detective is almost invariably referred to as Miss Marple –although there are cases where she is addressed by her first name, Jane.

A study of the common two- to five- word strings showed that Poirot appears to make more remarks than Miss Marple since ´Poirot said´ and ´Poirot asked´ had a higher frequency than ´Miss Marple said´ and ´Miss Marple asked´. However, a qualitative examination of the structures ´Poirot was´ and ´Miss Marple was´; and ´Poirot did not´ and ´Miss Marple did not´ revealed that the structure ´Poirot was´ was accompanied by ´silent´, and that the structure ´Poirot did not´ was followed by a verb of communication. This appears to indicate that Poirot is reserved and does not wish to engage in conversation.

Among further aspects in the characterisation of these detectives, it can be added that both are described as being smiling, nodding, and shaking their heads, though because of a higher frequency in these results, Poirot seems more inclined to do so.

Concentrating on Poirot, he is characterised according to feminine and masculine values. He is described as little, neat, sympathetic, and extra careful. These are all characteristics that tend to be on the feminine side of the dichotomic system. In addition, he seems to try to avoid physical activity. This opposes Lord Womsey’s characterisation regarding him doing sports in order to prove his masculinity. However, he is also classified as a great detective who is persistent, unfailing, and helpful. His method of investigation is not intuition but deduction using the intellect and considering the probabilities. He also shows an interest in human nature.

Focusing on Miss Marple, her spinster status makes her a Fallen Woman. However, since she is a female hero who goes out to have adventures, she earns the label of New Woman. Evidence of this is the excerpt where she sits down and makes a list to find evidence that can prove that it is ´necessary´ for her to go out and sleuth despite of the impediments caused by her old age. Miss Marple can also be said to be characterised in terms of masculinity and femininity, though to a lesser degree. She follows the Victorian Ideal by being a spinster who is polite, does needlework and takes care of her garden. She is also described as blushing, being confused, and not being competitive in conversation. However, she is also portrayed as being sharp and clear, and is compared to men in the public sphere –and not women. Her method of investigation is intuition, based on experience and knowledge of human nature.

**Conclusion**

The present thesis used corpus stylistics as a method to explore the representations of gender in Agatha Christie’s famous detectives, Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. The object of analysis was divided into two corpora, a Poirot corpus, and a Miss Marple corpus, each containing five novels representative of the 95 books written by Agatha Christie over a period of over 50 years. The intention of the analysis was to examine Christie’s language style in representing gender so as to assess the critics’ claim that Poirot and Miss Marple challenge gender stereotypes by redefining them.

In order to fulfil that purpose, chapter one offered a theoretical framework consisting of four sections. The first one was devoted to the theory of stylistics, briefly describing its uses and two of its branches: feminist stylistics and narrative stylistics. The second section presented an account of the changing social situation regarding gender roles in England from late-Victorian times up to after the Second World War, which covers the context in which Agatha Christie was born, grew up and wrote her novels. The third section viewed gender not as an innate quality, but as acquired socially and discursively through interaction. The fourth section was concerned with characterisation and gender, and looked at the tendency in the characterisation of male and female fictional detectives both before and after the First World War.

Chapter two was devoted to corpus-stylistics, the methodology chosen to study the novels. Here, especial attention was given to the combination of quantitative and qualitative analysis, since it is one of the possibilities that this methodology enables. In addition, this chapter offers a description of the corpora, as well as an explanation of the computer software used to analyse the texts.

Finally, the third chapter presented the corpus-stylistic analysis of the representation of gender in Poirot and Miss Marple, and a discussion where the analysis’ results were compared to the theory in order to be able to reach a conclusion.

To address the research questions, according to the examples examined in the analysis, the linguistic strategies used in the characterisation of the two detectives seem to include repetition of lexical items and, comparative structures, and contrast, mainly seen in the usage of conjuncts like ´yet´, and the conjunction ´but´.

It can be said that the critics’ claim could be observed in the results of this study since both characters seem to follow the gender stereotypes and fight against them. In the case of Miss Marple, Agatha Christie presents the character in one way –usually the conservative way-, and then contrasts this to a more modern depiction of the character. In the case of Poirot, it is usually the eccentric, more womanly aspect of the character’s personality that is presented first, and then the conventional manly characteristics are contrasted. This, it could be argued, might be due to the fact that the detective profession is a man’s job, as it was indicated in the theory section. Christie presenting characters that have female characteristics and yet have manly ones, could indicate her eagerness to balance gender roles. Both men and women can have aspects of masculinity and femininity and this does not necessarily affect the tasks they perform.

The facts that spheres seem to be kept unaltered could point out that Christie would not risk changing the scenario so drastically, for her credibility as an author would be questioned. She presents a plausible scenario according to the time she was writing, and modifies some of the characteristics typically associated to being a man and being a woman. To conclude with Kungl’s (2006, p. 23) words:

The women writers who created these detectives ultimately were able to explore the ways in which women could negotiate and command authority within a male-dominated culture, creating new routes to women’s authority in the detective fiction genre.

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**Appendix: Lists used as filters**

Buildings:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| abbey | A-frame | aircraft hangar | airport terminal |
| amphitheater | apartment building | aqueduct | arch |
| arena | armory | assembly hall | barn |
| barracks | beach house | boathouse | boarding house |
| bowling alley | bridge | brownstone | building |
| bungalow | bunkhouse | bunker | cabana |
| cabin | capitol | carport | castle |
| catacomb | cathedral | chalet | chapel |
| chateau | church | cinema | city hall |
| clubhouse | college | compound | concert hall |
| condominium | conservatory | cottage | courthouse |
| crypt | depot | detached house | dock |
| dome | dormitory | double wide | duplex |
| dwelling | earth-sheltered house | embassy | exposition hall |
| factory | farm | farmhouse | ferry slip |
| ferry terminal | firehouse | fire station | folly |
| forge | fort | fortress | foundry |
| gallery | garage | gas station | gazebo |
| geodesic dome | granary | greenhouse | gym |
| gymnasium | hall | hangar | haunted house |
| headquarters | high-rise | home | hospital |
| hostel | hotel | hot house | house |
| houseboat | housing project | hunting lodge | hut |
| igloo | jail | kiosk | laboratory |
| lean-to | library | lighthouse | lodge |
| log cabin | longhouse | mall | manor |
| manse | mansion | marina | market |
| mausoleum | meeting hall | mill | minaret |
| mobile home | monastery | monument | mosque |
| motel | museum | nuclear power plant | nursing home |
| observatory | office building | opera house | outbuilding |
| outhouse | pagoda | palace | parking garage |
| parliament | pavilion | plant | playhouse |
| police station | pool house | post office | power plant |
| prefab building | prison | pump house | pyramid |
| quonset hut | railway station | ranch | rectory |
| refinery | residence | restaurant | roller rink |
| roundhouse | rowhouse | school | shack |
| shed | shelter | shopping center | shopping mall |
| shrine | silo | skating rink | skyscraper |
| skyway | smokestack | spire | split-level house |
| stable | stadium | state house | station |
| steeple | store | storehouse | strip mall |
| structure | studio | supermarket | symphony |
| synagogue | temple | tenement | tent |
| terminal | theater | tipi | toll house |
| tomb | tower | townhouse | treehouse |
| triplex | Tudor house | university | vault |
| vicarage | villa | warehouse | watermill |
| workshop | yurt | airport | amusement park |
| antique shop | appliance store | arcade | arena |
| art gallery | art museum | aquarium | army surplus store |
| auditorium | automat | bakery | bank |
| bar | barbershop | beauty salon | bed and breakfast |
| bistro | bookstore | boutique | brasserie |
| bus station | butcher shop | cafe | cafeteria |
| camera store | candy shop | capitol building | car dealership |
| car wash | chain store | cinema | city hall |
| civic center | clinic | clothing store | coffee shop |
| college | community center | consignment shop | convenience store |
| convention center | copy shop | courthouse | dance studio |
| deli | delicatessen | department store | dentist's office |
| diner | discount store | doctor's office | dollar store |
| dressmaker | drive-in movie | drive-through | drugstore |
| electronics store | emporium | fabric store | factory outlet |
| farmer's market | fast food restaurant | feed store | fire station |
| five-and-dime store | fix-it shop | florist | food court |
| funeral home | furniture store | gallery | game store |
| gas station | general store | gift store | grocery store |
| gym | gymnasium | haberdashery | hairdresser |
| hardware store | hobby store | home improvement store | hotel |
| ice cream shop | inn | jewelry store | kiosk store |
| library | lighthouse | lumberyard | mall |
| market | meeting house | milliner | motel |
| movie theater | museum | music store | natural history museum |
| nursery | office building | optometrist | outlet store |
| park | parking garage | pawnshop | pet store |
| pharmacy | pizza place | playground | police station |
| post office | pub | public garden | quilt store |
| real estate agency | repair shop | restaurant | retailer |
| salon | saloon | sandwich shop | school |
| second hand store | shoe store | shop | soda shop |
| sporting goods store | stadium | stationer | stationery store |
| store | supermarket | surplus store | tailor |
| tavern | tea house | tearoom | theater |
| thrift store | town hall | toy store | train station |
| travel agent | truck stop | undertaker | university |
| upholstery shop | video store | wax museum | zoo |

List of countries:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Abkhazia | Afghanistan | Akrotiri and Dhekelia | Aland |
| Albania | Algeria | American Samoa | Andorra |
| Angola | Anguilla | Antigua and Barbuda | Argentina |
| Armenia | Aruba | Ascension Island | Australia |
| Austria | Azerbaijan | Bahamas, The | Bahrain |
| Bangladesh | Barbados | Belarus | Belgium |
| Belize | Benin | Bermuda | Bhutan |
| Bolivia | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Botswana | Brazil |
| Brunei | Bulgaria | Burkina Faso | Burundi |
| Cambodia | Cameroon | Canada | Cape Verde |
| Cayman Islands | Central Africa Republic | Chad | Chile |
| China | Christmas Island | Cocos (Keeling) Islands | Colombia |
| Comoros | Congo | Cook Islands | Costa Rica |
| Cote d'lvoire | Croatia | Cuba | Cyprus |
| Czech Republic | Denmark | Djibouti | Dominica |
| Dominican Republic | East Timor Ecuador | Egypt | El Salvador |
| Equatorial Guinea | Eritrea | Estonia | Ethiopia |
| Falkland Islands | Faroe Islands | Fiji | Finland |
| France | French Polynesia | Gabon | Cambia, The |
| Georgia | Germany | Ghana | Gibraltar |
| Greece | Greenland | Grenada | Guam |
| Guatemala | Guemsey | Guinea | Guinea-Bissau |
| Guyana | Haiti | Honduras | Hong Kong |
| Hungary | Iceland | India | Indonesia |
| Iran | Iraq | Ireland | Isle of Man |
| Israel | Italy | Jamaica | Japan |
| Jersey | Jordan | Kazakhstan | Kenya |
| Kiribati | Korea, N | Korea, S | Kosovo |
| Kuwait | Kyrgyzstan | Laos | Latvia |
| Lebanon | Lesotho | Liberia | Libya |
| Liechtenstein | Lithuania | Luxembourg | Macao |
| Macedonia | Madagascar | Malawi | Malaysia |
| Maldives | Mali | Malta | Marshall Islands |
| Mauritania | Mauritius | Mayotte | Mexico |
| Micronesia | Moldova | Monaco | Mongolia |
| Montenegro | Montserrat | Morocco | Mozambique |
| Myanmar | Nagorno-Karabakh | Namibia | Nauru |
| Nepal | Netherlands | Netherlands Antilles | New Caledonia |
| New Zealand | Nicaragua | Niger | Nigeria |
| Niue | Norfolk Island | Northern Cyprus | Northern Mariana Islands |
| Norway | Oman | Pakistan | Palau |
| Palestine | Panama | Papua New Guinea | Paraguay |
| Peru | Philippines | Pitcaim Islands | Poland |
| Portugal | Puerto Rico | Qatar | Romania |
| Russia | Rwanda | Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic | Saint-Barthelemy |
| Saint Helena | Saint Kitts and Nevis | Saint Lucia | Saint Martin |
| Saint Pierre and Miquelon | Saint Vincent and Grenadines | Samos | San Marino |
| Sao Tome and Principe | Saudi Arabia | Senegal | Serbia |
| Seychelles | Sierra Leone | Singapore | Slovakia |
| Slovenia | Solomon Islands | Somalia | Somaliland |
| South Africa | South Ossetia | Spain | Sri Lanka |
| Sudan | Suriname | Svalbard | Swaziland |
| Sweden | Switzerland | Syria | Tajikistan |
| Tanzania | Thailand | Togo | Tokelau |
| Tonga | Transnistria | Trinidad and Tobago | Tristan da Cunha |
| Tunisia | Turkey | Turkmenistan | Turks and Caicos Islands |
| Tuvalu | Uganda | Ukraine | United Arab Emirates |
| United Kingdom | United States | Uruguay | Uzbekistan |
| Vanuatu | Vatican City | Venezuela | Vietnam |
| Virgin Islands, British | Virgin Islands, U.S. | Wallis and Futuna | Yemen |
| Zambia | Zimbabwe |  |  |

List of Cities:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| London | Berlin | Madrid | Rome |
| Paris | Bucharest | Hamburg | Warsaw |
| Budapest | Vienna | Barcelona | Sofia |
| Munich | Prague | Milan | Copenhagen |
| Brussels | Birmingham | Naples | Cologne |
| Torino | Valencia | Marseille | Stockholm |
| Kraków | ?ód? | Amsterdam | Riga |
| Athens | Seville | Palermo | Wroc?aw |
| Frankfurt | Zaragoza | Genoa | Stuttgart |
| Helsinki | Glasgow | Düsseldorf | Dortmund |
| Essen | Pozna? | Bremen | Vilnius |
| Rotterdam | Málaga | Dublin | Dresden |
| Leipzig | Hanover | Lisbon | Gothenburg |
| Nuremberg | Duisburg | Den Haag | Liverpool |
| Gda?sk | Antwerp | Edinburgh | Lyon |
| Leeds | Sheffield | Bratislava | Bristol |
| Szczecin | Brno | Plovdiv | Tallinn |
| Manchester | Toulouse | Bochum | Murcia |
| Bologna | Bydgoszcz | Kaunas | Wuppertal |
| Palma de Mallorca | Florence | Lublin | Bilbao |
| Varna | Thessaloniki | Nice | Leicester |
| Bielefeld | Katowice | Valladolid | Ia?i |
| Cardiff | Córdoba | Ostrava | Catania |
| Bonn | Timi?oara | Mannheim | Cluj-Napoca |
| Coventry | Constan?a | Kingston | Craiova |
| Vigo | Bradford | Bia?ystok | Gala?i |
| Utrecht | Karlsruhe | Ljubljana | Bra?ov |
| Belfast | Wiesbaden | Venezia | Münster |
| Nantes | Gijón | Gelsenkirchen | Strasbourg |
| Augsburg | Mönchengladbach | Stoke-on-Trent | Aachen |
| Malmö | Gdynia | Verona | Messina |
| Wolverhampton | Graz | Burgas | Nottingham |
| Espoo | Cz?stochowa | L'Hospitalet | Chemnitz |
| Braunschweig | Plymouth | Porto | A Coruña |
| Granada | Krefeld | Halle | Kiel |
| Southampton | Košice | Reading | Ghent |
| Derby | Sosnowiec | Magdeburg | Ploie?ti |
| Arhus | Radom | Vitoria-Gasteiz | Swansea |
| Montpellier | Nicosia | Badalona | Oberhausen |
| Freiburg | Bordeaux | Tampere | Lille [²] |
| Br?ila | Lübeck | Trieste | Kielce |
| Eindhoven | Toru? | Rennes | Debrecen |
| Padua | Oradea | Oviedo | Erfurt |
| Aberdeen | Taranto | Charleroi | Vantaa |
| Gliwice | Sabadell | Terrassa | Rostock |
| Bytom | Móstoles | Pamplona | Hagen |
| Dudley | Kassel | Mainz | Zabrze |
| Le Havre | Newcastle | Northampton | Linz |
| Cartagena | Brescia | Klaip?da | Reims |
| Jerez de la Frontera | Portsmouth | Liège | Luton |
| Preston | Santander | Milton Keynes | Hamm |
| Donostia | Tilburg | Miskolc | Reggio Calabria |
| Saint-Étienne | Amadora | Fuenlabrada | Alcalá de Henares |
| Saarbrücken | Vila Nova de Gaia | Sunderland | Turku |
| Bielsko-Bia?a | Bac?u | Split | Modena |
| Leganés | Norwich | Pilsen | Olsztyn |
| Prato | Castellon de la Plana | Walsall | Herne |
| Piraeus | Braga | Mülheim | Burgos |
| Bournemouth | Pite?ti | Arad | Groningen |
| Patras | Cagliari | Osnabrück | Solingen |
| Parma | Ludwigshafen | Szeged | Leverkusen |
| Toulon | Southend | Rousse | Rzeszów |
| Pécs | Oldenburg | Odense | Getafe |
| Livorno | Salamanca | Swindon | Foggia |
| Sibiu | Grenoble | Neuss | Angers |
| Nijmegen | Salzburg | Dijon | Brest |
| Alcorcon | Perugia | Coimbra | Ruda ?l?ska |
| Potsdam | Logroño | Haarlem | Stara Zagora |
| Huddersfield | Le Mans | Târgu Mure? | Huelva |
| Poole | Paderborn | Dundee | Oxford |
| Heidelberg | Middlesbrough | Blackpool | Oulu |
| Rybnik | Reggio Emilia | Darmstadt | Arnhem |
| Heraklion | Newport | Rijeka | Bolton |
| Baia Mare | Ipswich | Breda | Telford |
| Salerno | York | Peristeri | Clermont-Ferrand |
| West Bromwich | Apeldoorn | Badajoz | Peterborough |
| Cádiz | Stockport | Leon | Amiens |
| Ravenna | Brighton | Aix-en-Provence | Limoges |
| Würzburg | Nîmes | Tours | Buz?u |
| Tychy | Saint-Denis | Jyväskylä | D?browa Górnicza |
| Ferrara | Enschede | Larissa | Regensburg |
| Šiauliai | Opole | Uppsala | Gy?r |
| Wa?brzych | P?ock | Elbl?g | Slough |
| Gorzów Wielkopolski | Amersfoort | Villeurbanne | Metz |
| Siracusa | Gloucester | Göttingen | Recklinghausen |
| Heilbronn | Aalborg | Ingolstadt | Wolfsburg |
| Watford | Sassari | Agualva-Cacém | Ulm |
| W?oc?awek | Monza | Offenbach am Main | Cork |
| Bottrop | Maribor | Santa Coloma de Gramenet | Pforzheim |
| Latina | Dordrecht | Pleven | Mataró |
| Zielona Góra | Tarnów | Leiden | Innsbruck |
| Besançon | Maastricht | Bruges | Rotherham |
| Tarragona | Zoetermeer | Bremerhaven | Pescara |
| Nyíregyháza | Boto?ani | Marbella | Remscheid |
| Panev?žys | Chorzów | Lleida | Caen |
| Cambridge | Fürth | Bergamo | Orléans |
| Jaén | Satu Mare | Reutlingen | Daugavpils |
| Râmnicu Vâlcea | Zwolle | Mulhouse | Ourense |
| Kalisz | Forlì | Salzgitter | Koszalin |
| Moers | Piatra Neam? | Vicenza | Västerås |
| Suceava | Exeter | Namur | Kallithea |
| Algeciras | Rouen | Eastbourne | Drobeta-Turnu Severin |
| Koblenz | Kecskemét | Boulogne-Billancourt | Siegen |
| Legnica | Bergisch Gladbach | Sutton Coldfield | Cottbus |
| Liberec | Perpignan | Blackburn | Terni |
| Trento | Almere | Colchester | Gera |
| Nancy | Oldham | Trier | Szekesfehervar |
| Dos Hermanas | Erlangen | St Helens | Hildesheim |
| Jena | Sliven | Olomouc | Dobrich |
| Lahti | Tartu | 's-Hertogenbosch | Almada |
| Linköping | Torrejón de Ardoz | Novara | Witten |
| Crawley | Ancona | S?upsk | Bolzano |

Type of Rooms:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| anteroom | armory | assembly room | attic |
| backroom | ballroom | basement | bathroom |
| bedroom | boardroom | boiler room | boudoir |
| breakfast nook | breakfast room | cabin | cell |
| cellar | chamber | changing room | chapel |
| classroom | clean room | cloakroom | cold room |
| common room | conference room | conservatory | control room |
| courtroom | cubby | darkroom | den |
| dining room | dormitory | drawing room | dressing room |
| dungeon | emergency room | engine room | entry |
| family room | fitting room | formal dining room | foyer |
| front room | game room | garage | garret |
| great room | green room | grotto | guest room |
| gym | hall | hallway | homeroom |
| hospital room | hotel room | inglenook | jail cell |
| keep | kitchen | kitchenette | ladies' room |
| larder | laundry room | library | living room |
| lobby | locker room | loft | lounge |
| lunchroom | maid's room | mailroom | men's room |
| morning room | motel room | mud room | newsroom |
| nursery | office | operating room | panic room |
| pantry | parlor | playroom | pool room |
| powder room | prison cell | rec room | recovery room |
| restroom room | rumpus room | salesroom | salon |
| schoolroom | screen porch | scullery | showroom |
| sick room | sitting room | solarium | staff room |
| stateroom | stockroom | storeroom | studio |
| study | suite | sunroom | tack room |
| utility room | vestibule | visitor's room | waiting room |
| wardroom | washroom | water closet | weight room |
| wine cellar | women's room | workroom |  |

List of Places:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Army | Bakery | Bank | Bar |
| Bookstore | Boutique | Bus | Café |
| Church | City | Clothing | Dentist |
| Department | Doctor | Drugstore | Farm |
| Furniture | Gallery | Garage | Garden |
| Grocery | Gym | Hairdresser | Home |
| Hospital | Hotel | House | Jewelry |
| Kiosk | Library | Lighthouse | Mall |
| Market | Men | Museum | Music |
| Office | Outside areas | Park | Pharmacy |
| Playground | Police | Residency | Restaurant |
| Salon | Saloon | School | Shoe |
| Shop | Sporting | Station | Store |
| Tea | Theatre | Town | Toy |
| University | Village | Work place | Zoo |
| abbey | A-frame | aircraft hangar | airport terminal |
| amphitheater | apartment building | aqueduct | arch |
| arena | armory | assembly hall | barn |
| barracks | beach house | boathouse | boarding house |
| bowling alley | bridge | brownstone | building |
| bungalow | bunkhouse | bunker | cabana |
| cabin | capitol | carport | castle |
| catacomb | cathedral | chalet | chapel |
| chateau | church | cinema | city hall |
| clubhouse | college | compound | concert hall |
| condominium | conservatory | cottage | courthouse |
| crypt | depot | detached house | dock |
| dome | dormitory | double wide | duplex |
| dwelling | earth-sheltered house | embassy | exposition hall |
| factory | farm | farmhouse | ferry slip |
| ferry terminal | firehouse | fire station | folly |
| forge | fort | fortress | foundry |
| gallery | garage | gas station | gazebo |
| geodesic dome | granary | greenhouse | gym |
| gymnasium | hall | hangar | haunted house |
| headquarters | high-rise | home | hospital |
| hostel | hotel | hot house | house |
| houseboat | housing project | hunting lodge | hut |
| igloo | jail | kiosk | laboratory |
| lean-to | library | lighthouse | lodge |
| log cabin | longhouse | mall | manor |
| manse | mansion | marina | market |
| mausoleum | meeting hall | mill | minaret |
| mobile home | monastery | monument | mosque |
| motel | museum | nuclear power plant | nursing home |
| observatory | office building | opera house | outbuilding |
| outhouse | pagoda | palace | parking garage |
| parliament | pavilion | plant | playhouse |
| police station | pool house | post office | power plant |
| prefab building | prison | pump house | pyramid |
| quonset hut | railway station | ranch | rectory |
| refinery | residence | restaurant | roller rink |
| roundhouse | rowhouse | school | shack |
| shed | shelter | shopping center | shopping mall |
| shrine | silo | skating rink | skyscraper |
| skyway | smokestack | spire | split-level house |
| stable | stadium | state house | station |
| steeple | store | storehouse | strip mall |
| structure | studio | supermarket | symphony |
| synagogue | temple | tenement | tent |
| terminal | theater | tipi | toll house |
| tomb | tower | townhouse | treehouse |
| triplex | Tudor house | university | vault |
| vicarage | villa | warehouse | watermill |
| workshop | yurt | workshop | theater |
| theatre | teashop | suburbs | stables |
| mansion | hospital | factory | bazaar |
| pub | cathedral | parliament | docks |
| countryside | courtyard | club | yard |
| university | dispensary | airport | bar |
| bank | platform | shop | cottage |
| station |  |  |  |

List of Transport:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Transportation | Travel | trainaerial tramway | aircraft |
| aircraft carrier | airplane | ambulance | amphibious vehicle |
| armored car | auto | automobile | baby carriage |
| balloon | bathyscaphe | barge | barrow |
| battleship | bicycle | bike | biplane |
| blimp | boat | bobsled | bomber |
| boxcar | broomstick | buggy | bulldozer |
| bullet train | bus | cab | cabin cruiser |
| cable car | caboose | camper | canoe |
| car | caravan | caravel | cargo ship |
| carriage | carrier | cart | catamaran |
| chairlift | chariot | chopper | clipper ship |
| clunker | coach | compact car | combine |
| compact car | Conestoga wagon | container ship | convertible |
| conveyance | conveyor belt | convoy | coupe |
| covered wagon | crane | crop duster | cruise ship |
| cruiser | cutter | cycle | delivery truck |
| delivery van | destroyer | diesel truck | dinghy |
| dirigible | dirt bike | diving bell | dog cart |
| dogsled | donkey cart | dray | driver |
| dugout canoe | dump truck | earth mover | eighteen-wheeler |
| electric car | elevated railroad | elevator | engine |
| escalator | express train | ferry | fireboat |
| fire engine | fishing boat | flatbed truck | forklift |
| four-door | four-wheel drive | four-by-four | freighter |
| freight train | frigate | funicular railway | galleon |
| garbage truck | glider | go-cart | golf cart |
| gondola | gondola lift | gridlock | handcar |
| hang glider | hansom cab | hardtop | harvester |
| hatchback | haul | hay wagon | hearse |
| helicopter | hook and ladder truck | hovercraft | hot-air balloon |
| hot rod | houseboat | hull | humvee |
| hybrid | hydrofoil | hydroplane | ice boat |
| ice breaker | jalopy | jeep | jet |
| jet boat | jetliner | journey | jet pack |
| jet ski | jumbo jet | junk | kayak |
| ketch | landing craft | lifeboat | life raft |
| light rail | limo | limousine | litter |
| locomotive | lorry | low-rider | magic carpet |
| maglev | mast | minesweeper | minibus |
| minivan | model T | monorail | moped |
| motor | motorcar | motorboat | motorcycle |
| motor home | mountain bike | narrowboat | oar |
| ocean liner | off-road vehicle | oil tanker | outboard motor |
| outrigger canoe | oxcart | paddle | paddlewheeler |
| parachute | passenger | patrol car | pedal boat |
| pickup truck | pilot | plane | police car |
| power boat | prairie schooner | propeller | PT boat |
| pumper truck | punt | push cart | racecar |
| racing car | raft | ragtop | railroad |
| railway | rapid transit | recreational vehicle | rickshaw |
| ride | riverboat | roadster | rocket |
| rover | rowboat | rudder | runabout |
| RV | sail | sailboat | satellite |
| school bus | schooner | scooter | scull |
| seaplane | sedan | sedan chair | Segway |
| semi | ship | shuttle | side wheeler |
| skiff | ski lift | ski tow | sled |
| sledge | sleigh | snow cat | snowmobile |
| snowplow | spaceship | space shuttle | speedboat |
| sports car | sport-utility vehicle/SUV | squad car | SST |
| stagecoach | station wagon | steamboat | steamship |
| stretch limo | stock car | stroller | subcompact |
| submarine | submersible | subway | surrey |
| SUV | tank | tanker | taxi |
| taxicab | T-bar lift | thresher | tire |
| toboggan | town car | tow truck | tracks |
| tractor | tractor-trailer | trail bike | trailer |
| train | tram | tramway | transit |
| trawler | tricycle | trolley | truck |
| tugboat | two-door | U-boat | ultralight craft |
| umiak | unicycle | van | vehicle |
| vespa | vessel | wagon | warship |
| wheel | wheelbarrow | wheelchair | windjammer |
| windshield | wreck | yacht | yawl |
| Zamboni | zeppelin |  |  |

Detective Vocabulary:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| science | scientific | logic | evidence |
| deduction | deduce | intelligence | intellect |
| trace | hunch | sleuth | detective |
| clue | hint | moral | nature |
| curious | curiosity | think | feel |
| know | knowlege | investigate | investigation |
| test | prove | examine | analyse |
| intuition |  |  |  |