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Exclamation Marks in The Book of Mormon: A Linguistic Analysis

Brooke Ellen Anderson

A thesis submitted to the faculty of  
Brigham Young University  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts

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## ABSTRACT

### Exclamation Marks in the Book of Mormon: A Linguistic Analysis

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This paper employs Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory to analyze the affect the exclamation mark has on the readers' interpretation of five Book of Mormon editions. Each unique instance of exclamation was obtained with its accompanying verse and these were coded by three coders for the genre they appeared in, the syntactic structures of their utterances, and the rhetorical function of the exclaimed proposition. This made possible a comparison of the exclaimed themes both within and across each genre and across each of the five editions analyzed. While the 1830 edition was found to have many exclamations in the genres of *conversation* and *speech* with emphasis on the themes of the love of God, the sacrifice of Christ, and the carnal nature of man, the 1920 edition by contrast saw emphasis mainly in the genres of *prayer* and *aside* on the call to repentance, the calamities of hell, and the need to call upon God's grace to overcome the many sins that will beset the latter generation of readers.

Keywords: Ricoeur, interpretation theory, exclamation, punctuation, Book of Mormon

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TITLE .....	i
ABSTRACT.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iii
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES .....	viii
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .....	1
Summary of the Book of Mormon as a textual document .....	1
The Original Manuscript.....	2
Summary of the Editions .....	3
The Book of Mormon Critical Text Project.....	5
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....	7
The History of the Mark of Admiration .....	7
Indicating Pause.....	7
Clarifying Sentence Construction.....	7
Elucidating a Rhetorical Function.....	7
Evolution of Form and Function.....	8
Relevant studies .....	9
CHAPTER 3 INTERPRETATION THEORY .....	11
Ricoeur’s Interpretation Theory .....	11
Interpretation Theory’s Theological Application.....	12
Interpretation Theory’s Linguistic Application.....	13
CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY .....	13
Data Collection .....	13
Raters.....	13

Resolving the data .....	14
Naïve Reading.....	14
Propositional Notation .....	16
CHAPTER 5 SYNTAX .....	18
Syntactic Type.....	18
Expletive. ....	19
Declarative. ....	19
Modal. ....	19
Interrogative.....	19
Punctuation Position.....	20
Sentence-final. ....	20
Sentence-medial.....	20
Sentence clause structure.....	20
Complex.....	21
Compound.....	21
Compound-complex.....	21
CHAPTER 6 GENRE.....	22
Aside.....	24
1830–1879.....	24
1920.....	24
Summary. ....	24
Prayer .....	24
1830.....	25
1920.....	25
Summary.....	26
Epistle.....	26
1830.....	26
1920.....	26

Summary.....	27
Conversation.....	27
1830.....	27
1837 and 1920.....	28
Summary.....	28
Records .....	28
1830.....	28
1837–1841.....	29
1879.....	30
1920.....	30
Summary.....	31
Speech.....	31
1830.....	31
1837.....	33
1841.....	33
1879.....	33
1920.....	34
Summary.....	35
Cross-sectional Themes .....	35
CHAPTER 7 FUNCTION .....	36
Directive.....	37
1830.....	37
1920.....	37
Expressive.....	38
1830.....	38
1837.....	38
1879.....	39
1920.....	39
Declarative.....	39

1830.....	39
1837.....	39
1920.....	40
CHAPTER 8 APPROPRIATION.....	41
CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION.....	43
CITATIONS .....	44



## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: <i>Kappa Results</i> .....	14
Table 2: <i>Example Propositions</i> .....	15
Table 3: <i>Frequencies of Syntactic Type</i> .....	18
Table 4: <i>Frequencies of Punctuation Position</i> .....	20
Table 5: <i>Frequencies of Sentence Clause Structures</i> .....	21
Table 6: <i>Frequencies of Genre</i> .....	23
Table 7: <i>Frequency of Functions</i> .....	36

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This study aims at an analysis of the way the placement and use of the exclamation point in five editions of the Book of Mormon affect the interpretation of the Book of Mormon text for each edition. The study takes a diachronic approach to show how the stance of the different editors have changed our interpretation of the five texts. While taking into account that the cultural background and history of each edition may have influenced the decisions of each of the editors, this study is concerned with how the editorial interpretations of the text affects readers' interpretation. To accomplish this aim, the study employs principles of Ricoeur's interpretation theory. Ricoeur's theory posits that discourse is the interaction of event and meaning. This study analyses event in terms of the genre of the Book of Mormon text and meaning in terms of the function of the exclamation point and the syntactic structure of the exclaimed utterance. This analysis allows for an extrapolation of the exclaimed themes in the text and the ways in which the exclamation point affects the delivery and emphasis of those themes. This final analysis is later referred to as appropriation of the text and is what allows us as readers to engage with, interpret, and learn from the scriptural passages.

Chapter one provides an overview of the Book of Mormon as a textual document, a summary of the five editions to be analyzed, and a discussion of the largest work yet carried out in producing a critical text of the Book of Mormon. Chapter two provides an overview of the literature including a history of the exclamation mark as it is relevant to this study as well as relevant studies on punctuation's effect on textual interpretation. Chapter three details Ricoeur's interpretation theory along with its theological and linguistic applications. Chapter four details the methodology and chapters five through seven analyze the data with regards to the three categories mentioned above: syntax, genre, and function. The final chapter explains how this analysis aids in our understanding of the major themes of the various editions and the effect the exclamation mark has on the interpretation of these themes within the text.

### *Summary of the Book of Mormon as a textual document*

*The Book of Mormon: Another Testament of Jesus Christ* is recognized as part of the canon of scripture of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Book of Mormon is unique among recent scripture in that it is primarily a narrative. The primary narrative follows

the course of a prophet Lehi and his descendants in the Americas and includes wars, prophetic teachings, histories, and the visitation of Christ to the people.

A secondary and overlapping narrative is that of the original authors and narrators. The Book of Mormon is a compilation of narratives kept by the prophets and compiled by the prophet Mormon before being buried in the earth to be brought forth ca. 1,500 years later by the prophet Joseph Smith. This double narrative structure of Lehi's descendants and the record keepers means that "the Book of Mormon is not simply a religious adventure tale set in the ancient Americas; it is instead a highly mediated, self-reflective story that is open to interpretation on multiple levels" (Skousen, 2009).

### *The Original Manuscript*

The Book of Mormon was first translated and dictated by Joseph Smith to his scribe Oliver Cowdery. This first manuscript, produced by Oliver Cowdery, is hereafter referred to as the original manuscript. From 1829 to 1830 a copy of the original manuscript was produced for the purposes of printing. This copy, called the printer's manuscript, "was the manuscript that was taken to the printer's shop in Palmyra, New York, where the type was set for the first edition of the Book of Mormon, published in 1830" (Skousen, 2012).

When Joseph Smith dictated the original manuscript, the wording was precise and even some of the spelling was dictated letter by letter. Punctuation and paragraphing were, however, entirely ignored. John Gilbert, the typesetter for the Book of Mormon commented on the original manuscript some sixty-three years later: "Every chapter, if I remember correctly, was one solid paragraph, without a punctuation mark, from beginning to end. ... I punctuated it to make it read as I supposed the author intended, and but very little punctuation was altered in proof-reading" (Skousen, 2012).

*"For the first part of the printer's manuscript, Oliver Cowdery copied the original manuscript without adding punctuation. He finally realized that he himself could add the punctuation, so beginning with page 106 of the printer's manuscript, Oliver started to add a little punctuation, but only sporadically and never systematically. Moreover, Gilbert basically ignored Oliver's punctuation" (Skousen, 2012).*

The majority of John Gilbert's additions were made to the five-sixths of the printer's manuscript that served as his copy text. One-sixth of the original manuscript (from Helaman 13:17 to the end of Mormon) was also used as a copy text while Oliver copied the remainder of

the original. Like he had to the printer's manuscript, John Gilbert inserted some punctuation, paragraph marks, and minor typographical corrections to this small portion of the original manuscript with which he worked (Skousen, 2009). "It is estimated that over 90% of Gilbert's punctuation marks in the printer's and original manuscripts were carried over without change into the 1830 edition" (Skousen, 2012).

### *Summary of the Editions*

Since 1830, the Book of Mormon has been produced in twenty-one total editions, of which the official website of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recognizes eight (1830, 1837, 1841, 1879, 1920, 1981, and 2013). According to the Encyclopedia of Mormonism, "Two major goals of each published edition of the Book of Mormon have been (1) to faithfully reproduce the text; and (2) to make the text accessible to the reader" (Skousen, 2000). Each time a new edition is made, it is based on one or more previous editions. Royal Skousen in his book *The Book of Mormon: Earliest Text* charts which editions were used as the references for later editions and which were not (Skousen, 2009). Citing his work, I determine that the following five have had the greatest impact on our current edition of the Book of Mormon, as each of them was cited and referenced throughout the various changes that take us from the first edition in 1830 to our current 2013 edition:

1. The First Edition (1830): The first edition consisted of 5,000 copies printed by E.B. Grandin in Palmyra, New York. This edition was generally a faithful copy of the printer's manuscript. Verses would not be added until later editions of the Book of Mormon, and many grammatical errors that were present in the original manuscript were put through to this first printed edition. This edition also featured a prefacing explanation by Joseph Smith and the testimonies of the Three and Eight Witnesses at the end of the book.
2. The Second Edition (1837): Printed in Kirtland, Ohio, this edition underwent hundreds of grammatical changes and had a preface written by Parley P. Pratt and John Goodson. However, the 3,000–5,000 copies of the Second Edition were still based on the First (1830) Edition and John H. Gilbert's printing manuscript (Skousen, 2000).
3. The First European Edition (1841): With Joseph Smith's permission, the Book of Mormon was printed by J. Tompkins in Liverpool, England while the apostles Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, and Parley P. Pratt were serving missions there with the other Twelve Apostles. It was basically a reprint of the 1837 edition (the 1840 edition was not

yet available to the Apostles in Britain) with modifications to conform to British spelling. Four thousand and fifty copies were printed out of a contracted 5,000. This was the last edition of the Book of Mormon to be published in Joseph Smith's lifetime.

Note that because of the Third (1840) Edition's rarity and limited availability to the Apostles in England, the First European Edition actually served as the basis for most subsequent publications of the Book of Mormon by the Church. Thus, the corrections that Joseph Smith made to the 1840 edition were not included in many following versions, although many of the errors were gradually corrected over the following century.

4. The Orson Pratt Revision (1879): Orson Pratt made his own revision at Brigham Young's request. There had been previous attempts at organizing the Book of Mormon to make it easier to refer to specific passages. Instead of the numbered, but still lengthy, paragraphs of previous versions of the Book of Mormon, this edition gives an easily cited versification that remains the standard today.
5. The Apostles Revision (1920): A committee of the Apostles of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints held a conference in 1920 with James E. Talmage as editor to reconcile the various circulating editions of the Book of Mormon and standardize the book of scripture. Changes in the Apostles Revision include new introductory material, chapter summaries, footnotes, and the dual-column text organization that is present today. This was a significant flashpoint in the editing history of the Book of Mormon, since it was the first time that a committee of apostles had conferred about the Book of Mormon's grammar and mechanics, among other things.

While the 1981 Scriptures Publication Committee version is cited both on the Church's website and in Skousen's work as one of importance to our current edition, this edition saw no changes in the placement or number of exclamation points and exclamatory utterances and will therefore not be analyzed in this paper. The latest edition—the Scriptures Committee version—was produced in 2013, again under the correction of the Apostles and the First Presidency. The edits were minor, correcting some punctuation and modernizing some word spellings. For an analysis of the exclamation point's placement and affect in this edition see (Hingson et al., forthcoming).

*The Book of Mormon Critical Text Project*

In the mid 1980s, the Foundation for Ancient Research and Mormon Studies (FARMS) began what would be a critical text of the Book of Mormon with the aim of recreating, as closely as possible, the original dictated text. (The majority of this original text has been lost to time, weathering and other factors.) The critical text is accompanied by notes that illustrate how the document has changed over time. These notes allow readers to “judge” between the alternative readings (Skousen, 1997).

In the case of the Book of Mormon, the primary purpose of the critical text is to “lay out the original English-language text of the book—that is, the text that Joseph Smith received by means of the interpreters (the Urim and Thummim as well as the seer stone).” The second purpose, accomplished by means of the notes or apparatus, is to “establish and display the history of the wording of the text, including both accidental errors and editorial changes that the document has undergone as it has been transmitted down through time in its many editions” (Skousen, 1997). In the words of Dr. Skousen, “The editing of the Book of Mormon has been fairly extensive. A more accurate critical edition will allow the reader to note not only the grammatical and other changes that have been made in the text but also when they were first introduced” (Skousen, n.d.).

In the first critical text of the Book of Mormon, each line of the text contained a single phrase which implied some kind of punctuation. However, no punctuation marks occurred in the text (Skousen, n.d.). In 1988 Royal Skousen began work on The Critical Text Project of the Book of Mormon. Through meticulous examination of the original manuscript, the printer’s manuscript, and the published Book of Mormon editions, he “identified all the variants in the manuscripts and printed editions, including not just words and phrases but also capitalization, spelling, punctuation, and versification” (Skousen, n.d.). The result is a six-volume work and “The Book of Mormon: The Earliest Text,” claimed as “the most textually significant edition since Joseph Smith’s work was first published in 1830 and the most accurate edition ever published” (Skousen, n.d.). Interestingly, however, his Earliest Text differs drastically from the 1830 and later editions in the number and placement of punctuation marks.

As stated in an earlier section, the original manuscript had virtually no punctuation except for a few dashes. To provide aid for readers, punctuation marks were added to the first printed edition by the type-setter John Gilbert. “Gilbert did a credible job, but following the conventions

of the time he over-punctuated, with many more commas, colons, and semicolons than modern editing would require” (Skousen, n.d.). Accordingly, Royal Skousen decided to redo the punctuation from scratch for his earliest text edition: “As I prepared each section of *The Earliest Text*, I started with one long string of unpunctuated words. I first broke the text into sense-lines; I then added the accidentals (punctuation and capitalization) as needed in order to make the syntax clear” (Skousen, n.d.). The result was a much more modern punctuation of the text with even more exclamation marks than our modern 2013 edition.

While both the First Critical Text Project and this paper are concerned with the changes over time in the punctuation of the Book of Mormon editions, the approach—and results—differ vastly. The first aim of the Critical Text Project is to reproduce an accurate original text. This paper is not concerned with the original text but only with the changed punctuation in the editions that follow it. Likewise, these changes are more than merely documented: they are analyzed and discussed according to interpretation theory to better understand how the message of the text is changed as a result.

## CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

### *The History of the Mark of Admiration*

The term *punctuation* comes from the word *punctilious*, meaning *attentive to formality or etiquette*, elucidating well the primary role of punctuation as "a *courtesy* designed to help readers to understand a story" (Truss, 2004). Over the years, scholars have identified three main purposes for punctuation, and for the exclamation point in particular: to indicate pauses, to clarify sentence construction, and to serve a rhetorical function.

*Indicating Pause.* For a long time, punctuation was not used in written English. When it was introduced, it was to aid readers in knowing where and for how long to pause. In the origins of printing, no punctuation marks were used except for the colon and the period, to which list the comma was added soon after. The comma was given the least pause, the colon the next most, and the period the greatest. Later in the fifteenth century, the semicolon was introduced. The exclamation point and question mark were introduced last of all and were attributed the same amount of pause as a period.

*Clarifying Sentence Construction.* For an example of how exclamation points can clarify sentence construction, consider the following sentence: *How great is our Lord*. Since many exclamatory sentences follow the same structure as an interrogative, this sentence can be read as either a question or an exclamatory statement (i.e. *How great is our Lord?* or *How great is our Lord!*) (Collins, 1938). The exclamation point is critical to understanding the structure of this sentence, where *how* can be either an intensifier or an interrogative.

*Elucidating a Rhetorical Function.* The rhetorical function of the exclamation point is vast and sometimes debated. When it was originally introduced, the exclamation mark was known as the note or mark of admiration. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) entry for admiration that corresponds to the time frame in which the note of admiration was introduced defines admiration as "the action or an act of wondering or marveling; wonder, astonishment, surprise. Also: regard for someone or something considered praiseworthy or excellent; appreciation." Given this history, it is no surprise that contemporary dictionaries and usage guides list "to express admiration (Truss 2004), to express astonishment (MacKellar, 1885), to express wonder (Collins, 1938), and to express surprise ((Collins, 1938; Fowler, 2015; MacKellar, 1885)" as some of the usages of the exclamation point.

Additional uses from the literature include the following:



- to salute or invoke (Truss, 2004)
- to express rapture (MacKellar, 1885)
- to express strong emotion such as sudden joy, sorrow, or grief (Collins, 1938 & MacKellar, 1885)
- to express contempt or dislike (Collins, 1938 & Fowler, 2015)
- to express warmth or sincerity (McCulloch, 2019)
- to express effusive thanks (McCulloch, 2019)
- to express absurdity (Collins, 1938 & Fowler, 2015)
- to express a command or request (Collins, 1938 & Fowler, 2015)
- to express enthusiasm (Collins, 1938)
- to express irony (Truss, 2004, & Collins, 1938)
- to express a warning (Fowler, 2015)
- to express approval (Fowler, 2015)
- to express regret (Fowler, 2015)
- to express a call of alarm (Fowler, 2015)
- to call for attention (Fowler, 2015)

*Evolution of Form and Function.* Over time, changes have occurred in the formatting and function of the exclamation point. The use of the exclamation point to express warmth or sincerity, especially in emails and social media, is a relatively new development. Likewise, though it has long been used to express approval, the use of it to express effusive thanks is also a relatively new development. Both of these usages did not appear in any usage dictionaries until 2019.

As for the formatting, while the first users of the exclamation point would perhaps have gawked at constructions such as “I’m so excited to see you tomorrow!!!!” where it would seem one exclamation is not enough, we might likewise find the following construction a little odd: “I’m so excited! to see you tomorrow”; however, this kind of sentence-medial punctuation was common until about the 1980s when this usage was dropped in favor of sentence-final. The debated uses of punctuation remain largely the same. Some scholars argue that it has an entirely linguistic function, others a grammatical, and still others rhetorical, while its actual use likely lies across these three pedestals.

### *Relevant studies*

A majority of current studies on punctuation observe the effect it has on the tone of electronic messages in emails, texts, and tweets. Operating on the assumption that irregular punctuation is used to compensate for the lack of extra-linguistic cues in text messaging, authors Klin, Upadhyay and Houghton determined that the inclusion of a period after a positive one-word response led readers to perceive the response as less sincere. Conversely, periods after one-word negative or neutral responses were seen as more negative (Houghton et al., 2018). They concluded that the period can serve a rhetorical, rather than grammatical, function in text messaging. The majority of studies seem to group punctuation into one of these two functions—rhetorical and grammatical.

For example, Young-Gie Min takes a grammatical approach to show the role that punctuation can play in resolving ambiguity (Min, 1996) and Mrochen Izabela takes a similarly grammatical approach in her history of the emotive interjections “why,” “what,” and “how” (Izabela, 2009). Within the realm of literature, however, punctuation is often studied with a rhetorical bend. Gomez-Jimenez aims to answer the question, “How can punctuation marks reinforce meaning” by a qualitative analysis of two poems by the poet E. E. Cummings. She determines that Cummings uses punctuation marks to delineate temporality, to address someone, to create an intimate atmosphere or to call somebody’s attention, to signal discursual relations, and to reinforce the thematical approach of a text (Gomez-Jimenez, 2011). A likewise descriptive study of punctuation is performed by Oliver Emerson on the epic poem “Beowulf.” The author asserts that Beowulf has a very different sentence structure than modern sentence structures. The poem is divided into a varying number of sentences with dramatically different punctuation by four different editors. Emerson determines that differences in punctuation result in differences in sense and that further revision to the punctuation of the text is necessary to come closer to the original intended sense of the work (Emerson, 1926).

There have been a small number of articles addressing punctuation in the Bible, across its various editions. While Hornsby (1973) studies Biblical punctuation from a historical perspective as a clue to the use of punctuation within the renaissance time period, the majority of Biblical punctuation studies aim to resolve ambiguity or other disputes regarding the meaning of the text by tracing back to and consulting the original texts. Much of the dispute over punctuation arises from the Bible’s Greek origins. In its early history, the text of the New Testament appeared only

in *scriptio continua*, so that punctuating the text was a matter of interpreting the meaning of an unbroken stream of Greek letters. In *'Day and Night' and the Punctuation of John 9:3*, John Poirier changes the placement of a period in John 9:3–4 that results in a changed interpretation and a resolution to what some have seen as a “bizarre theodicy.” Turner similarly offers a new punctuation to a New Testament passage: he refers to the original Greek of St. John 7: 37–38 to determine out of whose belly shall flow “the living water” and proposes an appropriate punctuation (Turner, 1922). Runar Thorsteinsson also refers to the original Greek to suggest a new punctuation of Romans 1:13–15 to solve the issue of what seem to be contradictory statements in 1:15 and 1:20 regarding Paul’s missionary objective (Thorsteinsson, 2002).

Within the text of the Book of Mormon, as in Biblical text, a variety of textual studies have been carried out. Stanford Carmack describes and compares the Book of Mormon’s 12 instances of complex finite cause syntax, an expression that occurs in earlier English almost exclusively prior to 1700 (Carmack, 2021). In a paper one year later, he compares the Book of Mormon’s subordinate *that* usage with the King James Bible and other archaic texts as evidence that the language is at the least pseudo-archaic and thus not a result of Joseph’s own word choice. Lastly, John Gee looks at the use of verbal punctuation in the Book of Mormon which includes statements such as “and now,” “amen,” “behold,” and “it came to pass.” The usage of such verbal punctuation parallels usage in many ancient languages which tend to do without typographic punctuation. None of these studies, however, focus on graphical punctuation.

## CHAPTER 3 INTERPRETATION THEORY

### *Ricoeur's Interpretation Theory*

One useful tool for studying the effect of punctuation on the themes and messages of a text is interpretation theory. Ricoeur's interpretation theory is aimed at determining the components of discourse and interpreting their meaning. In his work, Ricoeur separates discourse into two constructs—*event* and *meaning*—which work together as dialectic opposites (Ricoeur, 1976, p. 71). He defines *event* as the moment the message is instantiated or expressed. In this way, the time-bound actuality of discourse is accounted for. The text *meaning* is encoded in the proposition of the utterance. Discourse then occurs when propositional *meaning* is expressed through the *event* of an utterance.

“When the utterance is written and the reader is, therefore, removed from the event of the utterance, interpretation factors from the event itself are no longer available to aid the intended meaning. Ricoeur calls this removal from the initial event *distanciation*. We can attempt to reclaim the initial event by extrapolating on what the author intended, but for Ricoeur this is a useless exercise; we cannot go back to the initial event and ask the author what they intended. Instead, Ricoeur proposes that we *appropriate* the event to the reader” (Hingson et al., forthcoming).

The reader's interpreting of the text is then treated as the new *event*. This appropriation of the event to the reader becomes an act of iconicity as the reader, through the act of interpretation, recreates the text. The reader approaches the text without preconceived notions and allows the text to speak to them. The interpretation of the reader can then be further understood as a guess and explanation, often called a *naïve reading*. These guesses, though subjective, are not wild, but rather based on a shared communication system that takes words at their face value, and is substantiated by an explanation of why the particular interpretation in question is the most likely interpretation.

“As one interprets text after the discursive event of recording, they move from a process of reductive explanation of the overall text to a deeper understanding of the relationship between the parts and the whole, through both a *structural analysis* and/or a *deep understanding*, leading to an appropriation of the text. Ultimately, to have interpreted a text, a reader must create a new event, so that the text is now “one's own” (Ricoeur, 1976, p. 94) and illuminates a new

perspective. In this way, Ricoeur captures the connection between text and experience—the text itself has acted upon the reader to open a new world perspective” (Hingson et al., forthcoming).

Such an approach freezes the text as its own linguistic actor, independent of the author. Ricoeur refers to this as the *autonomy of the text*. “Inscription becomes synonymous with the semantic autonomy of the text, which results from the disconnection of the mental intention of the author from the verbal meaning of the text ... what the text means now means more than what the author meant when he wrote it” (Ricoeur, 1976, p. 29-30, 87, 92). Interpretation theory is thus confined to analysis of the effects of textual content on reader interpretation, regardless of the author’s intended meaning.

#### *Interpretation Theory’s Theological Application*

Interpretation theory has been applied, in many instances, to the interpretation of religious—and particularly biblical—text. Ricoeur has been esteemed as one of the most prominent philosophers on biblical narrative with regard to its meaning and truth value (Comstock, 1989); his early work “Hermeneutics of Recollection” was aimed at the recovery of meaning in religious symbolism (Schwartz, 1983). His interpretation theory has been applied to biblical hermeneutics and biblical interpretation (Moyaert, 2014; Bondor, 2010; Gray, 1980) as well as to individual passages and books within the Bible. For example, Sandra Schneiders employed Ricoeur’s theory of interpretation to analyze the meaning of the conversation that took place between Jesus and Peter as Jesus washed Peter’s feet in John 13:1–20, concluding that the meaning for contemporary disciples is unique from the meaning that may be derived within the historical context. Roxberg et al. likewise employed Ricoeur’s theory to explore the meaning of consolation as experienced by Job in the Book of Job. The study’s theoretical design applied Ricoeur’s view on phenomenology and hermeneutics by first producing a naïve reading, then performing a structural analysis on the various themes of consolation within the text, and finally interpreting the text as a whole with those themes in mind (Roxberg et al., 2013). As a result, they identified six unique themes of consolation that can aid the reader in understanding the relation of consolation to suffering and care. Ricoeur posits that it is this very production of new understandings that makes a religious text a relevant part of the reader’s life.

*Interpretation Theory's Linguistic Application*

Ricoeur's interpretation theory was originally addressed to a philosophical audience; however, its roots in the linguistic theory of meaning, its combination of pragmatic and speech act theories, and its development of the illocutionary act make it ideally operational using linguistic methods. The foundation of his theory is laid on the operation of linguistic theories and principles and delves richly into semantics as his basis for an argument on symbology and interpretation. For the purposes of this study, text meaning was operationalized through syntactic and semantic analysis. Event meaning was operationalized through 1) coding the illocutionary force of the exclamation mark as it related to the exclaimed proposition, which we called function, and 2) coding the specific genre within the Book of Mormon in which the exclaimed mark was located.

## CHAPTER 4 METHODOLOGY

*Data Collection*

Placement of exclamation marks in the current edition (2013) were identified using WordCruncher (1991–2022), a textual analysis software. Each instance of exclamation was treated as a new instantiation. The instances were then coded for syntactic structure, function, and genre.

*Raters*

Two independent student raters majoring in linguistics were trained for the closed codes of syntactic structure, genre, and function using a selection of eighteen verses from Jacob 2 to Alma 19 in the 1920 edition. These verses were selected due to the variety of genres and syntactic structures they exemplified. After training, the coders independently coded the closed codes categories for all remaining verses across all editions, and kappa results for intercoder reliability were established between the two coders, as seen in the table below. The highest agreement was in genre at  $\kappa \geq 0.80$  which Cohen interprets as almost perfect agreement. The function and the first two structure kappas fall in the substantial agreement range of 0.61-0.80. The final structure produced the lowest kappa value at  $\kappa = 0.31$ , achieving only fair coder agreement.

Table 1: *Kappa Results*

<b>Genre</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Structure 1: Syntactic Type</b>	<b>Structure 2: Punctuation Position</b>	<b>Structure 3: Sentence Clause Structure</b>
0.87	0.7	0.69	0.71	0.31

### *Resolving the data*

After the Kappa calculations, a master sheet was created with the genre, function, syntactic structure, and proposition for each exclamatory utterance (all propositions were provided by the researcher). Though not calculated in the Kappa, the researcher also performed independent coding of all the closed categories. This coding was used to form a majority and resolve differences in the cases where the two coders disagreed. In these cases, the final coding was chosen based on the majority's agreement.

In the rare cases where there was not a majority (the two coders and the researcher all disagreed), the researcher weighed each coding presented and decided upon the final assignment. An example of this scenario occurred in Mormon 6 where both the coders and the researcher all disagreed on the genre coding. The two coders assigned prayer and speech and the researcher coded journal/record. The final coding for these passages was journal/record. There was also one case in which, though the two coders were in agreement, the researcher assigned a different final coding. This occurred in the genre coding for Abinadi's speech to the wicked priests of king Noah in Mosiah 15. Both coders coded these passages as *speech*. However, due to the question and answer nature of the larger exchange, the researcher selected *conversation* as the final coding for this text-act. Once differences were resolved and the master sheet had been created, all exclamatory utterances were grouped by *text-act* into genre and each *text-act* was summarized along with example verses, from which the various themes within each genre could be extracted.

### *Naïve Reading*

“The text chronicles a thousand-year period starting with a Jewish family's migration to the Americas around 600 B.C. The population growth, division, and wars of this family are documented within the context of their religious tenets. The central event in the Book of Mormon is the appearance of Jesus Christ shortly after his crucifixion in Jerusalem. Around 400 A.D. the civilizations created by these people are made extinct through war.

The majority of exclamations cluster around a few prophets: Nephi and his brother Jacob, Alma, and Mormon. Typically, these exclaimed utterances document or address great wickedness among ancient American peoples. Various prophets implore others to forsake sinful behavior and repent so that they can be saved through Christ from eternal damnation. Mormon, the main compiler and redactor of the records now comprising the Book of Mormon, provides exclaimed commentary on past events. Many exclamation marks accompany his asides to current readers and writings about his current time period” (Hingson et al., forthcoming). The table below shows sample exclaimed verses. These same exclaimed verses are shown also with their propositional notations.

Table 2: *Example Propositions*

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Text</b>	<b>Exclaimed Proposition(s) (in the declarative)</b>	<b>Notation</b>
1 Nephi 1:13	and he read, saying, Wo, wo unto Jerusalem! for I have seen thine abominations; yea, and many things did my father read concerning Jerusalem—that it should be destroyed, and the inhabitants thereof, many should perish by the sword, and many should be carried away captive into Babylon.	Jerusalem is in a bad situation and Lehi has seen its abominations.	J BAD-SITUATION & L SEE A
1 Nephi 11:19	And it came to pass that I beheld that she was carried away in the spirit; and after that she had been carried away in the spirit for the space of a	Nephi should look at something	N SHOULD-LOOK



	time, the angel spake unto me, saying, look!		
2 Nephi 9:20	O how great the holiness of our God! For he knoweth all things, and there is not any thing, save he know it.	The holiness of God is great	H of G BE GREAT
Helaman 7:17	O repent ye, repent ye! why will ye die? Turn ye, turn ye, unto the Lord your God. Why hath he forsaken you?	People should repent	P SHOULD-REPENT
Mormon 6:17	O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!	The people departed from the way of the Lord.	P LEFT WoL

### *Propositional Notation*

“A reader’s extraction of meaning from a text can be split into two different categories: the objective *proposition*, which remains the same across all readers and each reading-event; and the subjective *event*, which is produced in the reader’s mind in real-time with each reading. Propositional meaning is derived purely from the senses and referents in the text and is resistant to personal interpretation. For this paper, propositions were extracted from the statements that were annotated with an exclamation mark in order to produce the falsifiable assertion (i.e., bearing a truth value) that lay behind each expression. Propositions can be written using semantic notation. This both creates a higher level of visibility for the predicate of each individual proposition and facilitates the comparison of different propositions. To maximize

readability at all levels, each proposition was encoded in sentence format as well as in semantic notation, for more critical interpretation of text meaning” (Hingson et al., forthcoming).

The following three chapters will detail the results of the three closed-category coding schemes. Chapter five will deal with syntax, including syntactic type, punctuation position, and sentence clause structure, Chapter 6 will discuss genre, and Chapter 7 will analyze the coding of function.

## CHAPTER 5 SYNTAX

“While meaning goes beyond the organization of the text, linguistic considerations of syntax are relevant to interpretation theory’s claim of text-based meaning. The sentence structure of each exclaimed phrase was coded based on three structures: 1) syntactic type, 2) punctuation position, and 3) sentence clause structure” (Hingson et al., forthcoming).

### *Syntactic Type*

Syntactic type had four coding options: *declarative*, meaning the sentence had a default word order structure; *interrogatory*, meaning the sentence was phrased as a question; *expletive*, meaning the sentence was, foremost, emphatic, often including an interjection such as ‘wo’ or ‘behold’ followed by a declarative or imperative phrase; and *modal*, meaning the sentence included a modal such as shall, would, or mightest. The use of *Wh-* intensifiers (*how*) was accounted for in the *declarative* category, which was considered separate from *interrogatory*. The modal category was necessary to determine possible correlations with the function of request or inspiring action since many verses containing modals also contained attempts to elicit a desired action. The syntactic type categories are inherently prone to overlap. However, each coder selected the category that they determined to be the primary feature of the utterance. The table below provides the count and percentage of each syntactic type for the five editions. It is followed by an explanation of each of the four types with textual examples.

Table 3: *Frequencies of Syntactic Type*

Levels	1830		1837		1841		1879		1920	
	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total
Expletive	38	51%	39	52%	39	53%	45	58%	56	50%
Declarative	27	38%	27	37%	26	35%	24	31%	25	22%
Modal	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	21	18%
Interrogatory	7	9%	7	9%	8	11%	8	10%	11	10%

*Expletive.* While the count of expletive instances consistently increased across all editions, a percentage count reveals a spike in 1879 from 53% in 1841 to 58% in 1879 and then back down to 50% in 1920. Most of the expletive instances in 1879 functioned as absurdity or as intensifiers. In the case of intensifiers, the exclamation most often occurred as sentence-medial on one-word expletives such as in Alma 5:37: “Oh! ye workers of iniquity.”

*Declarative.* The count of declarative instances, as well as the percentage they account for of the syntactic type, both decrease across all of the editions, with the sharpest decrease in percentage occurring in 1920. This decrease mirrors the sharp increase of modal instances that occurs in 1920. An example of a declarative exclamation is taken from 1 Nephi 16:32: “And now when they beheld that I had obtained food, how great was their joy!”

*Modal.* Up until 1920, there is one instance of modal syntactic type that comprises 1% of the syntactic types for each edition. In 1920, 20 instances are added, jumping the percentage up from 1% to 18%. These modals mainly function as calls of alarm in speeches and asides. Examples include Jacob’s speech to his prideful people: “O that he [God] would show you that he can pierce you, and with one glance of his eye he can smite you to the dust!” (Jacob 2:15) and Mormon’s aside, speaking to future readers at the time of the Restoration: “Wo unto him that spurneth at the doings of the Lord; yea, wo unto him that shall deny the Christ and his works!” (3 Nephi 29:5). Three of the instances of asides and calls of alarm occur in this chapter as Mormon pronounces wo upon various groups that shall in one way or another reject or deny Christ and His gospel in the last days.

*Interrogative.* The number of interrogative exclamations remains fairly constant in both count and percentage, averaging nine counts and 10% across all editions. Most of these occur in the genre of journal/record and function as a lamentation or as contempt. All instances of lament occur in Mormon chapter 6 as he laments the wickedness and loss of his people: “O ye fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord! O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!” In contrast, nearly all instances added in 1920 occur in the genre of prayer with the function of invocation/request. These occur exclusively in the psalm of Nephi when he invokes God’s grace to help him live righteously and achieve salvation. One such example is Nephi’s exclamation in chapter four verse 33, “O Lord, wilt thou encircle me around in the robe of thy righteousness!”

*Punctuation Position.* Punctuation position of the exclamation mark (structure 2) had two coding options, whether the exclamation mark was *sentence-medial*, where the exclamation mark occurred after the exclaimed word rather than the exclaimed proposition; or *sentence-final*, where the exclamation mark occurred after the exclaimed proposition. In cases where the single word was exclaimed but the word was an imperative and, therefore, propositionally capable of a truth value such as ‘Look!’, this was coded as *final* rather than *medial*. An example of medial punctuation is in Mosiah 27:37; “And how blessed are they! For they did publish peace; they did publish good tidings of good; and they did declare unto the people that the Lord reigneth.” Sentence-medial punctuation is one extant feature of archaic language preserved in the Book of Mormon. The table below provides the count and percentage of each of the two punctuation positions (sentence-medial and sentence-final) for the five editions.

Table 4: *Frequencies of Punctuation Position*

Levels	1830		1837		1841		1879		1920	
	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total
medial	12	16%	11	15%	12	16%	16	20%	12	11%
final	62	84%	63	85%	64	84%	64	80%	99	89%

*Sentence-final.* While the count for sentence-final exclamations increases significantly in 1920, the percentage computation remains constant across all the editions, with the exception of a 4% decrease in 1879, followed by a 9% increase in 1920.

*Sentence-medial.* As can be expected, the count of sentence-medial mirrors that of sentence final, remaining largely constant with the exception of a 5% increase in 1879. Many of these sentence-medial exclamations unique to 1879 occur in records where the exclamation functions as absurdity, such as in 2 Nephi 29:3, or as awe, as in Jacob 4:9: “For behold, by the power of his word man came upon the face of the earth! which earth was created by the power of his word.”

*Sentence clause structure.* This category received by far the lowest Kappa score at 0.31. Part of this is likely due to the winding clausal structures in the Book of Mormon, many of which were unfamiliar to the coders and some of which would not be considered complete sentences by modern grammarians.

Throughout all but the last edition, the most common sentence compositions were *simple* and *compound-complex*. Simple never dropped below 42%, making up almost half of the clause

structures in each edition, and compound-complex structures made up almost a quarter. The table below provides the count and percentage of each sentence clause structure (complex, compound, compound-complex, and simple) for the five editions.

Table 5: *Frequencies of Sentence Clause Structures*

Levels	1830		1837		1841		1879		1920	
	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total
complex	8	11%	8	11%	7	9%	9	12%	18	16%
compound	11	15%	10	15%	10	15%	10	13%	25	22%
compound-complex	18	24%	18	24%	18	24%	19	24%	23	20%
simple	37	50%	38	50%	39	53%	40	51%	47	42%

*Complex.* The number and percentage of exclaimed complex sentences remains constant until 1920, with a 4% increase. There is no significant correlation between the increase of complex sentences and any one of the genres or functions.

*Compound.* The percentage of exclaimed compound structures shows a slight decrease in 1879 from 15% to 13% followed by sharp increase in 1920 to 22%. Though many of the added instances in 1920 occurred in speeches, there is likewise here no correlation with function.

*Compound-complex.* Exclaimed compound-complex structures remain constant until 1920 when they decrease percentage-wise from 24% to 20%.

*Simple.* Although 1920 sees a significant spike in the number of exclaimed simple sentences, the percentages show an entirely different story. The percentage of exclaimed simple sentences actually decreases in this edition from 51% in the previous edition to 42% in 1920.

## CHAPTER 6 GENRE

The book of Mormon is a collection of narratives by various authors. To account for the different nature of the interactions and events recorded, it was necessary to identify different genres occurring in the text in order to identify any themes that may be associated with the exclamation mark within these genres. Consecutive verses within the same genre are grouped into text-acts. Each text act defines an event that occurred. Text acts can span multiple verses and chapters so that all verses within one text-act will necessarily be part of the same genre, while genres can be composed of any number of *text-acts*.

These *text-acts* provided the discourse context of the exclamation mark. For this paper, I use the same genres that were chosen based on inductive analysis of the text by Hingson et al. in their analysis of the 2013 edition. These genres are as follows: *record*, where the event was the written activity preserved for a future audience; *letter*, where the event was a written communication to another then-living person; *prayer*, where the event was a setting *prima facie* addressing the divine; *speech*, where the event was a monologue to present others; *conversation*, where the event was dialogic with present others; and *aside*, where the event topic was offset by an extended entry of the author. “Genres were assigned by the most ‘outer’ genre, such that a prayer recorded in a record entry would be marked as a record entry” (Hingson et al., forthcoming). The final codings for genre are shown in the table below with the counts for each by edition as well as the percentage they comprise of the total instances in each edition. The percentage of instances coded as conversation dropped greatly in 1920, while instances of aside and prayer increased in the same edition. The percentage of journal/record instances increased gradually across the editions.

The final codings for genre are shown in the table below with the counts for each by edition as well as the percentage they comprise of the total instances in each edition. The percentage of instances coded as conversation dropped greatly in 1920, while instances of aside and prayer increased in the same edition. The percentage of journal/record instances increased gradually across the editions.

Table 6: *Frequencies of Genre*

Levels	1830		1837		1841		1879		1920	
	Count s	% of total	Count s	% of total	Counts	% of total	Count s	% of total	Count s	% of total
journal/record	20	27%	22	29%	22	29%	26	33%	37	33%
prayer	5	7%	5	7%	5	7%	5	6%	11	10%
speech	27	36%	25	34%	25	34%	27	35%	38	34%
epistle	3	4%	3	4%	3	4%	3	4%	4	3%
conversation	16	22%	16	22%	16	22%	14	18%	13	11%
aside	3	4%	3	4%	3	4%	3	4%	10	9%



### *Aside*

*1830–1879.* In the 1830 edition, there are three instances of exclamations within the *aside* genre. The first is an exclamation of Nephi's pain on behalf of the suffering of his people after he, in vision, witnesses their destruction. The second, in contrast, is an exclamation of the blessed state of those who publish peace and bring others to a knowledge of their redeemer. The third and final aside, inserted by the editor and compiler, Mormon, occurs during a time in the text when the Nephites have become exceedingly wicked. The exclamation is attached to Mormon's lament of how slow the people are to remember their God (Helaman 12:5). Taken together, the three asides in this edition illustrate the rise and fall of Nephi's people who, because they reject their Redeemer, fall into wickedness and are eventually destroyed.

*1920.* There are no additional exclamations within the *aside* genre until the 1920 edition which sees the addition of seven exclamations within this genre. The first is added to the proposition that men do not seek wisdom nor desire wisdom to rule over them. The second instances are added to Ammon's desire to cry repentance and to his conclusory resolution that those who labor as missionaries will have a great reward. The last instances together highlight the quickness of men to hearken to Satan (Helaman 12:4) as well as the means by which men might do so, namely: denying Christ, denying revelations, and denying that Christ can work miracles (3 Nephi 29:5,6,7).

*Summary.* While two of the total seven asides emphasize the blessings and rewards of missionary labor as well as the desire to preach repentance, the remaining four stand in juxtaposition, telling a tale of destruction and wickedness that result from rejecting or forgetting Christ, His works, and His counsel. While 1920 saw the edition of one of the two instances regarding missionary work, it also provided the majority of instances regarding the foolishness of men and the denial of Christ.

### *Prayer*

1830. In the opening chapter of the Book of Mormon, the prophet Lehi has a vision in which he sees a pillar of fire and God upon His throne. He reads from a book, which reveals to him both the manifold sins and the imminent destruction of his city, Jerusalem. His exclamation of dismay yields the first exclamation point in the Book of Mormon in 1 Nephi 1:13. However, Lehi appears to have seen more than just the sins of Jerusalem, since in the same vision he also rejoices and praises the Lord. Among his rejoicings is a proposition in 1 Nephi 1:14 that *God is merciful—If one comes to God, God will save them*. This invocation is exclaimed throughout all four editions and is the first of many iterations of the theme of God’s mercy towards those who come unto Him.

Much later in the Book of Mormon, after experiencing this mercy one by one as they went forth to touch the nail-marks in the hands of the resurrected Christ, the people in Bountiful cried out *Hosanna!* which translates literally as “God save us now” and blessed the name of God.

1920. Exclamations were added to only two prayer text-acts and both emphasize the mercy of God. The first instance is in the prayer of a Lamanite Queen after being saved from an awful hell by the mercy of Christ. Up until 1920, only the first of these propositions—Jesus has saved her from hell—is exclaimed. In 1920, a second exclamation is added to her plea that God exercise His mercy on her people.

The second text-act to receive exclamation in 1920 is Nephi’s psalm following the death of his father, Lehi. Five exclamations were added to this text-act. Immediately after the final sermon and blessing of his father, Nephi records some introspections for his audience in 2 Nephi 4:15–30. He writes how he rejoices in spiritual things, but laments his own weakness. Part-way through, he turns from his introspective monologue and lamentation and directs his discourse towards God in a written prayer of praise. He exhorts the Lord to help him to do better and to be righteous. He beseeches the Lord to help him escape his enemies and to make his path straight.

*Summary.* In Nephi's psalm in 2 Nephi 4, Nephi closes much more certainly than he began, confident in the Lord's power and mercy, and exemplifying through his personal struggle the invocation of his father—that God will have mercy on those who come to Him. Thus, the additions in 1920 to the prayer text-acts reiterate the message of God's mercy that is exclaimed throughout all the prior editions, first by Lehi and second by the people at Bountiful who see the resurrected Lord.

### *Epistle*

*1830.* The 1830 edition has two epistolary text-acts exclaimed, to which two more are added in 1920. The first epistle in 1830 is written by the king Mosiah in an attempt to persuade his people in Zarahemla to not have a king because of the unrighteousness that a king can cause among his people. He does this by inciting them to remember how the wicked king Noah caused the destruction of a nation. The second instance is at the end of the Book of Mormon when Mormon is writing to his son, Moroni. He tells of how the women are starving because the armies have taken their provisions and cries, "O the depravity of my people!"

*1920.* In the 1920 edition, a second exclamation is added to Mormon's epistle to his son. Prior to his exclamation of the depravity of his people, Mormon details the wicked deeds being performed among them—and then the exclamation is added to his cry, "Come out in judgment, God, upon this people!" In contrast to the message of mercy seen in the genre of prayer, here we see emphasis on God's judgment to spare or to cease the depravity of the people. While Mormon's final words to his son are those of hope in Christ along with an admonition to remain faithful, these do not receive an exclamation.

The final instance, also added in 1920, is again in an epistle from Mormon to his son, Moroni. Moroni is aware that there have been disputations among Mormon's people concerning baptism of little children. To aid the assertion that little children are not in need of baptism, Mormon writes, "For how many little children have died without baptism!" While the epistle speaks also of God's mercy in saving little children, the exclamation here prompts the reader to think of the alternative: if children could not be saved without baptism, all of these unbaptized children would go to hell.

*Summary.* The 1830 edition emphasizes the propositions that a wicked king causes destruction and that the people are depraved while the 1920 exclamation is a cry for the judgment of God to save Mormon from witnessing the wickedness of the people as well as the would-be-damnation of little children were it not for the atonement of Christ. Taken together, the exclaimed epistolary text-acts in the Book of Mormon showcase the wickedness of the people and the desperation of those who have to witness it. The placement of exclamation marks within these text-acts calls on the reader to recognize and avoid such wickedness.

#### *Conversation*

*1830.* In the 1830 edition there were only two conversational text-acts that contain exclamations, the first of which is the conversation that the prophet Abinadi has with the priests of Noah before he is killed. Abinadi begins his conversation by pointing out the priests' wicked behavior and false teachings. After condemning the priests for perverting the ways of the Lord, Abinadi focuses most of the conversation on praising the power of God and explaining how one can live a righteous life. He repeats three times the same exclaimed proposition *the feet of those who publish peace are beautiful upon the mountains*, emphasizing the great importance of missionary work and spreading the news of Christ's righteous rule over humankind.

The second text-act is Nephi's vision of the tree of life. There is a total of 12 exclamation points in this vision, with 10 of them occurring in the directive uttered by the angel to Nephi to "Look!" Two instances are augmented by the word "behold" somewhere in the utterance, and therefore explicitly refer to an object. These are 1 Nephi 11:21 in which the object to behold is the Lamb of God and 1 Nephi 11:26 in which Nephi is being instructed to behold the condescension of God. Among those things that Nephi is told to look at and behold are the tree of life, the virgin Mary, the birth and ministry of Christ, the ministry of angels, the crucifixion of Christ, and the generations whose garments are made white because of their faith in Christ.

This conversation is unique in that it is never the themes themselves that are exclaimed; rather, the utterances of the angel direct Nephi to look and behold those things that exemplify the main themes of the love of God, the redemption of the people, and the restoration of the true Church.

*1837 and 1920.* In 1837 an exclamation was added to the directive in 1 Nephi 11:12 to “Look!” in order to match the typographical choices in the rest of the conversation. In 1920, an exclamation was added in Abinadi’s condemnation of the priests’ false teachings. The exclaimed proposition here—*it is bad to pervert the ways of the Lord*—is juxtaposed sharply against the later themes of Christ’s righteousness and reign.

*Summary.* While the majority of exclamations in this genre occur with the command to look or behold, the main theme that they correspond with is the love of God shown through the sacrifice of His Son. We also see emphasized the importance of making known this message in Abinadi’s conversation with the priests of King Noah.

### *Records*

*1830.* The first exclaimed themes of the Book of Mormon are the wickedness and destruction of Jerusalem (j BAD-SITUATION & I SEE a), exclaimed by Lehi after he reads the book given him in his vision. The second instance is preceded by a similar lamentation over one’s wickedness—in this case, Nephi laments *his own* wickedness after the death of his father, Lehi. In the middle of his writing, we get the exclamation, “Awake my soul! No longer droop in sin.” This resurgence of courage marks a turning point, after which Nephi’s psalm becomes a written invocation to God for strength. Though Nephi then writes of his gratitude and rejoicing, it is only this injunction to awake that receives an exclamation.

The second text-act to receive exclamations is Nephi’s quoting of Isaiah in 2 Nephi 11-24 concerning the state of the earth at the time of Christ’s judgment. There are many “wo” phrases in this section, including in 2 Nephi 13:9 *Their souls have earned evil, and so their souls shall be punished* and 2 Nephi 13:11 *If one is wicked, then one’s reward shall be to perish*. A majority of the remaining exclaimed verses in this text-act describe the wicked acts that people will be punished for unless they repent. In the period of rest, people will be free from bondage, saying: *The oppressor stops and the golden city is gone*. Hell, and its occupants, will also be weak, manifest through the exclamation that *Lucifer has fallen from heaven*. The majority of the exclamations describe the state of the wicked. The final exclamations that occur in the description of the final period of rest portray vividly the final downfall of the wicked.

The third text-act likewise exclaims the wickedness of a fallen people as Mormon writes of the destruction of his people and mourns what might have been had they followed Christ. Mormon laments for the destruction of the people who departed from the ways of the Lord: *O ye*

*fair ones, how could ye have departed from the ways of the Lord!* This is preceded directly by an exclamation of, in a sense, what might have been: *O ye fair ones, how could ye have rejected that Jesus, who stood with open arms to receive you!* If the people had accepted Jesus, they would have been saved, but since they did not, Mormon is left to mourn their loss: *O ye fair sons and daughters, ye fathers and mothers, ye husbands and wives, ye fair ones, how is it that ye could have fallen!*

The final record to receive an exclamation in the 1830 edition occurs in the writings of Ether, also concerning the destruction of a people. Ether witnesses of the destruction of the people and their collapse into wickedness. His prophecies of a New Jerusalem and the gathering and restoration of the House of Israel are juxtaposed with a complete destruction of both the people and the land. The exclaimed utterance, “*Who can stand before the army of Shiz? Behold, he sweepeth the earth before him!*” (Shiz CONQUERS land) marks the beginning of the great battle which leads to their ultimate destruction, which is a result of Satan’s hold upon the people.

1837–1841. Both of the exclaimed utterances added in 1837 are removed in 1920; however, we explore them to see the impact they have on the message of this and the subsequent 1841 and 1879 editions. The first occurs during Nephi’s vision of the Tree of Life as Nephi beholds the same great and spacious building that his father saw. The exclamation comes before the angel explains to Nephi the representation of the building (the pride of the world), so that the exclamation is merely to highlight the proposition that Nephi is beholding the same building his father saw, thus placing the emphasis on the object of his beholding rather than its symbolism.

In the second instance (Mormon 5:22), Mormon is writing to the future gentiles to whom the gospel will be delivered. The exclamatory utterance addresses the power of God and their need for repentance: they will be unable to stand before the power of God unless they repent of their evil ways.

1879. The 1879 edition likewise has two additions to the exclamatory utterances in records that are removed in the 1920 edition. These occur in Jacob 4:9 and Mormon 9:4. Jacob 4:9 emphasizes the power of God over the earth and over the understanding of man. In Mormon 9:4, Moroni is beseeching the future readers to repent, saying that they would be more miserable to dwell with God in their sin than to be damned in hell.

1920. Along with the four instances added in 1837 and 1879, there is one more instance that is deleted in the 1920 version (1 Nephi 20:18). This passage is a record of Isaiah in which the Lord is crying unto the House of Israel, “Oh that thou hadst harkened to my commandments!” In the 1920 edition and after the exclamation is replaced by an em dash which turns the focus away from a lamentation on their disobedience and towards the promised blessings of keeping the commandments: *—then had they peace been as a river and thy righteousness as the waves of the s*

The 1920 edition sees many added instances of exclamation points, especially within records. The first occurs during Nephi’s record of his family’s journeyings in the wilderness toward the promised land. This record is full of hardship, humbling circumstances, calls to repentance, anger at Nephi and at the Lord, and doubt on the part of Laman and Lemuel to the point of scorning and mocking Nephi. Yet, the only exclamatory utterance is “and now when they beheld that I [Nephi] had obtained food, how great was their joy!” While here their joy is found in temporal things, Nephi also provides record of their spiritual blessings and the many ways the Lord had guided and instructed them; however, none of these other instances are exclamatory.

The second instance occurs as Nephi is writing introspectively of his own wickedness. Here the added exclamation upon his wretched state is contrasted with added exclamations that occur in the second half in which he praises God in written invocation for His grace and the ability to rejoice. The added exclamations here highlight the contrast and the journey that Nephi took spiritually from sorrow and wickedness to rejoicing in grace.

The third instance is a new text-act in which no exclamations appeared previously. In this record of the coming forth of the Book of Mormon and the restored gospel, eleven propositions in the 1920 edition are annotated with exclamation points. All eleven propositions are pronouncements of wo upon those who, for one reason or another, reject the word of God that will come forth in the latter days as well as the power of God and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

The final instance is also a new text-act in the same sense. This short record details the pride cycle of a people who started off righteous and prospered by the Lord. They had all things common and saw peace and great miracles as they obeyed the commandments. As they prosper, pride enters their hearts and they begin to reject Christ and to create divisions among themselves. Interestingly, despite this full evolution into the pride cycle, the only exclaimed utterance is regarding their blessed state during the time of their righteousness: *And how blessed were they! For the Lord did bless them in all their doings* (Lamanites RIGHEOUS & L BLESSED) (4 Nephi 1:18). The exclamatory utterance is in the center of the record, just as these blessings are central to the pride cycle.

*Summary.* The 1830 edition emphasizes the wickedness that results in destruction. The 1837 edition exclaims the pride of the people and the need to repent. In 1879, this call to repentance is reiterated along with the power of God. In 1920 we see many more exclamations of wo—the majority on those who reject the word of God that will come forth in the latter days as well as the power of God and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Taken together the genre is mainly a record of the wickedness of the people and the call to repentance.

### *Speech*

*1830.* In 1 Nephi 16:38, Nephi’s elder brother Laman is angry at Nephi for their many afflictions in the wilderness. The exclamation here emphasizes their frustration and mockery, “Now, he saith that the Lord hath talked with him, and also, that angels hath ministered unto him! But behold, we know that he lieth unto us.” Not much later in their journeyings, Nephi is commanded by the Lord to build a ship and again his brothers are angry and murmur against him. In response, Nephi speaks unto his brethren extensively about the power of the Lord and His deliverance of the children of Israel. He speaks also of the rebellions and murmurings of Moses’ people when they were afflicted by fiery serpents: “He sent fiery-flying serpents among them; and after they were bitten, he prepared a way, that they might be healed; and the labor which they had to perform, was to look!” (1 Nephi 17:41). This exclamatory utterance hearkens back to the first exclaimed speech text-act in the Book of Mormon in which the Lord says unto Lehi and his family, “Look upon the ball and behold the things that are written!” This, too, was a simple way for a people to be delivered by the Lord.

In 2 Nephi 1–4 as well as in 2 Nephi 6–10, exclamations are included on the injunction to awake! In the first instance, this injunction is directed at Lehi’s sons when he is asking them



shake off the chains of hell and to hear the words of a dying parent. In the latter however, the injunction is directed at the Lord who will show his arm in gathering Israel.

In Jacob's speech to the people in 2 Nephi 6-10, he exclaims in many instances the greatness of God, specifically the greatness of his wisdom, mercy, grace, plan, justice, and holiness. This is contrasted with the cunning plan of Satan and the greatness of men's vainness, frailties, and foolishness. These all are couched in the theme of God's mercy, atonement, and gathering of the House of Israel. In Alma 24, when the king of the Anti-Nephi-Lehi's makes his speech, the mercy of God is likewise emphasized and exclaimed: "Oh how merciful is our God!" (Alma 24:15).

In Mosiah 2:19 the people of the land are gathering in tents to hear King Benjamin speak. King Benjamin begins his speech by explaining how he has humbly served the people and God. He explains his relationship with the people and God, propositionally saying *If x serves y, x serves God, and if x thanks me, the king, then x should thank God*. King Benjamin also talks for a large portion about the anguish the unrepentant will experience. Changing the topic, he tells the people that an angel revealed that the Lord shall dwell in a tabernacle among them and work great miracles. His name will be Jesus Christ; he will atone for man's sins and offer salvation, but some will still scourge him. The only exclamation however is in King Benjamin's profession of how we ought to thank God, emphasizing our dependence on Him.

The next exclamation is in Alma 26:3 when Ammon is glorying in the conversion of the Lamanites who were brought to behold the light of God. He professes this to be a blessing from the Lord that they were able to bring about God's work in their conversion.

In Helaman 7:17, Nephi mourns the iniquities of his people and utters the second exclamation concerning repentance in the Book of Mormon (the first being Lehi's call for his sons to awake). While Nephi is upon his tower praying and lamenting the sins of his people, a crowd gathers together, curious why he was in such great mourning. He asks why they have gathered together and responds that it is because of their iniquities that he is in mourning. The exclamation in this text-act occurs as Nephi calls the people to repentance: "O repent ye, repent ye! ... Turn ye, turn ye unto the Lord your God" (Helaman 7:17). In 3 Nephi 9:13 the exclamation also occurs around the call to repent; however, it occurs just prior to this call as the voice of the Lord addresses those who were spared from the destruction at the time of his

crucifixion: “O all ye that are spared, because ye were more righteous than they! will ye not now return unto me, and repent of your sins, and be converted, that I may heal you.”

The final exclamations in speech are in the Lord’s speech to the multitude at Bountiful following the great destruction of their lands. The first exclaimed utterance in this speech comes after Christ explains the restoration of the gospel in the latter days, the gathering of the covenant people, and the establishment of Zion. This explanation culminates in the exclaimed proposition *God will reign in Zion!* Christ continues to tell the people how they can know when these things are about to come to pass. He invokes all those who are afflicted—“O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest and not comforted!”—and promises them prosperity and protection. The final exclamation in speech bears the proposition: *the Lord will comfort His people.*

*1837.* The 1837 edition sees the removal of two instances of exclamation in speech text-acts. The first is in 1 Nephi 16:38. The second instance of removal is in 3 Nephi 9:13.

*1841.* Nearly all the changes in 1841 speech acts are reversed in later editions. The two added instances in 1 Nephi 17:40 and 3 Nephi 24:14 are later removed in 1920 and 1879 respectively, and one of the two that are removed (Alma 26:3) is later re-added in 1920. Only one instance is not reversed and that is the removal of the exclamation in 1 Nephi 16:26. The instance in 1 Nephi 17:40 occurs in Nephi’s speech to his brothers in response to their murmurings. After speaking of the many ways the Lord had provided for and protected his covenant people—the house of Israel—Nephi exclaims, “And he loveth those who will have him to be their God. Behold he loved our fathers! And he covenanted with them.” This occurs just prior to the exclaimed proposition that the people had only to look at the brass serpent to be saved. In 3 Nephi 24:14 the Lord is expounding Malachi and speaks of the ways in which the people rebuked the Lord and his ways. The exclaimed proposition showcases the people’s contempt: “Ye have said, it is vain to serve God, and what doth it profit that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord of Hosts!”

*1879.* In 1879 two instances are added: Alma 42:25 and Helaman 7:20. Both are introductions to rhetorical questions—the first, a question addressed by Alma to his son Corianton as he explains to him the role of justice. The second addressed by Nephi to the crowd of wicked men gathered around his tower is on the expletive “Oh!” followed by a rhetorical question: “How could you have forgotten your God in the very day that he has delivered you?”

1920. The 1920 edition sees many new instances of exclamation added to the speech genre. In first Nephi chapter two verses nine and ten Lehi, speaking to his sons Laman and Lemuel, compares them to the river and the valley by which they are camped. He calls them to repent, to keep the commandments, and to be steadfast in righteousness. These latter two are exclaimed with modals—“that thou mightiest be like unto” this river or this valley in firmness and righteousness.

Later in Jacob’s speech to the people the theme of humility before the Lord is exclaimed twice. Jacob tells the people that they have become sinful, which causes him great grief. He then admonishes them for their worldliness and pride and exclaims propositionally, *God should make you humble and you should listen to God and not be prideful*. In Mosiah chapter two the theme of humility before God continues. King Benjamin is speaking to his people and, as exclaimed in previous editions, testifies to them that God deserves our thanks and gratitude and that we ought to be continually in His service. In the 1920 edition there is added exclamation one chapter later warning of the calamities that fall those who knowingly rebel against God.

The next speech to receive exclamations is Alma’s speech to the people of Zarahemla in Alma chapter five. Here the main is repentance and we see again the call to hearken and listen to God. In his speech, Alma tells the people that they can only be saved and sit down in the kingdom of God if their garments have been washed white through the blood of Christ and asks them to consider a variety of sins for which they would need to repent. Twice *wo* is exclaimed upon them unless they repent. He then exclaims propositionally that *God—the shepherd—is calling you but you won’t listen*.

The next exclamation is one that was lost in 1841 and brought back in 1920, along with one other exclamation belonging to the same speech in which Ammon glories in the Lord and the success of their missionary efforts. The theme here in both exclamations is that of missionary work. After exclaiming how the Lord had blessed them to bring the Lamanites out of darkness to behold the light of God, Ammon exclaims to his brethren how the field was ripe and having labored much, they can behold the great results of their labor. The next exclamation is likewise a joyous testament of conversion. The exclamation occurs as Alma speaks to his son about his conversion and occurs at the turning point when Alma’s sorrow and pain for his sins turns to joy in the redemption of Christ.

In 1879 the first exclamation is added to Nephi's speech when he is on his tower. The exclamation there is to get the attention of the people gathered around. Here in the 1920 edition we see exclamations added to many of his main points which involve mostly the iniquity of the people, their pride, and the call to repent (see Helaman 7:14, 17, 25–27).

Some of the few exclamations removed in this edition within the speech genre are in 1 Nephi 17:40, 2 Nephi 1:13, and 2 Nephi 9:8. The first concerns the love of God for the children of Israel, the second the ultimate destruction of the wicked who are cast down to hell, and the third is merely a sentence-medial exclamation that is removed since there is already a sentence-final. (*O the wisdom of God! his mercy and grace!* is changed to *O the wisdom of God, his mercy and grace!* with the first exclamation removed and replaced with a comma.)

*Summary.* 1830 sees the exclaimed themes of God's mercy, the atonement, and the gathering of Israel as well as the call to awake and to obey the simple commandments of God. We see also the command to repent and the promise that God will comfort His people. In 1879 there is added exclamation on the justice of God. In 1920 we see again the call to repent along with many exclamations of wo upon those who do not. We also see exclaimed the pridefulness and rebellion of the people and the need to humble themselves before God. Lastly, exclaimed in this version are the blessings of missionary work and the joy of conversion.

#### *Cross-sectional Themes*

Two fundamental differences The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints claim from other branches of Christianity are the gift of the Holy Ghost and the priesthood. Likewise unique is the missionary effort that is constantly emphasized and reiterated and practiced. Cross-sectional themes speak to these differences. They include denial of the Holy Ghost or the Word of God (see *aside*, *epistle*, and *record*), believing in miracles, and praise for missionary work (found in *aside*, *conversation*, and *speech*). The cross-sectional theme of the denying or forgetting Christ and the punishment of the wicked is exclaimed in three genres (*aside*, *epistle*, and *record*) along with the pridefulness of the people and the command to repent, which are both exclaimed primarily in *speech* and *record*. The mercy and sacrifice of God and His son, Jesus Christ, are covered primarily in *speech*, with emphasis on mercy and grace in *prayer* and an emphasis on the atonement in *conversation*.

## CHAPTER 7 FUNCTION

Since the exclamation point can be employed to cover a large variety of modes and functions, the illocutionary force of the mark was coded based on previous studies (e.g., (Collins, 1938; Fowler, 2015; MacKellar, 1885; McCulloch, 2019; Truss, 2004) which after pairing overlaps resulted in fifteen codes: Expressive speech acts (*absurdity, lamentation, awe, effusive thanks, contempt, intensifier, enthusiasm, approval/praise, sudden joy, regret*), Declarative speech acts (*invocation/request, irony, call of alarm*), and Directive speech acts (*inspiring action, command/proclaim*). These fifteen functions were coded across all the verses within each edition, with the most salient function of the mark coded for each. As a result, *intensifier* was only used when it was the highest function operating in the mark, even though the exclamation mark is arguably always considered an intensifier.

Table 7: *Frequency of Functions*

		1830		1837		1841		1879		1920	
Levels		Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total	Counts	% of total
<b>Directive</b>	inspiring action	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	1	1%	4	4%
	command/proclaim	20	27%	21	28%	21	28%	20	26%	17	15%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Expressive</b>	effusive thanks	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	awe	2	3%	2	3%	2	3%	3	4%	3	3%
	absurdity	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	3	4%	4	4%
	lamenting	10	14%	9	12%	9	12%	9	12%	13	12%
	intensifier	1	1%	1	1%	2	3%	4	5%	0	0%
	contempt	9	12%	8	11%	9	12%	8	10%	9	8%
	enthusiasm	1	1%	1	1%	0	0%	0	0%	1	1%
	approval/praise	17	23%	17	23%	17	23%	17	22%	17	15%
	regret	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	sudden joy	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	2	2%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Declarative</b>	invocation/request	2	3%	2	3%	2	3%	2	3%	12	11%
	Irony	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%
	call of alarm	10	14%	11	15%	11	15%	11	14%	30	26%
	<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>18%</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>37%</b>

The expressive functions of *effusive thanks, irony, and regret* were absent in the mark's use in the text across all the editions. *Sudden joy* and *enthusiasm* were likely nearly absent, with

one or no instances, until the 1920 edition. The expressive functions *contempt*, *approval/praise*, and *awe* remained largely constant across all five of the editions, never experiencing a deviation of more than one from one edition to the next. Looking at these categories' percentages, however, we see that both *contempt* and *approval/praise* decreased in 1920. *Command/proclaim* also decreased in the 1920 edition while *invocation/request* and *call of alarm* both doubled their percentage.

#### *Directive*

*1830.* The 1830 edition had only one instance of *inspiring action*; however, the largest function category for the 1830 edition was the other directive function, *command/proclaim*, with 20 instances. The imperative syntactic structure was often utilized for this function, such as in the commands of the angel to Nephi to look and behold and in the proclamation of Lehi to his rebellious sons to awake their souls. Sixteen of the twenty instances of *command/proclaim* occurred with the injunction to look or behold, and three with the injunction *awake!*

In the predominate case of "Look!", sometimes it was to call attention to a definite visual scene, such as the birth of Christ, and other times it was to maintain attention to the conversational interaction between Nephi and the angel.

*1920.* The next notable change within the directive function coding was in 1920. The number of *command/proclaim* instances dropped by three, but was compensated with three new instances of *inspiring action*. *Inspiring action* was frequently characterized by future modals (e.g., would, could, might) and was often observed with the overall structure "O that (x) would (y)!" *Inspiring action* also employed comparisons, exemplified in Lehi's optative wish that his son Lemuel be firm like the valley they were settled in (1 Nephi 2:10).

Two of the added instances were to exclaim Lehi's wishes concerning his sons to be more righteous, while the third occurred during Nephi's speech concerning the baptism of Christ as he inspired his hearers to follow the righteous example of Christ and themselves be baptized. All three instances of *command/proclaim* that were lost in this edition took place during Nephi's vision and included the injunction to look or to behold.

*Expressive*

1830. Despite missing two possible categories and only three instances each of enthusiasm and awe, the expressive use of the exclamation mark remained the greatest across all the editions. The second largest individual coding category in the 1830 edition was the expressive category *approval praise*, with 17 instances. These instances were composed mainly of approval for the righteous people (especially regarding missionary work) and praise for the attributes of God, which appeared in large number in Jacob's speech to his people early in the Book of Mormon. These praise-worthy attributes include God's power, wisdom, grace, greatness, justice, holiness, and mercy, with mercy being the most commonly praised attribute.

Other notable large expressive functions were lamentation and contempt, with ten and nine instances respectively. These functions were used to highlight various aspects of wickedness. Lamentation occurred when the wickedness of the people distanced them from God through 'rebellion' and 'pride', and resulted in their fallen, weak, and sinful state. Lamentation was frequently characterized by statements such as "O that thou hadst X, then Y" and "How is it ye have Z," with X being a righteous act such as keeping the commandments, Y being the promised blessings or happy and peaceful state that would result from action X, and Z being an action that would lead the people to wickedness such as departing from the way and rejecting the word of the Lord. Contempt occurred for the choice to stay in the wicked state and was directed in the third, rather than the second, person. Among the things for which contempt was exclaimed were the plan of the evil one, the foolishness of men, the pride of men, the iniquity caused by a wicked king, and the revelations of the prophets.

1837. The 1837 editions saw the removal of one instance of contempt, in which Laman and Lemuel are angry at Nephi because Nephi had said that "the Lord hath talked with him, and also that angels hath ministered unto him!" Their contempt for their brother was inspired by their unbelief and also by Nephi's earlier proclamation that he, because of their wickedness, would be made a ruler over them.

*1879.* Two instances of *awe* are preserved from the 1830 edition throughout all subsequent editions. The 1879 edition saw one additional instance of *awe* in Jacob 4:9. In this instance, the *awe* is directed toward the power of God’s word, by which “man came upon the face of the earth.” The previous two instances functioned to remark on the power of Evil and the eventual downfall of that Evil. The instance in Jacob 4:9 is deleted in the 1920 edition.

In 1879, the first and only three instances of *absurdity* are exclaimed. In all three instances, *absurdity* was used to highlight the lack of thought or incongruity in an individual’s argument by being closed to information (see 2 Nephi 29:3) and by being distant from God and the knowledge of His nature (see Alma 42:25).

*1920.* The biggest change in the 1920 edition as far as expressive functions is the addition of five exclaimed instances of lamentation. All five instances lament the wickedness, pride, and iniquities of either the speaker, in the case of Nephi, or of those being spoken to or written about. These lamentations are contrasted with two additional exclamations of joy—one of spiritual joy as a result of the redemption of Christ (Alma 36:20), and one of temporal joy after Nephi obtains food for his family (1 Nephi 16:32). What both have in common is that they mark a contrast between a previously destitute state: the pain and sorrow of Alma and the hunger and dismay of Lehi’s family. Lastly, 1920 saw the addition of one case of awe in regards to the miraculous results of the diligent missionary efforts of Ammon and his brethren (Alma 26:5).

#### *Declarative*

*1830.* The 1830 edition has two instances of *invocation*, one invoking God and his power to save, the other invoking the comfortless to come to Christ and be comforted. The *call of alarm* function was, in nine of the ten instances, characterized by the textual expletives of ‘wo’ and ‘yea’. Six of the ten instances occurred in Nephi’s quoting of Isaiah early in the Book of Mormon. The exclamations called attention to the alarming state of others’ wickedness, abominations, and transgressions of the law and commandments.

*1837.* In 1837, one more instance of *call of alarm* was exclaimed as Mormon wrote to the gentiles near the end of the Book of Mormon. Here, the function is characterized by the textual expletive ‘O.’ The utterance rhetorically asks the gentiles how they can stand before the power of God unless they repent of their evil ways (Mormon 5:22). The exclamation in this verse is later changed to a question mark in 1920.



1920. In 1920, ten more instances of *invocation/request* were exclaimed as well as 29 more instances of *call of alarm*. Twenty-eight of these 29 instances occur as exclamations of *wo*. Over half of the exclamation points added to the Book of Mormon between the original edition in 1830 and the 1920 edition fall under this structure. The most common things that are woefully exclaimed are denial (of Christ, revelations, miracles, the Holy Ghost, and the power of God), rejection (of the Word of God and ongoing revelation), pride, and rebellion against God. Calls of alarm were often preceded in the text by laments over the people's state of wickedness and functioned to exclaim the state of the people rather than as a call or command to repent, making them declarative speech acts.

A majority of the ten instances of *invocation/request* occur in the psalm of Nephi in which he invokes God on multiple occasions, requesting His grace and aid in achieving salvation. Two instances invoke God—one thanking Him for His mercy, and one asking that his judgment would come against the wicked. And finally, one instance requests the attention of the people present, that they listen to the words being spoken.

## CHAPTER 8 APPROPRIATION

The last stage of interpretation theory is *appropriation* of the text. Ricoeur (1981) explains that “the interpretation of a text culminates in the self-interpretation of a subject who thenceforth understands himself better, understands himself differently, or simply begins to understand himself” (p. 182). Here the appropriation is limited to how the exclamation mark functions symbolically in the text to direct the attention to propositions that are subject to appropriation.

Throughout all the editions, the theme of God’s mercy was reiterated in the exclaimed prayers. Conversely, God’s judgment is exclaimed in the epistles as his power to destroy and condemn. This dichotomy of God’s mercy and judgment put the reader in a place to consider the result of each and to recognize and avoid the wickedness so often exclaimed in other passages.

Another theme exclaimed throughout all the editions is the love of God as shown through the sacrifice of His son. Interestingly, this theme occurs not with awe or approval but with the command to behold it. *Command/proclaim* is the largest function in the 1830 edition and drives home the doctrine of God’s character and the sacrifice of his son as among the most important doctrines to be emphasized. Joseph Smith in his King Follett Sermon stated that the first principle of the gospel is “to know for a certainty the character of God” (Roberts, 1978). Jacob’s speech about the goodness of God is the only place where the exclamation mark is used consistently to rhetorically mark each of his main points of his speech. This draws the reader’s attention to his points about God’s character, all of which are exclaimed with the expected function of approval and praise, the second highest function in the 1830 edition.

This focus on the goodness and nature of God is contrasted with the second-most common function in the 1830 edition—call of alarm—which calls attention to the plan of the evil one and condemnation of the wicked. Placed in the context of Church, exclaiming propositions which build a world of contrast—such as those of the nature of God and the destruction of Satan—follows protestant invocations of joining Christianity to avoid hell and punishment. Nine out of the ten calls of alarm occur with exclamations of wo for those in a state of wickedness, those who commit abominations, and those who transgress the law and commandments. We also see a contrast between the nature of God and the nature of man. Contempt is exclaimed not only towards Satan but also, more commonly, toward the foolishness, pride, and wickedness of men.

Thus the 1830 edition calls the reader to behold the love of God and sacrifice of Christ and makes an argument for God's character. It also shows contempt and call of alarm for certain sins. We see also the dichotomy of the love of God and his character contrasted with the condemnation of hell and carnal state of men.

The 1879 edition has the most sentence-medial exclamations, all of which occur in records and correspond with the functions of absurdity, intensifier, or awe. In the case of intensifier, the exclamation most often occurred on one-word expletives. These one-word expletives are often used to draw the attention of a certain group of people such as in Alma 5:37: "Oh! ye workers of iniquity."

In 1920 the amount of *contempt*, *approval/praise*, and *command/proclaim* functions decreased while the amount of *invocations* and *calls of alarm* increased significantly. *Invocations* and *calls of alarm* both doubled the previous edition in both percentage and count. *Calls of alarm* occurred most often with modals in the speeches and asides genre where they occurred as exclamations of wo: twenty-eight out of the twenty-nine instances pronounced *wo* upon the hearer. These exclamations of wo emphasized the destruction and wickedness that results from rejecting or forgetting Christ, His works, and His counsel. As if in response to this pervading wickedness we see too an increase in invocation and request, occurring most often in prayer. The majority of the added instances of prayer were associated with an interrogative syntactic form as Nephi requested the grace and aid of God in helping him to avoid wickedness.

Finally, the 1920 edition's added exclamations in asides aims the message at the future reader to whom Mormon was writing. These exclamations that emphasize what is happening outside of Book of Mormon times draws us into the eternal underlying themes of salvation through Christ. The main theme of these asides is the foolishness of men and their denial of Christ. This denial of Christ is juxtaposed with the blessings that come with the spreading of Gospel and message of salvation.

In all, the 1920 edition sees a larger emphasis on the many sins we can commit and the need to call upon God for his grace in overcoming them. The calamities of hell are painted in vivid picture as is the call to repentance. The asides bring the story to the reader as they exclaim the foolishness of men and denial of Christ and the compensating need for the preaching of the Gospel.

## CHAPTER 9 CONCLUSION

The editors of the Book of Mormon, in their discriminatory use of exclamation marks, highlight to the reader their preferred interpretation. In their use of the exclamation point in this religious text, the editors, intentionally or not, direct the reader's attention to the reality of the state of the wicked, to Christ and the positive attributes and mercy of God, and to the contrast between the two, while also calling attention to specific doctrines. Thus, the exclamatory points and the propositions they adorn invite the reader to appropriate for himself his state of righteousness or wickedness and his desire to follow God.

Research applying Ricoeur to the interpretation of religious texts has been carried previously; however, this paper took a unique approach in its application of Ricoeur's interpretation theory in a linguistic context to analyze the affect punctuation has on the reader's interpretation of the Book of Mormon texts. This work introduces new applications of Interpretation theory while opening an avenue for continued analysis of the Book of Mormon. Future research could analyze how punctuation in the Book of Mormon differs by author, how other punctuation marks function symbolically in the Book of Mormon text following our same methods, the modernization of texts with regards to punctuation, and the role of punctuation in translated works. These studies would add to the research on how society's use of punctuation has changed over the last two hundred years as well as to the theological understanding of the Book of Mormon as a significant source of doctrine for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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