PATRIZIA GIAMPIERI
(UNIVERSITY OF PERUGIA)
ORCID: 0000-0003-4443-1593

PRAGMATICS, USAGES AND TRANSLATIONS
OF *(MA) FIGURATI (SE)*

ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed at exploring the pragmatic usages and English translations of a set of *figurati* phrasemes, such as *ma figurati, figurati se, figurati se non, (no) no figurati,* and *(di) niente figurati.* To do so, three different spoken Italian corpora are consulted, where the meanings and usages in context of the above constructions are analysed in detail. Then, the *figurati* phrases are searched for in Italian-English parallel corpora of film subtitles, where pragmatic meanings and possible translations are brought to the fore.

KEYWORDS: pragmatics, politeness, discourse markers, spoken language, spoken Italian

INTRODUCTION

CONTRASTIVE PHRASEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

A phraseological unit (PU) is a fixed phrase or expression whose sense cannot be inferred by the simple addition of its components because it is culturally driven (Gläser 1998; Fiedler 2007). Fiedler (2007: 28) defines PUs as characterised by "semantic and syntactic stability, and to a great extent by idiomacity".

Gläser (1998) explores how phraseological units are shaped on the basis of the context where they are employed and in respect of a given genre. By doing so, PUs function as intertextual elements conveying particular meanings.

In light of the relevance of such units for communication, scholars have undertaken studies on PUs in translation contexts. Carrying out cross-linguistic phraseology-driven research implies determining the linguistic parameters that are referred to

in the language combination considered (Szerszunowicz 2017). In this way, it is possible to grasp equivalences at unit level. For instance, Dobrovol'skij and Piirainen (2005) frame a host of parameters that can be taken into account in the contrastive analysis of PUs. Amongst others, they discuss semantics, syntax and pragmatics. While focusing on their linguistic framework, the authors pinpoint relevant linguistic elements such as false cognates, synonymy and polysemy (*ibidem*: 68).

Other studies have proposed the categorisation of cross-linguistic equivalents. Dobrovol'skij (2011) proposes a taxonomy of interlingual correspondences by categorising them as absolute, partial, parallel and zero equivalences. Absolute equivalences are those featuring the highest value of cross-linguistic resemblance, whereas zero equivalences are the ones expressing non-equivalence.

Grabowski and Pęzik (2023) carry out a corpus-driven analysis of PUs (referred to as "phraseology markers") and "novelty markers" that are identified in standard expressions marking new phrasings. In their investigation, the authors scrutinise how patterned language is featured in such linguistic elements. The findings indicate that both phraseology markers and novelty markers can be employed to construct standard as well as unusual and unconventional expressions.

THE ITALIAN *FIGURATI*

The Italian expression *figurati* is a pragmatic discourse marker (Pugliese 2015: 173). Pugliese (2015: 163) argues that it is highly idiomatic and very common in spoken conversations. It serves two main purposes: acknowledging a favour (where it means "you're welcome" or "my pleasure"), and rejecting a statement with dubiousness and reluctance (thus meaning "it can't be" or "no way").

Radtke (1985: 292–293) highlights three main features of *figurati*: 1) it is a politeness token used in reply to "thank-you" statements (actually, it is argued to be more polite than the standard expressions *prego* and *di niente*, meaning "you're welcome" or "don't mention it"); 2) it conveys both assent (as in "of course") and dissent (e.g., "of course not") in requests such as "may I come in?" and "does it bother you if I...?", respectively; 3) it is an emphatic response or engagement token showing interest and involvement in the conversation (see also Pugliese 2015: 175).

Spitzer (2021) finds that *figurati* serves the purpose of helping conversation participants imagine an event or a situation. Benincà (1995: 151–152), in fact, associates *figurati* with the verb *immaginati* ("imagine"). Its function is to exhort the interactant to picture something and convene with the speaker on the truthfulness of a statement or concept (Spitzer 2021). In addition, *figurati* is a politeness marker, as it shows assent in replies to questions such as "may I...?", and, at the same time, it manifests an intensified negation when answering requests of the type "do you mind if I...?" (Spitzer 2021).

Schneider (2007) carries out a corpus-driven analysis of Italian parenthetical clauses. Such clauses are framed as groups of words providing extra information,

although not syntactically linked to the structure of the phrase. Therefore, they are not essential. The author addresses the frequencies and pragmatic functions of finites and verb phrases such as *diciamo* ("say", or "let's say"), *credo* ("I believe"), *direi* ("I would say"), and *voglio dire* ("I mean", but literally "I want to say"). Such pragmatic words mostly appear within or at the end of a statement and display engaging functions. Schneider (2007: 80, 86) finds that *figurati* is not as frequent as other reduced parenthetical clauses. Nonetheless, its varied deployments emerge quite distinctively as invitations to cooperate and, amongst others, monitors of the progression of a conversation (Schneider 2007: 110). For these reasons, *figurati* can be considered as an engagement token and a response elicitor overviewing participation in spoken interaction.

According to Kleinknecht (2007: 91), *figurati* is a cognitive verb, similar to *pensa* ("just think"), *fai conto* ("consider"; "take into account"), or *bada* ("mind well"). It also assumes an exhortation role, although it is used less frequently than other imperative verbs. In addition, Kleinknecth (2007: 91) posits that *figurati* is not necessarily addressed to the other conversation participant(s), but, rather, it is often turned inwardly and shows the speaker's ability of self-representation (as in *avevo un anno, figurati*; "I was one year, imagine", or *perché io, figurati, domattina (...) ci ci ripenso*; "because I, picture this, tomorrow morning (…) I'll have second thoughts").

Pugliese (2015: 177) finds that *figurati* serves anaphoric purposes as the discourse marker *appunto* ("exactly"). Namely, it moves the attention to elements of the conversation. It can co-occur with particles such as *ma* ("but"), *no* ("no") and *niente* ("nothing"). In these cases, it reinforces (or changes) its pragmatic functions. Moreover, *figurati* can be followed by evaluation comments or lexical reiterations or re-statements, especially when it is a politeness marker. Examples of such usages are noticed in the phrases *figurati, è sempre un piacere* ("don't mention it, it's always a pleasure"), and *figurati, per così poco* ("don't mention it, it's just a little thing"). Sometimes, *figurati* may express sureness or certainty, meaning "there's nothing to worry about" or "all is under control", as in *è tutto calcolato, figurati* ("everything is thought through, don't worry") (Pugliese 2015: 178). In other circumstances, it is a mitigation device because, amongst others, it softens the impact of some utterances (Giampieri 2025: 75). For these reasons, Pugliese (2015: 177) argues that *figurati* is a multifunctional pragmatic marker.

FILM DIALOGUES

Film dialogues are argued to mirror natural language (Brincat 2000; Petillo 2008; Minutella 2015, 2022; Dore 2016). Brincat (2000: 252) finds that fictional conversations are rich in non-words such as *eh, oh, ehi*, and discourse markers such as *allora* ("then"), *vero*? ("right?"), *davvero*? ("really?"), *sai* ("you know"). They also feature expressions like *va bene* ("all right"), and *ti prego* ("I beg you").

Petillo (2008) corroborates such findings and posits that film conversations are more natural-sounding because of the presence of several discourse markers of the type *be'/bene* ("well"), *ecco* ("now"), *ma* ("but"), etc. Dore (2016) posits that nowadays audiovisual translators resort to popular Italian, and film adaptors use creative language patterns.

For these reasons, it can be argued that exploring the language of films can help make assumptions about real-life language patterning. Minutella (2015, 2022), for example, investigates the (false) Anglicisms that are uttered in the Italian dubbed versions of Anglo-American films. By way of example, the response token "okay" is rendered in a variety of ways, ranging from the most expected ones such as *d'accordo?* ("agreed?") or *va bene?* ("all right?") to marked expressions, such as *ecco* ("now") or *sentite* ("listen") (Minutella 2015: 202, 2022: 45). Likewise, the sharedness marker "you know" is translated with various expressions, encompassing not only the standard *sai (una) cosa* (Freddi 2009: 106–107), but also creative solutions, such as *ascoltami* ("listen to me"), *tranquillo* ("take it easy"), *senti* ("listen up"), or *aspetta* ("wait") (Minutella 2022: 53–55). All such words can be considered as representative of authentic spoken Italian (Giampieri 2025: 189).

AIM OF THE PAPER AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This paper is aimed at exploring the usages and frequencies of *figurati* phrasemes across different corpora of spoken Italian in an attempt to grasp and compare their pragmatic meanings. To do so, constructions such as *ma figurati, figurati se, figurati se non, no figurati,* and *(di) niente figurati* are extracted from spoken Italian corpora where short dialogues and sample phrases are retrieved and analysed. In addition, possible renderings into English are focused on by consulting a parallel corpus of Italian-English film subtitles.

The research questions that this paper wishes to address are the following ones: 1) "What are the different pragmatic values of *figurati* phrasemes?"; 2) "What are the most recurring translations into English of such phrasemes in a parallel corpus of film subtitles?", and 3) "To what extent do the translations mirror the source language pragmatic functions and meanings?".

METHODOLOGY

As mentioned, corpora of spoken Italian are consulted to investigate and scrutinise the meanings, usages and pragmatics of various *figurati* constructions.

The words and phrases addressed in this paper are as follows (literal renderings are reported in brackets): *figurati* ("imagine", or "picture this"), *ma figurati* ("but

imagine"), *figurati se* ("imagine if"), *figurati se non* ("imagine if not", or "imagine if I/you/we don't"), *no figurati* ("no, imagine", or "not at all, guess it"), and *(di) niente figurati* ("not at all, imagine"). Such expressions are searched for in spoken Italian corpora, where their occurrences, usages in context and pragmatic meanings are focused on.

For the purpose of this paper, the Italian corpora consulted are the following ones: the Spoken Italian and Who Speaks Italian (KIParla) (Mauri *et al.* 2019); Corpora Didattici Italiani di Confronto (CorDIC) (Cresti, Panuzzi 2013), and the Perugia Corpus (PEC) (Spina 2014). The KIParla corpus comprises spoken interactions with more than 150 hours of conversations that were recorded, amongst others, in the cities of Bologna and Turin. It is composed of 1,385,219 words. The CorDIC and PEC comprehend a written and a spoken section. The spoken sub-corpus of the CorDIC contains 746,753 words and is composed of the transcriptions of a spontaneous speech corpus collected at the LABLITA (the Italian Linguistic Laboratory of the University of Florence). The spoken sub-corpus of the PEC consists of already existing spoken corpora such as the LIP (De Mauro *et al.* 1993), the Italian section of the Saccodeyl (Pérez-Paredes, Alcaraz-Calero 2007) and extracts of the CLIPS (Albano Leoni 2007). It comprises 2,158,555 words. The frequencies of the *figurati* constructions are calculated per million words.

As already indicated, the *figurati* phrasemes are also searched for in Italian-English parallel corpora of film subtitles. The corpora in question belong to the Open Subtitles 2018 project (Tiedemann 2012), which contains a collection of original and translated movie subtitles retrieved from the opensubtitles.org database. The Italian section is composed of 431,415,848 words. The *figurati* phrases above are queried in the Italian-English parallel sections where English equivalents are noted. In this way, it is possible to ascertain the usages and pragmatic functions of the English counterparts of the various *figurati* expressions, at least in film subtitling.

ANALYSIS

This section carries out a small-scale quantitative and qualitative analysis of the *figurati* constructions reported above. The first sub-section discusses the frequencies of such expressions in the three spoken Italian corpora (i.e., KIParla, CorDIC and PEC). As mentioned, frequencies are calculated per million words. Sample phrases and short dialogues are extracted from the three corpora in order to grasp usages and pragmatic meanings. The second sub-section addresses possible English translations and equivalents of the *figurati* phrasemes. To do so, the constructions are searched for in the Italian-English Open Subtitles 2018 parallel corpora, and the English counterparts are explored. Sample phrases are displayed in order to understand the pragmatic functions of the English expressions.

FREQUENCIES OF THE *FIGURATI* EXPRESSIONS

The frequencies of the various *figurati* phrasemes in the three corpora are shown in Table 1. The most frequent expressions per corpus are marked in bold.

Table 1. Frequencies per million words of the *figurati* expressions across the three corpora

Figurati phrasemes	KIParla	CorDIC	PEC
Figurati	**90.96**	28.10	52.35
Ma figurati	**15.16**	0.00	13.43
Figurati se	**9.38**	2.70	5.56
Figurati se non	0.22	0.00	**0.93**
No figurati	**5.05**	2.70	3.24
(Di) Niente figurati	**1.44**	1.30	0.46

As can be observed, all constructions (with the exception of *figurati se non*) are more frequent in KIParla. Conversely, CorDIC features the lowest frequencies of all phrasemes. In this corpus, *figurati se* and *no figurati* are the most recurrent, albeit with low frequencies. In addition, apart from *figurati*, the most frequent expressions in both KIParla and PEC are *ma figurati* and *figurati se*.

CORPUS-DRIVEN SAMPLE PHRASES AND DIALOGUES

This section reports and analyses some sample phrases and short dialogues retrieved from the three Italian corpora. In this way, the pragmatic functions of the *figurati* expressions are investigated in detail. Table 2 exhibits dialogue extracts with the word *figurati* written in bold. Back-translations are provided.

In line 1 and line 2, *figurati* means "guess what" or "picture this", but it is actually addressed inwardly (Kleinknecht 2007: 91). Therefore, it is a self-representation token, i.e., a linguistic tool for introspective analyses or argumentations. Conversely, in line 3, *figurati* is used as a sharedness marker, as the speaker is seeking consent on the fact that the final intercontinental cup was a down-in-history event. For this reason, *figurati* can be translated as "imagine" or "you know".

Table 3 reports corpus-driven dialogues featuring *ma figurati*. In the language samples above, *ma figurati* expresses politeness (Brown and Levinson 1987) and can be translated as "there's no problem", "sure", or "certainly". In particular, in lines 1 and 2 it functions as a negative politeness token as it remarks differences between conversation participants. In line 1, a granddad did not take his grandchild to some place, but this was not an issue for the grandchild. In line 2, the guest is

Table 2. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues with the word *figurati*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*È stata una delle nostre prime uscite **figurati** mi ricordo mi ricordo perché c'è stato il periodo che io la gente quando non sapevo dove portarla la portavo da Pino.*	It was one of our first dates, **picture this** I remember I remember because there was a time that I the people when I didn't know where to take them I took them to Pino's.
2	*Allora te vai a lavorare stamani o stasera io **figurati** vado a fare l'esame di stato.*	So you are going to work this morning or this evening; **guess what**, I am going to take the state certification exam.
3	*A: Il giorno che c'era la finale della coppa intercontinentale tra Estudiantes e Barcelona.* *B: Che riferimento.* *A: Sì eh sì no perché **figurati** una roba una roba storica.*	A: The day that there was the final intercontinental cup Estudiantes vs Barcelona. B: What a reference. A: Yeah, hum, yeah, no because, **imagine/ you know**, go-down-in-history down-in-history stuff.

Table 3. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues with the phraseme *ma figurati*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*A: Mi dispiace se no ti accompagnavo io.* *B: (...) Nonno **ma figurati** ma io te l'ho detto ci metto pochissimo.*	A: I am sorry otherwise I would have taken [lit.: I took] you [there]. B: (…) Grandpa **come on/there's no problem.** I told you it'll take me very little time.
2	*A: Ma volete un piatto?* *B: No.* *A: Sicuri? Va bene, okay.* *B: Non serve a niente, prometto che non sporco.* *A: No ma no puoi sporcare **ma figurati** puoi sporcare.*	A: Do you want a plate? B: No. A: Sure? All right, okay. B: I don't need it, I promise I won't dirty up. A: No you can dirty up **come on/there's no issue**, you can dirty up.
3	*A: Che dobbiamo fare eh taxi?* *B: Eh eh sì XX taxi troppo cari i taxi.* *A: **Ma figurati** anche io non ho la macchina non si prende il taxi.*	A: What shall we do, uh? Taxi? B: Erm erm yeah XX taxi, too expensive taxis. A: **Sure/certainly** me too I don't have a car, we won't take a taxi.

excused from dirtying up the host's place. By contrast, in line 3 *ma figurati* is a positive politeness marker, as it fosters camaraderie and in-group membership. In particular, both interactants are not willing to take a taxi because it is too expensive, although they do not own a car. Table 4 displays dialogues with the expression (*ma*) *figurati se*.

Table 4. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues
with the phraseme *(ma) figurati se*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*Devi vedere se c'è la persona di turno se ci sta il bus disponibile se c'hai il pieno e tutto quindi **figurati se** se in un'ora e mezza arrivano.*	You must see whether there's a person doing the shift if the bus is available, if it has a full tank and everything so **there's no way** for them to be here in an hour.
2	*No, ma è vero, **ma figurati se** io... **ma figurati se** posso negare la direzione di Pieri in Bologna–Juventus.*	No, but it's true, **there's no way** for me... **there's no way** for me to deny Pieri refereeing the Bologna-Juventus match.
3	*A: Credo che ne piglino diciotto e poi ne tagliano dodici quindi è più probabile che ti taglino capito?* *B: Cioè e poi e e e Rossi mi dice cose **ma figurati se** entri alla prima selezione.*	A: I think they'll take eighteen and then they'll cut down twelve so it's more likely that they'll cut you out, got it? B: Well, and then and and Rossi tells me stuff [like] **it would be weird/strange** for you to pass the first selection.

The construction *(ma) figurati se* introduces negative or pessimistic evaluations or speculations. It relates to something that would be rather difficult or odd to attain or obtain. In this sense, it is a justification tool. Moreover, it is a negative politeness token, as it reinforces divisions and addresses negative face wants. Therefore, the translations of *(ma) figurati se* can be "there's no way for... to..." or "it would be weird/strange for... to...". Table 5 analyses *figurati se* further and considers *figurati se non*.

Table 5. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues with the phraseme *figurati se non*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*E grazie al cazzo son tutti figli di papà **figurati se non** si bruciano cinquecento euro per venire in Italia.*	No shit, they're all daddy's boys **it's obvious that** they'll burn five hundred euros to come to Italy.
2	*Nel dentro i fascicoli c'è tutto lo immagino cioè vita vita morte e miracoli e anche altro lo immagino quindi **figurati se non** c'è scritto una cosa del genere.*	In inside the folders there's everything, I imagine, I mean, life life death and miracles and more, I imagine therefore there's **surely** something like this written.

Table 5 clearly shows that *figurati se non* is deployed to state the obvious and anticipate something that can be taken for granted. It does not necessarily introduce a negative stance, but it expresses the certainty for something to happen from the speaker's perspective. Its translations can be "it's obvious that" and "surely". Table 6 focuses on *no figurati*.

Table 6. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues with the phraseme *no figurati*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*A: Dovrei dire più cose?* *B: **No no figurati** quello che vuoi.*	A: Should I ask for more? B: **No, no, there's no problem**, whatever you want.
2	*A: Grazie a lei.* *B: **No no figurati**, adesso la cerchiamo.*	A: Thanks to you. B: **Don't don't mention it**, now we're looking for it.
3	*A: Pronto Stefania mh ciao ciao ti disturbo?* *B: **No figurati.***	A: Hello Stefania, hum, hi, hi, am I bothering you? B: **Not at all**.
4	*A: Ti chiedo scusa.* *B: **No figurati.***	A: I apologize. B: **Don't worry.**

The data reported in Table 6 leaves no room for misinterpretation: *(no) no figurati* is a response token in either positive or negative politeness situations. It can reinforce bondages (as in line 1 and line 2) and show emphatic helping attitudes. Alternatively, it addresses negative face wants (as in line 3 and 4) and it deals with boundaries when denying annoyance (line 3), or when accepting apologies (line 4). For these reasons, it may be translated as "there's no problem", "don't mention it", "not at all", and "don't worry". Table 7 addresses *(di) niente figurati*.

Table 7. Corpus-sourced sample phrases and short dialogues with the phraseme *(di) niente figurati*

No.	Dialogue extracts	Back-translations
1	*A: Allora intanto grazie.* *B: **Niente figurati**.*	A: So thanks for now. B: **Not at all/Don't mention it**.
2	*A: Okay grazie mille eh molto gentile.* *B: **Di niente niente figurati**.*	A: Okay thanks a lot uh, very kind. B: **Not at all at all**.
3	*A: Sì grazie della disponibilità* *B: **Niente figurati** tu hai il mio numero sì sì te l'ho dato quindi chiamami.*	A: Yes, thank you for your availability. B: **You're welcome**, you've got my number, yeah, yeah, I gave it to you, so call me.

As can be observed, *(di) niente figurati* is a response token replying to a "thank-you" statement. Therefore, its most likely translations are "not at all", "don't mention it", and "you're welcome".

ENGLISH EQUIVALENTS OF THE *FIGURATI* EXPRESSIONS

This section delves into an evaluation of the translations into English of the above *figurati* phrasemes when sourced from parallel corpora of film subtitles. Equivalent expressions are retrieved from the Italian-English Open Subtitles 2018 corpora. Meanings and pragmatic functions are focused on and compared with the ones of the corresponding Italian constructions analysed above. The tables that follow show the English equivalents (listed in alphabetical order) and corpus-driven sample phrases or dialogues displaying both the Italian and the English versions. The symbol "<" indicates a new conversation turn. Table 8 deals with the English equivalents of *ma figurati*.

Table 8. English equivalents of *ma figurati* in the Open Subtitles parallel corpora

No.	English constructions	Corpus-driven sample phrases
1	Any time; it's/that's all right; no problem; not at all; you bet	*1) Grazie per il tuo aiuto, Ed. Davvero. <**Ma figurati**, Al.* Thanks for your help, Ed. We appreciate it. <**Any time**, Al. *2) Non so come ringraziarla signore. <**Ma figurati**.* I don't know how to thank you, sir. <**It's all right**, my boy. *3) Ti ringrazio molto. <**Ma figurati**.* Thank you so much. <**No problem**. *4) Scusami se inavvertitamente mi sono introdotto. <**Ma figurati**.* You must excuse me for unknowingly intruding. <**Not at all**! *5) Grazie. <**Ma figurati**.* Thanks. <**You bet**!
2	Come on [meaning: "that's not true"]	*Melinda era la più corteggiata. <**Ma figurati** (...) Era Laurel la prima donna del gruppo.* Melinda was the fast, advanced one. <**Come on** (…) Laurel was the star of our group.
3	No way	*John Nolan? John O'Connor? <**Ma figurati**, José.* John Nolan? John O'Connor? <**No way**, Josè.
4	(Oh) Please [meaning: "come on"; "don't speak nonsense"]	*1) Quindi neanche tu hai mai detto ai tuoi genitori che eri gay? <**Ma figurati**, lo sapevano.* So you never told your parents you were gay either? <**Oh, please**, they knew. *2) Non è un esperimento scientifico, tesoro, questa è roba seria. <**Ma figurati**, credi che non riesca a farlo?* This isn't a science project, honey. This is business. <**Please**. You think I can't handle it?
5	Of course (not)	*Lei sta ridendo. <No. Di me. <No, **ma figurati**.* You are laughing. <No. At me. <No, **of course not**.

It is striking that the pragmatic meanings and usages of *ma figurati* and its English translations are varied and embrace several functions and situations. In line 1, for instance, *ma figurati* and the related equivalents (i.e., "any time", "it's/that's all right", "no problem", "not at all", and "you bet") are evidently polite response tokens replying to thank-yous or apologies. In line 2, *ma figurati* and "come on" are used as negative response tokens, which actually signify "that's not true" or, more informally, "don't talk nonsense". In line 3, such a stance is reinforced by the expression "no way", whereas in line 4, "(oh) please" is another (more polite) way to say that the interactant is talking nonsense. The same intention is conveyed in line 5, where "of course not" reinforces the speaker's stance. As a whole, *ma figurati* and its English equivalents are deployed as negative stances and politeness markers. Namely, they stress boundaries and/or remark differences (either conceptual or practical) among conversation participants. Table 9 addresses *figurati se* and its corpus-sourced English counterparts.

Table 9. English equivalents of *figurati se* in the Open Subtitles parallel corpora

No.	English constructions	Corpus-driven sample phrases
1	As if + subj. + would + verb	***Figurati se*** *questo mi tira su.* **As if** this guy would pick me up.
2	Imagine (+ noun/pronoun) + gerund	*1)* ***Figurati se*** *veniamo sull'Himalaia per scalare qualcosa!* **Imagine** coming to the Himalayas and actually climbing; *2)* ***Figurati se*** *riuscirebbe a superare le prove fisiche.* **Imagine** him trying to pass the physical!
3	Imagine if + subj. + finite	***Figurati se*** *quella sa cantare.* **Imagine if** she knows how to sing.
4	Not at all	***Figurati se*** *è una fibbia.* A buckle, **not at all**!
5	Of course + subj. + neg. verb	***Figurati se*** *è vero.* **Of course** it's **not** true
6	Subj. + don't/doesn't really + verb	***Figurati se*** *ascolto quello che mi dicono gli amici.* I **don't really** listen to what my friends say.

As observable, equivalents of *figurati se* mostly revolve around the imperative "imagine" followed by either a pronoun or a verb (see line 2 and line 3). The expressions "not at all" and "of course (not)" come again to the fore (see line 4 and line 5). The former, however, serves a different pragmatic function from the one seen in Table 8. The phraseme "not at all", in fact, is not used as a marker of politeness in reply to thank-you statements, but as a stance device. In this way, it can be assimilated to assertions foregrounding "of course (not)" (line 5) and "as if" (line 1). Such statements express a negative assumption or stance (i.e., "it's impossible for... to..."). Table 10 deals with *figurati se non* and its English equivalents retrieved from the parallel corpora.

Table 10. English equivalents of *figurati se non* in the Open Subtitles parallel corpora

No.	English constructions	Corpus-driven sample phrases
1	Here we go	***Figurati se non*** *se la prendeva con noi.* **Here we go**, always blaming us.
2	I knew + subj. + would	*Perché non chiedi a Trey Anastasio cosa ne pensa delle mie corde vocali? <**Figurati se non** la tiravi fuori, bastardo!* Why don't you ask Trey Anastasio about my pipes? <**I knew you would** go there, you son of a bitch!
3	It's clear	***Figurati se non*** *te ne importava, allora.* **It's clear** how much you care.
4	Of course + subj. + verb	***Figurati se non*** *tardavano.* **Of course** they're late.
5	Subj. + be + sure	***Figurati se non*** *l'ha detto.* **I'm sure** he did.
6	Subj. + can certainly	***Figurati se non*** *trovavo il biglietto da visita di Danny Wright.* **I can certainly** find Danny Wright's card in my addressbook.

It is evident that in film subtitles, *figurati se non* and its English translations are used to take a stance (either positive or negative) and confirm the speaker's opinions or views. All the English phrases, in fact, are aimed at confirming the speaker's perspective, such as "here we go" (meaning "as usual"); "I knew you would", "it's clear", "of course", "I'm sure", and "I can certainly". Table 11 exhibits data regarding *no figurati*.

Table 11 highlights that *no figurati* is a polite response token (i.e., "it's fine", line 1) replying to apologies. Alternatively, it softly expresses sympathy. More precisely, it shows that the speaker's opinion is in line with the listener's view or feelings. In line 1, the speaker adds evaluation comments such as *anch'io avevo voglia di parlarti* (literally: "I wanted to talk to you too"). In line 2, the speaker reinforces the other interactant's negation (*è Hank che non li vuole*, "does Hank not want?"). In line 3, *no figurati* ("of course") endorses *anche io sono sua figlia* ("I'm his daughter too"). Table 12 addresses *(di) niente figurati* and its English translations.

It is observable that *(di) niente figurati* is a response token featuring replies to apologies (line 1) or standard thank-you statements (line 2).

For reasons of space it is not possible to account for the several translations of the word *figurati* emerging from the Open Subtitles 2018 corpora. Indeed, there are too many different usages and pragmatic functions served by its English counterparts. It may suffice to mention a few equivalents, such as the following ones (in

Table 11. English equivalents of *no figurati* in the Open Subtitles parallel corpora

No.	English constructions	Corpus-driven sample phrases
1	It's fine	*Scusami se ti ho disturbato. <**No figurati**, anch'io avevo voglia di parlarti.* Sorry for coming so suddenly. <**It's fine**, I wanted to talk about today anyway.
2	No (no)	*È Hank che non li vuole... <Oh, no, no, no. Oddio, **no figurati**.* Does Hank not want...? <Oh, no, no, no. Oh, God. **No. No**.
3	Yes (of course)	*Io e il mio psicanalista abbiamo deciso che sarebbe stato peggio se non fossi venuta. Perché anche io sono sua figlia, va bene? <Chiaro. **No figurati**.* Yes, but I and my therapist agreed that it would be worse if I didn't come. Cause I'm his daughter too, is that clear? <**Yes... Of course**...

Table 12. English equivalents of *(di) niente figurati* in the Open Subtitles parallel corpora

No.	English constructions	Corpus-driven sample phrases
1	It's okay	*Scusami, scusami tanto. Cioè... <**Niente figurati**, mi è abbastanza piaciuto.* Sorry, I'm so sorry. <**It's okay**, I kind of liked it.
2	You're (very) welcome	*Grazie. <**Di niente**, figurati.* Thanks. <**You're very welcome**.

alphabetical order): "forget it", "imagine", "of course (not)", "I wouldn't", "that's all right", "well", and "you bet". As can be seen, an array of responses and engagement tokens come to the fore, together with stance devices and politeness markers.

DISCUSSION AND COMPARISON OF DATA

The analysis of *figurati* (as a stand-alone word) in the Italian corpora brought to the fore the fact that it can be used as a self-representation token and a sharedness marker. In the former case, *figurati* is deployed to reflect on the facts or events of one's life. In the latter, *figurati* is uttered to seek consent from conversation participants. In both cases, its most consistent renderings in English are "picture this", "guess what", "imagine", and "you know".

The considerations on the English equivalents sourced from the film subtitles corpora reveal several pragmatic usages of *figurati* and its translations. For example,

it can function as response and engagement tokens, as well as stance and politeness markers. Sample translations sourced from the film subtitles parallel corpora are "forget it", "imagine", "of course (not)", "I wouldn't", "that's all right", "well", and "you bet".

The examination of *ma figurati* in the spoken Italian corpora has evidenced that it can serve as a positive and negative politeness marker. In the first case, it fosters in-group memberships, whereas in the latter, it remarks differences among conversation participants. English renderings of *ma figurati* are "there's no problem", "sure", and "certainly". The analysis of the film subtitles parallel corpora, conversely, has foregrounded other functions and possible translations. For example, *ma figurati* appears as a response token in thank-you statements; hence, it is translated as "any time", "it's/that's all right", "no problem", "not at all", and "you bet". Additionally, *ma figurati* is used to detach oneself from the other conversation participants' opinions, thereby meaning "come one, that's not possible/true". This (negative) stance is also found in other sample situations, where *ma figurati* is translated as "no way", "(oh) please (don't speak nonsense)" and "of course (not)". Consequently, such pragmatic usages underscore that *ma figurati* and its translations mainly function as negative stances and politeness markers stressing differences among interactants.

In the Italian corpora, the phraseme *(ma) figurati se* conveys pessimistic evaluations or speculations about the difficulty or oddity of (obtaining) something. Therefore, it functions as a negative stance token and negative politeness marker reinforcing negative face wants. Possible translations could be "there's no way for... to...", and "it would be weird/strange for... to...". The analysis of *figurati se* in the film subtitles parallel corpora confirms the above pragmatic meanings, although with more varied English expressions, such as "imagine (if)", "not at all", "of course not", and "I don't really + verb".

In the spoken Italian corpora, the phrase *figurati se non* appears as a stance token with which the speaker asserts certainty over a fact. Therefore, its most consistent translations are "it's obvious that" or "surely". The analysis of the parallel corpora confirms that *figurati se non* and its renderings express positive and negative stances and the certainty of something to happen, according to the speaker's view. There is a wide variety of English synonymous phrases in this regard, such as "I knew you would", "it's clear (how)", "of course", "I'm sure", and "I can certainly".

The phraseme *(no) no figurati* emerges as a polite response token in situations where the other conversation participant apologises or thanks. Therefore, in the spoken Italian corpora it is employed to reinforce bondages (where it functions as a positive politeness marker), or to remark differences (thus serving as a negative politeness token). Its translations can be "there's no problem", "don't mention it", "not at all", and "don't worry". The same functions emerge from the analysis of the parallel corpora, where *no figurati* and its translations are used as response tokens. In the language samples extracted, however, such phrasemes mostly express sympathy

towards the other interactant, thereby conveying positive politeness. Corpus-sourced possible renderings are "it's fine" and "yes, of course".

Finally, the expression *(di) niente figurati* mostly appears in reply to "thank-you" statements in the Italian corpora. Therefore, its translations can be "not at all", "don't mention it" and "you're welcome". In the parallel corpora, conversely, *(di) niente figurati* and its English equivalents reply to both thank-yous and apologies. Hence, translations can either be "you're welcome" (as in the first case) or "it's okay" (as in the second case).

CONCLUSIONS

The analyses highlighted several pragmatic usages of the various *figurati* phrasemes and their English renderings. The examination of the spoken Italian corpora revealed a number of functions and purposes, ranging from politeness and stance markers to response tokens. The investigation of the English equivalents allowed the identification of further functions and facilitated the comprehension of the various purposes of the *figurati* phrasemes. Most of the times, the pragmatic meanings emerging from the Italian corpora were confirmed during the analysis of the parallel corpora. This was the case, for instance, of *figurati se* functioning as a negative stance and politeness marker across all corpora. The phrase *figurati se non* was another stance token asserting the speaker's certainty over some facts in both the Italian and the parallel corpora. Additionally, *no figurati* was used as a polite response token in all the language patterns analysed. Conversely, some discrepancies between the spoken Italian and the film subtitles parallel corpora were found with regard to *ma figurati*. Such a phraseme functioned as a positive and negative politeness marker in the first set of corpora, whereas it served various purposes in the latter. In the parallel corpora, in fact, *ma figurati* and its English translations appeared as response tokens to thank-yous, or as negative stance markers.

Another case in point was the word *figurati*, which was mainly used as a self-representation and introspective token, or as a sharedness marker in the Italian corpora, whereas it served various purposes in the film subtitles corpora.

This paper confirms that *figurati* phrasemes are multifunctional (Pugliese 2015) and perform a wide variety of pragmatic functions. For these reasons, the translations into a second language can be varied and numerous.

The questions that this paper wished to address were the following ones: 1) "What are the different pragmatic values of *figurati* phrasemes?"; 2) "What are the most recurring translations into English of such phrasemes in a parallel corpus of film subtitles?", and 3) "To what extent do the translations mirror the source language pragmatic functions and meanings?". The first question has already been answered: *figurati* constructions can serve different purposes, ranging from addressing positive or negative face wants to expressing stances. In reply to the second

question, it can be stated that there is an array of possible translation options, which this paper brought to the fore in the tables above. The third and last question can be answered by asserting that there is a certain congruity in the results obtained in the two languages. Most of the times, as mentioned, meanings and pragmatic usages coincided, although the English renderings were more varied. Such a variety, however, could be due to the multifunctional values of the *figurati* phrasemes.

The limits of this paper lie in the fact that only a few sample phrases and/or sample dialogues per phraseme were extracted from the Italian and parallel corpora. Generating more dialogues, for example, could have allowed the retrieval and analysis of more *figurati* phrasemes. This would have permitted the understanding of wider pragmatic functions and, possibly, the generalisation of the findings.

Future analyses could explore this possibility and focus on a larger number of dialogues. In this way, some of the differences between the Italian and English pragmatic usages could be better scrutinised. Alternatively, further research could focus on other language pairs or other spoken corpora, such as the medical ones, with interactions between physicians and patients.

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