

Troilus and Criseyde: The Nature of Their Relationship as Revealed

by a Discourse Analysis of Their Conversations

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Chapter 1

Introduction

The problematic relationship between the two central characters in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* has caused critics to disagree about both the nature of the characters and the relationship itself. Many critics think of Criseyde as timid and shrinking (Lambert 105-25; P. Martin 156-88). Some believe she is a lusty woman interested only in the physical qualities of men, a woman who falls in and out of love easily (Haahr 257-71). Others point out how she shallowly takes advantage of Troilus (Benson 153-70). And like Criseyde, Troilus has also evoked critical controversy: Is he an ideal faithful lover, a fool, a model for truth and constancy, a Christian who gave in to Fortune, a tragic figure, or a comic figure (Brewer 95-109; David 90-104)? The underlying motivations of the two protagonists appear ambiguous and have caused many debates among the critics as to 'entente'. Continuing this line of investigation, this study examines a rich but unexplored avenue of inquiry. Specifically, the study applies current methods of discourse analysis to evaluate the actual words of Troilus and Criseyde, with a focus on the nature of the relationship between the two individuals. Especially by analyzing the indicators of power and solidarity, this thesis offers an answer to the following question: Is the relationship of Troilus and Criseyde based upon one character's controlling and ultimately deceiving the other, or is their

union a partnership, which is founded upon equality and trust but which is finally ended by the forces of war?

Chaucer's version of the relationship differs from his predecessors. By significantly changing aspects of the characters and revising the story, Chaucer allows the characters to represent ideas previously unexpressed in literature or courtesy books. Essentially, by doing so, Chaucer invites readers to re-examine common social views of acceptable feelings, language, and behavior for men and women, particularly in regard to romantic relationships. Notably, through discourse analysis of the conversations between Troilus and Criseyde, the thesis demonstrates that Chaucer provides a linguistic model that not only explores how the interdependence of love and language transform a relationship but also illustrates how respect and equality can exist between a man and woman in medieval times, despite common views of social hierarchy and power. Further, this analysis resolves the ambiguity that literary critics perceive concerning the nature of the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde.

Some of the early stories that contain the characters of Troilus and Criseyde exhibit common views of social hierarchy and power within romantic relationships. They began from historical accounts by Trojan and Greek writers who were present during the Trojan War. Historians believe that Dares Phrygius, a Trojan priest

mentioned by Homer in the *Iliad*, lived in Troy during the war and wrote “from first-hand knowledge,” which was eventually translated into Latin and entitled *De Excidio Trojae Historia* around the sixth century A.D. (R.K. Gordon xi). Dares included a description of Troilus, Criseyde, and Diomedes but they are not linked together in any way, although they may have been linked in a possible longer version, which, if it existed, is now lost. The Trojan point of view is complemented by the Greek Dictys Cretensis, who also mentioned Troilus and Criseyde, separately, when he wrote about his country's side of the war in the *Ephemeris Belli Trojani*, translated into Latin around the fourth century A.D. He included descriptions of what he witnessed along with interviews of others, including Ulysses. Dares and Dictys were the first to mention the names of Troilus and Criseyde, but neither connected them romantically.

Around 1160, Benoît de Sainte-Maure wrote the *Roman de Troie*, which he states is based primarily on Dares and to a lesser degree on Dictys. Although the 30,000 line poem is primarily about the war itself, Benoît tells bits of the story about Troilus and Criseyde throughout the work. He is the first writer to connect them to a romance, which begins when the lovers are about to be separated and continues to Troilus's death. Benoît mentions only that the lovers were happy before the separation, but omits any details about the lovers' feelings or how they came to meet.

More than 100 years later, Guido de Columna, a judge at Messina in Sicily from 1257 to 1280 and the second author to connect Troilus and Criseyde romantically, wrote the *Historia Trojana* in Latin. Even though his primary source was Benoît's poem, he never mentions him but instead frequently cites Dares and Dictys. His work, "heavy and moralizing in tone as compared with Benoît," reflected the standard of its day (R.K. Gordon xiii).

Giovanni Boccaccio, the third author of this timeless story, read the works of Benoît and Guido and decided to complete the story by describing the relationship of Troilus and Criseyde before they were forced to part. He used his own experiences and feelings to imagine how Troilus must have felt when he first met Criseyde. The young Boccaccio not only put himself in the place of Troilus, but also created a new character he named Pandarus. He called his poem *Il Filostrato* and finished the work sometime between 1335 and 1340.

Approximately fifty years later, Chaucer read *Il Filostrato* and chose to retell the story. This longer and deeper look at Troilus and Criseyde reflects the vision of a "man of middle age and of wide knowledge of both men and books," as noted by R. K. Gordon, who also points out the following:

The tone is no longer lyrical and personal. Chaucer does not identify himself with Troilus. He writes of the

sorrows and joys of the servants of love, but he is not one of them. He allows himself a smile at the extravagances of 'these lovers.' Comedy and romance live side by side in the poem, and neither injures the other. If the English poem has less intensity and concentration than the Italian it has greater variety and complexity. (xv)

Moreover, Chaucer adds back in the visual details that Boccaccio removed from Benoît's story: the imagery of war—armor, weapons, warriors, wounded horses—and the descriptions of the characters, especially Troilus, Criseyde, and Diomedes (Stillinger 134-64), transforming the story into a complex poem of fine literary quality.

Critics view Chaucer's transformation of the poem in a variety of ways. Some agree with the point of view expressed in C.S. Lewis's essay "What Chaucer Really Did to *Il Filostrato*," which proposes that Chaucer transforms Boccaccio's poem *Il Filostrato*, using the "process of medievalization" (17). Boccaccio's poem focused on what Lewis describes as Latin values—the man must be a "lady-killer," not a "milk-sop" (27)—and on family love. Lewis tells us that between the time of Chrétien de Troyes and Chaucer certain common threads (e.g., "interest in the story" and "interest of the erotic doctrine and psychology") binding the medieval idea of courtly love became unraveled. These threads used by de Troyes

in primitive fashion to weave his tales were later reintroduced and perfected by Chaucer, who modified Boccaccio's poem by aligning the story with the code of courtly love.

Many critics, however, believe that while Chaucer's rewriting of Boccaccio's poem adheres to the guidelines of courtly love, it is far more than that. Boccaccio, on the one hand, writes his poem to alleviate his suffering during the absence of his love, Maria d'Aquino, comparing his own grief to Troilus's—and he is more interested in Troilus and his woes than he is in Criseyde, points out Dorothy Everett (117). Chaucer, on the other hand, has no personal interest in the story; he writes it using an objective narrator, who is equally interested in Troilus and Criseyde, and who is as fascinated by Troilus's wooing of Criseyde as by his "grief at her loss" (Everett 118). In Benoît's version, it is stated that "[Criseyde] had given herself to [Troilus]. . . . Most men knew of that" (R.K. Gordon 8), whereas in Chaucer's version, Troilus protects Criseyde's honor by keeping their relationship a secret. Further, in Chaucer's version, Troilus's death is not discussed except that he was slain by Achilles and he went to eighth sphere of heaven and experienced joy. These deliberate differences invite the reader to view the characters as more than symbols of romance or courtly love.

Along this vein, Everett concludes that Chaucer rewrote Boccaccio's poem not only to adhere to the guidelines of courtly

love for both Troilus and Criseyde (which, she notes, Boccaccio is able to do for Troilus but not for Criseyde), but also to create a lady who is “worthy to inspire and receive the humble service of a lover” (125), therefore making it necessary for Chaucer to re-create Criseyde. She disagrees with Lewis’s argument that Chaucer put the poem through a process of medievalization. Instead, she believes that Chaucer felt that he chose a story of extreme significance, worthy of high style and demanding “a treatment as dignified as he could give it” (134). In doing so, Chaucer transforms how love and relationships are represented to readers.

Chaucer’s more complex version of the story invites readers to make up their own minds about the ideas represented by the characters and plot. A survey of critical literature related to Chaucer’s representation of Troilus and Criseyde and their relationship amplify the contradictory views of the characters. Views of Troilus focus on various roles such as that of a faithful lover, a fool, a knight and warrior, and a spiritual man. In contrast, views of Criseyde focus more on qualities, such as timidity, falseness, deceptiveness, comedy, confidence, and self-reliance. Consequently, how critics view one character can influence their view of the other character. Interestingly, the contradictory views of the characters can be supported by using the same event in the story to make a point.

For example, some critics view Troilus as a faithful lover, a model of constancy and truth, while others view him as a fool (Benson 159-60). Both use the event of Troilus's swoon to make their point, notes Jill Mann. Some see the swoon as an example that indicates the depth of Troilus's love and desire to be with Criseyde. Others, however, echo the words of the narrative, "Is this a mannes game?" (3.1126). Mann points out that only one swoon occurs in the entire narrative and that Chaucer places it "at an earlier and apparently less disastrous point in the narrative," while Boccaccio places it at the time of hearing the request for the prisoner exchange (*Geoffrey Chaucer* 149). Mann states that the reason Troilus swooned was because of his subjection to Criseyde and the fear of losing her good will: he was afraid that Criseyde might find out Pandarus had lied to her to entice her into Troilus's arms that night (*Geoffrey Chaucer* 149-57). He wants her love to be freely given, as her "owene womman" (2.750) if it is to be valuable (Mann, *Geoffrey Chaucer* 157-59). The swoon can support either viewpoint of Troilus, leading to an interesting debate about what the character truly represents.

Although his role as a lover is intriguing, many critics who write about Troilus are also fascinated by his role as a knight and warrior. Some, such as C.S. Lewis and Thomas Stillinger, indicate that Chaucer revised Boccaccio's story to add in "far more Trojan

material” and to include richly visual details of the “phenomenal world—the world of colors, clothing, birds, gestures, architecture—that holds so little interest for [Boccaccio’s] Troiolo and his narrator” (Stillinger 160). The first extended description of Troilus occurs when Criseyde gazes from her window at him as he rides into the city, returning victoriously from battle, and it shows the “value given to martial machinery and visual display” (Stillinger 160) as well as the fusion of love and war. For Boccaccio’s Troiolo, love and war are “mutually exclusive fields of endeavor,” yet in Chaucer’s version “both realms—military glory and amorous 'heven' (2.637)—have been condensed into a single passage” (Stillinger 161). The youth, physical prowess and good looks of Troilus deeply affect Criseyde, but the “signs of deadly combat are also a crucial part of his appeal” to her (Stillinger 162). His role as a victorious warrior is essential in wooing her, many critics believe.

Yet, other critics focus more on the spiritual aspect of the story, and they conclude that Chaucer uses the character of Troilus to express the principles of a devoted Christian. Dieter Mehl, in summarizing this view, which includes critics such as C.S. Lewis and others, describes it thus: “Troilus’ concept of love corresponds to that of Boethius: love is the divine energy emanating from the Creator. . . . Troilus comes as close to a Christian concept of God’s

love as, according to a medieval view of a pre-Christian world, a heathen possibly can" (80).

Some add to this view of Troilus. They see him depicting a Christian who fell to the Wheel of Fortune. David Aers explains that the function of talk about fortune in Chaucer provides only "evasive, pseudo-explanations, the irrelevant vestiges of a tradition which needed them to provide some sense of understanding about troubling, obscure and seemingly inexplicable events and changes" (129). The Wheel of Fortune is juxtaposed first against religious philosophies of pagan supplication to the gods to help earthly mortals and later against Christian free will. Although Troilus prays and ultimately sees heaven, he chooses to remain passive to circumstance and to yield to the Wheel of Fortune rather than exert free will as a spiritual being (Mitchell 105). Absent in earlier versions of the story, this richer, more complex view of Troilus's love and spirituality continues to spark debates among critics, leading to differing and often opposite interpretations.

Just as Chaucer's story invites different interpretations regarding the character of Troilus, the same is true for Criseyde. Many critics think of Criseyde as timid and shrinking (Lambert 105-25; P. Martin 156-88). Some believe she is a lusty woman interested only in the physical qualities of men, a woman who falls in and out of love easily (Haahr 257-71). Others point out how she shallowly takes advantage of

Troilus (Benson 153-70). Views are influenced by intertextuality: subtle changes occur in the character of Criseyde from her birth as Briseis in the *Roman de Troie* by Benoît de Sainte-Maure to her appearance as Cressida in Shakespeare's play *Troilus and Cressida*. Moreover, views change as times change: each era has its own view of Criseyde.

In recent times, Roberto Antonelli, in “The Birth of Criseyde,” explains that Criseyde, originally known as Briseis, was not introduced into the literature until the twelfth century, whereas Troilus had been around since the creation of the *Iliad*. Troilus might not have remained in the limelight without Briseis and her “betrayal” of him (21). Briseis, depicted early on by Benoît de Sainte-Maure in the *Roman de Troie*, is “new and original,” rather than the courtly love stereotype of a woman. “[She] is characterized by a strong contradiction and a trauma, and it is for this reason that she has attracted the interest of other authors. . .” (22). This contradictory quality in Briseis exists because many twelfth century male authors, like de Sainte-Maure, had a hostile view of women who did not fit any “precise institutionalized role” such as mother or wife (22). In order for her to fit with this view of unfettered women, and for Troilus to love her, she must be not only “free and inconstant,” but she must deserve Troilus in some way—meaning she had to have some positive characteristics (22).

Antonelli explores her contradictory nature and finds that by the end of the *Roman de Troie*, her character has been “fragmented and deprived of her complexity in order to be understood by an audience who could easily identify with both . . . male characters . . . but not with an enigmatic figure who goes beyond her pre-established role” (48). Although it may appear on the surface that Criseyde is in the institutionalized role of widow, Chaucer adds a depth to her character that transcends social mores and leads to debates among critics that remain unsettled.

For example, many critics debate about whether Criseyde is cautious and insecure (Haahr 271). Evidence in the story suggests that because her father is a traitor and she is there only because of the “generous patronage” of Hector, she dresses humbly and acts meekly in her wish to “avoid offence by obtruding herself” (Mann, *European Tragedy* 220). Other critics go further and describe her as timid and shrinking. While C. S. Lewis emphasizes fear as Criseyde’s ruling passion, Mark Lambert describes it more as “the dominant color in the initial portrait, or a clear tone sounded early, and never forgotten” and summarizes by saying that for Criseyde the primary question is, “Is this going to hurt?” (106). Priscilla Martin describes her as a “worrier and a rationaliser (sic)” (171), who is ultimately “the victim of one of the most elaborate seduction plots in English literature” (176), giving examples from Books 2 and 3 to

prove her assertion (176-77). However, fear and worry only define one facet of Criseyde's character.

Some critics dismiss the fear and choose to focus primarily on the false and deceptive qualities they see represented in Criseyde. Some believe that she is a lusty woman only interested in the physical qualities of men, falling in and out of love easily (I. Gordon 81-83; Haahr 269). These point out how she shallowly takes advantage of Troilus. Joan Haahr emphasizes that "Criseyde is seduced by Troilus's beauty," using as an example Criseyde's "lingering and emphatically visual" response to her first sight of Troilus, as described in Book 2 (628-37 and 645-51), then points out that this "stress on the male lover's beauty, while common in classical poetry, is rare in the Middle Ages" (262). David Benson documents the different labels assigned to Criseyde between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, including "fickle woman," "Trojan whore," "false Criseyde," and worse. Men use her name as a warning to other men and also to refer to women like "Cressid's kind" as a common term to describe "foul" prostitutes (160-61). After the fifteenth century, the range of terms describing her expands to include "sweetheart" and "bright," and some portrayals of her again describe her beauty and attractiveness, although her infidelity to Troilus remains the dominant symbol of her character to

many (Benson 162-67). Indeed, her character has become an icon for infidelity, which remains one of the themes critics explore.

However, a few critics have chosen to go beyond even these qualities and instead explore the comedic aspect of Criseyde as Chaucer uniquely portrays her. Alfred David notes that Chaucer has given Criseyde “a sense of humor (completely absent in Boccaccio’s heroine) that makes her the ideal audience for her uncle’s japes and, in a more profound way, their innocent victim” (92). Comedy, through the character of Criseyde, is embedded within the tragedy drawn out through Troilus. For example, the playful antics of Criseyde and Pandarus, underlined by Chaucer at the end when he “prays that God may permit him ‘to make in som comedye’ (5.1788),” indicate that he “must have had some notion that a great deal of comedy already lay embedded in his tragedy of Troilus and that in the comic scenes he had found his truest vocation” (David 92). Ida Gordon finds that Chaucer puts a comic touch to some of Criseyde’s lines in the poem, starting in Book 3 when Criseyde gently mocks the “courtly nature of Troilus’ presentations” (107-08), and again in Book 4 when Chaucer brings into the “depiction of Criseyde that touch of exaggeration”—a “comic distortion of a characteristic or attitude” (104) present in Criseyde’s lament when she hears she is to be exchanged for Antenor (4.764-91) and later in her last speech to Troilus (4.1667-

73) when she tells him why she loved him (105-09). The comedic aspects of the poem not only delight us but serve as a sharp contrast to the tragedy surrounding the characters.

Yet, other critics look beyond the comedy and tragedy. They see Criseyde not as a victim, villain, or funny girl but instead as a confident, focused, and proactive woman—her "owene wommane" (2.750). To them, Criseyde exemplifies a hard-headed and practical person. Because of the war, the fear she feels is legitimate. She wants not only to live but to live well and to control her own life and her liberty. She thinks carefully about her life and makes choices that help her to further her goals (Warren 7). She is not timid or shrinking but powerful through use of indirect language and actions. She knows exactly what she wants because she takes the time to think about it. Further, she thinks about how to maintain her liberty in a patriarchal society. In summarizing these points, Mary Behrman describes her as a "brave" woman (317) and "skilled diplomat" (318). Over the course of the story, Criseyde's conversations with herself, Troilus, and Pandarus support this view along with the other, often opposite, views presented earlier, leading to a complexity that is not easily unraveled.

Derek Brewer concludes that the "complexity of this great poem is such that neither label, 'tragedy' nor 'comedy', nor even perhaps 'romance', nor any combination of these terms, can do

more than suggest one aspect of its Gothic multiplicity” and we find ultimately that the qualities and actions of the characters, balanced against the tragedy and comedy Chaucer weaves together, lead us to a “new awareness” (109). Indeed, by significantly changing aspects of the characters and revising the story, Chaucer allows the characters to represent ideas previously unexpressed in literature and to demonstrate social and linguistic models not found in courtesy books, as discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Social positions of Troilus and Criseyde

Used by writers up to and including Chaucer, the setting for *Troilus and Criseyde* is Troy during the pagan times of the Trojan War. However, Chaucer's readers find social structures typical of English medieval times: characters move and operate in a 14th-century English social setting and use language in a manner typical of Chaucer's day. Because of this, some critics describe him as the first of the modern novelists, a realist unique in his time (Wimsatt 43). Chaucer used the common understanding of 'estat' (social and political classes) as a backdrop to the complex formulation of his characters, inviting readers to re-examine common social views of acceptable behavior for men and women.

"Medieval people loved 'summae'. . . systems [that] provided them with a sense of order, and with reassuring norms against which to measure individuals," according to Margaret Hallissy (2-3). Social position, or 'estat', was one such principle. Most men were expected to fill one of three roles, depending on their social status: they could work (as 'laboratores' or 'agricolares'), fight (as 'bellatores' or 'pugnatores'), or pray (as 'oratores'). Marital or clerical status, along with age, further refined their position. In Chaucer's day, society was expanding beyond the laborers, nobility, and clergy to include new roles filled by merchants, craftsmen, citizens, and burgesses (Hallissy 3-4). During Chaucer's time, many

believed that social groups share character traits unique to each:

"Chaucer's Merchant or Franklin or Physician are not only individuals but representatives of their specific group" (Hallissy 4).

Social groups defined by 'estat' concepts "applied either exclusively or predominantly to men" because it was believed then that "only men's labor is real work" (Hallissy 4). Women's roles were defined differently: first they were divided into religious and secular groups. The secular groups were then sub-divided into categories of virgin, wife, or widow. In other words, women were defined by their chastity (or lack of it) as it related to the men they were associated with, whether father, husband, or Christ.

Women's lives and roles were further defined by rules set forth by male authority figures and by conduct books, sometimes referred to as courtesy books, written primarily by men. These rules for women were "promulgated both formally and informally, through sources both sacred and secular—scripture, theology, canon law, and homiletics on the religious side; civil law, inheritance customs, and didactic literature on the secular" (Hallissy xvi). These were "directed toward women and controlled by men," and shared a single aim: "the preservation of female chastity" (xvi). Men considered sexual purity of utmost importance because "only through the chastity of women was the integrity of the lineage guaranteed" (Hallissy 5). "Appropriate behavior for women was

'defined by their relationship to men'," Hallissy notes, and a "daughter's or wife's estate depended on her father's or husband's" (5).

Daughters, expected to conduct themselves as befitting the estate of their father, were to dress accordingly as well, thereby attracting a proper husband. Maidens, expected to be modest and demure, demonstrated this by not speaking or laughing too much or too loudly, by staying home with the older women of the family, and by avoiding inappropriate food and drink. Discouraged from going out, in some cases even to church, they could leave the house only for an approved reason. In such cases, they were to be accompanied by a chaperone and were advised to "walk with eyes downcast. . . and taking small steps" to prevent people from considering them flirtatious or overly-curious (Hallissy 22). Women who were unaccompanied outside the home were considered sexually available, and it was the father's role as protector of the maiden's chastity to ensure that she was never alone or unguarded (Hallissy 44, 90). When a maiden became a wife, she then conducted herself according to her husband's estate.

Wives were expected to continue to be modest and to dress according to the husband's estate. In addition, the good wife was expected to run the household efficiently, conserve goods, and provide good public relations, so that people would think highly of

her husband because of her efforts. When he was away, she was to be even more modest than usual and to show no joy. If the husband was unfaithful, some male authorities said that the wife should accept it while others said that she should discourage it so that he might be saved from his sins. Behind closed doors, the wife was expected to be "non-confrontational, soothing his anger and reflecting his own thoughts back to him" (Hallissy 22).

Only by turning to Christ could a woman escape the secular roles of maidens, wives, and, later, possibly widows. These consecrated virgins were able to remove themselves completely from family relationships and the expectations surrounding secular roles. They still belonged to a man, Christ, but as His bride many of those in medieval society believed that these women achieved a higher spiritual estate than that of their secular sisters who chose earthly marriage and all its challenges. Especially in the early Middle Ages, convents provided an opportunity for women to "develop their own spiritual and intellectual potential" as "individual souls before God" (Hallissy 6). The only women who could develop their individual potential further than the nuns were those rare widows fortunate enough to have independence, both financially and legally.

Chaucer demonstrates through Criseyde the difficult life most widows had to lead in the Middle Ages. Women who became

widows had, for the first time in their lives, freedom and a legal identity—"legal liberation" as Eileen Power notes (Hallissy 143). A widow doesn't have to remarry, Saint Jerome indicates; he compares the remarriage of a widow to the scriptural image of a dog returning to its own vomit (Hallissy 22). Others, like St. Paul and Christine de Pizan, have stated that widows could remarry if they are still young.

The widow, a stock character in Chaucer's time, typically denoted either virtue or lechery. Widows needed a proper public image—which included being pious and pleasant—and the best way to maintain this was to remain at home, out of the public's watchful eye. Criseyde was quite bold in going to religious festivals and looking out windows (Hallissy 22-23, 140).

As Christine de Pizan explains, widows, besides grieving, suffer "three trials in particular": 1) "harshness and lack of consideration or sympathy," 2) lawsuits, and 3) "evil talk of people who are all too willing to attack [them], so that [they] hardly know what [they] can do that will not be criticized" (220). All three of these occur to Criseyde at various times in the story. To survive, a widow must learn to carefully guard her speech, making "humble requests" like Criseyde does to Hector, for example (220). However, despite "quiet humility in words, apparel, and countenance," widows must "learn the judgment and behavior

necessary to protect [themselves] against those only too willing to get the better of [them]," states de Pizan, and should avoid them wherever possible (220).

To do so effectively, De Pizan recommends staying quietly home while being careful not to get involved in arguments with neighbors or servants. "By always speaking quietly while protecting your own interests," de Pizan states, "as well as by mingling little with miscellaneous people if you don't need to, you will avoid anyone taking advantage of you or ruining you" (221). Although Criseyde breaks the code of conduct by appearing at a religious festival and visiting her uncle's house rather than remaining at home, she generally follows the same wisdom of de Pizan and for the same reasons: she is concerned about appearances and about the need for wooing the gossips, in order to avoid trouble, including lawsuits.

The widow should avoid lawsuits if possible; but if she cannot then she must pursue her rights courteously and "attempt alternatives for achieving her ends" (de Pizan 221). Certainly Criseyde does this, through the dinner party orchestrated by Pandarus held in her honor, not knowing that her uncle had made up the story about some men causing trouble for her. Most importantly, de Pizan notes, any widow handling a lawsuit who wishes to avoid further trouble and remain successful in her

endeavor needs to "take on the heart of a man. She must be constant, strong, and wise in judging and pursuing her advantage, not crouching in tears, defenseless, like some simple woman or like a poor dog who retreats into a corner while all the other dogs jump on him" (222). Criseyde demonstrates her understanding of this by becoming strong-willed and confident in her choices out of necessity. Moreover, in other areas, Criseyde is also deeper than the stock character of widow used in other literature during Chaucer's time:

In creating his women characters, Chaucer was able to work within a well-known and highly detailed complex of ideas about virgins, wives, and widows.

Unlike his contemporaries who also used the tradition, Chaucer often did so in such a way as to question the validity of those received opinions. . . [He] shaped, modified, even flouted what everyone assumed to be true about women. (Hallissy 2)

As a male author, he was unique in that he gave women a voice reflective of real conversations, rather than artificial constructs. This began a dialogue that continues to this day about both male and female roles in society.

Chaucer treats his male characters as atypically as he does his female characters in *Troilus and Criseyde*. As he did with

Criseyde, Troilus's status in Trojan society is also reflected by the medieval idea of 'estat'. Troilus, in the upper echelon of nobility, is the second son of Priam, King of Troy. A leader well-regarded in Trojan society, he conducts himself as a noble should. Chaucer's narrator summarizes him as "a worthy kynges sone" (1.226) and, before his love for Criseyde, as a proud knight who scorns love (1.183-203). This portrayal may be in response to John Gower, one of the men to whom Chaucer dedicates *Troilus and Criseyde*, and who writes,

Now tell me. . .: what honor shall a conqueror have if
 a woman's love can conquer him? The end will
 bring nothing but inevitable folly upon the man for
 whom Venus initially leads the way to arms A
 woman does not often release a man whom she has
 ensnared so that he may escape. Instead, she
 envelops him with her silly love. The man who is once
 free and subjugates himself voluntarily ought to be
 reckoned more idiotic than an idiot. . . . It is not for the
 wise man to enter a ford in which he could be
 drowned, but rather to check his course away from
 the destruction, once he has seen it. (194)

Chaucer addresses this question through the character of Troilus, effectively demonstrating that a man deeply in love can at the same time be a powerful warrior.

As a warrior and "fierse" knight, Troilus is known for success and bravery in battle (1.225). This attracts Criseyde as much as his physical beauty and other qualities, since she is greatly concerned about the Trojan War and afraid of the Greeks (2.123-24). She is aware that the Greeks are afraid of Troilus and that the Trojans are proud of him, considering him second only to Hector (1.482-83, 2.610-44). He honors his primary responsibility as a knight, which is to keep the oath made to his lord or king, "to whom they have sworn and promised to do all that he shall command for the defence (sic) of his land"—and true knights do not fear death or what might befall in battle (Bonet 189).

Gradual changes occur in the character of this true knight as Chaucer's story progresses. For example, Troilus changes from haughty to human. Early in the story, Troilus has pride and haughtiness before he falls in love with Criseyde. "Troilus is not proud of his wealth or his birth, he is not proud of his strength or his good looks, but he is proud of what he conceives of as his ability to withstand temptation" (Wood, *Elements* 76). As he leads his young knights around, he enjoys not only girl-watching with them but also teasing them about their discomfiture around the women they are

attracted to or in love with (1.183-203). He is proud of himself for not falling into so silly a trap as that of loving a woman, which echoes Gower. Yet when he sees and falls in love with Criseyde, "kaught" is the "proud" (1.214). As he grows in love for her, his pride melts away and he begins to be more friendly, helpful, understanding, and kind to others—and also one of the best knights in his time (1.1079-85). His "humility works to his advantage; Criseyde, recognizing that his helplessness is a testimony to the genuineness of his feelings, loves him 'nevere the lasse' [3.85-89] for it" (Mann, *Critical Essays* 152). Yet his self-confidence turns to uncertainty, and while still a leader in the battlefield, he becomes what some may consider passive in his domestic relationship with Criseyde, as when he yields control of the task of winning Criseyde to Pandarus, unlike his rival Diomedes, who is able to obtain Criseyde's favor without outside help. Chaucer uses the character of Troilus to examine the roles men have defined for themselves and present to the world.

By using 'summae' as a backdrop to a portrayal of roles present in daily existence, and through convincing descriptions, details, and dialogue, Chaucer causes readers to re-examine conventional understanding. Through Criseyde, who "insists upon her agency and her active role" in her affair with Troilus, and through Troilus, who "eschews courtly conventions," Chaucer

represents a man and woman who "have freed themselves from patriarchal expectations concerning how one behaves in love" and who "have discovered, consequently, that love can bring forth a world of delight for both the woman and the man" (Behrman 326). Chaucer opened the door for the next generation of writers and philosophers to consider how they might choose to represent and redefine societal roles and love.

Chapter 3

Relationship of Troilus and Criseyde

In the evolution of the story of Troilus and Criseyde, the beginnings and the nature of the relationship change as each writer develops the story in a unique way. For instance, some striking differences distinguish Boccaccio from Chaucer, particularly regarding language and love. Whereas Boccaccio had created Troilus as a character who had been jaded and hurt by love, Chaucer instead chooses to emphasize, through Troilus, the significance of first love. Chaucer also changes Criseyde's character: she is more thoughtful and more deeply-faceted than in previous versions. By significantly changing aspects of the characters and revising the story, he allows the characters to represent ideas notably absent in earlier versions of the narrative, using language as catalyst, particularly regarding romantic love and its origins. Through this, Chaucer reveals how the interdependence of love and language can transform a relationship.

First, Chaucer demonstrates how love begins to transform Troilus. At the beginning of the story, Troilus, without having experienced romantic love firsthand, has no understanding of why love affects others in the way that it does. Indeed, he looks scornfully and with amusement upon those experiencing heartache and longing for love:

If knyght or squyer of his compaignie
 Gan for to syke, or lete his eighen baiten
 On any womman that he koude espye.
 He wolde smyle and holden it folye,
 And seye hym thus, "God woot, she slepeth softe
 For love of the, whan thou turnest ful ofte!
 I have herd told, pardieux, of youre lyvyng,
 Ye loveres, and youre lewed observaunces,
 And which a labour folk han in wynnynge
 Of love, and in the kepyng which doutaunces;
 And whan youre prey is lost, woo and penaunces.
 O veray fooles, nyce and blynde be ye!
 Ther nys nat oon kan war by other be."
 And with that word he gan caste up the browe,
 Ascaunces, "Loo! is this naught wisely spoken?"

(1.191-205)

Echoing Gower, who questions what honor a warrior shall have if a woman's love can conquer him (194), Troilus believes, before he falls in love, that "nothing hadde had swich myght / Ayeyns his wille that shuld his herte stere" (1.228-29). He thinks he is in control of himself, his will, and his emotions; yet, no man can overcome nature's laws, the narrator reminds us (1.238). However, when

Cupid's arrow strikes Troilus, he falls in love with Criseyde, and love begins to transform him.

In representing these transformations through the "early stages of Troilus' love Chaucer constructs a double effect" which "fully dramatizes the urgency of being in love yet allows for a reflective consideration of such love in general," Barry Windeatt notes (217):

In that this first experience of love for Troilus is sincere, uncalculated, wholly engrossing, Chaucer can present it as a model of its kind. This is a type case of first love, presented so as to show how such love characteristically channels and expresses itself through a power of idealization. *Troilus* has been painstakingly set in a pagan world, and one advantage of this is to give Chaucer a freedom to present in his Troilus an example of the universal experience of love, but outside the contemporary moral context in which such love would be considered and judged in his own time. (217)

Many readers can identify with that feeling of first love, and the accompanying emotions of excitement, fear, joy, and confusion. James Shanley points out that the reason Troilus's situation ultimately becomes "pathetic" is not that Troilus "thinks Criseyde

and love good, but that he has made them the things upon which all his happiness depends" (138). Theodore Stroud amplifies this point, noting that the longing Troilus has "to possess Criseyde physically has overtones of a religious devotee agonizingly praying for a mystical union" (128). Thus, not only does Troilus accept his feelings, but as he begins to do so, he also begins to change significantly.

In fact, after he accepts his feelings, Troilus abandons his pride and scorn. He gains understanding of what others suffered in love and becomes kind and helpful:

And though that he be come of blood roial,
Hym liste of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to ech in general,
For which he gat hym thank in every place.
Thus wolde Love—yheried be his grace! —
That Pride, Envy, Ire, and Avarice
He gan to fle, and everich other vice. (3.1800-06)

His love transforms him from an immature rude boy to a mature man, with all the virtues attributed to knighthood. Yet, he continues to keep his love to himself.

Initially, Troilus is reluctant to share his feelings for Criseyde with anyone. Pandarus comes into his room unannounced one day and, when hearing his groans and seeing his distress, ultimately

persuades him to reveal his problem first by using scorn to attack his pride as a warrior and religious man then by appealing to the love and trust they share between them as friends (1.545-616). When Pandarus learns that love is the root of the malady, he pushes past Troilus's remark to "lat be" his "olde ensaumples" (1.752-60) and eventually persuades Troilus to tell him who he loves by appealing to his pride and hope:

What womman koude loven swich a wrecche?
 "What may she demen oother of thy deeth,
 If thou thus deye, and she not why it is,
 But that for feere is yolden up thy breth,
 For Grekes han biseged us, iwys?
 Lord, which a thonk than shaltow han of this!
 Thus wol she seyn, and al the town attones,
 The wrecche is ded, the devel have his bones!"
 "Thow mayst allone here wepe and crye and knele—
 But love a womman that she woot it nought,
 And she wol quyte it that thou shalt nat fele;
 Unknowe, unkist, and lost that is unsought.

(1.798-809)

This insight convinces Troilus, along with some further arguments about Fortune's Wheel and its positive possibilities, to finally reveal that he is in love with Pandarus's niece, Criseyde (1.820-74).

Pandarus, of course, helps Troilus to obtain the love of Criseyde. He serves as a catalyst for Troilus to recognize, validate, and externalize his feelings of love through language. In essence, for Troilus, his transformation takes place first through love then language.

Yet for Criseyde, the opposite occurs: her transformation takes place first through language—specifically, words from Pandarus—then through love. Pandarus visits Criseyde, and his sixth sentence to her upon his arrival is about love (2.85-97). Later, Pandarus begins to speak of Troilus and his excellent qualities and actions, then hints of an adventure waiting for her (2.157-224). When he finds her receptive to what he has to say, he tells her of the love Troilus has for her (2. 246-325). He then bursts into tears and informs her that if she refuses to take pity on Troilus then her beauty is outmatched by her cruelty. He also counsels her that as her uncle she should continue to trust him because all that he and Troilus want from her is friendship with Troilus (2.326-85). Underneath the conversation, Pandarus hopes his specifically targeted words will influence Criseyde's decision about Troilus.

Pandarus's influence becomes apparent when Criseyde asks him what he would recommend that she should do regarding Troilus. Encouraged by her reply, he changes his tactics from trying to induce guilt to trying to induce fear, reminding her she is getting

older and losing a little of her beauty with each passing day. He also presses past the request for friendship onto love (2.388-407). She then bursts into tears herself and says "Allas, for wo! Why nere I deed? " (2.409). She chastises him:

Allas, what sholden straunge to me doon,
 Whan he that for my beste frend I wende
 Ret me to love, and sholde it me defende?
 Allas! I wolde han trusted, douteles,
 That if that I, thorough my dysaventure,
 Hadde loved outhur hym or Achilles,
 Ector, or any mannes creature,
 Ye nolde han had no mercy ne mesure
 On me, but alwey had me in repreve. (2.411-19)

Pandarus, through the type of request he is making of Criseyde, is going directly against what the conduct books emphasize the most: preservation of female chastity. As her closest male relative in Troy, he should be guarding her honor, not asking her to become involved in friendship with a male. Criseyde, understandably, distrusts the direction in which Pandarus is attempting to lead her.

Protesting his innocence and telling her he will no longer visit her if he is so mistrusted, Pandarus gets up to leave, and she stops him. She realizes her choices in the situation are limited and proceeds cautiously to accept friendship but nothing further, so that

she might retain her honor. Later in the same visit, she asks Pandarus to tell her more about Troilus. Although hesitant at first to get involved with Troilus, Criseyde's curiosity overwhelms her caution, and she begins to ask her uncle specific questions about Troilus, such as "Kan he wel speke of love?" (2.503). Pleased that he has accomplished his objective, Pandarus gladly answers, and they end the visit on a happy note (2.429-597). Pandarus, through careful use of language, has planted the seeds for love.

After he leaves, Criseyde ponders the love Pandarus has described, which is a significant revision by Chaucer of Boccaccio's version of the story. Specifically, Chaucer's Criseyde models how a medieval woman might approach such an unusual request. Whereas Boccaccio's Criseyde falls in love with Troilus quickly and reactively, Chaucer's Criseyde instead thinks very carefully about her actions. She weighs how to best satisfy the king's son without arousing his anger while at the same time maintaining her liberty. She doesn't know much about Troilus at this stage, and she is concerned about how this news may affect her life. She thinks to herself:

I am myn owene womman, wel at ese—
 I thank it God—as after myn estat,
 Right yong, and stonde unteyd in lusty leese,
 Withouten jalousie or swich debat:

Shal noon housbonde seyn to me "Chek mat!"

For either they ben ful of jalousie,

Or maisterfull, or loven novelrie. (2.750-56)

It seems that her deceased husband had prevented her from doing what she wanted; therefore, she fears losing such a dearly gained freedom, of being cast down from the height of newfound happiness that comes from living a life of independence, created by her own choices.

Widows who are financially independent have more choices than married women or maidens:

Because widowhood truly provides so many hardships for women, some people might think it best for all widows to remarry. This argument can be answered by saying that if it were true that the married state consisted entirely of peace and repose, this indeed would be so. That one almost always sees the contrary in marriages should be a warning to all widows. However, it might be necessary or desirable for the young ones to remarry. But for all those who have passed their youth and who are sufficiently comfortable financially so that poverty does not oblige them, remarriage is complete folly. Though some who want to remarry say there is nothing in life for a

woman alone, they have so little confidence in their own good sense that they will claim that they don't know how to manage their own lives. (de Pizan 223)

Because Criseyde wants to manage her own life, she cautiously considers her approach to a potential relationship with Troilus. She wants to make her own decisions because she retains confidence in her own good sense (Behrman 317-18).

Consequently, her good sense tells her that in choosing to have a relationship with Troilus, she could be risking her good reputation with the people of Troy. Criseyde understands that the widow should not be "too friendly or seemingly intimate with any man who may be observed frequenting her house, unless he is a relative," as de Pizan recommends. "Even then discretion should be observed. . . . For no matter how devout a woman herself may be, the world is inclined to speak evil. . ." (222). Criseyde, well aware of the dangers inherent in having a relationship with Troilus, taps into the same wisdom expressed by de Pizan:

The remedy against [being at the mercy of evil tongues] is that [the widow] must be careful in every way possible not to give anyone reason to talk against her because of appearance, bearing, or clothing. All these should be simple and seemly, and the woman's

manners quiet and discreet regarding her body, thus giving no cause for gossip. (222)

Criseyde portrays the benefits of following this advice: as long as she continues to wear her widow's 'weddes', remains discreet in her relationships with men, and seldom visits her uncle's house, her reputation should remain untarnished. Rather than emotionally reacting to circumstance and physical desire like Boccaccio's Criseyde does, Chaucer's Criseyde has been revised to reflect a character who believes that only she should decide how far to go in a relationship with Troilus.

However, in regard to a love relationship with Troilus, Criseyde has concerns beyond the normal social obstacles facing her as a widow. For example, marriage remains unavailable as an option because Troilus, second son of King Priam, would be expected to marry a woman with a higher social position. Additionally, because of her father's desertion to the Greek camp, Criseyde understands that her social position is dangerously insecure. Even worse, her uncle Pandarus, as the one who should be guarding her honor, instead uses his influence unfairly to persuade her to have a relationship with Troilus. In sum, Criseyde, aware that her current social situation is precarious on a number of levels, finds it crucial to maintain her honor and reputation if she wants to keep her place as a lady in Trojan society. If she refuses

Troilus's request for friendship, she could anger him and bring further trouble upon herself.

On the other hand, if Criseyde accepts Troilus's request, she realizes that maintaining her honor and reputation become even more important than under normal circumstances. As noted in Chapter 2, Criseyde has a legitimate fear about the danger of being seen; if people see her with Troilus, they might view the relationship as an impure alliance rather than a friendship, which could then lead to gossip. People could consider her unchaste, in which case all the benefits she enjoys as an accepted member of society would end, leading to a life of hardship without recourse or friend. Further, Criseyde could risk much with Troilus if she finds him untrue or indiscreet, which would essentially lead to her ruin. Yet, if she were to go against the king's son, life could become very difficult. His displeasure, always a potential source of danger for her, could cause life to become unpleasant. Ultimately, no matter which course she takes, she could face difficulty because of her current situation.

As Criseyde further considers her situation, Troilus slowly rides by after a successful battle against the Greeks (2.598-648)—another significant and unusual revision by Chaucer, depicting female interest and attraction through the visual cue of male beauty: Criseyde, upon studying his face carefully and letting its

image sink into her heart, asks herself, "Who yaf me drynke?" (2.649-51). His prowess, physical beauty, high estate, rank, and renown attract her as well. Pandarus's words planted a seed in her heart that now takes root. Antigone's words, along with her song of love, further convince Criseyde (2.827-75), and she begins to think about the possibility of a relationship with Troilus.

Chaucer meticulously revises what Criseyde's character expects, upon first meeting Troilus. Although she is fully aware that she is of lower social rank within the relationship, and acts accordingly, she is delighted to find that instead of an established hierarchy Troilus modestly treats her with respect and equality. This leads her to speak unconventionally, with familiarity and intimacy, rather than reflecting her partner's words back to him as the conduct books suggested (3.1112, 3.1126-27, 3.1504-05, 4.1605-06). Moreover, unlike Boccaccio's Criseyde, Chaucer's Criseyde decides to accept Troilus as her lover because of his good service to her for a long period of time and his apparent devotion to her, which she realizes could give her certain control over life despite the seeming vulnerability she initially feared.

Ultimately, as time passes, Criseyde finds this precious love and respect from Troilus does allow her to control her own life—right up to the day her exchange is announced (4.209-13, 4.666-67). On that day, everything changes for Criseyde: Trojan society has essentially rejected

her completely, and although Hector, the greatest warrior in Troy, attempts to prevent it, no one agrees to let her remain in Troy (4.176-96). She is now as alone as she was at the beginning of the story. Because Troilus is unable to offer a concrete and specific plan for how the two could remain a couple, Criseyde, a practical woman, decides to leave for the Greek camp and shares these thoughts with him (4.1252-1687). As time passes, Calchas's words, refusing to let her go back to Troy (5.694-95) and warning the Greeks of the fall of Troy (1.71-84), combined with Diomedes's words, offering protection and romance (5.128-75), influence her decision to remain in the Greek camp. Chaucer's Criseyde demonstrates a deeply thoughtful and practical woman, confident in her speech and careful in her decision-making process.

Even more specifically, Chaucer models the decision process that a woman may experience when attracted to a man. Chaucer's version of the story, shares Criseyde's thoughts and speech with the reader. Highly unusual for its time, it counters the love and language advice of the conduct books that instruct women in speech, encourage women's silence, and define women in context of their relationship to men. Instead, Chaucer emphasizes the power and importance of women's thoughts and speech by respectfully giving them expression through his writing. Further, by modeling specifically how women can use words in thoughts and speech to obtain an emotionally successful and physically

satisfying relationship, Chaucer offers a new way to consider the interaction of language and love in forming and maintaining relationships.

Chapter 4

An Overview of Discourse Analysis

To better understand the linguistic and discourse analysis applied to the conversations of Troilus and Criseyde, this chapter offers an overview of the methodology used for this purpose. To start, linguistic analysis is “concerned with understanding underlying patterns that create language, the mechanisms that give it structure and allow it to be used as a vehicle of communication” (Lakoff 3). While the umbrella term 'linguistics' has come to mean structure at the level of sentence, a subset of linguistics—discourse analysis—operates at the level of extended speech or writing. Using discourse and pragmatic analysis enables linguists to study “linguistic interactions that follow predictable patterns known implicitly or explicitly to participants and have a discernable function” (Lakoff 41), such as conversations, arguments, speeches, narratives, anecdotes, and jokes. In this way, discourse analysis can illuminate the underlying structure of social relationships and the ways in which they function.

Specifically, discourse analysis focuses on language features such as forms of address, distribution of pronouns, use of active and passive voice, use of the transactive and nontransactive, use of directness versus indirectness, and topic raising and turn taking. Additionally, discourse analysis employs methodologies like

pragmatics, which considers semantic and lexical choices in the context of speaker, audience, and situation. Pragmatics refers to a system of language use that “includes the rules and patterns that govern meaning and interpretation derived from context” (Johnson 36). Essentially, it covers “both context-dependent aspects of language structure and principles of language usage and understanding that have nothing or little to do with linguistic structure” (Levinson 9). Pragmatics focuses on what speakers hope to achieve through their communication and on the actual effect that occurs upon the participants (Lakoff 28). Such analysis can reveal how power is used within social relationships and how the participants perceive themselves and each other in relationships they share.

For example, with forms of address, a speaker’s choice in using first names, last names, nicknames, or titles reveals how that speaker perceives the relationship in terms of social hierarchy and closeness or distance. So too addressing someone with endearment such as 'my sweetheart' in Modern English or 'mine herte swete' in Middle English in combination with the ensuing response by the listener reflect the nature of the relationship as perceived by each participant. “Many of the ambiguities in choosing a form of address in English are a matter of expression of the degree of formality or familiarity in the relationship,” according to

Edward Sagarin (201). In other words, there is deferential politeness or solidarity politeness. In deferential politeness, the speaker is respectful yet maintains a social distance, a lack of intimacy. In solidarity politeness, the speaker expresses affection and intimacy as well as respect (Scollon and Scollon 175). For example, a man will start out calling his date by her first name then eventually will begin to refer to her as 'honey' or 'sweetheart', reflecting a deeper level of familiarity and a change in their statuses, as perceived by him. If the change is reciprocal, “rebuff is unlikely” and the reciprocity is demonstrated “in the shift to new forms of address from both sides” (Sagarin 201). Both participants have agreed to the new status of the relationship, and it is reflected in their communication with each other.

When the participants disagree on the status or the relationship, one or both may choose to avoid further encounters, avoid situations in which addressing may occur, wait for cues, or use a form of address while exhibiting stress. These behaviors are most likely to occur under one of the following conditions: 1) one participant is trying to express status not recognized by the other, 2) “clear-cut institutionalized roles governing the status” are not in place, 3) the status of the relationship is changing or has changed, 4) two or more “simultaneous reciprocal roles are held by the speaker and the [addressee],” or 5) a conflict occurs “between the

speaker and the addressee over their definition of the statuses they occupy” (Sagarin 195). Further, a speaker can demonstrate either deference or degradation through forms of address, which can be determined by taking the form used into the overall context of the conversation combined with the impression the speaker “sought to give” and the impression the listener received (Sagarin 195). The social hierarchy present in the relationship, including power and solidarity, can be determined by listening to the forms of address in use.

For instance, power and solidarity are often marked through the choice of personal pronouns. These pronouns can reflect closeness or distance as well as perception of place in the social hierarchy. If both parties use the familiar form 'tu' (French) or 'thow' (Middle English), then closeness and solidarity are established. If, on the other hand, both parties use the polite form—'vous' in French or 'yow/ye' in Middle English—then distance and mutual respect are established. Yet, if one party uses the familiar form 'tu' or 'thow' and expects the other to respond with the polite form 'vous' or 'yow/ye', then this reflects an asymmetrical relationship in which the speaker is assuming a position of power, a higher position in the social hierarchy, rather than solidarity or respect. Power is “non-reciprocal in the sense that both cannot have power in the same area of behavior” and this can be exhibited through the

dialog that occurs (Brown and Gilman 255). Regardless of social position, using the pronoun 'we' as opposed to 'you and I' reinforces a sense of belonging or connectedness. Thus, power relationships are created in social settings through these word choices.

Clearly, then, power relationships are not natural but artificial social constructs that are created and reinforced primarily through language (Fowler 61). Power, powerlessness, and solidarity can also be expressed through the use of active or passive voice. For instance, active voice occurs when the subject of the verb is also the actor producing the action, sometimes to an object of the verb, as in this example: 'The child played the game'. In contrast, passive voice involves a sentence subject receiving the action of the verb: the same content in passive voice would be reflected as 'The game was played by the child'. Sometimes in passive voice the object can be omitted altogether; when this occurs, the sentence is referred to as passive voice with deleted agent. Use of active versus passive voice, including deleted agents, can clearly indicate the speaker's perceived position in a social hierarchy.

This position can be further clarified by framing it within the context of transactive versus nontransactive events. Kress defines a transactive event as an event portrayed as arising directly as a result from some agent's action and with a direct effect on a goal, whereas a nontransactive event is without such an action but

rather is either a self-caused action or an action that happens in some unspecified way. For example, 'The child threw the ball' would be considered a transactive event, where the child is the agent, throwing is the action, and the ball is the goal. Examples of a nontransactive event would be 'The child ran' or 'The food was made'. Kress explains how this can be useful:

Clearly the mode in which an action is presented, either as transactive or as nontransactive, is not a matter of truth or of reality but rather a matter of the way in which that particular action is integrated into the ideological system of the speaker, and the manner in which such an action is therefore articulated in a specific discourse. (34)

Events are portrayed causally as they relate to the ideology of the speaker (Kress 34). In other words, speakers choose how to portray an action or event by organizing it in a way that is relevant to their ideology and their previous experience with discourse. Thus, by examining their choices in a discourse, we can gain an understanding of speakers' perceptions of the status of their relationships and social hierarchy.

Relational status and social hierarchy also depend on social culture and context. Thus, power can be enforced through the use of directives, expressed either directly or indirectly depending on

social rules. Politeness can be expressed through this device as well. These concepts when applied to Western culture hinge upon the concept of 'face': 'positive face' describes each individual's social striving for a positive self-image, social credibility, and recognition of this same striving in others, and 'negative face' respects an individual's right to privacy, boundaries, and time alone (Brown and Levinson 66-67). Positive and negative face rely on a social understanding of politeness and consideration of others. Interactional events which impose on others or which are considered rude are referred to as 'face-threatening acts' (FTAs) and can affect relationships and social standing. For example, in Western culture, because the requestor is assuming access to the hearer's time and attention, a request for information, such as the time, could be considered a FTA unless accompanied by a polite phrasing such as 'Excuse me. . .' or 'Would you mind. . .' Other FTAs include criticism, requests, and disagreements when stated directly. If speakers want to perform what may be considered FTAs, they can use indirect speech to accomplish it; this is referred to as going 'off-record' and 'saving face'. By being indirect, the meaning is ambiguous, and the speaker can disclaim any knowledge of FTAs. Indirectness can also be used to be polite and respectful of the other—for example, allowing the hearer a way out of an indirect request by letting the hearer infer a different meaning than the one

intended by the speaker (Brown and Levinson 216). In this way, social hierarchy is maintained.

In addition, social hierarchy is expressed by control of conversation through topic raising and turn taking. The term 'topic' has been defined as a subject or theme—or, more simply, what is being talked about—in combination with the speaker's intent as defined through speech acts (Brown and Yule 71). In conversations, one speaker speaks at a time, and turns are taken either by the current speaker selecting another participant or by participants competing for the floor of their own accord. Turn taking occurs at “transition-relevant places” in the conversation, as indicated by the speaker through changes in tone, sentence completion, and other indicators (Sachs et al, 34). Speakers, as participants in a conversation, “are oriented toward ideas: they evaluate them or present them neutrally; they express commitment to them, or distance from them” (Schiffrin 27).

As participants begin a conversation, the content tends to fall under a broad category that has been agreed upon, of which topics are chosen and discussed. Participants then take turns speaking about the topic or attempt to bring up a new topic or a new category, and the person speaking would be said to have the floor. For example, participants discussing their children's grades would be speaking under the broad category of 'school' and from there

could discuss topics such as evaluation of grades, choice of text books, study habits of students, completion of homework, and any number of other topics that relate to the overall category of 'school'. Participants would then either raise topics that fit under the general category agreed upon or change the topic to reflect a new general category. A participant could use cues within the topic to change the category of 'schools' to a new topic under a new category: for example, if one speaker brought up a movie about a student who had bad grades, another could use 'movie' as a cue to switch to the category of movies, thereby safely changing the topic to a new category while maintaining cohesion.

So too, topic raising can establish power and control, but with the possibility of vulnerability. A topic that has been raised by one speaker can be accepted, rejected, or ignored by other participants—hence the vulnerability. Introducing a topic occurs through turn taking, which is “governed by rules that are sensitive to context *and* to cultural definition” (Johnson 37). For it to occur effectively, it needs to take place in a way that is not face-threatening to other participants and their interests. Various strategies such as hedges (e.g., 'perhaps', 'a little bit', 'I would really like. . .') and discourse markers (e.g., 'but', 'anyway', 'as I was trying to say') can help to ease the transition without the previous speaker feeling threatened or offended. Raising a topic can be a way to

“assert rank, maintain face, and challenge the face of others” (Diamond 96). When a topic has been successfully introduced and accepted, the speaker then has the ability to shape the experience of the participants, at least momentarily, and to attempt to influence them while controlling the conversation (Diamond 93-96). Ultimately, power is “displayed in the ability to exert an influence on others, to interpret events and have those interpretations accepted, to perpetuate one’s role, to define others’ roles, and to do all this without too severely harming the fabric of interpersonal relationships” (Diamond 112).

Within topics, semantic and lexical choices, as viewed by pragmatics, illuminate the choices a speaker or writer makes in using language based on a perceived set of expectations shared by a social group. Lexical choices, within the context of pragmatics, refer to the actual words a speaker chooses. Semantic choices refer to meanings imbued within words, whether ideational or concrete and referential (Johnson 34-36). These choices can reveal how speakers perceive the social group they are in and each person’s role within that group. One way in which pragmatics uncovers this information is by word choice as governed by a group’s linguistic conventions. As Gumperz states,

[M]embers’ effectiveness within a group depends on their control over a range of communicative options

and on their knowledge of the signaling potential that these options have in alluding to shared history, values and mutual obligations. (206)

For example, Criseyde demonstrates her understanding of these options when she agrees to remain at her uncle's house during the rain storm (3.641-51). Both Troilus and Criseyde understand the linguistic conventions of their social group.

In the next chapter, the current methods of discourse analysis and pragmatics as outlined in this chapter are applied to the conversations between Troilus and Criseyde and to the linguistic conventions they follow. The study evaluates the actual words of Troilus and Criseyde, with a focus on the nature of the relationship between the two individuals. The linguistic analysis reveals whether the relationship of Troilus and Criseyde is based upon one character's controlling and ultimately deceiving the other, or whether their union is a partnership that is founded upon equality and trust but which is finally ended by the forces of war.

Chapter 5

An Analysis of Speeches and Linguistic Exchanges

The direct discourse of Troilus and Criseyde, particularly the 830 lines that the couple address to each other, reflects their true 'entente' as it shifts throughout the course of their relationship. The specific methodology used for examining the discourse in *Troilus and Criseyde* includes forms of address, as set forth by Ervin-Tripp, distribution of pronouns, as discussed by Brown and Gilman, use of active versus passive voice, including deleted agents, as explained by Fowler, use of the transactive and nontransactive, as clarified by Kress, use of directness versus indirectness, as described by Gumperz, topic raising, as depicted by Schiffrin, turn taking, as illustrated by Sinclair and Coulthard, and pragmatics, with a focus on semantic and lexical choices. In addition, my study determines the patterns of each of these features, based upon frequency, and it interprets specific subtleties of relevant features within the context of a specific conversation or sub-discourse. To facilitate this detailed discourse analysis, in addition to relying on traditional methods, I have supported my observations with data compiled from a textual analysis program (MonoConc) and an electronic edition of the Riverside *Troilus and Criseyde*. This analysis demonstrates the language mechanisms through which speakers or writers reveal and maintain power relationships.

Forms of address, as noted in the previous chapter, can reveal much about the nature of a relationship. A speaker's choice in using first names, last names, nicknames, or titles reveals how that speaker perceives the relationship in terms of social hierarchy and closeness or distance. As the status of a relationship changes, so do the forms of address. Over the course of their relationship, Troilus ultimately uses 11 unique forms of address, whereas Criseyde uses 18 forms. Changes in the forms of address to each other reflect how each perceives the status of their relationship over time.

Criseyde initially views their relationship in terms of power through social hierarchy, which means that she takes a formal and distant position. When Troilus and Criseyde first meet (3.57-217), Criseyde, as reflected in her dialogue, treats the relationship in a formal guarded manner that demonstrates her awareness of the hierarchical positions each has in society: Troilus has a higher social position because he is a prince whereas Criseyde, in addition to her lower social rank, is also the daughter of a traitor who has deserted Troy for the Greek camp. Therefore, Criseyde is cautious, formal, and distant when she and Troilus first meet. She responds to Troilus's first sentences to her by addressing him twice as "sire" (3.68, 3.75). As they end their first conversation together, Criseyde calls him "deere herte" and "my knyght" (3.176). Criseyde moves

from the polite and distant 'sire' to the more intimate solidarity of 'deere herte'. Her choices reflect a person who has become more intimate and trusting in the relationship, a person beginning to make a bond, to create a connection.

Criseyde's forms of address to Troilus change significantly as her emotions change. When they become closer, she uses 'swe(e)te', 'de(e)re', and 'herte', sometimes in combination with 'owen(e)', to express intimacy. However, after she leaves for the Greek camp these intimate terms are absent from her discourse, as are 'knight', 'Troilus', and others. Abstractions appear in their place, such as "Cupid's son" (5.1590), "ensample of goodlyheede" (5.1590), "sward of knyghthod" (5.1591), and "sours of gentillesse" (5.1591). Criseyde's choices in the forms of address unmistakably reflect her change of heart and her loss of interest in a relationship with Troilus.

Whereas Criseyde moves from using formal and distant forms of address to more intimate ones and then back, Troilus maintains a constant and intimate position of respect and equality, as demonstrated in his choices for forms of address. He calls her 'swete herte' twice right from the beginning of their meeting, then amplifies the term twice later by adding "deere" once (3.127) and "myn owen" once toward the end of their meeting (3.147). He calls her "wommanliche wif" (3.106), "goodly, fresshe free" (3.128), "my

lady right" and "chief resort" (3.134). He ultimately uses five different forms of address with her in this initial conversation. His choices reflect the decision he made before he ever spoke with her in person: " For with good hope he gan fully assente / Criseyde for to love, and nought repente" (1.391-92). In other words, he loves Criseyde, and his forms of address express this emotion, even though they have never talked before.

Not only do the forms of address that Troilus uses remain constant throughout the initial conversation, but also throughout the course of the relationship as well. His initial favorite choices of 'swete herte', 'lady', and 'Criseyde' continue throughout the entire time of the relationship. Even to the end, he is calling her "myn owen swete herte" (5.1421). When he is trying to win her back at the end of the relationship, he uses additional, more flowery, terms to refer to her, just as he did at the beginning. Although somewhat different from the terms he uses in the beginning, he calls her "right fresshe flour" (5.1317), "my right lode-sterre" (5.1392), "myn hertes day" (5.1405), and "goodly, faire, fresshe may" (5.1412). He only uses 'fresshe' when he is trying to win her or win her back. 'Right' is primarily used to win her or win her back as well, although he does use it once during their first night together. Supporting Everett's conclusion that Chaucer deliberately created a lady who is "worthy to inspire and receive the humble service of a lover" (125),

Troilus's use of positive forms of address regarding Criseyde reflect his positive impression of her, as well as his love and desire for her.

Forms of address can reveal much about the nature of a relationship, but when possessive pronouns are added, we can learn even more about a person's commitment to a relationship. Troilus adds the possessive pronoun 'my' to the form of address 55% of the time and does so throughout the whole relationship. He often adds it to 'herte', usually along with 'swete', and always adds it to 'lady'. He also adds 'owen(e)' on occasion, as in 'myn owen swete herte' and 'myn owene lady deere'. The use of 'myn owen(e) [lady/swete herte]' doubles after they part. However, the frequency of use of 'swete' and 'herte' drops by 30% from their last night together on. Yet, the use of 'my' combined with a form of address increases by 30% from their last night together on. The use of 'my' reinforces the desire that Troilus has to retain their committed relationship, while the change in the forms of address reflect the ambivalence and fear of loss that Troilus feels. Like Troilus, Criseyde adds the possessive pronoun 'my' to the form of address, and she does so 65% of the time; yet, unlike Troilus, she does so only while they are both in Troy. Criseyde stops using 'my' in conjunction with the forms of address once she leaves, a clear manifestation of the change in her feelings, and her loss of connection within their relationship.

Distribution of personal pronouns, the choice of pronoun to describe self and other in a relationship, also clearly demonstrates whether individuals feel connected in a relationship or not. As noted in the previous chapter, the choice of 'you and I' versus 'we' indicates individuality versus unity, thus clarifying the nature of the relationship as it is perceived by each speaker. The choices of Troilus and Criseyde regarding pronouns show that each perceives the two of them as individuals the majority of the time, rather than perceiving the unity of a couple. For example, they each say to the other: "Clippe ich yow thus, or elles I it meete?" (3.1344). Neither says, "We're holding each other so close, and it's wonderful!" Most of their time in Troy together is spent communicating using first-person singular pronouns. Choosing to avoid the first-person plural pronouns indicates a lack of connection or belonging.

This lack of connection or belonging is demonstrated amply throughout the story. For example, Troilus says to Criseyde at the beginning of their relationship: ". . . I shall yow serve" (3.1290) and ". . . with yow is al the lif ich have" (3.1477), rather than "We can make each other happy" or "Our life together is wonderful." He asks, "How sholde I longe, allas, fro yow sojourne?" (3.1484) rather than "How long must we be parted?" The night before Criseyde is to leave for the Greek camp, Troilus says to her, "Yet, er that ye me causen so to smerte, / Dwelle rather here, myn owen swete herte"

(4.1448-49) instead of "Rather than the pain of us suffering from being apart, let's stay here together." Throughout their time in Troy together, Troilus only uses 'we' once and 'us' once, during their first night together: ". . . now is ther but we tweyne!" (3.1207) and "God us graunte sownde and soone to mete!" (3.1526). Even though he wants to be emotionally connected to Criseyde, as indicated in his thought life, in reality he feels emotionally separate from her.

It is only when Troilus begins to imagine them remaining together in Troy, and truly connected, that he uses 'we' and 'our'; this occurs frequently at the end of their last night together in Troy when he tries to persuade Criseyde remain with him rather than go to the Greek camp (4.1503-1601). He pleads with Criseyde to "lat us stele away" (4.1503) and "ben togidere" (4.1507). He says, "Of tresour, may we bothe with us lede / Inough to lyve in honour and plesaunce / Til into tyme that we shal ben dede" (4.1514-16). He is willing to share his riches and life with her until death parts them, which he emphasizes by repeating his idea: "Us sholde neyther lakken gold ne gere, / But ben honored while we dwelten there. / And go we anon. . ." (4.1523-25). In his imagination, they are connected. After she departs, he never uses 'we' or 'us' again, which reflects and reiterates that their connection is indeed only in his mind.

As Troilus does the majority of the time, Criseyde primarily uses 'you' and 'I' as well, indicating her perception of a lack of connection or belonging. At the beginning of their relationship, she states, "[C]omen am I to yow for causes tweye" (3.75), rather than "I'm looking forward to developing our friendship together."

Although that is understandable at the beginning of a new relationship, she continues in this vein throughout their time together. For example, as the relationship develops, she says "[Y]oure herte al myn was" (3.993) rather than, for example, "We love each other." She continues to keep the two of them emotionally separate by using such phrases as "youre herte and myn" (3.1007) and "my devoir and youre hertes reste" (3.1045).

She uses 'we' once right before they consummate their relationship: "But lat us falle away fro this matere, / For it suffiseth, this that seyd is heere" (3.1306-07). She also uses it three other times during their first night together: twice in reference to God who created 'us' and redeemed 'us', and once at the end of the night when they are soon to part: "That day of us moot make disseveraunce!" (3.1424).

This indicates her acknowledgement of their physical union and their connection as two of the many of God's creatures here on earth, but lacks reflection of any emotional connection or sense of belonging. This supports some critics' claim that Criseyde has purely physical desires for him (I. Gordon 81-83; Haahr 269).

Further supporting Gordon's and Haahr's claims, Criseyde, during their last night together, uses 'we' and 'us' first to suggest, before anything else, that they go to bed together. She rarely uses first-person plural pronouns outside of requests for a physical union, which is why it becomes significant when she also employs first-person plural later to present a plan to him about how she should go to the Greek camp. Using the first-person plural pronouns of 'we' and 'us', she tries to establish a sense of connection that will persist with him beyond her departure. For example, on that last night, after their initial grief and Criseyde's fainting and appearing to be dead, followed by Troilus almost killing himself then stopping upon her revival, she says, "But hoo, for we han right ynough of this, / And lat us rise, and streght to bedde go, / And there lat us speken of oure wo" (4.1242-44). She tells him her ideas about why it is best for her to leave then return, using 'we' and 'us' often. For example, she says, "And syn that here assembled be we tweyne / To fynde boote of wo that we ben inne, / It were al tyme soone to bygynne" (4.1258-60). Striking, because she had never done so before, Criseyde moves from 'you' and 'I' to 'we'. She attempts to build a sense of emotional connection that will persist beyond their physical separation.

As she continues to use the first-person plural pronouns 'we' and 'us' frequently, she paints a future of alliance that is based upon his acceptance of her departure and his reliance on her promise of a future return to Troy:

Soth is, the wo, the which that we ben inne,
 For aught I woot, for nothyng ellis is
 But for the cause that we sholden twynne.
 Considered al, ther nys namore amys.
 But what is thanne a remede unto this,
 But that we shape us soone for to meete?

(4.1268-73)

She uses terms like "oure help" (4.1292) and "oure blisse" (4.1323), as well as phrases like "lat us shape a bettre way to fynde" (4.1302) and "we shal togideres evere dwelle" (4.1322) in a long conversation with Troilus, designed to influence him to accept her decision to leave Troy.

His heart misgives him about allowing her to go, and although he tries to accept her decision, he ultimately shares his concerns with her that her plan will fail and asks her to remain with him instead, also choosing to use first-person plural pronouns (4.1422-1526). After Troilus pleads with her to remain, she responds to his first-person plural pronoun choices of alliance with first-person singular pronouns of separateness: ". . . what filthe

[myn honeste] spotted sholde be, / If in this forme I sholde with yow wende" (4.1578-79) and "The tenthe day. . . / I wol yow sen. . ." (4.1595-96). She says "Allas, ye sle me thus for verray tene!" (4.1605), rather than "We shall suffer with grief at being parted." She continues in this vein: "I se wel now that ye mystrusten me" (4.1606) and "to be trewe I have yow plight my trouthe" (4.1610), rather than reassuring him, as she did early on for example, with something like "we shall always be together." Her choice of first-person singular pronouns, indicating their separateness, leads to their actual and permanent separation.

In addition to singular versus plural forms, pronoun choice in Middle English allows for distinction between the polite, formal, form of 'youw/ye' and the intimate, informal, form 'thow'. By default, socially, Criseyde would be expected to refer to Troilus using the polite form. By responding in kind, Troilus indicates respect. Regarding the choice of 'yow/ye' versus 'thow', Troilus and Criseyde primarily refer to each other using the polite form, 'yow/ye', and do so throughout the course of the relationship. The only time Troilus uses the intimate form is when he thinks Criseyde has died: "And thow, Criseyde, o swete herte deere / Receyve now my spirit!. . ." (4.1209-10). Criseyde uses the intimate form twice during their relationship, when they are alone together, stating "I am thyn" (3.1512, 4.1641). By using the intimate form, they are

expressing high emotion, yet by including the polite form, they also indicate respect. Especially in the case of Troilus, use of 'yow/ye' indicates that he considers her an equal. These pronouns indicate a continuous flow of respect and equality in the nature of the relationship.

Their choice of pronouns extends to the use of third-person pronouns in reference to each other as well. This means of addressing the other indirectly can represent deferential politeness, where the speaker is respectful yet maintains a social distance (Scollon and Scollon 175), or reflect changing or uncertain status within the relationship (Sagarin 195), as well as protect the speaker from any charges of a face-threatening act (Brown and Levinson 216). In its first occurrence within the story, when Criseyde first meets Troilus, she speaks to Pandarus about him as if Troilus is not present in the room with them: ". . . I wolde hym preye / To telle me the fyn of his entente. / Yet wist I nevere wel what that he mente" (3.124-26). Criseyde's choice is ambiguous and could mean one or more of the following: it could represent 1) deferential politeness, since she doesn't know Troilus well and he is of higher social status, 2) self-defense, by way of avoiding direct confrontation with—and the possible anger of—the King's son, 3) the use of negative face, to give Troilus a way out of any uncomfortable circumstances, should he change his mind. Through

her rhetorical choices and her ambivalence strongly indicate a desire for self-preservation.

This desire for self-preservation reoccurs at the end of their first meeting. Criseyde again slips back into third-person:

Myn honour sauf, I wol wel trewely,
And in swich forme as he gan now devyse,
Receyven hym fully to my servyse,
Bysechyng hym, for Goddes love, that he
Wolde, in honour of trouthe and gentillesse,
As I wel mene, ek menen wel to me,
And myn honour with wit and bisynesse
Ay kepe; and if I may don hym gladnesse,
From hennesforth, iwys, I nyl nought feyne.

(3.159-68)

She then addresses Troilus directly with a mixture of affection and warnings, willing to begin the next phase of the relationship (3.168-82). Using a mixture of bravery and diplomacy, as noted by Behrman (317-18), she may be communicating in this manner to establish the new and clear-cut roles they each have within the relationship while at the same time acknowledging the change in the status of the relationship in a manner that saves face for both of them.

She opens and closes their first conversation by using third-person rather than first-person with Troilus, in part as a means of establishing the status of the relationship. At the end of their first night together, Troilus questions the current status of the relationship: he wants to know if Criseyde has set him as firmly in her heart as he has with her. For a third time, she chooses third-person to respond:

The game, ywys, so ferforth now is gon
 That first shal Phebus fallen fro his speere,
 And everich egle ben the dowves feere,
 And everich roche out of his place sterte,
 Er Troilus oute of Criseydes herte. (3.1494-98)

By using the term 'game', which connotes a lack of seriousness, and by using the third person while addressing him directly, she appears emotionally more distant than he would like, and he is aware of it on some level. Her use of third-person here may be caused by stress from Troilus questioning her about her commitment or it may be caused the new, more intimate, status of the relationship, if examined using Sagarin's model (195). Criseyde ceases to use third-person with Troilus after this point.

Troilus chooses to use third person rather than first person with Criseyde on only one occasion. During their last night together, Troilus speaks to God directly about Criseyde while in her

presence, pledging faithfulness to her. His thoughts and words about Criseyde support Mehl's view of Troilus's love as divine energy (80). His words demonstrate a serious, deep, and divine quality to his love:

Now God, to whom ther nys no cause ywrye,
Me glade, as wys I nevere unto Criseyde,
Syn thilke day I saugh hire first with yë,
Was fals, ne nevere shal til that I dye.

(4.1654-57)

He is responding to Criseyde's questioning of the future status of their relationship, and, following Sagarin's model (195) is re-affirming his commitment to her and to their relationship as well as expressing his desire for solidarity in its deepest sense.

As demonstrated, power and solidarity are clearly established by the choices a speaker makes regarding forms of address and choice of pronouns. Power can also be examined in a different light by reviewing a speaker's choice of active versus passive voice. As noted in Chapter 4, these choices can indicate the speaker's perceived position in a social hierarchy (Fowler 61). Regarding active versus passive voice, both Troilus and Criseyde use active voice the majority of the time. For example, Criseyde, confident in her conversational style, states, "lat us falle away fro this matere" (3.1306), and "I speke it for the beste" (4.1288). At the

beginning of the relationship, she says, "[C]omen am I to yow" (3.75) when she first meets Troilus, which demonstrates that it is her choice and her action. Criseyde uses active voice to show how Troilus affects her: "Allas, ye sle me thus for verray tene!" (4.1605). She uses it to instruct Troilus to change his thinking: "Lat in youre brayn non other fantasie / So crepe that it cause me to dye!" (3.1504-05). Clearly, as noted by Warren (7), she perceives herself to be in control of her circumstances and that she is at least equal, if not superior, to Troilus.

Alternatively, Troilus uses active voice to show Criseyde that she can be in control, as demonstrated in these examples: "Doth what yow list; I am al in youre grace" (3.1176), ". . . techeth me. . ." (3.1293), and ". . . Now wolde God I wiste, / Myn herte swete, how I yow myght plese!" (3.1277-78). On rare occasions, he makes direct requests: "Now yeldeth yow. . ." (3.1208), "Dwelle rather here. . ." (4.1449), and, thinking that she is dead, "Receyve now my spirit!" (4.1210). The active voice, as used by both, reflects an individual in a private reality talking about cause and effect and aware of the roles each have in relation to the other—but there is no solidarity. Their use of active voice demonstrates their perception of power over themselves as individuals to make choices about their lives.

Although active voice is dominant, Troilus and Criseyde do use passive voice during a few significant moments. Troilus uses it in regard to the war: "Til we be slayn. . ." (4.1482). He also uses it twice when he feels insecure, during their first night together: 1) "Here may men seen that mercy passeth right; / Th'experience of that is felt in me, That am unworthi to so swete a wight." (3.1282-84), and 2) "Though ther be mercy writen in youre cheere, / God woot, the text ful hard is, soth, to fynde!" (3.1356-57). When Criseyde expresses a concern that he might be false to her after she leaves Troy, he reassures her then says "I kan na more; it shal be founde at preve" (4.1659), indicating he thinks that how she feels is out of his hands at that point.

Criseyde uses passive voice a little more frequently than Troilus, but not by much. The first night together, when Troilus pretends to be jealous, she uses the passive voice in a response much like he later gave her: ". . . dredeles, that shal be founde at preve" (3.1002). She uses passive voice to describe her feelings for Troilus, saying, "Ye hen so depe in-with myn herte grave" (3.1499). She uses passive voice most frequently when she has decided to leave Troy, saying, for example, that her "goyng graunted is by parlement" (4.1297) and "it may nat be withstonde" (4.1298). Her final letter to Troilus also uses passive voice. For example, she expresses concern "lest that this lettre founden were" (5.1602).

This use of passive voice gives the impression that she cannot control her departure, whether that is her actual perception or instead is simply the stance that she is taking with Troilus, which, when looking at the active and passive voice patterns as a whole, seems the more likely choice.

The relevance of active versus passive voice constructions can be further amplified by defining them as transactive or nontransactive, as noted in the last chapter. In doing so, speakers choose how to portray an action or event by organizing it in a way that is relevant to their ideology and their previous experience with discourse. Most of the conversations between Troilus and Criseyde up until their last night together are nontransactive events. They either talk about self-caused actions or speak about actions that happen in unspecified ways. This furthers the impression that they are simply two individuals interacting but never truly connecting.

However, as noted earlier, on the last night, Troilus tries to make an emotional connection; on this occasion, he uses transactive clauses to attempt to persuade Criseyde to stay with him and to warn her of the dangers of leaving Troy. By being specific and using details, he paints a clear picture of why her plan will fail. For example, he talks about her father: "He shal som Grek so preyse and wel alose / That ravysshen he shal yow with his speche. . ." (4.1473-74). In doing so, he avoids misunderstanding

and ambiguity while at the same time speaking concretely about specific actions they could take to maintain power over their circumstances as well as control of their relationship.

Yet, Criseyde's view of the circumstances differs. That night, she speaks about the war using the nontransactive: "[E]very day ek, more and more, / Men trete of pees" (4.1345-46), and also responds to Troilus's pleading, described in the previous paragraph, by using the nontransactive: "And if so be that pees heere-after take, / As alday happeth after anger game, / Whi, Lord, the sorwe and wo ye wolden make, / That ye ne dorste come ayeyn for shame!" (4.1562-65). The only time she uses the transactive frequently is briefly that night when she talks about being with her father: for example, she says that she will persuade him to have her return and what specific things she will do, such as "plukke hym by the sleve" (4.1403). She uses the transactive for the future actions she can envision as reality. Her choices of nontransactive and transactive phrasing reflect how her actions integrate into her ideology and ultimately the status of her relationships with Troilus and later with her father.

Use of directness versus indirectness, as noted in the previous chapter, can also determine status of relationships, in terms of power and social distance or intimacy. Troilus and Criseyde are direct with each other in their speech throughout their

relationship together in Troy. As noted in the previous section on transactive clauses, Troilus is especially explicit in his reasons as to why Criseyde should remain with him rather than leave Troy for the Greek camp. Criseyde is direct with Troilus as well, as is especially noted in the beginning of their relationship when she makes it clear she will not allow Troilus to take advantage of her (3.169-75). After Criseyde leaves Troy, Troilus writes her and, using directness, shares his feelings and asks her to remember her promise to return to him (5.1317-1421). Criseyde responds using indirectness, stating: ". . . ye requeren me / To come ayeyn, which yet ne may nat be; / But whi, lest that this lettre founden were, / No mencion ne make I now, for feere" (5.1600-03). She also uses indirectness to state: "Come I wole; but yet in swich disjoynte / I stonde as now that what yer or what day / That this shal be, that kan I naught apoynte" (5.1618-20). This indirectness indicates her tendency to avoid negative face as well as her refusal to answer Troilus directly, as he requested, about her desire to see him again—perhaps because he threatens his own death if she refuses to return.

Regarding topic raising and turn taking, which are indicators of who is in control of the conversation and how the social hierarchy of the participants is achieved and maintained, Troilus and Criseyde, for the duration of their relationship, speak of their feelings, their desire and love for one another, and how to maintain

their relationship. Their world, perhaps partly due to secrecy, is self-contained, as symbolized by the inner room in which they spend their first night together. The conversations Pandarus has with each of them serve to reflect this. Other people and worldly events are topics among the conversations he has with each of them.

However, when it is just the couple, the focus is on themselves and their relationship, reflecting equality rather than any power struggle.

The only deviance from this occurs when Troilus and Criseyde each share their opinions with the other on what would happen if Criseyde were to leave Troy. They each speak of her father, the war, and how others might view them. After they part, the focus returns to the relationship and how, or if, it will continue. The physical separation leads to the dissolution of their relationship by Criseyde, first from her final letter to Troilus (5.1590-1631), and second from Troilus seeing Diomedes wear the brooch Troilus gave to Criseyde when they parted (5.1655-65). Through the course of their relationship, their choice of topics reflect their self-enclosed world, which dissolves upon penetration from outside forces.

However, while in their self-contained world, in Troy, their turn taking generally indicates respect and fairness, with an interest in hearing the other out and responding to what was said. No interruptions occur. They each take opportunities during turn taking to attempt to influence the other's thinking. During their first night

together, Troilus tells Criseyde to yield and she responds that she already has or she would not be there (3.1208-11). During their last night together, Criseyde provides Troilus with reasons why she should leave Troy, and he responds with reasons why it is best for her to remain with him. She in turn responds to him with additional reasons as to why she should go, and he capitulates (4.1264-1687). Their use of turn taking emphasizes respect or politeness in regard to each other.

Their attitude of respect and politeness is also emphasized in the semantic and lexical choices that Troilus and Criseyde make, and in addition provides further insight into their relationship. They speak of love and friendship when they first meet. The use of 'frend' implies so much more when they first meet—affection that can lead to love. After Criseyde has left Troy, her final words to Troilus are about how she hopes they can continue to be friends no matter what else happens—the classic line used even today.

As she does with 'frendship', Criseyde opens and closes the relationship referring to Troilus's 'gentillesse' as well. At the beginning, she asks that he would ". . . in honour of trouthe and gentillesse / As I wel mene, ek menen wel to me, / And myn honour with wit and bisynesse / Ay kepe. . ." (3.163-66), and she later excuses his jealousy for "gentillesse" (3.1036). She only brings up 'gentillesse' again in her last letter to him when she refers to him as

"sours of gentillesse" (5.1591) and says ". . . I have ek understonde / How ye ne do but holden me in honde. / But now no force. I kan nat in yow gesse / But alle trouthe and alle gentillesse" (5.1614-17). Because her consistent use of the term 'gentillesse' marks Criseyde's discourse both at the beginning and end of the relationship, it is clear that this trait strongly attracts her to Troilus and helps her maintain the respect she has for him.

Although 'gentillesse' is only discussed at the beginning and end of the relationship, 'trouthe' is a thread that runs throughout the story, as an underlying theme that weighs the words of the participants against their actions. In the beginning of the relationship, Troilus pledges his service to Criseyde: "In trouthe alwey to don yow my servise" (3.133). He keeps the pledges he makes; his words are backed by his actions. When he hears Criseyde make promises to him to be faithful and to return to Troy, as when she says "Mistrust me nought thus causeles, for routhe, / Syn to be trewe I have yow plight my trouthe" (4.1609-10), he wants to believe that she will keep them because that is what he does. When her actions fail to match her pledges, he is then doubly hurt because he not only lost her but she also broke her word to him, leading to the ultimate betrayal so many critics focus on (Benson 160-67) and to Troilus's eventual and painful change in his perception of Criseyde and their relationship.

Without a doubt, the semantic and lexical choices of Troilus and Criseyde serve to illustrate the perceptions each has over time and whether they change or not. In Criseyde's case, her choice of 'frend' changes over time, from distant to close to distant, and she uses it as a polite way of saving face for both parties. Criseyde's use of 'gentillesse' reflects her continued respect for Troilus as a man who keeps his word. The use of 'trouthe' by each reflects their personal integrity: Criseyde uses the word without a matching action, whereas Troilus uses the word and maintains the pledge, which supports the opposing claims of critics who call him honorable or foolish (Benson 159-60). Troilus, looking back, can see how Criseyde's inconstancy in words is matched by her inconstancy in action. Criseyde, looking back, can see that Troilus's words are backed by his actions. These semantic and lexical choices underscore all the other linguistic choices each make to reflect and define the course of the relationship.

Discourse analysis, used to examine linguistic choices made by Troilus and Criseyde, clearly reveals the dynamics of the relationship. Criseyde's choices unmistakably reflect her change of heart, particularly the night before she leaves Troy, and her ultimate loss of interest in a relationship with Troilus. Troilus's choices reveal his steadfast love and continuous, yet unfulfilled, desire for emotional

connection. Their union is a partnership that is founded upon equality and trust but which is finally ended by the forces of war.

Chapter 6

Conclusion

Chaucer's *Troilus* is, as Lambert notes, "not only an extraordinarily rich, but a strangely shifting, shimmering work, and whatever we say about it, we soon find ourselves adding 'yes, but . . .'" (105), as evidenced by the lively critical debates that persist to this day. Hundreds of years later, we are still examining the meaning of this exciting and complex story and still exploring the diversity of critical conclusions put forth about it. Yet, by examining the revisions Chaucer made to the story, along with the linguistic model he provided through the conversations of the characters, we can resolve the ambiguity of literary critical analysis regarding the nature of the relationship between Troilus and Criseyde. Expressly, we can understand how the interdependence of love and language transform a relationship, which can then lead to respect and equality between a man and woman in medieval times, despite common views of social hierarchy and power.

These common views exist through the written language of the courtesy books, which underscore the social hierarchy that women are expected to follow by instructing women how to behave in relationships with their men; for example, they are expected to be subordinate, submissive, and quiet. Yet, Chaucer carefully and deliberately revises the story to provide a linguistic model of respect

and equality between men and women. He demonstrates how a man of power and intelligence, high in the social structure, can choose to give respect and equality as well as love to an inferior—because love transforms. Criseyde would be considered socially inferior because she is a woman and because she is far lower in the social hierarchy. The secret relationship they have is equivalent to 'what goes on behind closed doors' in a romantic relationship and strongly differs from the viewpoint presented in the courtesy books.

Troilus represents the embodiment of manhood: he is a knight who is intelligent, courageous, self-controlled, calm, and not easily influenced by fear or selfishness. These characteristics lead him to success both in battle and as Criseyde's lover. He demonstrates his intelligence by his ability to win battles, to predict Criseyde's future should she choose to go to the Greek camp, and to clearly articulate to her the dangers. Although Troilus had never been in love before, and did not know how to deal with loss (and loss of first love at that), the letter from Troilus to Criseyde contains the polite form of 'you', demonstrating respect to Criseyde even to the end of the relationship. By adding in the battle imagery and making him a tough and brave warrior, Chaucer balances and contrasts the vulnerable 'servant of love'. This powerful,

courageous man chooses to relinquish his authority because love has transformed him.

Love also transforms Criseyde. At the beginning of the story, she is leery of love, but Troilus eventually wins her trust and confidence. Moreover, she finds herself treated with respect and equality. If the circumstances of war had not intervened, it is likely they would have remained together indefinitely because Troilus is not "maisterfull" nor does he love "novelrie" (2.756), and he never says "chek mat" (2.754). Chaucer uses the conversations of Criseyde to provide a linguistic model of how a woman responds when treated with respect and equality.

By analyzing Chaucer's linguistic model with discourse markers, we can clearly establish that respect and equality is present in the relationship of Troilus and Criseyde, thereby resolving the ambiguity common to critics. Specifically, the forms of address, choice of pronouns, topic raising, and turn taking by Troilus and Criseyde reflect and emphasize respect and equality. While together in Troy, these choices reflect connection as well. These combined with the other markers reflect their belief in their rights as individuals to make choices about what they want as well as the difficulty of leading separate lives while longing to be

together. Ultimately, discourse analysis reveals the true nature of their relationship: respect, equality, and intimacy in a loving bond that breaks due to the forces of war.

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