The Development
of the Description of Punctuation
in Historical Grammar Books

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Abstract. The central thesis of this paper is that the evolution of punctuation reveals many interesting sociolinguistic aspects of a language. Studying punctuation can offer us new insights into the development of language codification, the relationship between speech and writing, the socio-cultural circumstances of a specific epoch, and it can even contribute to contemporary descriptions of orthographic prescription. On the history of the development of punctuation, several key titles have been written that take into consideration different text sources, periods and languages, e.g., Parkes (1992), Salmon (1999), and Mortara Garavelli (2008). In this paper I aim to contrastively explore descriptions of punctuation found exclusively in a selection of prototypical and accessible grammar books from the time of Antiquity to the Enlightenment through the perspective of historical 'comparative standardology' (Joseph, 1987), an approach that Deumert (2003, p. 1) claim has rarely been explored systematically. I have analysed five grammar books from Antiquity, fourty from Renaissance Humanism (twenty-one Latin and nineteen vernacular), and twelve grammar books from the Enlightenment. The three analysed factors—the grammar-book function, the divergence of punctuation from grammatical teaching to orthographic content, and the transformation of punctuation into written characters—were recognized as the most significant legacies of grammar books in the evolution of punctuation and in its transformation into the function, status, and application as we know it today. Supported by the constant evolution of literacy, the number of punctuation marks has been steadily increasing. The observation of historical punctuation in de jure and de facto normative orthographies or grammar books shows the strong link between the socio-cultural context and punctuation-related descriptions or prescriptions.

1. Introduction

Not all modern European languages have government-authorized orthographic manuals that standardize writing. Written standards have been

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established lexicographically either through general lexicography (e.g., English, French, Italian, and Spanish) or separate spelling dictionaries (e.g., Danish, German, Slovenian, and Russian). However, this was not the case throughout the history of language. Grammar books have assumed a central role in the process of language codification. Therefore, old grammar books provide numerous interesting insights into culture, the history of education, the evolution of linguistic thought, etc. (Law, 1997). By observing the history of punctuation in old grammar books through various socio-cultural circumstances and other factors in different epochs, we are able to learn more about the evolution of language description and prescription. A still-present practice of dividing punctuation marks into two classes—at sentential and word level—can be explained by an ancient differentiation between *distinctiones* and *notae*.[1] Furthermore, the principles on the basis of which contemporary punctuation norms have been established (cf. Salmon (1962, p. 348) and Salmon, 1988), have their origin in the rhetorical and grammatical function of punctuation.[2]

The status and meaning of orthography and punctuation have changed throughout history. Orthography used to be a constituent part of many historical grammar books, whereas descriptions of punctuation were more seldom. For example, the majority of the grammar books of Latin in Renaissance Humanism analysed here considered orthography a component of grammar, with its own unit named *littera*. In order to quantitatively depict the relations between orthography, punctuation, and other grammatical entities, I will here present the search results of several key words in the monumental *Lexicon Grammaticorum* that spans 1,728 pages. The word punctuation has 34 instances, orthography with its derivatives appears 485 times (spelling 270), as compared with 656 occurrences of morphology, 780 of semantics, 1,305 of phonetics, 1,236 of dictionary and 1,385 of syntax. This roughly exposes which topics have been dominantly linked with descriptions made by the world's most representative grammarians.

The most comprehensive exploration of the development of historical punctuation in Europe can be found in Parkes (1992) and Mortara Garavelli (2008). Wingo (1972) wrote an excellent treatise of Latin punctuation in the Classical Age. The evolution of English punctua-

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1. One example is Babić, Finka, and Moguš (2004), a standard orthographic manual of Croatian. The sentential (Croatian *rečenični znakovi*) and the orthographic marks (Croatian *pravopisni znakovi*) are the same characters (e.g., period, comma, colon, etc.) with the difference that the first are separate sentences and the latter affect the pronunciation or meaning of a word.

2. For instance, one of the disputes during the 1960 Novi Sad spelling reform of Croatian was a switch in the prescription of the use of punctuation from a 'grammatical principle' to a logical ('free' or rhetorical) principle. Cf. Jonke (1962) and, earlier, Guberina (1940).

tion from 1476 to 1776 has been analysed by Salmon (1999).[3] Both latter sources included grammar books in their studies and points for further reading. However, a contrastive exploration of the description of punctuation specifically in grammar books, as the most influential representations of written norms in language history, is still lacking.

The most common way to categorize grammar books is in terms of the well-known historical epochs of Western civilization. From the punctuational point of view, this periodized approach yields an unwanted gap in the typology, since grammar books, such as those written under the influence of Rationalism (the so-called universal or the philosophical grammars), do not include descriptions of punctuation at all. Therefore, I have adopted a more specific classification, proposed by Vogl (2012: 22), which was created to depict the emergence of a standard language ideology:

1. the emergence of 'uniform written languages' in the Middle Ages;
2. the emergence of a 'correctness ideology' in Early Modern times ('language and norm');
3. the instrumentalization of 'correct languages' as vehicles of identity politics and the politics of democratization in the eighteenth and nineteenth century ('language and nation');
4. the devaluation of everything non-standard in the nineteenth and twentieth century ('the best variety').

For a discussion on punctuation in grammar books, the fourth period is not relevant, since punctuation eventually became separated from grammatical teachings and reached its orthographical status in the third phase. This standard-language-ideology timeline corresponds to the historical socio-cultural periods. The emergence of 'uniform written languages' is linked to Antiquity and the Middle Ages; the emergence of a 'correctness ideology' matches up with Renaissance Humanism; and the relationship between language and nation was established in the age of Enlightenment.

2.   Methodology

The selection criteria for grammar books was defined according to the grammar-book prototypicality, availability, edition, and the language status today.

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3. I would like to point out here more useful sources for the study of (historical) punctuation. Houston (2013) is an interesting and a well-written popular scientific book on the evolution of numerous punctuation marks from Antiquity to the modern era. One important source for modern grapholinguistic studies on punctuation and its typology is Gallmann (1985).

Prototypicality refers to an attempt to include the relevant grammar books for a specific period, language, or country. While searching for them, I have used many sources of both historical and modern linguistic literature, such as Walch (1716) and Law (1997) for Latin, Marsden (1796), Howland Rowe (1974), and Horst (2016) for vernacular languages, and Kovachich (1786), Marsden (1796), Swiggers (2001), and Haßler and Neis (2009), for the Enlightenment period. I found some sources during my own search.

Availability can be exemplified by the case of Dévai Bíró Mátyás, who (Kamusella, 2009, p. 122) defines as the first grammarian of Hungarian in 1538. I could not find this grammar book, and instead used Sylvester (1539), a book one year younger.

To gain a methodologically consistent picture of the state of grammar-book descriptions of punctuation in vernacular languages, I used the criterion of the first printed grammar books in 19 available languages. The abovementioned Howland Rowe (1974) was particularly useful because of his comparative research into the first vernacular grammars of the sixteenth and seventeenth century for 63 languages. I have adopted his methodology of grammar-book determination and the list of grammars with two differences. Instead of the Hungarian grammar of Molnár (1610), I studied the earlier Sylvester (1539), and instead of the Portuguese grammar of Barros (1539), I considered the seven-year-older grammar of Oliveira (1532).

The last criterion was that I reviewed only languages that are officially used on a national level in Europe today, excluding minority and regional languages. The consulted grammar books are listed in the primary bibliography. There are five grammar books from Antiquity, 40 from the Renaissance Humanist era (21 Latin and 19 vernacular), and 12 from the Enlightenment period, which describe a total of eight languages.

The text sources of the grammars from the period of Antiquity were the Corpus Grammaticorum Latinorum webpage (sadly unavailable for some time now,[4]), the Greek Wikisource page[5] with Dionysus Thrax's Grammar, the Documenta Catholica Omnia website,[6] Davidson (1874), Copeland and Sluiter's selection of translated texts published in 2012, Barney et al. (2006), and the Google Books service.

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4. http://kaali.linguist.jussieu.fr/CGL.
5. https://goo.gl/oyQRVB.
6. http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/.

3.   Antiquity

On punctuation, Aristotle commented in the fourth century BCE that, 'It is a general rule that a written composition should be easy to read and therefore easy to deliver'. The reason why he included a discussion on punctuation in his book on rhetoric was obvious—according to Aristotle, one had to be skilled in rhetoric to punctuate a text.[7] Since proper punctuation was considered a skill of knowledgeable people, it logically appeared in the oldest preserved grammar of Greek, at the turn of the second to the first century BCE, Dionysus Thrax's Art of Grammar (*Τέχνη γραμματική*). It has 25 parts, two of which relate to the punctuation content: part (IV) on signs for clauses, and part (V) on the difference between the period and comma in terms of the criterion of time, i.e., the pause. The longest clause was the period (Greek *περίοδος*), which was marked by a high dot; a medium-long clause was the colon (Greek *κῶλον*), which was marked by an intermediate dot; and a short clause was marked by an underdot, or the comma (Greek *κόμμα*). The three basic punctuation marks represent syntactical and rhetorical units that indicate the manner of speaking, since texts in Antiquity were written in a continuous series of capital letters without blanks (Lat. *scriptura continua*).

This was adopted by the Roman grammarian Aelius Donatus, who wrote two Latin grammars (350 CE). *Ars maior* is an extended work and includes the chapter "De distinctionibus," which discusses the three positions of the separator character: high (Lat. *distinctio*), low (Lat. *subdistinctio*), and middle (Lat. *media distinctio*). Priscianus Caesariensis wrote *Institutiones grammaticae* around the year 520 CE and did not describe punctuation marks or other written characters.

Even though it is not a grammar book as such, but a medieval encyclopaedia, Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae* from the sixth to seventh century was a highly influential book (or rather collection of books), among which the first one was dedicated to grammar. It is divided into 44 chapters, three of which relate, more or less, to what we would today associate with punctuation: *De posituris* (XX), *De notis sententiarum* (XXI), and *De notis vulgaribus* (XXII). *De posituris* is about punctuation, although Isidore, according to Aristophanes and other grammar-book precursors, continues to consider the *comma*, *colon*, and *periodos* to be parts of sentences, which led Barney et al. (ibid., p. 74) to translate these terms as *clause*, *phrase*, and *sentence*. *De notis sententiarum* deals with 26 sentence marks of 'critical reading' (asterisk, paragraph, quotation marks, etc.). *De notis vulgaribus* describes symbols that mark syllables and words.

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7. 'To punctuate Heracleitus is no easy task, because we often cannot tell whether a particular word belongs to what precedes or what follows it.' Both Aristotle's citations are translated by W. Rhys Roberts and found in Barnes (1991, p. 114).

In *Ars grammatica* (ca. 798), Alcuin divides grammar into 26 types, among which there are punctuation marks (*positurae*), critical marks (*notae*), orthography, etc. Alcuin does not list them, but defines them—punctuation marks are, in Copeland and Sluiter's (2012) translation, 'points to distinguish meanings'. Critical marks symbolize 'certain marks, either to abbreviate marks, or to express meanings; or they are used for a variety of reasons, such as the obelus <÷> in Holy Scripture, or the asterisk <*>'.

4.   Renaissance Humanism

4.1.   Punctuation in Latin Grammar Books

In order to analyse the status of punctuation in Latin grammar books, I have looked at three aspects: (1) the definition of a grammar, (2) the content of the orthographic chapter, and (3) the description of punctuation. A total of 21 Latin grammar books, from the oldest one, Nebrija's in 1481, to Golius's in 1636, have been reviewed in more detail in Table 1.

The authors of the 12 Latin grammar books consider orthography a constituent part of grammar, equal with prosody, etymology (i.e., morphology and word formation) and syntax, with their respective units *littera* (letter or sound), *syllaba* (syllable), *dictio* (word), and *oratio* (clause). These are Nebrija, Cochlaeus, Curio, Melanchthon, Ramus, Valerius, Crusius, Alvares, Caucius, Frischlinus, Sanctius, and Golius. *Littera* is the 'sound which becomes separate by writing' (*vox, quae scribi potest individual*, Nebrija), while Scioppius goes even further by identifying *littera* as the basic unit of orthoepy, which was a synonym of orthography. The teaching on *littera*, the basic unit of orthography, is fundamentally about sounds. The grammatical content of *littera* in grammar books in this period is a division of letters and sounds, the difference between the letters K and Q, Z, and Y, discussions over the letter X, double letters, the arrangement of letters, diphthongs, and pronunciation of consonants with the sound *h*, etc. However, in spite of the *littera* definition and description, many grammarians define orthography as the art of writing correctly (*ars [recte] scribendi*, e.g., Nebrija, Curio, Crusius, Frischlinus, Golius), with prosody, etymology, and syntax being described as an art of speaking correctly (*ars [recte] loquendi*).[8]

The orthographic content in a wider sense (including the annexed chapter by Camerarius in Melanchthon's grammar book) encompasses the following 12 units in Latin grammar books:

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8. An overview of the orthography and grammar definitions from the reviewed period can be found in Haßler and Neis (2009, pp. 1716–1730).

1. teachings about *littera*;
2. the division of *distinctiones* into a comma, a colon, and a period;
3. marks (*notae*): question mark, exclamation mark, round brackets, diaeresis, hyphen between words, hypodiastole, accent marks;
4. apostrophe;
5. capital and minuscule letters;
6. the abbreviation of writing;
7. the division of words into syllables;
8. spelling variants (e.g., *ad/at*, *obstitit/opstitit*);
9. deviations in writing or general spelling mistakes;
10. rhetorical figures (*de figuris orthographicis*) and deviation from usual writing: *adjectio*, *detractio*, *transmutatio,* and *immutatio*;
11. three theoretical perspectives: tradition (*autoritate*), etymology (*notatione*), and correctness (*proportione*);
12. an orthographic glossary with a list of Greek names that were transferred into Latin differently.

Based on the description, on the characters that are included, and on its location in grammar books, punctuation teaching can be divided into four categories. These can even be named as stages in the evolution of punctuation. Each grammar book belongs to a single category, except for Valerius, Frischlinus, and Camerarius, which share features from the third and fourth categories.

(a) grammar books without a description of punctuation;
(b) grammar books that inherited a description of punctuation from Antiquity with three basic characters—comma, colon, and period;
(c) grammar books with five basic punctuation characters—the three abovementioned marks plus the question mark and parenthesis;
(d) grammar books with innovative approaches to the description of punctuation;

Ten grammarians belong to the first category (Aventinus, Brassicanus, Lancilotus, Linacre, Scaliger, Ramus, Alvares, Caucius, Sanctius, and Scioppius).

The interest of Latin grammarians and prominent orthographers during the Renaissance Humanist period was intrinsically bound to Greek and its written history, and they thus inherited teaching from the Antique period. Some Latin grammarians consistently followed the 'traditionalist' grammatical teachings on punctuation (Clenardus, Melanchthon, and Sanctius) and they all belong to the second category. All three authors described punctuation as a syntactic phenomenon— the three basic characters (comma, colon, and period) were within or immediately followed the syntactic chapter.

Alsted and Golius belong to the third category, with five punctuation marks (comma, colon, period, plus question mark and parentheses), which were explained both syntactically (*partes periodi*) and respi-

ratorily (*notae respirationes*). Both of them grouped the period, colon, and comma into the respiratory characters, while the question mark and parentheses were sentence characters of sound change (*notae mutationis soni*), as defined by Alsted. There are more grammarians that we associate with this group—Manutius, Frischlinus, Valerius, Camerarius, and Curio. Unlike Alsted and Golius, their description of punctuation went beyond the solely rhetorical or syntactic. Instead of a description of speech finiteness or perfection, which was a typical grammatical aspect of punctuation in Antiquity, the punctuation content was no longer in the syntactic part, but (1) among grammatical foundations—at the end of the first book on grammar essentials (Valerius); (2) at the end of the book (Manutius), together with accents and meter; (3) as part of the orthography chapter (Curio, Frischlinus), or within the orthography annex of the grammar book (Camerarius).

The last, fourth category of punctuation among the Latin grammarians happened when the punctuation set was enlarged with other characters. These are characters that denote pronunciation—accents, diaereses, apostrophes, marks for long and short syllables, and hyphens (Valerius, Golius). Furthermore, these characters signal an even stronger influence of the written language, which would become more obvious in vernacular grammar books: capital letters (Frischlinus) and paragraph marks, obelisks, and asterisk signs (Camerarius).

The period, colon, comma, question mark, and parentheses were fundamental features in punctuation descriptions found in sixteenth century Latin grammar books. The exclamation mark appeared much later—first in Alsted (1610), and then in Golius (1636), even though an 'effect of admiration' is mentioned in Manutius (1507)—an author who considerably influenced today's punctuation standards in his famous work as an early printer and typographer.

Just three grammarians described punctuation within orthography. The first was Curio (1546), and next came Camerarius, the author of the orthography chapter that featured as an annex in Melanchthon's grammar book. (Melanchthon did not consider punctuation part of orthography, however.) This annex was printed eight years before Aldus Manutius's *Orthographiae ratio* (1561) and can be regarded as one of the oldest printed orthographic manuals of Latin. The third grammarian was Frischlinus (1586).

4.2.   Punctuation of the First Vernacular Grammars

Latin continued to be the language of science in the fifteenth and sixteenth century, and so it was the starting point for describing vernaculars. Most vernacular grammar books used Latin as their metalanguage (12 out of 19). The teaching of vernacular grammars was completely in-

herited from Latin grammar books. One reason why vernacular grammars rely on Latin grammars so strongly probably lies in Law's explanation: the more the description of a language was similar to Latin, the more successful the grammars were (Law, 2003, p. 234). This is why the first Nordic grammar books were even literally translated pursuant to Donatus's *Ars minor* (Hovdhaugen et al., 2000, p. 10).

However, the status of punctuation in vernacular grammar books reveals an interesting pattern related to grammar-book function. While Antique grammars were oriented towards the native speaker, the vernacular grammars placed the foreign language speaker at their centre.[9] One aspect of language learning and tutoring found in vernacular grammars is their including a key to understanding the function of punctuation in them. I have analysed 19 vernacular grammars in their first editions in relation to one of the most important socio-cultural factors of that time—religion. Table 2 shows the language and metalanguage of grammar books, the religious background and information on the inclusion of the description of punctuation.

For a grammar book such as this, whose author was among the ranks of the Catholic Church and was working towards the ultimate goal of supporting (re)evangelization and spreading the faith, punctuation was of secondary importance. Grammar books were aimed at missionaries and priests who needed to learn the vernacular, and who were starting from Latin. Since the Jesuits were in charge of this process, they decided to typify the Latin grammar (Alvares 1572) and to complement it with data from local languages. If Alvares's grammar had had any punctuation-related content, this would certainly have been transferred to the vernacular grammars that were modelled on it. It did not because the written language was not vital knowledge for the Catholic Counter-Reformation or Revival, which prioritized preaching, i.e., the spoken language. Four Catholic grammar books were analysed, among which three did not have any description of punctuation—Portuguese (Oliveira 1532), Croatian (Kašić 1604) and Irish (Maolmhuaidh 1677). One exception is Albertus (1573), albeit with the important detail that Albertus converted from the Protestant to the Catholic faith five years prior to the book being printed, which tentatively suggests it was written under the influence of Protestantism and different socio-cultural circumstances.

Likewise, the practical reason of learning a new language underpinned the secular grammars. The spoken language was once again more important to pilgrims, traders, diplomats, and other travellers.

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9. Law (1997, p. xi). This is valid for the grammars that employ the Latin metalanguage. For the others, which were written in vernaculars, Vogl (2012, p. 20) explains that 'these grammars were not meant for foreign language learners, but for speakers of (a variety of) the languages to whom the authors of the grammars wanted to teach a "correct" version of their mother tongues.'

TABLE 1. Overview of Latin grammar books and their punctuation content

Author	Is there a chapter that includes orthography and/or punctuation?	Does it include punctuation? If so, what is the content?
Nebrija (1481)	7 pages on orthography (*De erotymatis orthographia*) in book 3 of 5. In the later edition (1515) he added a chapter *De punctis clausularum* on one page after the last, fifth book.	Comma, colon, period (*nota punctus*), parenthesis, and *nota interrogationis*.
Manutius (1507)	6 pages (*De posituris*) as the last book chapter, which also describes syllables, meter, and accents with many punctuation references	Period, colon, comma, question mark. Brackets were given as an example, but not directly named.
Cochlaeus (1514)	orthography without punctuation on 9 pages (*Folio LXXVI*).	no
Aventinus (1515)	no	no
Brassicanus (1518)	no	no
Lancilotus (1518)	no	no
Linacre (1532)	no	no
Scaliger (1540)	no	no
Curio (1546)	2 pages (*De orthographia*) in book 4 of 5.	Punctuation (*distinctiones*— period, comma, colon, question mark, brackets) is described in the chapter of orthography.
Clenardus (1551)	1 page (*Partes periodi*) in the second part of the book + 19 annexed pages (*De orthographia*) at the end of the book.	The description of sentence parts (*partes periodi*) as period, colon, and comma is after the description of syntax and before the part on accents and syllables. The orthography chapter was written by Johannes Vasaeus and it does not include punctuation.
Melanchthon (1553)	4 pages (*De periodis*) + 2 (*De distinctionibus*) + 16 annexed pages (*De orthographia*) at the end of the book, out of which 2.5 pages are dedicated to punctuation.	Description of sentence parts (*periodus, comma, colon*) is immediately after the syntax, and is followed by a chapter on *distinctiones* (*subdistinctio, media distinctio* and *distinctio vocalis/finalis*). The orthography chapter in this edition was written by Joachim Camerarius. It includes sentence marks (*de notis distinctionum*), which are: period, comma, colon, question mark, and brackets. In one paragraph, Camerarius also mentions compound marks (*multiplices notae*): *paragraphus, asteriscus,* and *obeliscus.*

Ramus (1559)	no	
Valerius (1560)	1 page (*Quaedam de notis*) at the end of the first book on the basics of grammar, before etymology.	Comma, colon, periodus, interrogatio, parenthesis, apostrophus, mark for long and short syllable, hypodiastole, and diaresis, and four accent marks.
Crusius (1563)	5 pages (*De orthographia*) at the beginning of the second part of the book + 8 pages (*De distinctionibus, et compositione orationis*) after the chapter on verbs and before the description of the calendar.	Subdistinctio, media distinctio, finalis distinctio, interpositio (round brackets), and *nota interrogationis*.
Alvares (1572)	no	
Caucius (1581)	no	
Frischlinus (1586)	8 pages (*De orthographia et prosodia*) at the beginning of the book, which includes the section *De notis* on punctuation (half of the page).	Orthography is determined in a twofold (*duplex*) fashion: basic (*simplex*) - sounds and letters, and formed (*figurata*)—marks (*de notis*) and figures (*de figuris orthographicis*). Punctuation is explained as separation marks (*notae distinctionum*), which are six: comma (or *virgula*), colon, period (*punctus finalis*), question mark (*nota interrogationis*), brackets (*nota parentheseos*) and capital letters (*litera majuscula*).
Sanctius (1587)	no	no[a]
Alsted (1610)	2 pages on punctuation (*De orationis distinctione*) in the chapter on syntax, behind the part on exclamations and before syntactic figures.	Punctuation is divided into primary and secondary. Primary are respiratory marks (*nota respirationis*): *virgula, periodus,* and *duo puncti.* Secondary are marks of sound change (*nota mutationis soni*): *parenthesis, signum interrogationis,* and *signum exclamationis.*
Scioppius (1628)	no	
Golius (1636)	4 pages (*De orthographia*) with which the book begins + 4 pages (*De ratione interpungendi*) as an appendix to the book on syntax (*Appendix ad syntaxin prior*).	Comma, colon, and periodus are punctuation marks based on the criterion of breathing (*respiratio*). Semicolon is included as part of the colon. Other punctuation marks are *interrogationis, parentheseos, exclamationis, diaereseos,* and *connexionis* (a hyphen between words, e.g., *ante-malorum*).

a. Tropos, periodos, cola, commata are mentioned once in the third book on syntax as figures of the verb and the sentence.

TABLE 2. Review of vernacular grammars

Work	Language	Metalanguage	Religious background	Descr. of punct.
Nebrija (1492)	Spanish	Spanish	Secular	No
Giovanni Francesco Fortunio (1516)[10]	Italian	Italian	Secular	No
Barclay (1521)	French	English	Secular	No
Oliveira (1532)	Portuguese	Portuguese	Catholic	No
Optát et al. (1533)	Czech	Czech	Protestant	Yes
Sylvester (1539)	Hungarian	Latin	Secular	No
Statorius (1568)	Polish	Latin	Protestant	No
Albertus (1573)	German	Latin	Prot. > Cath.	Yes
Spieghel (1584)	Dutch	Dutch	Secular	No
Bohorič (1584)	Slovenian	Latin	Protestant	Yes
Bullokar (1586)	English	English	Secular	No
Kašić (1604)	Croatian	Latin	Catholic	No
Portius (1638)	Greek	Latin	Secular	No
Petraeus (1649)	Finnish	Latin	Protestant	No
Jónsson (1651)	Icelandic	Latin	Secular	No
Pontoppidan (1668)	Danish	Latin	Protestant	Yes
Maolmhuaidh (1677)	Irish	Latin	Catholic	No
Tiällmann (1696)	Swedish	Swedish	Protestant	Yes
Ludolf (1696)	Russian	Latin	Secular	No

None of the nine secular grammar books explored here contained descriptions of punctuation. Unlike Catholicism, Protestantism relied heavily on printing and on spreading the written word. In the period from 1521 to 1545, 30.2% out of 5,651 printed books related to the reformation, and 17.6% to the Catholic doctrine. In the first half of the reviewed period, as much as 46% of all printed books related to reformation (Crofts, 1985, p. 373). These vernacular grammars attached more importance to punctuation because reading also became an important purpose for using the language. Most of the first vernacular grammars (four out of six), whose authors belonged to the Protestant priesthood, contain a description of punctuation to a smaller or greater extent.

Except for the five basic Latin punctuation marks, three more were included in this period: the hyphen, semicolon, and exclamation mark. The Czech grammar book introduced a hyphen at the end of a line, which illustrates a typographical influence on punctuation and the next step towards its separation from speech. The Danish grammar was the first to include the semicolon and exclamation mark (*signum admirationis*). The number of pages with a description of punctuation rose:

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10. The first edition dates from 1516, however, I have used the edition from 1545.

while punctuation was listed on one to two pages in Latin grammars, the vernacular grammar book contained punctuation descriptions spanning from two and half to six pages (Czech—five pages, Slovenian—five pages, Danish—six pages, Swedish—two and half pages). All the grammar books included punctuation in the chapters on orthography. There was no notable correlation between a vernacular grammar's metalanguage and the description of punctuation.

5.   The Enlightenment

One of the most obvious manifestations of the Enlightenment in European countries was the introduction of mass and compulsory primary education (Prussia 1763 and the Habsburg Monarchy 1774) and the establishment of national language academies (the Netherlands—1766, Russia—1783, Spain—1713, and Sweden—1783) or ministries of education (Poland—1773) with the goal of issuing normative grammars and establishing prescriptions concerning language use.

Among the first grammar books commissioned by language academies or other authorities with the goal of being normative and authoritative, the Russian (Lomonosov 1757), Polish (Kopczyński 1778), and Swedish (Sahlstedt 1769) grammar books included a description of punctuation. The half page on Russian punctuation encompasses the five basic marks, together with the semicolon, hyphen, and exclamation mark. Punctuation was called 'line characters' (Russian *строчные знаки*) and described in the second part of the book *О чтеніи и правописаніи россіискомъ* ('On the reading and spelling of Russian'). Punctuation marks were named 'orthographic marks' in Polish (*znamiona pisarskie*) or *notae ortographicae*, with the Latin explanation in brackets, and described across two-and-a-half pages in the third part on grammar *O Znamionach* ('On marks'). They were the same as in Russian, while also including three footnote marks (1, a, *). The description of punctuation in Swedish is included in the last, sixteenth part of the grammar book (Swedish: *Om Skiljetecknen och andra uti skrifwande brukliga*, 'On punctuation and other writing habits'). It spans two-and-a-half pages and does not include the question mark among the five basic marks, but does include the semicolon, apostrophe, and diaeresis. Sahlstedt did not use the term 'orthography' in his grammar book.

The first normative grammar of Spanish, *Gramática de la lengua castellana* (1771), and Dutch, *Nederduitsche Spraakkunst* (1805), both commissioned by their respective national academies, do not include punctuation, only because the normative orthographic manuals had already been published (*Orthographía Española* for Spanish in 1741 and Siegenbeek for Dutch in 1804).

The Prussian government commissioned Johann Christoph Adelung to create a school grammar, which appeared in 1781 with a highly structured chapter on orthography, which included punctuation-related content. Adelung's description of orthography is in terms of a completely independent unit that he placed at the end of his grammar. It appeared in a separate publication entitled *Grundsätze der Deutschen Orthographie* one year later (1782). His fourand-halfpage-long subchapter on punctuation is divided into three categories: the first includes the question mark and the exclamation mark, the second the period, colon, semicolon, and the comma, and the third the quotation marks, the hyphen (*Theilungszeichen*) as <⸗> or <->, round and square brackets, the ellipsis (*das Zeichen einer abgebrochenen Rede*), the en-dash (*Gedankenstrich*) or <−>, and the apostrophe.

The school reformer under the rule of Maria Theresia, Johann Ignaz Felbiger, issued a German normative grammar in 1774, which did not include content pertaining to orthography or punctuation because it came out in the same year as a separate, also normative orthographic manual (Felbiger's *Anleitung zur deutschen Rechtschreibung: zum Gebrauche der deutschen Schulen in den kaiserlich-königlichen Staaten* in 1774). Felbiger's grammar served as a template grammar and orthography in all official languages of the Habsburg Monarchy (Hungarian, Croatian, Romanian, Slovakian, and others). It was first published in bilingual editions, and later as an adapted translation.

Unlike the above grammar books, all of which were normative language manuals in their societies, the following selection of grammar books in other countries were used as de facto language textbooks. They all include a description of punctuation marks. The most influential English grammar books in the period of the Enlightenment were Brightland and Gildon (1711) and Lowth (1762), with the latter said to be the 'embodiment of prescriptive grammar' (Tieken-Boon van Ostade, 2000, p. 881). Brightland and Gildon's grammar is divided into four parts—letters, syllables, words, and sentences. Punctuation, or *Stops and Pauses in Sentences* is described on its own, in the eleventh chapter on three pages, within the fourth part of the book that consists of three chapters (after the chapter on sentences that precedes, and before the chapter on prosody that succeeds it). The punctuation described is the comma, colon, semicolon, full stop or point, question mark, wonder or admiration mark, parenthesis, hyphen (at the end of a line), apostrophe, a caret mark that signifies an unintentionally omitted word in writing or printing, a stroke or a long line instead of word(s) deliberately left out, index point <☞>, obelisk mark as a footnote sign <‡>, section mark <§>, asterisk <*>, quotation marks <" ">, and paragraph mark <¶>.

Lowth's chapter on punctuation, which is 17 pages long, is structurally equal to the other parts of the grammar book and is positioned at the end of the book. It includes the comma, colon, semicolon, period,

question mark, exclamation mark, and the parenthesis, without mentioning orthography. According to Stammerjohann (2009, p. 932), Ash (1763) was used in schools as an adaptation of Lowth's grammar. This grammar has a 3-page separate chapter on punctuation ('Of the Points and Stops, and Other Characters Made Use of in Writing') at the end of the introductory chapter entitled 'An Introduction to the Grammatical Institutes'. The term 'orthography' was not used. The punctuation marks included are the comma, semicolon, colon, period, question mark, exclamation mark, quotation marks (<' '> or <" ">), brackets, caret, hyphen, apostrophe, paragraph mark (¶), diaeresis, and marks for notes at the bottom of the page (<*>, <†>, <‡>, or <||>). Capital and minuscule letters are also mentioned here.

In America, Webster (1783−1785) wrote a grammar in three volumes: the first was dedicated to orthography (*Spelling Book*, 1783), the second to grammar (*Grammar*, 1784), while the third part was a reader (*Reader*, 1785). Punctuation-related content was included in two places: a one-page description, taken over from Brightland and Gildon's first book, with one slight change—the omission of the long line. The other description is in the appendix of the second book and spans six pages, with the subtitle 'Abridged from Dr. Lowth'. It includes the comma, semicolon, colon, period, question mark, exclamation mark, and the parenthesis.

Italy was not politically united in the eighteenth century, so no wide-ranging educational reforms for learning Italian could be completed. Corticelli (1745) was the first Italian grammar with a clear educational function. Punctuation is described in several subchapters in the last part of the book (In Italian: *Della maniera di pronunziare, e di scriver toscano*, 'On How to Pronounce and Write Tuscan' [i.e., Italian]). This third part was entitled *Della ortografia toscana* ('On Tuscan Orthography') in the page heading. Writing apostrophes was included in the fourth part, and writing periods and commas was in the eleventh chapter, which spanned a total of five pages. Besides the apostrophe, period, and the comma, only the question mark, exclamation mark, and the semicolon were described.

Based on the 12 reviewed de jure and de facto normative grammars in eight language environments (German and English in two political systems), nine of them describe punctuation marks (three English grammar books in England and one in America, German in Prussia, Polish, Russian, Swedish, and Italian), while three do not (Dutch, German in Austria, and Spanish). The reason why punctuation is not found in normative grammars in the Netherlands, the Habsburg Monarchy, and in Spain is that the orthographic content had already been separated from the grammatical teaching and had grown independently into a separate publication. The normative orthographic manuals were published alongside the normative grammars. Out of nine grammar books that included punctuation, five of them included it in the orthographic chap-

ter (Italian, English in America, German in Prussia, Russian) or, indeed, named punctuation marks 'orthographic marks' (Polish). The remaining four grammar books described punctuation in their own chapters, two of which made the punctuation chapter equal to other book parts or chapters (Sahlstedt and Lowth), whereas two grammar books categorized punctuation within the Introduction part (Ash) or together with the chapter on sentences and prosody. None of these four grammar books linked punctuation with orthography.

The Enlightenment grammar books introduced three major novelties in punctuation. First, the punctuation-related content has been created with pedagogical criteria in mind, so that the rules became more structured, shorter, and clearer. Second, punctuation has eventually become separate from speech. The written perspective taken to punctuation is visible in the inclusion of footnote marks, hyphens at the end of lines, square brackets, dashes, various quotation marks, etc. Third, punctuation has become an essential part of language prescriptions due to the orthographic content finally being separated from grammatical teachings.

6.   Conclusions

Grammar books, central manuals in the history of language description, were the first framework in which content related to punctuation was described. The description of punctuation has a long history in grammar books from Antiquity to the Enlightenment. As grammar books evolved in different epochs, the teachings included on punctuation also changed—this signifies that punctuation relates to the socio-cultural context of grammar books. In this comparative analysis of the description of punctuation in historical grammar books, I have shown that the development of punctuation can be divided into three historical periods, which generally correspond to the classification of the emergence of a standard language ideology (Vogl 2012). I have isolated three major factors in the evolution of punctuation: the grammar book function, the divergence of punctuation from grammatical teaching into orthographic content, and the transformation of punctuation into written characters.

6.1.   The Grammar-Book Function

The first factor is the change in the relationship between punctuation and grammar-book functions. The evolution of punctuation can be evaluated as the history of the change in function of the grammar book. Punctuation arose from a pragmatic purpose of consuming written texts. The aim of punctuation in the Classical Age was to show the

sentence structure in order to ease the clarity of the written text and to facilitate reading. For this purpose, three basic characters were enough.

The main function of grammar books in Renaissance Humanism was to help educate pupils in Latin, a language void of native speakers for centuries. This is why grammatical teaching was inherited from the period of Antiquity, when grammarians were native in Latin. Moreover, Renaissance Humanism was affected greatly by the ancient texts that came to Europe via trade routes with the East. All humanists were consumers of manuscripts and there is no humanism without books (Davies, 2004, p. 47). Some even say that Renaissance Humanism 'may be regarded as a primarily language-oriented (or "lingual") movement' (Verburg, 1998, p. 189). The first printed grammar books of Latin, Nebrija, and Manutius started to include other characters among the punctuation marks from Antiquity, namely, the question mark and parentheses. The turning point was in the middle of the sixteenth century with Melanchthon (1553) and Valerius (1560), after which no one considered punctuation marks to be only the period, the comma, and the colon.

Regarding the content of punctuation, the discovery of the printing press affected punctuation considerably and represented the next stage in its evolution. Printed texts were more dominant, and punctuation evolved into standardized typographical marks. The number of standard punctuation marks raised from three to at least five. Two new punctuation marks were introduced—brackets and the question mark.

Based on its own description, punctuation in Latin grammar books was categorized into four groups (cf. 4.1). Among those authors who include descriptions of punctuation, we can conclude that punctuation evolved when it had begun to be considered as speech-related marks, outside of the scope of syntax.

On the other hand, the growing importance of the vernacular languages in administration and literary activity led to the emergence of vernacular grammar books (Percival, 2007). A need to spread religion and to learn vernacular languages were the factors that explain the (mis)appearance of punctuation's description in the first vernacular grammar books in Renaissance Humanism. Only grammar books written under the influence of Protestantism included descriptions of punctuation, which reveals the written character of language and the purpose of the grammar books.

The Enlightenment brought with it the last phase in punctuation's evolution. The function of grammar books changed substantially: they became prescriptive manuals commissioned by language institutions. Descriptions of punctuation were included in all the researched grammar books with the above-explained exception of two grammar books in which punctuation-related content was already printed separately in an associated orthographic textbook. The most representative feature of the Enlightenment was the introduction of the system of compulsory

public education. New grammar books had to satisfy the need for mass literacy in writing and reading. This led to the inclusion of punctuation because the unavoidable written characters and the introduction of new punctuation marks emphasized the even stronger influence of the written language.

6.2.   Punctuation's Shift From Grammatical Teaching to Orthographic Content

In Antiquity punctuation was included in grammar books because of its rhetorical-syntactic role and the need to delimit speech. *Positurae*, *distinctiones* or *théseis* (period, colon, and comma, or *subdistinctio*, *media distinctio,* and *distinctio finalis*) were syntactic units that represented different parts of the sentence in order to indicate a level of finiteness of expression. They were also rhetorical marks because they symbolized places to breathe in while reading the *scriptura continua* texts. This teaching was inherited by the Latin grammarians Clenardus, Melanchthon, Sanctius, Alsted, and Golius. Other Latin grammarians, such as Manutius and Valerius, described punctuation as speech characters outside the syntactic chapters, but nevertheless punctuation was part of grammatical teaching. The change in the conception of punctuation happened in the middle of the sixteenth century with three grammarians—Curio, Camerarius, and Frischlinus—who began to regard punctuation as related to orthography.

The link between punctuation and orthography is clearly visible among vernacular grammarians. All of the four grammarians who were influenced by Protestantism, included their description of punctuation within the chapter on orthography, unlike the Catholic and secular grammarians (with just one debatable exception). These grammarians enlarged the standard set of punctuation marks to include the hyphen at the end of a line, the semicolon, and the exclamation mark.

The final stage in the evolution of punctuation was the ultimate separation from grammatical teaching that happened during the Enlightenment. In two-thirds of the languages analysed here, punctuation was considered as part of orthography, described either within grammar books (Italian, English in America, German in Prussia, Russian, and Polish) or even completely separately in prescriptive orthographic textbooks (Dutch, German in the Habsburg Monarchy, and Spanish). Punctuation was mostly described as separate from other grammatical features in the remaining four grammar books too, but without any mention of orthography. This divergence from grammatical teachings in the Enlightenment was followed by the introduction of many new punctuation marks, which led to the next, final element in the evolution of punctuation.

The first mention of punctuation as orthographic marks was in the first Polish grammar book, Kopczyński (1778) (*notae ortographicae* or *znamiona pisarskie*), followed by Adelung (1781), who described punctuation (*interpunction*) as orthographic marks (*orthographische Zeichen*).

6.3.   The Transformation of Punctuation Into Written Characters

The modern classification categorizes punctuation separately from other written characters (cf. Gallmann, 1985, and the Unicode standard), such as letters, symbols, numbers, etc. The distinction between the spoken and the written language is one of the most important in the evolution of language theory. From the three basic punctuation marks in Antiquity, today we count 798 characters that fall under the 'General Category of Punctuation' in the Unicode standard.[11] It is not incorrect to say that this great progress in the number of punctuation characters was caused by the demands of contemporary literacy and frequent language use in the written form.[12]

In the periods considered, from Antiquity to Renaissance Humanism the spoken language was at the centre of grammatical descriptions, as can be seen in the definitions of grammar and the status of orthography and punctuation in it. The more a language was used in the written form, the more punctuation marks appeared in grammar books. This process was followed by the separation of punctuation from grammatical teaching, as explained in the previous section.

As with the two abovementioned described factors, there are three observable periods in the evolution of punctuation. A shift from handwriting to printed grammar books (or Antiquity to Renaissance Humanism) affected typographical standardization and the number of punctuation marks. Following the early printers, grammarians such as Camerarius and Frischlinus began to include new characters. They inserted capital letters and three text marks (paragraph mark, obelisk, and asterisk mark), and Optát et al. added a hyphen at the end of a line, while Golius, brought a hyphen inside a line to denote the structure of a word. All these new characters represent the increasing influence of the written language and printed books.

The second change that happened in the Enlightenment era was fostered by mass education and literacy. Being able to read and write became a requirement that led to the spread of the written language throughout many societal circles and with many applications. New

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11. The Unicode Standard v13, `https://www.unicode.org/charts/`. Accessed on 8 September 2020.

12. Parkes (1992, p. 2) stated that punctuation developed by stages that coincided with changing patterns of literacy.

characters that appeared in prescriptive grammar books represented the influence of the written language—footnote signs, various dashes and quotation marks, square brackets, etc.

By observing the descriptions of punctuation in a selection of prototypical and accessible grammar books in different periods from Antiquity to the Enlightenment, and taking into account the function of the grammar book, the shift in punctuation from grammatical teaching to orthographic content, and the transformation of punctuation into written characters, a typology of the development of punctuation across three periods can be established:

1. The handwriting punctuation of Antiquity with three basic characters (period, comma, colon) that served a rhetorical-syntactic function and which were described within syntactic chapters.
2. The standardized punctuation of Renaissance Humanism with five basic characters (period, comma, colon, question mark, brackets) that served the roles of learning Latin and spreading the influence of vernacular languages in printed books. Punctuation reflected both the spoken and the written language, and it was described predominantly outside the syntactic chapters.
3. The prescribed punctuation of the Enlightenment with more than eight punctuation marks that served the role of learning a national language as part of mandatory education and with the aim of increasing literacy. The punctuation reflects the written language and is included as part of orthographic content.

This paper aims to contribute to the description and typology of punctuation (based on Vogl's classification of a standard language ideology) and to the recognition of comparative (historical) standardology, as defined by Joseph. I have shown that punctuation went through three major evolutionary periods that evidenced the emergence of uniform written languages, the emergence of normative written languages, and the establishment of prescriptive written languages.

The three analysed factors or in other terms—punctuation function (6.1), punctuation status (6.2) and punctuation application (6.3)—can be recognized as the most significant legacies of grammar books in the history of punctuation in relation to punctuation's transformation into the forms and meaning with which we are familiar today. The function is depicted by the change from Latin to vernacular languages, the status by the inclusion of punctuation in orthographic content, and the application by the use of characters that represented the printed language. A pioneering grammar book is finally worth mentioning here—the first Czech grammar (Optát et al. 1533), which apart from being the first vernacular grammar that included the description of punctuation (punctuation function), it also included it within orthography (punctuation status), and added the hyphen at the end of a line as a character of printed language (punctuation application).

Acknowledgements

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