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7. Spoken Greek and the Work of Notaries in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon

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1 Introduction

The church councils of late antiquity were summoned to discuss and deliberate on important matters of the Christian doctrine and church governance. Hundreds of clerics and occasionally dozens of lay officials attended such councils. The oral medium was predominant and the recording of the proceedings was crucial; for each council, acts were produced that were consulted in the years to come. We have acts of several councils from late antiquity, and the minutes of some of these are very extensive. Since these present themselves as the verbatim transcripts of the conciliar proceedings, they offer an unrivalled insight into the history of major events of late antiquity and into the spoken language of this period (cf. Millar 2006: 16, 249–50). What we can make of these documents for our purposes depends very much on their reliability, which depends in turn on how faithfully they were recorded and transmitted – hence the importance of the work of the notaries (*notarioi*), who were tasked with the production of the records.[1]

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[1]Following a now established tradition of scholarship on the Acts, throughout this article I shall use 'notary' as a translation of Latin *notarius* and Greek *notarios*. However, I should make it clear that while English 'notary' is convenient and etymologically consistent, it is inaccurate with regard to the function of *notarii* at this time: they acted as minute takers and secretaries, not as modern notaries (see Teitler 1985 for an overview of these figures). In fact, 'notary' is not contemplated as a translation of *notarius* in the *OLD*, which gives instead 'short-hand writer, stenographer'; the Revised Supplement to the *LSJ* s.v. *notarios* has 'Lat. *notarius*, secretary', and Lampe has 'shorthand writer, secretary' (I should like to thank Hans Teitler for discussing this with me in a private exchange).

In this Section, I shall focus on the minutes included in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE).[2] This council marked a turning point in the history of the church and in late antique history more generally. Hundreds of bishops were summoned, mostly from the Greek East, to produce a new definition of faith and to assess the events of the controversial Second Council of Ephesus (August 449). The latter task required the minutes of Second Ephesus to be read out and discussed. At Second Ephesus, chunks of the minutes of previous gatherings had been read out and discussed, too: the First Council of Ephesus (431), the Resident Synod (*synodos endemousa*) of Constantinople held in November 448 and some related hearings held at Constantinople in April 449 (see Price and Gaddis 2005: I.113–14). Parts of these made it into the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon. This process tells us a good deal about the importance of minutes in this sociocultural context.[3]

In what follows, I shall look at the work of the notaries of the Council of Chalcedon and of the above-mentioned gatherings, in order to discuss the historical and especially linguistic reliability of the minutes;[4] I shall subsequently explore the potential of the minutes as evidence for the spoken Greek of the mid-fifth century by investigating the differences between spoken and written language in the Acts.[5]

I should like to make it clear that I shall concern myself with spoken language as a linguistic medium and not with orality as a linguistic conception, although

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[2] The Acts are published in Schwartz (1933–7). The Greek Acts are contained in volume II.1, the Latin translation in II.3. An English translation is in Price and Gaddis (2005). When quoting from the Acts (*ACO* = *Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum*), I shall indicate volume, page and line number in Schwartz's edition, alongside the number of the session and paragraph (e.g. *ACO* II.1 p. 55.1–6, 1.1). I should point out that Price and Gaddis (2005) in numbering the sessions follow the Latin version, which is at times different from the Greek one (see Price and Gaddis 2005: II.vii–viii).

[3] See Graumann (2009) on aspects of the reading of documents and sets of conciliar acts at First Ephesus but also at Chalcedon. Graumann (2018) focuses on the material objects containing conciliar acts and their archival preservation.

[4] I shall not concern myself with the Acts of First Ephesus, which are preserved independently of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon (unlike those of the other councils here considered) and pose a different set of problems (see e.g. Graumann 2009).

[5] Our source will be obviously the extant Greek Acts. The original Acts included the Latin statements of the few western delegates, accompanied by a Greek translation (see Schwartz 1933: 247–8); at least some Latin statements must have been still accessible by the time the Latin translations were produced in the mid-sixth century (see Mari 2018). In the extant Greek Acts, all text in Latin has been eliminated.

there obviously is an interplay between these two.[6] As councils were formal occasions attended by bishops and high-ranking imperial officials, the spoken language we must expect to find is by and large that of educated men expressing themselves at a formal occasion, that is formal spoken language.[7]

2 From the oral discussion at the councils to the modern edition of the Acts: a hypothesis

First of all, we need to address the question as to how the minutes were produced. Unfortunately, the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon do not contain information about the minute-taking at that council. Normally, details of this were meant to be invisible, and most of the times they actually remained so unless issues were raised about the veracity of the minutes at following gatherings (Price and Gaddis 2005: I.75–6). For example, the veracity of the minutes of the Resident Synod of 448 came into question at the hearings of Constantinople in 449, and that of the minutes of Second Ephesus in 449 came into question at Chalcedon. Through this scrutiny, some details of the minute-taking in both occasions were revealed, and we shall look at these in what follows.

The most detailed, albeit not entirely clear, source about minute-taking and production of acts at a church gathering are the Acts of the so-called Conference (*Collatio*) of Carthage in 411.[8] Here two groups of rival bishops, the Catholics and the Donatists, had four notaries each (*notarii ecclesiastici*). Two of them for each side would alternate in taking shorthand notes of the proceedings, assisted by a team of imperial stenographers (*exceptores*) and supervised by two imperial *scribae*. The formal version of the minutes was produced after each shift by comparing the parallel versions of the shorthand notes, under the supervision of some representatives of the bishops who had to verify and sign it. After this, the imperial *exceptores* would retranscribe the verified minutes producing the final official version, from which authenticated copies would be made for the different parties.

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[6] On this distinction and on questions of orality in text (especially Latin texts), see Oesterreicher (1997); although he does not take conciliar acts into account, these would fit most naturally in the text type called 'records of spoken transactions' (Oesterreicher 1997: 202–3). For questions of orality in Attic prose, see Vatri (2017: 1–22).

[7] On formal spoken language and its similarities with formal written language, see Akinnaso (1985).

[8] See Lancel (1972: 337–63) and Teitler (1985: 5–15). The Acts of the Conference of Carthage have been republished most recently by Weidmann (2018).

Different assemblies must have had different systems for the production of minutes, depending on their size, chair, location and so on. At the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448, for example, five notaries of the archbishop Flavian of Constantinople (Aetius, Asclepiades, Asterius, Nonnus and Procopius) were in charge of the minutes;[9] one year later they still possessed the original minutes authenticated by the signatures of the bishops, and they were required to produce these as their reliability came into question at some hearings held in Constantinople in April 449.[10] Copies were in the possession of some representatives of Eutyches, the monk who was condemned for heresy at the Resident Synod in 448 and who questioned the reliability of the minutes after he allegedly found in them some things contrary to the truth;[11] it is not stated who made such copies – indeed in 449 Flavian's chief notary Aetius asked to inspect them to figure out whose hand they were in and who had provided them, but his request was not granted.[12] Aetius also asked whether the minutes produced by Eutyches' representatives (Constantine, Eleusinius and Constantius) were originals, copies or else; this might suggest that there could have been more than one original, since he too possessed the original minutes.[13] Three *exceptores* are recorded as attending the

[9] See Teitler (1985: 108 s.v. Aetius 2, 114 s.v. Asclepiades, 115 s.v. Asterius 4, 154 s.v. Nonnus, 163 s.v. Procopius 3). All of these are called 'deacons and notaries' (*diakonoi kai notarioi*) in the minutes. They also acted as secretaries, reading out documents, answering questions about the proceedings and making announcements.

[10] *ACO* II.1 p. 154.7–8 (session 1 para. 588), an official tells the notaries: Τῶν ὑπομνημάτων τῶν αὐθεντικῶν χρεία ἐστίν, ἐν οἷς αἱ ὑπογραφαί τῶν ἐπισκόπων περιέχονται ('We need the original minutes in which the signatures of the bishops are contained'). At *ACO* II.1 p. 156.5 (1.614) it is said that the notaries presented τὸ αὐθεντικὸν σχεδάριον ('the original draft'), which Teitler (1985: 102) says is the equivalent of the *scheda*, the verified and signed minutes, of the Conference of Carthage in 411 (see also Graumann 2018: 284–9). At Second Ephesus (August 449), the original minutes of the Resident Synod of 448 were presented by Archbishop Flavian of Constantinople (cf. *ACO* II.1 p. 99.29–30, 1.222).

[11] Eutyches' petition to the emperors regarding his case read: 'For yesterday I read the minutes that the most devout bishop Flavian has mischievously prepared against me and I found in the text things that are contrary to the proceedings. For neither what he has said to me was contained in it nor did they put down in the minutes what I said' (*ACO* II.1 p. 152.24–7, 1.572).

[12] *ACO* II.1 p. 155.32–7 (1.610–11).

[13] *ACO* II.1 p. 155.26–7 (1.606): πότερον αὐθεντικά ἐστιν ἢ ἀντίγραφα ἢ τί τοιοῦτο παρὰ τινὸς αὐτῶι παρεσχέθη ('whether they are originals or copies or what someone ever gave them'). The question was slightly rephrased by another attendee, the patrician Florentius: Ὁ εὐλαβέστατος Κονσταντῖνος εἰ ἃ προφέρει ἀντίγραφα, ἴσα εἰσὶν ἢ αὐθεντικά, διδάξει ('the most devout Constantine will show if the copies that he is presenting are replicas or originals'); Constantine

hearings in 449 and reading out documents: Asterius, Euethius and John.[14] There is evidence that at Constantinople in 449 the first notes were taken on tablets, for a statement of the deacon Eleusinius was read out *apo deltōn* 'from tablets' shortly after he made it.[15] Hence Teitler (1985: 103) argues, by analogy with the Conference of Carthage in 411, that shorthand symbols were used by the notaries of Flavian of Constantinople as well as by the three *exceptores* who attended the hearings in 449, although explicit evidence is lacking.

We know less about the minute-taking at the Second Council of Ephesus in 449, for which our information comes from complaints raised two years later at the Council of Chalcedon.[16] Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, presided over this council, and the protonotary (*protos notariōn*) John of Alexandria was in charge of reading out documents. Several bishops had their own private notaries but claims were made at Chalcedon that Dioscorus expelled the other bishops' notaries and had his own take care of the minutes. Dioscorus tried to defend himself by pushing the idea that each notary took records for his bishop.[17] Bishops Juvenal of Jerusalem and Thalassius of Caesarea, Dioscorus' allies at Second Ephesus, confirmed that they too had their own notaries;[18] however, Dioscorus later revealed that it was his notaries in particular who had taken the minutes, by letting it slip that his notary Demetrianus had been secretly asked by Basil, bishop

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replied that they were replicas (Ἴσα ἐστίν.) (*ACO* II.1 p. 155.28–30, 1.607–8). At Second Ephesus in 449, Eutyches produced presumably the same replicas: ἐπιδέδωκεν δὲ τὰ ἴσα καὶ ὁ θεοσεβέστατος ἀρχιμανδρίτης Εὐθυχής (*ACO* II.1 p. 99.30–31, 1.222).

[14] See Teitler 1985: 115 s.v. Asterius 5, 132 s.v. Euethius 2, 144 s.v. Iohannes 5, respectively.

[15] *ACO* II.1 p. 169.7 (1.741).

[16] *ACO* II.1 p. 87.10–88.4 (1.122–30).

[17] *ACO* II.1 p. 87.16–20 (1.124): Ἕκαστος διὰ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ νοταρίων ἔγραψεν, οἱ ἐμοὶ τὰ ἐμά, οἱ τοῦ θεοσεβεστάτου ἐπισκόπου Ἰουβεναλίου τὰ αὐτοῦ, οἱ τοῦ θεοσεβεστάτου ἐπισκόπου Θαλασσίου τὰ αὐτοῦ· ἦσαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλων εὐλαβεστάτων ἐπισκόπων πολλοὶ νοτάριοι ἐκλαμβανόντες. οὕτως οὐκ ἔστιν τῶν ἐμῶν νοταρίων τὸ γράμμα· ἕκαστος ἔχει τὸ ἴδιον ('Each one wrote through his own notaries: mine wrote my records, those of the most religious Juvenal wrote his, those of the most religious bishop Thalassius wrote his; there were also many notaries of other most devout bishops who kept a record. So the text is not of my notaries; each has his own.'). Price (in Price and Gaddis 2005: I.152–3) translates οἱ ἐμοὶ τὰ ἐμά etc. as 'mine recorded my statements' etc., but I find it hard to believe that each notary was only recording the words of his own bishop, for it would have been ultimately pointless if these were not inserted in the context of the debate. I think it more likely that τὰ ἐμά implies ὑπομνήματα ('records') or γράμματα ('texts').

[18] *ACO* II.1 p. 87.21–7 (1.124–7).

of Seleucia, to modify his statement.[19] Some of Dioscorus' accusers repeatedly claimed that they had to sign blank papers.[20]

The Council of Chalcedon was directed by imperial authorities. All sessions but one were chaired by imperial officials, and two imperial secretaries (*sekretarioi*), Constantine and Veronicianus, were tasked with reading out written texts. The patriarchal staff of Constantinople cooperated: the aforementioned Aetius, who had been promoted to Archdeacon of Constantinople and chief of the notaries (*primikerios notariōn*), helped read out documents at some sessions and must have played a role in checking the minutes.[21] The third session, Dioscorus' trial, was exceptional:[22] it was presided over by the chief of the Roman delegation, Paschasinus bishop of Lilybaeum, and documents were read out by the patriarchal notaries Aetius, Asclepiades and Procopius (Asclepiades acted as reader alongside Aetius at the fifth session as well); moreover, three delegations of bishops were sent to Dioscorus with summons, and each of them included one lector and notary (*anagnostēs kai notarios*) who took notes and read them back before the assembly.[23] At Chalcedon like at Second Ephesus some bishops came with their own notaries.[24] Some version of the minutes was ready for use soon after the sessions.[25]

The Conference of Carthage in 411 was special in many ways: although it was presided over by a delegate of the emperor, like the Council of Chalcedon,

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[19] *ACO* II.1 p. 179.37–180.2 (1.854). For Demetrianus, see Teitler (1985: 127 s.v. Demetrianus).

[20] *ACO* II.1 p. 88.5–16 (1.131–4).

[21] In the Latin Acts, the first session is concluded by Aetius' statement 'It is complete' (*ACO* II.3 p. 259.18–19, 1.1076); this must be 'a record of a subsequent checking of the minutes' (Price and Gaddis 2005: I.365 n. 523).

[22] This session was the third chronologically and in the Latin Acts, but it is numbered as the second in the Greek Acts, for the order of the sessions was rearranged.

[23] Himerius and Hypatius, lectors and notaries, and Palladius, deacon and notary of Patricius bishop of Tyana (see Teitler 1985: 141 s.v. Himerius, 142 s.v. Hypatius 2, 156 s.v. Palladius 5).

[24] *ACO* II.1 p. 78.8–11 (1.75–6): the two notaries of Dioscorus of Alexandria are accused of being rowdy.

[25] For example, at the fourth session (17 October 451) the secretary Constantine read out parts of the minutes of the first session (8 October) and the secretary Veronicianus parts of the minutes of the second session (10 October) (*ACO* II.1 pp. 288–9, 4.2–4); at the seventeenth session (sixteenth in the Latin Acts and in Price and Gaddis 2005), the minutes of a private meeting that had been held the previous day were read out by Aetius (*ACO* II.1 pp. 447–53, 17.7–9). In all three of these cases the term used to indicate the object containing the minutes is *schedarion* (see Graumann 2018: 284–5).

it was more of a show trial than a council and was 'a formally and explicitly adversarial affair between two separate churches whose bishops deeply mistrusted each other' (Price and Gaddis 2005: I.75). It must have been a consequence of this that two teams of notaries took shorthand notes in parallel and that representatives of the bishops supervised the production of the formal minutes and verified them with signatures. It is unlikely that this particular procedure was put in place at other gatherings; yet it stands to reason that the more basic aspects of the production of the minutes (i.e. notaries taking shorthand notes and later rendering them into formal minutes) were the same at the Conference of Carthage and at the Council of Chalcedon – as well as at those gatherings whose minutes made it into the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon. We may thus reconstruct the stages from the oral discussion at the councils to the modern edition of the Greek Acts as in Table 1:

Table 1.

Stage 1	Spoken statements and written texts (read out)
Stage 2	Notaries produce shorthand transcription during the sessions
Stage 3	Notaries render shorthand transcription into formal version
Stage 4	Copies of the formal version are made for parties[26]
Stage 5	Official publication of the Acts of Chalcedon (Constantinople, 454/455)[27]
Stage 6	Revision of the Greek Acts (probably seventh century)[28]

[26] We know that the Roman delegates returned to Rome from Chalcedon with some documents of the Council, and Anatolius of Constantinople sent the rest of the minutes to Pope Leo by December 451 (Letter of Anatolius to Leo, ACO II.1 p. 448.24–8).

[27] See Price and Gaddis (2005: I.79–81). The publication of the Acts was promoted by the imperial court and patriarchal see of Constantinople as a means of propaganda; the Acts include not only the minutes of the proceedings but also letters and other documents related to the Council of Chalcedon.

[28] Price and Gaddis (2005: I.82–3). In the sixth century, three Latin translations of the Acts had been produced (see Price and Gaddis 2005: I.83–5 and Mari 2018); the extant Greek version is sometimes less complete than the Latin translations, for it suffered cuts after the Latin translations were made.

Stage 7	Medieval manuscript tradition[29]
Stage 8	Schwartz's critical edition (1933–7)

A clarification on the first stage is in order. Here I take spoken statements to include both unprepared statements and oral speeches that were based on written texts, for they function in the same way from the perspective of the production of the minutes: both types of speech were recorded as they were delivered.

By written texts I mean petitions, letters and minutes of previous gatherings that were read out at the councils. From the perspective of the production of the minutes, these might differ from spoken statements, for it is conceivable that they could be handed to the notaries to be copied instead of being transcribed as they were read out.[30]

Spoken statements and written texts will constitute the basis of my comparison between spoken and written language in Section 4. I should make it clear that, for the purposes of the linguistic analysis, spoken statements included in the minutes of previous gatherings count as evidence of spoken language, not of written language. I should add that spoken statements based on written texts, if they are not recognised as such, may cause problems in the analysis of spoken language (see Section 4.2).

Now that we have an idea of how the minutes have been produced and transmitted, we can turn to the question of their historical and especially linguistic reliability. First, how faithfully do the minutes report the contents of the gatherings? Second, and most crucially for us, how faithfully do they represent the language spoken at the gatherings? The second question depends to some extent on the first, inasmuch as alterations in the contents of minutes would produce alterations in their language, thus undermining their faithfulness to the language spoken at the gatherings.

[29] Schwartz's edition is mainly based on the manuscripts of Venice, Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Gr. Z. 555 (eleventh century) and Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, hist. gr. 27 (twelfth/thirteenth century).

[30] This seems to be the meaning of requests that frequently accompany the reading out of written texts, such as 'let this be read and inserted in the text of the minutes' (e.g. *ACO* II.1 p. 83.22–3, 1.86; p. 90.13–15, 1.156; p. 100.12–13, 1.223, etc.).

3 The Acts as historical evidence

In this Section, I shall discuss the Acts as historical evidence; I shall use as a basis for discussion the work of Price (2009), who has investigated the question of how much in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon belongs to the categories of truth, omission and fiction, respectively. He has convincingly argued that 'the first, fortunately, greatly outweighs the third', and also that 'the category of omission is much more significant than that of fiction' (Price 2009: 105). On this plausible conclusion I shall elaborate in what follows. It is beyond the scope of this contribution to assess the historical reliability of the Acts altogether; my focus will be on the recording policies and practices of the notaries (with the proviso that they might have been different at different gatherings), and on the significance that these might have for our linguistic appreciation of the Acts.[31] I shall discuss the categories identified by Price (2009) in the following order: omission, fiction (which I call 'alteration and falsification') and, by process of elimination, truth.

3.1 Omission

Generally speaking, omissions are more likely to undermine the evidentiary value of a document for historical than for linguistic investigation. From a linguist's point of view, omissions simply reduce the size of the corpus, unless they target linguistically marked material, in which case they weaken the representativity of the corpus (e.g. if the records of a meeting were to omit all statements of those speaking a substandard variety of the language).

The most striking example of omission at Chalcedon is that of sessions that were not recorded at all (cf. Price 2009: 97–8).[32] For example, an unrecorded meeting in the palace of the archbishop Anatolius of Constantinople was meant to convince everybody of the orthodoxy of Pope Leo's main theological work, the so-called *Tome*;[33] in this way, there would have only been consensus at the

[31] On contemporary challenges to the accuracy of the records see Ste. Croix (2006: 307–10).

[32] There were also extra-conciliar meetings, such as that in 448 between some envoys of the Resident Synod and the monk Eutyches, of which only informal notes were taken and whose content was then reported before the assembly. Upon being questioned about his account of the meeting, the presbyter John admitted that 'it is not possible for one who is sent to convey a message to others to report back the exact words' (*ACO* II.1 p. 160.5–7, 1.644).

[33] *ACO* II.1 p. 279.8–11 (3.33; 2.33 in the Latin Acts and in Price and Gaddis 2005).

formal session in which Leo's Tome was to be approved.[34] If minutes had been taken at that 'private' meeting, we would certainly know more about the degree of doctrinal dissent over Leo's Christology, but the records would hardly give us a very different picture of the language than we can find at other sessions. The same must be true of material that was excised later for the sake of brevity,[35] and material that was omitted for the sake of convenience.

The very different length of some sessions is striking. For example, the first session, where the events of Second Ephesus were assessed, spans 142 pages, as opposed to only ten pages for the crucial fifth session, at which the draft definition of faith was read out, discussed and amended. We know that the first session was exceptionally long and went on until late at night, but it is clear that much of the fifth session has been omitted. In some cases that is explicit in the very minutes: at paragraph 3, we read that 'Asclepiades, deacon of the great church of Constantinople, read out the definition, which it was decided not to include in these minutes' (*ACO* II.1 p. 319.7–8); at paragraph 4, it is stated that some people raised objections after the reading, but not who did it and what objections were raised (*ACO* II.1 p. 319.9); at paragraph 29, it is reported that a selected committee met to discuss the amendments to the definition, but the discussion itself is not recorded (*ACO* II.1 p. 322.1–2). Moreover, the objections to the draft definition of John bishop of Germanicia (paragraph 4) and of the Roman delegates (paragraph 9) must have been much more detailed than we read now to justify the long and animated responses attributed to 'the most devout bishops' at paragraphs 6, 11, 12, etc.[36]

Who decided what was not to be included in the minutes, and based on what criteria? In the case of the draft definition (*ACO* II.1 p. 319.7–8, 5.3), the phrasing suggests that the decision to omit the draft definition was taken during the production of the formal minutes; the reason for this omission as well as the omission of the objections to the draft definition was probably that the editors did not want to provide arguments to the critics of the definition of faith (Price and

[34] Deliberative processes at councils depended on a system of unanimity, not majority (see Ste. Croix 2006: 266–7 and Price 2009: 92–5).

[35] For example, the reading of the Acts of First Ephesus spans 40 pages in the Latin version (*ACO* II.3 pp. 196–235) but it is reduced to a very short summary in the Greek version (*ACO* II.1 p. 189.31–4). Just after that, where the Acts of Second Ephesus are read out, the Greek version omits most of the sentences of the bishops and only gives their names (*ACO* II.1 p. 190.15–22, 1.945–51, and p. 190.29–33, 1.954–7), while the Latin version preserves the full sentences (*ACO* II.3 pp. 236.4–237.4, 1.948–54, and p. 237.10–24, 1.957–60). These parts must have been omitted in the seventh-century revision of the Greek Acts for the sake of brevity.

[36] See Price (2009: 96–7) for more examples; see also Ste. Croix (2006: 266, 300).

Gaddis 2005: I.196 n. 33). The aim to portray ecclesiastical consensus instead of disagreement certainly played a role: this must have been especially the case with sessions focusing on doctrine, such as the fifth, while there was an interest to record the 'judicial' sessions more fully (Price and Gaddis 2005: I.78).[37]

But what is more relevant for our linguistic investigation is that it also seems that a criterion of formality played a role in the selective recording of the proceedings: to this effect we have the testimony of Aetius, the chief notary at the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448. As I have said in Section 2, at this Resident Synod, the archimandrite Eutyches was condemned for heresy; he later appealed, claiming that the minutes of the synod had been falsified, and some hearings took place in April 449 to reexamine the minutes. Eutyches did not attend this meeting in person but was represented by three monks: Constantine, Eleusinius and Constantius. They possessed copies of the minutes and checked them against the official minutes as they were being read out by an *exceptor*. At one point, Constantine observed that three statements of Flavian of Constantinople,[38] Seleucus of Amaseia and Basil of Seleucia were missing from the official minutes (*ACO* II.1 p. 172.34–173.10, 1.788); the notary Aetius quite candidly replied that 'many things are often said in the way of ordinary conversation and suggestions (ὡς ἐν διαλέξει κοινῆι καὶ ἐν συμβουλῆς μέρει) in synod by the most holy bishops present that they do not command to write down (ἃ οὐκ ἐπιτρέπουσι

[37] Not that omissions cannot be identified in judicial sessions such as the first, though: for example, the oriental bishops' exclamation as Bishop Theodoret was admitted to the council, 'we signed blank sheets. we were beaten and we signed' (*ACO* II.1 p. 69.21, 1.28), can only be explained if somebody just accused them of having previously signed his condemnation, which is not in the minutes (cf. Price and Gaddis 2005: I.134 n. 66). As for the hearings at Constantinople in 449, Eutyches' defensive strategy was based on the claim that some statements had been omitted in the minutes of the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448, where he had been deposed ('For neither what he [Bishop Flavian] has said to me was contained in it nor did they put down in the minutes what I said' *ACO* II.1 p. 152.24–7, 1.572): so his delegates at the hearings in April 449 lamented omissions at *ACO* II.1 p. 168.30–4 (1.737), p. 171.28-31 (1.773), p. 172.34–173.10 (1.788), p. 174.8 (1.797), p. 174.26–8 (1.804), p. 175.30–32 (1.818). Some of these claims were refuted by other attendees, so it is difficult to tell what was actually omitted and what was never said at all. A good deal of omission must have affected the minutes of Second Ephesus in 449, that were controlled by the notaries of Dioscorus; some bishops at Chalcedon recalled statements and events that are not recorded in the minutes of Second Ephesus and against which Dioscorus protested strongly: *ACO* II.1 p. 180.3–9 (1.855), p. 180.14–28 (1.858), p. 180.33–40 (1.861), etc.

[38] The statement attributed to Flavian of Constantinople ('say "two natures after the union" and anathematise those who do not say so') must have been made before Eutyches' statement at *ACO* II.1 p. 143.32 (1.535); as it was not commented upon immediately, Constantine brought it up again at *ACO* II.1 p. 174.25–175.29 (1.804–17).

γράφεσθαι)' (*ACO* II.1 p. 173.32–4, 1.792). There is an implicit distinction here between formal pronouncements and informal communication: the former were to be recorded, the latter not. After Basil replied that he did not remember exactly what he had said and reconstructed something different from what Constantine found in the minutes (*ACO* II.1 p. 173.19–31, 1.791), Constantine repeated that that was not contained in the minutes. Basil then admitted having said it but in conversation and not as a declaration (διαλεγόμενος τότε, οὐκ ἀποφαινόμενος), implying that that was the reason why his statement was not recorded (*ACO* II.1 p. 174.9–13, 1.798).[39] This situation recurs several times at the hearings of Constantinople in 449: after the *exceptor* read out a statement of the patrician Florentius ending with 'Speak!', Florentius complained that he said 'Speak!' not as a pronouncement (ὡς διαλαλῶν) but as an exhortation (προτρέπων), evidently implying that that word should not have been put down in the records (*ACO* II.1 p. 171.25–7, 1.772);[40] Florentius brought up the same complaint again about a slightly longer exhortation of his ('I did not say "Speak! If you do not speak, you are deposed" as a pronouncement', *ACO* II.1 p. 172.1–3, 1.776).

The statement of Seleucus of Amaseia that was found in Constantine's version of the minutes but not in the official version was by and large confirmed by the patrician Florentius and by Seleucus himself (*ACO* II.1 p. 173.11–18, 1.789–90); the notary Aetius asked Seleucus if his statement was meant to be included in the minutes, and Florentius followed up on that by asking if Seleucus or anybody else said what needed to be recorded and what did not (*ACO* II.1 p. 173.11–18, 1.799–800); Seleucus remembered having said such things (μέμνημαι εἰρηκὼς τοιαύτας φωνάς) but blamed the failure to record his statement in full on the uproar that followed (*ACO* II.1 p. 174.23–4, 1.803).

So apparently it was not only up to the notaries to work out what was meant as a formal pronouncement and what was ordinary conversation; the attendees could have their say in asking that some utterances be recorded or not. We often come across speakers explicitly asking that some testimonies or written documents be included in the minutes;[41] what is more striking, some

[39] This statement of Basil was discussed also at Second Ephesus (*ACO* II.1 p. 144.28–145.4, 1.546–8) and at Chalcedon (*ACO* II.1 p. 92.18–93.2, 1.168–9).

[40] See Price and Gaddis (2005: I.258 n. 295), following Schwartz (1929: 30).

[41] This especially concerns written documents (all from *ACO* II.1): p. 83.22–3 (1.86) and p. 90.13–15 (1.156) at Second Ephesus; p. 102.22–9 (1.235), p. 104.5–7 (1.238), p. 126.12–16 (1.378–9) at the Resident Synod of 448; p. 147.34–5 (1.554) at Second Ephesus regarding the minutes of the hearings of Constantinople in 449. Sometimes it is also asked that oral testimonies or statements be included in the minutes: p. 137.13–15 (1.457) at the Resident Synod of 448; p. 176.34–6 (1.828),

even asked that their statements be deleted from the minutes. This is the case of the monk Constantine at *ACO* II.1 p. 156.28–157.22 (1.621–8): he first asked that an ill-judged comment of his (1.621) be erased, because he allegedly made it during an uproar without being aware (1.624); his request was not granted: the bishop Seleucus replied that the comment was made in a quiet moment before the uproar (1.625), while Thalassius and Eusebius stated that Constantine could not be selective about his own statements but had to accept all of them (1.627–8). Constantine did not go quietly, and kept on insisting that he said one word during an uproar and that was recorded (*ACO* II.1 p. 158.20–1, 1.639). As a matter of fact, uproars were anything but exceptional at councils;[42] there is evidence that they made it difficult for speakers to express themselves clearly, for listeners to hear and, we must assume, for notaries to take records accurately. For example, when the bishops at the hearings of Constantinople in 449 were asked whether they heard Flavian's statement as found in Constantine's minutes but not in the official minutes (1.805), Basil, Julian and Longinus replied that they could not remember due to the uproar (*ACO* II.1 p. 174.29–175.26, 1.808, 814, 816); when Constantine pointed out that, after his deposition, Eutyches made an appeal that was not recorded in the official minutes (1.818), the patrician Florentius replied that Eutyches said that to him softly (*praōs*) during an uproar after the closing of the synod (1.819), and other bishops stated that they never heard Eutyches say that (*ACO* II.1 p. 175.30–176.10, 1.818–24).

To sum up, we have seen that informal statements were not meant to make it into the records, and they generally did not; however, some did. It is a difficult question whether omissions of informal statements have affected the linguistic representativity of the Acts as a whole by leaving out linguistically marked material. The councils were formal situations with a quite well-defined procedure, and there is some degree of formulaicity in the language of the attendees in certain occasions (e.g. when they express themselves on doctrine). It may be, although it need not be, that informal statements, which have not been recorded, contained more informal linguistic features than formal pronouncements, which have been recorded.

3.2 Alteration and falsification

For the purposes of our investigation, I take Price's category of fiction to include those statements included in the minutes whose wording has been altered

p. 178.29–30 (1.843) and p. 179.7–9 (1.847) at the hearing of Constantinople in 449.

[42] On unruly behaviour at councils, see Whitby (2009).

(deliberately or not) or that have been made up entirely. Surely, while omissions merely reduce the material available for our linguistic analysis, such instances of alteration and falsification would more deeply undermine the value of our corpus as evidence for spoken language; for some statements that we look at as samples of spoken language might have been actually rewritten or written in the first place. Forgery was a hot issue at councils (see Wessel 2001). As a matter of fact, most claims of forgery in the Acts concern omissions, not additions or alterations; this is especially the case with the minutes of the Resident Synod of 448 as examined at the hearings of Constantinople in 449. That is in keeping with Price's (2009: 105) conclusion that 'the category of omission is much more significant than that of fiction'. For example, the patrician Florentius complained that the minutes of the Resident Synod of 448 ascribed to him two sentences that he had never uttered (*ACO* II.1 p. 167.1–6, 1.721; p. 172.11–12, 1.778); in both cases his complaints got the notaries in some trouble, for they prompted Archbishop Flavian of Constantinople to question them insistently about their work (p. 167.6–14, 1.722–5; p. 172.13–23, 1.779–81). Constantine, the monk representing Eutyches, lamented inaccuracies in the minutes a couple of times (*ACO* II.1 p. 156.21–3, 28–30, 1.619, 621), which he took back as soon as he realised that it was counter-productive, and the deacon Eleusinius referred that the minutes did not report in the proper order what had happened (p. 167.19–23 (1.728)). The reading of the first two sessions of the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448 did not spark protests (*ACO* II.1 p. 156.13–18, 1.616–7), and in another couple of cases the representatives of Eutyches had to admit that the minutes were correct (*ACO* II.1 p. 165.3–4, 1.690; p. 166.32, 1.718). At the end of the hearing on the case of Eutyches (13 April 449), the notary Aetius happily concluded that after many readings of the minutes, nobody had found fault with him and the other notaries (*ACO* II.1 p. 176.27–9, 1.827); this did not prevent the notary Asterius from accusing them of having altered certain chapters of the minutes, as the official Macedonius reported (*ACO* II.1 p. 179.1–6, 1.846).

Claims that some statements had been falsified were more frequent at Chalcedon with regard to Second Ephesus. As we have seen in Section 2, Dioscorus controlled the proceedings at Ephesus and it was later alleged that his notaries were in charge of the minutes, while the notaries of those bishops who were not on his side suffered violence and were prevented from taking notes, and those very bishops were forced to put their signatures on blank sheets. It is difficult to say to what extent these claims were truthful and to what extent they were an attempt of some bishops to justify their support for Dioscorus at Ephesus, at a time when it was no longer convenient to be on his side. For example, in

the minutes of Second Ephesus, the bishop Aethericus denies having uttered the statement in support of Flavian that the minutes of the Resident Synod of 448 ascribe to him (*ACO* II.1 p. 118.20–119.4, 1.308–14); at Chalcedon, on the contrary, he claimed that Dioscorus pressurised him to deny that, which prompted Dioscorus to accuse him of calumny (p. 119.15–30, 1.323–9) (cf. Ste. Croix 2006: 308 n. 110).

As the minutes of Second Ephesus were read back, Dioscorus confidently stated that 'the minutes themselves will reveal the truth' (*ACO* II.1 p. 112.6–7, 1.260), but that did not work very well for him. It was especially collective pronouncements that were contested by those bishops who were opposing him at Chalcedon.[43] Here one is reminded of the notary Aetius confessing a notarial 'secret' at the hearing of Constantinople in 449, namely that 'at these most holy gatherings it often happens that one of the most God-beloved bishops present says something and what is said by one is written down and counted as if it was said by everyone alike. This has happened from the beginnings: for example, when one person speaks, we write "The holy council said".' (*ACO* II.1 p. 170.34–7, 1.767). On that occasion, the patrician Florentius picked up on that with a comment to the effect that individual pronouncements recorded in the minutes could be relied upon, but collective pronouncements could not (*ACO* II.1 p. 171.3–4, 1.768; cf. Price and Gaddis 2005: I.257 n. 294). Collective pronouncements and acclamations are very common in the Acts (see Roueché 2009); Aetius' testimony serves as a warning that some of these might have been pronounced by individuals, not by groups – which has consequences both for our historical and for our linguistic appreciation of the Acts.

3.3 Truth

By process of elimination, we could conclude that anything that was recorded in the Acts (i.e. that was not omitted) and was not falsified falls into the category of 'truth'. Of course we do not have enough independent evidence to confirm the veracity of everything that is on record; also, it is certain that falsification was more frequent than we know from the complaints recorded in the Acts.[44] But it is

[43] *ACO* II.1 p. 87.8–9 (1.121); p. 89.22–3 (1.149); p. 140.33–4 (1.496); p. 143.14–19 (1.530).

[44] While in the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon there are recorded complaints about falsification in the minutes of previous gatherings, to my knowledge we lack similar complaints about the proceedings of the Council of Chalcedon itself. Yet one can occasionally find evidence for it, as for example in the suspicious differences between the Greek and Latin versions of the crucial sixteenth session (cf. Price 2009: 100–101).

highly unlikely, or I should say impossible, that most or even much of the content of several hundred pages of Greek text was completely or mostly made up by the notaries.[45] To falsify in their entirety the records of such a sizeable gathering would have been a much more challenging and ultimately less profitable task than to falsify precise sections. Indeed, we have seen in Sections 3.1 and 3.2 that claims of falsification always revolved around single sentences. One may add to this that there is a great deal of realistic elements in the Acts that seem unlikely to have been made up, such as embarrassing dissent and unruly behaviour on the part of the bishops (cf. Whitby 2009 and Price 2009: 94–6); also, interruptions are recorded precisely with explicit captions and sentences left hanging, as in example 1:

(1) *ACO* II.1 p. 155.19–24, 1.604–5
᾽Αέτιος διάκονος καὶ νοτάριος εἶπεν· Εἰ κελεύει ἡ μεγαλοπρέπεια ὑμῶν, ἔχομέν τι εἰπεῖν. ἐμάθομεν ὡς διὰ τῶν δεήσεων ἀνεδίδαξεν ὁ εὐλαβέστατος Εὐτυχὴς πράξει ὑπομνημάτων ἐντετυχηκέναι κἀκεῖθεν τὰς αἰτίας τῶν αὐτῶι προσουσῶν δικαιολογιῶν εὑρηκέναι· ταύτην τὴν πρᾶξιν αξιοῦμεν
Οὗ λέγοντος ὁ μεγαλοπρεπέστατος πατρίκιος εἶπεν· …
Aetius deacon and notary said: 'If your magnificence gives permission, we have something to say. We have heard that through his petition the most devout Eutyches declared that he had read the minutes and found there the grounds for his defence. We ask that this text...'
While he was speaking, the most magnificent patrician said: …

As a rule, of course, verisimilitude is no guarantee of truth; realistic details may be artfully inserted into a forgery so that it does not look like a forgery. But that hardly seems to be the case here, and a healthy scepticism cannot detract from the evidentiary value of the Acts as a historical document.

[45] Famously, this is what Riedinger believed happened at the Lateran Council of 649: in his view, the Acts were composed by Greek monks before the council even took place, and the notaries simply read out the script (including the bishops' statements!) during the sessions (cf. Riedinger 1982: 120). However, Price *et al*. (2014: 64–8) have convincingly showed that, while much of the materials must have been planned in advance, there are some elements of spontaneity in the Acts. At any rate, the Lateran Council was very different from that of Chalcedon, for the latter was much longer and involved a great deal of debate, while the former mostly consisted of long and articulate speeches that were quite obviously read out.

4 The Acts as evidence for spoken Greek

I have shown that the Acts are by and large reliable as far as their content is concerned, although they certainly present some problems of omission and, to a lesser extent, falsification. Now we come to our second question, that of the linguistic reliability of the Acts. How faithfully did the scribes record the speakers' utterances from a linguistic point of view? There are several factors to take into account here, some of which we cannot really control. For example, the notaries' skills and the practicality of their writing supports must have played a role; also, the motivations and attitude of the notaries as well as notarial policies are crucial. We have seen in Section 3 that notarial policies were quite thorough but not absolutely so, for notaries were not normally meant to record informal statements. But in recording formal statements, how did they handle less formal features that frequently occur in the spoken language, such as interjections, pauses, repetitions, syntactic inconsistencies, etc.?[46] And how about nonstandard and/or substandard linguistic features, if any?

4.1 A modern parallel: the records of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom

It may be helpful to look at a crosscultural parallel, the official records of a modern deliberative assembly, to appreciate how this can be done nowadays. We have to take into account that now, unlike in the fifth century, sound recording allows one to check minutes and correct any mistakes that may have been made during the first transcription. Potentially, modern records can be a hundred per cent accurate; this makes it all the more significant when they are not so, for any divergences will be the result of choices and, possibly, policies.

I have chosen an Oral Answers to Questions session of the House of Commons of the United Kingdom (22 February 2016).[47] Here is part of Prime Minister David Cameron's impromptu response to Jeremy Corbyn on Britain's EU referendum (3:57pm). First is my verbatim transcription (2), then the official

[46] A study of such features in Plato's *Apology* is in Verano (2018). For an account of elements of spoken language in Latin texts, see Koch (1995). Koch and Oesterreicher (2011) discuss spoken language in French, Italian and Spanish. More on this in Section 4.3.

[47] A reference to the records of parliamentary proceedings in the UK is in Ste. Croix (2006: 310 n. 114), where some of the challenges of that process are discussed.

transcription (3). I indicate in bold the differences between the two versions:[48]

(2) Verbatim transcription of David Cameron's speech
Well, let me thank the right **honourable** Gentleman for his contribution. **Look, he** and I disagree on many, many things **– about** economic policy, **about** social policy, **about** welfare policy**, indeed we even disagree about** the approach we should take within Europe, as he**'s** just demonstrated in his response **–** but we do **both** agree about one thing, **which is that** Britain should be in there, fighting for a good deal for our country. **Erm erm** I worry a little for **the right honourable Gentleman** ... On what **he** said about the (**uh**) deal, **(erm)** I – **I'm going to** make two points about why **I think actually** he should **really** welcome **the deal**. The first is that **it does actually implement**, **as far as I can see**, almost every pledge on Europe in the Labour manifesto – **and I'm** looking at the former **(erm) leader.**

(3) Official transcription of David Cameron's speech
I thank the right **hon**. Gentleman for his contribution. **He** and I disagree on many, many things – economic policy, social policy, welfare policy **and even** the approach we should take within Europe, as he **has** just demonstrated in his response – but we do agree about one thing**:** Britain should be in there, fighting for a good deal for our country. I worry a little for **him** … On what **the right hon. Gentleman** said about the deal, I **will** make two points about why he should welcome **it**. The first is that, **as far as I can see**, **it implements** almost every pledge on Europe in the Labour manifesto – **I am** looking at the former **Labour leader when I say that.**

As is easy to see, the official transcription is a slightly polished version of Cameron's unprepared speech. It eliminates some typical elements of spoken language such as interjections ('erm erm', 'uh'), phatic expressions ('well', 'look'), contractions ('he's' becomes 'he has', 'I'm' becomes 'I am') and repetitions ('I – I'); it adjusts some inconsistencies and stylistic infelicities that must be due to limited time for elaboration (e.g. 'I'm going to make two points about why I think actually he should really welcome the deal' becomes 'I will make two points about why he should welcome it', where the second 'deal' is replaced with the pronoun 'it' and the emphatic adverbs 'actually' and 'really' are omitted); it makes more

[48] The video of the session is available online on Parliament TV; the official records of the debate are available online in the House of Commons Hansard.

explicit some expressions that in speech depend on the context and possibly on extralinguistic elements like gestures to be fully understood (e.g. 'and I'm looking at the former leader' becomes 'I am looking at the former Labour leader when I say that'); it eliminates emphatic and/or pleonastic expressions (e.g. 'it does actually implement' becomes 'it implements'; 'indeed we even disagree about the approach' becomes 'and even the approach'; 'agree about one thing, which is that Britain' becomes 'agree about one thing: Britain'), and so on.

While we cannot assume the policies of the stenographers of the House of Commons to have universal value, it stands to reason that some aims and attitudes of fifth-century stenographers were similar. First of all, as is quite obvious, the stenographers of church councils, just like those of the House of Commons, were not interested in the language of the debate but in its content and in the legibility of the minutes. So, we cannot expect the degree of faithfulness that we get in modern transcripts of spoken language recorded for linguistic purposes. For example, we do not find evidence on phonology in the minutes: as the Acts are an official text, the notaries applied the same orthographic conventions that they would have applied in any other official text. Likewise, we cannot expect that they would have recorded interjections such as Cameron's 'erm' or 'uh' and very obvious repetitions like Cameron's 'I – I'. Indeed these do not appear in the sample of the Acts that I have examined (see Section 4.2 for the corpus). There is, however, limited evidence for phatic expressions that are typical of real-time communication; that is the case of Eutyches' parenthetic 'did you pay attention?' at the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448 (example 4):

> (4) *ACO* II.1 p. 142.26–8, 1.522
> ἐπειδὴ γὰρ σῶμα θεοῦ αὐτὸ ὁμολογῶ (προσέσχες;), οὐκ εἶπον σῶμα ἀνθρώπου τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ σῶμα …
> for since I acknowledge it to be the body of God (did you pay attention?), I did not say that the body of God is man's body …

As in the case of David Cameron's speech, what we can legitimately expect not to have been dramatically altered is the overall syntactic structure of the sentences – unless it was so broken that a reader could not make sense of it – and the lexicon;[49] for to systematically change that would have been a challenging and

[49] That the Acts can be a source for colloquial lexicon has been pointed out by Ste. Croix (1984: 23–4), who gives the example of *salgamarioi* 'pickle-sellers', a loanword from Latin (*salgamarius*) which was used in a derogatory sense by Diogenes bishop of Cyzicus (*ACO* II.1 p. 411.30–31, 12.56); this term first made it into the Liddell and Scott in the Supplement to the 9th edition in

time-consuming task, and one that would not have really benefited anyone. Here I wish to suggest that, in order to explore the potential of this material as evidence for spoken Greek, we should look first at syntactic structure and complexity on the one hand and at lexicon on the other hand.

4.2 Spoken and written language: our corpus

The features of spoken language are best appreciated by comparison with written language. In order to analyze the differences between spoken and written language in the Acts, I have put together a corpus of spoken statements and written texts produced at the councils. Spoken statements, which are the vast majority in the Acts, consist of utterances that are not presented as having been read out but that are normally introduced by the verb 'to say'; written texts typically include letters, petitions and bills of indictment and are introduced by the verb 'to read out'.

The samples belong to five of the few attendees who both spoke and presented written texts at the councils. Having a spoken and written set for each of them allows us to investigate how one attendee's spoken language differed from that attendee's written language, thus making up for the impact that idiolects might have on the analysis of the corpus as a whole; it also allows us to compare the language of one attendee with the language of all the other attendees. After comparing the language of individual attendees, I shall attempt to produce generalizations based on the whole corpus without differentiating for individual attendees (Section 4.3).

For each attendee, I have selected a sample of spoken statements and one of written texts that are approximately the same in size. Both the spoken and written samples of Anatolius, Eusebius and Eutyches are a little over 600 words, while the samples of the bishops Bassianus and Photius are smaller, for they spoke and wrote much less than the other three. While I could have chosen to set a cut-off size based on the size of the smallest sample, I have preferred to have larger samples whenever possible so as to increase representativity.

I have aimed for consistency between spoken and written statements with regard to communicative situations, for different communicative situations might require different styles and linguistic features; since the written texts are long and elaborate, I have looked for spoken statements that are also fairly

1968, and the only reference given was a Corinthian inscription from the sixth century.

long.[50] Not all attendees delivered long speeches, though: the corpus of Eutyches' oral statements, for example, mostly consists of short answers given during a questioning session. We shall see that different findings correlate with different types of speech. While this detracts from the homogeneity of the corpus as a whole, it also contributes to its diversity and makes it more representative of varieties of actual speech, allowing us to look into different registers. The corpus is represented in Table 2:

Table 2.

Attendee	***Spoken statements***	***Written texts***[51]
Anatolius of Constantinople	**632 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 206.10–13 (2.12), 225.21–5 (3.95), 290.4–10 (4.9.1), 397.21–4 (11.145), 398.32–399.7 (11.162), 410.37–411.10 (12.50), 412.24–8 (13.3), 413.9–14 (13.9), 466.5–11 (19.32), 468.1–6 (19.50)	**631 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 248.5–249.21 (letter to Pope Leo)
Bassianus of Ephesus	**390 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 405.19–406.15 (12.14)	**383 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 409.1–33 (11.7, petition)
Eusebius of Dorylaeum	**633 words:** *ACO* II.1 p. 66.13–17 (1.14), 103.5–104.7 (1.238), 134.11–23 (1.443), 135.1–11 (1.445)	**636 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 66.23–67.17 (1.16, petition), 100.18–101.5 + 101.16–28 (1.225 + 230, bill of indictment)

[50] See Akinnaso (1985: 330–31) for criticism of studies comparing the two most distant discourse types, formal written language and informal spoken language.

[51] In all of the written texts, I have deliberately left out the salutation formulas at the beginning.

Eutyches of Constantinople	**618 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 90.7–12 (1.155), 99.17–22 (1.220), 138.33–4 (1.471), 141.5–7 (1.498), 141.12–13 (1.502), 141.20–24 (1.505), 142.4–6 (1.512), 142.8–10 (1.514), 142.13–15 (1.516), 142.18 (1.518), 142.22 (1.520), 142.26–33 (1.522), 143.1–3 (1.524), 143.10–11 (1.527), 143.32–144.2 (1.535), 144.14–15 (1.540), 144.18–20 (1.542), 144.24–5 (1.544), 147.32–3 (1.553)	**618 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 90.17–91.14 + 92.5–8 + 94.24–95.15 (1.157+ 164+ 185, petition)
Photius of Tyre	**424 words**: *ACO* II.1 p. 291.16–22 (4.9.15), 112.8–10 (4.37), 112.33–6 (4.46), 369.37–9 (9.22), 375.22 (10.10), 377.21–31 (11.22), 462.32–5 (19.3), 464.18–22 (19.10), 465.5–8 (19.18), 465.28–31 (19.24), 465.33 (19.26), 466.17–20 (19.34)	**437 words**: 463.10–464.11 (19.7, petition)

A couple of variables may affect, to a small degree, the homogeneity and reliability of the corpus. First, the samples are taken from records of different gatherings (for example, Eutyches' statements are from the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448, from the hearings of Constantinople in 449, and from Second Ephesus in 449; Photius' statements are all from Chalcedon); as we have already seen in Section 2, records of different gatherings may not be equally reliable.

Second, while most spoken statements were unprepared, for they arose in the course of the debate, there is evidence that some were prepared beforehand in writing, although the minutes do not mention this. That is the case of a testimony of the presbyter John delivered at the Resident Synod of Constantinople in 448; the Acts introduce this with 'John said', but, at the hearings of the next year, John produced the *aide-memoire* (*hypomnestikon*) on which he had based his testimony, and it appears that he had not deviated much from it. Here are a few lines of John's statement at the Resident Synod of Constantinople (5), followed by the corresponding ones from his aide-memoire (6):

(5) *ACO* II.1 p. 124.4–7 (1.359), also read out at p. 159.5–8 (1.643)
Πρώην τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου ἐπισκόπου Εὐσεβίου προσελθόντος ἐν συνεδρίωι τῆι ὑμετέραι ἁγιωσύνηι καὶ αἰτιασαμένου τὸν εὐλαβέστατον πρεσβύτερον καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτην Εὐτυχῆ καὶ βιβλίον ἔγγραφον ἐπιδεδωκότος τὸ καταδηλοῦν νοσεῖν αὐτὸν τὰ τῶν αἱρετικῶν πάθη …
Previously, as the most God-beloved bishop Eusebius appeared at the assembly before your holiness and accused the most devout presbyter and archimandrite Eutyches and had presented a written document declaring that he suffered from the disease of the heretics …

(6) *ACO* II.1 p. 160.34–7 (1.648)
Πρώην τοῦ θεοφιλεστάτου Εὐσεβίου ἐν συνεδρίωι προσελθόντος τῆι ὑμετέραι ἁγιωσύνηι καὶ κατηγορήσαντος Εὐτυχοῦς τοῦ εὐλαβεστάτου πρεσβυτέρου καὶ ἀρχιμανδρίτου καὶ βιβλίον ἐπιδόντος κατ' αὐτοῦ τὸ καταδηλοῦν νοσεῖν αὐτὸν τὰ τῶν αἱρετικῶν πάθη …
Previously, as the most God-beloved Eusebius appeared at the assembly before your holiness and brought an accusation against Eutyches, the most devout presbyter and archimandrite, and presented a document against him declaring that he suffered from the disease of the heretics …

If we had used John's testimony as a sample of spoken language, that would have led us astray. In this case, we are lucky that his aide-memoire is preserved in the minutes; but it is a fair guess that this was not the only time when somebody spoke using notes and the Acts simply tell us that he gave a speech. When we compare spoken utterances and written documents in the Acts, we must take that into consideration.

Third, we cannot be entirely sure that the written texts presented by each attendee were actually written by them; in case somebody helped them with the composition of the speeches, these would not represent their written language faithfully.

As is clear, there are certain challenges to the use of this material as evidence for spoken Greek. However, I should like to argue that we must not be discouraged, for such challenges are not insurmountable; quite the opposite, the findings of the next Section look very promising.

4.3 Spoken and written language: comparison and findings

Researchers of modern languages have identified several differences between spontaneous spoken language and written language (see Miller and Weinert 1998, with bibliography). In what follows, I am going to investigate whether the

same differences can be observed in the samples of spoken and written language from the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon.

As I have said in Section 4.1, I shall concentrate on aspects of syntactic structure and complexity and on lexicon. In this respect, the differences I find most relevant to our analysis are the following: in spontaneous spoken language a smaller quantity of information is assigned to phrases and clauses than in written language; there is less grammatical subordination and more coordination or parataxis, and the clausal constructions are less complex; the vocabulary is less rich; some constructions that occur in spontaneous spoken language do not occur in written language, and *vice versa* (cf. Miller and Weinert 1998: 22–3).

Based on this account, I shall look at the following elements in the spoken and written samples: the average (and maximal) length of the complex sentence, accepting the editorial punctuation;[52] the number of independent and dependent clauses and the ratio between them; the number of different words used (excluding proper names) and the type/token ratio (TTR), an index of lexical diversity obtained dividing the total number of different words by the total number of words. As for the question of constructions that occur only or preferably in either spoken or written language, I am going to look at participial constructions as competing with finite subordinate clauses for temporal, causal, concessive, final and conditional expressions; I have chosen this type of constructions so as to verify the hypothesis that the participial system underwent a formal and functional reduction in the spoken Koine of the Roman period, to the advantage of finite clauses (see Horrocks 2010: 94, 181–2). To this effect, I am going to find out how many participles are used where finite subordinate clauses may have been used, and *vice versa*; I am also going to calculate the percentage of participial constructions within all such subordinates.

In order to ease the comparison between different samples, in the case of independent/dependent clauses and participial constructions/finite subordinate clauses, I have also normalised frequencies based on the word count of the smallest sample (383 words in Bassianus' written petition) and indicated them between brackets; in the case of the number of different words used, on the other hand, I have simply considered the first 383 words of each sample, excluding proper names. The findings are shown in Table 3 (for each of the five attendees

[52] Modern research concludes that 'the sentence is not a useful analytical unit for informal spoken language' (Miller and Weinert 1998: 22); however, it can be used as an analytical unit in the Acts, for the notaries were bound to use the traditional units of written language in taking the records, the Acts being an official written document; it is also to be expected that in a formal occasion such as a council the speakers would have mostly used a formal register.

considered, the left column contains the data from the spoken statements, the right column those from the written statements).

Table 3.

	Anatolius		**Bassianus**		**Eusebius**		**Eutyches**		**Photius**	
	Sp. (632)	Wr. (631)	Sp. (390)	Wr. (383)	Sp. (633)	Wr. (636)	Sp. (618)	Wr. (618)	Sp. (424)	Wr. (437)
Average sentence length (and max.)	31.6 (82)	105.2 (253)	21.7 (47)	34.8 (74)	35.1 (101)	57.8 (133)	17.2 (48)	61.8 (135)	17 (54)	36.4 (118)
Independent clauses (and norm.)	26 (15.7)	13 (7.9)	35 (34.4)	14 (14)	27 (16.3)	14 (8.4)	58 (35.9)	20 (12.4)	36 (32.5)	10 (8.8)
Dependent clauses (and norm.)	50 (30.3)	56 (34)	25 (24.5)	37 (37)	68 (41.1)	61 (36.7)	58 (35.9)	59 (36.6)	33 (29.8)	47 (41.2)
Ratio independent: dependent	1:1.9	1:4.3	1:0.7	1:2.6	1:2.5	1:4.3	1:1	1:2.9	1:0.9	1:4.7
Different words used[53] (and %TTR)	179 (47)	188 (49.1)	146 (30.5)	169 (44.1)	158 (41.2)	176 (45.9)	123 (32.1)	174 (45.4)	157 (41)	178 (46.4)
Participles[54] (and norm.)	9 (5.4)	24 (14.6)	13 (12.8)	13 (13)	15 (9.1)	17 (10.2)	1 (0.6)	23 (14.2)	7 (6.3)	15 (13.1)
Finite subordinates (and norm.)	10 (6.1)	6 (3.6)	2 (2)	4 (4)	3 (1.8)	5 (3)	14 (8.7)	2 (1.2)	3 (2.7)	5 (4.9)
% particip./ sub-ordinates	47.3	80	86.7	76.4	83.4	77.4	6.6	92	69.9	75

As is clear, these figures show that the differences between spoken and written language identified in modern languages can be observed in this material as well:

[53] Based on cut-offs of 383 words, corresponding to the size of the smallest sample (Bassianus' petition).

[54] Among participial constructions, conjunct participles (CP) are more frequent than genitive absolutes (GA) in both spoken and written samples. Anatolius: spoken CP 5, GA 4, written CP 19, GA 5; Bassianus: spoken CP 10, GA 3, written CP 11, GA 2; Eusebius: spoken CP 10, GA 5, written CP 14, GA 3; Eutyches: spoken CP 1, GA 0, written CP 17, GA 6; Photius: spoken CP 6, GA 1, written CP 11, GA 4.

In the samples of each attendee the spoken statements have, on average, shorter sentences than the written statements (e.g. 31.6 *vs* 105.2 words in Anatolius).

The spoken statements have many more independent clauses than the written statements, and somewhat fewer dependent clauses (the only exception being Eusebius' samples); this means that for each independent clause there are fewer dependent clauses in the spoken samples, that is, less subordination (e.g. in the case of Anatolius' spoken statements, there are 1.9 dependent clauses for each independent clause, while in his written statements there are 4.3 dependent clauses for each independent clause).

The lexicon is less rich in all spoken samples: for example, the type/token ratio is 47 per cent in Anatolius' spoken statements as opposed to 49.1 per cent in his written statements, and the gap is higher in the samples of the other attendees (e.g. 30.5 per cent *vs* 44.1 per cent in Bassianus' samples).

Of course, there is a degree of variation across samples of different attendees, which may be due to such factors as different communicative situations, register, idiolect and so on. For example, the average sentence is twice as long in Eusebius' spoken samples as in the spoken samples of his arch-enemy Eutyches (thirty-five and seventeen words, respectively); this must be due to the 'oratorial' character of the statements of Eusebius, who was a trained lawyer, as opposed to the brevity of Eutyches' statements, who was answering charges of heresy and trying to give away as little information as possible, while presenting himself as a humble man with little interest in theological subtleties.[55] To be sure, the sentences in Eusebius' spoken statements are as long on average as in Bassianus' and Photius' written samples. Also, the sentences in Anatolius' letter to Pope Leo are much longer than those of the others (105 words on average, but the longest sentence has as many as 253 words), which might reflect the conventions of letter writing as opposed to those of petitions. The syntax of Eusebius' spoken pronouncements is also more complex, having a ratio of dependent clauses to independent clauses of 2.5 to 1, which is almost as high as that of Bassianus' and Eutyches' written samples (2.6 to 1 and 2.9 to 1, respectively).

On the other hand, the data concerning participles are not as straightforward to interpret: participial constructions are generally preferred to finite subordinates to express temporals, causals and so on, and the figures are similar across spoken

[55] Cf. Willi (2010: 307–8), who compares specimens of oratory, historiography and 'conversational' literature (from Plato's *Gorgias* and Aristophanes' *Clouds*) and finds that sentences are on average shorter in the last.

and written samples. The only major exception is in Eutyches' samples: he uses only one participle as opposed to seventeen finite subordinates in his spoken statements, while using almost exclusively participial constructions in his written texts (twenty-three as opposed to only two finite subordinates). Anatolius and Photius also use participles less frequently in spoken statements than in written texts, although the gap is not as striking as in Eutyches' samples (nine *vs* twenty-four in Anatolius and seven *vs* fifteen in Photius). The figures show that at this time the participle was still alive in the spoken language of educated people at a formal occasion. But how about the case of Eutyches? We have seen in Section 4.2 that most of his spoken statements are short answers given during a questioning session, as opposed, for example, to the long and 'oratorial' pronouncements of his archenemy Eusebius; this might suggest that, if not in spoken language altogether, in a 'conversational' register such as that of Eutyches' answers, the use of participial constructions was somewhat restricted.[56]

Now that we have ascertained that the spoken language of the individual attendees was different from their written language in a way that matches the modern descriptions of spontaneous spoken language, we can go a little further and attempt to produce generalizations by looking at the same parameters based on the whole corpus of spoken and written samples, without differentiating for different attendees. Here I shall calculate the average sentence length based on the whole corpus, as in Table 3; for the average number of independent and dependent clauses, participial constructions and finite subordinates, I shall use the normalised frequencies given in Table 3; for the number of different words used, I shall consider the sum of the cut-offs considered in Table 3.

The figures in Table 4 confirm the findings of Table 3, while also showing that, on average, participial constructions are more frequent in written than in spoken language.

Table 4.

	Spoken	Written
Average sentence length	23	54.1
Independent clauses (normalised)	27	10.3
Dependent clauses (normalised)	32.2	37.1
Ratio independent/dependent cl.	1:1.2	1:3.6

[56] Cf. again Willi (2010: 307–8), who observes a 'more restrictive use of participial phrases' in texts of a 'conversational' character compared to oratory and historiography.

Different words used (and %TTR)	467 (24.4)	588 (30.7)
Participles (normalised)	6.8	12
Finite subordinates (normalised)	4.3	3.3
% participles/subordinates	61.3	78.4

5 Conclusions

In this paper, I have looked at the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, a unique source for the history and language of the mid-fifth century CE. I have focused on the work of notaries in producing the minutes of the Council, and on how their work has shaped the reliability of the Acts as a historical and linguistic document. I have shown that, as far as history is concerned, the Acts are by and large reliable, while also being affected by some degree of omission and, to a lesser extent, falsification. When it comes to language, my preliminary investigation has shown that the Acts prove precious in pinning down features of the Greek spoken by educated men at this time; if one looks at syntactic complexity and lexicon of spoken statements as opposed to originally written passages, one finds the same differences between spoken and written Greek that have been identified in modern languages: spoken Greek had shorter sentences, less complex clausal constructions and a lesser range of vocabulary than written Greek. The samples also suggest that participial constructions, which are believed to be yielding to finite subordinates in the spoken Greek of this time, were still alive in the use of educated people at formal occasions; at the same time, one sample of a more 'conversational' character shows a restricted use of participial constructions to the advantage of finite subordinates. But this is only the beginning of linguistic research into the conciliar Acts, and I am confident that further investigation into the syntax and lexicon of the minutes will greatly contribute to our appreciation of spoken Greek in the fifth century CE.

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