Chapter 6 A linguistic description of Lingua Franca

Lingua Franca defiantly resists neat categorisation. In part because of the limited corpus, and the potential unreliability of some sources, as well as the lack of written record of a now extinct language, Lingua Franca cannot be definitively termed a pidgin, koine, foreigner talk or L2. Depending on the source, his or her native language(s) and, to a lesser extent, interlocutor (that is, the individual speaking Lingua Franca), what was being spoken could also be regarded as any one of these discrete terms. As such, Romance language speakers might view Lingua Franca as a corrupt version or L2 of their own language, or possibly a koine. Others, unfamiliar with Romance lexicon might consider it a more independent and stable language, even a pidgin. Some sources cited in Chapter 4, including Thédenat (1948), give weight to the L2 argument, and this is further substantiated by Lingua Franca's geographic variation. Algiers' proximity to Spain is reflected in the more Spanish bent to the Lingua Franca spoken there, while the Italian lexical bias is stronger in Tunis and Tripoli (both geographically and commercially closer to Italy).

The paucity of the corpus is echoed in the scant lexical and grammatical record of Lingua Franca, the single text (the *Dictionnaire* of 1830) published specifically to be a manual for French colonising forces rather than as a documentation of the language *per se*. Nevertheless the range of sources, over time and space, and the repeated references to Lingua Franca being spoken as an alternative to more standard Romance, and especially Italian (Broughton 1839; Frank 1850), suggest that it may have been more than just L2 Italian. The extent of variation means that it might be more appropriate to think in terms of Linguas Francas, that there were multiple variants on a continuum ranging from a stable and extensive pidgin to ad hoc and improvised L2 (Mori 2016: 26; Minervini 1996: 241-3).

The following sections in this chapter are an attempt to provide, as comprehensively as possible, a descriptive grammar for Lingua Franca, while Chapter 7 offers a lexical analysis, based on the corpus and the *Dictionnaire* (1830).

6.1 A descriptive grammar of Lingua Franca

The limited corpus of Lingua Franca, both in word count and its repetitive quality, makes a descriptive grammar challenging. Additionally, Lingua Franca shares several key grammatical features of the predominantly Venetian northern Italian dialects, particularly the choice of the oblique or tonic form for the subject pronouns *mi/ti* vs. *io/tu* 'I/ you', making it difficult to definitively establish whether certain elements constitute Lingua Franca. However, there appear to be specific features that recur across sources such as, phonologically, the Arabic-influenced vowel space. Consistent morphological features include the almost ubiquitous employment of the infinitive to indicate both present tense and imperative forms of the verb. This is how stylistically and lexically Lingua Franca stands most apart from its lexifiers, and the plurality of Romance languages and dialects that flourished in Barbary during the period of remote Ottoman sovereignty.

6.1.1 Phonology

Lingua Franca's phonology exhibits variation. As already discussed in Chapter 4, the fact that differences between, and even within, sources may be attributable to a lack of standardized orthography, as well as idiolectal reasons, makes the identification of a definitive phonemic inventory both difficult, and at times, inconclusive. Overall, Lingua Franca follows Romance, and predominantly Italian, though with elements of Venetian and Spanish, phonology; however, in terms of the language's vowels, Arabic appears to exert influence. This is evident from one of the very the early documentary sources, Haedo (1612). Minervini (1996: 263-4) comments that although Haedo's

account is rife with variation and apparent orthographic discrepancies, they are fewer than one might expect given his own criticism of *la mala pronunciacion de los moros y turcos* 'the poor pronunciation [of Lingua Franca] by the Turks and Moors' (Haedo 1612: 24). Many commentators refer to Arab elites speaking Lingua Franca. According to Cifoletti (2004), despite or perhaps because of its intended French audience and their need to understand as well as speak, to the indigenous population, the *Dictionnaire* (1830) manifests Arabic influence on pronunciation: *bonou* from the Italian *buono* 'good' evidences a de-diphthongisation of the *uo*, while *gratzia* alters the final vowel of Italian *grazie* 'thank you' to *a*. This is part of a general tendency to limit the vowels of Lingua Franca to the Arabophone three-vowel system. Despite the potential variation of Arabic dialects, the 3 principal vowels /a:/, /i:/ and /u:/ would have been familiar to all Arabic speakers (Cifoletti 2004: 34). Renaudot (1718), the French 17th century linguist, offers the following explanation of vowel phonetics in the region:

> 'Whenever the *u* occurs in eastern names it is to be
> pronounced nearly like the diphthong *ou*, or rather *oo*, as
> in moon: the *i* is to be pronounced as *ee: the* a and the *o*
> must in general be pronounced a little more open than as
> in English, but not quite so broad as in French' (Renaudot
> 1718: Preface xxxv; translated by Tully).

In the *Dictionnaire* (1830) there are many Romance-derived words where within the word the *e* is replaced by *o* or *u*, while a word-final –*a* works in place of –*e* because in several Arabic dialects the final –*a* is pronounced as a [e]- hence *scoura* from *scure* 'axe' or *gratzia* 'grazie'. By contrast, where the sound is a long –*e* sound as in *sempre* 'always 'or *grande* 'big', one finds *sempri* and *grandi*. (Cifoletti 2004: 36). Bergareche (1993) concurs, citing the Lingua Franca words, *mouchou* 'much, many', *poudir*,'can, to be able' *inglis* 'English' with their roots in Spanish (*mucho*, *poder*, *ingles*) as evidence of the smaller Arabic vowel space (Bergareche 1993: 444). Verb endings in the *Dictionnaire*

(1830) and the corpus are exclusively *–ar* or *–ir*, as identified by Schuchardt (Schuchardt 1909, trans. 1980: 83), in contrast to the more typical *–er* ending found across Romance languages. As such, *désirer* 'to desire' which would be rendered as *desidere* in Italian, is translated as *desiderar* or *desirar* (or *quérir*) and *écrire* 'to write' is *scrivir* in Lingua Franca rather than *scrivere* as it would be in Italian (*Dictionnaire* 1830: 27, 29). This conforms to the Arabised phonology of Lingua Franca. Equally, where there would be diphthongs in Italian and Spanish (*uovo* 'egg', *duole* 'hurt', *buono* 'good') the Lingua Franca words are reduced (*obo, dole, bono*) (Bergareche 1993: 444).

Most Romance-derived words in the *Dictionnaire* end in vowels. Equally, the one English derived word in the Lingua Franca lexicon, flint, appears as *flinta*. Broughton (1839) also draws attention to the Italianization or 'Lingua Francification' of English names. As such, one of the Consul's interpreters, a partially sighted man named Bob, saw his name adapted to a less English version:

> 'Turks, Jews and Christians of every nation, pronounced however, according to the genius of their various native languages, often with the Italianized termination, as Blindi Bo-bi' (Broughton 1839: 134).

She also mentions the adaptation of King George's name, stating that the king is known as the Pasha's *buon amigo el rey Georgi*, 'good friend, King George' (Broughton 1839: 318), immediately adding:

> 'Let it be remembered that it is Lingua Franca I quote and not any of the score of pure languages, out of which it is so arbitrarily compiled' (Broughton 1839: 318).

Unlike most words in Lingua Franca that have a typical Romance vowel ending, Arabic words generally retain their consonant ending: *rouss* from *ruz* 'rice', *maboul* from *mahbūl* 'stupid' (Cifoletti 2004: 38). Another phonological feature, typical of Venetian, but also found in

Lingua Franca, is iotacism, the use of the *i* rather than *gi* as in *Iorni/ giorni* (days). As mentioned above, the Lingua Franca for Jew, *iudeo* or *iudio* is found throughout the corpus; the Italian is *giudeo* (Muru[13] 2017).

Venetian influence is also evident in the Lingua Franca tendency to drop final vowels following *-l, -n, -r* e.g. *colazion* instead of *colazione* 'breakfast'. Both Venetian and Lingua Franca exhibit examples of degemination: *tuto* rather than the more accepted *tutto* 'all' and voicing of intervocalic stops – *segredo* rather than *segreto* 'secret' (Ursini 2011). The voicing of *t* to *d* is consistent with the Spanish that also influenced phonologically elements of Lingua Franca. An example from the *Dictionnaire* (1830: 63) that illustrates both the plosive voicing and the final vowel drop is *padron* 'master', an epithet that recurs throughout the corpus, though sometimes as *patron* (and even *padrone* and *patrone*), thereby highlighting the difficulty in linguistic analysis due to variation. Dakhlia (2008) also suggests this, citing the instances of *padron* and *patron*. She mentions that Dan, uses the term[14], as does the English captive, Joseph Pitts who refers to '*patroonas* or mistresses' (Dakhlia 2008: 344). The Bey of Tunis and the Dey of Algiers are spoken of as *padrone* or even *patrone grande,* (Dakhlia 2008: 344). The English captive, Okeley, refers to his Arab master as *patron* throughout his text (Okeley 1675). Meanwhile, the English diarist, Samuel Pepys, refers to the Algiers slaves' *padron* in an early 1661 diary entry:

> 'How they are beat upon the soles of their feet and bellies
> at the liberty of their *padron*. How they are all, at night,
> called into their master's *Bagnard*; and there they lie'
> (Pepys 1893: Loc. 5394).

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[13] Personal correspondence with Cristina Muru (2017).
[14] Dan repeatedly uses the term *patron* 'master' immediately preceded or followed by *maistre* 'master' as if to clarify to his French audience the exact meaning of the Lingua Franca term. (Dan 1649:139, 335)

Pepys was geographically far removed from Lingua Franca; despite this, certain terms such as *padron* and *Bagnard* (the Lingua Franca is *bagno,* (Dictionnaire 1830: 16) and elsewhere in the corpus *bagnio*), evidently resisted translation. In his analysis of London Jamaican, Sebba (1993) suggest that such code-switching is used to 'animate' the narrative as it creates 'voices' for the individuals in the story (Sebba 1993: 120), while Gardner-Chloros (2009) defines this practice as *mot juste* switching where 'speakers switch precisely because the other language contains the most accurate term' (Gardner-Chloros 2009: 32).

Another sound that reflects the non-Romance influence on Lingua Franca is /p/. It does not exist in Arabic's phonemic inventory (Della Puppa 2007: 23). The *Dictionnaire* features occasional substitutions of [b] for [p] (Cifoletti, 2004:36): *nabolitan* 'Neapolitan', *osbidal* (*Dictionnaire* 1830:41) and there is, of course, the ubiquitous *sabir* plausibly from the Spanish *saber* 'to know', but also a potential example of the Arabic bearing on Lingua Franca's pronunciation as the Italian is *sapere*. Some sources, including those found in Kew, such as the Pasha's tailor's letters (TNA: FO 335:1/20), refer to the leader of Algiers as the *bassa*, while English texts use the epithet *bashaw*. The more common title is *pasha* from the Turkish *paşa* 'head, chief'. Tully claims that *bashaw* derives from two Persian words *pa* and *schah,* meaning viceroy (Tully 1817: vol. ii, 125), underlining the multiple influences on Ottoman Turkish.

Perhaps given that Lingua Franca is replete with abbreviation, ellipsis, and omissions, it predictably features examples of aphaeresis. In several lexemes that entered Italian as Arabic loanwords, the Arabic article *al* often appears in the loanword as a bound morpheme, usually at the start of the word – *algebra* 'algebra', *alchimia* 'alchemy', but at times comes at the end with the obligatory additional final vowel – *ammirale* 'admiral', a clipped version of the Arabic '*amīr al-ʾumarā*',

Nolan (2012: 7). This practice is reversed in Lingua Franca. Many of the Romance words beginning with a syllable that resembles an Arabic article, see this omitted in Lingua Franca. Examples include *sagiar* rather than *assiaggiare* ' to taste' (*Dictionnaire* 1830:32), as well as *bassiador* for *ambasciatore* 'ambassador', *bastantza* for *abbastanza* 'enough', and *rigar* for *irrigare* 'to water'. As with many other linguistic features, however, the similarity between Lingua Franca and Venetian dialect must be considered, as some of these words exist in their abbreviated form in Venetian (Cifoletti 2004: 40).

Lingua Franca exhibits epenthesis, but, as with many of the features identified, not consistently. The addition of an *e* at the start of words such as *estar* is found in Haedo: *Assi, assi, hora estar bueno, mira cane como hazer malato* 'Just like that, now you'll be fine, see, dog, what a sick man does' (Haedo 1612: 12; my translation). The epenthetical *e* belies the Spanish element of Lingua Franca, plausibly another indication that Lingua Franca was L2 Italian spoken by Spanish, or other nationalities with Spanish as a more dominant language than Italian in their multilingual repertoire. The Jewish merchants of Livorno and Barbary itself might fit such a linguistic profile. Since Spanish was Haedo's native language, there remains the possibility that his use of the epenthetical *e* is simply idiolectal variation. The *Dictionnaire* features both *star* and *estar* 'to be' as well as epenthetical examples such as *escaldar* 'to heat', *escambiar* 'to exchange', *escapar* 'to escape' and *escala* 'ladder'. However, the French *escalier* has the Lingua Franca equivalent as *scala* and *esclave* 'slave' is rendered as *skiavo*. Similarly *scrivir* is the Lingua Franca translation for *ecrire* 'to write'. It would seem impossible to establish any fixed rule of epenthesis.

Lingua Franca's phonology stems largely from its Romance lexifiers, with particular Italian and Venetian influence, but where there is variation a few fixed generalisations can be made. As Mühlhaüsler

states, 'of all parts of grammar, those of pronunciation and phonology remain the least stable in stabilized pidgins' (Mühlhaüsler 1986: 5). This would seem a rather apposite observation with regard to Lingua Franca.

6.1.2 Morphology

The morphology of Lingua Franca exhibits significant influence of Venetian. This is predictable given the prevalence of Venice in Mediterranean trade and diplomacy. Although Tuscan had superseded Venetian in official correspondence by the late 16th century, Venetian was much spoken across the Mediterranean and in Barbary, thanks to the presence of merchants from Northern Italy, particularly Venice, Genoa, and Livorno, and a number of Venetian corsairs. As such, Lingua Franca shares both morphological (and phonological) features with Venetian.

As with much of Lingua Franca, pronouns exhibit variation that cannot be clearly attributed to geographic or diachronic factors. The *Dictionnaire* (1830) records the following as Lingua Franca's personal pronouns:

1st sing: *mi*	1st plural: *noi*
2nd sing: *ti*	2nd plural: *voi*
3rd sing (m): *ellou, ello*	3rd plural: (m): *elli*
(f): *ella*	*(*f): no mention

Several sources, both Italian and Spanish, across a wide timespan also use *tu* for the 2nd person singular rather than *ti*. *Mi* is almost ubiquitous, other than Caronni (Emerit 1954) who records *io* but also *mi.* The nominative singular in Italian, *io, tu* etc., is often used in pidgin forms, notably Ethiopian Italian, (Cifoletti 2004: 46), but Lingua Franca's pronouns may well stem from Northern Italian dialects, particularly Venetian where *mi* and *ti* function as nominatives; *ello* also comes from Venetian.

Plural forms of pronouns reveal some variation. Rehbinder (1798-1800) states that there are no polite forms - *Voi* or *Lei* - used in Lingua Franca 'You do not find any form of polite address in this language', (Rehbinder 1798 - 1800: vol. III, 67-8; my translation). He uses French-influenced Spanish plural forms, *nous autros, vous autros* for the first and second person plural, while the *Dictionnaire* lists *noi* 'we', (Dictionnaire 1830: 4).

While early (pre 18th century) Lingua Franca texts mostly exhibit null subjects, in keeping with both Italian and Arabic, both of which are termed 'pro-drop languages', later texts use the pronouns *mi* and *ti* rather than Italian's *io* and *tu*. The near-constant use of the infinitive in Lingua Franca would seem to require a subject, and yet this could be obviated given its overwhelmingly oral usage. Later texts do, however, feature pronouns, specifically *mi* and *ti,* Lipski (2007: 17-20). Lipski notes how the emergence of these forms coincides with the same phenomenon in Afro-Iberian, and Afro-Lusitanian languages. He explains this by suggesting that the same social groups and professions, such as merchants, sailors, residents of the Mediterranean coastlines, familiar with Lingua Franca, would also come into contact with Afro-Iberian speech. As a result, a 'cross-fertilization of Afro-Iberian pidgin and Lingua Franca forms could well have occurred, since the former would have also occupied a prominent place in the popular imagination as the appropriate way of addressing "Africans", whether Arabic-speaking or from sub-Saharan regions' (Lipski 2007: 27).

By the nineteenth century tonic pronouns were evidently in use. The *Dictionnaire* 's *Dialogues* section features the following examples:

> *Mi star contento mirar per ti* 'I am happy to see you'
> *Non star bonou* 'he doesn't feel well' (*Dictionnaire* 1830:
> 93-98; my translation).

It is worth noting that where it designates the subject, the 3rd person pronoun is omitted.

In terms of possessive pronouns, *tua, tuya* (Dan and Haedo respectively, both early to middle 17th century) and later *di ti* are all used by different sources. The *Dictionnaire* (1830) is consistent in its usage of *di*, followed by the pronoun such as *ti*, to indicate a possessive, as in *casa di ti* 'your house' (Dictionnaire 1830: 96).

The table below demonstrates the 1st and 2nd person pronoun variation of Lingua Franca across sources, and also as evidenced particularly by Haedo, within a source.

Table 6.1

Source/ author	Date	Io / tu (subj)	Mi / ti (tonic)	Null subject (pro-drop)	Me (obj)	-mi (clitic) /mi (obj)	Miya/ tuya/ mio/ tuo	Di mi / Di ti
Contrasto della Zerbitana	Late 14th c.		X					
Savary de Brèves	1604		X					
Haedo	1612	X	X	X		X	X	
Dan	1637			X			X	
Archive of Sardinia (in Ferrari 1912)	1820s		X		X		X	
Dictionn-aire	1830		X					X

The table exemplifies once again the level of variation found in grammatical features diachronically. There seemed to be a tendency toward tonic pronouns, as in Venetian, but this was not a fixed rule. Grammatical fluidity characterizes the use of pronouns. Haedo (1612) is the most extreme example of this; as in the case of infinitives and lexical variation. his record of Lingua Franca pronoun use demonstrates inherent variation in the language. He records the use of

the tonic pronoun: *mi estar barbero bono* 'I am an honest doctor', but also a clitic, *io dico di der que dezirme que ceccar boca*, 'I say to be quiet' (Haedo 1612: 120v, 200).

Object pronouns exhibit somewhat less variation. Most sources use the subject form of the pronoun. One exception is Tamayo, who was a Spanish traveller in the early 17th century in Algiers. His use of *contigo* 'with you' (Tamayo 1644), the only such example in the corpus, belies his native language of Spanish rather than a wider use of the Spanish form of pronoun. Many sources feature the preposition *per* followed by object pronouns, discussed below in Section 5.7.3.4.

A lack of gender and number marking is a hallmark of Lingua Franca. The *Dictionnaire*'s preface asserts:

> *les noms n'ont pas de pluriel, Les amis: l'amigo. Ces*
> *Messieurs sont mes amis. Questi Signor star amigo di mi*
> 'Nouns have no plural form, the friends: the friend. These
> gentlemen are my friends. These gentlemen is my friend'
> (Dictionnaire 1830: 11; my translation).

The *Dictionnaire* nevertheless provides a couple of examples of plurals:

mes marchandises 'goods' is translated as *lé merkantzié di mi',* and the use of a singular nationality to denote a plural group: *l'Algerino* 'Algerians' and *il Francis* 'French' (Dictionnaire 1830: 50, 98,96).

Spanish influence is evident by a few examples of plural marking *-s, -os.* Cifoletti (2004: 42) cites Dan, who writes of *casseries* 'army barracks', *matamoures* 'ditches' (neither of which comes from Spanish). Others, including Dapper (1668) and Broughton (1839) use plurals with *–s*; neither is Spanish. Morphologically, Lingua Franca manifests multilingual complexity with apparent adherence to the grammars of several Romance languages, but not in a coherent manner. Equally, there is a sense of fluidity in the choice of

grammatical items such as pronouns. While hallmarks of Lingua Franca, both the lack of agreement of gender and number, and the use of tonic pronouns, are also consistent with L2 Italian (Ramat 2003: 51, 62, 222).

6.1.3 Verb forms
6.1.3.1 Use of the infinitive
Perhaps the grammatical hallmark of Lingua Franca was the near ubiquity of the infinitive form of the verb. Contemporaneous commentators, such as Pananti (1841: 201), confirm that Lingua Franca verbs were, for the most part, in the infinitive. Several linguistic analyses of Lingua Franca (Minervini 1996; Lipski 2007; Selbach 2008) comment on the unusual choice of the infinitive as the chosen form for all present tense verbs. The third person singular is less marked, yet as with many colonial pidgins (and especially those in Africa, often in Francophone countries), the infinitive is a prominent feature of Lingua Franca, (Lipski no date: 7) It was also found in *petit-tirailleur*, the French-lexified pidgin of West Africa (Delafosse 1904). Lipski (2007) explains this potentially surprising verb form

> 'as an originally conscious choice by speakers of Italian and other Romance languages to simplify their verbal system when speaking to foreigners deemed incapable or unworthy of learning a full version of these languages. The same is true for *todesche*, *greghesco*, and other forms of Italian foreigner-talk' (Lipski 2007: 11).

Schuchardt (1909, trans. 1980) makes a case for this deliberate choice of the infinitive by speakers of fluent Romance, as opposed to the spontaneous emergence of the infinitive in emerging Arab-Romance pidgin:

> 'But how then does it turn out that the Arab, who does not yet know Italian, selects mangiar as the expressant for mangio, mangi, mangia, etc.? It is the European who impresses the stamp of general currency on the infinitive,

thereby controlling all communicative languages of the
first and second degree' (Schuchardt 1909, trans. 1980:
69).

Minervini (1996) suggests otherwise, seeing little correlation between mastery of one's own language and the ability to simplify it. The choice of the infinitive in Lingua Franca is more likely the distortion of the Romance speaker's native tongue in response to a foreigner's attempt to speak it (Minervini 1996: 271). Despite their differences, Lipski and Minervini highlight the circularity identified by Arends et al. (1995) of the pidgin / foreigner talk argument, namely that not only might a pidgin derive from foreigner talk, but also that foreigner talk itself could develop from a pidgin. They posit, as an alternative explanation for the ubiquity of the infinitive, that a pidgin's linguistic features result from imperfect L2 learning by its (European) slave speakers, (Arends et al. 1995: 96-98). Given the multilingual slave, corsair, merchant and ruling communities, Arends' theory might well apply to Lingua Franca, and speaks to its level of variation inasmuch as imperfect learning on the part of many speakers would lead to multiple idiolect-based lexical and grammatical alternatives. In terms of verb endings, according to the *Dictionnaire* (1830), all forms end with an *r* (similar to several Italian dialects, notably Venetian), none of which is silent as in French. Lingua Franca does not have verbs ending with the French -*er*: it has only endings –*ir* and –*ar,* consistent with the Arabic vowel space discussed in the phonology section, 6.1.1.

The constancy of the infinitive, both in the descriptions and excerpts of Lingua Franca across time and place, is striking given the level of lexical and grammatical variation highlighted throughout the corpus. There are a few authors, the Spaniards, Haedo and Tamayo included (notably early sources from the first half of the 17th century), who use the imperative itself, such as *anda* 'go!', but so does the Milanese priest, Caronni, who was captured by pirates and enslaved in Tunis in

the early 19th century, thus it does not appear to be diachronically affected. Caronni's account features multiple imperatives: *anda, anda, canaglia* 'go on, go on, scoundrel!' (Caronni1805: 57), and *taci, gridommi* ' "Be quiet!" He shouted at me' (Caronni 1805: 67). However, he also refers to the *Raïs* 'corsair captain' exhorting his group on the ship, *Non far entrar moro* 'Don't let the Moor aboard' and his Arab masters urging him, *mangiare mangiare* 'eat, eat!' (Caronni 1805: 61). Minervini identifies in Haedo (1612) a dichotomy of past participle (without auxiliary) to denote the past and infinitive to indicate the present and future, with a few uses of the imperative *mira cane* 'Look, dog' (Minervini 1996: 266). Overall, the use of the infinitive appears to be almost the defining feature of the language, both according to sources, and among scholars, several of whom (Schuchardt (1909, trans. 1980) and Whinnom (1977)) cite the ubiquity of the infinitive as an indication of Lingua Franca's pidgin status.

The employment of the infinitive in dramatic sources would seem to reinforce its status as a hallmark of the language. Both Molière's and Goldoni's Turkish, and thus Lingua Franca-speaking characters exclusively use infinitives. Hence, Ali, the Turkish merchant in *L'Impresario di Smirne* (1780) rebukes Carluccio, a rather inflexible singer:

> ALI: *Smirne non aver bisogno di tua persona. Se voler andar Turchia, io ti mandar Costantinopoli, serraglio de Gran Signore.*
>
> ALI: 'Smyrna has no need of someone like you. If you want to go to Turkey, I will send you to Constantinople, to the palace of the Great Lord' (Goldoni 1780: Act III, Sc. ii; my translation).

The presence in the above example of three infinitive forms rather than inflections for the first, second, and third persons singular reinforces how the infinitive is the sole verb form required in the language.

Past time reference

Past time constructions exist throughout the Lingua Franca corpus. As with all its linguistic features there is variation, often within a sole source. Some sources cite the Italian form of the past participle ending in either *-ato* or *-ito*, while others use the Spanish or Venetian *-do*. Later 19th century sources generally include an auxiliary as well as a past participle; however, Caronni exemplifies the variation endemic to Lingua Franca, attributing a question concerning the Pope to his Algiers master: *cosa detto, cosa aver detto pappasso per carozza*? 'what did the Pope say, what did he say about carriage?' This one sentence exhibits the two constructions of the past tense – both with the auxiliary *aver* in *aver detto,* and without it, in *detto,* both signifying 'did say'. Pananti (1841), Frank (1850) and Calligaris (1834 in Monchicourt 1929) were all roughly contemporary with the *Dictionnaire*, and all with either Italian as their native tongue or encountering their Lingua Franca in Tunis and Tripoli where Lingua Franca was alleged to be more influenced by Italian (Dictionnaire 1830: 10). They all record past tense constructions featuring the auxiliary *aver*; however, the *Dictionnaire*, which only counts six instances of the past participle in its phrasebook section, does not include the auxiliary with any of these. It is hard to explain this divergence between the *Dictionnaire* and the corpus, but it is worth noting that there are 139 phrases in total. The past time references are minimal, which can be explained by the very functional nature of the *Dictionnaire*'s *dialogues*; less a conversation tool, more a manual for communication and understanding. A couple of the sentences exemplify the combination of lexifying languages and grammatical idiosyncrasies particularly usefully:

> *Mi sentito ablar di ellou*
> (Me heard to speak of him)
> 'I have heard speak of him'
> (Dictionnaire 1830: 96)
> *Mi mirato in casa di ti*

(Me saw in house of you)

'I saw him at your house'

(Dictionnaire 1830: 96)

Both sentences feature the past participles without auxiliary. There are words from both Italian (*sentito, casa*) and Spanish *(mirato, ablar)* in each *Dictionnaire* sentence, and the tonic form of the pronoun *mi* is used, as well as periphrastic possession, even when the possessor is pronominal.

Although there are no examples in the *Dialogues,* in its introduction the *Dictionnaire* asserts that *star* alone acts as an auxiliary, offering the construction, *mi star andato* 'I went / I have gone' (Dictionnaire 1830: 120). The use of *star* is not found elsewhere in the corpus. The *Dictionnaire* explicitly refutes the idea of *aver* functioning as an auxiliary:

> Le verbe **avir** ou **tenir** (avoir), *ne s'emploie pas comme auxiliaire, mais seulement comme verbe possessif. J'ai cette chose, je possede cette chose, mi tenir questa cosa*
> 'the verb *avir* or *tenir* (to have), is not used as an auxiliary but solely as a possessive verb. I have that thing, I possess that thing, *mi tenir questa cosa*' (Dictionnaire 1830: 13; my translation).

Both Broughton and Renaudot, two of the latest sources in the corpus (early 19th century) based in Algiers, use the Spanish form of the participle with an auxiliary *aver*. Renaudot (1830), who was the author of a comprehensive study of Algiers, *Alger: tableau de la ville d'Alger et ses environs*, and the *Dictionnaire*, both published in France in 1830, distinguish clearly between the use of the infinitive form (for present and imperfect tenses) and the past participle (to denote the perfect form). This suggests that by the early 19th century there had been an extension of tense marking in Lingua Franca. The table below highlights the inconsistencies, not solely between authors in their

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rendering of the past tense in Lingua Franca, but also of how individual sources manifest inconsistency by using more than one form within their writing, often within a single text.

Table 6.2

Source	Date	Italian ending of past participle	Spanish ending of past participle	Auxiliary *aver*	Auxiliary *Star*	No auxiliary
Haedo	1612	X	X			X
Caronni	1805	X		X		X
Pananti	1815	X		X		
Dictionnaire	1830	X			X	X
Renaudot	1830		X	X		

While this is a sample of only a few sources, it appears that in another grammatical area, Lingua Franca is characterized by its fluidity. The overriding priority was mutual understanding. The absence of first language speakers of Lingua Franca would have placed few constraints in speakers' language acquisition, possibly leading to a lack of focus and importance attributed to grammatical accuracy, if indeed such a concept even existed.

6.1.3.3 Future time reference

The 1830 *Dictionnaire*'s *Dialogues* (phrases which were designed to aid communication between French troops and the indigenous North African population) include examples of the future tense construction using the auxiliary bisogno (literally 'I need to' in Italian). As with references to the past, there are only a few phrases that imply future events. The French sentence *nous irons demain* is rendered *bisognio andar domani* 'we will go tomorrow' (Dictionnaire 1830:100). The *Dictionaire* also features the French sentence *Il n'est pas necéssaire*, translated into Lingua Franca as *non bisogna* 'It's not necessary', and the different forms *bisognio* and *bisogna* suggest a distinction between the future construction and implied necessity. The *-io* future ending resembles the 1st person singular ending in Italian (and Venetian),

while the -*a of bisogna* is a more typical 3rd person singular or impersonal ending. *Non bisogna* still exists today with the same meaning. There are few examples of future tense construction in the rest of the documentary corpus. One such is found in the account of Dan (1637) who quotes the words of the pirate who captured the slaves whose liberation Dan had been sent to ensure:

> *No pillar fantasia: Dios grande, mundo cosi, cosi, si venira*
> *ventura ira à casa tua.*
> 'Don't be downhearted: God is great, the world turns. If
> luck comes to you, you will return home' (Dan 1637:
> 373; my translation).

Given that this statement containing *venira* 'will come' and *ira* 'will go' is the only mentioned instance of a future construction within the corpus, and it is already reported speech when Dan records it, there is a distinct possibility that it is not generally representative of Lingua Franca. *Ira* is also standard French, rather than Lingua Franca.

Prior to the publication of the *Dictionnaire* (1830), the infinitive form would seem to have extended to all present and future tense constructions, and this again suggests a discrepancy between the *Dictionnaire's* suggested authoritative representation of Lingua Franca and the evidence offered by sources in the Regencies. While later sources appear to concur more with the *Dictionnaire's* lexical and grammatical entries, this might be largely due to the source authors being influenced or even educated by the *Dictionnaire*, particularly where the sources were written by military personnel, such as General Faidherbe (1884).

6.1.4 Prepositions and the particular use of *per*

Lingua Franca features many of the common prepositions found in Italian: *a* 'to'*, da* 'from'*, di* or *de* 'of', appearing to vary more temporally rather than geographically with *de* used predominantly in early sources and *di* from the late 18th century onwards, and *in* (with Haedo

only using *en*). All these fulfil the same semantic functions as in Italian (and other Romance languages). *Per,* however, has many more meanings. The *Dictionnaire* (1830) translates both *pour* 'for' and *par* 'by' as *per.* It also lists several expressions where *per* has both a different sense, and together with a personal pronoun acts as an accusative or dative clause:

> *portar per mi* 'bring to me', and *mi quérir mouchou per ti*

> 'I hold you in great respect' (Dictionnaire 1830: 13, 32).

Similarly, several sources use *per* to denote accusative and dative phrases. Renaudot records the expression:

> *Dios mandado per mi*

> 'God sent me [a son]' (Renaudot 1830: 73).

It appears, however, that this multifunctional role of *per* does not date from the earliest literary texts with other hallmarks of Lingua Franca. The Grion poem, *The Conflict with the Maid of Jerba,* and the V*illancico* by Encina do not evidence such *per* constructions. Similarly, these early texts do not exhibit exclusively disjunctive pronouns. Instead, medieval texts show that the Lingua Franca of that era used the weak enclitic pronoun as is used in Romance syntax today:

> *Alá ti da bon matín*

> 'Good morning to you', (Encina 1520 in Harvey, Jones and
> Whinnom 1967),

However, in the 1545 play, *La Zingana* by Gigio Artemio Giancarli, the eponymous Arab character with Lingua Franca-style speech uses *bel* (her version of *per*) followed by the direct or indirect pronoun. Evidently, it was an established convention that would resonate with audiences as a foreigner speaking an imperfect form of Italian or, in the case of Giancarli, Venetian. Andrews (2007) comments on the realism of the dialects in Giancarli's works, particularly *La Zingana,* Andrews (2007: 144-154), and indeed such a use of *per* appears to have been more than a dramatic device. Much later, *per* occurs regularly in similar constructions in the nineteenth century corpus, predominantly from Algiers-based sources such as the

aforementioned Renaudot (1830), *Dictionnaire* (1830), and Rehbinder (1798-1800). The last quotes a Muslim warning to a Christian:

> *Guarda per ti, et non andar mirar mugeros de los Moros*
>
> 'Be careful and do not go to look at the wives of the
>
> Moors' (Rehbinder 1798-1800, vol. iii, 269).

This example only uses *per* in the first clause; it does not introduce the direct object of the 'wives of the Moors'. As with so many of Lingua Franca's features, there is a lack of consistency in their occurrence, or at least the record of such. As will be discussed in Chapter 10, *per* or its alternative pronunciations of *ber* and *bel,* remains a feature of Lingua Franca's legacy and of linguistically similar Italian-lexified pidgins found in Ethiopia (Marcos 1976: 178).

6.2 Conclusions

Lingua Franca, which was largely Romance-based, exhibited in its phonology and morphology the influence of Northern Italian, and particularly Venetian. There is also noteworthy Arabic influence on the vowel space and the devoicing of bilabial plosives. It had, however, a number of identifying characteristics, predominantly the near-ubiquitous use of the infinitive verb form, tonic pronouns and, particularly in its latter stages, the use of the preposition *per* preceding a direct object. These features coincide with L2 Italian, and various Italian and Romance-based pidgins more generally. The aforementioned features are, however, found consistently in the Lingua Franca corpus across both time and space. There remains, nevertheless, considerable variation at the morphological level between sources, as highlighted in the tables in this chapter. Whether this is geographically or temporally determined is hard to conclude, and often the variation appears to derive rather from idiolectal record, and potentially the native language of the witness.