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Phrases à rallonge in Suetonius' *De vita Caesarum*: Communication Patterns

1 Introduction

The goal of this paper is the study of participial *phrases à rallonge* in Suetonius' *De vita Caesarum* (*DVC* henceforth). Building on previous scholarship, the focus will be more precisely on the verbs used in the participial clauses, in the attempt to identify communicative patterns linked to the use of this construction. In order to achieve this goal, I will be resorting to the linguistic annotation contained in the LASLA (*Laboratoire d'Analyse Statistique des Langues Anciennes*) corpus. The paper will be structured as follows: sections 2 and 3 will introduce, respectively, the syntactical construct known as *phrase à rallonge* and the previous studies on Suetonius' use of it; in section 4 the LASLA database will be presented, whereas section 5 and 6 will analyze the verbs that the *phrases à rallonge* most frequently employ. In the conclusion, I will evaluate the methodology used and the results obtained.

2 Historiography and the *phrases à rallonge*

In the monograph *L'expression narrative chez les historiens latins. Histoire d'un style* (1969), Chausserie-Laprée describes the most common syntactic structures found in the prose of major Latin historiographers. The author singles out three main kinds of complex sentences: *phrase narrative-type*, *phrases à relance* and *phrases à rallonge*. The *phrase narrative-type*, which is by far the most frequent type of sentence in Caesar and Livy, consists of *membres circonstanciels* (i.e. subordinate clauses introducing distinct actions or circumstances) that precede the main clause (MC henceforth).[1] One example is given by the following sentence:[2]

> Liv. 38.7.1
>
> *Perseus*
> *ubi adesse Aetolos audivit,*
> *omissa obsidione urbis quam oppugnabat*
> *depopulatus tantum agros,*
> *Amphilochia excessit atque in Macedoniam redit.*

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1 Cf. Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 129–132 for the definition and examples.
2 Cf. Yardley 2018, 19–20 for the text and translation. The example is found at Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 131.

When he heard that the Aetolians were coming, Perseus abandoned the siege of the city that he was attacking and after merely ravaging the countryside left Amphilochia and returned to Macedonia.

Each subordinate clause being autonomous content-wise, the *phrase narrative-type* can be of different length according to the number of *membres circonstanciels* that are added. The main information is presented in the MC, while the subordinate clauses set up the gradual understanding of the preceding steps.

The *phrase à relance* is constituted by two main clauses, each preceded by one or more *membres circonstanciels*. It is thus a sequence of two *phrases narratives*, as the following example shows:[3]

Liv. 22.42.5

Qui ubi adequitavit portis,
subsistere extra munimenta ceteris iussis,
ipse cum duobus equitibus vallum intravit,
speculatusque omnia cum cura,
renuntiat insidias profecto esse.

[Statilius] rode up to the camp gates, told the rest of his men to remain outside the fortifications, and passed beyond the palisade with two cavalrymen. After carefully examining the whole camp, he reported that it had to be a trap.

This kind of sentences entails a double movement: the first *phrase narrative-type* might lead the reader to think that the reasoning is concluded, yet the coordinating conjunction (here *-que*) opens up a second, similar development. The English translation shows the strong independence of the two parts, as they are split into two different sentences, separated by a full stop.[4]

Finally, in the *phrase à rallonge* (*PhRal* henceforth) the structure is reversed. In this case, the MC is expanded by a number of *membres circonstanciels* that are thus 're-jected' at the end of the sentence. In the case of the *PhRal*s, the definition of the *membres circonstanciels* is restricted to participial clauses (both with participial secondary predicates and absolute ablatives).[5] The example below illustrates this category:[6]

Liv. 34.25.9

Atque ita cum paucis in forum pergit ire,
clamitans ut [...] ducem se libertatis sequerentur.

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3 The example is found at Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 254. For the translation, cf. Yardley 2019.

4 Cf. Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 253–258 for definitions and examples.

5 Cf. Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 283–290 for definitions and examples. The scholar also includes *cum*+subjunctive clauses (Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 290–291), but in this paper we will focus exclusively on participial clauses. For the definition of participial secondary predicates (*participes conjoints* or *épithètes détachées* or *praedicativum*, cf. Pinkster 2021, §21.1.

6 The example is found at Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 288. For the translation, cf. Yardley 2017, 493.

> So it was that, with a few supporters, he proceeded into the forum crying out [for all wishing to save the state] to follow him as the champion and leader of their freedom.

Chausserie-Laprée analyses the evolution of the usage of these different structures across time. The *PhRal* is initially (esp. in Caesar) only rarely used as an alternative to the *phrase narrative*. However, the study of other historians (Sallust, Nepos, Livy, Curtius Rufus and Tacitus) shows a gradual increase in the rate of *PhRal*s at the expense of the *phrase narrative-type*. In particular, this structure becomes strongly predominant in Tacitus, to the point of representing an essential feature of his writing style.[7] The *PhRal* introduces a dimension of surprise, since the reader, while expecting that the MC would provide the full, complete information, finds out that the *PhRal* brings new elements to the understanding of its content.

Building on Chausserie-Laprée's work, Longrée has further characterized the *PhRal*.[8] In fact, Chausserie-Laprée's analysis shows that the notion of *PhRal* is more complex than the simple syntactic definition as postposition of participles, given that in some cases such structures are not classified as *PhRal* by Chausserie-Laprée. Longrée has shown that the sentences more commonly considered *PhRal*s are those perceived as an alternative to an independent juxtaposed sentence introducing elements of the narrative background: the *PhRal*s represent thus one solution for introducing *variatio* with respect to sentence juxtaposition. As the next section will show, the use of *PhRal*s in Tacitus and Suetonius, as well as the comparison between the two, have been the object of various studies.

3 The Style of Suetonius: A Long Story of Criticism

Damon[9] has recently retraced the history of the criticism of Suetonius' style: according to ancient[10] and modern scholars, the formal dimension of the *DVC* is neglected to the advantage of communicating rich content. The major role played by participles, and more precisely by *PhRal*s, has been pointed out by various scholars.[11] The first systematic analysis was provided by Sage, who surveyed Suetonius' text in two articles both published in 1979. In the first study,[12] Sage enquires whether literary features that embellish other authors' prose can be found in Suetonius, too (e.g. the use of historical infinitive, historical present, parataxis, *cum inversum*, etc.). According to

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7 Cf. Chausserie-Laprée 1969, 294–296. Cf. also Longrée 1996 for an analysis of the *PhRal* in Tacitus.

8 Longrée 1991.

9 Damon 2014, 43–48.

10 Cf. *Vita Probi* (*HA*) 2.7, where it is stated that Suetonius wrote *non tam diserte quam vere*; cf. Damon 2014, 42.

11 Cf. e.g. Bayer 2002, 72–92; Ramondetti 2002, 386–393 retraces the story of these observations.

12 Sage 1979a.

Sage, the main feature[13] regularly found in Suetonius corresponds to subordinate clauses rejected at the end of the sentence, while they would be expected to precede the MC. Given the analogy with Tacitus on this point,[14] in his second contribution[15] Sage scrutinizes the use of these constructions by Suetonius. Sage heavily relies on Chausserie-Laprée's analysis (cf. section 2), but oscillates between two different kinds of constructions: the more general *structures descendantes* (where subordinates follow the MC), and the specific *PhRal* as defined by Chausserie-Laprée. Sage aims at demonstrating that, whereas Tacitus masters the use of these structures and effectively exploits them for stylistic purposes, Suetonius does not seem to have a clear sentence structure in mind but, after stating the main point in the MC, he just appends one clause after another in order to add a certain amount of related information. In particular, according to Sage, Tacitus' participial appended clauses would show a close logical relationship with the MC, while in Suetonius they either elucidate what has been stated before or add 'forgotten' details without any precise link with the MC. Longrée has shown all the methodological issues raised by Sage's analysis:[16] the confused definition of the *PhRal*s, the arbitrary comparisons carried out by the scholar, the flawed sampling methodology in selecting passages, and the inaccurate semantic classification of the passages according to the function they cover. Longrée proposes thus a re-analysis of the data relative to Tacitus and Suetonius. From Longrée's work, it appears that there is a significant statistical difference between the use of absolute ablatives and secondary predicates in the *PhRal*s: Tacitus prefers absolute ablatives, whereas Suetonius favours secondary predicates.[17] Moreover, in Tacitus' texts (for this specific analysis, a sample from the *Annals*) it is much more frequent to find imperfect and pluperfect verbs in the MC than in Suetonius. Since those two tenses are normally used to provide background information (as opposed to foreground information, normally expressed in the present and perfect tense), this means that Tacitus is prone to spread background information in MCs on the one hand, the *rallonges* on the other, while Suetonius tends to be neat in incorporating foreground information in the MC as well as pushing background information in the postponed participial clauses. Longrée's study convincingly demonstrates that the distribution of linguistic features is strongly intertwined with the understanding of each author's narrative techniques.

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13 Apart from the careful usage of adverbs such as *statim*, *repente*, *subito*, which the scholar also identifies as typical.

14 Tacitus' use of the *PhRal* has been widely studied. Beyond Longrée's work, cf. Dräger 1868, Courbaud 1918, Seitz 1958, Kohl 1959, Enghofer 1961.

15 Sage 1979b.

16 Longrée 2003.

17 Longrée 2003, 8–9.

Building on Longrée's earlier analysis,[18] Ramondetti examines the use of the *PhRal*s according to their function in the organization of the text in Suetonius' *DVC*.[19] The study is based on a manual counting, classification, and statistical analysis of all the *PhRal*s found in the *DVC*. The data are duly reported in an *Appendix*, and the core part of the paper deals with the function that *PhRal*s play in the information flow of the *DVC*. According to Ramondetti, they function as (i) junction across different parts of the narration by illustrating the previous MC and anticipating elements of the following sentence, (ii) introduction of further explanations, (iii) expansion of a detail mentioned in the MC, (iv) conclusion of a series of elements that support an initial statement, (v) metanarrative moments providing information about the reasons why certain elements are included into the text. The *PhRal*s thus play a key role in the construction of Suetonius' *per species* text sections, introducing the material (details, reflections, etc.) that allows the reader to delve into the personality and motivations of the emperors. In the final part of her work, Ramondetti focuses her attention on how Suetonius zooms on narrative details in the *PhRal*s.

4 Methodology

My research aims at building both on Longrée's and Ramondetti's key contributions, namely on the observation that *PhRal*s are a key element for understanding Suetonius' information structure. To this purpose, I wish to introduce an additional layer of linguistic information, i.e. the semantics of the verbs found in the participial *rallonges* clauses. Taking the cue from the fact that *PhRal*s introduce background information (Longrée) and that they mostly function as zooms on specific narrative details (Ramondetti), I aim to show whether specific verbs or semantic areas are most frequently found in the *PhRal*s, with special regard to the participial clauses constituting the *rallonges*.

To achieve this goal, I resort to the linguistic information contained in the LASLA corpus. The LASLA corpus has been developed at the Université de Liège since the sixties and consists of Latin and Greek texts linguistically annotated. For each word (token) of the text, a philologist has encoded the correct vocabulary entry (lemma) and morphologic annotation (part of speech, case, mood, tense, etc.).[20] For instance, in the opening sentence of Suetonius' *DVC* (*Annum agens sextum decimum patrem amisit...*), *amisit* is tagged as "Verb, third conjugation, singular, indicative, perfect, active, third person". A syntactic layer is also recorded, namely the verbs of the MC are distinguished from those of the subordinate clause, and, for each subordinate verb, the

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18 Longrée 1991.

19 Ramondetti 2002.

20 The annotation guidelines can be found in Philippart de Foy 2014.

corpus indicates by which subordinating conjunction it is introduced or the type of subordinate clause in which it is found. In the example above, *amisit* is tagged as verb of the MC. However, participles used as secondary predicates are not tagged as subordinate verbs. This makes it impossible to automatically distinguish a participle used as substantive or adjective from one used as secondary predicate. For instance, in the sentence[21]

Suet. *Tit.* 8.4

Bona oppressorum in Vesuvio, quorum heredes non exstabant, restitutioni afflictarum civitatium attribuit

And the property of those who lost their lives by Vesuvius and had no heirs left alive he applied to the rebuilding of the buried cities,

the participle *oppressorum* indicates "those who lost their lives", functioning as a substantive, and *afflictarum* qualifies the cities as "buried", functioning as an adjective. On the contrary, in the sentence

Suet. *Nero* 6.1

De genitura eius statim multa et formidulosa multis coniectantibus praesagio fuit etiam Domiti patris vox, inter gratulationes amicorum negantis quicquam ex se et Agrippina nisi detestabile et malo publico nasci potuisse

Many people at once made many direful predictions from his horoscope, and a remark of his father Domitius was also regarded as an omen; for while receiving the congratulations of his friends, he said that "nothing that was not abominable and a public bane could be born of Agrippina and himself",

the participle genitive *negantis* is a secondary predicate of *Domiti patris*. In the LASLA corpus there is no way to distinguish the three usages. The same does not hold for absolute ablatives, which are tagged as subordinate clauses. Thus, in the sentence

Suet. *Aug.* 94.6

Atque etiam sequenti statim nocte videre visus est filium mortali specie ampliorem, cum fulmine et sceptro exuviisque Iovis Optimi Maximi ac radiata corona, super laureatum currum, bis senis equis candore eximio trahentibus

Moreover, the very next night he dreamt that his son appeared to him in a guise more majestic than that of mortal man, with the thunderbolt, sceptre, and insignia of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, wearing a crown begirt with rays and mounted upon a laurel-wreathed chariot drawn by twelve horses of surpassing whiteness,

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21 Suetonius' text is taken from Ihm 1908 (available in a digital format) and the translation from Rolfe 1913/1914. The examples quoted are systematically compared to the more recent edition by Kaster 2016, and the differences are indicated in the footnotes.

it is possible to distinguish the *radiata* (attribute ablative participle) from the *trahentibus*, a participial absolute ablative (*equis trahentibus*).

In addition, the LASLA corpus does not record the full syntactic tree of the sentence.[22] It is thus impossible to define the entire set of clause dependencies. For instance, if a participle is followed by a final clause, it is not possible to automatically determine whether the final clause is subordinated to the participle, or to the MC. Given these specific features of the LASLA corpus, it was impossible to automatically retrieve the *PhRals* in Suetonius' *DVC*.

5 Statistical Analysis: Participles in Suetonius and Other Historians

Given the availability in the LASLA corpus of linguistic annotation on most of the texts used by Chausserie-Laprée for his analysis, we will first consider some texts which may provide us with an overview of Suetonius' style in comparison to that of other historians. The following analyses are performed via the software Hyperbase-Web, an online interface developed by the UMR 7320: Bases, Corpus, Langage (CNRS, Université de Nice Sophia Antipolis) for searching and statistically exploiting linguistically annotated corpora. These analyses are run on the full text of the *DVC*. From the LASLA database "Historia",[23] I selected the texts listed in Tab. 1:

Tab. 1: Selected texts of the LASLA database "Historia".

Author	Text
Sallust	*Bellum Catilinae*
Sallust	*Bellum Iugurthinum*
Caesar	*Bellum civile*
Caesar	*Bellum Gallicum*
Cornelius Nepos	*De viris illustribus*
Livy	*Ab Urbe condita*
Tacitus	*Agricola*
Tacitus	*Annales*
Tacitus	*Historiae*
Suetonius	*De vita Caesarum*
Curtius Rufus	*Historiae Alexandri Magni*

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22 A Suetonian treebank is available but covers only Suet. *Aug.* 1–55 (http://perseusdl.github.io/tree bank_data/).
23 The list of the available databases can be found here: http://hyperbase.unice.fr/hyperbase/control ler/action/intro/read_base.php

The first test consists in analyzing the distribution of participles and absolute participles through the database. The results are shown in Fig. 1. The value indicated in the vertical axis translates the specificity of the two linguistic categories for each text. A high positive value (> 2) indicates that the linguistic feature is more present than what would be expected on the basis of the corpus' average, whereas a low negative value (< −2) indicates that the feature occurs less frequently than what would be expected.[24]
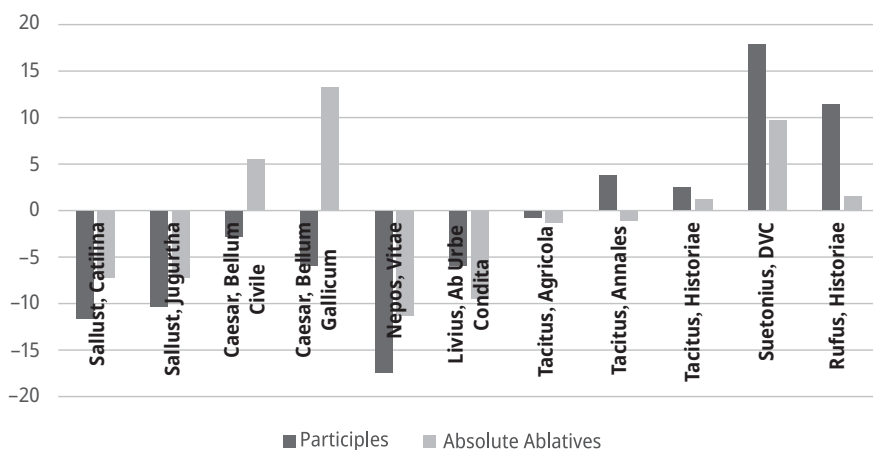

Fig. 1: Distribution of participles (dark grey) and participial absolute ablatives (light grey) in selected texts of the LASLA dataset "Historia".

Suetonius stands out in the usage of both categories: the only value exceeding Suetonius' specificity is the use of absolute ablatives in Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum*.[25] The study of the function of the two categories in Suetonius is thus fully justified. The results above include all the participles in the text, thus many more participles than those contained in the *PhRals*; however, it is already indicative of Suetonius' strong preference for this mood.

In order to introduce the semantic level, it is possible to interrogate the database on the most frequently used participles by each author. The results are provided in Tab. 2.

It is immediately clear that Suetonius' use of participles differs greatly from that of the other writers. Caesar uses a comparable number of participles (3073 vs 3914 in Suetonius), and yet the most frequent form (*cognitis*) appears 37 times, whereas Suetonius' most frequent form (*professus*) only 12. In addition, if all the forms of *cognosco* are added up, 100 participles are formed from the same verb in Caesar, whereas the

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24 Cf. Brunet 2011, 37–41 for details of the computation.

25 For an analysis of Caesar's absolute ablatives, cf. Longrée/Mellet 2012.

Tab. 2: Most frequently used participial forms in selected texts of the LASLA database "Historia".

Sallust	Caesar	Nepos	Livy	Tacitus	Suetonius	Curtius Rufus
1022 part.	3073 part.	750 part.	6533 part.	6883 part.	3914 part.	3631 part.
Conscripti (26)	*Cognitis* (37)	*Facto* (18)	*Ratus* (42)	*Ratus* (38)	*Professus* (12)	*Ratus* (31)
Existumans (10)	*Facta* (33)	*Absens* (10)	*Profectus* (39)	*Missis* (31)	*Data* (10)	*Intuens* (16)
Victis (10)	*Cognito* (32)	*Natus* (9)	*Facto* (36)	*Audita* (21)	*Dato* (9)	*Dato* (15)
Cognita (9)	*Cognita* (31)	*Interfectus* (7)	*Rati* (31)	*Ingressus* (21)	*Petenti* (9)	*Iussis* (13)
Ratus (9)	*Facto* (31)	*Profecto* (7)	*Victis* (28)	*Dictitans* (20)	*Agens* (8)	*Relictus* (11)
Cognitis (8)	*Nactus* (26)	*Cognita* (6)	*Profecti* (27)	*Victis* (20)	*Cunctatus* (6)	*Fatigatis* (10)
Dato (8)	*Acceptis* (25)	*Existimans* (6)	*Captis* (23)	*Omissa* (18)	*Ferens* (6)	*Iusso* (10)
Paratis (6)	*Confecto* (25)	*Gestis* (6)	*Facta* (23)	*Ausus* (17)	*Insequenti* (8)	*Relictis* (10)
Rati (6)	*Interfectis* (24)	*Verens* (6)	*Relicto* (23)	*Conscripti* (16)	*Repetita* (8)	*Victis* (10)
Perculsi (5)	*Missis* (23)	*Facta* (5)	*Conscripti* (21)	*Interfecto* (16)	*Reversus* (8)	*Facto* (9)

highest number in Suetonius is 19 (*do*). Curtius Rufus has a similar number of participles as well, but *ratus* is used much more frequently (31 times) than *professus* in Suetonius. Similarly, Tacitus has less than double the number of participles (6883), but *ratus* occurs 38 times, *missis* 31, etc. Livy shows an even stronger preference for specific verbs (*ratus*, *profectus*, *facto*), and the same applies to Sallust and Cornelius Nepos, considering their lower total number of participles. Thus, despite the very high rate of participles in the text, Suetonius' use of participles appears to be highly diversified, at least in comparison with the other authors of the database "Historia".[26]

The distribution of MCs in imperfect and pluperfect tense within the same database is shown in Fig. 2.

Longrée's observations are fully confirmed. Suetonius ranks extremely low in the use of imperfect and pluperfect in the MC, whereas Tacitus (in the *Historiae*) and Caesar have significantly positive values. In the following section, it is worth attempting to answer the following questions:

–   Taken into account the semantic diversity of the verbs used as participles in the *DVC*, is it possible to isolate regular uses of this construction with specific regard to the *PhRal*s?
–   What kind of background information is given in the *PhRal*s and how can observations like these integrate existing studies on Suetonius' narrative technique?

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26 For a similar discussion including non-historiographical texts, cf. Dalbera/Longrée 2019.
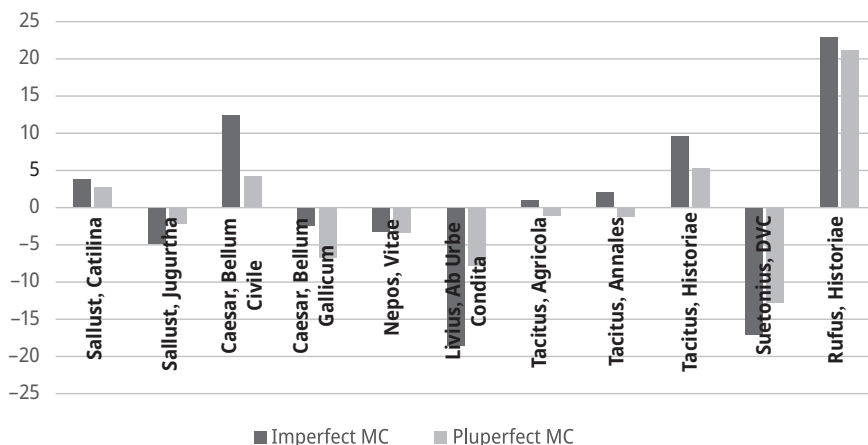
Fig. 2: Distribution of MC verbs in imperfect (dark grey) and pluperfect (light grey) in selected texts of the LASLA database "Historia".

6 *PhRal*s in Suetonius

As detailed in Section 4, there is no automated way to retrieve the *PhRal*s from Suetonius' corpus. As a consequence, the list provided by Ramondetti was used to manually identify the correspondent sentence in Suetonius' LASLA corpus.[27] Only the first six books of the *DVC* were processed in this way (*Caesar* to *Nero*). Nonetheless, the first six books represent almost the 80% of the *DVC* (in fact, the last biographies are on average much shorter than the first ones),[28] hence this study can be considered representative of Suetonius' writing in the *DVC*. Ramondetti's list also includes ablative absolutes built with a noun (*Mario consule*) or with an adjective (*superstitibus liberis*), which have not been included here.[29] The corpus of *PhRal*s is constituted of 14.859 words (tokens), spread across 440 different sentences. The total of the first six books of the *DVC* (i.e. all sentences included) contains 56.203 words: the *PhRal* corpus includes thus 26% of the first half of the *DVC*. Fig. 3 illustrates the ratio between the number of sentences and the *PhRal*s in each analyzed book.

The distribution appears fairly regular, only in Nero's *Vita* the frequency is slightly higher. Hence, *PhRal*s can be considered as a regularly distributed linguistic feature in the work.

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27 Ramondetti 2002, 423–424.

28 More precisely, books I–VI contain 56.203 tokens over a total of 71.782 (78.2%).

29 Cf. Serbat 1979, 340–343 for a classification of the absolute ablatives.
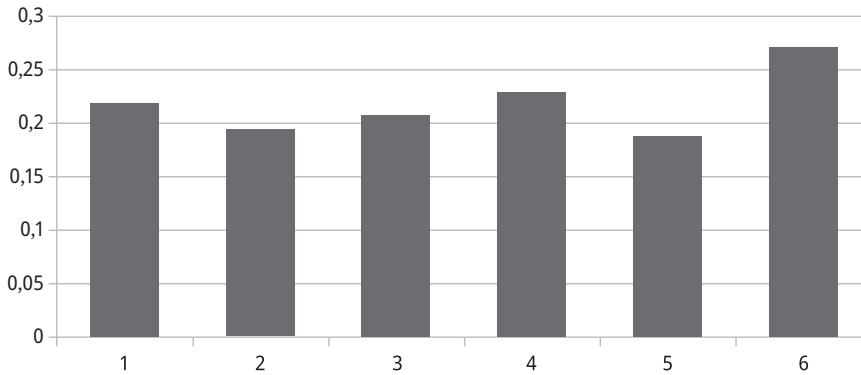
Fig. 3: Ratio of *PhRal*s in the first six books of the DVC.

From this corpus, I extracted all the participles following the MC: the most frequent lemmata used as participles are found in Tab. 3 (all the lemmata which occur five times or more are listed). However, results remain unprecise, mostly because of cases in which a second MC is found after the participle. Due to some inconsistencies in sentence splitting between the LASLA files and Ihm's edition, I preferred not to filter out automatically the cases in which a second MC was following the participle, but to manually verify and validate the results:

Tab. 3: List of the most frequent lemmata used as participles following a MC in the *PhRal* corpus.

Lemma	occurrences	Lemma	Occurrences
excipio	9	*deduco*	5
do	9	*excuso*	5
affirmo	7	*polliceor*	5
appello	7	*pronuntio*	5
prosequor	7	*scribo*	5
caedo	6	*sedeo*	5
mitto	6	*submitto*	5
nascor	6	*vito*	5
offero	6		
profiteor	6		
refero	5		
soleo	5		

In the list of Tab. 3, different kinds of verbs appear: some are related to communication (such as *affirmo*, *refero*, *excuso*, *pronuntio*), others hint at the description of behaviours (such as *soleo*, *vito*, *sedeo*); and, finally, verbs such as *excipio* and *do* have a rather generic meaning. The next sections describe the most recurrent uses.

6.1 Reporting Words

Suetonius' taste for reporting expressions, comments, and speeches has already been singled out in the scholarship as a core feature of the *DVC*.[30] From a stylistic point of view, this appears as one of the most frequent uses of the *PhRal*s. Indeed, after describing the main action in the MC, Suetonius adds in direct or indirect speech the words accompanying the action, introducing them in the *rallonge* participial clauses.

In the examples 1 and 2, two dreams are introduced with an infinitive clause depending from *affirmans*. In both cases, a character suddenly enters the scene (MC) bringing disruptive news, conveniently announced via a dream: the participial clause, in this case, introduces the key element of the scene. In fact, in the first case, Suetonius describes how easily Claudius could be manipulated into taking revenge against 'enemies'; in the second, Suetonius introduces a list of miracles that announce Caligula's death, one of which is the dream.

> 1. Suet. *Claud.* 37.2
>
> *Pari modo oppressum ferunt Appium Silanum: quem cum Messalina et Narcissus conspirassent perdere, divisis partibus alter ante lucem similis attonito patroni cubiculum inrupit, affirmans somniasse se vim ei ab Appio inlatam* [...]
>
> It was in a similar way, they say, that Appius Silanus met his downfall. When Messalina and Narcissus had put their heads together to destroy him, they agreed on their parts and the latter rushed into his patron's bed-chamber before daybreak pretending consternation, declaring that he had dreamed that Appius had made an attack on the emperor.

> 2. Suet. *Calig.* 57.1
>
> *supervenitque ilico quidam Cassius nomine, iussum se somnio affirmans immolare taurum Iovi.*
>
> and at once a man called Cassius turned up, who declared that he had been bidden in a dream to sacrifice a bull to Jupiter.

In other cases, the words of the emperors are reported to strengthen the description of a certain behavior given in the MC. In examples 3 and 4, *affirmans* introduces statements by, respectively, Augustus and Tiberius in which they motivate their choices. In this way, the information given in the MC is inserted into the broader description of the emperors' characteristics.

> 3. Suet. *Aug.* 40.3
>
> *Et Liviae pro quodam tributario Gallo roganti civitatem negavit, immunitatem optulit affirmans facilius se passurum fisco detrahi aliquid, quam civitatis Romanae vulgari honorem.*

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30 Damon 2014. Cf. also Fry 2009, 25–26, on the stylistic treatement of direct citations; Galfré in this volume for further bibliography on quotations in Suetonius.

And when Livia asked it [the citizenship] for a Gaul from a tributary province, he refused, offering instead freedom from tribute and declaring that he would more willingly suffer a loss to his privy purse than the prostitution of the honor of Roman citizenship.

4. Suet. *Tib.* 34.1

et ut parsimoniam publicam exemplo quoque iuvaret, sollemnibus ipse cenis pridiana saepe ac semesa obsonia apposuit dimidiatumque aprum, affirmans omnia eadem habere, quae totum.

Furthermore, to encourage general frugality by his personal example, he often served at formal dinners least left over from the day before and partly consumed, or the half of a boar, declaring that it had all the qualities of a whole one.

Similar to these last examples are the *PhRal*s containing the participle *professus*. Emperors are caught in the act of admitting some specific thought or publicly validating a certain state of affairs with their words. With respect to the previous examples, the focus is here on the passage from the private to the public dimension. Caesar's course of action (first attacking Pompey's forces in Spain and then Pompey in Greece, example 5), Caligula's public recognition of his bond with Caesonia (example 6) and Claudius' open predilection for Greek culture (example 7) are thus introduced via the same syntactic structure.

5. Suet. *Iul.* 34.2

Hos frustra per omnis moras exitu prohibere conatus Romam iter convertit appellatisque de re publica patribus validissimas Pompei copias, quae sub tribus legatis M. Petreio et L. Afranio et M. Varrone in Hispania erant, invasit, professus ante inter suos, ire se ad exercitum sine duce et inde reversurum ad ducem sine exercitu.

After vainly trying by every kind of hindrance to prevent their [= of the consuls and Pompey] sailing, he marched off to Rome, and after calling the senate together to discuss public business, went to attack Pompey's strongest forces, which were in Spain under command of the three lieutenants – Marcus Petreius, Lucius Afranius, and Marcus Varro – saying to his friends before he left "I go to meet an army without a leader, and I shall return to meet a leader without an army".

6. Suet. *Calig.* 25.3

Uxorio nomine dignatus est †quam enixam,† uno atque eodem die professus et maritum se eius et patrem infantis ex ea natae.

He did not honour her with the title of wife until she[31] had borne him a child, announcing on the selfsame day that he had married her and that he was the father of her babe.

7. Suet. *Claud.* 42.1

Nec minore cura Graeca studia secutus est, amorem praestantiamque linguae occasione omni professus.

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31 The translation is based on the integration <u>*non prius*</u> after *nomine* (Roth). Kaster prints *Quam enixam uxorio nomine dignatus est.*

> He gave no less attention to Greek studies, taking every occasion to declare his regard for that language and its superiority.

Other verbs (such as *appello* or *pronuntio*) cover similar functions.[32]

6.2 Citing Sources

Reporting information found in other sources is a core aspect of the work of the historian, and the way in which this information is introduced plays a crucial role in defining the author's methodology and his relationship with his source material.[33] Two of the verbs most frequently used as participles in the *PhRal*s (*refero* and *scribo*) serve indeed the purpose of mentioning source information. Examples 8 and 9 show how the *rallonge* is used to expand the MC where the name of the source is mentioned, providing the full quotation. Example 10 differs slightly, as the emperor is himself described using a source in order to corroborate his position. Whereas in the first two examples the use of *referens* hints at the "work of the historian" (the author seeks to strengthen his point via external information), in example 10 the citation is embedded within the main narration.

> 8. Suet. *Iul.* 9.2
>
> *de hac significare videtur et Cicero in quadam ad Axium epistula referens Caesarem in consulatu confirmasse regnum, de quo aedilis cogitarat.*
>
> Cicero too seems to hint at it in a letter to Axius, where he says that Caesar in his consulship established the despotism which he had in mind when he was an aedile.
>
> 9. Suet. *Iul.* 30.4
>
> *quod probabilius facit Asinius Pollio, Pharsalica acie caesos profligatosque adversarios prospicientem haec eum ad verbum dixisse referens: "hoc voluerunt: tantis rebus gestis Gaius Caesar condemnatus essem, nisi ab exercitu auxilium petissem".*
>
> The latter opinion is the more credible one in view of the assertion of Asinius Pollio, that when Caesar at the battle of Pharsalus saw his enemies slain or in flight, he said, word for word: "They would have it so. Even I, Gaius Caesar, after so many deeds, should have been found guilty, if I had not turned to my army for help".
>
> 10. Suet. *Claud.* 16.2
>
> *notavitque multos* […] *quendam vero et quod comes regis in provincia fuisset, referens, maiorum temporibus Rabirio Postumo Ptolemaeum Alexandriam crediti servandi causa secuto crimen maiestatis apud iudices motum.*

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32 Cf. Suet. *Tib.* 57.1, *Calig.* 13.1, *Claud.* 21.5 (*appellans*) and *Nero* 13.2.
33 This kind of expressions is strongly related to the way in which Suetonius refers to his own work: cf. Longrée 1996; Duchêne 2022, 51–88.

> And he degraded many [...]; one man merely because he had been companion to a king in his province, citing the case of Rabirius Postumus, who in bygone days had been tried for treason because he had followed Ptolemy to Alexandria, to recover a loan.

Similarly, *scribens* is used to quote other authors in order to validate the main statement making use of external authorities (cf. *Iul.* 30.5; *Aug.* 7.2). Generally speaking, it is worth noticing that the *PhRal*s frequently serve the purpose of reporting words and texts. The content of the *rallonge* is a necessary complement of the MC, representing the main information of the clause, or substantially contributing to the understanding of the MC. In addition, the importance for Suetonius of reporting words and documents has been widely recognized.[34] The frequency of the association between the participial *rallonge* and these passages compellingly shows that the enrichment of the MC via these structures represents a crucial expressive tool of the *DVC*.

6.3 The Importance of Precision: *excipio*

Excipio stands out as the most frequent verb used as a participle following the MC. Out of the 10 occurrences recorded, 4 show a fairly regular behavior: Suetonius makes use of the participial *rallonge*, always in the absolute ablative, to add an exception to the information delivered in the MC. In all four examples, the MC always declares the absence of something/someone, whereas the *rallonge* adds the detail that a couple of cases could indeed be found, as can be seen in examples 11–14:

> 11. Suet. *Iul.* 75.3
>
> *Nec ulli perisse nisi in proelio reperientur, exceptis dumtaxat Afranio et Fausto et Lucio Caesare iuvene.*
>
> And it will be found that no Pompeian lost his life except in battle, save only Afranius and Faustus, and the young Lucius Caesar.
>
> 12. Suet. *Aug.* 74.1
>
> *Valerius Messala tradit, neminem umquam libertinorum adhibitum ab eo cenae excepto Mena, sed asserto in ingenuitatem post proditam Sexti Pompei classem.*
>
> Valerius Messala writes that he never invited a freedman to dinner with the exception of Menas, and then only when he had been enrolled among the freeborn after betraying the fleet of Sextus Pompey.
>
> 13. Suet. *Tib.* 48.2
>
> *ne provincias quidem liberalitate ulla sublevavit, excepta Asia, disiectis terrae motu civitatibus.*

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34 Cf. e.g. Townend 1960; Gascou 1984, 1–339.

He did not relieve the provinces either by any act of liberality, except Asia, when some cities were destroyed by an earthquake.

14. Suet. *Claud.* 26.3

ac vix uno interposito die confecit nuptias, non repertis qui sequerentur exemplum, excepto libertino quodam et altero primipilari, cuius nuptiarum officium et ipse cum Agrippina celebravit.

And he married her with hardly a single day's delay, but none were found to follow his example save a freedman and a chief centurion, whose marriage ceremony he himself attended with Agrippina.

These *rallonges* respond to a need for credibility and precision: after the strong statement of the MC that might not sound reasonable to the reader, the *rallonge* nuances the information and hints at the precision of Suetonius' sources and knowledge. Examples 13 and 14 also show the use of two subsequent *rallonges* in absolute ablative: in example 13, the second absolute ablative illustrates the reason for the exception stated in the first one. In Example 14, on the contrary, the information about the absence of citizens following the emperor's behavior is already stated in absolute ablative, and then finetuned by *excepto libertino*.

6.4 Specific Types of Actions

The list of Tab. 3 contains verbs that communicate specific kinds of information. Not surprisingly, *solitus* is used to communicate the habits of the protagonists, as shown in example 15,[35] where a government habit of Augustus is described:

15. Suet. *Aug.* 48.1

nec aliter universos quam membra partisque imperii curae habuit, rectorem quoque solitus apponere aetate parvis aut mente lapsis, donec adolescerent aut resipiscerent

He never failed to treat them all with consideration as integral parts of the empire, regularly appointing a guardian for such as were too young to rule or whose minds were affected, until they grew up or recovered.

Suetonius appears eager to report (self)-justifications of the emperors' behavior, introducing them with the participle of *excuso*: Augustus' infidelity was indeed explained by his political strategy:[36]

16. Suet. *Aug.* 69.1

adulteria quidem exercuisse ne amici quidem negant, excusantes sane non libidine, sed ratione commissa, quo facilius consilia adversariorum per cuiusque mulieres exquireret.

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35 Similar passages are found at *Iul.* 67.1; *Claud.* 3.2; 21.3; 33.2.
36 Cf. also *Nero* 41.1; *Claud.* 6.2. The verb is used in the core meaning of "apologizing" in *Tib*. 11.2.

That he was given to adultery not even his friends deny, although it is true that they excuse it as committed not from passion but from policy, the more readily to get track of his adversaries' designs through the women of their households.

Another characteristic of the political scene described by Suetonius is the role of promises for obtaining favors or claiming rights. Example 17 shows Tiberius busy not only in justifying a law which was not appreciated, but also in offering compensation for it.

17. Suet. *Claud.* 6.2

Quod decretum abolitum est, excusante Tiberio imbecillitatem eius ac damnum liberalitate sua resarsurum pollicente.

This second decree was however repealed, since Tiberius urged Claudius' infirmity as a reason and promised that he would make the loss good through his own generosity.

Justifications and promises come together also for Claudius, as shown in example 18:

18. Suet. *Claud.* 38.1

Irae atque iracundiae conscius sibi, utramque excusavit edicto distinxitque, pollicitus alteram quidem brevem et innoxiam, alteram non iniustam fore.

He was conscious of his tendency to wrath and resentment and excused both in an edict; he also drew a distinction between them, promising that the former would be short and harmless and the latter not without cause.

In example 19, the exaggerated nature of Caligula's promise is shown by the use of the adverbial *et* before *sollicitus*: the scalar value ("even") of *et* underlines the extent of Caligula's appetite for power.

19. Suet. *Calig.* 12.2

Quam quo magis confirmaret, amissa Iunia ex partu Enniam Naeviam, Macronis uxorem,[37] *qui tum praetorianis cohortibus praeerat, sollicitavit ad stuprum, pollicitus et matrimonium suum, si potitus imperio fuisset.*

To have a better chance of realizing this, after losing Junia in childbirth, he seduced Ennia Naevia, wife of Macro, who at that time commanded the praetorian guard, even promising to marry her if he became emperor.

The examples above[38] show that *pollicitus* (or *pollicente*) brings the additional information of a promise that makes the MC statement more credible. In all cases, it testifies to the emperor's willingness to obtain a certain goal or consent.

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37 Kaster prints *Enniam, Naevi Macronis uxorem*.

38 Cf. also *Claud.* 25.3; *Nero* 31.4, where nonetheless promises are not made by the emperors.

Moreover, *PhRal*s with *mitto* in absolute ablative are used three times to describe the act of sending groups of men (legion, delegation) to a certain destination. In this case, all the occurrences in the corpus are in absolute ablative. Examples 20–21 show the use of the same expression (*legionibus missis*):[39]

20. Suet. *Aug.* 26.1

Consulatum vicesimo aetatis anno invasit admotis hostiliter ad urbem legionibus missisque qui sibi nomine exercitus deposcerent.

He usurped the consulship in the twentieth year of his age, leading his legions against the city as if it were that of an enemy, and sending messengers to demand the office for him in the name of his army.

21. Suet. *Nero* 39.1

Accesserunt tantis ex principe malis probrisque quaedam et fortuita: [...] *ignominia ad Orientem legionibus in Armenia sub iugum missis aegreque Syria retenta.*

To all the disasters and abuses thus caused by the prince, there were added certain accidents of fortune: [...] a shameful defeat in the Orient, in consequence of which the legions in Armenia were sent under the yoke and Syria was all but lost.

Finally, the verb *do* – despite having a very general meaning – is used in three cases in an ablative absolute *rallonge* clause to indicate the act of assigning a task to someone (the expression *dato negotio* is used twice, *data cura* once).[40]

22. Suet. *Iul.* 44.1

[...] *bibliothecas Graecas Latinasque quas*[41] *maximas posset publicare data Marco Varroni cura comparandarum ac digerendarum.*

[...] to open to the public the greatest possible libraries of Greek and Latin books, assigning to Marcus Varro the charge of procuring and classifying them.

23. Suet. *Aug.* 3.1

Ex praetura Macedoniam sortitus fugitivos, residuam Spartaci et Catilinae manum, Thurin[g]um agrum tenentis in itinere delevit, negotio sibi in senatu extra ordinem dato.

On his way to the province, executing a special commission from the Senate, he wiped out a band of runaway slaves, refugees from the armies of Spartacus and Catiline, who held possession of the country about Thurii.[42]

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39 *Aug.* 58.1 contains the rallonge *legatione* [...] *missa*. In *Nero* 22.2 *liberto mittente mappam* is also used in an absolute ablative *rallonge* clause.

40 Absolute ablative *rallonges* with *do* are also found at *Calig.* 23.2 and *Aug.* 56.3.

41 Kaster prints *quam maximas posset*.

42 The translation is based on the text *Thurinum*, which is also the text printed by Kaster.

24. Suet. *Tib.* 34.1

adhibendum supellectili modum censuit annonamque macelli senatus arbitratu quotannis tempe-randam, dato aedilibus negotio popinas ganeasque usque eo inhibendi, ut ne opera quidem pistoria proponi venalia sinerent.

he proposed that a limit be set to household furniture and that the prices in the market should be regarded each year at the discretion of the senate; while the aediles were instructed to put such restrictions on cook-shops and eating-houses as not to allow even pastry to be exposed for sale.

7 Conclusions

The analysis has provided an example of the use of linguistically annotated resources for elucidating Suetonius' narrative technique, in particular the use of *PhRal*s. Starting from the conceptual framework set up by Chausserie-Laprée and developed by Longrée, as well as from the thorough analysis carried out by Ramondetti, this paper has detailed the kind of information found in the *PhRal*s. First, I have shown that the verbs used as participles in Suetonius are much more varied than what can be observed in other histori-ographers, which indicates that Suetonius does not strongly associate participles with recurrent expressions. Second, when analyzing the most frequently used verbs in the *rallonges,* it appears that the background information falls into some general categories. On the one hand, reported speech or texts are commonly found in the *PhRal*s: as an overall effect, these *PhRal*s end up making the scene vivid and precise by citing the exact written or spoken text in which, generally speaking, the core information of the sentence is found. On the other hand, the citation of exceptions in the *PhRal*s displays formal regularity and aims to increase the precision of Suetonius' historical reporting. Furthermore, *PhRal*s featuring verbs such as *soleo, polliceor, excuso* introduce background information that depicts behaviors common to various emperors. From a methodological point of view, the paper has illustrated how a digital corpus, even though not perfectly suited for the scope, can support the analysis of stylistic features. The integrated interplay between stylistic scholarship and digital corpus analysis can thus help deepen the understanding of formal features and information structuring in Suetonius' *DVC*.

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