

DIRECT SPEECH AND LEXICAL PRESENCE OF *ESSE* IN VIRGILIAN EPIC¹

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I. Aims and Structure of the Essay

This study considers the lexical density of *esse* in an epic text. It takes a comparative approach, looking specifically at occurrences in passages of direct speech and of narrative. Using data from a statistical analysis of the verbal forms of *esse* in both text types (§ 2) it examines a number of factors that might account for differences in the findings here (§ 3). Results are then summarised and some conclusions offered (§ 4).

2. Approaching the Question. Statistical Studies

The study of the behaviour of the verb *sum* in the *Aeneid* provides what seems to be remarkable findings. First, it is surprising to note that the overall frequency of use of this polyvalent verb is far less than might be expected.³ This is more notable still when a study variable is introduced and we focus on the presence of the verb in what is generically known as direct speech (henceforth DS)—literal words uttered by the characters—or in passages by the narrator (henceforth NAR).

Virgil's abundant use of DS follows the Greek model: in Homer's epic poetry, for example, DS typically constitutes at least 60% of a text (Torres 2003: 109);⁴ however, in Virgil's works, speeches are comparatively brief and seldom appear in long dialogues or in dialogues between many characters. Despite this, it is evident that for Virgil DS⁵ can still be the source of great dramatism.

According to the data that can be drawn from Highet (1972: 302),⁶ DS occupies 46.48% of the *Aeneid* (4619 verses), a somewhat lower

ratio compared to Homer's epic poetry. Let us see the distribution of the forms of *esse*:⁷

TABLE (1) DS/NAR distribution and forms of *esse* in Verg. *Aen.*

	DISTRIBUTION OF THE VERBS IN <i>AEN.</i>	FORMS OF <i>ESSE</i>
DS	4619 verses (46.48%)	269 (66.75%)
NAR	5277 verses (53.32%)	134 (33.25%)
Total	9896 verses	403

As can be seen, the totals are “inverted”: when the narrative text is longer, the presence of verbal forms of *sum* is lower. This is surprising in that, (i) it is generally accepted that conversational discourse favours word omission;⁸ (ii) the omissibility index of copulative verbs is far higher than that of other predicates. Taking both (i) and (ii) into account, then, one might expect the omissibility degree of the copula in DS to be higher than in NAR; Table 1, though, shows precisely the opposite.

Such unexpected findings demands a detailed study of the occurrences⁹ of this verbal form as a means of identifying the causes of what seems to be its anomalous behaviour in the context of the discursive genre here.¹⁰ The analysis of each instance of the form (403 in total) would exceed the scope of the present study, and thus a smaller, yet significant, number of specific examples have been sought. One possible selection criterion would be to take those books in which the verb's presence is greatest. The distribution of the different forms of *esse* in each book is as follows:

TABLE (2) Distribution of the forms of *esse* by book in Verg. *Aen.*

BOOK NO.	NO. OF FORMS OF <i>ESSE</i>	BOOK NO.	NO. OF FORMS OF <i>ESSE</i>
1	31	7	37
2	35	8	21
3	29	9	31
4	27	10	49
5	25	11	38
6	44	12	36

As table 2 shows, the three books in which the greatest presence of *esse* is found are 6, 10 and 11, which together contain a total of 131 such forms, one third [32.50%] of all occurrences in the work. We might then ask whether the presence of this verbal form in the DS passages in these three books is equally “dense”, that is, whether or not a similarly high relative frequency of occurrence of these verbal forms is found when we look specifically at the DS fragments. The following table sets out the findings here:

TABLE (3) Ratio of forms of *esse* in DS (*Aen.* 6, 10 and 11)

BOOK	NO. OF VERSES	FORMS OF ESSE	OVERALL “DENSITY” IN VERSES	“DENSITY” PER VERSE
6	426	31	7%	0.0727
10	270	31	11%	0.1148
11	401	29	7%	0.0723
Total	1097	91	8%	0.0829

Except for the slight increase in book 10, the average occurrence in DS verses is well balanced, and amounts to nearly 8% of the total number of such verses. Also, the frequency of *esse* in DS fragments from these three books amounts to more than two-thirds of all instances in the books (91 forms out of 131 [= 69.47%]). Thus, the data provided by these three books seems to be significant, and might then serve as a useful basis for our analysis.

Furthermore, by analysing the behaviour of *esse* in these three books, it will be possible to examine slightly different contexts: *prima facie*, the tone of the conversation between Aeneas and the Sibyl or Anchises in book 6 is not the same as that of the discussion of the gods in book 10, or indeed of the predominantly martial context of book 11.

3. Analytic Study. Concurrent Factors

The analysis of each verbal occurrence in DS shows that, in most cases, they are pragmatically motivated.¹¹ There are also some cases in which the presence of the verbal form is also justified by lexical-grammatical needs, these being cases in which the absence of the verbal form would

render the expression unrecognisable and, hence, communication would be impossible.

Both pragmatic motivation and lexical-grammatical necessity can be related to the incidence of the expressly grammaticalised person and mood categories: as we know, elision is far simpler and more frequent in the case of the 3rd person present than in other forms.¹² This is reflected in the current data with respect to the personal forms used in *NAR* and *DS* discourse types: while in *NAR* only the 3rd person appears (120 occurrences), in *DS* there are 13 1st-person cases and 24 2nd-person cases, plus 217 3rd-person cases.¹³ In fact, it must be said that a modality that uses, for instance, exhortative subjunctive or imperative forms which are hard to omit from the speech act, is far more frequent in *DS* than in *NAR* precisely because these elements have a special communicative value: these are “marked” moods.

As one might expect, the data obtained are not “pure”. In other words, it is not a matter of absence of elision in *DS*¹⁴ versus a higher frequency of elision in *NAR*;¹⁵ what in fact occurs is that *DS* invites the concurrence of different factors—pragmatic, grammatical, stylistic, lexical factors—which make it necessary to use this verbal form more often, far more often than in *NAR* contexts.

This could be compatible with another determinant factor: that Virgil tried to incorporate in direct speech passages certain elements more becoming of oral texts, so as to make the text resemble real oral production as much as possible at these points.¹⁶ Thus, in passages of direct speech, it is probable that the speaker will not be using a wide range of terms, and it will be easier for him to resort to those polyvalent terms that are hence easier to use; in a *NAR* context, by contrast, the poet would typically be using a “richer” variety of verbal resources. Such a hypothesis requires further investigation.¹⁷

3.1. Pragmatic Factors

In order to focalise the verbal form¹⁸ the poet may use different resources, such as the introduction of contrasts (§ 3.1.1), its position in discourse, repetitions, parallelism (§ 3.1.2), the use of certain particles and so on.

3.1.1. Contrast

Among cases in which pragmatic factors turn out to be co-causal with, and explicative of, occurrences of the verbal forms of *sum*, there are a few cases in which two opposing forms appear:

(1) Verg. *Aen.* 10.613–4

si mihi, quae quondam **fuerat** quamque **esse** decebat,
uis in amore **foret**

had my love the force that once it had, and still should have

Juno's tone is intended to persuade Jupiter to take Turnus away from the battle and keep him alive. There is a contrast between the different tenses of the same verb, particularly between *fuerat* and *foret*; in the former the pluperfect expresses the status quo before the situation changes,¹⁹ whereas in the latter Juno resorts to the familiar sense of "if you really loved me...".²⁰

In the next example, Anchises refers to the lands that will be founded subsequently by Silvius Aeneas, Procas, Capys and Numitor. The contrast between the future (*nomina*) and present (*sine nomine*) situations is stressed by the presence of the adverbs *tum* and *nunc* respectively, and by the chiasmic position of the terms:

(2) Verg. *Aen.* 6.776

haec tum nomina **erunt**, nunc **sunt** sine nomine terrae

these shall then be names, that now are nameless land

Latinus' particular account of those who can and cannot be relied on in battle is made by means of the different uses of *sum* in (3), and by means of the respective *non*, *at* and the intensive *et*; there is no repetition of the double dative (*auxilio nobis*) but the verbal form is preserved, and it is this, plus the occurrence of *est*, that make Camilla's presence real:

(3) Verg. *Aen.* 11.428–32

non erit auxilio nobis Aetolus et Arpi:
at Messapus **erit** felixque Tolumnius
(...)
est et Volscorum egregia de gente Camilla

no aid to us will be the Aetolian and his Arpi: yet Messapus will be, and Tolumnius the fortunate (...) We have Camilla too, of the glorious Volscian race

There can be a contrast between a form of *sum* and another form of a different verbal lexeme; but the presence of the form *esse* is necessary in order to implement this contrast strategy and thus to have a contrasting term:

(4) Verg. *Aen.* 10.467–9

stat sua cuique dies, breue et irreparabile tempus
omnibus **est** uitae; sed famam extendere factis,
hoc uirtutis opus

each has his day appointed; short and irretrievable is the span of life to all: but to lengthen fame by deeds—that is valour's task

In this example presenting Jupiter's solemn words, the poet tries to make a lexical *variatio* between *stat*—in emphatic position—and *est*, although these two verbs do not differ that much from the point of view of their semantic content. Their presence, however, is necessary to establish a difference between the notion that existence will come to an end, expressed by *stat*, and that of the mere attribution of briefness as a characteristic of life, expressed by *est*. Besides, it should be noted that the sentence following the one in which *est* appears contains a structure formed by *sum* plus *opus* and genitive, this structure lacking a verb because it is not necessary,²¹ as suggested in the *ThLL*²² and in the Greek model of the Latin sentence, in which there is a similar use of ἔργον:

(5) A. *Ch.* 673

ἀνδρῶν τὸδ' ἐστὶν ἔργον

The contrast between *est* and *uiximus* in the following example is rather different. The tenses and the persons are different although the emphatic anaphor of the adverb *diu* and the special position of the verbs in their respective verses come to stress the opposition: present plus a general statement about reality in the *est* sentence, versus perfect plus a specific statement about specific individuals (Mezentius and his horse Rhaebus) in the *uiximus* clause:

(6) Verg. *Aen.* 10.861–2

Rhaebe, diu, res si qua diu mortalibus ulla **est**,
uiximus

Rhaebus, long have we lived, if to mortal beings ought to be long

Similarly, there is a contrast between *mandemus* and *est* in (7), where once more we see an opposition between the exhortative subjunctive addressed to Aeneas and his comrades, and the general formulation of the *est* sentence:

(7) Verg. *Aen.* 11.22–3

interea socios inhumataque corpora terrae
mandemus, qui solus honos Acheronte sub imo **est**

meanwhile let us commit to earth the unburied bodies of our comrades—
the only honour that exists in nether Acheron

Moreover, the statement in the copulative clause in (6) is usually a pathetic statement: *si qua* (< Gr. εἴ πως) and the similar expression *si quis* are in fact habitually used by Virgil to express dubious possibility, a sort of “hope against hope”.²³ This expression will be used in other instances of this copulative verb.²⁴

Finally, let us consider one final example of the contrast between forms of different verbs, this time in the same coordinated temporal sequence:

(8) Verg. *Aen.* 10.862–5

aut hodie uictor spolia illa cruenti
et caput Aeneae **referes** Lausique dolorum
ultor **eris** mecum, aut, (...)
occumbes pariter

to-day thou shalt either bear off in victory yonder bloody spoils with
the head of Aeneas, and avenge with me the sufferings of Lausus, or, ...
thou shalt die with me

The contrast here in these words from Mezentius to Rhaebus is based on the opposed ideas of *uictor* and the action described by the *referes* sentence, on the one hand, and the content of *occumbes*, on the other: the familiar disjunction “death or glory”, although the first term of the contrast is characterised by a sort of *amplificatio* coordinated by

et in the *eris* sentence, in which the verbal form in the 2nd person of the future cannot be discarded.

3.1.2. Parallelism

As already noted, focalization can also be attained by means of various kinds of parallelism in order to stress the special relevance of the verbal form; the grammatical structures handled by the poet and the verbal forms of *esse* and/or other verbal lexemes are totally or partially repeated:

(9) Verg. *Aen.* 10.107

quae cuique est fortuna hodie, **quam quisque** secat spem

whate'er the fortune of each to-day, whate'er the hope each pursues

(10) Verg. *Aen.* 11.443–4

nec Drances potius, **siue est** haec ira deorum,
morte luat, **siue est** uirtus et gloria, tollat

nor let Drances in my stead, if heaven's wrath be there, appease it by his death; nor, if here be prowess and glory, let him win the palm!

(11) Verg. *Aen.* 11.15–6

haec sunt spolia et de rege superbo
primitiae manibusque meis Mezentius **hic est**

these are the spoils and firstfruits of a haughty king; and here is Mezentius, as fashioned by my hands

(12a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.51–2

est Amathus, **est** celsa mihi Paphus atque Cythera
Idaliaeque domus

Amathus is mine, mine are high Paphus and Cythera, and Idalia's shrine

(12b) Verg. *Aen.* 10.86

est Paphus Idaliumque tibi, **sunt** alta Cythera

Paphus is thine, thine are Idalium and high Cythera

(12c) Verg. *Aen.* 10.526–8

est domus alta, **iacent** penitus defossa talenta
caelati argenti, **sunt** auri pondera facti
infectique mihi

a stately house have I; buried deep within lie talents of chased silver,
and mine are masses of gold, wrought and unwrought

In (9)—Jupiter’s words—we see with particular clarity the analogy between the unexpected yet unflinching evolution of personal fortune and subjective hope, two circumstances that form part of a parallel structure. In (10), the final part of Turnus’ speech, the parallelism conveyed by the correlation has been clearly sought, in that the forms of *esse* do not appear in metric position and the respective caesurae are placed in both cases directly before the correlation.²⁵ In (11),²⁶ though, the initial position of *sunt* and the final position of *est* also contribute to balance the two verses. Cases (12a)–(12c) are typical examples of existential *sum* with dative, where the verb has been placed in a preeminent position, at the beginning, stressing the intended focalization.

The three conditional clauses in (13) make it necessary for the verbal forms to appear in order to guarantee a complete syntactic parallelism, linked to a possible *tricolon auctum*. Then, in (14), the poet chose a lexical variation with a similar semantic content—spoken by Turnus—, resorting once more to the initial focus position; this is also a case of impressive illocutionary force²⁷ (the intention of the speaker when uttering a message), in which the exhortative subjunctive is necessary from the communicative point of view, in that it expresses Turnus’ wishes regarding Drances’ life in the context of a speech in which he intends to mock him:

(13) Verg. *Aen.* 11.368–9

si fama **mouet**, **si** tantum pectore robur
concipis et **si** adeo dotalis regia cordi **est**

if glory stir thee, if in thy heart thou nursest such strength, or if the dower
of a palace be to thee so dear

(14) Verg. *Aen.* 11.409

habitet tecum et sit pectore in isto

let it dwell with thee, and abide in thy craven breast!

Moreover, it is possible to find cases in which one occurrence of *esse* operates in two structures organised in a parallel way, and we might talk about a sort of “cleft parallelism”, as in the following NAR case:

(15) Verg. *Aen.* 10.183

qui Caerete domo, **qui sunt** Minionis in aruis

those who come from Caere — their hometown — those who live in the Minio valley

Here, *Caerete domo* may be considered an ablative expressing location, and thus the same verbal form might refer to both relative structures. But there is also another more widely supported possibility, in which the sentence is considered an ablative by origin,²⁸ and hence it could be said that either (i) a verb other than *sum*, with a lexeme involving the notion of movement, has been elided and yet the form of *esse* is not eliminated, or (ii) the form of *esse* is valid for both relative structures, although with a different value: copulative in the first case and locative in the second. In either case, the presence of *sunt* is relevant and fully justified.

Nonetheless, it is more usual to see the same verbal form work in two parallel structures while being lexically present in just one of them, so as to render communication viable:

(16) Verg. *Aen.* 6.129

hoc opus, hic labor **est**

this is the task, this the toil

But, in addition to this, the poet has here chosen a Theme-predication structure once again,²⁹ which contributes to increase the relevance of the Focus of the predication; this Theme is formed by an infinitive structure: *sed reuocare gradum superasque euadere ad auras / hoc...* (“but to recall thy steps and pass out the upper air, this...”, Verg. *Aen.* 6.128–9).³⁰

In the following example, the parallel structure is clear; it is the way that at least one of the structures can be interpreted which turns out to be ambiguous. In the first of these, the existential value of the elided form of *esse* seems to pose no difficulties at all; in the second, if a strict parallelism is applied, the value of *est* should also be existential and

the phrase *tanta cupido* should be considered the subject of the clause. The structure, however, can be interpreted as a copulative-attributive construction. In either case, the presence of the verbal form, at least in one of the constructions, seems to be necessary. Furthermore, the rhetorical use of *tantus... tanta* can also be seen in other Virgilian texts,³¹ suggesting that it might also be a stylistic feature.

(17) Verg. *Aen.* 6.133–4

quod **si tantus** amor menti, **si tanta** cupido **est**
bis Stygios innare lacus

but if such desire is in thy heart, if your heart conceals such a yearning
to cross the Stigian Lake twice / if the yearning to cross the Stigian lake
twice is so powerful

A similar double use could be suggested in (18), where the same *est* is valid for a copulative-attributive construction and for an existential-possessive one:

(18) Verg. *Aen.* 6.540–2

hic locus est ...
(...)
hac iter Elysium nobis ...

this is the place, ... here we have the pathway leading to the Elysium

Austin (1986: 179) accepts the “accusative of place to which” with no preposition *Elysium* after *iter*³² and he proposes the reconstruction “*iter* ⟨*est*⟩”.

The following examples have structures resembling those provided so far:

(19a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.493–4

quisquis honos tumuli, **quidquid** solamen humandi **est**
largior

whatever honour a tomb gives, whatever solace a burial, I freely grant

(19b) Verg. *Aen.* 10.858–9

hoc decus illi, **hoc** solamen **erat**

this was his pride, this was his solace

3.1.3. Illocutionary Force

Given that illocutionary force is related to a speaker's communicative intention, those cases in which a specific type of illocutionary force—impressive illocutionary force—is present can be included here within pragmatic factors. Such cases are more frequent in ED than in NAR. Speech acts characterised by this type of illocutionary force are not intended to provide addressees with more information, but to bring about a certain reaction, that is, to influence the behaviour of the addressee. The main types of speech acts with impressive illocutionary force are commands (or prohibitions) and wishes, although the latter clearly lack the capacity to control the actions of the addressee.

The verbal moods most frequently linked to this type of speech acts are imperative and subjunctive, especially the exhortative or desiderative subjunctive. In the case of *esse*, all the imperatives in the work (12X) appear in DS contexts, just like the impressive subjunctives (3X).³³

In such cases the verbal element cannot be lacking since the introductory or interactive content of the expression would disappear. Thus we can find the following cases:

(20a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.280–1

nunc coniugis **esto**
quisque suae tectique memor

let each be mindful of his wife and home

(20b) Verg. *Aen.* 12.439

sis memor

thou be mindful thereof

(21a) Verg. *Aen.* 6.153

sedibus hunc **refer** ante suis et **conde** sepulcro
duc nigras pecudes; ea prima piacula **sunto**

him bear first to his own place and hide him in the tomb. Lead black cattle; be these thy first peace-offerings

(21b) Verg. *Aen.* 6.258

procul, o procul **este**, profani

away! go away! unhallowed ones

In (20a)–(20b) the impressive illocutionary force constitutes a certain lexicalization³⁴ in the expression chosen by the poet, which in turn shows that it is necessary for the verbal form to appear. In (21a) there are a series of commands for the catabasis which the Sibyl proposes to Aeneas; Austin (1986: 86) defines the imperative of *sum* as a formal, legalist form and in (21b) the formulaic expression³⁵ is also mentioned (1986: 114).

Among the occurrences of the imperative, there are a few cases in which a *concessio* has been traditionally recognised.³⁶ The verb appears as the only element in the sentence, and it is understood that some opposite arguments to those adduced in the context are true yet unfavourable for the issue at hand:

(22) Verg. *Aen.* 10.67³⁷

esto

so be it

3.2. Lexical-Semantic Factors

There are two phenomena that can be explained by a lexical-semantic motivation for the presence of verbal forms of *esse*: (i) the occurrence of the so-called “semi-copulas” and (ii) the cases of (quasi-)lexicalization.

3.2.1. Semi-Copulas

Semi-copulas correspond to forms of *esse* in which none of the main values assigned to this verb are found, and instead the predicate has a somewhat different semantic content, which can be interpreted using verbs such as “become/turn into” and “behave (as)”.³⁸ These meanings can also be expressed by Latin *esse*³⁹ and they have the features that copulas usually lack: existence of verbal process instead of state, and Subject’s control capacity.

An instance can be seen when Aeneas orders Venus’ birds to act as his guides in his search for the branch that he needs to enter Hell:

(23) Verg. *Aen.* 6.194⁴⁰

este duces

o be my guides

It goes without saying that doves cannot be *duces* in the literal, military, Roman sense of the word, but they can act as such, and this is what Aeneas asks them to do. Moreover, this case is also characterised by an impressive illocutionary force.⁴¹

Similarly, in other cases, a being is said to have become or to be likely to become something else, and this is what happens when the transformation of the ships into sea nymphs is mentioned:

(24) Verg. *Aen.* 9.101–2

magnique iubebo (*sc.* **naues**)
aequoris **esse deas**

and (I will) bid them be goddesses of the great sea

This is confirmed soon afterwards, either in the NAR:

(25a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.220–2

nymphae, quas alma Cybebe
numen **habere** maris nymphasque e nauibus **esse**
iusserat

the nymphs whom gracious Cybele had bidden be deities of the sea, and turn from ships to nymphs

or in the DS, when Juno tells Jupiter:

(25b) Verg. *Aen.* 10.83

potes in totidem **classem conuertere nymphas**

thou hast power to turn their fleet into as many nymphs

Thus, the semantic content of this type of *esse*—greater than the copula's and probably inferior to that of the existential *esse* and that of the locative—seems, apart from this occasional illocutionary force,⁴² to be a determinant factor as far as the non-elision of the verbal form is concerned, since its absence would make it more difficult to convey the informative content of the predication.⁴³

3.2.2. Lexicalization

The lexicalization—to a greater or lesser extent—of certain expressions including a verbal form of *esse* contributes to the lexical expression of the verbal form: this is what happens with (quasi-)lexicalized formulae or *iuncturae* such as *fama esse*,⁴⁴ *ignarus esse*,⁴⁵ *animus esse*,⁴⁶ *necesse est*,⁴⁷ etc.

(26a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.641

fama est uolitare figuras

even like shapes that flit, 'tis said

(26b) Verg. *Aen.* 11.154

haud **ignarus eram**

well knew I...

(26c) Verg. *Aen.* 11.325–6

sin alios finis aliamque capessere gentem

est animus

but if they have in mind to lay hold of other bounds, and another nation

(26d) Verg. *Aen.* 6.514

et nimium meminisse **necesse est**

and all too well must thou remember

(26e) Verg. *Aen.* 6.596–7

nec non et Tityon, Terrae omniparentis alumnum,

cernere erat⁴⁸

likewise one might see Tityos, nursling of Earth, the universal mother

Quasi-lexicalized formulae include the conditional protasis with indefinite subjects, which appear frequently in the poem:⁴⁹

(27a) Verg. *Aen.* 6.194; 6.367

si qua uia est

if any way there be

(27b) Verg. *Aen.* 6.459⁵⁰

si qua fides tellure sub ima **est**

whatever is sacred in the grave below

(27c) Verg. *Aen.* 10.828

si qua est ea cura

if such a care may touch thee

(27d) Verg. *Aen.* 10.903

si qua est uictis **uenia** hostibus

by whatsoever grace a vanquished foe my claim

(27e) Verg. *Aen.* 11.502

sui merito **si qua est fiducia** forti

if the brave may justly place aught of trust in themselves

The absence of verbal forms seems to be less frequent in subordinate clauses. This, it seems, is useful as a means of guaranteeing the grammaticality of the expression and rendering communication possible. This is the case of indirect questions, among others:

(28a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.481

aspice **num** mage **sit** nostrum penetrabile telum

see whether our weapon be not the more piercing

(28b) Verg. *Aen.* 11.295

audisti et **quae sit** magno sententia bello

thou hast heard... what [sc. the King] he counsels on this mighty war

(28c) Verg. *Aen.* 11.314-5

nunc adeo **quae sit** dubiae sententia menti,
expediam

now I will tell you what is it my wavering mind thinks

The formula *quisquis es* and its variants, quite usual in addressing a foreigner, are halfway between grammaticalisation and the need to communicate when the speaker talks to an addressee that is present—either virtually or de facto—in the speech act; these formulae always appear in DS:

(29a) Verg. *Aen.* 6.388

quisquis es

whose thou art

(29b) Verg. *Aen.* 10.739⁵¹

quicumque es

who'e'r thou art

3.2.3. Semantic Identification Relationship

Among the different copulative-attributive structures, we also find those constructions whose semantic relationships have been described as one of “Identification”: the predicate does not mention a feature of a specific entity, but instead reveals its identity by means of a proper noun or a well-defined feature capable of denoting a unique, specific entity. In such cases it can be observed that the presence of the verbal form is almost compulsory, among other reasons, to make the relationship of Identification clear. An analysis of the ratio of occurrence of these structures in the *Aeneid* shows that they appear mostly in DS, with 18 cases out of 21 (87.71%).

Sometimes, this type of structure can also involve additional reasons concerning a specific focalization type:

(30) Verg. *Aen.* 10.230–1

nos sumus, Idaeae sacro de uertice pinus,
nunc pelagi nymphae, **classis tua**

we—pines of Ida, from her sacred crest, now nymphs of the sea—are
thy fleet!

This example reflects the nature of example (24), above, where an identity change was narrated. It depicts the moment in which the nymph

Cymodocea—the *fandi doctissima*—talks to Aeneas. The presence of the personal pronoun in initial position, and the opposed location (final position) of the key identification element in order to balance the sentence, confer special relevance to both nominal terms. An analogous structure appears in the following example:

(31) Verg. *Aen.* 8.62–4

ego sum pleno quem flumine cernis
stringentem ripas (...)
caeruleus Thybris

I am he whom thou seest lavng my banks with full flood..., / —the blue Tiber

Besides, it is not unusual for identifying structures to be formulated in a person other than the 3rd person singular in DS, which turns the phonic weight of the form into a hindrance when we it comes to elision. Thus, in the poem we find cases such as (30)–(31) and also the following ones:

(32a) Verg. *Aen.* 1.268

(sc. puer Ascanius) Ilus **erat**

(sc. the lad Ascanius) Ilus he was

(32b) Verg. *Aen.* 1.378

sum pius Aeneas

I am Aeneas the good

(32c) Verg. *Aen.* 6.845

tu Maximus ille **es**

thou art he, the mightiest

(32d) Verg. *Aen.* 6.883

tu Marcellus **eris**

thou shalt be Marcellus

(32e) Verg. *Aen.* 12.830

es germana Iouis Saturnique altera proles

true sister of Jove art thou, and Saturn's other child

3.3. Causal Factors in NAR

Considering the different factors that appear to be at least co-causal as far as the presence of verbal forms of *esse* in DS is concerned, we might ask whether such factors play any role as far as the presence of those forms in NAR is concerned, although their frequency of occurrence is considerably lower.

In fact, an analysis of the verbal forms in NAR in the same books 6, 10 and 11, reveals the existence of pragmatic factors⁵² or lexical-semantic factors⁵³ that are similar to the ones exemplified here—even though they are not so abundant. However, following the analysis of the forms of *esse* in the work, another potentially relevant factor was found, one related to the structure type: it was seen that the ratio of Existential-locative constructions⁵⁴ (*ExL*) is comparatively higher in NAR; in these structures the verbal form is usually present,⁵⁵ and significantly so, quite often in initial position⁵⁶:

TABLE (4) Distribution of ExL structures in DS and NAR

	FORMS OF <i>ESSE</i> IN <i>AEN.</i>	NO. OF ExL STRUCTURES
DS	269 (66.75%)	8 (2.97%)
NAR	134 (33.25%)	25 (18.65%)
Total	403	33

The percentages of ExL structures have been calculated taking into account all other possible structures with forms of *esse*⁵⁷ appearing in the texts analysed. The comparison has confirmed that this is the only structure with more absolute and relative occurrences in NAR than in DS. This construction is capable of introducing an element that usually marks the beginning of an ecphrasis, which is more typical in NAR than in DS; several representative examples are given here:⁵⁸

(33a) Verg. *Aen.* 1.159

est in secessu longo locus

there is a spot in a deep inlet

(33b) Verg. *Aen.* 5.124–5

est procul in pelago saxum

far out at sea... there is a rock

(33c) Verg. *Aen.* 6.271

est iter in siluis

there is a path in the forest

(33d) Verg. *Aen.* 7.563

est locus Italiae medio

there is a place in the heart of Italy

(33e) Verg. *Aen.* 8.597

est ingens gelidum lucus prope Caeritis amnem

near Caere's cold stream there is a vast grove

As can be seen, the form *est* appears frequently in this type of construction, where it has a marked focal status, in that it appears at the beginning of the sentence.⁵⁹ Yet there are cases in which the elision of this form or of another form in the 3rd person can be expected, also in constructions with a different semantic value, including existential [(34a)–(34b)], copulative [(34b)–(34e)] and locative [(34f)]:

(34a) Verg. *Aen.* 10.121⁶⁰

nec spes ulla fugae

hope of escape [is] none

(34b) Verg. *Aen.* 10.202–3

gens illi triplex, populi sub gente quaterni,
ipsa caput populis, Tusco de sanguine uires

three races [are] there, and under each race four peoples: herself [is] the head of the peoples, her strength [is/comes] from Tuscan blood

(34c) Verg. *Aen.* 10.112

rex Iuppiter omnibus idem

Jupiter [is] king over all alike

(34d) Verg. *Aen.* 10.116⁶¹

hic finis fandi

so [passed] the parley

(34e) Verg. *Aen.* 10.501⁶²

nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futura

o mind of man, knowing not fate or coming doom

(34f) Verg. *Aen.* 11.655

at circum lectae comites

but round her [are] her chosen comrades

Even though *est* is rather usual in this type of structure, a similar percentage of 3rd person imperfect indicative and 3rd person perfect indicative forms appear in the *Aeneid* in cases where an epiphysis is introduced:

(35a) Verg. *Aen.* 6.237⁶³

spelunca alta fuit

a deep cave there was (*sc.* there)(35b) Verg. *Aen.* 11.849–51⁶⁴

fuit ingens monte sub alto
regis Dercenni terreno ex aggere bustum
antiqui Laurentis opacaeque ilice tectum

under the mountain height stood a mound of earth, the mighty tomb of
Dercennus, Laurentine king of old, screened by shadowy ilex

(35c) Verg. *Aen.* 5.288–9

mediaque in ualle theatri
circus erat

right at the centre of the valley there was an enclosure like that of a
theatre

These verbal forms appear frequently throughout the entire poem and in different types of constructions; in fact, these are the only two verbal forms that appear more frequently as absolute and relative occurrences in NAR than in DS:

TABLE (5) Distribution of the most frequent verbal persons in DS & NAR

	<i>EST</i>	<i>ERAT</i>	<i>FUIT</i>
DS	102 (77.86%)	10 (27.02%)	13 (32.50%)
NAR	29 (22.14%)	27 (72.98%)	27 (67.50%)
Total	131	37	40

This behaviour in the person category is in keeping with the findings from the analysis of the predominant temporal orientation in each text type analysed: present and future predominate in DS, while past predominates in NAR, where the narration of a series of facts that have already taken place makes it necessary to use the past tense rather frequently. Apart from this, and as already discussed,⁶⁵ the 1st and 2nd verbal forms, which are resistant to elision, do not appear in NAR:

TABLE (6) Verbal person distribution in DS & NAR

	1 ST PERSON	2 ND PERSON	3 RD PERSON
DS	13	24	217
NAR	—	—	120
Total	13	24	337

Thus, the temporal orientation of each text, the absence of the 1st and 2nd verbal forms, and the abundant presence of a particular type of structure (the ExL), all seem to be relevant agents with regard to the use and explicit presence of *esse* in NAR.

4. Conclusions

Thus, a series of concurrent factors at different levels of linguistic structure seem to be in operation which can explain the greater presence of lexical forms of *esse* in direct speech text as compared to narrative text. Apart from using grammatically marked forms,⁶⁶ both the pragmatic and the lexical and semantic-based motivations appear to be co-causal. Indeed, these factors make it possible to explain—at least partially—nearly 90% of cases in which a form of *esse* appears in DS passages in the corpus analysed.

Similarly, the most relevant factors as far as the frequency of use and type of verb *sum* in NAR are concerned seem to be related mainly to the implications of tense and person and to the use of a particular type of structure that is more typical of narrative-descriptive contexts.⁶⁷

NOTES

1. This essay falls within the thematic framework of Research Project HUM 2005-06622-C04-03. At the same time, it forms part of an initiative of the Research Group on Classical Philology of the Department of Latin and Greek, University of Santiago de Compostela; I hereby thank the group members for their suggestions on previous versions of this study. The linguistic model adopted and the study's fundamental concepts are drawn essentially from Functional Grammar; see, for example, PINKSTER (1995), DIK (1997).

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3. For instance, *fuit* is not found at all in book 5, and appears just once in books 8 and 12, respectively, and twice in book 6; *fuertunt* does not appear a single time in the whole work. These data do not include auxiliary *esse* forms. As for the Latin text itself, I have followed MYNORS' 1980 edition, which includes corrections to the 1969 edition. For the translation of examples—which are necessary to show the interpretation of discourse strategies—I have followed, either wholly or partially, the versions by FAIRCLOUGH (1974–1979) and ESTEFANÍA (1988).

4. Cf. also the findings of RICHARDSON (1990: 70), who also pointed out that three fifths of both poems are written in direct speech, and of LATACZ (1975: 395), who observes that speeches represent 67% of the *Iliad*.

5. Even Aristotle admitted that a lower presence of direct speech reflected lower dramatism; yet, this does not mean that a quantitatively lower use of direct speech involves qualitative inferiority: cf. *Poet.* 4, 1449 a 2–6; 26, 1461 b 26–1462 b 15. In this regard, according to HEINZE (1999: 327) Virgil's speeches, even when they seem to be more carefully designed from the point of view of form—as is the case of the speeches in Venus and Juno's assembly in book 10—appeal to feelings rather than to the mind. Similarly, CONTE (1986: 149) points out that an abundance of direct speech might be the result of the poet's willingness to provide different points of view, individual perceptions: as if reality was presented through a sort of splintered mirror. As for the different narrator and character's perspectives—the external and the internal ones (“geometrica” and “semantica”)—, cf. BONFANTI (1985: 23 ff.).

6. In order to facilitate percentage calculations, the findings in HIGHER have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

7. The auxiliary forms and the nominalised uses of the verb have been excluded.

8. Omissibility is coherent with the fact that the omissible information is topicalised by the *hic et nunc* of the communicative situation. Cf., for instance,

LINDSAY (1907: 55) and ALLARDICE (1929: 2) about the language of comedy. Cf. also CABRILLANA's comments (2007: 43).

9. The "empirically testable".

10. It goes without saying that this does not mean that the presence of a verbal form is an anomalous thing, because that is rather natural; but this is special because the incoherent behaviour of these statistics is due to the fact that the verbal forms of *esse* in DS far outnumber those in NAR, whereas direct speech is more suitable for elision.

11. HENGVELD (1992: 208) had already pointed out that the elision of copulative forms might be contextually determined.

12. This is far more frequent in the case of 3rd person singular present indicative forms; among other reasons—and apart from their less marked character—they are less prone to appear in metric position.

13. This will be dealt with later on: cf. § 3.3.

14. Elision seems clear in Verg. *Aen.* 6.126; 6.132; 6.673; 6.865; 6.326; 6.650; 6.673; 6.767; 10.849–50; 10.280; 10.897–8; 11.54–5; 11.290–1; 11.362 (= 11.399); 11.373; 11.739, among others.

15. Cf., for instance, Verg. *Aen.* 6.20; 6.27; 6.347; 6.509; 6.542; 6.702; 10.116; 10.121; 10.202–3; 10.510; 10.170; 10.302; 10.599; 10.611; 10.628; 11.214–5; 11.655.

16. Cf. PINKSTER (1999: 711–2).

17. Initially, this hypothesis seems quite probable; still, the poet's lexical virtuosity must be taken into account, and it might not always reflect register changes. In fact, a brief glance at books 6 and 10 shows that the number of verbs repeated by the poet is similar both in NAR and in DS. Nevertheless, an in-depth study as to the different verbs used for similar concepts would be necessary to address this issue fully, in which the probable occurrence of metric conditioning would also need to be taken into account.

18. In the case of *esse*, the possibility is mentioned by ADAMS (1994: 69 ff.), PUSTET (2003: 5–6) and DEVINE & STEPHENS (2006: 199).

19. Cf. also *Aen.* 5.397–8: *si mihi quae quondam fuerat quaque improbus iste / exsultat fidens, si nunc foret illa iuventas.*

20. Cf. HARRISON (1991: 223).

21. Moreover, (4) includes a structure that is typical of the pragmatic function of Theme with a summarising element in the predication (*hoc*): cf. CABRILLANA (1999).

22. S.v. *opus* I.A.2.b.

23. Cf. HARRISON (1999: 189); see *infra* § 2.2.

24. As in *Aen.* 6.195; 6.459; 11.502.

25. Penthemimeral in the first case and trihemimeral in the second.

26. Words uttered by Aeneas in his harangue to his triumphant fellow mates, at the beginning of book 11.

27. See *infra*, § 1.3.

28. This is how it is interpreted by ESTEFANÍA (1988) and also by HARRISON (1991) who mentions a similar example in Verg. *Aen.* 10.141: *Maeonia... domo.*

29. Cf. (4).
30. Another example of this same type of construction, although its Theme is developed by a *quod* construction, is found in *Aen.* 11.177–8: *quod uitam moror inuisam Pallante perempto / dextera causa tua est* (“that I drag on a life hateful now that Pallas is slain, the cause is thy right hand”).
31. Cf., for instance, *georg.* 3.112: *tantus amor laudum, tantae est uictoria curae*. NORDEN (1927: 163) talks about stylistic *variatio*.
32. This feature can also be seen in other parts of the work; cf. for instance, *Verg. Aen.* 3.507; 6.683; 6.696.
33. Impressive speech acts appear in NAR contexts too, whenever the poet talks to someone who is not present at the moment of enunciation, be it the gods or when the speaker talks to himself, but always with verbs other than *esse*.
34. Understanding this expression as a fixed one. Cf. *ThLL, memor*, 656,40; 656,60 ff.; 657,5; 657,13 ff.; 657,67; 658,12; 659,59 ff. *passim*.
35. Cf. *Callim. Ap.* 2: ἐκάς, ἐκάς, ὄσις ἀλιτρός.
36. Cf. LAUSBERG (1975: 261–2); cf. also *OLD, sum* A18b and GAFFIOT, *sum* 13b.
37. More instances in *Aen.* 4.35; 7.313; 12.821.
38. Cf. GOOSSENS (1990: 182), CABRILLANA (2010: 35–9). In such instances, Latin is quite likely to partially reflect the Indo-European heritage of the fientive *Aktionsart* which refers to the moment in which the Subject enters a new state, as opposed to the essive *Aktionsart* (state of the Subject without referring to the moment in which the Subject enters such state). Both values can be expressed by the same form in *-e-* in Hittite language (cf. WATKINS, 1973: 67 and HOFFNER & MELCHERT, 2008: 177).
39. The same phenomenon applies, for instance, in the case of English “be”.
40. Similar cases in *Aen.* 4.237; 12.176; 12.646–7.
41. Very probably, the realization of the semantic value of this verb is limited due to certain pragmatic conditions.
42. The four instances of semi-copulas meaning “to behave (as)” appear in the imperative—cf. previous note—and in DS; when they mean “become”, the cases (4x) are found in DS (2x) and NAR (2x).
43. HENGVELD (1992: 35) explains that “the main difference between constructions containing a copula and those containing a semi-copula is that the semi-copula can never be left out without changing or affecting the meaning of the resulting construction. In other words, the semi-copula adds an element of meaning to the construction in which it occurs, whereas the copula does not”.
44. Cf. *ThLL, fama*, 209,77; *Verg. Aen.* 3.578; 3.694; 6.14; 7.205; 8.600; 9.195; 10.641; 12.735.
45. Cf. *ThLL, ignarus*, 272,60; 273,55; 274,31; 274,40; 274,61 ff.
46. Cf. *ThLL, animus*, 93,26 ff.; *Verg. Aen.* 4.639; 9.205; 10.715.
47. Cf. *OLD, necesse*, *passim*; *Verg. Aen.* 3.478; 4.613; 6.514; 6.737.
48. Cf. *ThLL, cerno*, who considers this expression *iucturae notabiliores*. AUSTIN (1986: 189) says that Servius considers it a *Graeca figura*, like Gr. ἦν ἰδεῖν.
49. Cf. the comments on (6) and NORDEN’s comments (1927: 254) about the

mistrust expressed by this construction; cf. also, for instance, *Aen.* 2.536; 3.433; 7.4; 7.559; 9.41; 9.493; 10.861.

50. Cf. Sinon's lament in *Aen.* 2.141–43: *quod te per superos et conscia numina ueri, / per si qua est quae restet adhuc mortalibus usquam / intemerata fides*, or Soph. *Phil.* 469: *πρός τ' εἴ τί σοι κατ'οἶκόν ἐστι προσφιλές*.

51. Cf. *Aen.* 1.387; 2.148; 4.577; 8.122.

52. Cf., for instance, *Aen.* 6.173; 6.893; 6.266–7; 10.183; 10.859; 11.312.

53. Cf., among others, the examples in *Aen.* 6.14; 6.487; 6.266; 6.711; 10.715; 10.152–3; 10.328; 10.221; 11.761. About the Homeric filiation of different formulaic resources, cf. BARCHIESI (1984: 31, 103).

54. Cf. CABRILLANA & DÍAZ DE CERIO (2000).

55. Cf. ROSÉN (1998: 734).

56. Cf. SPEVAK (2010: 189).

57. E.g., mainly existential, copulative-attributive, copulative-dative, possessive and locative.

58. Cf. also *Aen.* 1.12; 1.441; 2.453; 2.512; 3.22; 4.457; 5.289; 6.237; 7.59; 7.170–71; 7.483; 7.601; 9.381–2; 9.530; 11.522; 11.774; 11.849–50.

59. Cf. ROSÉN (1998: 731; 734), DEVINE & STEPHENS (2006: 150–1; 209; 213); these structures are mainly intended to introduce or (re)activate a discursive topic which is typically resumed in the next fragment.

60. The same expression appears in *Aen.* 9.131. HARRISON (1991: 92–3) admits the frequent elision of *esse* in similar constructions (after *nec*), both in DS (*Aen.* 2.137–8; 2.314; 4.365; 9.10; 9.208; 11.181) and in NAR (*Aen.* 5.368; 5.458; 9.342; 9.395; 10.537; 10.712; 12.553). A study reviewing all such occurrences in the *Aeneid* reveals a similar percentage of cases in DS (13 occurrences) and in NAR (10 occurrences).

61. Cf. HARRISON (1991: 91), who adds “sc. *fuit*”.

62. As to this type of examples, it should be noted that NAR contexts are more suitable for the expression of statements (cf. BENVENISTE, 1966; BONFANTI, 1985: 41), which are also more suitable phraseological units for the elision of the verbal form.

63. Cf. AUSTIN (1986: 108); the expression of localisation appears expressly in verse 243.

64. Cf. HORSFALL (2003: 444).

65. Cf. § 3.

66. From the point of view of person, tense and mood.

67. Both in DS and in NAR it would be necessary to incorporate the possible metric and rhythmic conditionings as an additional co-causal factor.

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