The Subjective/Objective Case Distinction,
with Special Reference to Eighteenth-century Fictional Prose

FUAMI Kayoko

Abstract : This paper is an attempt to describe characteristic usage in the choice between subjective and objective forms of personal pronouns, and also in the variation between *who* and *whom* in non-subject functions. The analysis of eighteenth-century fictional prose involves some stylistic interpretation, and also shows us actual usage in literary writings of the period. Variant forms such as *than I/me, between/let/saw you and I* and *it's I/me* do not take on different meanings respectively, but reflect authors' attitudes towards the distinction between usage levels : educated or vulgar use. The isolated use of pronouns like *I/Me!/?* has negative or interjectional implications. As for the distinction between *who* and *whom* in non-subject functions, *whom* is much more preferred in writing. Our findings in *Evelina* correspond with the notion that *who* is closely associated with spoken style and *whom* with written style ; there is a higher frequency of *whom* in description and of *who* in dialogue.

1. Introduction

The eighteenth century saw a flood of prescriptive comments on English language usage. It is, therefore, natural that people should have become conscious about what is "correct" and what is not, searching for a standard or prestigious usage. The main concern of my work is to describe the use in the language of literature in that period by taking up various grammatical problems in turn : to find out how the notion of correctness is embodied through the manipulation of characters' use of language, and the stylistic differentiation between description and dialogue. The grammatical matters I have treated so far are negation (Fuami 1991) and imperatives (Fuami 1998).

In this paper the focus is on case distinction : the choice of subjective and objective forms. The analysis is twofold : (1) case distinction in the use of personal pronouns and (2) the relative/interrogative *who/whom* variation in the non-subject function. Materials used for this analysis are in the main eighteenth-century British fictional prose. Variations within a single text may give us some insight into the authors' attitude towards usage in relation to the sociostylistic treatment of fictional characters. Variations between authors may tell us something about the prevalent usage of the time. We should, however, note that the language of literary texts does not always yield information on the actual usage and practice of the period in which they are written.

2. The subjective/objective case distinction in the use of personal pronouns

This section first deals with the choice of subjective and objective forms in problematical positions such as after the verb *to be* (2. 1) and after *as* and *than* (2. 2). Then pronouns used independently in response or exclamatory utterances are treated (2. 3). Lastly we concern ourselves with the coordinate constructions with *and* (2. 4).

The choice of subjective and objective forms has often been explained from the viewpoint of formality. How can the eighteenth-century examples be interpreted from the formality viewpoint? Is there a 'formal' versus 'informal' contrast between the case variations? Does a salient contrast exist between the author's own voice and his or her fictional characters' speech? Can the variations found

among various characters' speech give us some sociostylistic suggestions? Bearing these questions in mind we should like to look at the context and examine the factors that influence the choice of subjective/objective forms.

2. 1 The subject complement after the verb *be*

This construction can be roughly classified into two types :

> Type I : It is *I*.
> Type II : It is *me*.

Before looking at eighteenth-century examples, it may be useful to see what one of the grammarians of the period had to say about this construction. Robert Lowth wrote :

> The Verb to Be has always a Nominative Case after it ; as, "it *was I*, and not *He*, that did it : " unless it be in the Infinitive Mode ; "though you took it to be *Him*." (1762 : 105–106).

Concerning the distribution of Type I and Type II , Lowth's comment almost regularly applies to my data collected here. We shall show three typical examples from *Evelina* below :

> That's *she*! (*E* : 326)
> 'tis certainly *she*! (*E* : 326)
> but I don't much fancy it can be *him*. (*E* : 399)[1]

In the first two examples the subjective form 'she' is used, and the last one takes the form of the objective 'him' since it is 'in the infinitive mode' after the auxiliary verb 'can'.

In the cleft construction the pronoun acting as a complement to the verb *be* is varied according to its function in the sentence. If the initial focal item is a subject of the clause, the pronoun is subjective, thus :

> they should remember it is *we* that pay them. (*TJ* : 408)

If the pronoun after the verb *be* has an objective function, it can take the objective form, as in the following.

> I thought it was *me* they were speaking of, . . . (*DS* : 114)

Lowth's precept seems to be still alive in modern English, although grammatical matters like this are treated more liberally than in the eighteenth century (Schlauch 1959 : 145). Grammatical consciousness of this matter sometimes appears in children's literature.

> 'It's all right,' he [Mr Beaver] was shouting. 'Come out, Mrs Beaver. Come out, Sons and Daughters of Adam. It's all right! It isn't *Her*!' This was bad grammar of course, but that is how beavers talk when they are excited ; . . .
> (*The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* : 90)[2]

This passage is noteworthy for two reasons.

For one thing, the utterance 'It isn't *Her*!' is intended to draw attention to 'bad grammar'. This concept originates from the precept which has been deeply rooted since the eighteenth century. The author would like to tell his readers that the objective case '*Her*' should have been the subjective 'she'. He seems to bear in mind young readers in particular and tell them here about the correct grammatical use of case distinction, for case distinctions are often a problem for children learning a language. In the example above the 'It is *I* ' type is considered to be the recommended form for the educational purpose. In passing, we should like to point out another prescriptive comment concerning the case distinction in children's literature.

> 'Who taught you these things, Majesty?' he [the Chief Professor] demanded. . . .
> 'Him,' said the King, *ungrammatically*.
> (*Mary Poppins Comes Back* : 125)

By inserting the commentary adverb 'ungrammatically', the author seems to give young readers a chance to consider the 'correct' grammatical form.

Another thing explicit in the passage from *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* is that the phenomenon of the grammatical violation is correlated with the speaker's state of emotional upsurge. That is to say, the speaker's state of emotion is closely connected with grammatical

violation. In a way, instances of grammatical deviation or violation could be an emotional marker of the speaker.

2. 2 The construction involving the elements *than* and *as*

There is a good deal of confusion about the case to be used after *than* and *as*. This is because the grammatical status of *than* and *as* is contentious among grammarians.

As for the construction with *than,* the following four types are found in my data :

> Type I : She is taller than *me.*
> Type II : She is taller than *I.*
> Type III : She is taller than *I am.*
> Type IV : She is taller than *myself.*

Type III uses a full clause, and Type IV a reflexive form after *than*. It is possible that these two types are being used to evade the case problem (Wales 1996 : 97). In order to see the case distinction, we should like to concentrate on the first two types.

An analysis of the relevant examples in *Tom Jones* may reveal the prescriptive notion which was gaining ground in the eighteenth century. In this novel the consistent form is the 'than *I*' type. A sprinkling of examples of the 'than *me*' type, which are found in the first, second and third editions, are all corrected to the 'than *I*' type in the fourth edition. It is worth considering what the printer Millar advertised in publishing the fourth edition. Concerning this point, Fredson Bowers says as follows in his Textual Introduction of *Tom Jones.*

> The revision, which Millar advertised, was chiefly stylistic and concerned itself specifically with purity of usage and with correcting careless grammatical modification. (*TJ* : lxvii)

If we begin with the assumption that the language edited for publication in print is subject to the rules and expected practice of the period in which books were published, this verbal alteration from 'than me' to 'than *I*' may be a modification made to conform to the most expected type of Fielding's time.

Conversely in *Governess* the 'than *me*' type and the 'than *myself*' type both occur, but the 'than *I*' type never

occurs. *Governess* is a book intended for children and the style is most likely to approximate to the spoken tone appropriate for children of the eighteenth century. If we take this into account, there is a possibility that the '*than me*' type was favoured in everyday spoken English of that period.

Concerning the construction with *as,* we shall only mention the marked use in *Tom Jones.* In this novel the normal case form after *as* is subjective. The following, in which the objective case after *as* is used, is, therefore, marked.

> I must acquaint you, Mrs. Honour, that you are not so good as *me.* (*TJ* : 355)

This is put in the mouth of Mrs. Western's maid, one of the typical low-life characters.

For the sake of interest, we shall refer to the relevant use in Austen's *Emma.* Harriet Smith's use of 'as educated as me' is said to reveal her lack of education (Denison 1994 : 291).

2. 3 The isolated use of pronouns

This use is found mainly in response utterances and also in exclamatory ones. Among response utterances, some may be found to be the 'subjects' or 'objects' of elided sentences. On the other hand, in exclamatory utterances it is difficult to reproduce an alternative utterance with a subject-predicate, for it is often the case that there is no definite syntactic relation to the preceding utterance. Whether in response or exclamatory utterances, the norm in present-day English is the objective case (Wales 1996 : 99–100). In dialogue in eighteenth-century fictions the subjective case appears very frequently. In the present paper particular attention is paid to the first person pronouns *I* and *me* in absolute use, since the first person is of more frequent occurrence than any other personal pronoun.

In *Tom Jones* and *Roxana* the regular case is subjective. The examples of the 'I' in absolute use are almost exclusively associated with negative utterances like the following.

> '. . . And you seem to me to be angry it was not your own Case.'
> '*I,* Ma'am!' answered Mrs. Honour, 'I am sorry

your Ladyship should have such an Opinion of me. I
am sure nobody can say any such thing of me. . . .'
(*TJ* : 197)

No ; . . . I would sooner be cut into ten thousand
Pieces. I hate all Treachery. *I* ! I never betrayed any
one in my Life yet, and I am sure I shall not begin
with so sweet a Lady as your Ladyship. (*TJ* : 592)

The speakers in both of the examples above adopt a resis-
tant attitude towards the preceding speaker. In the first in-
stance Mrs. Honour, the maid-servant, makes a sort of ex-
cuse starting with 'I am sorry . . .' followed by the nega-
tive statement 'nobody . . . any'. The second utterance is
put into the mouth of the Landlord. The exclamatory na-
ture of '*I* !' is emphasised by the negative words such as
'never' and 'not'. This use of 'I!' is almost interjectional.

A similar interjectional use is also found in the form
'me!'.

my whole Desire is to make thee happy ; *me!* d––n
me if there is a Thing upon Earth I would not do to
see thee happy. (*TJ* : 839)

This objective form 'me!' in absolute use is the only one
example in this novel. It is most likely that the form 'me'
is attracted by the word 'me' in the following 'd––n me',
in the same way as the 'I' type examples above, where
the form 'I' is attracted by the word 'I' at the start of the
following sentence.

Since the isolated use of 'I' is closely associated with
negative notions as is seen in the above, it is no wonder
that the word 'I' often collocates with the negative 'not'.
The locution 'Not I' occurs so frequently in my
eighteenth-century data that it appears to be firmly estab-
lished in the period as a fixed phrase.

'Pray, Brother, have you not observed something
very extraordinary in my Niece lately?' 'No, *not I,*'
answered Western ; . . . (*TJ* : 274)
'How,' said Allworthy, 'what, did you employ him
then to enquire or to do any Thing in that Matter?'
'*Not I,*' answered Western, . . . (*TJ* : 945)
I said to him, Amy being by, Hark ye, Mr. ––––, Do
you know that you are to lye with Amy to-Night?
No, *not I,* says he . . . (*Roxana* : 46)

'And so you would sacrifice your Religion to your
Interest?' cries the Exciseman ; 'and are desirous to
see Popery brought in, are you?'
'*Not I* truly,' answered the other, 'I hate Popery as
much as any Man . . .' (*TJ* : 647–648)

It is worth noting that the last instance of 'Not I' is ac-
companied by the emphatic adverb 'truly'. The defensive
attitude emphasised in 'Not I' is a sign that one wants to
justify oneself as much as possible. This often leads a
speaker to rely on emphatic expressions such as 'truly',
'indeed', 'faith' and so on[3].

The locution 'not I', if it is placed at the end of a sen-
tence, also serves as a kind of tag, to make the preceding
negation sound more definite.

For as for that Matter, I am no more afraid than an-
other Man, *not I* ; as to Matter of that. (*TJ* : 630)
Captain! I do not know of any Captain that is here,
not I. (*Amelia* : 496)
I don't value that one Farthing, *not I,* says the Wife,
I'll keep none of them. (*Roxana* : 24)
. . . if he asks me, I won't deny him, *not I* ; Hang
me if I do, says Amy. (*Roxana* : 39)
I know not what ail'd me, *not I* ; . . . (*Roxana* :
128)

Moreover, it is interesting to note that the negative func-
tion of the 'not I' tag is doubly emphasised by the state-
ments that follow it, such as 'as to Matter of that' in the
first, 'I'll keep none of them' in the second and 'Hang me
if I do' in the third example.

Now attention will be paid to the isolated first person
pronoun use in *Evelina*. Unlike *Tom Jones* and *Roxana,*
the regular case in *Evelina* is the objective form 'me'.

'*Me*!' cried I, 'no, I detest him!' for I was quite sick
at heart. (*E* : 251)
'Miss Anville, have you an almanack?'
'*Me*! ––– no, Ma'am.' (*E* : 359)
'So, Miss Belmont, I wish you joy ; so I hear
you've quarrelled with your new name already?'
'*Me*! ––– no, indeed, Sir.' (*E* : 392)
'What say you, Lady Louisa,' cried Mrs. Beaumont,
'to a strole in the garden ; . . .'

'*Me,* Ma'am! ––– I declare I can't stir a step ; the heat is so excessive, it would kill me. . . . (*E :* 280)

Like the absolute use of 'I', the isolated pronoun 'me!' occurs almost always in negative contexts. Negative words such as 'no', 'not' and the like are found in the utterance following 'Me!'. What is noticeable is that the expression 'Not me', which is supposed to be equivalent to the locution 'Not I', is not found in our data[4].

Then let us examine Mr. Lovel's speech in *Evelina*. His regular use is the 'me' form. There is, however, one instance in which the unusual 'I' form, which is perceived to be marked, is used.

'*Me,* Madam!' said he, colouring, 'no, really I must beg to be excused.' (*E :* 290)

'*Me,* Sir!' said Mr. Lovel, very much discomposed ; 'I protest I never thought myself in such imminent danger as to ––– really, Sir, I don't understand you. (*E :* 392)

'Who? *me*! ––– O dear Ma'am,' said he, simpering, 'I can't pretend to assist a person of your Ladyship's taste ; . . .' (*E :* 393)

. . . he [Captain Mirvan] marched up to Mr. Lovel, and abruptly said, 'Pray have you e'er a brother in these here parts?'

'*Me,* Sir? ––– no, thank Heaven, I'm free from all incumbrances of that sort. (*E :* 399)

'Who *I*?' cried Mr. Lovel, almost mad with vexation, 'as I'm a living creature, I would not touch him for a thousand worlds!' (*E :* 400)

The last two instances appear in a scene in which Captain Mirvan makes a fool of Mr. Lovel. Captain Mirvan asks Mr. Lovel if he has a brother, saying he has met a person very much like Mr. Lovel. At this stage Mr. Lovel's response is 'Me, Sir?' with the normal objective case. When the captain reveals that the so-called 'brother' was a real monkey, not a person, Mr. Lovel's resentment reaches its strongest, as is shown in the description 'almost mad with vexation', and the form 'I', which is different from the usual one, appears in his utterance in the last instance. This switching from regular to irregular use clearly correlates with the speaker's sudden emotional change. This is one of the instances in which grammatical deviation from the usual form happening in one speaker's speech gives us a clue to the speaker's emotional fluctuation or rather heightening.

2. 4 The coordinate constructions with *and*

In considering this construction, the ordering of pronouns is important from the viewpoint of style and courtesy (Quirk & Greenbaum 1990 : 109), but in this section we shall concentrate on the case variation. Our concern here is to see the pronouns in coordination (1) in the subject position and (2) in the non-subject position.

In the subject position, both pronouns connected by *and* almost always take the subjective form. What we should note is the problem of concord. With regard to concord, the use in *Roxana* is inconsistent.

when *she and I was* alone (*Roxana :* 265)
as *my Spouse and I was* sitting by a little Table, near the Fire, . . . (*Roxana :* 297)
when *his Lord and I were* together above (*Roxana :* 83)
And now *Amy and I were* at Leisure to look upon the Mischiefs that we had escap'd ; . . . (*Roxana :* 121)

The coordinate pronouns are sometimes perceived to be singular, as the former two instances show, and sometimes plural, as is seen in the latter two examples. The former two coordinate constructions treated in the singular may perhaps be explained by analogy with 'we was', which occurs only twice in *Roxana,* where 'we were' exceeds it in the number of occurrences.

In *Tom Jones* all the coordinate constructions are treated as plural except the following :

Was not *you and she* hard at it before I came into the Room? (*TJ :* 342)

This is put in the mouth of Squire Western. Considering the deviant forms used by a vulgar character like Squire Western, the 'incorrect' concord in the above can be suggestive of his non-standard language (Blake 1981 : 123).

In what follows we are concerned with coordinate pronouns in the non-subject position. We confine ourselves to the problematical constructions with *let* and *between*.

There are quite a few instances of the 'let you and I . . .?' construction and similar patterns to it. Only a couple of examples are given here :

> if it be so, *let you and I* go into the next Room and consider of it there (*Roxana* : 116)
> *let my Dear and I* talk the Matter over, and you shall judge it between us. (*BS* : 95)

Examples of the [between ––– and I] pattern are as follows :

> there was nothing *between Mr. Robert and I.* (*MF* : 45)
> so far had this innocent Girl gone in jesting *between her and I,* . . . (*Roxana* : 44)
> . . . and Letters and Answers pass'd *between Amy and I* a little slower than usual, . . . (*Roxana* : 221)

Both patterns, [let ––– and I] and [between ––– and I], are censured as ungrammatical in the eighteenth century. At the same time, however, there is no denying the fact that they were 'almost universally used in familiar conversation' in that period (Leonard 1962 : 188). The relatively high frequency of the coordinated pattern [––– and I] seems to have resulted in a tendency for it to be used as a fixed phrase. Whether it is placed in the subject position or not, the form is often invariant. This invariant pattern occurs only in the speeches of so-called 'vulgar' characters in *Evelina.*

> Come, Miss, *let's you and I* have a little fun together (*E* : 232)
> he saw *you and I* a-walking up Holborn Hill! (*E* : 251)
> You are just come in time, my boy, . . . to settle a little matter of a dispute *between this here gentlewoman and I* ; . . . (*E* : 75)

The first two utterances are put into the mouth of the members of the Branghton family. The last one is spoken by Captain Mirvan. The [––– and I] pattern in the non-subject position in all of the three examples above could be interpreted as one of the typical grammatical features assigned to the so-called vulgar characters. Moreover, it is

worth noting the expression 'let's you and I' in the first example. Why is it used instead of 'let you and I'? It seems possible to conjecture that 'let you and I' is so common in conversations that it does not serve the purpose of conveying a tinge of vulgarity any more. Lastly we should like to add one more example from Squire Western's speech in *Tom Jones* :

> it was after what passed *between your Nephew and she* that the whole Matter came out. (*TJ* : 306)

This is the only instance in which the subjective form of the pronoun is used after 'between', while all the others have pronouns of objective case after 'between' in this novel. Here the use of the subjective case 'she' indicates a deviation at least from the norm in this novel. This deviant case distinction embodied in this example can be said to be utilised to give the speech of a vulgar character like Squire Western a sign of non-standard English.

3. *Who/whom* variation in the non-subject position

In respect of the cases, the relative/interrogative pronoun with its forms *who, whom* resembles the personal pronouns. In the latter part of the present paper the focus of attention is on the variation and distribution of the *who/whom* pronoun which functions as the objective case, including the one after a preposition. We shall henceforth call this use of pronoun 'non-subject *who/whom*'.

The first thing to do is to examine the distribution of 'non-subject *who*' and 'non-subject *whom*' respectively in each text concerned here. Then, on the basis of the result of this, we should like to look at the contexts in which non-subject *who* and *whom* are used, and consider whether there could be any factors that influence the choice of them.

Before the actual analysis, it may be useful to see what grammarians say about the non-subject *who* and *whom* :

> . . . the inflected form *whom* is disappearing from the spoken language and being replaced by *who,* though it still persists strongly in writing. . . . There is one position where *whom* is always used still, and that is immediately after a preposition which governs

it. (Barber 1964 : 130–131)

Let us quote another comment on the form *whom* :

> . . . the form *whom* is still very much alive ; however, it is considered very formal, and in spoken English it is practically restricted to a few marked positions, especially immediately after a preposition. (Schneider 1992 : 437)

As is seen in the above, *who/whom* variation is often explained stylistically. That is, *whom* tends to be associated with formal and written style, whereas the uninflected *who* is associated with informal and spoken style.

3. 1 The distribution of non-subject *who/whom*

For the purpose of taking an overview of the distribution we shall provide the numbers of instances found in several works of eighteenth-century fictional prose in the form of a table.

Table 1   Distribution of non-subject *who/whom*

	whom	*who*	total
E	79 (81.4%)	18 (18.6%)	97
ML	19 (43.2%)	25 (56.8%)	44
Roxana	17 (26.6%)	47 (73.4%)	64
JPY	29 (50.9%)	28 (49.1%)	57
Pamela	39 (95.1%)	2 (4.9%)	41
DS	96 (100%)	0 (0%)	96
Governess	18 (100%)	0 (0%)	18
Boswell's London Journal	73 (100%)	0 (0%)	73

Defoe's works exhibit higher frequencies of non-subject *who* than those of any other authors examined here. *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* are supposed to be narrated by their heroines, Moll and Roxana respectively. The prose style of them is, therefore, based on the assumption that the whole work is written as if Moll and Roxana were telling their stories. What these two heroines have in common is that they are of humble origins and far from educated. The high percentage of the use of non-subject *who* may be closely related to their spoken style.

For the purpose of comparison, we have chosen one journal, *A Journal of the Plague Year,* by the same author, which might reveal a different sort of result from *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana.* This journal is narrated by an imaginary citizen who kept a close watch on the Great Plague of 1665. If we consider that it is supposed to be a written record, the frequency of *whom* is significantly higher than in the other two works.

3. 2 Formal classification and stylistic interpretation

There are six types of formal structures. This complete list of the examples of non-subject *who/whom* includes both interrogative and relative pronouns together.

Ⅰ. *Who* as object
Ⅱ. *Whom* as object
Ⅲ. *Who* as prepositional complement : *who* +prep.
Ⅳ. *Who* as prepositional complement : prep.+*who*
Ⅴ. *Whom* as prepositional complement : prep.+ *whom*
Ⅵ. *Whom* as prepositional complement : *whom* + prep.

Examples of each type are as follows :

Ⅰ. Two Men swore that they see the Man, *who* they pursued, go into her House (*MF* : 217)
   Who do you mean by THEY? (*MF* : 36)
   You know *who* I seek. (*Roxana* : 319)

Ⅱ. The servant *whom* I shall commission to call for an answer, has orders to ride post with it to me. (*E* : 256–257)
   Saw *whom,* Madam? (*TJ* : 930)
   Whom can I get to send? (*Amelia* : 517)

Ⅲ. This was what she call'd her Friend, *who* she corresponded *with* upon this particular Subject (*Roxana* : 131)
   Who does he speak *of,* my dear? (*E* : 43)
   O Sir! you don't know *who* you talk *of*! (*E* : 86)

Ⅳ. . . . upon this, the whole House was set upon me to Examine me, and to press me to tell, whether I was in Love or not, and *with who*? (*MF* : 42)
   . . . he knew neither where, or *of who,* to enquire for me (*Roxana* : 226)

Ⅴ. As I have mention'd Sir Robert Clayton, *with whom* I had the good Fortune to become acquainted (*Roxana* : 167)
   these were the People *of whom* the well People ought to have been afraid (*JPY* : 191)

I hardly know myself *to whom* I most belong!
(*E* : 353)

Ⅵ. Of the strangers *whom* I make acquaintance *with*, I shall not draw regular characters.
(*Boswell on the Grand Tour* : 96)

My emotions soon betrayed to Lord Orville *whom* the letter was *from* (*E* : 403)

In eighteenth-century fictional prose examined here *whom* is much preferred to uninflected *who* as object. If *whom* is used as prepositional complement, the type Ⅴ (prep.＋ *whom*) is greatly favoured over type Ⅵ (*whom*＋prep.). In the case of *who* used as prepositional complement, the greater part of the examples can be classified under type Ⅲ (*who*＋prep.). Type Ⅳ (prep.＋*who*) is very rare, but is actually found, almost exclusively functioning as inter-rogative pronouns.

Let us see if there is any difference in frequency in the use of non-subject *who/whom* between narrative and dia-logue parts. In *Evelina* we examined the distribution of *whom* and *who* by counting the occurrence of each in the description and dialogue parts separately. The following table was obtained.

Table 2   Distribution of *who/whom* in description and dialogue in *Evelina*

	description	dialogue	total
whom	63 (79.7%)	16 (20.3%)	79
who	7 (38.9%)	11 (61.1%)	18

Out of 79 examples of *whom*, 63 occur in the descrip-tive parts, and this accounts to 79.7% of all instances of *whom*. This result clearly shows that *whom* occurs more frequently in description than in dialogue. The situation is reversed with regard to *who*. The proportion of *who* is higher in dialogue than in description.

It may be interesting to see in what kind of characters' speech the instances of non-subject *who* are found. The majority of occurrences of non-subject *who* are used by characters like a footman, Miss Branghton, Mr. Brangh-ton, Madame Duval and the like. They all are characters to whom the author seems to give a trace of vulgarity in some way or other (See McIntosh 1998 : 114−118). One of the examples spoken by these so-called vulgar charac-ters is shown here :

'Tell her, if you please, that I am much concerned, ——— but that I am pre-engaged.'

'And *who to*?' demanded the abrupt Miss Brangh-ton. (*E* : 84)

In respect of the choice of *who* and *whom,* we can see a contrastive utterance using 'whom' :

'If I do dance,' said I, in great confusion, 'I believe I am engaged.'

'Engaged!' cried he, with earnestness, 'May I ask *to whom*?' (*E* : 332)

The question 'May I ask to whom?' is asked by Lord Or-ville, who is assumed to be a member of the true nobility in *Evelina*. In these two examples the verbs are similar : 'pre-engage' and 'engage'. Both of them are accompanied by the preposition 'to'. In more or less the same linguistic environments, the contrastive choice of *who* and *whom* is significant enough to suggest the difference in formality or politeness. Miss Branghton's utterance 'And who to?' is short and sounds rather brusque, in marked contrast to Lord Orville's formal way of asking, starting with the po-lite expression 'May I ask?'

Now we will turn our attention to one character's use of non-subject *who/whom*. Sir Clement normally uses *whom*, except one instance in which the uninflected *who* is used :

'My Lord,' *cried Sir Clement, warmly,* 'your praises make me doubt your disinterestedness, and there exists not the man *who* I would so unwillingly have for a rival as yourself. . . .' (*E* : 346)

The fluctuating usage by one character may be explained from the emotional point of view. As is seen in the de-scriptive part saying 'cried Sir Clement, warmly', a strong feeling akin to anger brings him to use a form different from the usual one.

3. 3 Coexistence of non-subject *who* and *whom* from the perspective of stylistic and historical accounts

It is generally said that *whom* is disappearing in spoken and informal language in present-day English. Interroga-tive *whom* is particularly a case in point. Even in the

eighteenth century the use of *who* for *whom* in interroga-
tive clauses has already been established (Saito 1997 :
62). In literary texts, however, examples of *whom* are not
hard to come across in both relative and interrogative
clauses. It is evident that there was a choice between *who*
and *whom*.

Let us see the following pairs of sentences :

(a) did you know *who* you *should meet* there? (E :
     331)

(a′) *Whom should* I meet today but Lombach, my
     Utrecht acquaintance. (*Boswell on the Grand
     Tour* : 207–208)

(b) it was impossible to guess by the Equipage,
     who I was, or *who I belong'd to* (*Roxana* : 84)

(b′) I hardly know myself *to whom I* most *belong*!
     (*E* : 353)

The first pair, (a) and (a′), may help to explain that the
choice of *who* and *whom* is a matter of preference and
varies from author to author. The second pair, (b) and
(b′), shows us another point to consider. Whether a
preposition is fronted or not forms a factor which influ-
ences the choice between *who* and *whom*.

In Defoe's prose the form *whom* is used almost exclu-
sively as prepositional complement and belongs to type V
(prep. + *whom*). There seems to be a possibility that type
V shows a strong resistance towards giving way to the
uninflected *who*. In the following example *who* and
whom coexist in one sentence :

nothing cou'd express the Amazement and Surprize I
was in, when the very first Man that came out I
knew to be my Lancashire Husband, the same *with
whom* I liv'd so well at Dunstable, and the same *who*
I afterwards saw at Brickill . . . (*MF* : 280)

The first form, 'with whom', seems to continue to resist
the move towards the uninflected *who* because the prepo-
sition 'with' precedes it. The latter instance of the unin-
flected *who* may be the resultant form which the inflected
whom gave way to because of the absence of preposition.

4. Conclusion

This paper has examined the case distinction between
subjective and objective, which has been one of the con-
tentious problems among grammarians. We hope to have
shown how this grammatical matter is reflected in lan-
guage use in eighteenth-century fictional prose. Our ap-
proach has been twofold : examining personal pronouns
in subjective/objective forms and *who/whom* variation in
non-subject functions. Overall we have tried to explore
the factors which influence the choice between subjective
and objective forms.

We shall conclude by pointing out again a couple of
factors we have considered in the present paper. One pos-
sible factor is a speaker's emotional transition. This is re-
vealed by observing marked and unmarked forms in one
character's speech. Another factor is authors' motivation
for utilising the variation in case distinction. The general
tendency is that the use most censured at the time is
likely to serve as a sign of vulgarity.

Finally some comments will be made on the prevalent
and characteristic use in eighteenth-century fictional prose
examined here. Concerning personal pronouns, there is a
stylistic preference for the isolated use in negative and in-
terjectional utterances. The 'Not I' form is particularly
common. With regard to the variation between *who* and
whom in non-subject functions, our quantitative findings
about the distribution of *who* and *whom* give useful evi-
dence for the prevalent use of *whom* in literary writings.

NOTES

1) Italics in quotations are mine.

2) Italics in this quotation are in the original.

3) The following examples illustrate emphatic adverbs :

Not I, *indeed,* dear ; I hate London. (*CW* : 16)

No, poor man, not I, *faith.* (*CW* : 45)

No, *faith,* not I, how could I? (*CW* : 56)

Not one of 'em, *by heav'ns,* not I! (*MM* : 126)

4) Examples of the locution 'not me' abound in present-day
English.

. . . 'I do believe you're cross.'

'What, me? *Not me!*' said Perks loftily

(*The Railway Children* : 83)

'Oh, come away, Peter, come away!' said Bobbie and
Phyllis, in agonized unison.

'*Not me,*' said Peter, 'but you'd better.'(*The Railway
Children* : 115)

'Did you see Cinderella?' said Jane.

'Huh, Cinderella? *Not me,*' said Mary Poppins, contemptuously.　　　　　　　　　　　　　(*Mary Poppins* : 28)

'Well, we are the others, all of us. And so are you, my man.'

'Me!' The Park Keeper was indignant. 'I'm not somebody else, *not me!*'　　(*Mary Poppins in Cherry Tree Lane* : 45)

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