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Introduction

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> *Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*
>
> Matthew 13, 1-8 The King James Version

This special issue of *Token: A Journal of Linguistics* contains a collection of papers drawing on the work presented at the Colloquium *Exploring the Discursive Creation of Argumentation and Ideology in Evolving Specialized Knowledge Domains* organized by Prof. Rita Salvi as part of an Italian national research project[1] under the auspices of the CLAVIER research centre.[2] The Colloquium was held in Rome on June 13-14, 2019 and some of the papers published here were presented at the Colloquium, while others have been inspired by the topic which was intensively and extensively discussed during the two days of study.

The papers cover a wide range of contexts in which knowledge dissemination can take place, focusing on different domains, participants and levels of specialisation. Knowledge dissemination is, in fact, characterised by asymmetrical cognitive relationships. The recipient of the knowledge

[1] PRIN 2015, no.2015TJ8ZAS: "Knowledge dissemination across media in English: continuity and change in discourse strategies, ideologies and epistemologies".

[2] Corpus and Language Variation in English Research https://clavier.fileli.unipi.it/.

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being transmitted knows less than the transmitter, even in peer-to-peer communication. However, all the papers start from the assumption that the dissemination of knowledge does not consist in the mere transfer of information and data, but rather it involves a necessarily complex set of cognitive and pragmatic acts which may be positioned along a message-bearing continuum linking the production to the interpretation of the message, the encoding to the decoding. To disseminate any message, including one bearing specialised knowledge, the text creator needs to construct it linguistically, or through other semiotic systems, in such a way as to ensure its propagation, acceptance and entrenchment in the target discourse community.

If we associate the idea of dissemination of knowledge with the biblical parable in the epigraph, or with the impressionist painting of *Le semeur* by Jean François Millet, we can use them allegorically to describe how argumentation and ideology characterise knowledge. Like the Sower and the Semeur, those who seek to disseminate the seed of their knowledge need to scatter it into the furrow traced by those who preceded them. He or she trusts that most of the seed will bear fruit a hundred, sixty or thirty times, but is also aware that some seed may fall by the wayside, among stones or amid thorns. The Sower encodes the seeds of knowledge using semiotic substance and forges them through argumentation and ideology.

Knowledge can be understood simply as information, facts, descriptions, but it also implies a deeper understanding of a phenomenon or subject acquired through study and experience. When we receive information, we interpret and integrate it in accordance with our ideological makeup, our beliefs, values and social positionings which underlie individual and group behavior. In the words of van Dijk (2003: 86), "Knowledge is not only mental, but also social". Unless it is acquired, shared and used by people in interaction, it will remain simply a personal belief. Consensus, therefore, is an essential factor which has to be built up and reinforced in the discourse. Knowledge also has a cultural dimension, insofar as it unites, coalesces and consolidates a community, whether it be a community of practice or a community in the broader sense of a social or national group. Once again quoting from van Dijk (2003: 86), "One can only act competently as a member of such a culture when one shares its knowledge and other such social cognitions".

From a linguistic point of view, we can therefore say that the dissemination of knowledge through textual production is not due to a purely objective observation of reality, but is "always filtered through acts of selection, foregrounding and symbolisation" and construed "through

processes that are essentially social, involving authority, credibility and disciplinary appeals" (Hyland 2004: 6). Knowledge dissemination necessarily implies the transfer and transformation of information, which, in turn, produce changes in the discursive constructions used to place emphasis on different meanings, thus bestowing an argumentative structure upon the text. Moreover, the selection of dissemination mechanisms made to establish such a hierarchy of meanings in the recontextualization of knowledge are highly influenced by the ideology of text creators who, in the first place, choose what is valuable for knowledge dissemination from their perspective (Beck et al. 2019).

This collection of papers is, in fact, centred on the two closely interwoven themes of argumentation and ideology, which are intrinsic to the dissemination of knowledge. The construction of texts for the conveyance of knowledge is an ideologically oriented operation, as it presupposes choosing semantically stratified and discursively recontextualized materials from the semiosphere, which bear the imprint of the significance they have acquired within a given field. However, ideology here is not intended just as a political or economic doctrine, but also as the tacit assumptions, beliefs and value systems which are shared by members of a social group, and therefore can influence the relationship and discourse between interlocutors.

Knowledge dissemination is inherently argumentative, since those who seek to inform (to disseminate) need to adopt persuasive strategies functional to the correct interpretation and acceptance of their messages. The creation of knowledge and its diffusion is "managed, controlled and manipulated through discourse […] to be fully comprehended, for it to meet the needs and expectations of the readers, or even to activate and elicit specific expectations on their part" (Sala 2020: 12). Argumentation, therefore, has to work within different dimensions. The force of logos may not always be sufficient to garner consensus, and therefore persuasion may also require appeals to the realms of ethos and pathos. The choice of argumentative and para-argumentative techniques used by creators of texts as disseminators of knowledge may reveal their value-laden inclination and compliance with certain ideological positions inscribed in and conveyed through the text, more or less intentionally.

Knowledge dissemination is, therefore, a multi-faceted and ubiquitous process and this is reflected in the plurality of perspectives adopted and the variety of discursive domains investigated by the authors of the papers featured in this volume. The first papers are all concerned with argumentation in the academic domain. The subject of **Rita Salvi**'s paper

is an example of highly specialised discourse – the Nobel Prize Lectures in Economic Sciences. She combines a corpus and a discourse perspective to examine patterns of argumentation. In particular, the discourse analysis shows how argumentation is constructed across a variety of fields through the exposition of models, methods and theories, at a symptomatic, comparative and causal level. It also shows how some rhetorical strategies, such as the use of questions, narrative and figurative language, characterize the relationship between the Lecturer and the audience.

Silvia Cavalieri's paper turns to a completely different context, though still within the domain of economics. She addresses the question of the changes in the argumentative realizations of two academic genres, written and video abstracts in management journals, thus assessing the influence of digital media technologies on academic discourse. The study proposes an analysis of the rhetorical strategies, with the focus on the metadiscourse used by authors to express their authorial selves and to create a relationship with readers. The construction of academic arguments using visual abstracts is shown to be more interactive than in their written counterparts because of the presence of the author and the search for scholarly solidarity.

The next paper focuses again on academic discourse, but within the field of medicine. Drawing on a corpus of scientific research papers, **Renzo Mocini** explores the role of existentials in the construction of medical knowledge and their argumentative function. Thanks to their semantics, existentials form a privileged environment in which to tackle medical discourse from a quantitative angle, especially as quantification represents one of the techniques of objectification characteristic of scientific writing. On the strength of their quantificational import, existentials, as they present themselves throughout a medical paper, can bring inherently argumentative intentions to the surface since they are used to justify the validity of the claims made by the authors of clinical studies.

Moving away from the academic field, but remaining within the sphere of argumentation, the next two papers deal with the formation of public opinion through the media. The first focuses on the creation of texts and investigates the strategies adopted by journalists of two leading U.S. newspapers when reporting Hillary Clinton's first congressional hearing on the Benghazi attacks of September 23rd, 2013. **Cinzia Giglioni** analyses how official material of the hearing is incorporated in the final texts, the newspaper articles, either to endorse/criticise Clinton's version of the events, or to present a more neutral stance. The author proposes that, in terms of input-source usage, specific processes and strategies were employed

to avoid the explicit endorsement of Clinton's point of view. The second paper starts from the premise that the public generally has only mediated knowledge and construct their opinion about events on the basis of their interpretation, the decoding of the message(s) in the media. **Douglas Ponton** presents a study based on data collected in interviews with ordinary people about the Skripal/Novichok affair in 2018. Drawing on Grice's cooperative maxims he examines the role of explicit or implicit argumentation to explain, and account for, their opinions and explores patterns of evidentiality in the discourse of the interviewees about the topic. The study highlights the way Grice's maxims allow for the identification of covert patterns of meaning that provide support for the speakers' stated positions.

With **Gaetano Falco**'s paper we enter the area of ideology. It reports on a study of the terms and concepts originating in neoliberal ideology that became widespread during the 2008 financial crisis. He investigates the way in which they are textually construed and in particular the linguistic devices such as metaphorical expressions used to express the ideology overtly or covertly. Using an approach which draws upon cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, and critical metaphor analysis, the author shows how some terms, expressions and their metaphorical meanings reflect the rise and fall of the neoliberal ideology in the wake of the 2008 subprime crisis.

Judith Turnbull takes a different perspective on ideology, which leads us outside the usual political or economic contexts and into the field of museum discourse. She suggests that a museum's approach to communication with visitors reflects its attitude and beliefs about the role it plays in society today. Some museums seem to maintain the traditional, asymmetrical power relations between expert and non-expert, whereby museums and curators fulfil their role as communicators of intellectually important ideas. Others embrace a more contemporary approach based on the ideology of social inclusion and thus aim to share their knowledge and transfer authority to visitors.

The volume closes with a contribution that highlights the enigmatic nature of argumentation. **Silvia Cacchiani** focuses on the transfer of knowledge about *copyright* and *copyleft* to lay-people and (semi-)experts with different profiles, needs and goals, in different user situations. The analysis moves from an objective exposition of COPYRIGHT in the *Oxford Dictionary of Law*, to institutional and non-institutional webpages appearing at the top of Google search listings. The high-ranking online pages are generally considered objective, credible and authoritative sources of knowledge. However, in the non-professional online dictionary articles self-promotion

and persuasion may affect expository content, revealing the ideology of the author and organization and, therefore, creating an argumentative dimension.

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Argumentation in academic discourse: The case of Nobel Prize lectures in Economic Sciences

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Rem tene, verba sequentur.
[Grasp the subject, the words will follow.]
Cato the Elder, 234-149 BC

ABSTRACT

Nobel Prize lectures in Economic Sciences are examined in this contribution as an example of highly specialized discourse, reflecting all the features of a genre relevant to a discourse community (Flowerdew 2015). A corpus has been built, including all the 29 lectures delivered by the winners over a time span of fifteen years (2001-2015); the written version of the lectures has been considered in order to identify patterns of argumentation (Hyland 2013, van Eemeren 2019). An integrated methodology has been adopted, combining a corpus and a discourse perspective. The results of the analysis have shown examples of lexical indexicality and underlined some discourse markers, be they causal, temporal, additive or hypothetical, frequently adopted to develop the topics. Discourse analysis has shown how argumentation is constructed across a variety of fields through the exposition of models, methods and theories, at a symptomatic, comparative and causal level (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 1992). Particularly, comparative and causal features of the language have been illustrated with reference to "expectation", which is the most prominent domain in this context. Moreover, some rhetorical strategies have been presented, such as the use of questions, narrative and figurative language, which characterize the relationship between the Lecturer and the audience.

Keywords: academic discourse, lectures, text and discourse analysis, ESP: the language of economics.

1. Introduction

This contribution explores academic discourse, focusing on the linguistic analysis of lectures in their argumentative perspective. Argumentation as

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a general notion refers to a process of systematic and methodical reasoning with the aim of arriving at a conclusion or solving a particular analytic problem by formulating a set of coherent and relevant arguments. Within this broad definition, Frans H. van Eemeren (2019) indicates some factors which affect the argumentative style, such as the medium used, the degree of formality of the occasion, the norms that are being played with and the contextual domain in which the discourse takes place. This study examines lectures as a distinct form of institutional discourse, in which speakers show their authorial presence and academic prestige, by establishing an interpersonal relationship with the audience, often with a variety of reporting, persuasive and, why not, encomiastic purposes.[1] "Authority – as Hyland claims – is partly accomplished by speaking as an insider, using the codes and the identity of a community member. But it also relates to the writer's convictions, engagement with the reader, and personal presentation of 'self'" (Hyland 2001: 209). Far from being a static genre, lectures result in typified rhetorical actions inherent to social and cultural situations in an evolutionary perspective, requiring flexibility and innovation on the one hand, and responding to audience expectations on the other (Bhatia 2008). They fully show the interactive nature of academic discourse, which in turn involves communication between experts, and between experts and educated people in our case (Hyland 2013). In particular, Nobel Prize lectures are strictly formal, culturally-organized, planned speech events and the speaker's authority is an incarnation of "the epistemic conventions of the discipline" (Hyland 2006: 21). Lectures in Economic Sciences are examined here as an example of highly specialized discourse, reflecting all the features of a genre relevant to a discourse community, as acknowledged by Flowerdew (2015): they realize the public goal to transmit knowledge and are recognized by the discourse community which shares specialized terminology and a suitable degree of relevant content and discoursal expertise.

With this in mind, a corpus has been built that includes 29 Noble Prize lectures delivered by the winners over a time span of fifteen years (2001-2015, see Appendix I). The written version of the lectures has been considered.[2] The

1 For example: "This lecture is dedicated to the memory of Jean-Jacques Laffont. It is of course unlike any lecture I had ever given. It is filled with emotion, intellectual indebtedness and very fond memories." (Tirole, Nobel Prize Lecture 2014)

2 Since 1901, the Nobel Prizes have been presented to Nobel Laureates at ceremonies on 10 December, the anniversary of Alfred Nobel's death. As stipulated in Nobel's will, the Nobel Prizes in Physics, Chemistry, Physiology or Medicine and Literature are awarded in Stockholm, Sweden, while the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded in Oslo, Norway. Since 1969 an additional prize has been awarded at the ceremony in Stockholm, the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel. There have been 79 Laureates between 1969 and 2017.

Nobel Foundation's statutes require each winner to give a lecture explaining his/her work; lectures are usually delivered on December 8 and help define a laureate's work for posterity, but sometimes they do much more, providing inspiration for future generations of scholars and public figures. "Knowing the historical importance of such speeches adds to the excitement", says University of Chicago Prof. Roger Myerson, who won the economics Nobel in 2007; "I loved the challenge," Myerson says. "The Nobel Prize is not just for individual people, it's for a body of work. Laureates honor that body of work by talking about its significance, and that's a tall order. Some Nobel lectures have become famous papers that made major statements." (http://www.uchicago.edu/features/what_makes_nobel_speeches_endure/)

Indeed, these lectures in their published form are for an audience wider than that of the lecture delivered at the Nobel ceremony. Although dealing with economics, the topics discussed are very heterogeneous, reflecting each speaker's academic specialization and cultural interests. Sharing the epistemology of their discipline, the speakers aim to transmit their own knowledge in the field. In doing so, they communicate their personal experience (also adopting narrative strategies) and explain their results (through expository strategies). But economics is a social science, therefore argumentation strategies are needed to either convey authority or engage with the audience, in any case to increase the effectiveness of the speakers' discourse.

In an attempt to include different perspectives for language analysis, the paper will first describe the features of lectures as a genre; then it will discuss the role of argumentation in lectures. A presentation of the corpus will be provided, with an analysis and discussion of the data collected, before tracing out some closing remarks.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Lectures as a genre

Albeit not a homogeneous genre, which can include talks and speeches delivered in different institutional occasions, lectures have maintained a macrostructure generally constituted by a certain number of expositions

Only one woman has been awarded the Prize in Economic Sciences so far, Elinor Ostrom (US), in 2009. Up to 2007, nine awards had been given for contributions to the field of macroeconomics, more than any other category. The institution with the most affiliated Laureates in Economic sciences is the University of Chicago, which has 29 affiliated Laureates.

within which a "focal episode", various "developmental episodes" and a "closing episode" are collocated (Bhatia 2004: 46). Present trends in academic rhetoric influence the structure of lectures (Helal 2013): globalization and media require changes in the exposition, and make lectures a more hybrid genre than in the past. They aim, however, at broadening the consensus of the audience about the theories discussed and, based on the speaker's authority as the linchpin of the communicative event, they intend to persuade and stimulate complicit cooperation for prospective pragmatic decisions.

Bakhtin (1986) emphasized the dialogic qualities of lectures, and more recent genre studies (Bawarshi – Reif 2010) acknowledge their dynamic and interactive nature. Furthermore, lectures on economic topics, usually published in English, are intended for a supranational scientific community. This involves a high degree of shared knowledge as well as an interwoven structure of contents and contexts, which corresponds to a deep level of intertextuality, as described in Fairclough's framework: "basically the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which the text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth" (Fairclough 1992: 84). Furthermore, Bazerman (2004: 94) states that "intertextuality is not just a matter of which other texts you refer to, but how you use them, what you use them for, and ultimately how you position yourself as a writer to them to make your own statement". This is of particular interest in the field of economics, in which discourse and argumentation are based on a hypothesis/thesis pattern, a problem/solution model or a chain of cause/effect relations, and include several ramifications in the discipline which influence rhetorical choices and discursive strategies (Salvi 2011, 2012). Therefore, we expect that either "manifest intertextuality" (quotations, citations and paraphrases) or "functional intertextuality" (a text as part of a larger system of texts) will emerge from the study.[3]

Lectures can also be an example of interdiscursivity (Foucault 1969, Fairclough 2003), as they represent a combination of spoken discourse (the speech of a lecture) and written mode (the published version); both forms contribute to construct knowledge and awareness within disciplinary communities.

However, the case of Nobel Prize lectures is quite different from other academic contexts in that the delivering of the speech is compulsory

[3] For example, as far as verbs are concerned, the most frequent in the corpus is to see (441-0.15%), as it is used extensively to introduce bibliographical references ("see the comments by Paul Samuelson 2004"; "see e.g. Paul McCarthy 2013"), which immediately confirms the high level of intertextuality.

in accordance with the Statutes of the Nobel foundation.[4] It is therefore the occasion for the winners to reveal "epistemic beliefs, and institutional structures of academic communities" (Hyland 2013: 2), projecting their personal competence onto a shared professional context. The text, delivered orally, is obviously reviewed for a written edition (published online at the Nobel Prize Foundation's website, https://www.nobelprize.org). In many respects the communicative style of the lectures can be best appreciated by tracing the rhetorical characteristics of the language of economics illustrated by McCloskey (1983, 1986), because "rhetoric is exploring thought" (1983: 483) and "the rhetoric of economics is a literary matter" (1983: 499). Therefore, as McCloskey says, literary devices such as metaphor, analogy, metonymy and synecdoche, can improve economic prose and argumentation, the relationships between economics and other disciplines, and even the economists' temperament: "A rhetorical criticism of economics can perhaps make economists more modest, tolerant, and self-aware, and improve one of the conversations of mankind" (1986: 53).

Another key to the interpretation of texts, which can easily be applied to lectures, is offered by Hyland:

> Rather than simply examining nature, writing is actually seen as helping to create a view of the world. This is because texts are influenced by the problems, social practices and ways of thinking of particular social groups. In other words, discourse is socially constitutive rather than simply socially shaped; writing is not just another aspect of what goes on in the disciplines, it is seen as producing them. […] Research is essentially a social enterprise, both in the sense that it is an immediate engagement with colleagues and that it is mediated by the social institutions within which it occurs. […] But while disciplines are defined by their [academics'] writing, it is how they write rather than simply what they write that makes the crucial difference between them. […] Scholarly discourse is not uniform and monolithic, differentiated merely by specialist topics and vocabularies. It is an outcome of a multitude of practices and strategies, where what counts as convincing argument and appropriate tone is carefully managed for a particular audience. (Hyland 2013: 3)

[4] "It shall be incumbent on a prizewinner, whenever this is possible, to give a lecture on a subject relevant to the work for which the prize has been awarded. Such a lecture should be given before, or no later than six months after, the Festival Day in Stockholm or, in the case of the Peace Prize, in Oslo." (https://www.nobelprize.org/about/statutes-of-the-nobel-foundation/ § 9).

Considering the academic role of Nobel Prize lectures, this contribution examines some specific discourse functions, such as informing (through lexical salience) and elaborating (through discourse organization and exemplification). The evaluative language that may emerge is not so much in respect of the construction of the Lecturer's identity, as this has already been amply affirmed in the Nobel Prize context, but rather in relation to his argumentative coherence.

2.2 Argumentation in lectures

Aristotle divided argumentation into three genres: forensic or legal (which requires verdicts on past action), deliberative or political (which seeks judgement on future action) and epideictic or ceremonial (which concerns values and seeks no specific decisions, as in lectures). For Aristotle, the epideictic genre was of limited importance in the civic realm since it did not concern facts or policies. Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, in contrast, believe not only that epideictic rhetoric warrants more attention, but that the values normally limited to that genre are in fact central to all argumentation. "Epideictic oratory – they argue – has significance and importance for argumentation because it strengthens the disposition toward action by increasing adherence to the values it lauds" (1969: 50). These values, moreover, are central to the persuasiveness of arguments in all rhetorical genres since the orator always attempts to "establish a sense of communion centred around particular values recognized by the audience" (1969: 51).

As the strategic manoeuvring develops in argumentative reality, van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992) describe the three argument schemes which are fundamental to pragmatic choices: in "symptomatic" argumentation the scheme is used to establish a relation of concomitance between the argument concerned and the standpoint that is supported, so getting a personal opinion accepted; in "comparison" argumentation a relation of comparability is established; in "causal" argumentation a relation of causality is sustained, that can be instrumental in establishing the truth of a scientific claim in an academic setting (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 1992: 94-102).

All in all, lectures can be considered an excellent example of parrhesia, that mode of discourse in which – following Michel Foucault's study of discourse in ancient Greece – a person speaks openly and truthfully about opinions and ideas. In his lectures at the University of California, Berkeley, in 1983 (lectures edited by Joseph Pearson in 2001) Foucault sums up the Ancient Greek concept of parrhesia as such:

> So you see, the parrhesiastes is someone who takes a risk. […] In a political debate, an orator risks losing his popularity because his opinions are contrary to the majority's opinion […]. In parrhesia, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy. (Foucault 2001: 19-20)

Although giving a lecture does not imply a risk to the speaker's life (at least we hope not nowadays), many factors pertinent to the present inquiry can be gleaned from the previous quotation: definitely, the basic principle to tell the truth, also for the benefit of the community; critical skills to describe theories and policies; the attempt to overcome personal interests. In our case, however, lectures also show the use of rhetorical devices which involve a certain number of persuasive functions necessary to deliver information and build consensus. To reach these objectives, Nobel Prize winners adopt multifarious argumentative patterns, instantiated in techniques of definition and description, association/dissociation, classification/comparison/connection, exemplification, application. These techniques concern mainly the argumentative procedure, but they also contribute to the process of knowledge transfer, as described by Calsamiglia and van Dijk (2004).

Another aspect will be considered here in relation to argumentation, namely the use of narrative as a means to make discourse coherent and meaningful and as a way to appeal to the audience. Narrative will be explored along the lines traced by Julio C. Gimenez (2010: 199), "narratives are sociolinguistic manifestations as well as discursive constructions of an array of social processes. […] A sociolinguistic analysis of narratives should examine not only their formal elements but also the sociolinguistic elements that surround narratives, thus furthering our understanding of the social phenomena reflected in individual narratives".

3. Corpus and methodology

A corpus has been built including 29 Nobel Prize lectures in Economic Sciences in the time span between 2001 and 2015, that is all the lectures delivered by the winners and published online (except Thomas J. Sargent's

lecture, USA 2011, for which only slides are provided).[5] The corpus consists of about 280,000 tokens (277,512 precisely) for 14,180 types. The TTR (Type/Token Ratio) is 5%, a percentage which, together with the high number of hapax words (5,600),[6] gives an idea of the heterogeneity of the topics dealt with (see Appendix I), albeit in the field of economics. The lectures are of different lengths, ranging from 757 words (Shapley 2012) to 36,622 (Stiglitz 2001). The data have been run through different software tools for corpus analysis: *ConcApp* (Greaves 2005) for the detection of frequencies and collocations; *Wmatrix* (Rayson 2009) for retrieving word lists and semantic domains; *ConGram* (Greaves 2009) for phraseological configurations and discursive/argumentative structures.

However, considering the lexical salience of the corpus in relation to the content and context, an integrated methodology has been adopted, combining the quantitative analysis with a discourse perspective, following the theoretical premises presented in the previous section.

The analysis of the data has been carried out following Michael Stubbs' (2010) approach: in a corpus-driven perspective, "keyness" and "aboutness" will be therefore exemplified as significant factors of meaning expressing shared values and, at the same time, as a mirror of the social institution involved.

4. Interpreting quantitative data

In light of the symptomatic, comparison and causal argumentation schemes outlined by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992), in this section some elements, namely phraseology and conceptual fields detected from the quantitative data, are illustrated to guide the interpretation of the texts in their argumentative dimension.

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[5] Almost all the lectures include tables, diagrams, theorems and mathematical formulas which have not been analysed. (Only the following Lecturers do not use figures: Stiglitz 2001, Akerlof 2001, Granger 2003, Schelling 2005, Hurwicz 2007, Williamson 2009.)

[6] Hapax words often express very technical concepts, as in Mortensen 2010: "This activity is reflected in the fact that a recent issue of the *Journal of Labor Economics* was devoted to this approach to understanding monopsony in the labor market." (Monopsony is a situation in a market in which there is only one buyer for goods or services offered by several sellers.) In other cases, hapax words express analogy and metaphor, as we will see later (Excerpt 39).

4.1 N-grams

A first step towards contextualization can be taken by analysing the most frequent group words as they appear in the 4-gram list, of which the first five are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. 4-grams

4-gram	Frequency
on the other hand	27
in the case of	24
the size of the	22
at the same time	21
in the context of	21

Argumentation is immediately manifest through the use of "on the other hand" to introduce statements that describe opposite ideas or modify/supplement a previous viewpoint. Slight changes or contradictions of a previous statement are also expressed by "at the same time".

(1) On the one hand, we need to compare like with like, using only goods and services that are close to identical in different countries. *On the other hand*, we also wish to capture what people actually spend, so that we want to use goods and services that are widely consumed and representative of actual purchases. (Deaton 2015)

(2) The patterns of behavior that have been observed in speculative asset prices are consistent with a view of market efficiency as a half-truth today and *at the same time* with a view that there are behavioral complexities in these markets that need to be met with properly engineered financial innovations and financial regulations. (Shiller 2013)

"In the case of" and "in the context of" contribute to defining the territory and the situations within which events happen and the circumstances under which a hypothesis can be explained and verified, this being the most typical function of the language of economics:

(3) For example, *in the case of* a non-marketed good, the net return for the firm is for a cost-plus contract, for a fixed-price contract, and between 0 and 1 more generally. (Tirole 2014)

(4) By quantifying the information in the signals for example how many units or what the dimension is of the spaces used *in the context of* rigorously formulated models, it has been shown that […]. (Hurwicz 2007)

Finally, "the size of the" does not only indicate an amount or a dimension, it also implies a comparison: in this case, the specific language needs to express the concepts of "counting" and "measuring".

(5) *The greater* the initial excess of the expected inflation rate over its rest point, of course, *the greater* is *the size of the* optimum deviation of actual inflation from expected inflation, and thus *the greater* is the initial increase in unemployment. *The smaller* is the utility discount rate, *the lower* is the rest point target for the expected inflation rate and *the greater* is the optimum size of the initial shortfall *the greater*, then, the near-term pain and the long-term gain. *The greater* is the costliness of decreased employment, *the smaller* is the optimum initial deviation, *the smaller*, then, the optimum deviation of unemployment from its natural level and thus *the slower* the speed of the disinflation. (Phelps 2006)

4.2 Semantic domains

Tellingly, the 4-grams correspond to the key domains detected by Wmatrix.

Figure 1. Key Domains

For the purpose of the present analysis, it is interesting to focus on the conceptual fields signaled in a prominent position by the analyzer, that is "Comparing" and the group "Cause&Effect/Connection", together with "Expected", which is even highlighted in red in the original.

Starting from the concept of "expectation", data reveal 203 (0.07%) occurrences of the noun (singular and plural) and 291 (0.10%) of "expected" (adjective and past participle), whereas the verb shows only 40 occurrences (0.01%). It is worth noting that "expectation(s)" is often used with reference to statistical projections as in (6), although it is also found in its denotational meaning as in (7).

(6) Alternative approaches were suggested including static *expectations*, adaptive *expectations* or appeals to data on beliefs […] To be clear, rational *expectations* offers an approach for comparing distinct stochastic equilibria but not the transitions from one to another. […] The ratio has conditional *expectation* equal to unity, and this term reflects how new data that arrive between dates t and t + 1 are incorporated into the relative likelihood. (Hansen 2013)

(7) The provision of insurance affects the willingness of workers to accept particular jobs, making it more attractive to pass up some opportunities in *expectation* of doing better later. (Diamond 2010)

"Expected" is present in many collocations which are also frequent nowadays in contexts that are not highly specialized, once again with reference to statistical projections: *the expected inflation rate/marginal utility/lifetime/profit margin*. It is nevertheless interesting to see how "expected" often collocates with comparative forms: *a higher expected profit*; *the larger expected utility*; *a lower expected return*. It thus confirms that forecasting and the estimation of parameters are fundamental features in the field of economics.

"Comparison" is another domain of interest. Together with "expected", it is expressed in connection with temporal deictics (*whenever prices fell below the level expected*; *over such long periods, expected returns are larger*) and in the formulation of hypotheses (*demanding higher expected real wage gains at lower rates of unemployment*; *the behavior is much more variable than is expected from outcome-based utility models*; *workers demand nominal wage increases in excess of expected inflation*).

A closer analysis of comparison in context reveals that, beside the frequent use of *more* (818-0.29%), the high number of occurrences of *most*

(272-0.09%), and *better* (173-0.06%) cannot go unnoticed, which reflects the positive thinking and success in the field.

(8) These arguments are much *more* widely accepted today than they were thirty years ago. (Deaton 2015)

(9) In my view, finance is the *most* successful branch of economics in terms of rich theory, extensive empirical tests, and penetration of the theory and evidence into other areas of economics and real-world applications. (Fama 2013)

(10) Unemployment is instead the outcome of a decentralised equilibrium, which may or may not be optimal. It seemed to me that the two-sided matching view had a *better* chance of success, both in grounding itself in microeconomic theory and in interpreting the facts about unemployment. (Pissarides 2010)

Even more interesting, collocations detected by Wmatrix within the comparing domain include a lot of different words which imply a comparison; only a few examples can be given here, underlining that they all relate to the specific technical content: *the well-known variation in expected bond returns*; *to capture the variability of time series data*; *the share of healthcare spending ranges from 27 percent to 74 percent*; […] *from many studies using both cross-section and time series;* […] *that provide different combinations of co-variances*.

The domain "Cause&Effect/Connection" is even more articulated: the raw data generate 420 outputs in the Wmatrix list which need to be organized for interpretation, making direct reference to the whole text. Therefore, four broad categories have been selected manually, namely adjectives, nouns, verbs and causative prepositions/linking words.

Adjectives represent the smallest group; they can express either effect (*resulting* predictability of stock) or connection (*related* econometric methods; macroeconomic shocks *pertinent* to investors) always within the specific content. Here is an example of a sentence where the adjective 'conditional' is used in its technical connotation:

(11) The insight in Fama 1975, applied by me and others in subsequent papers, is that a regression estimates the *conditional* expected value of the left-hand-side variable as a function of the right-hand-side variables. (Fama 2013)

In addition to the basic lemmas "cause(s)"/"effect(s)" together with "connection(s)", very many other nouns fall into this domain, such as *consequence*, *impact*, *result*, *implication*, *interplay*, *link*, *reason* and *relation*:

(12) Stochastic discount factors are closely *connected* to the "risk-neutral" probabilities used in valuing *derivative* claims. This *connection* is evident by dividing the one-period SDF by its *conditional* mean and using the *resulting* random variable to define a new one-period *conditional* probability distribution, the risk neutral distribution. (Hansen 2013)

The short example above shows many words related to the domain considered here, in particular the term "derivative" (included in the group of nouns) which is used in financial analysis.

A long list of verbs is necessary to indicate all those used in the domain: *to produce*, *to generate*, *to lead to*, for example, to express the cause/effect relation; *to combine*, *to give rise* or *to tie* to express connection. *Related to* occurs 56 times (0.02%), all of them necessary to support the argument under scrutiny:

(13) The variance bounds test rejections of market efficiency could not be dismissed as correct but unimportant, as were the inefficiencies that the efficient markets literature had discovered, for they suggested that most of the variability of the aggregate stock market was not explainable as *related to* information about future fundamentals. (Shiller 2013)

So far, the three schemes ("symptomatic", "comparison" and "causal" argumentation) have proved to be functional to the development of the specialized topic. They are also functional to set the basis of the argument proposed by the Lecturer, who states the point, compares procedures and results, and describes or explains phenomena. Other layers of argumentation accomplished by rhetorical choices remain to be analysed.

5. A survey of textual strategies and rhetorical choices

The complex discourse of lectures is characterized by the intertwining of strategies and rhetorical choices used by the speaker in order to give a representation of the facts and an interpretation of the relevant data as well as to support his argument and underline his authority and credibility.

Some of these features are described in this section. It is interesting to note, however, that a sentence can represent an example of more than one strategy and can perform more communicative functions. For example:

(14) What I am going to describe for you is a revolution in macroeconomics […] (Prescott 2004)

This is the opening sentence of the lecture, which introduces the topic. As such, it delivers the speaker's intention and stance, marked by the use of the first person pronoun. The word "revolution" captures the listener's attention and arouses his curiosity: it can be considered a way to appeal to the audience. The dialogic form "to you" contributes to establishing an immediate relationship between speaker and audience. The paragraphs which follow can only give a glimpse of the wide scenario.

5.1 Positioning the speaker

In spite of its high score (1,074-0.38%), the first person pronoun *I* is used less frequently than in non-Nobel Prize lectures (see Salvi 2012: 86; for example, its percentage is 0.44% in Galbraith's lectures and even 0.72% in Stiglitz's). The first person pronoun is used either as a marker of self-representation or as a means of metadiscursive practice (Salvi 2013: 34). However, in the Nobel Prize context, self-representation is based more on exposition and reasoning rather than on personal identity, which is obviously taken for granted. *I* appears often in introductory paragraphs to either signpost the speaker's stance[7] or organize the discourse:

(15) *I* want to tell you about the theory and practice of market design […] *I* should say personally that *I* am delighted to be recognized for work that we are still very much engaged with. (Roth 2012)

(16) The announcement of this year's Prize cites empirical work in asset pricing. *I* interpret this to include work on efficient capital markets […] (Fama 2013)

[7] Here is an example of how the Lecturer's position is clarified: "I don't mean just the monetary discount rate, what you get in the bank. I mean the personal, subjective discount rate" (Aumann 2005).

(17) *I* will start this lecture with some general thoughts on […] *I* will consider the discourse in the profession […] *I* will focus on the statistical methods […] (Shiller 2013)

(18) Yet, like the committee, *I* believe that the work has an underlying unity. (Deaton 2015)

The use of *we* (1,011-0.36%) is more problematic to interpret, as it indicates different in-groups: in (15), when Professor Roth (2012) mentions a "work that *we* are still very much engaged with", he is referring to "many of my colleagues [who] are here in the audience and they are all waiting for me to get back to work". For his part, Professor Sims (2011) uses *we* instead of *I* partly to adopt the style of academic writing, but also to involve the audience: "*We* will be tracking two interrelated strands of intellectual effort: the methodology of modelling and inferences for economic time series, and the theory of policy influences on business cycle fluctuations". And when Professor Maskin (2007) says "What *we* mean by an "outcome" will naturally depend on the context", he is clearly using *we* to indicate the community of economists.

Whilst direct quotations are not used much in Nobel Prize lectures, references to other scholars' studies are frequent and detailed, in order to both support argumentation and recognize other colleagues' achievements. The following examples show how personal experiences position the speaker in the scientific community which is portrayed by way of evaluation, marked by positive adjectives:

(19) The eminent researcher and 1995 Nobel laureate in economics, Bob Lucas, from whom I've learned a lot, wrote […]. (Kydland 2004)

(20) Prior to that, scholars such as Yule 1927, Slutsky 1927, 1937 and Frisch 1933 had explored how linear models with shocks and propagation mechanisms provide attractive ways of explaining approximate cyclical behavior in macro time series. […] While both de Finetti 1937 and Savage 1954 gave elegant defenses for the use of subjective probability, in fact they both expressed some skepticism or caution in applications. **(**Hansen 2013)

(21) The ARCH model was invented while I was on sabbatical at the London School of Economics in 1979. Lunch in the Senior Common

> Room with David Hendry, Dennis Sargan, Jim Durbin and many leading econometricians provided a stimulating environment. I was looking for a model that could assess the validity of a conjecture of Milton Friedman 1977 that the unpredictability of inflation was a primary cause of business cycles. (Engle III 2003)

This is perfectly in line with the academic tradition, and it happens because "At the community level, academics write as group members. They adopt discoursal practices that represent an authorised understanding of the world (and how it can be perceived and reported) which acts to reinforce the theoretical convictions of the discipline and its right to validate knowledge" (Hyland 2013: 17).

5.2 Opening and Closing

Although part of the same scientific community, each Lecturer adopts rhetorical devices in line with the topic discussed, but also inherent in his/her personal attitude and cultural background. Lecturers often refer to their "team", as the individual success has been made possible by the group.[8] At the same time, self-mention and first person pronoun use, indicated by Hyland (2001) as powerful rhetorical strategies to emphasize the writer's contribution, have wide representation in these parts of the lecture. These devices belong to the category of "logos", being based on logical reasoning, facts and figures as well as quotations.

The lectures show different openings. Some start in a polite, traditional style (22), whilst others get straight to the point, (23) and (24).

(22) I'm delighted to stand before so many people. I'm also very happy when I get to work with models with many people. That is the key to the framework for which Ed Prescott and I were cited by the Nobel committee. (Kydland 2004)

(23) Wars and other conflicts are among the main sources of human misery. **(**Aumann 2005)

[8] "This paper has benefited from my presentation of an early draft to my colleagues and students at the University of California, Berkeley and from subsequent discussions with Steven Tadelis. […] Never since my visit to Carnegie have I experienced such intellectual excitement" (Williamson 2009).

(24) The theory of mechanism design can be thought of as the 'engineering' side of economic theory. (Maskin 2007)

As far as conclusions are concerned, it is worth noting that lectures usually end with a conclusive paragraph about the results and further research, more similar to specialized scientific articles than to oral communication. Sometimes (e.g. Ostrom 2009) the final paragraph reports acknowledgments. Only one Lecturer adopts a different strategy, taking leave with a personal view:

(25) Over my career and before today, I have met twenty-one Nobel Laureates: one in Physics Dennis Gabor, 1970, one in Peace Phillip Noel Baker, 1959, one in Chemistry Harold Urey, 1934, plus 18 Prize winners in Economics. Without exception I have found them to be both very fine scholars and also having excellent personalities, willing to help a younger, inexperienced worker when seeking their advice or meeting them socially. I hope that I am able to live up to their very high standard. (Granger 2003)

In line with what has been described in the previous paragraph, the extensive use of evaluative language adopted in both the opening and closing sections confirms each Lecturer's awareness of belonging to a scientific community in which "excellent personalities" combine hard and soft skills, being generous, open-minded and forward-looking (*fine scholars … willing to help a younger, inexperienced worker*).

5.3 Appealing to the audience

Appealing to the audience means arousing curiosity, which can be achieved, for example, with a surprising statement (26) or a question (27), even a list of questions (28), a technique frequently adopted to keep dialogism alive:

(26) The most spectacular event of the past half century is one that did not occur [no explosion of nuclear weapons]. (Schelling 2005)

(27) I will start this lecture with some general thoughts on the determinants of long-term asset prices such as stock prices or home prices: what, ultimately, drives these prices to change as they do from time to time and how can we interpret these changes? (Shiller 2013)

(28) What are search frictions? What role do they play in the analysis of markets? Why are they important? These are the questions I will try to answer. (Mortensen 2010)

Indeed, in the corpus we find 315 questions, from which we can assume that questions function as a rhetorical device.[9] As Hyland (2002) points out, interrogative forms are a distinctive feature of academic writing: they can imply an evaluation and/or a reason for the questioning. Here are some examples:

(29) Bubble stories thus face a legitimate question: which leg of a bubble is irrational, the up or the down? Do we see irrational optimism in the price increase corrected in the subsequent decline? Or do we see irrational pessimism in the price decline, quickly reversed? Or both? Or perhaps neither? (Tirole 2014)

(30) What justified the use of the representative agent in the linear expenditure system? Was this just an assumption, or an implication of such a utility function? And more broadly, *why* were demand functions not influenced by the distribution of income? (Deaton 2015)

Why? is present in all the lectures and deserves close attention as it is something more than a question word in this context: in line with Hyland's (2002) findings, it can be used to both organize discourse (as in 31) and support a claim (as in 32).

(31) *Why* does a surge of effective demand, that is, the flow of money buying goods, cause an increase in output and employment, as supposed in the great book by Keynes 1936? *Why* not just a jump in prices and money wages? […] Another question arose immediately: How could there be positive involuntary unemployment in equilibrium conditions more precisely, along any equilibrium path? (Phelps 2006)

(32) *Why* did the trade counterculture flourish despite the apparent completeness of conventional trade theory? […] Do you have to be in the same city to reap positive externalities from other producers

[9] The title of a lecture is itself a question: "But who will guard the guardians?" (Hurwicz 2007) which makes explicit reference to the question "Sed quis custodiet ipsos custodies" posed by Juvenalis in his *Satura* (book II).

in the same industry? If so, *why*? […] Clearly, if the producer opens only one plant, it will be in the larger market. But will it concentrate production? Only if. (Krugman 2008)

5.4 Figurative language

Subsequent to the rhetorical influence of John M. Keynes and his impact on the writing style in the field of economics, much has been said about figurative language, as a fundamental resource in the language of economics (McCloskey 1986; Cameron – Low 1999). Indeed, some metaphors, such as those based on the concepts of "disease" and "contagion" (usually classified as "medical metaphors"), parallel economics to a living organism and express recurrent associations of ideas. An example can be found in Kydland's lecture:

(33) Another possibility, and I'd like to return to it because it relates to our 1977 paper about which Ed Prescott talked in his lecture, is that the outcome for the 1990s in part is the result of what we may call the time-inconsistency *disease* due to bad policies in Argentina before 1990. (Kydland 2004)

Anthropomorphic metaphors are very frequent, as they conceptualize economics in terms of a body, which may be suffering or recovering from an illness. However, in the corpus other examples can be detected, which originate from different disciplines or situations:

(34) These *roots* go back to Adam Smith 1759 […]. (Smith 2002, from botany)

(35) There is therefore little reason for respondents to question their judgment, perhaps even less than in the *bat-and-ball* problem that was mentioned earlier. (Kahneman 2002, from sport)

(36) Private sector demand for money *balances* can shift, because of financial innovation or fluctuating levels of concern about liquidity. (Sims 2011, from mechanics)

(37) […] the upstream bottleneck owner is victim of its inability to commit not to *flood* the downstream market. (Tirole 2014, natural catastrophe)

Although not all conceptual metaphors are universal and different communities may use different metaphors to express the same abstract

concepts, in an international context such as the Nobel Prize convention they are based on widely shared knowledge and their meaning is readily available. More than ornamental tropes, metaphors are important instruments of expressiveness and with an interesting pedagogical function "as authentic and contextualized examples for awareness raising and as illustrations of the use of specific linguistic devices" (Ho – Ceng 2016: 46).

Analogy also produces communicative effects, as in Ostrom's simile where the analogic act is based on a memorable example and it also shows a subtle sense of humor, not infrequent in lectures:[10]

(38) Like the US Cavalry in a good Western, the government stands ready to rush to the rescue whenever the market 'fails', and the economist's job is to advise it on when and how to do so. (Ostrom 2009)

The following excerpt clearly shows how figurative language can help to convey complex abstract concepts (it is also worth noting that "dance" is a hapax in the corpus, an unexpected word in this context.):

(39) Read any African-American biography: the uncomfortable dance between acceptance and rejection invariably takes center stage. The identity theory of minority poverty has social policy implications that depart from those derived from standard neoclassical theory. (Akerlof 2001)

Another interesting example is the introductory paragraph of Myerson's lecture ("An historical perspective") where the Lecturer parallels past and present, in a narrative style which leads us to the next session:

(40) Economics began with Xenophon's Oeconomicus (c 360 BC), in which Socrates interviews a model citizen who has two primary concerns. He goes out to his farm in the country to monitor and motivate his workers there. Then he goes back to the city, where his participation in various political institutions is essential for maintaining his rights to own this farm. Such concerns about agents' incentives and political institutions are also central in economic theory today. (Myerson 2007)

[10] Sometimes humor is a fundamental component of the message: "The Roman author, Juvenal, was suggesting that wives cannot be trusted, and keeping them under guard is not a solution because the guards cannot be trusted either." (Hurwicz 2007)

5.5 Narrative strategies

Narrative is a crucial point in lectures, particularly in the Nobel Prize context in which Lecturers are specifically required to present their work and previous studies through professional and also personal experiences. Therefore, self-mention is a highly contextualized feature in this context, as it fulfils a specific expectation. In this respect the analysis of "personal narratives" in Gimenez's terms is significant, precisely in a functional perspective (2010: 204) which indicates not only the formal elements that make up a narrative, but also the ways in which remembered facts are expressed, and the whys for which they are recalled. When Phelps (2006) says "Looking back, it may be that my 1967 paper was the father of what came to be called inflation targeting", he is only in part reaffirming his authority: he is rather accomplishing an assignment within the Nobel Prize institutional framework. Personal experiences and professional commitments frequently merge: "This was an immense effort. More than two years was devoted to developing the final coding manual, E. Ostrom et al. 1989" (Ostrom 2009). Successes and achievements are reported:

(41) In this article, I will describe the intellectual journey that I have taken the last half century from when I began graduate studies in the late 1950s. The early efforts to understand the polycentric water industry in California were formative for me. In addition to working with Vincent Ostrom and Charles Tiebout as they formulated the concept of polycentric systems for governing metropolitan areas, I studied the efforts of a large group of private and public water producers facing the problem of an overdrafted groundwater basin on the coast and watching saltwater intrusion threaten the possibility of long-term use. Then, in the 1970s, I participated with colleagues in the study of polycentric police industries serving U.S. metropolitan areas to find that the dominant theory underlying massive reform proposals was incorrect." (Ostrom 2009)

The same can be said to interpret Granger's words, who also manifests a form of understatement:

(42) As an aside, I wrote this lecture whilst visiting the Department of Economics of the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, where Karl Popper also spent some years after World War II.

> Before considering the usefulness of the new methods of analysis, I would like to take a personal detour. This Prize has climaxed a year which started with me being named a Distinguished Fellow of the American Economic Association. Previously in my career, I have been Chair of two economics departments, yet I have received very little formal training in economics. One third of my first year as an undergraduate at the University of Nottingham was in economics, with introductions to micro and in national accounts, and that was it. Whatever other knowledge I have, it has come from living amongst economists for about forty years, by osmosis, attending seminars, having discussions with them, and general reading. My question is: does this say something about me, or something about the field of economics? I think it is true to say that I am not the first Nobel Prize winner in economics to have little formal training in economics. (Granger 2003)

So far, we have seen how personal narratives operate within the lectures, enhancing the speaker's identity and his experience as a member of the scientific community (Hyland 2018). The following excerpts, instead, are examples of diachronic narrative characterized by highly specific knowledge about history (43) and economic thought (44). It puts the findings into a broader historical context and give them more significance.

(43) But part of that may be because President Johnson's nineteen-year nuclear silence had stretched into a fourth and then a fifth decade, and everyone in responsibility was aware that that unbroken tradition was a treasure we held in common. We have to ask, could that tradition, once broken, have mended itself? Had Truman used nuclear weapons during the Chinese onslaught in Korea, would Nixon have been as impressed in 1970 by the nineteen-year hiatus as Johnson was in 1964? Had Nixon used nuclear weapons, even ever so sparingly, in Viet Nam would the Soviets have eschewed their use in Afghanistan, and Margaret Thatcher in the Falklands? Had Nixon used nuclear weapons in 1969 or 1970, would the Israeli have resisted the temptation against the Egyptian beachheads north of the Suez Canal in 1973? (Schelling 2005)

(44) For the sake of background, let me take you back a bit in time to review some history of macroeconomic thought. In the late 1960s the New Classical economists saw the same weaknesses in the micro-foundations of macroeconomics that have motivated me. They hated

> its lack of rigor. And they sacked it. They then held a celebratory bonfire, with an article entitled 'After Keynesian Macroeconomics'. The new version of macroeconomics that they produced became standard in the 1970s. Following its neoclassical synthesis predecessor, New Classical macroeconomics was based on the competitive, general equilibrium model. (Akerlof 2001)

The knowledge of past political facts and the evolution of economic theories are essential to establishing a common ground between the speaker and the audience, and giving a shared interpretation to the points at issue. The examples above show how connections of occurrences and consequential relationships have a great impact on economics in the course of time. These elements strictly belong to the experts and are usually hard to understand for the out-group.

6. Final remarks

Analysing the language used in Noble Prize lectures is of fundamental importance, as "It is the primary work of language to make all those "other" phenomena [experience, reality, feelings, or knowledge] accountable" (Edwards 2006: 42). The results have shown some examples of lexical indexicality and underlined some discourse markers, be they causal, temporal, additive or hypothetical, frequently adopted to develop the topics. Discourse analysis has shown how argumentation is constructed across a variety of fields through the exposition of models, methods and theories, at a symptomatic, comparative and causal level (as described by van Eemeren and Grootendorst 1992). Comparative and causal features of the language have been illustrated, particularly with reference to "expectation", which is the most prominent domain in this context. Moreover, some rhetorical strategies have been presented, giving evidence that "argumentation aims at securing the adherence of those to whom it is addressed [and] it is, in its entirety, relative to the audience to be influenced" (Perelman – Olbrechts-Tyteca 1969: 19).

The findings show how the Nobel Prize lectures are an instance of institutionalized discourse as conceived by Phillips et al. (2004: 638), who propose that "institutions [are] constructed primarily through the production of texts, rather than directly through actions. […] Institutions are constituted by the structured collections of texts that exist in a particular field and that produce the social categories and norms that shape the understanding and behaviors of actors."

The collection of texts analyzed here represents the institution so much so each of them explains, legitimates, validates and promotes the discipline. Texts reveal the speakers' authorial identity through language devices which contribute to building argumentation, that is to expressing the advancement of a theory, to improving models and to raising consensus supporting reasons, while also introducing evaluation of practical options and comparative assessments. Although within the framework of a rigorous scientific presentation, the episodes related to personal human experiences contribute to establishing a form of phatic communication with the audience (see Note 1).

Technology allows us free access to this type of text, so Nobel Prize lectures can become a fruitful example of globalized knowledge and contribute to the social construction of science. As a matter of fact, the word "knowledge" is widely used in the corpus, either to indicate a danger ("lack of knowledge") or a positive perspective ("a wider knowledge", "a body of knowledge"). It is quite evident from some excerpts reported in the paper that the Lecturers are very aware of their role in developing and transmitting knowledge. It would be hard to say, however, that these lectures can be considered an example of science popularization. Nevertheless, the pedagogical value of this type of text should not be underestimated, both in terms of learning a highly specialized language and in the educational perspective of belonging to a supra-national Community of Practice the objective of which can be found in one of the lectures: "Making this world a better world is the economist's first mission" (Tirole 2014).

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APPENDIX I

Year	Laureate	Country	Title	Rationale
1	2	3	4	5
2015	Angus Deaton	UK/USA	Measuring and Understanding Behavior, Welfare, and Poverty	"for his analysis of consumption, poverty, and welfare"
2014	Jean Tirole	France	Market Failures and Public Policy	"for his analysis of market power and regulation"
2013	Eugene Fama	USA	Two Pillars of Asset Pricing	"for their empirical analysis of asset prices"
	Lars Peter Hansen	USA	Uncertainty Outside and Inside Economic Models	
	Robert Shiller	USA	Speculative Asset Prices	
2012	Lloyd Stowell Shapley	USA	Allocation Games – the Deferred Acceptance Algorithm	"for the theory of stable allocations and the practice of market design"
	Alvin E. Roth	USA	The Theory and Practice of Market Design	

1	2	3	4	5
2011	Christopher A. Sims	USA	Statistical Modeling Of Monetary Policy And Its Effects	"for empirical research on cause and effect in the macroeconomy"
2010	Christopher A. Pissarides	Cyprus/ UK	Equilibrium in the labour market with search frictions	"for their analysis of markets with search frictions"
	Dale Mortensen	USA	Markets with search friction and the dmp model	
	Peter Diamond	USA	Unemployment, vacancies, wages	
2009	Oliver Williamson	USA	Transaction Cost Economics: The Natural Progression	"for his analysis of economic governance, especially the boundaries of the firm"
	Elinor Ostrom	USA	Beyond Markets and States: Polycentric Governance of Complex Economic Systems	"for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons"
2008	Paul Krugman	USA	The increasing returns revolution in trade and geography	"for his analysis of trade patterns and location of economic activity"
2007	Roger Myerson	USA	Perspectives on mechanism design in economic theory	"for having laid the foundations of mechanism design theory"
	Eric Maskin	USA	Mechanism design: how to implement social goals	
	Leonid Hurwicz	Poland/ USA	But who will guard the guardians?	
2006	Edmund S. Phelps	USA	Macroeconomics for a Modern Economy	"for his analysis of intertemporal tradeoffs in macroeconomic policy"

1	2	3	4	5
2005	Thomas C. Schelling	USA	An astonishing sixty years: the legacy of Hiroshima	"for having enhanced our understanding of conflict and cooperation through game-theory analysis"
	Robert J. Aumann	Israel/ USA	War and Peace	
2004	Edward C. Prescott	USA	The transformation of macroeconomic policy and research	"for their contributions to dynamic macroeconomics: the time consistency of economic policy and the driving forces behind business cycles"
	Finn E. Kydland	Norway	Quantitative aggregate theory	
2003	Clive W.J. Granger	UK	Time series analysis, cointegration, and applications	"for methods of analyzing economic time series with common trends (cointegration)"
	Robert F. Engle	USA	Risk and volatility: econometric models and financial practice	"for methods of analyzing economic time series with time-varying volatility (ARCH)"
2002	Daniel Kahneman	Israel/ USA	Maps of bounded rationality: a perspective on intuitive judgment and choice	"for having integrated insights from psychological research into economic science, especially concerning human judgment and decision-making under uncertainty"
	Vernon L. Smith	USA	Constructivist and ecological rationality in economics	"for having established laboratory experiments as a tool in empirical economic analysis, especially in the study of alternative market mechanisms"

1	2	3	4	5
2001	George Akerlof	USA	Behavioral macroeconomics and macroeconomic behavior	"for their analyses of markets with asymmetric information"
	A. Michael Spence	USA	Signaling in retrospect and the informational structure of markets	
	Joseph E. Stiglitz	USA	Information and the change in the paradigm in economics	

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From abstracts to video-abstracts: Academic argumentation in genre hybridization

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ABSTRACT

This paper deals with the influence of the advent of digital media technologies on academic discourse. Specifically, it addresses the changes in the argumentative realizations of two academic genres belonging to the same genre colony, written abstracts (WAB) and video abstracts (VAB), in management journals. The study proposes an analysis of the rhetorical strategies used by authors to express their authorial selves and to create a relationship with the readers. Specifically, the study addresses the role and changes in metadiscourse, focusing on *stance* (hedges, boosters, self-mentions, attitude markers) and *engagement markers* (reader pronouns, directives, questions, shared knowledge, asides) as means for writers to guide readers and display an appropriate professional persona. These elements are an important aspect of persuasive writing and may be employed differently due to the genre hybridization caused by the multimodal shift of the textual realization. Results of the analysis will show that metadiscursive items are far more present in VABs than in WABs, thus highlighting a greater interactivity in the construction of the academic argument as regards both the presence of the author and the search for scholarly solidarity communality with the parent discourse community.

Keywords: video abstract, management, academic discourse, metadiscourse, genre hybridization.

1. Introduction

Nowadays advances in digital media technologies and the pervasiveness of online media content have completely changed the way in which scholars share their research. From traditional scholarship, we have moved to "multimodal scholarship", that is the use of multiple digital mediums

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(e.g. still and moving images, interactive digital objects, audio, data sets, geospatial data, and text), often composed, displayed, or linked together, and disseminated across an array of digital publishing platforms (e.g. websites, blogs, mobile applications, and social networks) in order to communicate research (Spicer 2014: 2). These new multiple digital mediums have provided researchers with unprecedented opportunities to enhance their articles' accessibility and visibility and, as a consequence, to improve their chances of being cited (Coccetta 2020: 305).

Some scientific publishers (e.g. Elsevier, Sage, Taylor & Francis, Wiley) have begun to provide the option on their websites for authors to send their papers accompanied by a video abstract (VAB) in addition to the traditional one (WAB = written abstract). As defined by Spicer (2014: 3), a video abstract is a short video that should be no longer than 5 minutes and which briefly communicates an author's research "through a more personal, media rich medium that is better adapted for internet sharing (e.g. websites, blogs, mobile applications, and social networks)". Video abstracts are generally hosted on a journal's website, but they can also be published on their *YouTube* channel or on other platforms such as *Vimeo*, thus extending the participatory framework of research (Askehave – Nielsen 2005) by making it available not only to a specific audience (i.e. the discourse community of the scholar), but also to a potentially infinite number of internet surfers as ratified participants.

Interactivity is a secondary, but no less important aspect of "multimodal scholarship" on Web 2.0. When a video abstract is published on *YouTube*, for example, its content can be immediately commented on by viewers, which creates an interaction between the author and the audience. Hence, video abstracts seem to have brought academic discourse to a new level, from the Information Age to the Relationship Age (Myers 2010), in which research can be discussed directly in the new media arena.

Even though the wider reach of video abstracts may encourage scholars to use this new genre to increase their number of citations, this new type of academic text is still not widely diffused, and is limited to just a few disciplines, especially in the context of hard science journals. As for humanities, we find even fewer instances of video abstracts and these are circumscribed to economics (especially for econometrics and management research) that can be considered half-way, since it is a social science that also has recourse to statistics and mathematics.

Furthermore, despite the fact that the first video abstract was published around 2009 (Berkowitz 2013), this recent academic genre has received only

limited attention as far as linguistic analysis is concerned and studies have mainly focused on the hard sciences and only on genre structure (Plastina 2017; Coccetta 2020).

Starting from these premises, this paper analyses a corpus of management video abstracts comparing them to their written counterpart to better highlight changes due to "genre hybridization" (Bhatia 2004) and addresses the following research questions: 1) what are the variations in the use of metadiscourse devices, such as *stance* and *engagement markers*, as means for writers to guide readers and display an appropriate professional persona? 2) Are there any differences in the rhetorical interaction between writer and reader? 3) Does the interplay between visual and verbal mode influence the rhetorical realization of the relationship between producer and receiver of the academic message?

The paper is structured as follows: section 2 provides a literature review of the linguistic research on the abstract as genre, including the most recent studies on video abstracts; section 3 describes the materials under investigation, the corpora collected, and the methodological procedures adopted. Then, the results drawn from the comparative analysis of the corpora are presented in section 4. Finally, section 5 offers some concluding remarks in light of the results obtained.

2. Literature review: The abstract

The study of academic discourse has become an area of great interest over the last three decades, especially from a genre perspective (e.g. Swales 1990, 2004; Bhatia 1993, 2004). Research in the field has mainly focused on highly conventionalized written academic genres and the WAB has attracted the attention of a number of researchers (see, among others, Salager-Meyer 1990; Bhatia 1993; Dos Santos 1996; Bondi 1997, 2001; Martín-Martín 2003; Dahl 2004; Lorés-Sanz 2009; Samraj 2005; Pho 2008; Bondi – Lorés-Sanz 2014). As Bondi (1997: 396) suggests, "abstracts would seem to provide excellent material for genre analysis. Their textual structure is comparatively easy to identify, and their size is manageable for different types of linguistic analysis".

Genre-based studies in English on WAB have received quite a lot of scholarly attention (see, among others, Dos Santos 1996; Hyland 2000; Lorés-Sanz 2004; Cross – Oppenheim 2006; Swales – Feak 2009), across different disciplinary fields (Samraj 2005; Busch-Lauer 2014; Tankó 2017), and across cultures (Diani 2014).

In this extensive literature on the WAB as a genre, we find, however, a notable gap to date created by a lack of attention to the nature of interactive persuasion and to the importance of interaction in the creation of academic arguments. This absence of investigations on the topic may be due to the limited length of these texts which, on the one hand, makes them perfect for genre analysis, but, on the other, less fruitful as for variety of linguistic realizations. The role of academic persuasion through interaction has only been dealt with in longer publications such as research articles (see, among others, Bondi 1997; Hyland 2000, 2005, 2008).

Another remarkable paucity in the literature is represented by the limited attention paid to VABs as a genre that, unlike the written abstract, has not yet been thoroughly investigated from a linguistic point of view. To the best of our knowledge, few discourse analytical studies have focused on the VAB so far (Plastina 2017; Coccetta 2020) and they have mainly focused on the rhetorical structure of VABs published in medical journals.

The present study, thus, attempts to advance our understanding of this new academic genre by considering a social science, namely management, and providing a preliminary analysis of the argumentative strategies involved in the producer-receiver relationship. The results of this investigation may produce some useful guidelines for scholars who will face the new academic challenge of producing "multimodal" academic genres in the near future.

3. Materials and methods

3.1 Materials

This study was carried out on two small comparable corpora of abstracts in the field of management. We use the expression "comparable corpora" here since we collected the two versions, written and video, of the same research paper abstract, thus two different textual representations of the same academic genre. The two corpora are composed as follows: the first one is made up of 80 video abstracts (VAB corpus, 31,816 tokens); whereas the second one is constituted by their written counterparts (WAB corpus, 10,670 tokens). The materials for the analysis were collected from four management journals, namely the *British Journal of Management* (Wiley), the *Journal of Management* (SAGE), the *Journal of Management Reviews* (Wiley), and the *Strategic Management Journal* (Wiley) in a timespan from 2014 to 2020.

These journals were selected after putting the keywords "video abstract", "management", "journal" in a search engine. These are, in fact, the only journals in the management field which offer the possibility to provide video abstracts. The 2014-2020 timespan was chosen because 2014 was the year in which 3 out of the 4 journals started to publish video abstracts, so we decided to collect all the instances from that year on. The oral part of the VABs was manually transcribed in order to obtain textual data ready for the corpus analysis.

The following table shows the number of VABs and as a consequence also of WABs gathered for each journal.

Table 1. Number of WABs and VABs collected for each journal

Journals	No. of VABs/WABs (2014-2020)
British Management Journal (BMJ)	10
Journal of Management (JM)	2
Journal of Management Review (JMR)	3
Strategic Management Journal (SMJ)	65
TOT	80

The video abstracts collected range from a length of 2 to a maximum of 8 minutes on average, and they are all available both on the journal website as well as on YouTube.

As for the visual modes involved, the VABs in the corpus make use of a variety of visual realizations and not all the VABs present the author/s as the protagonist/s of the video. The following table classifies the VABs according to the type of visual mode contained:

Table 2. Types of visual mode realized in VABs

Journals	Author/s as protagonist/s	PowerPoint presentation (including tables/graphs)	Images (drawings/ photos)	Mixed representations (author/s + PPT/images)
BMJ	6	1	\	3
JM	1	\	1	\
JRM	2	1	\	\
SMJ	23	8	21	13
TOT	32	10	22	16

Interestingly, the table highlights that there is a preference for the presence of the author/s in the VABs either alone or with the aid of some visuals (e.g. ppt, images). These data may be relevant when considered in relation to the metadiscursive devices used by the authors. Visual realizations can also have an influence on the genre structure of the VABs as well as on the argumentative strategies employed and, as a consequence, on the producer-receiver relationship.

As regards the structure of VABs, Coccetta (2020: 312-314) claims that often the genre framework of VABs is less predictable than that of WABs since they do not follow the classical moves identified by Swales (1990): Introduction, Methods/Materials, Results, Discussion. Indeed, VABs may vary their structure from VA to VA adding some subphases with different communicative purposes, and Coccetta in her paper provides a useful grid (2020: 312-313) highlighting the additional moves and their communicative function in VABs. The following table applies Coccetta's framework and shows the subdivision of the VABs collected in the corpus according to their move structure:

The rhetorical analysis of management VABs shows that they maintain all the principal moves identified for WABs in the literature (i.e. *IMRD structure*). In addition, as highlighted by Coccetta (2020) for medicine video abstracts, management VABs also present some new moves due to the hybridization of the genre caused by multimodality (e.g. *Greeting, Speaker's introduction, Thanking viewers, Encouraging further contact, Encouraging further reading, Acknowledgements, Institutional affiliation, Credits).* Interestingly, the presence of these new moves is more frequent in the VABs where the authors are physically protagonists of the video or in videos where they interact with a PowerPoint or with images/tables related to the research. In these VABs, we find a more action-oriented (Coccetta 2020: 314) attitude where authors encourage readers to contact them by asking for further information (*Encouraging further contact* move) and to read the full paper by going to the url of the journal (*Encouraging further reading* move). Conversely, VABs where only visuals (e.g. PPT, images/tables) are used seem to have a stronger adherence to the classical IMRD structure of the genre being more information-oriented (Coccetta 2020: 313), as they provide more information about the research described in the paper. As for the new moves, they frequently add those moves which are again information-oriented, as for example *Speaker's introduction* that provides personal information about the speaker.

Table 3. Moves in the VABs – distribution in the corpus

Moves	Communicative function	BMJ	JM	JMR	SMJ
Paper information	Providing information about the paper (e.g. title, author(s), etc.)	10	2	3	65
Greeting	Greeting the audience	9	1	2	37
Speaker's introduction	Indicating speaker's name and affiliation	6	1	2	46
Topic announcement	Announcing the topic of the paper	10	2	3	65
Establishing a territory	Providing the context for research	4	1	2	44
Establishing a niche	Identifying a gap in the literature	6	1	1	25
Purpose	Indicating the objectives of the study	10	2	3	65
Methods/Materials	Describing the methodological framework of the analysis and the data	9	2	2	58
Results	Summarizing the results	10	2	3	65
Conclusions	Drawing the key conclusions	10	2	3	65
Thanking viewers	Thanking the audience for watching	9	1	2	36
Encouraging further contact	Encouraging the audience to contact the speaker	5	1	1	24
Encouraging further reading	Encouraging the audience to read the full paper	4	1	1	27
Acknowledgements	Thanking co-authors	\	\	\	12
Institutional affiliation	Indicating the affiliation for which the researcher(s) work(s)	4	2	1	48
Credits	Indicating the person(s) who contributed to the VAB creation	\	\	\	\

3.2 Methods

As for methodology, the present study is based on Hyland's framework for *stance* and *engagement* in academic writing (2008: 5-7). These two elements involve the accomplishment of interaction in academic genres.

Specifically, *stance* refers to "the writer's textual 'voice' or community recognized personality" (Hyland 2008: 5). It is an attitudinal marker that is writer-oriented and deals with the way in which scholars present themselves and convey their judgements, opinions and commitments. *Stance* includes metadiscursive resources such as:

- *hedges:* devices which withhold complete commitment to a claim made;
- *boosters:* the opposite of *hedges*, they express the writer's certainty in his/her claim;
- *attitude markers:* items that indicate the writer's affective attitude to what is stated; they convey surprise, agreement, importance, frustration, affect and appraisal;
- *self-mentions:* the use of first person pronouns and possessive adjectives (*I, my, me, exclusive we/our/us)* to present information (Hyland 2000) and the discoursal self.

Secondly, *engagement* concerns the ways in which the writer "brings readers into the discourse" (Hyland 2008: 9). The function of elements in this class is mainly to anticipate possible objections from the reader by engaging them in an appropriate way. This set of strategies allows writers to anticipate readers' reactions to their arguments and to assist them in constructing an effective way of reasoning (Hyland 2008: 9). *Engagement markers* include:

- *reader pronouns:* explicit reference to the reader in the text such as second person pronouns *you/your,* first person plural pronouns *we/our* when used with an inclusive purpose;
- *directives: imperatives* and *obligation modals* that engage the readers in three kinds of activity: 1) *textual acts:* direct readers from one part of the text to another or to another text; 2) *physical acts:* indicate to readers how to perform an action in the real world; 3) *cognitive acts:* guide readers in the interpretation of an argument by inviting them to *consider, note, think about* some claim in the text);
- *personal asides:* they consist of brief interruptions in the argument to address readers directly in order to offer a comment on what has been said;
- *appeals to shared knowledge:* signals used to explicitly mark for readers something as familiar and accepted, e.g. *well known, obviously*;
- *questions*: dialogic elements to involve readers and to stimulate curiosity as well as to guide them to the writer's point of view.

To achieve its purposes, the study relies on a two-fold perspective combining both quantitative and qualitative observation of data. On the one hand, quantitative data were obtained with corpus linguistics tools (*wordlists, concordances* and *collocations* [Wordsmith Tools 7 (Scott 2016)]) in order to identify the most frequent patterns of *stance* and *engagement* in the corpora. On the other hand, qualitative data were gathered through discourse analytical tools to determine the influence of the visual mode on the kind of metadiscourse involved in the hybridization of the genre.

In the next section, the results emerging from the analysis of the two corpora are presented, with special reference to the differences in the use of *stance* and *engagement markers* due to the hybridization of the genre in the video mode.

4. Results

A quantitative study was first carried out to record the number of occurrences of *stance* and *engagement markers* in the two corpora. The analysis yielded the following comparative results:

Table 4. Stance and engagement markers in each corpus (per 1,000 words)

Feature	WAB corpus	VAB corpus
Stance	*16.1*	*40.6*
Hedges	2.9	12.1
Attitude markers	1.7	5.2
Boosters	0.4	4.6
Self-mentions	11.1	18.6
Engagement	*0.2*	*9.54*
Reader pronouns	\	8.8
Directives	\	\
Questions	0.2	0.5
Shared knowledge	\	0.3
Asides	\	\

At a glance, Table 4 shows that metadiscursive elements are far more common in the VAB corpus, and the most striking difference between the two corpora lies in the use of *engagement markers* that are almost inexistent in the WAB corpus. This immediately highlights the more interactive spirit

of video abstracts. In VABs, authors seem to always maintain eye contact with the viewers by looking straight into the video camera searching for an interpersonal relation with them in order to align the receivers with the presentation of the arguments and thus gain credibility through solidarity with the peer disciplinary community.

Another significant variation between the two corpora concerns *stance markers*, which are more than twice as frequent in the VAB corpus as in the WAB corpus, with *self-mentions* that dominate frequencies in both corpora. According to Hyland (2002: 16), this behavior is typical of soft-science academic writing where scholars are less concerned with generalizing their claims for the sake of objectivity and are keener on showing their personal perspective which distinguishes the writers' work from that of others. However, when we have a closer look at their realizations in the corpora, namely the use of *I, my, me, exclusive we/our/us*, we discover that writers represent themselves in different ways: in WABs authors rely only on the use of the first plural pronouns, whereas in VABs scholars also present their research taking recourse to the first person singular pronouns (3.6 ptw), especially in videos where the author is the protagonist or in mixed situations in which we can see both the presenter and the PowerPoint slideshow.

Furthermore, the similar frequencies between *hedges* and *self-mentions* in the VAB corpus can be interpreted considering their relation in the construction of academic argumentation. With *self-mentions*, the authors strongly identify with a particular argument, trying to gain credit for their viewpoint (Hyland 2008: 16), but at the same time they need to downplay their claims by using *hedges* in order to remain open to "heteroglossic diversity" (Hyland 2008: 14) in the community. Thus, in VABs, even in the authorial construction of the self, we can observe a receiver-oriented perspective sharing a personal research viewpoint, but not imposing it on the audience.

In the next sections, we will have a closer look at the textual rendering of the most frequent items of *stance* and *engagement* by giving some examples in context.

4.1 *Stance*: Authorial presence in the argumentative construction of knowledge

The most frequent visual realization of the VABs collected in the corpus involves the presence of the author/s of the research either by themselves or in a mixed form with a slideshow presentation aid (60%). This is reflected

in the high frequency of *self-mentions* which are often accompanied by *hedges, boosters* and *attitude markers*. As management can be considered a soft-knowledge field, it is more interpretative (Hyland 2008:14) and results may be influenced by contextual factors and variables. Scholars' arguments are frequently built through claim-making negotiations with the receivers of the parent discourse community and claims have to be expressed cautiously by using *hedges* or *attitude markers*, as the following examples show:

(1) **I believe** it **can** be used as a teaching material in a doctoral seminar and since **our article may give** some insights for researchers who specialize in this field. (*Journal of Management* – VAB)

(2) […] so **I think** an implication from that is that for not just science parks but universities and accelerators anyone who's interested in training entrepreneurs. (*Strategic Management Journal* – VAB)

Modals and cognitive verbs in the example downplay the evaluation of what has been argued, thus highlighting the subjective viewpoint on the claim. Interestingly, the use of cognitive verbs is almost inexistent in the WABs and *hedges* are often found in impersonal constructions, thus not involving authorial presence as in the following example:

(3) In addition, several issues for future research are proposed, which may provide useful insights for both literature and practice. (Strategic Management Journal – WAB)

As shown by the example, in WABs authors seem to be more concerned with generalizations rather than with subjective viewpoints and with providing the reader with objective claims rather than with personal interpretations of their research.

Moving on to the use of *boosters* related to *self-mentions*, VAB authors rely on *boosters* when dealing with methods and results of their research since these parts are more open to questions. As a consequence, scholars need to establish the importance of their work by restricting the possibility of criticisms and alternative interpretations and, to achieve this aim, they have recourse to *boosters* which are typical of the more colloquial style used in videos. The following example provides an instance of this strategy related to methodology:

(4) **Our article** provides **really important** methodological advances. These not just help us ascertain the mechanisms we've just explained, but are also **tremendously useful** in advising other researchers trying to get into emerging economies research how to try to go about studying and rigorously collecting data in these contexts. (British Management Journal – VAB)

Even though we find a limited presence of *boosters* in the WAB corpus (0.4 ptw), their function is the same as for VABs and they are almost always used in the methods section to highlight the fruitfulness of the procedures employed in the research as demonstrated by example 4, or to show the importance of the study in the literature panorama as in example 5:

(5) Environmental dynamism reduces the negative effect of TMT gender and educational-level faultline strengths on strategic change while in fact revealing **a notable positive effect** between TMT age-faultline strength and strategic change. (British Management Journal – WAB)

(6) **This paper** provides **important insights** into how executive search firms can successfully manage their reputations to overcome major threats to their organizations. (Journal of Management Review – WAB)

As suggested by the examples, however, authors of WABs show a higher degree of impersonality associated with *boosters* (e.g. *this paper, environmental dynamism*) in order to promote the objectivity of their claims. They subordinate their own perspective to suggest that the importance of the results achieved, or the value of the methods used, would be the same independently of their role as researchers.

4.2 *Engagement*: Audience involvement in the argumentative construction of knowledge

Besides the creation of authorial credibility through *stance,* authors may also decide the degree of participation of the audience to highlight or downplay their claims through *engagement markers.* Engagement devices are concerned with the various ways scholars relate to their readers by bringing them into the discourse in order to anticipate possible objections (Hyland 2008: 17). As we observed in Table 3, *engagement markers* are far less frequent than *stance* elements in both corpora with, however, a higher frequency in the VAB corpus (9.54 v. 0.8 ptw).

A striking difference between the two corpora concerns *reader pronouns* as they are inexistent in the WAB corpus, whereas they are the most frequent category in the VAB corpus. In VABs, as a matter of fact, authors often bring the receivers into the discourse by using different strategies. First of all, especially in the VABs where the researcher is the protagonist, scholars tend to involve their audience through expressions typical of face-to-face interaction associated with the second person singular pronoun *you,* as shown in example 7:

(7) **If you are interested** in this field **please read** my article, I welcome any questions or comments. Please **feel free to contact** me by email. Thank you for viewing to the end (Journal of Management Review – VAB)

As it is possible to observe in the example, there is an explicit engagement with the receivers, and the purpose seems to be a promotional one: to convince the audience to read the whole paper.

On other occasions, the VAB authors use the relationship with the audience in order to highlight the suitability of the methodology by encouraging the receivers to follow the research strand proposed, as in example 8:

(8) We hope that our paper will **encourage you to go out and engage with the visual as researchers** and **to analyze it in your work**. **Enjoy the paper!** (British Management Journal – VAB)

Even in the previous example, the reference to the audience is straightforward and involves expressions of face-to-face interaction (e.g. *enjoy the paper*). The suggestion that the receiver should embrace the line of research proposed in the VAB, and as a consequence in the paper, could be seen again as promotional, but it is also a way of giving value to claims made in the study.

The presence of *reader pronouns* is also frequent in VABs when the authors create a *scenario* (Gülich 2003: 233), taking the receivers into the procedures of the paper or into a specific example by sketching a possible situation that could also be experienced by the receivers themselves. Example 9 provides an instance of this strategy related to *reader pronouns*:

(9) If **you walk through** and **don't like what you see** on the other side **you can't get back** to where you were before, but most decisions aren't like that they are changeable, reversible (Strategic Management Journal – VAB))

A second frequent *engagement device* in the VAB corpus is the use of questions. The majority of the questions found in the corpus are rhetorical and present the author's opinion in the form of interrogatives. However, this strategy enables the scholar to simulate a dialogue with the audience and at the same time to present a claim by responding to the question immediately. Example 10 shows an occurrence of this question pattern associated with the second person singular pronoun *you:*

(10) What do these two firms have in common, you might ask? The answer is that they share the same strategy […] (Journal of Management – VAB)

In contrast, *engagement markers* are almost totally absent from WABs, and authors do not seem interested in bringing the audience into the discourse; this could be because of the different medium involved or maybe because in written publications we find other means of inclusiveness in the discourse community (i.e. shared knowledge, inclusive *we*).

In the next section, some concluding remarks on the results of the analysis are given.

5. Concluding remarks

The present paper focused on the video abstract, a new academic genre that has received limited attention in the literature (Plastina 2017; Coccetta 2020). Since the analysis of VABs has only been carried out with reference to hard sciences, we proposed a study on a soft discipline, i.e. management, and we compared video abstracts to their written counterparts. Another noticeable paucity in the literature is represented by the limited attention paid to VABs as a genre that, unlike the written abstract, has not yet been thoroughly investigated from a linguistic point of view. To the best of our knowledge, few discourse analytical studies have focused on the VAB so far (Plastina 2017; Coccetta 2020) and they have mainly focused on their rhetorical structure in corpora of VABs published in medical journals.

Our study has attempted to move a step forward in our knowledge of this new academic genre by considering a social science (e.g. management) and to provide a preliminary analysis of the argumentative strategies involved in the producer-receiver relationship focusing in particular on *stance* and *engagement.* Moreover, the VAB corpus was compared to its written counterparts (WAB corpus) to highlight changes due to "genre hybridization" (Bhatia 2004).

Starting from *stance*, the analysis of metadiscursive items showed that these elements are far more frequent in VABs than in WABs. In VABs, the author persona is strongly represented by the use of the first person singular pronoun *I* as *self-mention*, thus placing him/herself in a central position in respect to the research conducted. This strategy enables the scholar in the VAB to show their personal perspective and to distinguish his/her work from that of others. In addition, this strong *self* representation may also be due to the fact that, in VABs, most authors act as protagonists sometimes just by themselves without any graphical support, whereas a few appear in a mixed form accompanied by a slide show. As a consequence, this makes it easier to personalize the textual content produced. This personal approach is less evident in the WAB corpus, in which scholars are more concerned with generalizing their claims and where we found only the first person plural pronoun *we* as self-reference. In WABs authors seem to build their arguments by showing a more objective position and searching for credibility through solidarity with their peer disciplinary community. This point is also evident in the different use of *boosters*; in WABs they are usually found in impersonal constructions, whereas in VABs they are often associated with the personal realizations. (e.g. *our study, my paper*)

Moving on to *engagement markers*, here we found the most striking difference between the two corpora. In fact, *engagement devices* are almost inexistent in the WAB corpus. This immediately highlights the more interactive spirit of video abstracts. In VABs authors seem to focus on the audience, searching for an interpersonal relation with it in order to involve the receivers in the construction of the arguments. Reader pronouns were the most frequent *engagement marker* in the VAB corpus, whereas they were absent from the WAB corpus. Since the authors of VABs expose themselves in narrating their research by constantly referring to the audience, they seem to appeal to scholarly solidarity (Hyland 2008: 17) and to claim communality with the discourse community. This strategy enables them to anticipate possible readers' objections through collegiality of interpretation.

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Existential indicators in medical research papers

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the role of existentials in the construction of medical knowledge and how they manoeuvre argumentation in scientific research papers. Corpus analysis reveals that some grammatical environments appear to be chosen on epistemological grounds since they are frequently employed in medical writing to encode and disseminate evidence-based information. Thanks to their semantics, existentials form a privileged environment in which to tackle medical discourse from a quantitative angle, especially as quantification represents one of the techniques of objectification characteristic of scientific writing. On the strength of their quantificational import, existentials, as they present themselves throughout a medical paper, can bring inherently argumentative intentions to the surface since they are used to justify the validity of the claims made by the authors of a clinical study.

Keywords : existentials, argumentation, quantification, medical discourse, EBM.

1. Introduction

This study aims at investigating the role of existentials in the construction of medical knowledge and how they manoeuvre argumentation in scientific research papers. Halliday and Matthiessen (1999: 3) claim that:

> All knowledge is constituted in semiotic systems, with language as the most central; and all such representations of knowledge are constructed from language in the first place. (Hence when we consider the knowledge enshrined in a particular discipline, we understand this by examining the language of the discipline – the particular ways of meaning that it has evolved […]).

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Along these lines, if we want to inquire into the representation and diffusion of the knowledge "enshrined" in this textual genre, we need to turn to the linguistic semiotic system medical researchers employ to construe their collective and individual experience as evidence used to answer clinical questions.

Corpus analysis (Leon – Divasson 2006; Mungra 2006; Maci 2012; Mocini 2015) reveals that some grammatical environments appear to be chosen on epistemological grounds since they are frequently used in medical writing to encode and disseminate healthcare information. A case in point is the extensive use of existential constructions whose investigation may shed light on the specific way medical doctors present and communicate their findings.

Rejecting the traditional locative interpretation, claiming that existential constructions serve "to introduce the NP referent into the discourse world of the interlocutors by asserting its PRESENCE in a given location" (Lambrecht 1994: 179),[1] in this analysis I shall take on board Davidse's (2000: 203) insight when she holds that "the conceptual import of existential constructions is not, as has traditionally been held, to locate entities somewhere, but to quantify instances of a general type". Indeed, the quantificational import of existentials[2] accounts for their widespread use in scientific medical texts which are known to concern quantitative data charged with the task of providing information based on evidence.

The aim of this paper is therefore twofold: firstly, to shed light on the linguistic realization of existentials and on their discourse-semantic function in the construction and dissemination of medical knowledge and, secondly, to show how existentials are exploited by medical writers to build up an evidentiary argument to defend the validity of their claims.

2. Corpus, methodology and analytical framework

The theoretical framework chosen for the investigation illustrated in this paper lies at the interface between functional, cognitive and corpus linguistics. The systemic functional paradigm, in particular the functional linguistic depiction of the nominal group (Halliday 1994; Halliday – Matthiessen 2004),

1 The capitalization in Lambrecht's NP stands for Noun Phrase. In this paper, Nominal Group (suggested by Halliday) will be used as a synonym for Noun Phrase.

2 In the present study "existential clauses", "existential constructions" and "existentials" are considered synonyms.

was integrated with Langacker's (1991) cognitive approach to nominals.[3] Corpus linguistics provided a number of devices useful for the identification, quantification, and discussion of synchronic corpus samples.

2.1 Corpus construction and exploration

The reference corpus used in this study is a collection of medical research papers covering the span of a decade, from 2010 to 2019. It is a work-in-progress compilation used by the author of the present paper to teach medical ESP to student doctors. Papers dealing with a variety of medical topics are included in the corpus, chosen both by the teacher to inform his different teaching activities and by the students to perform tasks aimed at learning how to analyse and write medical reports and articles. All of the texts selected are informed by a relatively new paradigm of clinical research called Evidence-based Medicine (hereinafter EBM), that is used very frequently by contemporary doctors and medical researchers. The main tenet of EBM is to seek and find solutions to clinical problems, provide patients with the best possible therapeutic intervention, and transfer the results of research published in the medical literature to clinical practice. The mainstay of EBM is, in fact, the hierarchical system used to classify evidence according to the methodological rigour applied to research studies, their scientific validity, and applicability to patient care. The texts contained in the corpus are based on the study designs associated with the highest levels of evidence: systematic reviews, meta-analyses, randomized clinical trials, case-control and cohort studies.

All the texts were retrieved online using the PubMed search engine, and only those providing a full-text version retrievable from PubMed Central were chosen.[4] Of each paper, a version in *.txt* was obtained so that this format could be subjected to quantitative analysis using dedicated software. The details of the corpus are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Corpus in detail

Number of files	573
Tokens	2,162,157
Types	49,119
Type/token ratio	2.48

[3] Langacker employs the term "nominal" to refer to the Noun Phrase (Langacker 1991: 550).

[4] While PubMed (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/) is a database of citations and abstracts from MEDLINE, life science journals, and online books, PubMed Central (https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/) is a free digital archive of full-text journal articles.

Table 2. Frequency of the existential *there*

Word	Frequency	%	Texts	%
there	3,123	0.14	494	86.21

During our didactic activities in the lecture hall, the students drew my attention to the recurrent use of existential clauses. This was the event which triggered my interest in the topic at hand and prompted me to write the present report. To carry out this work, I conducted an analysis using *WordSmith Tools 6* (Scott 2012), making use, in particular, of the *Wordlist* and *Concordance* functions of this software. With the former function I obtained the number of occurrences for the word *there*, while the latter provided me with the examples I chose for the discourse-semantic analysis conducted further on. It also enabled me to retrieve the co-text of *there*, so that only occurrences of *there* used existentially were selected, and those conveying other non-existential meanings were discarded, as for example when used as an adverb meaning "in, at, or to that place", or when it conveys the concept of "attracting or drawing someone's attention to someone or something". Table 2 illustrates the frequency of the existential *there*, which accounted for 0.14% of all the running words and, more importantly, appeared in more than 86% of the texts included in the corpus.

2.2 The systemic functional paradigm

One of the of hallmarks of Hallidayan linguistics is the system of transitivity. Writers (or speakers) represent their experience and the reality around them by selecting from among a wide range of linguistic options. This system of choices manifests itself at the level of the clause which can be structured in various ways by manipulating its constituents. As Halliday and Matthiessen posit (2004: 181), "Transitivity is a system of the clause, affecting not only the verb serving as Process but also participants and circumstances". Every clause can be categorised according to the type of process it comprises: material, relational, existential, behavioural, mental, and verbal. The focus here is on existential clauses which revolve around Processes[5] realized through verbs designating the existence or occurrence of something. As Halliday and Matthiessen point out, although these clauses "are not, overall, very common in discourse […] they make an important, specialized

[5] In keeping with Systemic-Functional Linguistics, functional categories are capitalized.

contribution to various kinds of texts" (2004: 257). As Table 2 above shows, in the medical discourse instantiated in the texts analysed here, the word *there* employed "existentially" appears very frequently, totalling 3,123 occurrences in a remarkable percentage of texts present in the corpus. This is a figure that draws our attention to the semantics and discursive functions of this type of clause.

Existential clauses have one obligatory Participant, the Existent, that is a nominal group representing a phenomenon, an entity or an event of any kind. As regards the Process, the study of the corpus concordances for the word *there* showed that the verb *be* is by far the preferred option (Table 3), even though other verbs may be chosen: *exist*, *seem*, *arise*, *appear*, *emerge*). The existential Process can also be located in space or time by inserting circumstantial elements.

Table 3. Occurrences of verbs used as existential processes

Verbs used as existential processes	Occurrences
be	3,087
appear	21
exist	6
seem	5
arise	3
emerge	1

Semantically, existential clauses state that a given entity exists or that something happens. From the point of view of transitivity, the word *there* has no experiential meaning, because it is neither a Participant nor a Circumstance. However, the existential *there* performs its function at a discourse-pragmatic level, since it is used to create an attentional frame exploited interpersonally by announcing that a new referent is being introduced into the discourse and brought to the reader's attention. This focusing function is further emphasised by the thematic structure of existential clauses, which "typically take as their starting point the simple fact that some entity exists" (Thompson 2004: 161). As a result, the word *there* acts as theme and points cataphorically to what occupies the rhematic position, namely the Existent and a number of additional circumstances. By way of illustration, let us analyse the transitivity of the following example:

(1) In this analysis, there were 200 pancreatic cancer cases and 673 controls.[6]

[6] All the examples taken from the corpus are numbered in order of appearance. Details of the sources are provided in the journal-reference section at the end of the study.

Table 4. Transitivity analysis of example (1)

In this analysis	there	were	200	pan-creatic	cancer	cases	×
×	×	×	673	×	×	controls	and
Circum-stance	×	Process	Existent				×
×	×	×	Nume-rative	Classi-fier	Classi-fier	Thing	×
×			Pre-modifiers			Head	×

Given the focusing function of existential clauses, their selection among the other possible lexicogrammatical realizations having the same experiential meaning encoded into the system of transitivity appears to be functionally motivated. Accordingly, if we refer to example (1) above, the authors might have opted for a different construction agnate to the existential clause, such as the following:

This analysis included 200 pancreatic cancer cases and 673 controls.

Table 5. Transitivity analysis of the agnate of example (1)

This analysis	com-prised	200	pan-creatic	cancer	cases	×
×	×	673	×	×	controls	and
Token/ Identi-fied[a]	Process: posses-sion	Value/Identifier				×
×	×	Nume-rative	Classifier	Classifier	Thing	×

[a] Token and Value are used to label the two participants in identifying relational clauses. A Token is the participant being defined (Identified), while a Value is the participant which defines (Identifier). See Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004.

Here the circumstantial element of the initial clause is unpacked into a Participant plus a Process designating an abstract relationship of containment which includes a feature of possession (Halliday – Matthiessen 2004: 246). Had the author opted for this type of construal, a very similar experiential meaning would have been conveyed, but it is likely that the attentional frame would have been downplayed. The existential construction serves therefore to draw the reader's attention to discourse-new entities by

foregrounding their quantificational import which, as will be shown in the analysis carried out below, plays a crucial role in the construction of medical knowledge based on evidence.

2.3 Insights from cognitive linguistics

The basic idea behind the notion of different linguistic construals is, therefore, that writers can select different lexicogrammatical patterns to allocate the reader's attention to certain aspects of a situation. Indeed, with existential clauses a cognitive process occurs within an "event-frame", where a portion of the referent situation is foregrounded through "the selective distribution of attention with respect to a conceptual concept" (Talmy 2000: 304).

Besides their focusing function, existential clauses typically encode a quantificational meaning, specifying "whether or not a general category is instantiated in a specific search domain, and if so in what cardinal measure" (Davidse 2000: 14). The phrase "search domain" designates the region to which the semantic target of a construal is restricted (Langacker 1999: 53). As Table 4 above shows, the head noun embodies what Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) call the "Thing", or "the semantic core of the nominal group" (2004: 325). In the light of Langacker's (1991) insightful description of nominal groups, the head noun *cases* in (1), represents a "thing type", conceptualized as a category which has the potential to manifest itself within a certain domain of instantiation. In his view, every nominal group, including plural nominal groups, profiles only one instance of the instantiated type and the basic difference between a noun and a nominal lies in the fact that the former constitutes a "thing type" whereas the latter singles out an instance of that type. On this account, also in the case of plural nominal groups incorporating a quantifier, the "size of the instance will be given by the number of its component entities, but collectively these entities constitute just one instance of the plural-noun type" (Langacker 1991: 81). In (1), the actualization of the type category *cases* as an "instance" occurs by means of its modifiers and its instantiation within a search domain. In actual fact, pre-modifying elements like *200*, acting as Quantifier, and *pancreatic/ cancer*, acting as Classifiers, not only single out an instance of the general type category *cases* but also provide its specification in terms of quantity, profiling the cardinal quantification of its occurrences in a specific search domain realized by the Circumstance *In this analysis*. The exact value of the quantity designated corresponds to a specific point on a numerical scale indicated as *200*.

Existential clauses express, therefore, quantification conjointly through the word *there* and the Existent. More specifically, the word *there* announces "that instantiation of a type in a cardinal quantity will be involved" (Davidse 2000: 239), while the Existent provides the quantificational measure.

Type specification may occur in a less "iconic" way, with different semantic functions failing to correlate with separate component parts of the same nominal group. For instance, in the above-cited excerpt, *673 controls* does not actually express type specification which is, however, presupposed or implied by the immediate context. By virtue of its strong collocation with the neighbouring word *cases*, the type concept *controls* instances a specific type of people sharing with the *cases* as many features as possible, except the disease. The quantifier *673* provides the cardinal quantification of the instance within the search domain delimited by the same circumstantial *In this analysis*. The type is therefore turned into a specific instance thanks to what Langacker calls the "current discourse space", consisting in those elements and knowledge relations shared by the writer and the reader, basic for successful communication at any given time:

> As discourse unfolds, at each step the current expression is constructed and interpreted against the background of those that have gone before. The prior discourse is a major determinant (along with context, background knowledge, etc.) of what I call current discourse space (CDS). The CDS is a mental space comprising everything presumed to be shared by the speaker and hearer as the basis for discourse at a given moment. Starting from that basis, each successive utterance updates the CDS in some fashion (Langacker 2008: 59).

3. Existential realizations in EBM texts

This section draws on a number of excerpts taken from the corpus with a view to illustrating the semantics and lexicogrammatical realizations of existentials in EBM texts. This qualitative analysis seeks to show how medical writers can exploit this type of clause for the construction and transfer of evidentiary knowledge.

3.1 The realization of the search domain

In the texts analysed here, the search domain of instantiation can be realized in various ways. It can occur either through a discourse-oriented spatial

circumstantial (*In this analysis*) as shown in example (1) above or through a more concrete spatial reference (2):

(2) *In the analysis* of all-cause mortality, there were 25 459 deaths in the intervention group vs 28 306 deaths in the control group (RR, 0.99 [95% CI, 0.94 to 1.03]; P = .49).

Very often the search domain consists in a temporal circumstantial:

(3) *During a mean follow-up of 3.0 years*, there were 2343 recurrent VTE events.

Here the authors explore the search domain, which, in this case, is delimited by the temporal circumstantial *During a mean follow-up of 3.0 years*, for the size of *recurrent venous thromboembolism events*. They count the component entities of the instance to discover that they amount to 2,343.

The search domain can also consist in a spatio-temporal combination of two circumstantials:

(4) *In the same year*, there were approximately 11 300 prostate cancer deaths *in the UK*, making prostate cancer the second most common cause of cancer death in men.

When the search domain is not explicitly mentioned, it is easily retrievable by implication, and may coincide, for example, with the overall space of all the relevant knowledge available to the authors:

(5) *To our knowledge*, there are two other studies that have considered prescribing trends, and these were focused mainly on the impact of the National Dementia Strategy.

Instead of being realized by a prepositional phrase, the search domain can be embodied in adjectives (6) or adverbs expressing time (7), or space (8), or both (9):

(6) There have been two *recent* high impact, well designed studies, examining the role of HMV in COPD).

(7) There are *currently* three indicators for dementia included in the framework.

(8) *Worldwide*, there are at least 230 million invasive procedures performed annually and most of us will undergo several in our lifetime.

(9) *Globally*, the overall pooled annual incidence of ALS is ~1.9/100,000 population, and it is estimated that there are *presently* ~228,000 prevalent cases.

The realization of the search domain can also occur outside the existential clause, in a contiguous subordinate temporal clause:

(10) We will argue that it is important to take information about financial COIs into account when assessing research and that there are at least five factors that one should consider *when making judgments on how financial relationships affect the credibility of research*.

3.2 Uniform and homogenous masses

There are also existentials that have no specific quantifier. Nonetheless, these contain a specification of quantity not by designating discrete instances, but rather "the kind as such" (Davidse 2000: 221). This is the case with Existents realized by bare plural nominal groups:

(11) M. tuberculosis strains resistant to four or more of the front-line treatments (i.e., extremely drug-resistant [XDR] strains) have appeared and spread rapidly in the last decade or so (124, 130). And now there are *TDR strains*, which are totally drug resistant!

Here, though referring to an unspecified amount of entities, the mass nominal group realizing the Existent designates just one instance of the kind *strains* identified within the temporal search domain expressed by *now*. Unlike explicit quantification conveyed by an Existent pre-modified by a cardinal quantifier which profiles the magnitude of a mass consisting of a certain number of discrete entities of the same type, as shown in (1) to (10), and where "considerable prominence is accorded to the discrete entities out of which the mass is constituted" (Langacker 1991: 78), Existents realized by bare plurals designate a qualitatively uniform mass composed of entities of the same kind. Reference to the amount of the instance is still present, though implicitly, while the emphasis is placed on the kind as such.

Existents realized by mass nouns exhibits a semantic make up similar to those realized by bare plural nominal groups:

(12) Two studies were identified involving 1843 participants. There is *evidence* that walking groups have wide-ranging health benefits.

(13) When blood pressure is tightly controlled with an average systolic reading of < 140 mmHg at three years post-transplant, there is improved allograft *survival* and reduced CV *mortality* at 10 years.

The Existent in (12) refers to one instance of the body of evidence obtained within a spatial search domain (*studies*). The word *evidence* designates a homogenous mass consisting of uniform elements corroborating the claim about the health benefits of the walking groups, the quantity of which remains implicit. Similarly, example (13) designates an implicit amount of *survival* and *mortality* within a search domain construed by a circumstance of contingency operating at clause-complex level, and specifying that the actualization of the instance of the Existent depends on certain circumstance: one instance of *improved allograft survival and reduced CV mortality* occurs when blood pressure is tightly controlled. In both examples the heads of the nominal groups realizing the Existent designate a mass which is internally continuous and undifferentiated: the measure of the intrinsic magnitude of the mass in question remains implicit.

In some cases, the magnitude may be conveyed more explicitly through the insertion of an epithet:

(14) Since there were consistent findings in multiple high-quality RCTs (as well as in low-quality RCTs), there is *strong* evidence to conclude that early DMARD initiation results in better radiographic outcomes.

Here the adjective *strong* emphasizes the quantificational import of the existential clause by adding the meaning of "great in number" (Hornby 2005: 1521).

Medical writers may also signal no attestation of a given instance, or a *zero* attestation, either in a given search domain or in a domain which is not lexicalised but implied:

(15) *Currently*, there is no bedside test available for ZIKV.

(16) To our knowledge there are no publications that have evaluated physical activities in relation to the etiopatho-genesis of AIS other than sports scolioses and trunk asymmetries with swimming.

In example (15) the quantifier *no* profiles an instantiation with zero magnitude of the type *bedside test available for ZIKV* attested in the temporal search domain indicated by the mood Adjunct *currently*. In (16) the zero quantification relates to the instance of etiopathogenetic evaluation of AIS. The specification of the instance is here realised by a post-modifying embedded clause, whereas the search domain is not explicitly mentioned but easily retrievable by implication, and coincident with the overall space of the relevant literature available to and perused by the authors.

3.3 Degenerate replicate mass

Cardinal quantification may conflate with an indefinite determiner:

(17) All patients randomized to sequence 2 receive treatment B in the first period, and then treatment A in the second period. Often there is *a washout period* between two periods during which they receive no treatment.

Here the indefinite article *a* profiles a discrete entity, which corresponds to one instance of the type category *washout period*. The indefinite article designates what Langacker calls a "degenerate replicate" mass, comprising only one component entity. This kind of one-entity quantification is notably typical of medical discourse when it comes to describing the outcomes of a medical research project or an experiment. The existent is often realized by head nouns profiling co-occurrence, referring to two or more things taking place simultaneously, like *association*, *link, relationship*, or to some form of variation in amount or number like *increase*, *fall*, *difference, change*. The specific nature of this relational configuration is expressed through post-modifying elements acting as Qualifier. The instance is often evaluated from the point of view of relevance, either by means of an epithet qualifying the instance (18), or in a less direct fashion, through counter-expectancy (19):

(18) Compared with the intended stent strategy at the end of the first procedure, there was a *significant* increase in maximal stent diameter (in millimeters) (3.0 [IQR: 3.0 to 3.5] versus 3.5 [IQR: 3.0 to 4.0].

(19) *Following the first stage of the trial*, the primary outcome measures of cardiac death, non-fatal MI and coronary intervention failed to reveal statistically significant results. There was *however*, a 32% reduction of LDL-cholesterol and risk of MI was decreased by 35%.

It is interesting to note that in (19) the search domain is indicated not within the existential clause but by a non-finite clause (*Following the first stage of the trial*) contained in the previous sentence. Furthermore, the conjunctive Adjunct *however* binds the two sentences and enhances "the window of attention", opened by the existential *there,* signalling counterevidence and counter-expectancy vis-à-vis a previous statement. The evaluation (*failed to reveal statistically significant results*) provided in the first sentence is counterbalanced by the entity profiled in the existential clause (*a 32% reduction of*…) which, by retrospective contrast with the insignificance of the primary outcome measures mentioned above, emerges as relevant and thus worthy of attention.

The Qualifier specifying the nature of the instance may be realized by highly complex structures which expand the head noun, delineating its specific nature and adding a temporal circumstance to the spatial indication designating the search domain:

(20) *Within the deferred stenting group*, there was a significant reduction in the proportion of patients with angiographic evidence of thrombus *at the start of the second versus the first* procedure (98.1% vs. 62.7%; $p < 0.0001$).

3.4 Schematic quantification of magnitude

Unlike the above-cited examples which contain an explicit cardinal value, the following excerpts offer a less direct description of the magnitude of the instances in question:

(21) In literature, there are *many reports* on the correction results of AIS, while there are *a few studies* focused on the difference of the correction results between MSS and AIS.

(22) However, to date, there is *little evidence* about the effects of daily sleep duration on human health outcomes for older adults.

Existential constructions of this type convey "schematic expressions of the magnitude" (Langacker 1991: 84) and present Existents realized by head nouns pre-modified by indefinite quantifiers such as *many*, *little*, (*a*) *few*, (*a*) *little* that provide an approximate indication as to the quantity of the entities involved. On this account, the exact value of the quantity is not expressed by

a specific number on a scale but placed instead "within a vaguely-delimited range" (Langacker 1991: 84) and conceptualized by reference to an implicit norm. The quantity of the *reports* profiled by *many* in (21), for example, is conceptualized as being above the implicit reference norm and can be translated into a value higher than the expected quantity of the *reports* at issue. Conversely, the quantity profiled by *a few* implies a zero baseline with respect to which the quantity value of the *studies on the difference of* …is situated a little higher. By the same token, the Existent in (22) profiles a "quantity" of evidence that falls below expectation. In both examples, *many*, *a few* and *little* contrast the asserted quantity with an expected quantity. Therefore, the semantic indeterminacy characterising "schematic" existentials is overridden by resorting to the common ground shared by the whole scientific community to which the two "interlocutors" belong and thanks to which they share a similar expectancy line and "arrive at roughly similar conceptions of the objective content" (Langacker 2008: 466). It is, in fact, the knowledge repertoire of discourse participants, whether construed locally or at a global level, that determines the reference point for the successful interpretation of quantifiers.

As a result, "schematic" existentials are used as evaluative tools since authors not only provide quantificational information, but also convey a kind of assessment according to the expectancy parameter whose value is discourse-and discipline-bound.

3.5 Relative expression of magnitude

All the examples analysed so far provide a measure of the intrinsic magnitude of the mass in question to a varying degree of ex/implicitness. The magnitude is determined either by reference to a quantized scale or a tacit norm.

By way of contrast, there are instances of existential constructions that "make a quantitative assessment relative to a reference mass" (Langacker 1991: 83), which may be openly stated or contextually determined. These are existential constructions which include forms of comparison:

(23) In addition, there were *more* patients with cirrhosis among the genotype 3-infected group.

(24) There were *more* patients with high-grade tumours in the elderly group *as compared with* the non-elderly group.

(25) Difficulties were compounded by inadequate backfill and study staff attrition. There were *fewer* participants completing the maximum four sessions among the second half of participants recruited, and this was more pronounced in the MI group, suggesting that staff attrition may have impacted on the dose received by participants.

In (23) the relative quantifier *more* involves a comparative relationship with the reference mass *genotype 3-infected group*. Here the magnitude of the patients with cirrhosis is determined as a proportion of the reference mass represented by the *genotype 3-infected group*. The predicated mass (*patients with cirrhosis*) has a magnitude smaller than the mass represented by the whole *genotype 3-infected group* but greater than the mass of patients without cirrhosis belonging to the same group. This type of existential clause serves an indexical function since reference to the ground is fundamental for the identification of its meaning. While in (23) the size of the instance is obtained by comparing two masses belonging to the same search domain, the measure of the instance profiled by the existential in (24) is obtainable by explicitly (*more…as compared with*) comparing two values referring to two different search domains (*elderly* vs. *non-elderly group*). Interestingly, the true quantificational measure of the instance conveyed by *fewer* in example (25) is obtained by correlating three hierarchical orders of magnitude expressed, respectively, through the masses *the second half of participants recruited, participants completing the maximum four sessions*, *MI group*, all of them search domains.

There are other existential constructions which enumerate and quantify the instances of a more general category mentioned in the discourse:

(26) Regarding *complications*, in 7 procedures (3.7%) the plasma filter was replaced due to increased transmembrane pressure, and in 2 procedures (1%) the filter clotted and the procedure was restarted. There were 5 (2.6%) cases of *hypotension* and one case of *severe gastrointestinal bleeding after PE with heparin anticoagulation*. During 139 PEs with citrate anticoagulation, there were 5 episodes (3.6%) of *significant hypocalcemia* during PE.

Here the existent noun groups *cases of hypotention/severe gastrointenstinal bleeding/significant hypocalcemia* evoke a contextually specified "type", namely *complications*, of which they enumerate the instances in relation to a quantitative scale. They are tokens of a superordinate "type" mentioned

in the preceding discourse. The word *complications* creates an expectancy in the readers about the types of complications involved. The existential clause enumerates a number of instances "as a response to an (implied) request for entities of a certain type" (Abbott 1993: 43).

4. Existential tokens of evidence

The analysis conducted so far aimed at describing existential constructions and their discourse-semantic implications. The epistemological assumption underlying their widespread use in EBM texts is that they construe and convey information from a quantitative angle. On the strength of their quantificational import, existential construals, as they present themselves throughout EBM papers, can also bring inherently argumentative intentions to the surface because they can be used strategically to justify choices made by physicians and underpin the validity of the claims made by the authors of a clinical study. Indeed, the texts analysed here reveal a type of argumentation informed by some ideal model of critical discussion which, when examined at close quarters, may disclose traits and strategies typically used to defend a position or hypothesis. The examples selected in this section are intended to show how existentials may be exploited to build an evidentiary argument which runs through and frames the fundamental moments characterising the organizational structure of an EBM paper.

According to the pragma-dialectical theory developed by van Eemeren and Grootendorst (1992, 2004), argumentation is defined as "a verbal, social, and rational activity aimed at convincing a reasonable critic of the acceptability of a standpoint by putting forward a constellation of propositions justifying or refuting what is expressed in the standpoint" (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 2004: 1). Despite the apparent monological nature of the medical texts examined here, it is possible to detect a kind of cryptic discussion in progress, between those who, data in hand, endeavour to support a claim and those who, as interlocutors, as implicit potential antagonists, are called upon to accept the writer's argument:

> The pragma-dialectical argumentation theory assumes that, in principle, argumentative language use is always part of an exchange of views between two parties that do not hold the same opinion, even when the exchange of views takes place by way of a monologue. The monologue is then taken to be a specific kind of critical discussion

> where the protagonist is speaking (or writing) and the role of the antagonist remains implicit (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 2004: 59).

In medical research papers it is not so much a matter of accepting and defending a point of view as that of providing convincing answers to specific questions about the biomedical or behavioural interventions from which clinical studies depart and which are normally embodied in the authors' premises. These can assume the status of evidence if they obtain the recognition and consensus of that invisible, amorphous mega-interlocutor known as the scientific community at large. Since acceptability rests upon data of a quantitative kind, and given the quantificational import of existentials discussed above, the word *there* acts as a discursive argumentative signal, marking some stages of the evidence-building process.

The response to a clinical question posed by medical investigators makes use of an argumentative process which goes through the four main stages of a critical discussion, "argumentation at a distance" in the case of a published article: the "confrontation", "opening", "argumentation" and "concluding" stages (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 2004).

The terms of the discussion are established during the "confrontation" stage where the authors address the present state of knowledge and know-how regarding a particular aspect of research in their field and seek solutions to the issue at hand. By comparing the latest literature and the state-of-the-art information actually available, the authors prepare the terrain for a reasoned, documented discussion of their claim. In (27), even though the experience of the scientific community is that *mesothelioma* recurs even after successful *first-line therapy* also because there are, to date, no second-level therapies available, the arguer, the authors of the study, intends to demonstrate the potential benefits of a chemotherapeutic drug called *nivolumab*:

(27) Unfortunately, even following successful first-line therapy, all patients with mesothelioma will subsequently relapse. There is currently no standard second-line therapy […]. The outcome of this trial will provide evidence of the potential benefit of the use of nivolumab in the treatment of relapsed mesothelioma.

As we can see, the discussion is launched by a given, though numerically unquantifiable datum, introduced by the quantifier *all,* which in this context and by way of contrast summons up its polar opposite the zero quantity "none". If all the patients who successfully followed first-line therapy have

suffered a relapse, then the logical conclusion is that none are cured. The existential clause emphasises here both quantity and the urgency of finding a clinical solution. By suggesting that the quantitative vacuum conjured up by *all* and *no* may be filled, the arguer foregrounds the intervention gap that will be exploited to construe proof of the potential benefits of treatment based on *nivolumab*. The argument enters then its "opening" stage where the authors signal their intention to advance the progress of medical science in some way by providing solid, factual evidence supporting their achievement.

In (28) below, the "confrontational" stage is expressed by the existential clause which draws the reader's attention to a quantitative datum regarding existing studies, *a few*, which are, as things stand, in need of further specific systematic investigation:

(28) To date, there have been a few placebo-controlled studies using osmotic therapies in meningitis published in different settings in children and adults. A systematic review and meta-analysis would help to decide if these studies have demonstrated clinical benefit either by improvement in mortality or long-term neurological disabilities from the use of these treatments. This review aimed to encompass all types of osmotic therapies to investigate whether the principle of osmotic pressure change in the CNS is of benefit in people with meningitis […].

The need for further systematic study is the node which, in this case, like (27), leads into the "opening" stage which makes the aim of the authors' study perfectly clear: to conduct a systematic review aimed to encompass all types of osmotic therapies.

Following these two stages the discussion in medical papers typically enters the "argumentation" stage *strictu sensu* which begins when the authors start building up their evidence by presenting a series of informative data collected both at the baseline and at the end of the study. To achieve its argumentative purpose, the text has to mention all the fundamental data relating to the population examined, those comparing the arms of a clinical trial, and, finally, those regarding the final results obtained. In short, the argument will follow the PICO model (an acronym which stands for Patients (or Problems) / Intervention / Comparator / Outcome) used by medical researchers to help formulate clinical questions. It is here that the argumentative function of existentials more openly reveals itself, when describing, for example, the characteristics of sample groups:

(29) The majority of patients (n = 389; 89.5%) had pleural mesothelioma; there were 53 cases that were classified as non-pleural mesothelioma.

(30) There were 573 eligible practices (73%) that agreed to participate and there were 195 912 men eligible for the intervention group and 219 445 men eligible for the control group. Among these 415 357 randomized men (mean [SD] age, 59.0 [5.6] years), there were 189 386 in the intervention group and 219 439 in the control group after exclusions who were included in the analysis (n = 408 825; 98%).

To be credibly argued the answer to the clinical question underlying a research study will have to convey similarities and differences between the groups enrolled in the study:

(31) There was no clear evidence of a difference between the two groups for thrombocytopaenia (OR 1.05; 95% CI 0.64 to 1.74; P = 0.85).

(32) There were 184 deaths in the combination group and 262 in the ADT-alone group. There was strong evidence of a survival advantage in the combination group, with a 3-year survival of 83% as compared with 76% in the ADT-alone group (hazard ratio for death, 0.63; 95% confidence interval [CI], 0.52 to 0.76; P < 0.001) (Fig. 1A). There was no evidence of nonproportional hazards (P = 0.31) or of heterogeneity of the treatment effect according to metastatic status at randomization.

Existentials typically occur in the presentation of the results to prove that the outcome(s) envisaged at the beginning of the study has (have) been achieved. The information provided will refer both to the data collected at the end of the study and to those collected during or after follow-up:

(33) Among practices randomized to a single PSA screening intervention vs standard practice without screening, there was no significant difference in prostate cancer mortality after a median follow-up of 10 years but the detection of low-risk prostate cancer cases increased.

(34) There was no difference between groups in relation to secondary outcomes (online supplementary table S1). For the overall cohort, there were three cases of early-onset pre-eclampsia < 34 weeks (0.55%), n = 22 (4.03%) any pre-eclampsia, n = 57 (10.44%) SGA infants and 15.02% (n = 82) placental disease. Secondary outcomes for groups 3A (screen-positive aspirin) and 3B (screen-negative no

aspirin) are demonstrated in online supplementary table S2. Despite taking aspirin, there remained a greater number with pre-eclampsia at < 37 weeks in the screen-positive versus the screen-negative group, although numbers were small (n = 2 (15.4%) vs n = 2 (1.2%)).

Crucially, all the data provided are functional to corroborating the initial claim. Each single datum provided during the "argumentation" stage represents a token of evidence bearing witness to the achievement of the goal established at the beginning of the project and leading, hopefully, to acknowledgment of the outcome as evidence recognized by the scientific community.

The following excerpts, instead, exemplify the concluding stage where the author asserts the overall success of the research carried out though it may still be in need of further investigation:

(35) There is growing evidence supporting that early brain injury in aSAH may be related to significant morbidity and mortality. This needs to be explored further.

(36) The authors suggested that there was potential to reduce the intensity of treatment based on successful surgical control of disease in good prognosis HPV-positive patients. However, further validation through RCTs, like PATHOS, is needed prior to widespread shifts in practice.

Here the authors re-assert their initial position, while conveying the final outcome of their research. At the same time, they set the scene for fresh discussions (*explored further*, *further validation*), also suggesting the context in which the new argument might take place.

The constellation of existentials which occur at each discourse phase suggests that the notion of argumentative style, as "a particular way in which an argumentative discourse is conducted to be helpful in achieving the difference of opinion at issue aimed for by the arguer", is particularly pertinent in this context.

5. Conclusion

EBM has been viewed by some scholars (Marks 1997; Porter 1995) as a continuous effort to render medicine as scientifically meaningful as possible

through quantification. Therefore, thanks to their semantics, existentials form a privileged environment in which to investigate medical discourse from a quantitative angle, especially because quantification represents one of the techniques of objectification characteristic of scientific writing. On this account, they are employed extensively in the medical texts analysed here because they activate a type-instantiation mechanism from a quantitative perspective which EBM writers can employ to describe the fundamental steps of their observational and experimental studies.

Far from functioning as a locational deictic, existential *there* acts as a strategic discourse signal pointing at entities designated by the Existent, inducing the expectation that a new entity profiled for its quantity be introduced into the discourse. Although quantification is crucial to the semantics of existentials, these clauses also serve other functions at a discourse level. They not only trigger the awareness of the readership as the discourse unfolds, by opening "windows of attention" whose content is quantitative, but also convey evaluative meanings in terms of either relevance or expectation.

Existential clauses can underpin some of the subtle argumentative strategies employed by scholars seeking to construct and disseminate information that will enhance the medical community's knowledge, mainly because they are employed to introduce new and relevant quantitative information into the discourse. They also signpost a set of strategic manoeuvres "instrumental to realizing the arguer's strategic scenario" (van Eemeren 2019: 163) by "legitimizing the transfer of acceptance" (van Eemeren 2019: 156) from the data, reported gradually, to the final outcome of clinical studies.

This study makes a contribution to the diffusion of specialist knowledge regarding the use of English. The combined theoretical framework applied here may pave the way for further research on the diffusion of specialist knowledge in English undertaken from a cross-disciplinary angle and aimed at comparing the frequency and role of existential clauses in medicine and other scientific domains of scientific discourse particularly concerned with the notion of evidence.

Furthermore, the linguistic analysis carried out here may prove useful to medical students and professionals when seeking to textualize their clinical findings and contribute effectively to the dissemination of the findings of medical research and the ultimate improvement of healthcare intervention.

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Clinton's hearing reaches headlines: The mediatisation of the Benghazi hearing in two leading U.S. newspapers

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ABSTRACT

This article presents preliminary findings of a research project aimed at investigating textual outcomes in the press of Hillary Clinton's first congressional hearing on the Benghazi attacks on September 23rd, 2013. The analysis focuses on the way in which journalists of two main U.S. newspapers use congressional hearing material, and centres specifically on the strategies that are deployed to incorporate the hearing either to endorse/criticise Clinton's version of the events, or to present a more neutral stance, as may be expected of high-reputation newspapers. The analytical model that has been employed relies on the model Catenaccio (2008) developed drawing on van Dijk and Bell to analyse the presence of corporate press releases in the media and has been applied to the genre of congressional hearing. Findings confirmed that, in terms of input source usage, specific processes and strategies are similarly employed by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* and are aimed at avoiding explicit endorsement of Clinton's point of view.

Keywords: congressional hearings, news articles, qualitative analysis, news production process.

1. Introduction

Congressional hearings have a long history in US political discourse. They have been broadcast over the past 50 years[1], and most Americans have

[1] The Legislative Reorganization Act of 1970 permitted, for the first time, radio and television broadcast of House committee and subcommittee hearings (GPO 2003:43).

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watched at least one televised committee hearing. It seems quite evident that, alongside their formal role as records of committee activity, hearings serve other communicative purposes. Witnesses, who play a crucial role, may use their testimony to set out the motivations of their choices and justify their conduct. This is mostly the case with investigative hearings, which for their very nature have attracted the audience's attention and media coverage for a long time. To quote just one example, back in 1862[2] *The New York Tribune* reported President Lincoln giving testimony before the House Judiciary Committee about the premature publication of a portion of his last annual message in the *Herald*.

Originally addressed to a more restricted audience, nowadays hearings are widely reported on the front pages of the national press and increasingly accessed in their digital version. They provide both witnesses and committee members with high profile moments where they can use their argumentation skills to set out their ideology, thus giving them the opportunity to engage with an increasingly wide and varied audience.

Hearings occur in a very specific setting – almost all of the hearings are held at Capitol Hill – and they undergo a unique process of production and distribution. They can be broadly classified into four types, legislative, oversight, confirmation and investigative, although all hearings share common elements of preparation and conduct. Official hearings, which are published by the Government Printing Office and can be easily retrieved online, are made up of elements such as written and oral witness statements, transcripts of verbal question-and-answer sessions between committee members and witnesses, reports, exhibits and materials submitted for the record by witnesses, as well as correspondence and other materials submitted by interested parties. House and Senate Rules (Sachs 2004; Carr 2006) require a witness to file in advance a written copy of their testimony with the committee, who may want to summarise or outline the testimony, draft questions tailored to each witness's statement or photocopy the statement for distribution to the press. In following the traditional format, a witness summarises his or her written statement and addresses questions from committee members. As the analysis will reveal, the witness's opening statement is used extensively by the press and deserves specific attention in empirical work aimed at an improved understanding of the genre of congressional hearings.

[2] https://www.senate.gov/committees/SittingPresidentsVicePresidentsWhoHave-Testified BeforeCongressional Committees.htm

Previous steps of the research project on congressional hearings carried out by the author of this paper investigated the way in which witnesses discursively construct their public identity through their testimony (Giglioni 2017; 2019). However, the extent to which these textual and discursive constructions are adopted, wholly or partially, by the press (Bell 1991; van Dijk 1988) is also of crucial importance. This paper analyses and discusses textual outcomes in the media of Hillary Clinton's first congressional hearing on the 2012 Benghazi attacks. On January 23rd, 2013 Hillary Clinton testified in front of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the U.S. Senate and, later in the day, she appeared in front of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. This second hearing resulted in a longer document, although Clinton's opening statement is essentially a duplication of the opening statement she read out during the Senate hearing. It needs to be noted here that both in *The New York Times* and in *The Washington Post* the House hearing is not used as an input source except in one, not significant, case[3]. The analysis will focus on the way in which journalists use parts of the congressional hearing and will pivot specifically on the strategies which are deployed to incorporate the hearing, either privileging Clinton's version of the events or not.

2. Theoretical framework

Jacobs et al. (2008: 1) argue that, "as cultural brokers disseminating world knowledge, the stories journalists tell are ideologically significant. This observation is old news, but ever so timely, especially given today's mediascape of convergence, innovation, competition, and globalization". Journalists are social actors (Peterson 2003) and generally convey a point of view targeting an ideal audience that will/will not be comfortable with the construed ideological position (Fowler 1991: 232). At the same time, newspapers assert the "objectivity" of their discourse and maintain that their texts are "factual", "impartial", "balanced" and free of any of the author's own opinions and perspectives (White 2009), in other words journalists are presented as "disinterested transmitter[s] of the news" (Hanitzsch 2007: 372). Whilst a balanced engagement with alternative voices and positions was, in principle, a default procedure and a practice of professional ethics for quality newspapers (Richardson 2007: 44; Skovsgaard et al. 2013), nowadays journalist discourse often seems to be openly value-laden.

[3] In The Washington Post article, only four lines were taken from the question-and-answer session.

As media practice involves journalists as social actors who make interpretative decisions (Couldry 2004), the textual outcomes of these decisions – news articles – deserve to be studied to better understand the actors' real intentions. According to van Hout and Jacobs (2008: 68), "journalists are interpretative agents who construct authoritative news accounts out of a multitude of news sources". Journalists "create public identities for both social groups and individuals through subtle discursive practices" (Fairclough 2003: 213). The model used for the present study, therefore, highlights the news providers' agency – the journalists' active role in the news production process.

Among these discursive practices, the way reporting and reported voices alternate deserves special attention, as the resulting multi-voice narrative (Harry 2014: 1042) is typical of news articles. *Verbatim* quotations in news discourse amplify, mimic or de-contextualise the speech of others, whilst indirect quotations can echo, paraphrase or "depict" this speech (Clark – Gerrig 1990). In the hearing under investigation, the reporting and reported voices conflate in ways that allow the former to be "disguised" as the latter (Bednarek 2006: 651). Direct quotations represent Clinton in her own voice, and by bringing the reader face to face with her actual words, journalists obtain a dramatic effect (Gray 2018: 202) that easily captures the reader's attention. At the same time, through indirect quotations consisting of a "paraphrasing and summary of an original quote by means of synonyms, re-phrasing and re-wording" (Harry 2014: 1050), Clinton's words are syntactically incorporated into the journalists' reporting voice, which is constructed to appear as a relatively accurate representation of what the source originally meant.

As argued by Thompson (1996: 514) and Wortham – Locher (1996), such an interweaving of reporting and reported voices produces a sort of linguistic ventriloquism, since quoted speech used by journalists is "the most explicit form of inclusion of other-discourse" (Calsamiglia – López Ferrero 2003: 147). Calsamiglia and López Ferrero's research focuses on direct and indirect quotation and highlights that when direct citations are used, there is a fracture between the syntax of other-discourse and the writer's discourse. This kind of fracture affects tense, space and time adverbs and person-reference words, as a result of the two different types of enunciation being juxtaposed and signalled by graphic markers such as colons and quotation marks. On the other hand, there is only one discourse with a single deictic centre when using indirect citations, with subordinate clauses introduced by conjunctions, and the correspondent agreement of tenses (Calsamiglia – López Ferrero 2003: 155).

The following paragraphs will discuss the way in which the congressional hearing's material is embedded in two news articles. This view somehow echoes the Goffmanian concept of "embedding", the incorporation of one speech event into another (Goffman 1981), – which is pivotal in the investigation carried out. As observed by Bell, in print media most of the reported news actually "consists of previously composed text reworked into text news" (Bell 1991: 41).

The analysis, which is qualitative in nature, focuses on news articles, the traditional object for media discourse analysis. At the same time, the study broadens the investigation to include the actual process (Cotter 2010), the manufacture of news products. News production is here considered as a form of reproductive writing (Jakobs 2003) involving the transformation of sources, thus highlighting the intertextuality of news text and the way in which news texts are linked to sources (van Hout – Jacobs 2008: 67). It is against this background that the textual practices underlying the transformation of the Clinton hearing from a congressional document to news reports are investigated in this study.

3. Data

The texts considered for the pilot study consist of the congressional hearing Clinton gave in front of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee[4] and two news articles, which were published the following day in two of the most important US newspapers in terms of circulation, reputation and tradition: *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. The first one has a worldwide influence and readership[5], it has won more Pulitzer Prizes than any other newspaper[6] and is ranked 3rd in the US in circulation[7]. *The Washington Post* is regarded as one of the leading daily American newspapers[8] and is well known to the general public for its accuracy in delivering news in a timely and efficient manner.

The two articles have been selected also in consideration of the fact that they are of a similar length (1180 and 1167 words respectively) and do

4 Clinton's hearing was retrieved from the US Government Publishing Office (GPO)'s website.
5 https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-New-York-Times.
6 https:// www.nytco.com/company/prizes-awards, accessed June 2019.
7 https://www.cision.com/us/2019/01/top-ten-us-daily-newspapers/, accessed June 2019.
8 https://www.politico.com/media/story/2015/08/is-the-washington-post-closing-in-on-the-times-004045, accessed June 2019.

not belong to the category of editorials, where explicit value-laden opinions are openly presented to readers. In fact, editorials' typical argumentative structure caters to a declared purpose of setting forth opinions rather than reporting facts and will "induce the reader to construct a preferred model of the event being discussed" (Degano – Garzone 2008: 25). The rationale underlying the choice of news articles in this study is that bias is expected to be less openly expressed in this type of article, and therefore the way the congressional material is used by the press may somehow reveal journalists' opinions.

In addition, an expert informant who was consulted during the research – an analyst on Congress and the legislative process – suggested the choice of the two leading US newspapers and underlined that:

> Most hearings in the US Congress are at least partially advocacy events. In other words, the committee is having the hearing in whole or in part because they want to demonstrate a particular viewpoint to colleagues, the media, and the public. As such, the Chair is often careful to select witnesses whose testimony will illustrate whatever viewpoint the committee wishes to convey. The ranking minority party Member, who has a limited right to select witnesses at hearings, does the same thing. Because of that, it is in the interest of the Chair and his or her staff to publicize the hearing and to distribute the testimony to media representatives covering the event. When planning a hearing, among the many factors congressional staff often consider is, "what will be the headline in *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post* the morning after we hold this hearing?" (Christopher M. Davis – Analyst of Congress – Personal communication, 4th Aug. 2019)

4. Research questions and methodology

Input sources (van Dijk 1988:126; Bell 1991: 57) play a major role in the actual production of news and, not surprisingly, congressional hearings seem to be no exception. This crucial role becomes even more so when deadlines are tight (Wodak 2009: 19) and news needs to be produced quickly. White House congressional correspondents, who typically sit through hour-long hearings and try to attract and maintain the attention of their readers, make an extensive use of the congressional document as an input source, as this analysis will show.

The study takes into consideration van Dijk's (1988: 133) suggestion that selection, deletion, and, to a lesser extent, summarisation are the main strategies used in news production, to which generalisation/particularisation and restyling/translation may be added (Bell 1991: 65). The news articles reporting on Clinton's congressional hearing are investigated following Catenaccio's model (2008) that draws on van Dijk and Bell to analyse the presence of corporate press releases in the media. This model considers the following strategies and processes, on the basis of textual evidence:

1. Selection Implies selecting parts of the congressional hearing and using them in news articles.
2. Reproduction Refers to incorporating parts of the hearing into the news articles with no changes.
3. Summarisation Implies information provided in the hearing can be summarised in the news articles.
4. RestylingImplies rearranging the information that was provided in the hearing.
5. Commentary Refers to extraneous evaluation expressed in the news articles towards the information that is provided in the hearing.

In line with Catenaccio's approach (2008), the model used in this paper does not include the strategy that Bell refers to as generalisation/particularisation because a cursory reading suggested that it was not deployed in the articles analysed. Moreover, what Catenaccio defines as "stance" is here indicated as "commentary", since it seemed a more appropriate term as the point of the present research is to see how far the strategies together reveal the ideological positioning and stance of the two newspapers.

The two articles from *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* have been downloaded as text files and tagged manually in order to identify strategies involved in the news production process.

The analysis followed the research questions which are summarised below:

> RQ 1. In reporting about Clinton's hearing, to what extent do the newspapers under consideration make use of the hearing's textual data?
> RQ 2. When the hearing is incorporated into the news pieces, what kind of operations are carried out on its text?
> RQ 3. Are there any significant differences between the articles selected, in the use of congressional material?

5. Analysis

5.1 The New York Times

There are specific parts of Clinton's hearing which appear to have been incorporated into the final news piece in print on January 24th, 2013 (the day after the hearing), Section A, Page 11 of the *New York Times* edition with the headline: *Facing Congress, Clinton Defends Her Actions Before and After Libya Attack*[9].

5.1.1 Selection

In terms of the 5-point investigation template, the process of selection seems to be necessary when it comes to congressional hearings. In fact, Clinton's hearing, like most hearings, lasted many hours which then resulted in a very long document (about 70 pages). Therefore, its embedding in a news article necessarily implies a major process of selection, which results in only a few lines of the document being actually used in the final news piece. Nevertheless, what seems to be significant is the fact that a relatively large number of lines of the article – corresponding to roughly 10% of the text – come from a really small part of the congressional document, the witness's opening statement. Furthermore, these lines from the opening statement are given a prominent position (in the second, fourth and most notably last paragraph of the news article), which seems to confirm the crucial role the statement plays in the event. This idea is also reinforced by the information provided by the expert informant, who explained that the opening statement is distributed by congressional committees to media representatives covering the event the very day it takes place, thus providing journalists with ready-to-use material.

The other part of the hearing that is selected and partially reproduced in the news article is the verbal question-and-answer session between committee members and the witness. In Clinton's hearing, this is the longest part of the document and counts for slightly more than 50% of the text (pages 11 to 48). The remaining parts, which are not embedded in the news article at all, are the short opening statements by two committee members (pages 1 to 6) and the written responses of the Secretary of State to questions

[9] All the examples provided in this paper have been retrieved from the online version at https://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/24/us/testifying-on-benghazi-clinton-cites-new-security-steps.html, accessed May 2019.

submitted by six senators. This is a rather long part (pages 49 to 70), which corresponds to 30% of the text and is submitted after the conclusion of the actual hearing, as it is quite common in the U.S. Congress for committees to obtain information from a witness both before and after the hearing in which the witness appears in person.

5.1.2 Reproduction

As far as the process of reproduction is concerned, data suggest that the information provided in the news article relies heavily on the input source. In fact, 60% of the news article is made up of actual words from the hearing, both in the form of direct and indirect speech. Reported speech prevails slightly over reporting speech (18 vs. 14 lines) and it is also the journalist's choice for the second paragraph, the first where Clinton's words are reproduced *verbatim*:

(1) "As I have said many times, I take responsibility, and nobody is more committed to getting this right," she said, reading a statement during a day of testimony before Senate and House committees. "I am determined to leave the State Department and our country safer, stronger and more secure."

5.1.3 Summarisation

Due to the different size of the two texts – the congressional hearing and the news article – the strategy of summarisation was expected, with different parts of the hearing being conflated into one single sentence in the resulting text. Summarization is a distinctive strategy in about 30% of the paragraphs, including the very first one. The reader can find a couple of examples of this strategy below.

(2) WASHINGTON — In one of her final appearances as secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton on Wednesday vigorously defended her handling of last September's attack on the United States diplomatic compound in Benghazi, Libya, which killed four Americans and prompted a scathing review of State Department procedures.

(3) But Mrs. Clinton, whose appearance before Congress had been postponed since December because of illness, quickly departed form the script. She jousted with Republican lawmakers over who deserved blame for the security problems at the compound, and choked up as

she described being at Joint Base Andrews outside Washington when the bodies of the American killed in the assault arrived from Libya.

Example (3) summarises the opening lines of the congressional document – the Chair opens the hearing expressing his relief in seeing Secretary Clinton healthy and ready to testify before she leaves office – and also the question-and-answer session[10] and some lines from the witness's opening statement, where Clinton underlines that for her "this is not just a matter of policy. It is personal. I stood next to President Obama as the Marines carried those flag-draped caskets off the plane at Andrews. I put my arms around the mothers and fathers, the sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters, and the wives left alone to raise their children" (Senate Congressional Hearing No. 113-184, 23 Jan. 2013: 9).

5.1.4 Restyling

The fourth process at work is restyling, and it consists in reporting the information provided during the hearing in a different order. The clearest example of this process can be found in the penultimate paragraph of the news article, where Clinton's words from her opening statement, which occupies the initial pages of the congressional document, close the article, the very last line being a single-line quotation from the question-and-answer session.

(4) "Benghazi didn't happen in a vacuum," she said. "The Arab revolutions have scrambled power dynamics and shattered security forces across the region. And instability in Mali has created an expanding safe haven for terrorists who look to extend their influence and plot further attacks of the kind we saw just last week in Algeria".
"We are in for a struggle, but it is a necessary struggle," she said. "We cannot permit northern Mali to become a safe haven".

This is in sharp contrast with the congressional document where the opening statement occupies the initial pages. The resulting dramatic effect of using the politician's own words in such a prominent position is evident, and its force is intentionally exploited, as is also the case in *The Washington Post*. It is worth quoting Mazzoleni (2015: 379) who, among the five distinctive traits of the mediatisation process, includes the spectacularisation of the event, that

[10] "[Clinton] jousted with Republican lawmakers […]".

is the effort made by journalists to portray characters' voice, appearance, and personality in order to give audiences the impression that they can directly observe the characters' feelings through the lens of the omniscient journalist. The few lines of indirect speech that come immediately before (4) introduce what is going to follow, but have a milder impact: "Mrs. Clinton sought to put the events in Benghazi in a regional context, noting the presence of a group of northern Mali affiliated with Al Qaeda".

As previous research has shown (Giglioni 2017), Clinton's opening statement is extremely sophisticated from a communicative and rhetorical point of view, and it is conceived to attract the audience's attention and convey Clinton's standpoint. This is a common trait in witnesses' opening statements (Giglioni 2019), also in consideration of the fact that they are written texts that are carefully crafted and were previously submitted to the committee. Therefore, the reversed order of the hearing's parts in the news piece seems to have yet another purpose: it shifts the attention back to the main character, the witness, whose voice had been mixed with committee members' voices in the preceding paragraphs.

5.1.5 Commentary

The New York Times's massive use of reproduction processes can be considered to be significant in evaluating the newspaper's stance towards the information that is provided in the congressional hearing. In epistemic terms, Clinton's and the committee members' words openly represent their points of view and, accordingly, they are attributed either when quoting *verbatim* or through indirect speech. Commentary can therefore be located only in the remaining (small) part of the text, as in the example provided below:

(5) The continuing controversy over the attack, which resulted in the deaths of Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and three other Americans, has cast a cloud over Mrs. Clinton's final months at the State Department. It also has enormous political implications for Mrs. Clinton, the former New York senator who is already regarded as the front-runner for the 2016 Democratic presidential nomination if she chooses to run. It was the first time she had faced extensive questioning about her role in the episode.

The commentary parts generally maintain a neutral tone and are sometimes compounded with direct and indirect speech, as (6) exemplifies:

(6) One of the sharpest exchanges of the day came when Mrs. Clinton responded to questions from Senator Ron Johnson, a Wisconsin Republican, by saying there was too much focus on how the Benghazi attack had been characterized in its early hours and not enough on how to prevent a recurrence. Republicans have repeatedly charged that Obama administration officials deliberately played down the attack, focusing much of their criticism on Susan E. Rice, the ambassador to the United Nations and once Mr. Obama's choice to succeed Mrs. Clinton.

The neutral tone of this commentary is followed by an extremely vivid citation from the hearing, which is frequently quoted, as a cursory reading of other newspapers published the same day revealed:

(7) "Was it because of a protest, or was it because of guys out for a walk one night who decided they'd go kill some Americans? What difference, at this point, does it make?" Mrs. Clinton said, her voice rising. "It is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again, Senator."

The New York Times depicts a combative Hillary, who "vigorously defended" her handling of the attacks, "jousted" with Republican lawmakers over who deserved blame for the security problems in Benghazi and "face[s]" extensive questioning about her role in the episode. Her voice is mixed with the voices of her opponents, expressed both in direct and indirect speech, thereby presenting the reader with a multi-perspective picture of the situation:

(8) Mr. McCain asserted that the Obama administration's aversion to nation-building had precluded it from providing the kind of training and assistance that would have helped the fledgling Libyan government in Tripoli confront growing security threats from militants. "We did not give them the kind of assistance that would have been necessary to help dismantle these militias that still, to this day, remain a challenge to democracy in Libya," he said.

On the basis of the analysis conducted, the strategy that most reveals an evaluative treatment of the material from the hearing seems to be restyling. Through restyling, a small part of the congressional document which presents the witness's point of view is given prominence in the news article. However, *The New York Times* – notwithstanding its publicly declared

support for the Democrat party during the presidential elections both in 2008 and 2012 – seems careful in presenting the event in the most neutral way: the commentary parts are impartial, and the reproduced parts relay both Clinton's and her opponents' words. The Grey Lady, as *The New York Times* is nicknamed, has gained a national and international reputation, and its neutral stance was expected also in the case of a highly controversial topic like Clinton's handling of the Benghazi crisis.

5.2 The Washington Post

The article, *Clinton delivers forceful defence on Benghazi in congressional testimony*, was retrieved from *The Washington Post* website[11]. The *Washington Post* endorsements historically tend Democratic, as observed by one of its journalists (Pexton) in 2012. However, over the years the newspaper has also endorsed Republicans for federal, state or local elections, although it has never endorsed a Republican for presidential elections, whereas it supported Obama both in 2008 and 2012.

5.2.1 Selection

In terms of input source usage, the strategies employed by *The Washington Post* show both similarities and differences with those employed in *The New York Times*. As far as selection is concerned, *The Washington Post* often resorts to this strategy since it is necessary when a long congressional document migrates to a news article, as previously mentioned. Similarly to what was detected in the analysis of *The New York Times*, the witness's opening statement is a privileged part of the hearing when it comes to its exploitation by journalists. Notwithstanding its brevity (4 pages), it is the input source for 22% of the resulting text, while the question-and-answer session is reproduced in roughly 50% of the news article, although it represents about 50% of the input source (37 pages). Like *The New York Times* article, *The Washington Post* article presents no traces of other parts of the hearing, such as the committee members' opening statements, whereas the witness's opening statement, with its extraordinary communicative force, is foregrounded. Indeed, it occupies prominent positions and closes the news

[11] All quotations come from that document that can be found at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/clinton-to-appear-before-congress-over-benghazi-attack/2013/01/22/3f03f8ee-64ce-11e2-85f5-a8a9228e55e7_story.html.

piece with a dramatic effect, as will be discussed further in this paragraph, when focusing on the restyling process:

(9) "For me, this is not just a matter of policy. It's personal," she said, choking up. "I stood next to President Obama as the Marines carried those flag-draped caskets off the plane at Andrews. I put my arms around the mothers and fathers, the sisters and brothers, the sons and daughters, and the wives left alone to raise their children."

5.2.2 Reproduction

The news article also relies on the process of reproduction, with 16 lines of direct speech and 30 lines of indirect speech, thus reversing the proportion found in *The New York Times*. However, it confirms a trend: reproduction occupies a major part (72%) of the news article, and especially through indirect speech. Among the *verba dicendi* that introduce Clinton's indirect speech in this article, *say* is the most frequently employed (occurring 7 times) but, unlike *The New York Times*, there is also space for more connotated, performative verbs (*reiterate*, *demand*, *reject*, *pledge*, *praise*), whereas they occur only once (*acknowledge*) in *The New York Times*.

(10) She reiterated that she takes responsibility for what an independent investigation called security lapses and systemic failures within the State Department. But she rejected all suggestions by Republicans that there had been a cover-up in the aftermath of the assault on the temporary post and a nearby annex used by the CIA. She also said she never saw requests by Stevens and others for more security.

As explained before, other participants take the floor in the hearing during the question-and-answer session, and they seem to migrate into the news article: the committee members' words are reproduced, either through direct or indirect speech, in almost one fourth of the article, as in the example below. (11) also displays the phenomenon of "integrated citations" (Calsamiglia – López Ferrero 2003: 155), that is a form of indirect citation but with segments also cited literally, mainly with quotation marks, thus mixing syntactic traits of direct and indirect style, a strategy frequently used by journalists to enliven their pieces.

(11) Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) greeted Clinton politely, but switched his tone quickly, telling her, "Your answers are not satisfactory to me."

> He said that "numerous warnings" about militant activity in Libya were not addressed and that the State Department's desire for a "soft footprint" in the country "was to some degree responsible for what took place." Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) said he would have fired Clinton if he had been president, eliciting a gasp from a Clinton aide. And Rep. Dana Rohrabacher (R-Calif.) trying to pin Clinton down later in the day, observed, "Everybody has their own CYA to do here." On a lighter note, Rep. Steve Chabot (R-Ohio) drew chuckles when he wished Clinton "the best in your future endeavors — mostly."

5.2.3 Summarisation

Summarisation was also expected and, as with *The New York Times*'s attitude, it does not seem to be framed in evaluative terms. It occupies roughly 13% of the news article – thus revealing a difference with *The New York Times* (30%) – and it is also found in the three-paragraph opening part of the article, where it is interwoven with commentary:

(12) In what probably was her final major public appearance as secretary of state, Hillary Rodham Clinton spent Wednesday delivering a forceful defense of the Obama administration's response to the killings of four Americans in Libya last year and praising the commitment of the United States' diplomats.

Clinton, who returned to work this month after suffering a concussion and blood clot in early December, spent six hours testifying and answering questions. She started at 9 a.m. before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and ended after 5 p.m. with the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

Her long-awaited testimony provided little in the way of new information about the attack in Benghazi. But confronting her critics and delivering a spirited defense of the administration's response was essential to the effort to put the tragedy behind her as she leaves a job for which she has received wide praise and contemplates a possible presidential run in 2016.

The tone sounds neutral, even when the journalist writes that "[Clinton's] long-awaited testimony provided little in the way of new information", somehow echoing *The New York Times*'s lines: "The testimony did little to clarify the role of the White House". The newspaper's commentary is generally neutral throughout the article, and this neutrality is further reinforced by the presence of various committee members' voices.

5.2.4 Restyling

The last process to be discussed is restyling, and it is particularly clear in (but not limited to) two cases. The first one is the witness opening statement, which is at the beginning of the congressional document, but actually appears at the very end of the news article. The second case regards the frequently quoted citation taken from the central question-and-answer session in the hearing which has been already referred to above. In the article it occupies an initial position (the third paragraph), employing both indirect and direct speech:

(13) At times, the usually composed Clinton was emotional, choking up as she described meeting the caskets of U.S. Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens and the three other Americans who were killed in the assault on a diplomatic outpost on Sept. 11. Occasionally her patience wore thin. After one Republican pressed her on the administration's shifting explanations for the attack — which it initially described as the result of a protest — she pounded the table. "What difference, at this point, does it make?" Clinton demanded. "It is our job to figure out what happened and do everything we can to prevent it from ever happening again."

The process of restyling places under the spotlight some parts of the hearing which originally occupied a more neutral position in the congressional document, especially as only a few lines have been selected from an event that lasted many hours and resulted in a 70-page document. In the article, these lines seem to share a common function, that is to portray the witness's character and personality, a picture that is much more vivid when placed in a prominent position and stems from the character's actual words.

7. Conclusions

Although Clinton's hearing was among the most keenly anticipated and mediatised appearances in Washington history, we should consider that "all contemporary politics are mediated to some extent" (Moffitt 2016: 94). We seem to be far away from the "end of mediatization due to the direct relationship now practicable between politicians and citizens, i.e. disintermediation" (Mazzoleni 2015). However, we could talk about a new form of extended mediatisation that includes old media and the

Internet. In this new, mixed scenario, the press still has a "watchdog" role from which it derives its professional legitimacy and democratic function (Skovsgaard et al. 2013: 23-29). The apparent general lack of ideological colouring found in the two leading US newspapers can therefore be better understood in this perspective.

In fact, on the basis of the discussion carried out in the paper, it seems possible to conclude that the journalists of the two newspapers under investigation are particularly wary of endorsing Clinton's point of view by reproducing her discursive practices in their articles. Even while (considerably) relying on the information provided in her opening statement, they balance this information either by mixing it with alternative voices, such as those of the committee members, or by relying on restyling, a strategy which enables the newspaper to present its reading of the events while ostensibly maintaining an objective appearance.

In terms of input source usage, the processes and strategies employed by *The New York Times* show substantial similarities with those used in *The Washington Post*. It may be worth stressing here that both newspapers are published on a daily basis, and therefore they are generally less focused on commentary than weekly publications that refer to facts that have been disclosed several days before the publication, and have therefore already been extensively reported by a variety of media (Catenaccio 2008: 120). This may partially explain why commentary is relatively limited with an average presence of about 15% and the input source is extensively used in both news articles, as the processes of reproduction and restyling highlight, thus demonstrating a manifest intertextuality (Fairclough 1992: 117-119). As underlined throughout the discussion, the process referred to as reproduction is widely based on quotations, whose reproduction is not combined with evaluative comments to support different lines of arguments – a phenomenon that has been frequently pointed out in the literature (especially Bakhtin 1981: 340). At the same time, both articles show evidence of substantial selection and some degree of summarisation that can be better understood if we consider that information is transferred from a long congressional hearing to (much shorter) news pieces.

Although the hearing is extensively relied on (roughly 90% of the text in *The New York Times*, 85% in *The Washington Post*), and never combined with data from other sources[12], and even if the reproduction process features

[12] There is one exception confined to a single line in The New York Times where reference to Clinton's "interview with television reporters" on October 15th, 2012 is made.

comparatively often in the articles, with a relative prominence of the witness opening statement, the two newspapers can hardly be said to reproduce Clinton's versions of the events. However, the fact that the witness opening statement is overrepresented both quantitatively and qualitatively in both news pieces may suggest a different attitude. In fact, for its very nature, the witness opening statement contains a favourable self-representation of the witness (cf. Giglioni 2019). Nevertheless, in the two cases under investigation, this part of the congressional document has been manipulated by journalists to present more neutral meanings, as it is expected for high reputation newspapers. Also, the lack of explicit commentary seems to be primarily linked to the identity being construed by these prestigious papers, whose objectivity and impartiality are crucial for their reputation as trustworthy imparters of information.

This pilot study proved to be an adequate testing ground for the proposed research questions. However, further research calls for a larger-size corpus, to corroborate/contradict the findings presented here, and investigate if and to what extent the 5-point template used in this study can help to understand how and why congressional material is used by the press.

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Implicit argumentation: Media and the shaping of public opinion about Russia

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of explicit or implicit argumentation in explaining, and accounting for, the views people form about political events; events of which, necessarily, they generally have only mediated knowledge. The media do not only inform people of the events which happen, but also exercise a role in forming opinions about those events. This may occur through selection of what is printed, but also in editorial comments or indirectly through framing strategies, use of evaluative language, and so on.

The Skripal/Novichok case in 2018 offers a good opportunity to assess some of these points, since it provoked great press attention and public interest and, moreover, Britain's politicians advanced a specific theory relating to the guilt of the Russian state, and Putin's personal involvement. The paper attempts to probe how far people's opinions on the case depend on media exposure, and to explore patterns of evidentiality in the discourse of interviewees about the topic.

Keywords: argumentation, implicature, media, evidentiality, Novichok.

1. Introduction

This study of the role of media in influencing public opinion originated in fieldwork conducted in the UK following the Skripal/Novichok affair in 2018 (Larina et al. 2019; Ponton 2019). The analysis focuses on the explicit/implicit argumentation speakers deploy, in responding to questions, to support their opinions on such complex public events, of which they will only have mediated knowledge. Use is made of theories of conversational

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implicature (Wilson – Sperber 1998) and inference (Levinson 1987), as well as argumentation theory (Toulmin 1958; van Eemeren – Grootendorst 1984).

On 5 March 2018, British people were informed that a Russian ex-spy, Sergei Skripal, and his daughter Yulia had been found on a park bench in Salisbury in a confused state. Attention was immediately directed to possible Russian involvement by Metropolitan Police assistant commissioner Mark Rowley who, in a BBC interview the next day, compared the incident to the Litvinenko case (Guardian 06/03/2018). Later the same day Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, replying to a question in the House of Commons, directly accused the Kremlin of involvement (*Independent* 06/03/2018). On 11 March Prime Minister Theresa May told the House of Commons that the Skripals were poisoned by "a nerve agent of a type developed by Russia". She identified the toxin as "Novichok", and continued "there are therefore only two plausible explanations for what happened in Salisbury on the 4th of March: either this was a direct act by the Russian State against our country or the Russian government lost control of its potentially catastrophically damaging nerve agent and allowed it to get into the hands of others" (*American Rhetoric*).

The hypothesis of Russian involvement, therefore, was proclaimed by the British Prime Minister in an official context, a report to the House of Commons on the affair, and the story was afforded the media prominence granted to significant events.

At a distance of time from these events, the evidence of Moscow's involvement in the attack has appeared slight. Instead of hard facts, the rest of the year saw the eruption of a full-scale diplomatic incident, a war of words between the British and Russian governments, the mutual expulsion of diplomats on a scale not witnessed since the Cold War (Washington Post 14/03/2018). The release of CCTV photos, in September 2018, of two Russian men supposedly involved in the attacks received a good deal of coverage in British media, ensuring that the Skripal case remained newsworthy. Other highlights in the story were the men's identification as GRU agents (Guardian 28/10/2018) and their appearance on Russian television, where they claimed to be tourists wanting to visit Salisbury cathedral.

The Skripal case, therefore, was an episode which provided an opportunity to observe the discursive representation of Russia in British media and, in the summer of 2018, I conducted interviews with shoppers in Glasgow and Greenock to probe the formation of opinion about the case. In this paper, the focus is on the way some respondents use explicit or implicit argumentation to support their views.

2. The role of the press in forming opinion

As Lippmann long ago argued, the press exercises a fundamental role in determining our "cognitive map of the world" (Lippmann 1922, in McCombs – Reynolds 2002: 2; see also Cottle 2003: 4). Objectivity in the media has traditionally been seen as among the most important professional values in the sector (Schudson 1978: 9, in Hackett 1984: 229-230) and, though factors such as personal views or editorial stance may still influence the representation of events, most Western journalists still cherish the ideal of independence from the influence of powerful social actors such as corporations or governments (Berkowitz et al. 2004; Ryan 2009). Though the notion has been revised and re-evaluated within the profession (Gauthier 1993), in most Western countries journalists still subscribe to an ideology of objectivity that sees their role as that of "disinterested transmitters of the news" (Hanitzsch 2007: 372; see also Herman – Chomsky 2002: 2). However, their part in supporting hegemonic discourses has also received a good deal of attention within critical discourse studies (Fowler 1991; van Dijk 1991, 2007; Herman – Chomsky 2002; Larina et al. 2011; Ivanova 2016; Ozyumenko – Larina 2017).

There are two possible views of the role and function of the press; on the one hand, it acts as a bridge between events and the public, informing the latter of what is going on in the g/local community. On the other, as White (2000: 379) says, journalistic discourse is regarded with suspicion by critical analysts and media theorists as "value laden and ultimately ideological, as a social force typically acting to support the interests of various economic and political elites", and by the public as purveying news that is "inaccurate, commercialised, sensationalist and biased" (see also Grabe et al. 2010).

Because they select newsworthy items from among the mass of daily world events, the press set a public agenda for discourse about them. An influential and still relevant early study of news reporting was Galtung – Ruge (1965), who drew up a list of criteria involved in the process of selecting what to print. As an example, consider the BBC's coverage of Boris Johnson's claim on 16th March that Vladimir Putin was personally involved in ordering the attack. The decision to cover the story satisfied Galtung – Ruge's criteria 9-12 (1965: 68): it concerns élite nations (Britain and Russia), and élite people (Britain's Foreign Secretary and the Russian president); it is therefore personalised and finally, it is a negative story. These aspects are all reflected in BBC coverage of the story: "our quarrel is with Putin's Kremlin, and with his decision – and we think it overwhelmingly likely that it was his decision – to direct the use of a nerve agent on the streets of the UK, on the

streets of Europe, for the first time since World War II. That is why we are at odds with Russia" (*BBC News* 16/03/2018).

There are several features of this statement that merit critical inspection. Pronoun reference is vague: who are the referents of "our" and "we", for example? Possible answers include the British government, the Conservative Party, British intelligence, the foreign office, and so on. The verb *to think* does not construe the same level of certainty as *to know*, while the phrase *overwhelmingly likely* appears to leave little room for any doubt, but nevertheless stops short of construing certainty. The reference to World War II places the Novichok episode in a military frame, thus positioning Russia as an enemy state that has committed an act of war. In the current paper, these aspects are not followed up; it is simply noted that negative perceptions of Russia and its president were common in the Western press generally, in the period following the attacks.

Johnson's comments received widespread newspaper coverage (*Financial Times* 16/03/2018; *Telegraph* 16/03/2018; *Guardian* 16/03/2018). The *Telegraph* online version, for example, also embellishes Johnson's words with a striking lexical choice. It carries a picture of Johnson and Putin above the caption: "The Foreign Secretary said it was "overwhelmingly likely" that the Russian President was behind the *attempted murder*" (*Telegraph* 16/03/2018). By printing the views of a named social actor (Johnson) through a device known as attribution (Martin and White 2005: 111) typical of press discourse (Fowler 1991), the paper avoids possible accusations that they are spreading unfounded rumours about Russia or its president. Such reporting was not confined to right of centre media sources; the most prominent representative of Britain's left leaning press, the *Guardian*, has also published a series of articles that imply Russia's involvement in the affair (*Guardian* 19/04/2018, *Guardian* 03/05/2018, etc.).

These comments about the press background are included because, in mediated public space in Britain following the Novichok events, a negative picture of Russia, and especially of Vladimir Putin, was common. It was a persistent feature of comments of politicians and other influential social figures about the case, repeated across various forms of media, as in the instances just cited. On BBC television's Newsnight programme, for example, reporter Gabriel Gatehouse spoke of the government's "circumstantial evidence", referred to the Litvinenko case, and used the loaded expression "the Russians have form".

That the media have the ability to influence public opinion is not a proposition that is seriously doubted, and much research has been devoted

to the question.[1] It is not impossible that careful readers may disambiguate the nuances in meaning in Johnson's comments above, but it is more likely that what will remain are the broad contours of his accusation. As Gilbert et al. (1993: 222) say: "repeated exposure to assertions for which there is no evidence increases the likelihood that people will believe those assertions".

Thus, in questioning members of the public about the Novichok affair, I was also interested to see how far this negative picture was reflected in the opinions of consumers of news, and also how far what they suggest as "evidence" in support of their views derives directly from mediated information. One striking feature of the answers provided, in fact, was the apparent willingness of respondents to enlarge on their replies, to state their views, and then add their grounds for holding them. It was this aspect of the interaction that became a focus for subsequent analysis. The questions asked concern the identification of covert patterns of argumentation, of the reliability of one's sources of information, and of *evidentiality* (Aikhenvald 2004).[2] The perspective on evidentiality used in this paper is that described by Bednarek and Caple in their study of journalism in an Anglo context, "As its name suggests, expressions of Evidentiality give information about the bases (or "evidence") of statements and information. "Evidential" expressions answer questions such as "How do we know? What is the basis of journalists' and others' knowledge? What kind of evidence do we have for this?" (Bednarek – Caple 2012: 148-149).

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1 See Gershkoff – Kushner 2005; who explore the role of media in convincing public opinion in the US of the link between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda; other works on the same topic are Kull et al. 2003; Jamieson – Waldman 2003. The consensus appears to be that public opinion is dependent on media representations to a considerable degree, though much also depends on pre-existing patterns of thought.

2 In her book *Evidentiality* (2004), Aikhenvald distinguishes between the layman's understanding of the term and that of the linguist, pointing out that for the former, but not for the latter, it does not necessarily refer to the speaker's attitude towards the truth value of the proposition. For her, the term refers to the source of information, and she speaks of visual evidentials ("I saw it") and reported evidentials ("they told me") (Aikhenvald 2004: 3-4). She says there are some languages where there is no relation between such linguistic resources and the truth value of utterances. However, she also cites authors who maintain a different position, for example Dendale – Tasmowski (2001: 343), who claim that "in the evidential systems of many languages, the forms marking the source of information also mark the speaker's attitude towards the reliability of that information". The clearest example they provide refers to the Wintu language: "The Wintu never say it is bread. They say, 'It looks-to-me bread' or 'It feels-to-me bread' or 'I-have-heard-it-to-be bread' or 'I-infer-from-evidence-that-it-is-bread' or 'I-think-it-to-be-bread', or, vaguely and timelessly, 'according-to-my-experience-be bread'" (Lee 1959: 137, in Dendale – Tasmowski 2001: 1).

Sapir was among the first to trace the grammatical sources of knowledge about the world, according to whether something is known "by actual experience, by hearsay, by inference" (1921: 108-109, in Aikhenvald 2014: 4). If our only source of information about the Novichok affair, for example, is via a report in the media, then it is correct that the status of such "knowledge" should be de-constructed. One could say correctly, for example, that one *knows* only that one heard a certain report, but not that one possesses the kind of knowledge that derives from first-hand experience of the actual event. Unless they live in the immediate area, people will know about the episode only because of what they read in the newspaper or see on television or other media.

3. Methodology

Data were collected from several sources: among the general public in Greenock shopping centre, with community workers in Port Glasgow, and outside the Caledonian University, Glasgow, in several visits during summer 2018. Where people were happy to be interviewed, recorded personal interviews were used with fixed questions, of which the main ones were:

> What's your general opinion of Russia and Russians?
> What factors affect your opinions about Russians?
> Do you think the British government are telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?
> What do you think really happened?
> Do you think President Putin personally ordered the operation?

The answers were later transcribed, and the same questions were handed out as a questionnaire when people did not wish to speak. 25 recordings of conversations on the topic, and 40 questionnaires were collected. The audio data is much richer than the written, since people expressed themselves more freely and at greater length in this context; written answers were frequently monosyllabic or consisted even of dashes. The following discussion is therefore based on the oral data.

As well as from the notions of evidentiality already outlined, the analytical methodology derives from pragmatic theory, beginning with Grice (1989), exploring meanings that are inferred (Levinson 1987; Wilson – Sperber 1986; Wilson – Carston 2007) in a dialogic perspective (Kecskes 2014, 2016). Reference is made to notions of communicative salience (Kecskes 2014,

2016) and relevance (Sperber – Wilson 1986; Wilson 1994). Meaning is teased out through the application of a Gricean perspective, as in Shiro (1994), but applied to interactive contexts rather than continuous text. The data is analysed from the interactive or dialogic, pragmatic perspective promoted by Kecskes (2016: 27), who explains that:

> the speaker-hearer not only interprets but also reacts to the other interlocutor's utterance. The basic dialogic principle is that human beings are dialogic individuals (social individuals) who communicate in dialogic interaction not only by producing and understanding utterances but also by acting and reacting.

The analysis will include reference to Grice's cooperative maxims (for convenience, indicated by the abbreviations G1, G2, etc.). These are:

1. The maxim of quantity, where one tries to be as informative as one possibly can, and gives as much information as is needed, and no more.
2. The maxim of quality, where one tries to be truthful, and does not give information that is false or that is not supported by evidence.
3. The maxim of relation, where one tries to be relevant, and says things that are pertinent to the discussion.
4. The maxim of manner, be clear brief and orderly avoid ambiguity. (Grice 1989)

These maxims are at the heart of explorations in discourse pragmatics (Levinson 1983: 100; Wilson – Sperber 2012: 1), since they allow for the investigation of a range of non-surface meanings, and thus afford a richer picture of discursive interaction. To give a brief example, consider the following exchange:

(1) Question: Do you think the British government are telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?
Answer: I think to an extent they are I think the evidence we've got it's more likely that these two guys were possibly responsible for it in whatever way

In terms of G1, a sufficient answer could consist of the first clause alone, "I think to an extent they are", which would leave it to the questioner to follow up this qualified statement, or not. This would be more satisfactory than the

simple "Yes", since it is clear from the speaker's qualification (*to an extent*) that he does have reservations. The response thus flouts the quantity maxim, and Kecskes 2014, 2016: 33) would explain this in terms of the notion of "salience", i.e. that the speaker imagines his interlocutor to be interested in his reasons for thinking the way he does; in other words, a follow-up "*why"?* is anticipated. It is also of interest that the responder continues with the phrase "the evidence we've got". In the light of Grice's third maxim, on relation, this allows us to connect the two phrases by understanding the speaker's conversational implicature (Wilson – Sperber 1998: 2) to be that this "evidence" has affected his own "thinking", i.e. he can be understood as saying something like "this is what I think, and here are my grounds for thinking it".

In an empirical study comparing native speaker vs. second language users' interpretations of inferences, Shiro (1994: 177) speaks of inferential processes supplying "missing links" across different parts of a text. Parenthetically, it may be that this phenomenon of not only answering the question but also providing unasked-for grounds for one's opinions, a frequent occurrence in the data, is linked to the area of face. As Brown and Levinson point out, "being in the right" is socially valued, while being seen as one who has wrong opinions, or who takes their views directly from the media, is stigmatised. In their words, being "wrong, misguided or unreasonable about some issue" is "associated with disapproval" (Brown – Levinson 1978: 66). Therefore, it is possible to see what is going on in the above fragment as the responder anticipating an objection from his interlocutor, attempting to discursively construct a social image that is positively valued, i.e., that of one who is in the right. The same perspective allows us to explicate the presence of hedging (Hyland 1996, 1998), in the response, construed through various linguistic devices (*more likely, possibly, in whatever way*). The speaker has also covered himself against the possibility of losing face through being proved wrong at some future date.

Thus, connected to the question of evidentiality is the notion that such fragments of text may be seen to contain implicit argumentation – in support of the speaker's views, warding off contrary views, and so on. In a context of studies of formal argumentation, Toulmin (1958: 11-12) speaks of the necessity to provide "backing, data, facts, evidence, considerations, features" that support a particular view. The complete citation is as follows:

> Whatever the nature of the particular assertion may be – whether it is a meteorologist predicting rain for tomorrow, an injured workman alleging negligence on the part of his employer, a historian defending

> the character of the Emperor Tiberius, a doctor diagnosing measles, a businessman questioning the honesty of a client, or an art critic commending the paintings of Piero della Francesca – in each case we can challenge the assertion, and demand to have our attention drawn to the grounds (backing, data, facts, evidence, considerations, features) on which the merits of the assertion are to depend (Toulmin 1958: 11-12).

The suggestion, therefore, is that something similar may occur in many contexts of everyday interaction, at an implicit level, whenever the speaker feels prompted to justify a stated opinion. While recognising the differences between contexts of formal argumentation and informal discursive interaction, some of Toulmin's mechanisms of argumentative structure are found to be relevant for the explication of a kind of implicit argumentation. The discourse may concern epistemic propositions – the real-world situation under discussion, as in our example – or propositions of the deontic type, proposals for what should be done about it (Searle 1969: 175).

4. Data: Some analysis

4.1 Speaker One

The following is an application of this methodology to some extracts from the data, beginning with one subject's response to the question *How far do you think the British government are telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?*:

Table 1. Speaker One

1.	I think they are unless they're making it up and the CCTV evidence you know you
2.	could say that they could be actors but to be fair then they appeared on Russian TV
3	and it was quite comical really and then of course what they've done now they've
4.	tracked one of them down there and I think they even got a picture of Putin with his
5.	arm around him and so there's some truth there of course there's timelines from

6.	Salisbury train station they were seen not too far from where the victims were they
7.	said they were going to Salisbury Cathedral and there was no CCTV results of them
8.	doing so and they were back to the train station within about an hour or 30 minutes
9.	I've been to Salisbury Cathedral you spend 3 hours just walking around the place I
10.	think they are telling the truth I know there's a lot of things lately about fake news and
11.	Trump and everything you see now on YouTube so but but you got to make your own
12.	mind up what's out there and then decide I think they are telling the truth

This extract does not show a person whose mind is in the process of being made up, but someone expressing opinions they have already formed, a process which may account for an element of (self)justification, responding to implied questions such as *Why do you think this? What grounds do you have?* This is plain from the first sentence [1]:

(2) I think they are unless they're making it up [1]

Grice's second maxim says: "Be truthful" (G2). At the surface level, then, the speaker's answer is tautological. The notion of people making things up connotes the semantic field of *untruthfulness*, and it is therefore redundant of the speaker to add this comment. In the ordinary way, we do not flout Grice's Quantity maxim (G1) by adding explanatory comments of the following kind:

(3) She's a beautiful girl; that is, she's not ugly

Since Grice's relational maxim (G3) suggests that speech will be both relevant and meaningful, part of conversational interaction regards the sifting by interlocutors of a range of possible meanings, and eventually selecting one which will satisfactorily explain the other's statement. This will generally be determined according to the principle of mutual salience outlined by Kecskes, by which the hearer selects the meaning that is felt to be the "most probable out of all possible" (Kecskes 2014: 176).

I suggest that the above conundrum (why the speaker adds this apparently unnecessary clarifying remark), may be explained in terms of an

attempt to provide discursive justification for the first part of the comment. The response is viewed as part of a covert argumentative strategy, as follows:

Statement	Assumed knowledge / unstated proposition	Implicit argumentation
I think they are unless they're making it up	The British government never make things up	**Since:** There are only two possibilities; either the British government are telling the truth or they are not **And Since:** The British government never make things up **Therefore:** The British government are telling the truth

Figure 1. Speaker One, implicit argumentation

The implicit arguments are displayed using a standard model (Damer 2005; Sinnot-Armstrong – Fogelin 2010) for such "categorical syllogisms", i.e. major premise / minor premise / conclusion (Corbett 1965: 50).

The speaker's comment may be seen as an enthymeme, which Kennedy (2007: 21; see also Charteris-Black 2019: 56) explains as the drawing of a conclusion from premises which may be stated or, as here, implied. From a dialogical point of view, the addition "unless they're making it up" entertains a contrary view; to a degree the speaker opens the dialogical space to a view which he doesn't hold (White 2003). Once more, the distinction between contexts of formal and informal argumentation should be remembered. The speaker is probably not trying to engage in some kind of improvised debate here; his words may even be taken as a form of phatic communication (Zegarac – Clark 1999); nevertheless, this paper suggests that the perspective of implicit argumentation is a relevant one. There does appear to be an element of implied argumentation present in these lines, as what follows is a series of statements that appear to be backing (Toulmin 1958) for the speaker's contention. The fact that his response commences with the statement that he thinks "the British government are [telling the truth]" [line 1], and concludes in line 11 with the reiteration of the proposition, would support this interpretation.

He enumerates many items to which his term "evidence" apparently applies:

(4) The CCTV evidence [1]
They appeared on Russian TV [2]
They've tracked one of them down there [3-4]
They got a picture of Putin with his arm round him [4]
There's timelines from Salisbury station [5]
They were seen not too far from where the victims were [5-6]
They said they were going to Salisbury cathedral and there was no CCTV results of them doing so [6-7]

Moreover, the speaker's explicit reference to truth (so there's some truth there, [lines 4-5]) further confirms that these statements can be viewed as contributing to an argumentative frame, of the type where what is at stake is a descriptive version of reality (*this is/is not the way things are*).

Each of these short sentences could be broken down in a similar way to uncover their potential roles within an argumentative framework with a different focus and conclusion, for example:

(5) They got a picture of Putin with his arm round him [4].

This is another enthymeme, where the implicit argumentative structure is:

(6) Since: (implicit assumption) the government is right to say that Putin ordered the attacks

And since: Putin is shown embracing the man

Therefore: the man was involved in the attacks

Or:

(7) They were seen not too far from where the victims were [5-6]
Since: (implicit assumption) the men are guilty
And since: they had the opportunity to commit the crime
Therefore: the men are guilty

Following pragmadialectical conventions (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 2004), the inferences involved in these two fragments could be connected, as follows:

(8) 1. The British government is right, i.e. Putin is guilty
1.1a one of them features in a picture with Putin
1.1b CCCT pictures show two Russian men close to the place

The grounds for deducing, in the second statement, that the speaker's underlying assumption is that the men are guilty are as follows: if this is not the implicit assumption, why is the speaker telling us that they were seen near the scene of the crime, something that was also true of thousands of other people in the area that day? This extract is thus an instance of the question-begging logical fallacy; in other words, the conclusion is included in one of the premises (Walton 1995; Hazlett 2006). To sum up, the speaker offers a wide range of circumstances, which he represents as evidence to support the correctness of his view, that the British government are telling the truth.

4.2 Speaker Two

In the second extract, below, a speaker with a different view answers the same question:

Table 2. Speaker Two

1.	Do I think Britain are telling the truth? Highly unlikely. I think I'm very wary of you
2.	know what we're told by our government and I think that in years gone by when data
3.	has been released freedom of information we find out that most governments give out
4.	one minuted information skewed information so no I'm not overly trustworthy of my
5.	government so no

Though the expressed opinion (van Eemeren – Grootendorst 1984: 5) is different, some of the same linguistic devices and rhetorical patterns are noticeable. The opinions are hedged: "I think I'm very wary" [1], "not overly trustworthy" [4]. One rhetorical and pragmatic effect of this strategy is, by stopping short of expressing certainty, to leave a certain space for face saving in the event that her view be proved incorrect.

The speaker focuses attention on the content of the question by repeating it in a rhetorical question [1]. However, like the first speaker, she does not limit her response to the yes/no answer grammatically encouraged by the question,

but goes on to provide the grounds for her view. These grounds amount to a generalised mistrust of the government, construed in a series of sentences:

(9) Highly unlikely [1]
I'm very wary of what we're told by our government [1-2]
In years gone by when data has been released, we find out that most governments give out skewed information [3-4]
I'm not overly trustworthy of my government [4]
No I don't believe they're giving us the right information [5]

This extract too may be analysed in terms of an implicit argument that is added in support of the speaker's view:

Expressed opinion	Assumed knowledge / stated proposition	Implicit argumentation
It is highly unlikely that the government are telling the truth	The British government have made things up in the past	**Since:** The British government are telling us something **And Since:** In the past they have made things up **Therefore:** It is highly unlikely that the British government are telling the truth

Figure 2. Speaker Two, argumentation

The speaker does not simply state the second premise in this argument. Fleshing out her less than coherent discourse in lines [2-4], she appears to be saying: *in the past, when data that has been classified for many years under the Official Secrets act is finally released, governments have been found to have lied, or at least provided unreliable information*. This is the stage of argumentation Toulmin (1958) calls "backing", where support is given to the grounds for advocating the expressed opinion. To the extent that the backing is credible, the argument is convincing. However, though the speaker's remarks here may be true, there is a logical fallacy in this argument too. It would be coherent only if the speaker asserted that the government *always* provide skewed information; there is a chance that the government's communications about the Skripal episode fall into that category of government statements in which the truth is told.

To give the speaker her due, she is not attempting to provide a watertight syllogism and, as already pointed out, through hedging and other linguistic resources for construing uncertainty, she gives discursive recognition to the limitations of her position.

4.3 Speaker Three

Table 3. Speaker Three

1.	Do you think the British government are telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?
2.	No absolutely not
3.	Why not?
4.	The biggest cache of Novichok in Europe is is seven miles away from Salisbury
5.	yeah? the way that the whole investigation has been conducted is reported as having
6.	been conducted and as of them finding a shampoo bottle or whatever it was you know
7.	like a perfume bottle that some two randoms have found it's like if Russia is going to
8.	conduct an operation like that I'm sure as hell they'd be a lot more careful than just
9.	dumping it behind the bin
10.	So what do you think happened?
11.	What I think really happened is it's a failed MI5 hit that's what it looks like that's what
12.	it smelt like when I first saw it there's been nothing that's changed my mind that it's a
13.	British secret service hit that's what it looks like

In a pragmadialectic reconstruction, this complex of argumentation would appear as follows:

(10) 1. The British government are not telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury, and therefore another explanation, such as that it is a British secret service hit, is plausible
1.i.a There is a big cache of Novichok in Salisbury
1.i.b The Russian secret service would dispose of evidence more carefully

In this case, the speaker does limit his answer to the yes/no alternative suggested by the grammar of the question, leading to a follow up [3], which means that the following argumentation is of an explicit kind. Thus, the dialogue which follows [4-12] can be uncontroversially identified as the speaker's grounds for his opinion, since these have been explicitly requested [3].

There are three main arguments provided in support of this opinion:

(11) a) The biggest cache of Novichok in Europe is in nearby Salisbury [4]
b) The Russians would have been more careful than to just dump the bottle behind a bin [5-8]
c) It looks like/smells like a British secret service hit [10-12]

The first of these grounds relies heavily on the disambiguation of implicatures, since it is simply a factual statement, inviting the hearer to apply G3; the comment is intended to be construed as an answer to the question in [3], i.e. *why do you think the British government are not telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?* The hearer thus has to know that the British government's own chemical weapons programme is located at Porton Down, near Salisbury, and to construct a possible response from this knowledge, as follows: *I think it was the British government who are responsible, because Porton Down is just down the road from Salisbury*. The speaker initially stops short of making this accusation, digressing in lines [5-8] to give grounds for exculpating the Russians of involvement, but returns to it in [10-12]. The argument is therefore as follows:

Expressed opinion	Assumed knowledge / stated proposition	Implicit argumentation
The attack was a British secret service hit	Porton Down is very close to Salisbury	**Since:** The British government have a nerve gas facility at nearby Porton Down **And Since (implied premise):** The British secret service had ready access to nerve gas **Therefore:** It was a British secret service hit

Figure 3. Speaker Three, argumentation

Again, it is not hard to identify the flaw in this argumentation, which is essentially a form of argument from possibility — since something was possible, it must therefore have happened — however, what is relevant here is the extent to which the argument leans on shared context knowledge between speaker and hearer, and on the correct interpretation of conversational nuances. This is also observable in the speaker's other comments, where he argues that Russia could not have been responsible. This, too, assumes that speaker and interlocutor share knowledge concerning the details of the case. The context knowledge assumed is briefly summarised on Wikipedia as follows:

> On 30 June 2018, in Amesbury, two British nationals, Charlie Rowley and Dawn Sturgess, were admitted to Salisbury District Hospital in Wiltshire, England. Police determined that they were poisoned by a Novichok nerve agent of the same kind used in the poisoning of Sergei and Yulia Skripal in Salisbury, 8 miles (13 km) away, almost four months prior.

The couple had found a perfume bottle thrown away in a park, and sprayed themselves. From these events it was claimed that the Russians allegedly involved in the Skripal attack were also responsible for the death of Sturgess. Home Secretary Sajid Javid, for instance, accused Russia of using Britain as a "dumping ground" for poison, and in the same BBC article reporting on this statement, security correspondent Gordon Corera said that the most likely hypothesis was that "the Novichok was left over from an item discarded after the attack on the Skripals" (*BBC News* 05/07/2018).

This is the argumentative pattern in this case:

Expressed opinion	Assumed knowledge / stated proposition	Implicit argumentation
The Russians were not involved	Russian secret service personnel are highly efficient	**Since:** The Russian secret service is famously efficient **And Since:** To toss away a piece of incriminating evidence is a demonstration of incompetence **Therefore:** It could not have been the Russian secret service who were responsible

Figure 4. Speaker Three, argumentation (ii)

To the extent that the backing is believed, this is a coherent argument. What it does not do, of course, is support the speaker's main contention here, that the British secret service were responsible. To attempt to use it for that purpose would be to offer another instance of the "false alternative" logical fallacy (Damer 2005: 143). The case is not one where, if Russians were not responsible, it must have been the British; there are many other possibilities. However, in terms of providing an answer to the question "why don't you believe what the government are telling us?", this line of thinking is entirely understandable since, as we have seen, one key aspect of the British government's message about the Skripal case was that responsibility for it lay with Russia.

5. Discussion

In the case described in our study, all speakers, whose primary source is either visual or reported information, attempt to provide implicit or explicit reasons to support the truth value of opinions about the way things are. Both of these kinds of information come from media sources. This seems an inescapable feature of post-modern societies where, under pressure from globalisation, personal or collective subjectivities are distributed across remote spatio-temporal areas, in patterns that are controlled by mass media and, increasingly, by information technologies (Lyotard 1984; Kellner 1995; Arnett 2002). Our period has seen an explosion in the phenomenon of infotainment (Thussu 2007), so that it is possible to follow — indeed, it is hard to escape doing so — the development of dramatic events such as wars or natural disasters, in real time, across a variety of media (Carruthers 2000; Tumber – Palmer 2004; Esser 2009). The Skripal case is another instance of this, an episode which involves events and characters whose milieu is constituted by complex geo-political realities entirely detached from the day-to-day realities of the wo/man in the British street.

All this means that, at the very least, there has been a general broadening of perceptions, so that citizens of post-modern societies now receive information about a range of global issues. This information is constantly updated, modified, confirmed or denied; facts are presented in intertextual patterns which borrow information from other relevant stories (Fass – Main 2014). They may disappear from the public consciousness for a period, to resurface in dramatic fashion as some new facts emerge.

Questions like those in the questionnaire used in this study are typical of chat show formats that shape opinion on whatever affairs are currently

in the public domain. Thus, it is not surprising that people do have opinions about what is going on, not just in their local communities. Rather, it is surprising when they do not, as in this example from the data:

(12) Do you think the British government are telling the truth about what happened in Salisbury?
I don't know anything about it
You don't know anything about the Novichok thing you don't know anything about the Salisbury thing?
No

As mentioned above, to display ignorance about current affairs is socially stigmatised. After some further probing, this interviewee revealed that she knew something about the events, and also that she had formed an opinion about them:

(13) so what do you think really happened in Salisbury?
I'm guessing maybe they've been into a trouble or maybe got into a fight a disagreement or something or just some person just dipped it in and poisoned them but it's not particularly the Russians that's done it

The speaker's expressed opinion, then, is oriented towards an implicit accusation: *do you think the Russians were responsible for the attack?* Her response would appear to reflect the way the case had been framed in British media, and by government figures such as May and Johnson, in terms of Russian guilt/innocence.

If we return to the first speaker, it is plain that every circumstance he adduces in favour of his hypothesis comes from some form of media, from newspaper or television reports:

(14)
1. The CCTV evidence
2. They appeared on Russian TV
3. They've tracked one of them down there
4. They got a picture of Putin with his arm round him
5. There's timelines from Salisbury station
6. They were seen not too far from where the victims were
7. They said they were going to Salisbury cathedral and there was no CCTV results of them doing so

In Aikhenvald's (2004) terms, this consists partly of "visual" evidentials. The man saw, via the medium of TV, actual images of the suspects. He saw the men on Russian TV, and a photo of Putin with his arm around one of them. Reported evidentials are also present [3, 5, 6, 7]. Therefore, it is on the basis of such "evidence" that this person has reached their opinion on the case. Naturally we need to distinguish between what might count as proof in a legal context, and the more informal nature of conversational evidentiality, where what is meant is simply the grounds for holding an opinion, however sound they might be. To take a legal perspective on the speaker's "evidence" here would be to show up the weakness of the grounds. For example, some of the CCTV evidence [1] consisted of shots of the two Russians doing nothing more sinister than walking around Salisbury in broad daylight, something thousands of other people also did that day (YouTube 23/11/2018). Again, in [7], the fact that the men apparently did not go through with their design of visiting the cathedral could have many other explanations than the one insinuated. However, as said above, the context of the interactions reported in this paper was not a formal legal one, and analysis has focused on the conversational strategies, and patterns of implicit argumentation that may be observed when people are asked for their opinions on such matters.

What is also plain is the degree to which the grounds for those opinions are based on information drawn from media sources, which may or may not be reliable, but in any case will never consist of the kind of first-hand knowledge referred to above, in the discussion on evidentiality.

6. Conclusion

From the mass of mediated impressions that surround them, people construct their view of the social world. As we have seen, they use implicit patterns of argumentation to justify their assertions about epistemic or, in Halliday's (1994) terminology, *ideational* realities. It appears that the same lexical / grammatical resources for construing evidentiality that speakers use in support of opinions about the realities of their daily lives, are also used when they focus on complex geo-political issues of which they can have no first-hand knowledge. The study highlighted the way that Grice's maxims allow for the identification of covert patterns of meaning that provide support for the speakers' stated positions.

Speakers tend to resist the idea that they simply absorb views passively: all three of the interviewees represent their views as the result of independent thought about the case:

(15) Speaker One: You got to make your own mind up what's out there and then decide
Speaker Two: I'm very wary of you know what we're told by our government
Speaker Three: There's been nothing that's changed my mind

The above discussion has underlined the fact that the formation of opinions about epistemic realities depends to a considerable degree on mediated information, which is sifted by consumers and shaped into a more or less coherent picture or world view. One participant responded simply:

(16) Where do you get your opinions about Russia from?
The telly and the papers

As we saw, the first responder repeats many circumstances of the case which could only have come from media reports. On the basis of their consumption of such mediated information, many people feel able to give their views on complex public events such as the Novichok affair, representing them as their own opinions rather than as, for example, a party line, or what the government wishes them to think.

This paper has tended to represent people as able to make up their own minds, rather than as an uncritical mass subject to processes of media brainwashing. As mentioned above, the fact that, in our society, the capacity for independent thought is positively valued, and mental conformism stigmatised, may explain why some respondents feel it necessary to give answers that go beyond a simple "yes" or "no".

It is also clear that consumers respond to news on the basis of a body of already formed ideas, prejudices, ideological assumptions, political orientations and the like (Ensink et al. 1986: 15; Grimshaw 1990; Ohara – Saft 2003), which constitute a sort of interpretative lens that is likely to determine, and guide their responses to any fragment of news. It is plain that Speaker Two has an ingrained mistrust of the government, since she says as much, and this makes her resist government and media claims of Russian guilt. It is possible that Speaker Three has some ideological issue with the British government, since the opinion that the attack on the Skripals was the work of MI5 is a sort of conspiracy theory, and hence presupposes some inherent mistrust of official versions of events.

This study has not addressed the question of whether mass media manipulate populations (Chomsky 1989, 1997), though critical perceptions

of the role of the press have also been raised. Governments do much to set the agenda for public debate through their responses to events, and media play their part in opinion formation by passing government frames on to readers or viewers. The Novichok affair was framed by May as a possible attack by Russia against Britain, and this interpretation was heavily mediated in the following months. It is therefore understandable that people had pro or contro views regarding the proposition and, as we have seen, they appear to recognise the necessary role of argumentation in forming and defending their opinions.

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Metaphorical patterns and ideology in economic and financial discourse

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ABSTRACT

This paper illustrates the results of a research carried out on the terms and concepts which became widespread during the 2008 financial crisis. More precisely, the purpose of the paper is to assess how and to what extent the ideological stances that emerge from the linguistic analysis of the frame and situational context of these terms and the way in which they are textually construed reflect the socio-economic and historical background of the early 2000s, i.e. the years before, during and after the crisis. Special attention is paid to the discussion of the linguistic devices, e.g. metaphorical expressions, that are used to express ideology overtly or covertly. To achieve this goal, our study is carried out on a set of corpora consisting of texts published between 2004 and 2019. Some corpora are available online, others have been compiled for the purpose of the present research. Using an approach which draws upon cognitive linguistics, corpus linguistics, and, in part, critical metaphor analysis, the analysis of some terms, expressions and their metaphorical meaning shows the rise and fall of the neoliberal ideology in the wake of the 2008 subprime crisis.

Keywords: cognitive linguistics, perspective, financial discourse, metaphor, ideology, neoliberalism.

1. Introduction

Over the last decades, a number of scholars have been concerned with the relationship between language and economics. To some, this relationship consists of "small tropic exchanges or metaphors" (Shell 1978: 7, cited in Osteen – Woodmansee 1999: 5). In fact, the use of different metaphorical concepts to depict changes of mind in the field of economics and finance across time is not just a linguistic issue, but it reveals the clash between

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competing ideologies. For example, the prevalence of the metaphor "THE ECONOMY IS A LIVING ORGANISM BODY" over the metaphorical concepts "THE ECONOMY IS A MACHINE" or "THE ECONOMY IS MECHANICS" involves the contrast between different perspectives in economics: *dynamic efficiency* vs. *static efficiency* (Schumpeter 1934), Hayek vs. Keynes, free market vs. welfare economy, disequilibrium vs. general equilibrium theory, neoliberalism vs. government-controlled economy.

Consequently, the change in ideologies entails a variance in the language of economics at the semantic and pragmatic levels. In other words, the same term can take on different meanings depending both on its temporal and spatial "context", i.e. the "when" and "where" in which the term is used, and the "perspective", i.e. the "how", "the way in which a scene is viewed, including the relative prominence of its participants" (Evans 2007: 162). Accordingly, there is no absolute ideology. There is no ideology which is falser (or truer) than another, "*For ideologies are not simply lies;* they are truthful statements about what a man thinks he sees" (Schumpeter 1949: 349).

Against this background, in this paper we present the results of a study which focuses on the representation of neoliberal ideology in texts published before, during and after the 2008 financial meltdown. The research is carried out on sets of corpora embracing a period which goes from 2004 to 2019. Considering that an ideology can be defined "as a verbal image of the good society and of the chief means of constructing such a society" (Downs 1957: 96), we focus on the textual representation of ideologies through metaphor which, linguistically speaking, is the verbal image *par excellence*, as it is able to turn social abstractions, such as concepts, into concrete words, thus contributing to the construction of social, cultural and economic reality. To this end, we adopt the notion of metaphor as developed by Lakoff – Johnson (1980), Lakoff (1987), and in cognitive linguistics (Evans – Green 2006). We also draw upon other analytical tools designed by cognitive linguistics, such as *frame*, *situational context* and *construal*, as they contribute to interpreting the ideology transmitted by the pragmatic meaning of specialized terms. Our survey methodology resorts to recent studies in the field of corpus-based approaches to metaphor and ideology.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 2 focuses on recent theories developed in the framework of cognitive linguistics about the relationships between language and ideology and the role played by metaphor as a linguistic vehicle of ideologies. Section 3 describes data and methods. Section 4 contains the case studies of the research, while Section 5 provides some concluding remarks and suggestions for further research.

2. Theoretical background

This paper seeks to cast light on the ideological meaning conveyed by some economic terms which spread in the 2000s, before, during, and after the meltdown that upset the American (and the global) financial system. For the purpose of the present article, by "ideology" we mean not so much "political ideology", a view which originates from Marx and Engels, but rather as a set of "values" and "attitudes" whereby "ideological differences are fundamentally differences in *valuations*, both abstract and concrete" (Levi Martin 2015: 9). As "ideology is ubiquitous in our lives" (Hawkins 2001: 35), we are neither fully aware of it, nor do we possess the linguistic devices to describe it in a concrete way. Yet, our words and expressions have some ideological intent, which is implicit and arises from the meaning that we give to words depending on the position that we take. In the same vein, Nescolarde et al. claim that "language is understood from repeated patterns in the use of sets of beliefs" (2017: 8).

Ideology is, among other things, "the process of production of meanings, signs and values in social life" (Eagleton 1991: 1). It is a system of ideas, that are verifiable, through which the dominant political power is legitimated. It is a system of symbols and beliefs that characterize a culture. In economics, for instance, different ideologies correspond to different worldviews or belief systems, as for example free trade, mercantilism, and *laissez-faire* economics. As a consequence, the relationship between ideology and language is investigated from the perspective of cognitive linguistics. This relates "ideology in language" to conceptual and linguistic phenomena that establish specific, though often unconscious, views on the world (Dirven et al. 2012).

Cognitive linguistics provides different tools for the analysis of ideology in language, including cognitive grammar and metaphors. Metaphors can be *overt* or *covert* resources of ideology. As a matter of fact, a systematic function of metaphors is "highlighting and hiding" (Lakoff – Johnson 1980), whereby we tend to focus only on certain aspects of a metaphor while disregarding others. Very often a metaphor, which is widely acknowledged to convey a specific meaning (*overt*), may hide a different sense and even carry some underlying ideology (*covert*) as a result of the context in which words and sentences are used and of the perspective that the speaker/writer takes on in that context, i.e. the particular point of view that we adopt in order to determine the nature of metaphor used to represent the target domain.

Two more analytical tools developed by cognitive linguistics to investigate ideology are *ideological deixis* and *iconographic frames of reference*. Both are pragmatic tools, which are used to convey the ideological meaning. In the first case, ideology is closely related to the function of deixis, whereby through ideology speakers *point to* time, space and their cultural beliefs and values. Ideological deixis involves the manipulation of various conceptual tools in order to achieve a given rhetorical effect on the target audience (Dirven et al. 2012).

Iconographic reference is "a common mode of textual representation" whereby speakers, involved in a familiar context, use simple images to tell about their experiences and insinuate their own ideological claims and value judgments, which are expected to be shared and understood by their interlocutors (Hawkins 2001: 32).

We will use these theoretical instruments to demonstrate that economic terms, even though they are highly specialized words – and, accordingly, they are presumably characterized by denotation, monoreferentiality, lack of emotion, impersonality, objectivity, and syntactic complexity – can be, in fact, ideologically connotated, i.e. vehicles of ideas, values, ideals or doctrines. Considering that the ideological density of a text and its terminology result from the communicative acts taking place between users, the type of communication and information exchanged, as well as the socio-cultural, historical and economic setting in which interactions occur, "semantic knowledge" cannot be separated from "pragmatic knowledge". As cognitive linguists contend, knowledge of word meaning and knowledge of word use work together to form our encyclopaedic view of meaning, i.e. our knowledge of language as it is grounded in human interaction with others (our social experience) and the world around us (our physical experience) (Faber – San Martín Pizarro 2012: 213). So, our concern is not only about what words *mean*, but also about what words *do*. This is also true for specialized knowledge and specialized terms. The latter take their pragmatic meaning from the specialized context in which they are used. As a result, the same term can have different meanings, or better still, three pragmatic dimensions, *frames*, *situational context* and *construal*, which vary according to the context in which the term is adopted.

Frames represent the way in which we schematise our experience and structure our knowledge, by relating elements and entities which refer to a particular culture, situation or human event. Linguistically, frames are constructed by means of attributes and relations between attributes.

Situational context is a *relational construct*. It represents the network of relations between the objects, on the one hand, and between the objects themselves and the agents who use or act on them, on the other hand.

Construal can be defined as "the way a language user chooses to 'package' and 'present' a conceptual representation as encoded in language, which in turn has consequences for the conceptual representation that the utterance evokes in the mind of the hearer." (Evans – Green 2006: 576). This process is performed by choosing a particular "focal adjustment", i.e. the linguistic organization of a scene in a specific way. The construal of language depends on the speaker's perspective, the speech acts that the speaker performs and his or her communicative intention when he or she uses one term instead of another with a similar meaning. Therefore, it is not only the linguistic aspect that characterizes the utterance, but the whole socio-cultural context the speaker belongs to, e.g. the shared knowledge, expectations related to speaker perspective, and intentions. What is most interesting for the purpose of this paper is that "another way that construal can be understood is through the use of specialized language as a way of conveying ideology" (Faber – San Martín Pizarro 2012: 201). It may provide an alternative way of describing specialized concepts.

Against this theoretical background, we intend to demonstrate the following:

1. economic terms are vehicles of ideologies;
2. economic terms which are general nouns take on specialized meaning when they occur in combinatorial patterns in particular contexts;
3. the transformation of general nouns into economic terms is the result of processes of metaphorization and iconographic reference.

The evolution of economic thought goes hand-in-hand with the evolution of language, and they both embody the development of ideological stances. Given the status of economics as a *soft science*, and its dynamic nature, economic language proves to be endowed with a significant semogenic (meaning-making) power, i.e. the capability to generate new meanings from existing words in response to new, sometimes unexpected, events. This is, in other words, the process of metaphorization proper: general nouns are transferred to the economic and financial field where they are turned into terms with a specialized meaning. However, unlike most cases of Language for Special Purposes (LSP), relating mainly to the *hard sciences*, it can be argued that economic terms are semantically and pragmatically variable and, accordingly, ideologically connotated. The ideological stance depends on the "position" in time and space that economic and financial terms have.

It follows that the same term can have different connotations, either positive or negative, as a result of the "perspective" adopted by the addresser and the addressee in communication.

3. Methodology and data

Methodologically, our research draws upon recent studies on empirical, corpus-based approaches to metaphor and ideology (Stefanowitsch 2006a, 2006b; Berber Sardinha 2011; Muelas Gil 2019). Following Berber Sardinha (2011), our first step was to decide whether to adopt a "whole corpus-based" or a "concordance-based" corpus linguistics metaphor approach. The former consists in a hand-based retrieval of all the metaphors which occur in the whole corpus, whilst the latter implies the extraction of the concordances relevant to specific items and the investigation of the metaphors occurring in the immediate co-text of those items.

As this choice depends on the size of the corpus and the purpose of the research, we opted for a combination of both approaches for at least a couple of reasons. After surveying all the corpora and identifying the words and phrases which, in our opinion, could be parts of metaphorical expressions, we extracted the sets of concordances in which those words and phrases occurred as keywords in context. More specifically, to carry out this study we adopted a method based on Stefanowitsch's analysis of "metaphorical pattern" (2006a, 2006b), by which he means "a multi-word expression from a given source domain (SD) into which one or more specific lexical items from a given target domain (TD) have been inserted" (2006b: 66). This method, which "relies mainly on the analyst's knowledge and intuition" (Muelas Gil 2019: 230), allows researchers to work with both metaphorical expressions that contain target domain items and with metaphorical expressions that do not (Stefanowitsch 2006a; 2006b). Moreover, in accordance with Charteris-Black's Critical Metaphor Analysis (2004) and Muelas Gil (2019), we mainly focus on the metaphorical pattern and its immediate co-text. In some cases, the co-textual range included larger chunks of texts since we also considered all lexical units which might be semantically related to the key word or phrase even though they did not occur in its immediate co-text. The metaphorical patterns and their co-text proved to be loaded with ideological stances, which in some cases were manifest, in others hidden.

To achieve this goal, the investigation was carried out on a set of corpora: some available online, others built from scratch for the purpose of the present

research. Various criteria were followed, including topic and time: corpora were selected and compiled, accounting for texts produced in a delimited time span, which included the years before, during and after the crisis.

The corpora available online, and chosen to carry out the research, are presented in Table 1 and Table 2 below. Some are broken down by time spans into different sub-corpora:

Table 1. *Corpora available online broken down by time spans* (available at www.english-corpora.org)[1]

Corpus	Words	
COCA[a] 1995-2019	1,001,610,938	
	1995-1999	126,247,476
	2000-2004	127,661,503
	2005-2009	124,036,796
	2010-2014	124,374,418
	2015-2019	123,771,007
COHA[b] 2000-2010	58,958,902	
NOW[c] 2010 to-date	10.6 billion+	
iWeb[d]	14 billion	

[a] Davies, M. (2008) *Corpus of Contemporary American*
[b] Davies, M. (2010) *Corpus of Historical American English*
[c] Davies, M. (2016) *News on the Web*
[d] Davies, M. (2018) *The Intelligent Web-based Corpus*

Table 2. Corpora available online broken down by time spans (available at www.sketchengine.eu/)[2]

Corpus	Words
The English Web 2008	2,759,340,513
The English Web 2012	11,191,860,036
The English Web 2013	19,685,733,337
The English Web 2015	15,703,895,409

[1] More details about the corpora are available at www.english-corpora.org
[2] These corpora belong to the TenTen corpus family, which includes comparable corpora in more than 30 languages. The corpora are very large in size (over 10 billion words per language) and consist of texts from various registers and genres. Other details are available through Sketch Engine.

Five DIY corpora were also compiled, collecting texts taken from both US and international institutions and bodies; they included reports, speeches and other genres which were purposefully produced during the years of the crisis. Table 3 below provides data about the corpora.

Table 3. DIY Corpora

Corpus	Words
IMF[a] (2007-2010)	1,783,826
SPEECHES[b]	324,313
BIS[c]	641,378
BOC[d]	965,595
USCH[e]	177,130

[a] The IMF corpus consists of documents published by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) between 2007 and 2010, namely Global Financial Stability Reports (951,171 words), Working Papers (67,906) and World Economic Outlooks (764,749).
[b] This corpus consists of 86 speeches delivered by international economists, politicians and sociologists, including Bernanke, Draghi, Trichet, Dudley, during and after the 2008 crisis.
[c] The BIS corpus consists of papers published by the Bank for International Settlements between 2007 and 2009.
[d] The BOC corpus consists of eight books about the crisis downloaded from www.archive.org.
[e] The USCH corpus consists of 31 hearings held by the US Congress between 2005 and 2010.

These corpora were analyzed with Wordsmith Tools 7.

Lastly, other corpora were compiled with the Sketch Engine suite. Using the "New Corpus" option, the corpora were built by typing specific words and phrases in the "web search", i.e. *subprime*, *2008 financial crisis, meltdown, housing bubble*. The resulting corpora were analyzed via the Word Sketch and Concordance tools available on Sketch Engine.

4. Case studies

Very briefly, the 2008 housing bubble was the outcome of both the neoliberal forces and the housing affordability policy started in the 1990s. The crisis is also known as the subprime meltdown as it was the result of the lenders' granting of mortgages to subprime borrowers, "NINJA" (*No Income, No Job*

or Assets), i.e. people "who could not otherwise qualify for traditional loans because of a weak credit history or other disqualifying credit measures" (Kenton 2018).

The crisis can be ascribed to at least to two ideological stances:

1. the ideology of the "sanctity of ownership", also known as "affordable housing", dating back to Clinton's 1995 "National Ownership Strategy"; and,
2. the neoliberal ideology which advocated for selfishness, self-interest, and supported deregulation based on the belief that markets were self-correcting.

Besides the socio-economic and political impact, the crisis was also characterized by the development of a wide range of terms and expressions which permeated the economic and financial discourse; some of them were already known to the public, others were coined as a result of the contingencies and the financial creativity which "was a lot 'like cheap sangria'" (Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission 2011: 6).[3] *Collateralized debt obligations* (CDOs), *asset-backed securities* (ABS), *mortgage-backed securities* (MBS), *SIVs*, *CMOs*, are only some of the terms, abbreviations and acronyms which formed the 2008 crisis vocabulary.

In this paper, we will analyze *free, subprime*, *toxic* and other terms and phrases which became widespread during the crisis. The study of these terms and the metaphorical patterns in which they occur shed light on the supporting views as well as the critical stances towards neoliberalism in the panorama of the subprime meltdown and in the wider climate of the socio-cultural and economic failure of the neoliberal and free-market ideology.

4.1 Case study 1: *Free*

This subsection is devoted to the case study of *free* and its context. In the 2005-2009 span in the COCA corpus, which roughly covers the period before, during and after the crisis, *free* is collocated with a variety of nouns: *free trade*, ranking first (568 occurrences) in the frequency list; *free market*, ranking fifth (261) and *free markets* ranking fourteenth (121). For the sake of brevity, we will focus on *free market(s)*, and exclude other expressions.

[3] This expression was used by Michael Mayo and is quoted in The Financial Crisis Inquiry Report (Financial Crisis Inquiry Commission 2011).

Concordances from COCA (2005-2009) show contrasting attitudes towards "free markets". On the one hand, the "free market" is seen positively, as *efficient*, *fair*, *trustworthy*. It is a source of prosperity, a way of enhancing innovations, "an extraordinarily effective means of distribution, and it promotes commutative justice in the economic sphere". On the other hand, the "free market" is seen as a danger, the "most disastrous thing in modern America". Significantly, this view about the "free market" as a negative phenomenon increases as we come closer to 2008, the year of the subprime bubble. The "free market" is seen as a lie, the doctrine that exacerbates the disparity between the rich and the poor, and it turns positive again from 2009 on, when it is seen as efficient and "effectively self-regulating", a solution to all social problems including health, a source of wealth, a spur to competition.

These data are confirmed by corpora available via Sketch Engine. *The English Web* corpora (Table 4) show that "free market" occurs in the same context as *federalism*, *deregulation*, *globalization*, *capitalism*, *individualism*, as well as *Friedman* and *ideology*. It is represented as something out of control, as its pre-modifiers suggest: *free market* is *unfettered, unregulated, unbridled, unrestrained, untrammeled* and *unencumbered*. It must be specified that this view is worldwide, it is not restricted to the US; this demonstrates that the neoliberal doctrine spread across the globe, as happened with the crisis. A remarkable aspect is the co-occurrence of *free market* with *ideology*; it generally occurs in combination with another lexical element, an adjective, to further identify the neoliberal ideology: *capitalist*, *utopian*, *government-out*, *anti-government*, *libertarian*, *neo-liberal*.

Table 4. Concordances of *free market* – Source: *The English Web* corpora

This was also the way I see	"free market"	fundamentalism ideology was used by
International corporations use	"free market"	capitalism ideology to justify globalization and
This denial reflected the dominance of the	'free market'	Monetarist ideology, which wanted smaller
but to brutally promulgate its right-wing,	free market,	government-out ideology , with the goal of
Anything that challenges	free markets	and neo-liberal ideology in any meaningful way
The Government were and are driving	free market	political ideology through the heart of our NHS.

The reason, of course, is simply because it is	free market	economic ideology which, as we discussed in.
Three decades of	free market,	neoliberal, ideology are being torn up,
developments coincided with the rise of	free market	economic ideology in the 1980s,
because it reflects our	free market,	libertarian ideology.

4.2 Case study 2: *Market fundamentalism*

There are various expressions that occur in the context of the term "free". One that stands out in the list is *market fundamentalism*, as sample data from the BOC corpus (Table 5) show. This expression, aka *market economism*, is used as an alternative to *free market ideology* and neoliberalism.

Table 5. Concordances of *market fundamentalism* – Source: BOC

an indispensable history of the emergence of	market fundamentalism	(or "economism") in the United States
one can't (logically) believe in	market fundamentalism.	Even after the multibillion-dollar bail-out
Suddenly, advocates of	market fundamentalism,	who talked about the virtues of "price
that Lehman Brothers collapsed, may be to	market fundamentalism	(the notion that unfettered markets, all
These institutions pushed	market fundamentalism	("neo-liberalism," it was often called),
And these will fail. The poor suffered under	market fundamentalism.	Trickle-down economics didn't work.
partly because rugged individualism and	market fundamentalism	have eroded any sense of community
the IMF's policies (often based on the flawed	market fundamentalism	that I have discussed in this chapter) led
"The God That Failed: Free	Market Fundamentalism	and the Lehman Bankruptcy,"
with the crisis of 2008, the debate over	"market fundamentalism"	the notion that unfettered markets by
The IMF might claim that it believes in	"market fundamentalism"	that markets are efficient, self-correcting,

The concordance lines partially show the frames which the expression pertains to. It includes a network of attributes, which are metaphorical representations of the negative attitude towards the neoliberal doctrine, such as *flawed*, *rugged individualism*, *pernicious social consequences*, *lack of community*, *threat to the poor*, *eroded*.

Other lexical items in the situational context provide a different view of *market fundamentalism*, which witnesses the fact that neoliberalism was seen as something ethically good, e.g. *morality, liberty, sound money, honest money, commodity money*, *low interest rates, peace, free trade, balanced budgets, removal of the bankers' monopoly over credit*, *prosperity* and *economic growth*.

These expressions consist of overt metaphors that contribute to constructing our understanding of the early 21st century neoliberal ideology. Better still, the various attributes embody two competing perspectives on the neoliberal ideology underlying the subprime meltdown.

However, there are other meanings implicit in the term "fundamentalism" and its situational context, which are examples of a covert conceptual metaphor: THE ECONOMY IS RELIGION. As such, the economy is construed as a form of extremist ideological expression (Nagata 2001). This is evidently a case of iconographic frame of reference in that ideology is imposed on the individual and collective conscience by selecting and networking attributes and elements taken from the religious iconography, as both the BOC corpus and the COCA corpus confirm. There are people or institutions that believe in or trust market fundamentalism, worship at its "altar" or see it as a miracle or even as God.

Like other expressions of ideological extremism, market fundamentalism has its "idols that enslave us" and "dominates much of today's society". It "absolutizes the value of capital above all other values" and, finally, causes pains to people, mainly the poor, who are victims of this "trickle-down economics", thus ending up with a "loss of faith" even by those who had initially advocated it.

4.3 Case study 3: *Subprime*

*Subprim*e is one of the outstanding words, perhaps the most representative of the economic vocabulary of the 2008 financial crisis. It is no coincidence that the economic events, which shocked the US market as well as world finance, are also known as the subprime meltdown.

The survey of subcorpora compiled from the COCA corpus according to the time spans 1995-1999, 2000-2004, 2005-2009, 2010-2014 and 2015-2019, provides interesting data. The 2005-2009 subcorpus was taken as the benchmark against which the other periods of time were compared, since the years from 2005 to 2009 are those which mainly experienced the crisis with the culmination in 2008.

Unsurprisingly, data show that the normalized frequency[4] (per million words) of *subprime* in the 2005-2009 span outnumber the normalized value in the subcorpora relevant to the other time spans, i.e. before and after the crisis years (Table 6).

Table 6. Raw and Normalized Frequencies of *subprime* in COCA sub-corpora by time spans

	1995-1999	2000-2004	2005-2009	2010-2014	2015-2019
Raw Frequency	20	86	581	291	340
Normalized Frequency	0.14	0.59	4.01	2.00	2.35

The higher number of occurrences of *subprime* between 2005 and 2009 reflects the centrality of the issue in the period. More interesting than the quantitative aspects are the qualitative data relevant to the co-text of *subprime*.

In the years before the outburst of the crisis, *subprime* was mainly used as a premodifier of *loan* and *lending*, and, what is more, showed no negative connotation: *subprime* had a neutral connotation and was associated with *car lending*. The same neutral discourse prosody characterizes *subprime* in the years between 2000 and 2004, with some change as far as its application scope is concerned: from 2000 onwards *subprime* becomes associated with *mortgage* and *home lending*, and in at least four cases is defined as *predatory*.

In the years 2005-2009, the number of occurrences of the term *subprime* increases exponentially, skyrocketing to 581. Interestingly, *subprime* occurs in patterns such as *subprime loans*, *subprime mortgages* or *subprime assets*, which are fundamentally depicted as *bad*, *risky*, *high-risk*, *shaky*, *iffy*, *suspicious* and *toxic*.

[4] As corpora were of different sizes they were normalized per one-million words, using the formula FN = FO(106)/C where FN is the normalized frequency, FO is the observed frequency, and C is the corpus size (http://www.thegrammarlab.com/?p=160).

Table 7. Concordances of *subprime* – Source: COCA

to sustain themselves in the wake of the	toxic subprime asset	waterfall,
it was buying up a lot of these	toxic, subprime loans	that seem to have poisoned the
This layering of risk is what made	subprime loans so toxic.	"Even if you have only two of those

Although the number of occurrences of *subprime* almost halves in the post-crisis years (2010-2014 and 2015-2019), the term still tends to be associated with negative words, e.g. *risky*, *bad*, *high-risk*, both in its left and right context, thus generating typical patterns in which *subprime* is followed by *crisis*, *meltdown*, *fiasco*, *mess*, *fallout*, *debacle*, *collapse*, *implosion*, *woes*.

The negative representation of *subprime* is confirmed by other corpora, although statistics prove substantially different in quantitative terms. The survey of the English corpora available via Sketch Engine, notably the English Web 2008, 2012, 2013 2015, shows that the normalized frequency of *subprime* is higher in 2012 and 2013 than in 2008 (Table 8).

Table 8. Raw and Normalized Frequencies of *subprime* in The English Web corpora (Sketch Engine)

	The English Web 2008	The English Web 2012	The English Web 2013	The English Web 2015
Raw Frequency	6,083	37,855	48,659	11,495
Normalized Frequency	2.20	3.38	2.47	0.73

Raw and Normalized Frequencies of *subprime* in The English Web corpora (Sketch Engine)]

The different numbers of occurrences for *subprime* between the sets of COCA sub-corpora and the Sketch Engine corpora, which amounts to a normalized value ratio of 1.31 (COCA) < 2.11 (Sketch Engine), may be ascribed: first, to the fact that the former is smaller in size than the latter; and second, to the fact that COCA includes texts in American English only, whereas Sketch Engine corpora consists of texts representative of English varieties across the world. Nevertheless, both share some significant aspects, including the patterning of *subprime* with typical terms such as *crisis*, *fallout*, *implosion*, *woes*, *mess*, *fiasco*.

Other corpora, including documents produced in the pre- and post-crisis periods of time, also suggest this negative portrait of *subprime*. The NOW corpus, for instance, which contains documents until the 2010s, shows that besides *bad* and *risky*, subprime loans and mortgages are also *predatory* and, above all, *toxic*.

Table 9. Concordances of *subprime* – Source: NOW

main underwriters of the poisonous and	predatory subprime mortgages.
relieve banks of toxic assets tied to	subprime mortgages

This negative perspective of *subprime loans* (*mortgages, borrowers, borrowing, lenders*) is further confirmed by the investigation of corpora compiled for the purpose of the present research. In the IMF corpus (2,162,278 tokens), the negative impact of the subprime market cannot be grasped immediately; it emerges from the analysis of the wider co-text of the *subprime + NOUN* pattern, which involves *distressed*, *liquidity shock*, *crisis*, *delinquency*, *turmoil*, *fallout*.

Interestingly, the analysis of the expression *subprime lending* in the USCH corpus displays the important role that it plays in molding the iconographic frame of reference which lays the foundations of the ideology *par excellence* in America: the *American dream*. One of the "core tenets" of this dream, which is also evoked in the corpus, is the *dream of home ownership*.

In fact, a thorough analysis of both the Sketch Engine corpora and the COCA timespan-based sub-corpora below discloses the intrinsic contradictions of this dream, and of the failure of the housing commodity as a way of fulfilling that dream of equity and equality, as the concordances of *subprime* and its context show (for the sake of brevity, only a few samples from the various corpora are reported below):

Table 10. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: English Web 2008, 2012, 2013 (enTenTen08; enTenTen12; enTenTen13)

	Black and Hispanic homebuyers who get mortgages from	"subprime"	lenders are 30% more likely to get higher rate loans than other borrowers
2008	Black and other minorities disproportionately fall into the category of	"subprime"	borrowers" because of lower credit scores,

2008	Several studies have found that black and Hispanic borrowers were more likely to be steered into high-cost	Subprime	loans than other borrowers
2012	Within these high	Subprime	tracts, black women took a disproportionate share.
	Consider the	Subprime	mortgage crisis. It required a population – communities of color – whose economic and political vulnerability made them easy targets for exploitative loan products, …And racial inequity is growing
	The report found that, nationally, black borrowers living in the most racially segregated metropolitan areas were more likely to receive	Subprime	loans than black borrowers living in the least racially segregated metropolitan areas.
2013	The	Subprime	mortgage crisis has taken a particularly harsh toll on Black homeowners and threatens to stall the further expansion of the Black middle class.

Table 11. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: COCA 2000-2004 sub-corpus

Studies show that banks continue to discriminate against minority consumers and neighborhoods of color by either denying them mortgage loans or pushing them into riskier	"subprime	mortgages. Realtors continue to "steer" black (and to a slightly lesser extent, Latino) families […]"
employees had called black clients mud people and	Subprime	lending ghetto loans.
Indeed, "whoever says	'subprime	debtor' says black as well."
black families have been the objects of targeted marketing by	Subprime	lenders. This is, to some extent, the legacy of the redlining practices of banks of the 1970s.

Then came those high-cost	Subprime	loans whose fine print ensured that you would never be able to pay them back. In a case of "reverse redlining,"
levels of segregation create a natural market for	Subprime	lending,"
Black homeowners were most fleeced by	Subprime	mortgages,
African Americans nationally were far more likely than whites to rely on	Subprime	(as opposed to prime) mortgage loans.
This "racial gap in	Subprime	lending" held across income levels

Table 12. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: COCA 2005-2009 sub-corpus

A disproportionate share of	Subprime	borrowers are black or Hispanic,
WOMEN ARE 32% MORE LIKELY TO BE TARGETED FOR	SUBPRIME	LOANS THAN MEN. //
Black and Hispanic families have gotten a disproportionate share of	Subprime	lending,

Table 13. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: COCA 2010-2014 sub-corpus

So they were disproportionately harmed by the	Subprime	market

Table 14. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: COCA 2015-2019 sub-corpus

the crash was caused by minorities getting	Subprime	loans, something forced on institutions by the Clinton administration's anti-redlining Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) requirements.

Table 15. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: NOW corpus

African American women became disproportionate victims of the	Subprime	lending and subsequent foreclosure crisis after 2008

Table 16. KWIC of *subprime* – Source: iWEB corpus

African Americans who were steered into expensive	Subprime	mortgages were the hardest hit.
The discriminatory placement of wholesale borrowers in	subprime	loans, also known as "steering,"
borrowers who were steered into loans based on race or national origin, a practice that systematically placed borrowers of color into	Subprime	mortgage loan products

Words and phrases occurring in the context of *subprime*, such as *black, Afro-American, Hispanic borrowers*, who are *targeted*, *hard hit*, *harmed* or *victimized by* as well as *steered into subprime loan*, are instances of specific iconographic frames of ideology. Specifically, the association of *subprime* with Afro-American and Hispanic people, as well as with women and minorities in general, evokes ideologies of race and gender disparity. *Subprime* refers to both an economic condition and a socio-cultural status, which induce racial and gender discrimination. This is suggested by means of orientational metaphors (Lakoff – Johnson 1980), since words and verbs accompanying subprime borrowers involve both economic and geographical displacement and, accordingly, socio-economic downgrading.

By "steering" black and Latino as well as female homeowners into subprime loans, US banks committed deliberate racial mischiefs against people of these social categories who, between 2008 and 2009, lost their homes to foreclosure. In other words, African-American and Hispanic families were definitively "led into" poorer conditions as they lost their homes and savings.

In fact, subprime borrowing also marked a concrete movement towards geographical segregation. In those years, the dominant iconographic reference representing the physical condition of racial discrimination was the "redlining" of Black and Hispanic neighborhoods by banks. Redlining represented the mapping of inequality; it meant keeping minorities away from the élite and, accordingly, the achievement of "the ideology of white supremacy, which is deeply engrained in white American culture in the United States".[5]

[5] These words are taken from a conversation between Joe T. Darden, author and professor of geography at Michigan State University, and Mike Wilkinson, a reporter for Bridge Magazine (available at https://www.michiganradio.org/post/redlining-s-legacy-how-discriminatory-housing-policies-continue-shape-michigan-s-metro-areas).

Interestingly, there is another remarkable iconographic reference, which subprime and its broader context build up, as the survey of both the COCA corpus and Sketch Engine corpora shows. The iconographic reference is grounded in facts, persons and metaphorical expressions conjuring up the spectre of the 2008 financial crisis. The visual image standing out in the text samples included in the various corpora is that of a "canary in a coal mine", a proverbial metaphor, serving as an early warning of some danger. Accordingly, the subprime mortgage meltdown in the US is perceived as the "canary in the coal mine" of the banking crisis in 2007 and the 2008 financial crisis.

Table 17. KWIC of *canary in the coal mine* – Source: iWEB corpus

but it was private debt that was the	canary in the coal mine.	In the early days of the crash, it was called the "subprime crisis,"
The proverbial	canary in the coal mine	usually resides somewhere in the credit market (think of LBOs in 1989 and subprime mortgages in 2007)…
Bear's hedge funds turned out to be the proverbial	canary in the coal mine.	Wall Street firms such as Lehman Brothers,
If the subprime lending boom had never happened, we would still be roughly where we are today. Call this the	"canary in the coal mine"	theory.
The Subprime Crisis:	Canary in a Coal Mine?	

4.4 Case study 4: *Toxic assets*

The USCH corpus displays the co-occurrence of *subprime* with *assets*, especially in the string *subprime and other impaired assets*. The latter are company assets that have "a market value less than the value listed on the company's balance sheet" (Investopedia). Put simply, subprime loans or borrowings are entered as *negative assets* into the balance sheet. However, more interesting than this is how *assets* are ideologically represented during the 2008 financial crisis.

The term *asset(s)* was a keyword in the economic and financial crisis of 2007-2008, as the number of occurrences in various corpora suggests. More significant than this is the way in which *assets* are represented when this term keeps company with *subprime mortgage or loans, mortgage-backed securities*, and other instruments and products delivered during the period.

A survey of COCA shows a high number of *assets*, premodified by *bad* (50), *troubled* (36) and, above all, *toxic* (94), in the time span between 2005-2009. These data are much more significant if compared against the 2010-2014 period, where *assets* are mainly *risky* (11) and *toxic* (16), and even more so, if compared with the 2015-2017, where any negative connotation of *assets* has totally disappeared.

Special attention should be paid to the pattern "toxic assets" and its situational context. A study of the 2005-2009 period, as compared to the 2010-2019 time span in the COCA corpus, shows that the pattern was significantly widespread during the crisis (the normalized frequency is 0.83 in 2005-2009), whereas it decreases between 2010 and 2014 (normalized frequency = 0.16) and definitely disappears after 2015 (normalized frequency = 0.02). In the period before 2004, as COCA demonstrates, *toxic* was generally associated with environmental objects, or was used in the domains of physics and chemistry. It occurs as an attribute which generally premodifies concrete products or commodities, e.g. *chemicals, waste, substances, materials, gases, compounds, pesticides*.

Referring to the 2004-2009 period, the metaphorization process, whereby *toxic* comes to be associated with *assets* and other financial items, captures the movement which took place in the field of finance at the ideological level during the 2008 bubble. To be more precise, the expression *toxic assets* seems to embody the failure of the neoliberal ideology, which occurred both in the economic and political domains. *Toxic assets* are the "housing market" itself, seen as the cause of the collapse of Wall Street and a multitude of banks and companies, as the following concordances show:

Table 18. Concordances of *toxic assets* – Source: COCA

the sacrificial lamb and take the blame for the	toxic assets	that would drag down the net value of the firm.
the mortgage-backed securities and other	toxic assets	that were drowning Wall Street and the credit markets.
but the country's banks have been saddled with	toxic assets	since the real estate bubble collapsed.

Geithner still doesn't know how to value these	toxic assets	killing the banks.
to come in and to help buy out the	toxic assets	in these banks are going to be scared off.
what they're going to do with the banks and the	toxic assets	and all that zombie stuff we get scared about
And for one, you know, these	toxic assets,	toxic investments that have brought down so many of the banks

The co-text surrounding "toxic assets" suggests the climate of fear and panic that characterized those years, whereby it was necessary "to get toxic assets off the (bank) books". The whole financial system was "polluted by *toxic assets* that could trigger another meltdown"; exposure to toxic assets was *lethal*. They could even *strangle* the credit market, cause the *clogging* of bank books or likely *hobble* their peers.

The BOC corpus confirms these data. *Toxic assets* generally occur along with other terms that contribute to making up the situational context in which the crisis erupted. Thus, *toxic assets* are also *poisonous, obscure, abnormally sophisticated*; like plagues, they *contaminate* other countries across the world. Therefore, they must be *fenced off* or *ring-fenced*, or even *purged*.

This metaphorical image of assets as toxic also occurs in the corpus of speeches about the 2008 crisis and the IMF corpus and is consistent with Warren Buffet's characterization of derivatives, and other assets in general, as "financial weapons of mass destruction". In these corpora, not only do *toxic assets* appear as *impaired* – thus suggesting a physical and structural deficiency – but, first and foremost, they evoke the fear of a *zombie apocalypse* of the financial world and the turning of neoliberalism into a "zombie ideology".

4.5 Case study 5: From *toxic assets* to *zombie stocks*

Since 2007-2008, the term *toxic*, which seems to be one of the favorite epithets used to label the failure of the neoliberal ideology in economics and finance, has been gradually replaced by the word *zombie*.

Data extracted from NOW[6] (Table 19) show the frequent occurrence of the word *zombie* as a premodifier of *banks, firms, companies, enterprises, corporations*. For example, *zombie companies* (562 raw occurrences) and *zombie*

[6] More details are available at https://www.english-corpora.org/now/.

enterprises (170 raw occurrences) are two of the most frequent expressions on the *zombie* + NOUN pattern in the corpus.

Table 19. Concordances of the "*zombie* + NOUN pattern" – Source: NOW

Zombie companies, **zombie debt** and a zombie **economy**. With interest rates at an all-time low,
Consider some of the terms that those fears produce: **zombie banks**, **zombie economies**, **zombie**
The **banks** remain in a **zombie** vegetative state, with the Federal Reserve providing the IV and the
We live in a time where we talk about '**zombie banks** 'and '**zombie corporations**' – the economic
the original problem has metastized, and the **banks** are still in **zombie** status, but with share prices

What are in fact *zombie companies, banks,* or *corporations*? A corpus built with Sketch Engine, using *zombie*, *companies*, *firms*, *assets*, *neoliberalism*, *economy* as seed words, provides interesting data, casting light on the metaphorical meaning of the word *zombie* and its ideological value when it is used along with economic and financial concepts. Basically, *zombie companies*, aka *zombie stocks*, are "companies that earn just enough money to continue operating and service debt, but are unable to pay off their debt" (Investopedia). *Zombie companies* are "indebted businesses" or "risky debtors and investments"; they are the "scourge" of neoliberalism.

Metaphorically, they are represented as the last phase of neoliberalism, its end. An interesting aspect which emerges from the corpora is that *zombie companies* are associated with Schumpeter's concept of "creative destruction", which, in a word, means "crisis". This is intriguing in terms of the iconographic frame of reference construed around the neoliberal ideology, in that such an association evokes two simultaneous, clashing stances towards the term "crisis". On the one hand, if "creative destruction" is considered from a Schumpeterian perspective, the zombie phase represents the crisis of neoliberal ideology, where "crisis" is meant as "failure". It is the failure of the free market, of the *laissez-faire* ideology; it is the failure of innovation and wealth achieved through social and economic disequilibrium. By contrast, if "creative destruction" is considered from a Marxist perspective, the term "crisis" takes on a positive connotation. It is intended in the sense of "change", since to Marx "crises are never more than momentary, violent solutions for

the existing contradictions, violent eruptions that re-establish the disturbed balance for the time being" (Marx 1981 [1883]: 357 in Holgersen 2015: 694).

6. Concluding remarks

This study has revealed some important findings which shed light on economic terms as vehicles of ideological perspectives. Accordingly, any study of the ideology conveyed by specialized terms in the economic and financial domain gives rise to the need for contextualization. When new ideologies emerge, existing terms and words are combined in patterns which take on new meanings to respond to socio-cultural and economic events, thus exploiting what Halliday (2003) refers to as the semogenic potential of words. Very often, these new semantic formations are the result of metaphorization processes and other rhetorical tropes. This means that ideologies are the result of pragmatic rather than merely semantic processes, as argued by cognitive linguists.

Another interesting aspect that has emerged from the research is the kind of "freedom" that economics enjoys in terms of analytical methods. Because of its status as a "soft science", the language of economics is a dynamic language, which continuously grows and varies as markets diversify and become more internationalized. This "soft" nature of economics, however, does not mean that the language of economics is not subject to terminological constraints. Rather, it implies freedom of perspective or standing.

Although a good deal of linguistic studies maintain that terms are monoreferential, we have shown that they have a variety of semantic potentialities, which depend on the perspective adopted to look at the term itself. Moreover, terms and specialized expressions may be loaded with ideology which is conveyed via metaphors and/or other pragmatic resources designed by cognitive linguistics, such as iconographic frames of reference.

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Museums as communicators: Teaching or sharing knowledge?

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the paper is to investigate museum communication and establish to what extent museums are responding to the changing social context of the early 21st century. Museums have been traditionally perceived as authoritative and distant repositories of knowledge. Over the last few decades there has been a drive to make museum visits meaningful experiences for all peoples of different origins and backgrounds, including the development of websites, not only as a marketing strategy, but also as an important channel of knowledge dissemination. The data has been collected from the websites of four of the most important art galleries in Europe. Using a Critical Discourse Analysis approach and drawing on Blunden's work on museum communication (2017a, 2017b), the analysis will focus firstly on the webpages where the museum presents itself to the public and explains its principles, beliefs and objectives. It will then analyse what kind of information about the artefacts in the museums is given and especially how it is conveyed to the visitor. The findings reveal the different approaches adopted by the museums.

Keywords: museums, ideology, accessibility, visitors, museum communication.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to investigate museum ideology and discourse. Museums are generally viewed by the public as repositories and authorities of knowledge, commanding respect, but appearing at times somewhat detached, even distant. This perception seems to have been confirmed by the International Council of Museums (ICOM) in 2007 when it defined a museum as "A non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves,

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researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment" (ICOM Statutes, adopted by the 22nd General Assembly in Vienna, Austria, on 24 August, 2007). However, fundamental changes in society prompted by globalization, multiculturalism and, above all, radical individualization are altering the profile of museum visitors and their expectations (Smeds 2012: 61) and, as a consequence, are forcing museums to meet new challenges. In actual fact, the ICOM's definition is currently undergoing an amendment to accommodate changing principles and practices.

Museums often embody and support what Coffee (2006) calls "the social narrative", portraying the dominant values and beliefs of society. Indeed, the 18th and 19th century conception of museums as serving to create national identity and culture still persists, but museum professionals have begun to focus on how to build on museums' reputations as places of trust and expertise (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 10) and are trying to understand how to motivate and engage with visitors. In other words, they are looking at the museum experience from the visitors' perspective (Falk – Dierking 2016). This study will look at the way in which museums are now realizing this new approach, how they envisage their role and function in society today and whether museum communication with visitors actually reflects this change.

Numerous studies have been made on museum exhibitions and visitor experience (Jewitt 2012; Pang 2004; Soren 2009; Gurian 2007). However, nowadays museums are continuously developing their online presence, not only as a promotional and marketing strategy, but also as one of the most important sources of information and knowledge (Wilson 2011; Marty 2008). A website can act as an extension of the museum beyond its actual physical presence, its bricks and mortar, and stretch out to a variety of people. Potential visitors include tourists, schoolchildren researching an artist or a painting, people who are simply curious about the museum and its exhibits or who would really like to visit the museum but are physically unable to go there for whatever reason. The study will therefore investigate how museums communicate their specialised knowledge to virtual visitors and what kind of relationship they try to establish with them, that is whether they maintain the traditional, asymmetrical power relations between expert and non-expert whereby museums and curators fulfil their role as communicators of intellectually important ideas (Falk – Dierking 2011) or they share knowledge and transfer authority to visitors (Gurian 2007, cited in Soren 2009) in a more contemporary approach.

2. Museum communication today

There has always been a certain tension in museums between, on the one hand, the functions of collecting and conserving and, on the other, the social purpose of educating and edifying the public. The first museums were private collections, known as Cabinets of Curiosity, and provided an exclusive space for the rich, the powerful and the knowledgeable in the 16th and 17th centuries. Various social impulses have in time gradually opened up museums to a broader public, initially with a view to "civilizing the public", before the economic, political and social changes of the 20th century favouring greater social inclusion gave and encouraged access to visitors from all walks of life and from all over the world.

Advances in technology in recent years have facilitated this approach and created many opportunities and affordances to present information in an innovative, stimulating and entertaining manner. Indeed, nowadays museums are often positioned within the leisure industry and tourism, whereby learning is linked to worthwhile, valuable, but also pleasurable activities (Hooper-Greenhill 1994). A visit to a museum is now seen as an "experience", where the visitor does not just acquire information about an artefact or an artist, but is invited to consider an object, whatever it may be, "conceptually and ideally to develop a personal interpretation linked to his/her visit experience (and life)" (Scarpati 2018: 7).

The use of technology and multimodality in museums has, in fact, led to the re-mediation of the relationship between the audience and the artefact, actively encouraging individuals to interact in the digital environment. The old emphasis on facts and grand histories of nation states has been replaced by descriptions of contexts, emotions and everyday themes to provide new perspectives (Lindstrand – Insulander 2012: 31).

This development has been heightened by the advent of Web 2.0, allowing users to interact and collaborate with each other through social media and social networks as creators of user-generated content in a virtual community. It is radically changing social relations, "empowering" all users and thus challenging the asymmetrical relations between expert and non-expert. The individual puts himself centre stage and sets his own standards and criteria, possibly in conflict with the authoritative character of official knowledge. This situation is also replicated in museums. Curators and museum staff are the experts who set up an exhibition and will guide a visitor's interpretation, but ultimately individual visitors will interpret as they wish, in relation to their personal experiences and

interests (Lindstrand – Insulander 2012: 39-40). As Kress and Salander say, "Communication happens when a participant in the interaction has interpreted what she or he has taken to be a prompt in communication and for interaction." (2012: 8).

However, the "democratization" of museums has led to greater social diversity and fragmentation among audiences. Visitors are a heterogeneous group with a wide range of knowledge, some shared, some not, especially in the highly international context of museums. They bring with them their own personal individual background knowledge, beliefs and values, which will vary according to their culture and level of education. These will then form the basis for their understanding and interpretation of museum exhibits (Hooper-Greenhill 1999: 13). Indeed, "the fact that artefacts may be subject to multiple interpretation has important implications for the way museums think about and present themselves" (Goulding 2000: 262). To enable this personal and individual interpretation and to develop and achieve total inclusion, museum communication must also be intellectually and linguistically accessible to the broader public.

The internationalisation of audiences is, in fact, a further complicating factor in communication, as English is used not only to address native speakers, but also to act as a lingua franca for many other visitors. As well as linguistic issues, cultural and pragmatic questions are also brought into play, possibly creating great diversification in the shared knowledge of visitors. It also puts a different perspective on visitor expectations. Even within a European context Guillot (2014: 74) found native German speakers complained that museum texts in English were not explicit enough, whereas native English speakers found texts in French and Spanish museums "formal, specialised and distant".

3. Data

The study has analysed four websites of art galleries that are among the most famous in Europe, if not the world: the Louvre, the National Gallery, the Uffizi and the Rijksmuseum. The choice of which museums to include in the study fell upon art galleries because the world of art is often perceived by people as far removed from everyday life and belonging to the world of intellectuals and scholars, thus making museum communication even more challenging.

Although museums are setting up systems by which visitors can create their own galleries and collections on the website (Marty 2011) or interact on social media, the analysis will focus principally on two traditional types of webpages which are more significant from a linguistic point of view. Firstly, those where the museum explains its philosophy, principles and beliefs and declares its objectives for the future. These include the *About us* pages and *Mission and Vision statements*, where available, and will give a picture of the official position of the museums. The mission statement was originally part of corporate communication (Swales – Rogers 1995), but it is now commonly used by governmental and non-profit organizations. They are frequently present in websites and can be seen as a way of managing an organization's public image. However, some of the pages included in the analysis are not in a prominent position in the website, which suggests they may be considered as a motivating communication tool for internal as well as external stakeholders. Whatever their function, they show the public face of intentions and purposes and can provide useful insights into the ideology of museums and their vision of their role in society.

Secondly, the data includes pages giving information about the artefacts in the museums and therefore directly addressed to visitors, thus revealing the approach adopted by the museums in the actual practice of transferring knowledge. Fifteen paintings were selected from each museum, though the choice was often guided by the website highlighting the masterpieces in the gallery. The corpora are, admittedly, very small, but they are sufficiently representative of the style and approach adopted by each museum and, therefore, can indicate the characteristics of each one.

The English versions of the websites have been analysed in the study, and therefore three of them are translations into what we may consider a lingua franca. The art galleries are globally renowned and are addressing an international audience, amongst whom there will be, in addition to many native speakers of English, also many more non-native speakers of English. However, this study is not concerned with the texts as translations, whether they be "covert" or "overt" (House 2006: 347), but rather it focuses simply on how the ideology of the gallery is reflected and how it positions itself in relation to the audience in these texts.

Table 1. Corpus of texts about exhibits

	Tokens
Louvre	12,920
National Gallery	17,164
Rijksmuseum	4,330
Uffizi	5,049

4. Theoretical background

As the study investigates the role and function of museums in society and consequently the power relations between museum experts and non-expert visitors, a Critical Discourse Analysis approach forms the basic theoretical framework for the study (Fairclough 1995). Reference will also be made to the concept of proximity and reader engagement, which concerns the relationship between writer and reader, and in our context between museum and visitor. According to Hyland (2010: 123) proximity is "where writers acknowledge and connect to others, recognising the presence of their readers, pulling them along with their argument, focusing their attention, acknowledging their uncertainties, including them as discourse participants, and guiding them to interpretations." This can be achieved through the use of pronouns, questions, directives, shared knowledge markers and personal asides (Zou – Hyland 2019).

Within the more specific field of museum communication (Purser 2000; Ravelli 2006; Serrell 2015), the paper will draw on the work of Blunden. She investigates both what is being communicated (Blunden 2017a) and how, linguistically, it is being communicated (Blunden 2017b). Blunden (2017a) proposes a model, which has been developed from systemic functional linguistics (Halliday 1978) and multimodal semiotics (Liu – O'Halloran 2009), to explore the complexity of meanings in museum texts giving information about paintings in art galleries. By analysing the relationship between verbal text, museum artefact and visitor, she suggests that text may "add something more to looking" (Blunden 2017a) and, we can therefore suppose, enhance the viewer's experience. She bases the model on two intermodal relations, converging and diverging. When both the verbal and the visual text correspond, the relations are converging. The language anchors the verbal text to the artefact, creating ideational concurrence between text and artefact and a "verbal vector" (Blunden 2017a: 10) that directs the viewer's gaze towards the artefact. On the contrary, if the meanings in the verbal texts are not instantiated visually in the artefact, they are diverging and bring new meanings. Therefore, something is added to the looking, in the first case by heightening the observation and in the second by contextualising the artefact.

This study will also examine the type and degree of detail of the contextualising information, as it will foreground the presence of the expert/curator. The information may concern the history of the painting, the artist or more generally the history of art, refer to the social significance of what is depicted in the painting or give an interpretation. The specificity of the specialised knowledge implicitly positions the museum curator as expert in

relation to the non-expert general public, thus upholding the asymmetrical power relation. However, the key to understanding the relationship the museum wishes to establish with its visitors is the tone and register of the language it uses. The way the information is imparted can become fundamental in "rebalancing", or at least adjusting, this asymmetry in order to give the semblance of a peer relationship and thus empowering the viewer.

Blunden (2017b) states that writing for a reading age of 12 is the usual standard in museum communication and identifies the characteristics of the language frequently used by museums that often render a text less accessible for the broader public. She makes the distinction between "congruent" and metaphorical language and, to illustrate the two types of language, provides the following examples which express the same concept, but in completely different ways (2017b: 296-297).

> "Josie badly needed a strong coffee and so she went to the café."
> "Josie's journey to the café was the result of her need for a strong coffee."

Congruent language, as in the first example here, is more concrete and closer to the real, material world: actions and processes are expressed as verbs, people and things as nouns, qualities as qualifiers and links between ideas as conjunctions. In contrast, grammatical metaphor (Halliday 1985) changes the tone of the text, making it more abstract and formal. Grammatical metaphors involve a "repackaging" of other grammatical forms, especially nominalisation, as seen in the second example with the nouns *journey* and *need*, substituting for the verbs *go* and *need*. Although greater abstraction makes the text feel less real and directly connected to the material world, grammatical metaphor can extend the meaning potential of language and offer more opportunities to introduce subtlety and nuances through the modification of nouns (Blunden 2017b: 297).

5. Analysis

5.1 Institutional webpages

5.1.1 Museum Homepages

The analysis will start with the Homepages of the websites, as they obviously give the first impression of the museum to visitors and, through them, we can begin to discern the ideology of the museum.

The Uffizi homepage presents a picture of the magnificent building housing the museum. It is a front view, rather the usual view down the courtyard to the River Arno and therefore shows it in its full glory. On the left side of the photograph is the phrase, "An encounter with great Western art: an everlasting wonder". This may be taken as an invitation to the visitor to enter the website and satisfy his curiosity, but the tone is formal and impersonal with the unusual nominalisation *encounter* making it abstract and distant. The Louvre also uses the image of the building on its homepage and especially the famous glass pyramid. However, the visitor is addressed only in the menu for practical matters with imperatives to *plan your visit*, *buy your ticket*. Given their imposing size and majesty in both cases, the presentation of the images of the buildings, so famous as to be immediately recognised, is a strong reminder to the visitor of the institution and its authority.

In contrast, the Rijksmuseum projects a changing series of pictures, showing some items from the museum's collections, people inside the museum either looking at works of art or watching the restoration of the museum's most famous painting, *Night Watch*. It offers a very colloquial invitation to *Dive into the collection*, suggesting a more welcoming approach. Similarly, the National Gallery takes the visitor directly inside the museum, with a picture of a woman sitting with her back to the camera and surrounded by other people walking around the museum. The colours are bright, lively and dynamic and the woman's red jacket focuses the viewer's attention on what she is doing, namely sitting in a gallery and looking at a painting. In the centre of the page there is written *Welcome* and below *The story of European art, masterpiece by masterpiece*. The word *story*, rather than history, suggests a kind of intimacy and sharing of knowledge and experiences.

5.1.2 "About us" sections and Mission statements

The museums give a variety of headings to the webpages that outline their function and objectives. These include *About us*, *Our Mission*, *Our vision and strategy* or *Rules and objectives*, where the museums describe and define themselves in relation to three dimensions, each placing a different emphasis on them:

- Time – past and future
- Place – national and global
- People – individuals and society as a whole

The Uffizi and the Louvre call upon the past in a glorification, albeit well-justified, of their collections and reputation and, on this basis, they also claim present and future recognition.

(1) **The Uffizi contains the quintessence of western art, a marvellous promise that is hinted from the architecture of the building.**
The art collections that today's visitors to the Uffizi Galleries are able to enjoy in all three complexes represent a whole that few in the world can equal. In fact, they were put together by the ruling families who lived here, and who preserved these works to hand down their unevaluable heritage destined to be enjoyed by the public. This is thanks to the enlightened, wise and generous action of the last of the Medici family, Anna Maria Luisa, who in her "Family Pact" of 1737 decided to leave the collections belonging to her illustrious family to the city of Florence so that, "no part could be removed from the Capital of the Grand Ducal State, of the Galleries, Paintings, Statues, Libraries, Jewels and other precious objects from the succession of His Serene Grand Duke, so that they remain here, as ornaments of the State, for the use of the Public and to attract the curiosity of Foreigners". (Uffizi)

The power and authority of the museums is conveyed forcibly by naming some of the most famous artists in the history of art:

(2) It is famous worldwide for its outstanding collections of ancient sculptures and paintings (from the Middle Ages to the Modern period). The collections of paintings from the 14th-century and Renaissance period include some absolute masterpieces: Giotto, Simone Martini, Piero della Francesca, Beato Angelico, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Mantegna, Correggio, Leonardo, Raffaello, Michelangelo and Caravaggio, in addition to many precious works by European painters (mainly German, Dutch and Flemish). (Uffizi)

In the following example (3), the Louvre positions itself in no uncertain terms as a truly intellectual authority and asserts its prowess.

(3) The Louvre: An Age-Old Institution Looks to the Future

Heir to the century of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution, the Louvre was quickly accepted as the "museum among museums;" and since then it has remained a model and a recognized authority. (Louvre: Missions and Projects)

The museums also place themselves in global terms, as being a focus of worldwide interest.

(4) Since the Renaissance, these three museum sites have been connected to one another by an ingenious construction, the Vasari Corridor, and together they form one of the most important, most visited culture hubs in the world. (Uffizi)

(5) Museum among museums
Formerly a royal palace, the Louvre has embraced the history of France for eight centuries. Intended as a universal museum since its inception in 1793, its collections—among the finest in the world—span several thousands of years and a territory that extends from America to the confines of Asia. Divided among eight departments, these collections feature works admired throughout the globe, including the *Mona Lisa*, the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, and the *Venus de Milo*. (Louvre: Missions and Projects). With nearly ten million visitors in 2012, the Louvre is the world's most visited museum. (Louvre: Missions and Projects)

Although the National Gallery and especially the Rijksmuseum have more modest claims, they nevertheless place themselves in an international context.

(6) Collection overview
The National Gallery, London houses one of the greatest collections of paintings in the world.
Although, by international standards, the collection is not particularly large (2349 paintings, at June 2014), its breadth and quality make it a collection of world-wide importance and reputation. (National Gallery: The National Gallery's Display Policy (Permanent Collection))

(7) The Rijksmuseum is the museum of the Netherlands. (Rijksmuseum)

What really distinguishes the museums, however, is the way they position themselves in relation to their visitors. All four certainly talk about people, often in terms of numbers and their place of origin.

(8) Since the Renaissance, these three museum sites [Uffizi, Pitti Palace and Boboli Gardens] have been connected to one another by an ingenious construction, the Vasari Corridor, and together they form

one of the most important, most visited culture hubs in the world. (Uffizi)

The Louvre is universal both in terms of the wealth of its collections and the great diversity of its visitors. Of the nearly ten million people who visited the Louvre in 2012, 69 percent were of overseas origin, with 15 percent from the United States of America, 7 percent from China, and 6 percent from Brazil. (Louvre: Missions and projects)

But it is how they refer to their visitors that is the most distinctive characteristic. In the following example the text refers to the emotions aroused in visitors to the museum.

(9) Vision and mission of the Rijksmuseum
In 2013, an entirely renovated Rijksmuseum opened its doors to the public. They are greeted by a stunning building, amazing interior design, wonderful exhibitions, lively events, and many fine amenities for young and old. (Rijksmuseum)

However, it is the museum that is acting, *stunning* and *amazing* the visitors who are passively greeted and spellbound by the wonder of the museum. Similarly, the Uffizi describes how visitors are filled with wonder on their arrival at the museum:

(10) When arriving at the museum, visitors are first and foremost struck by the beauty of the Loggia dei Lanzi […]. (Uffizi: About us)

The very word, *visitors*, gives the idea of an unequal relationship, suggesting a host and guests. This becomes particularly evident when we compare the National Gallery website, in which the museum actually disclaims ownership of the collection, stating it belongs to the people of the UK, promoting an all-inclusive approach.

(11) The Gallery's aim is to care for the collection, to enhance it for future generations, primarily by acquisition, and to study it, while encouraging access to the pictures for the education and enjoyment of the widest possible public now and in the future.
The collection belongs to the people of the United Kingdom. It is open to all.

The gallery affirms the traditional objectives of studying, enhancing and caring for the collection, but it also envisages its role as *serving* a very wide and diverse public, thus putting itself in a subordinate position.

(12) The Gallery serves a very wide and diverse public, which includes:
- Frequent and occasional visitors to the Gallery in London
- Those who see its pictures while they are on loan elsewhere, both inside and outside the UK, and those who know the collection through publications, multimedia and TV
- Those who live nearby as well as those who live further away in the United Kingdom and overseas
- Every age group – from children to pensioners
- The socially excluded and the privileged; the uninformed and the specialist; and those with special needs
- The worldwide community of museums and galleries
- **Most importantly**: future generations (National Gallery: Constitution)

Those listed amongst *this diverse public* include people of all ages, from children to pensioners, as well as contrasting classes of people from opposite sides: the privileged and specialists who can be expected to be part of the gallery's audience in any case, but also *the socially excluded*, *the uninformed* and *those with special needs*, clearly expressing the intent to be socially all-inclusive.

5.2 Texts about the exhibits

The second part of the analysis will focus on the texts accompanying the images of the paintings. Each exhibit is given a separate webpage and allows the viewer to zoom into it, thus giving a very close-up view of the painting, a privileged position which the visitor can only enjoy in a virtual visit to the gallery (Marty 2008: 10). The information about the items given in the text may include a more or less detailed description of the painting and facts from the history of art (styles, various schools), about the history of the painting itself (the commission, who it belonged to) or the artist (his life, his technique) and/or the social, historical significance of the painting. The following paragraphs will discuss some of the characteristic features of the texts which show the different stances of the museums.

5.2.1 Length of texts

The information load varies enormously in the websites, as can be seen in the Table below. The Uffizi has relatively short texts (average 200-350 words) compared to the Louvre which can reach 700 words and in one case even 1558 words. Interestingly, both the Rijksmuseum and the National Gallery adopt similar strategies, whereby they provide visitors with two options, a short and a longer version. In the case of the Rijksmuseum the texts are extremely short, between 50 and 70 words, but the longer audio versions, though still short, stretch to 145 and 180 words. The National Gallery, on the other hand, offers an *Overview* of 150-170 words and a much longer *In-depth* text which goes from 950 to 1050 words approximately.

Table 2. Approximate length of texts (number of words)

		Audio	In-depth
Louvre	300-700 (1558)	–	–
National Gallery	150-170	–	950-1050
Rijksmuseum	50-70	145-180	–
Uffizi	200-350	–	–

The conciseness of the Rijksmuseum short texts, however, does not imply a superficial description or limited information. As the following examples show, they can touch upon a range of topics:

(13) This curious painting refuses to divulge its secrets. The image can be interpreted as an admonition to praise God with singing and music-making, but also as a risqué scene of seduction. The young woman's gaudy garments and red shoes are in questionable taste, and the old woman looks suspiciously like a procuress. Perhaps the painting contains a warning against immoral conduct. (Rijksmuseum: Musical Company)

(14) As inexperienced as he is, the young Rembrandt does not shy away from experimenting. Here the light rakes his right cheek while the rest of his face is enveloped in shadow. It takes a moment to realize that he is peering out at you. Rembrandt accentuated the curls of his tousled hair by drawing in the wet paint with the butt end of his paintbrush. (Rijksmuseum: Self-portrait, Rembrandt)

(15) This exceptional diptych shows the leading Florentine architect Giuliano da Sangallo and his recently deceased father Francesco, who was an architect as well as a musician. These are among the earliest portraits to characterize their sitters by profession: a pen and compass allude to architecture, the sheet music to music. Both disciplines are based on notions of harmony and proportion. (Rijksmuseum: Portraits of Giuliano and Francesco Giamberti da Sangallo)

(13) proposes possible interpretations of the significance of the painting, but leaves it as an open question. (14) explains a technique adopted by Rembrandt, whilst (15) gives some background information from the history of art. Although very brief, the texts guide the viewer in his "reading" and understanding of the painting.

5.2.2 Engagement with the reader/viewer

A clear indication of the relationship between curator/museum and visitor can be seen in the way a text engages with the visitor. The reader may be addressed directly though the pronoun *you* or imperatives, as in the Rijksmuseum and, to a lesser extent, the National Gallery websites (see Table 3 below) and is invited to focus on particular elements of the paintings, thus sharpening their observation and enhancing their experience (Blunden 2017a: 14).

(16) Look for example at the shawl in her hand – you can actually see the strokes of the brush. (Rijksmuseum: Portrait of a Couple, Probably Isaac Abrahamsz Massa and Beatrix van der Laen)

(17) However, there is nothing unusual in the pigments used – this illusion of reality relied on van Eyck's skill, not on any technical innovation. Look closely and you can see an astonishing level of detail. (National Gallery: The Arnolfini Portrait)

Even when *you* is generic, the tone is less formal and therefore more personal and engaging to the reader.

(18) If you were able to take a peek through the window of a 17th century Dutch home, you might well encounter a scene like this one, of a mother delousing her child in a simple interior. (Rijksmuseum: A Mother Delousing her Child's Hair)

Table 3. 1st and 2nd person pronouns (raw and normalized frequencies)

	Louvre		National Gallery		Rijksmuseum		Uffizi	
we	11	(0.0851%)	27	(0.1564%)	7	(0.1614%)	2	(0.0425%)
us	8	(0.0619%)	20	(0.1149%)	7	(0.1614%)	1	(0.0212%)
you	–		6	(0.0348%)	11	(0.2306%)	–	

The pronouns *we* and *us* are used by all museums, although less frequently by the Uffizi and the Louvre (see Table 3). However, it is not just a question of the number of occurrences, but also their use and meaning. If we look closely at the following examples, we can see an important difference. The Louvre uses both *we* and *us* to include the viewer and to direct his attention to certain features of the painting:

(19) Yet, despite the illusion of immediate proximity with the lacemaker, *we* cannot really penetrate her universe. The forms of the tapestry, sewing cushion and small table come between *us* and her, and her work is hidden in her right hand. (Louvre: the Lacemaker)

(20) Slightly off-center, a woman with a sophisticated hairstyle and plunging neckline beckons *us* with her eyes and hand position toward the left side of the composition where another player, plunged in shadow, is discreetly producing an ace of diamonds from under his belt. (Louvre: The Cheat with the Ace of Diamonds)

In contrast, in the Uffizi text *us* is not inclusive, without the involvement of the visitor, but very much exclusive when referring to highly specialized knowledge, thus reinforcing the asymmetrical relationship.

(21) The subject of the Nativity and the date, MCCCCLXXXVII written on the marble block in the foreground, lead *us* to think that this panel could have been painted on the occasion of the birth of Giovanni Tornabuoni, first born of Lorenzo Tornabuoni and Giovanna degli Albizi, born in 1487. (Uffizi: The Adoration of Magi)

In line with their more familiar approach that we have seen above, *we* is inclusive in both the Rijksmuseum and the National Gallery and used to draw the viewers' attention to details in the painting.

(22) *We* can see a backroom through the open doorway and beyond it a garden. (Rijksmuseum: A Mother Delousing her Child's Hair, Known as a Mother's Duty)

(23) In The Hay Wain, the mill is out of sight – *we* just glimpse the edge of its red brick wall on the extreme right. (National Gallery: The Hay Wain)

However, the National Gallery also uses it when referring to curators' expert knowledge and therefore in an exclusive manner.

(24) *We* don't know how Hay got it, but he brought it back to England and it was bought by the National Gallery in 1842 for the moderate price of 600 Guineas. It was our first Netherlandish painting. (National Gallery: The Arnolfini Portrait)

Questions are another way of engaging directly with the viewer and, at the same time, they create verbal vectors directing the visitor's gaze toward a particular detail of the painting. Rather than describing a painting, a question invites the reader to look and think about the painting or painter in greater depth. We find once again both the Rijksmuseum and the National Gallery making a similar use of a device, whereas the Louvre has only one example of a question in the heading of paragraph and the Uffizi makes no use of them at all.

(25) By painting the bottom of the houses white, he draws our attention to the figures, the woman doing handiwork in the doorway and the children playing. And that woman by the barrel – has she just finished scrubbing the street? The waste water glistens in the gutter and flows towards us, pulling our gaze into the alleyway. (Rijksmusuem: View of Houses in Delft, Known as "The Little Street")

(26) Do these instruments and books symbolize intransience or is the music actually a reference to harmony? And what is the significance of the painting on the wall with the biblical story of Lot and his daughters? Perhaps it's a disguised brothel scene intended as a warning against immoral conduct. What did Rembrandt want to say with this painting? Opinions are divided. (Rijksmusuem: Merry Company)

(27) An engagement present or an allusion to Christ?
One interpretation of this self-portrait, which is said to stem from Goethe, is that it was an engagement present for Agnes Frey, whom Dürer was going to marry on his return to Nuremberg in 1494. […] Combined with the inscription on the picture next to the date, "Things happen to me as it is written on high," the thistle could also be seen as a reference to Christ's Passion… (Louvre: Self-Portrait or Portrait of the Artist Holding a Thistle)

In line with this more direct approach is the use of simple, everyday lexis, as for example *pottering about* and *belting out* that can be found in the National Gallery and Rijksmuseum texts.

(28) Mrs Andrews, still only 17 or 18, is less self-confident, sitting bolt upright in the palest of blue informal skirts and jacket, and a pair of backless mules more suited to pottering about the house. (National Gallery: Mr and Mrs Andrews)

(29) This fun-loving family looks to be in a state of utter chaos. […] The slip of paper affirms this. It bears the text, "As the old sing, so the young pipe", which is to say, "Children will follow their parents' example". The father is clearly over abiding, mother and grandmother are belting out a duet, and the baby is being literally spoon fed this life of excess. (Rijksmuseum: The Merry Family)

5.2.3 Narratives and anecdotes

Another strategy to be found in all the websites, though more frequently in the National Gallery than in the others, is the use of narrative and anecdotes, which not only 'adds something more' to the looking by contextualising the painting (Blunden 2017a), but also makes the information more entertaining and intriguing.

(30) "You wouldn't recognise him anymore", said Theo van Gogh to his mother. He was referring to his brother Vincent who has just had a mouth operation on account of losing all his teeth. At the time Vincent was in Paris, where he had moved in with his brother. He painted this self-portrait one year later. His cheeks may still be somewhat sunken, but with his felt hat and cravat, he looks eminently presentable. And so he should. For Vincent, Paris was the place to be. (Rijksmuseum: Self-portrait, Vincent van Gogh)

(31) In his memoirs, one courtier later noted that in 1756 the marquise stopped receiving visitors in her dressing room but instead received them while at her tapestry-frame: "she went from make-up to making." Embroidery was regarded as a virtuous activity for women and it was not uncommon for them to be portrayed engaged in it. (National Gallery: Madame de Pompadour at her Tambour Frame)

(32) Veronese depicts, with apparent ease, no less than 130 feast-goers, mixing biblical figures with men and women of the period. The latter are not really identifiable, although according to an 18th-century legend, the artist himself is depicted in white with a viola da gamba next to Titian and Bassano, all of whom contribute to the musical entertainment. (Louvre: The Wedding Feast)

Personal letters, memoirs or legends of the time are quoted to give personal insights, whilst (33) narrates the story of the painting, touching upon the very modern question of gender equality.

(33) The painting was completed in Rome where Artemisia returned after spending seven years in Florence and where she was able to appreciate Caravaggio's works once more. The naturalistic "virility" of the work provoked strong reactions on its arrival in Florence and the painting was denied the honor of being exhibited in the Gallery; in fact, it was only with great difficulty and the help of her friend Galileo Galilei that the painter managed to extract the payment […] Today, this painting also represents the human and professional tale of a woman who chose to be an artist in an era dominated by men; in this she succeeded, working in the courts of Rome, Florence and Naples, traveling to England and finally becoming the first woman to enter the Academy of Art and Design in Florence. (Uffizi: Judith Beheading Holofernes)

5.2.4 Technical vocabulary

The use of technical language often raises a barrier to non-expert understanding of specialized discourse. However, the museum texts do not make an extensive use of technical terms. Indeed, the Rijksmuseum does not use them in the texts analysed in this study and the Uffizi and the Louvre rarely used any. This is not to say that technical issues are not discussed, but it is done by giving a simple explanation without resorting to specialized

terminology. In the following example, we find the term *pointillist*, but it appears in inverted commas and is glossed by referring to *dabs* of colour, so that someone who is unfamiliar with the term can, nevertheless, understand the sentence.

(34) The Delft master's genius consisted in reproducing the natural optical deformations of the human eye by creating several depths of field. The center of our attention, the lacemaker's painstaking work, is shown in great detail and in sharp focus, particularly the fine white thread stretched between the young woman's fingers. Further away from this visual focus, the forms become more blurred, including, paradoxically, those in the foreground. The white and red threads hanging out of the cushion are rendered in almost abstract dribbles of paint. The tapestry, painted with little "pointillist" dabs of pure color, is also out of focus. (Louvre: The Lacemaker)

Perhaps surprisingly, in view of its less formal style, the National Gallery uses technical terms much more frequently, often with a gloss as in (29).

(35) Leonardo has used his inventive technique, now called aerial perspective, to give the impression of a vast landscape setting. He realised that we perceive the same colours differently depending on their distance from us; green appears blue if viewed from far off. By painting the mountains in the background blue, he tricks us into believing they are in the far distance. (National Gallery: The Virgin of the Rocks)

5.2.5 Abstract language

Although there is little specialized terminology in the Louvre and the Uffizi websites, their texts are sometimes much less accessible than the National Gallery's. This can be accounted for by the use of abstract language or, in Blunden's framework, metaphorical language. The comments on the paintings tend to use nominalisations, many adjectives (often very formal) and abstract concepts making comprehension more difficult and the descriptions of the paintings more distant and almost alienating:

(36) The rigorously ordered pyramidal composition does not hinder the movement of the figures, and the painstaking orchestration of their gestures (the superimposition of hands and interplay of looks) takes

on a new intensity in the diffuse light which softens outlines without weakening the modeling of the figures. (Louvre: The Virgin of the Rocks)

The extremely complex structure of (37) increases the difficulty for the reader. The writer describes how the artist skilfully combines two techniques with the metaphor *marries*. The *approach* is both pre- and post-modified by the adjective *strict* and the past participle clause *learned during his Florentine education*. Similarly, the second element, the *representation*, is also both pre- and post-modified by *lenticular* and *characteristic of Flemish painting* and followed by a participle clause indicating the result.

(37) The master painter marries the strict approach to perspective learned during his Florentine education with the lenticular representation more characteristic of Flemish painting, achieving extraordinary results and unmatched originality. (Uffizi: The Duke and Duchess of Urbino Federico da Montefeltro and Battista Sforza)

By contrast, the following examples from the National Gallery and Rijksmuseum websites adopt a completely different style. In place of nominalisations in the Louvre text, the subjects of the sentences in (38) are people, either the artist or the figures in the paintings, and active verbs, *captures*, *leap out*, *throws out*, are used to describe what is happening. The structure of the sentences is complex like the Uffizi text, but the description of concrete actions and physical attributes, rather than abstract concepts, makes it easier to understand.

(38) Caravaggio captures the dramatic climax of the story, the moment of revelation when the disciples suddenly see what has been in front of them all along. Their actions convey their astonishment: one is about to leap out of his chair, his elbow jutting out towards us, while the other throws out his arms in a gesture of disbelief. Typically for Caravaggio, he has shown the disciples as ordinary working men, with bearded, lined faces and ragged clothes, in contrast to the youthful beardless Christ who, with his flowing locks and rich red tunic, seems quite literally to have come from a different world. (National Gallery: The Supper Emmaus)

The text below from the Rijksmuseum has a simple style and guides the reader by signposting the information structure of the paragraph. It first announces

that the painting has a number of characteristic features of Rembrandt's painting, before mentioning two of them and giving a specific example. It closes with an informal comment, *the effect is wonderfully dynamic*, and directs the gaze of the viewer to a detail by an invitation introduced by *if*.

(39) Already we can see all the features that would later make him so famous. Not only does Rembrandt experiment with light and shadow, he also tries out different painting techniques. For example, he added lighter accents by using the back of his paintbrush to scratch lines in the wet paint, making it appear as if his curls have caught the sunlight. The effect is wonderfully dynamic. If you look closely, you can see that he gazes out directly at the viewer, yet we actually see very little of him. (Rijksmuseum: Self-portrait, Rembrandt van Rijn)

5.2.6 Teaching or sharing expert information

The background information provided by the art galleries inevitably is drawn from highly specialized, academic and scholarly sources. The question arises of how this knowledge can be communicated without exposing the asymmetrical relationship and leave room for the individual visitor to make his own interpretation.

The websites actually present this "insider" knowledge in different ways. As we have seen, the National Gallery presents an appropriately named *In-depth* version of the text, where detailed information is coloured with insights from the history of art.

(40) His determination to capture the rural Suffolk landscape of his boyhood in these monumental paintings must in part have been due to a sense that this way of life was changing due to rapid industrialisation – the factories, steam power and locomotives that appear in works by his contemporaries, such as Turner, are absent from Constable's paintings. (National Gallery: Hay Wain)

Although the information is a result of specialized expert knowledge and understanding of the painter, it is presented here to the viewer in a less imposing manner, through the supposition *must* […] *have been due to* and the mitigating expression *in part*.

In the following example the text guides the viewer to observe details in the painting and offers possible interpretations of the scene, but without a definitive answer. *Perhaps*, *but then*, *perhaps*, *may help us*, *it seems* are all expressions which lessen the force of the statements.

(41) A young woman standing at a keyboard holds our eye with a direct gaze. Suffused in the light which streams through the window, she seems caught in a moment of expectation and uncertainty. Perhaps we have interrupted her playing, or perhaps she is waiting for us so that she can start. But then maybe the empty chair in the foreground is significant: perhaps she is waiting for someone else. The large painting of a naked Cupid, the god of erotic love, on the wall behind her may help us to understand the situation. It seems to be a signal that this is not just a scene of music making, but that the woman is waiting for her lover. (National Gallery: A Young Woman Standing at a Virginal)

Similarly, the Rijksmuseum draws the viewer's attention to the appearance of the figures and then suggests a comparison with other paintings from the same period, thus "teaching" or informing in a deductive manner.

(42) Jan Steen expertly rendered the figures effusive moments and facial expressions which already distinguished him in his own day. Compare this to the dignified and calm poses of the figures in the other 17th century paintings. (Rijksmuseum: The Merry Family)

The Louvre, on the other hand, presumes a surprisingly deep level of knowledge on the part of the viewer and this raises the question of what kind of audience the museum is actually targeting. For example, in (43) the word *diurnal* is unusual and maybe a result of a literal translation. Nevertheless, the text pretends that the visitor knows that the scenes in most of Georges de la Tour's works were in candlelight.

(43) The only diurnal painting by Georges de La Tour in the Louvre along with the Saint Thomas, the Cheat illustrates a theme that was frequently taken up in the wake of Caravaggio. (Louvre: The Cheat with the Ace of Diamonds)

Similarly, in (44) it expects the visitor to have a good understanding of the Cubist and Surrealist art movements in order to appreciate the comment on the painting. Furthermore, it supposes this is a fairly obvious observation, *It is easy to imagine*, thus underlining the asymmetrical knowledge and power relationship between museum and visitor or suggesting the sharing information at a peer level, or at least expert to (semi-)expert.

(44) Dialogues with the 20th century
In the simplified volumes, the oddness of the composition, and the comical aspect of the subject matter, the Louvre's Cheat found pride of place in 20th-century sensibility. It is easy to imagine how this work must have fascinated the Cubists in its treatment of mass or the Surrealists with its mysterious character, as did another painting a few years its predecessor: Gabrielle d'Estrées and One of Her Sisters, an anonymous work from the second school of Fontainebleau (Louvre). (Louvre: The Cheat with the Ace of Diamonds)

The Uffizi also calls upon a level of education and cultural knowledge on the part of the visitor that can be fairly described as above average, as for example the reference to Horace's "hedonistic ideology" in the following excerpt.

(45) His depiction of the basket of fruit and the cup of wine proffered by the god is surprising, with such elements interpreted by some critics as a Horatian invitation to frugality, conviviality and friendship. (Uffizi: Bacchus)

It also presumes a specific knowledge of art history as it refers to Vasari, an Italian painter, architect and biographer of Italian artists, without any explanation as to who he is.

(46) It is highly probable that the work was commissioned by a member of the Medici family, although there is nothing written about the painting before 1550, when Giorgio Vasari describes it in the Medici's Villa of Castello, owned by the cadet branch of the Medici family since the mid-15th century. (Uffizi: Birth of Venus)

6. Concluding remarks

Museums envisage their role in society as educators and as having a duty to share their knowledge and expertise with the public. All the art galleries considered in this study certainly fulfil this function by giving contextualising, background information that enhances the understanding and appreciation of the paintings. This information acts as a "prompt" (Kress – Salander 2012: 8) to visitors who can then exploit or capitalise on the facts, observations and insight for their own purposes or interests. However, the analysis has shown a number of similarities and differences in the approach

adopted by the museums and the relationship they wish to establish with their visitors. In fact, there is a noticeable distinction between the Louvre and Uffizi on the one side and the National Gallery and the Rijksmuseum on the other.

The Louvre and the Uffizi maintain a more traditional, conservative approach and seem to aim at a higher threshold level of shared knowledge amongst visitors, which may, in fact, satisfy some nationalities, bearing in mind Guillot's findings (see above). However, they do not make the museum information easily accessible to all, either intellectually or linguistically. The tone and register used by these two art galleries reflect their vision of the role of museums today, which, as we saw in their institutional webpages, highlights their authoritative status.

In contrast, the National Gallery and the Rijksmuseum seem to place the bar at a lower level, so much so that they could be accused by some perhaps of dumbing down. The National Gallery, in particular, glosses and explains in greater detail than the other websites, although it also makes quite an extensive use of terminology. Their use of pronouns and questions to engage directly with the reader establishes an apparently more symmetrical relationship. Rather than imparting their specialized knowledge in a top-down manner, they seem to share it and thus embody a more contemporary vision of museum communication.

The art galleries' expertise, no matter what their style or approach is, certainly enriches the learning experience. But, unlike knowledge dissemination in other specialised domains, such as law or medicine, where the knowledge of the subject and its technical terminology may be essential for the empowerment of the individual, the average museum visitor has no specific need for the cultural information offered there, except for his own edification. A visit to an art gallery, whether in person or online, can inspire interest and curiosity in art, stimulate wonder at the beauty of the paintings or simply bring pleasure.

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Copyright & *copyleft*: Knowledge mediation at the interface of law and computer technology

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ABSTRACT

This paper provides a qualitative investigation into the many ways in which exposition mediates exclusive knowledge about *copyright* and *copyleft* to lay-people and (semi-)experts with different profiles, needs and goals, in different user situations. The analysis moves from objective exposition in the COPYRIGHT article of the *Oxford Dictionary of Law*, primarily intended for inclusion and knowledge transfer, to institutional and non-institutional webpages at the front end of Google search listings (pages from *GOV.uk*, *Techopedia*, *MakeUseOf*, the *GNU Project*). While highly ranking online pages are generally held to be objective, credible and authoritative sources of knowledge, non-professional online dictionary articles may depart from lexicographic practice and provide thin if incorrect content (e.g. the Techopedia dictionary article). Moreover, the goals of self-promotion and persuasion may frame expository content, which may communicate the ideology shared by author and principal organization, and therefore take on a significant argumentative dimension (e.g. the GNU's page *What is Copyleft*). Another point concerns the ability to reach out to the lay-person in new genres and media: the analysis suggests that popularization strategies and usability principles interact in diverse ways and to different extents in (multitype) expository texts written for online communication, on pages which benefit from dilution of information and recourse to expandable content down or outside the sitemap.

Keywords: copyright, copyleft, exposition, popularization, knowledge transfer, new media, old genres, usability.

1. Introduction

This paper is concerned with the many facets of exposition in mediating domain-specific knowledge about *copyright* and *copyleft* to lay-people and (semi-)experts with different profiles, needs and goals, in different user

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situations (Tarp 2008; Bergenholtz – Bothma 2011). Our question is whether and to what extent exposition (Werlich 1983) is used by itself or with other types, to mediate knowledge that is "exclusive" (Engberg et al. 2018a) to a restricted (i.e. specialist) discourse community in old genres like dictionary articles remediated or written for online, and short essays published on popular online pages.

Exposition reflects the basic cognitive process of comprehension (Werlich 1983). Dictionary definitions and dictionary articles in general (Bergenholtz – Tarp 1995: microstructures) are prototypical manifestations of the objective, analytical, expository text type. Linguistically, exposition correlates with phenomenon-identifying and phenomenon-linking sentences (respectively, *definiendum* IS *definiens/definientia*; *definiendum* INCLUDES *definiens/definientia*). The major difference from description lies in the prevalence within exposition of general stative verbs, which are relatively abstract and non-dynamic in nature – in generic or generalizing sentences. Generic sentences say something about abstract individuals rather than particulars located in time and space; generalizing sentences express a pattern or regularity rather than specific episodes (Smith 2003: 24). As an information mode (Smith 2003), exposition provides knowledge about things and events. In lexicographical terms, it caters for the cognitively oriented needs of the dictionary user, or the acquisition of linguistic, sometimes semantico-encyclopaedic information ("What?"). When the user's needs and questions are operative, however, the focus is on procedural information ("How to?"). This function is typically overlooked in current lexicography (Agerbo 2017). Lay-users and semi-experts searching for *copyright* and *copyleft*, however, may have both cognitively-oriented and operative needs.

Another important point for our investigation and text selection regards the slow dynamics of legal language, and the (in)ability of traditional legal lexicography to keep an up-to-date record of terms and definitions. In our particular case, Elizabeth Martin and Johnathan Law's (2019) authoritative *A Dictionary of Law* (ODL) accounts for *copyright*, but does not record *copyleft*. ODL is now available online via subscription on the *Oxford Reference* platform (OR). Given the century-long debate around *copyright*, its adaptation to national and international law, as well as the development of an established core meaning, ODL provides coverage of the principle in an article of around 180 words. In terms of Search Engine Optimization, this is short but not deplorably thin content, which users can visualize above the fold.

Copyleft has only recently developed as one of the basic tenets of the Free Software Foundation. It sets conditions on copyrighted work, challenging the traditional conception of private property and the rights granted by Copyright Law.[1] Many legal issues still remain unclear about the *copyleft* licencing system and its relation to the copyright principle. This explains both the exclusion of the lemma from ODL's macrostructure and short meaning descriptions and thin content in other OR dictionaries. Even in the best of circumstances, Daniel Chandler and Rob Munday's (2020) *A Dictionary of Media Communication*, devotes only 57 words to copyleft (ODMC: COPYLEFT) and 72 to copyright, with mutual cross-referencing (ODMC: COPYRIGHT).

With the web now in power stage (Moor 2005), our knowledge search habits have significantly changed. As a consequence, it makes sense to broaden the picture to websites that provide content at the interface of law and computer technology. Very briefly, we have learnt to demand fast(er) access to more and preferably free information (Sunstein 2008; Lorentzen – Theilgaard 2012; Lew – de Schryver 2014). This means sidelining active searches and long-established paying options while depending on general internet search engines and their underlying algorithms for our queries. Webpages on the front end of google search listings are automatically held to be credible and authoritative sources of knowledge (Sunstein 2008; Lorentzen – Theilgaard 2012).

On these grounds, we complement discussion of ODL's copyright article (ODL-cr) with insights into expository passages from freely available pages with high google rankings for the search strings "copyright site:uk" and "copyright OR copyleft" (1 September 2018). Setting aside high-ranking extended essays (e.g. the Wikipedia pages for *copyright* and *copyleft*), we concentrate on the texts listed in Table 1.

A cursory look at the sample suggests that ODL-cr is a homogeneous text, with *I explain* as the main performative verb (Longacre 1983). The

[1] Since the Statute of Anne, passed in England in 1710, national *copyright* legislation has developed as part of intellectual property regulations and adapted to the changing needs of national states, while going through a continuing process of international harmonization. Recent technological advances and the Internet in particular, however, have been challenging the traditional conception of private property and the rights granted by Copyright Law. For example, in the 1980s Richard Stallman developed the *copyleft* licencing system, one of the basic tenets of the Free Software Foundation. It allows users to modify the source code of a system, provided they grant the same rights to those they pass the system on to. Since copyleft sets conditions on copyrighted work, copyleft licences are interpreted as a development from copyright, or a subset thereof.

other texts are multitype (Virtanen 1992). That is, exposition combines with narration (performative verb: *I recount*) in TECH-cl and with instruction in the GOV passages (performative verb: *I direct*), while it combines with objective argumentation in MUO-cl (performative verbs: *I explain* and *I argue*), and takes on a clear argumentative-persuasive dimension in GNU-cl (Amossy 2005). This comes with a shift from more impersonal forms of knowledge mediation and knowledge transfer, to recourse to popularization strategies (Calsamiglia – van Dijk 2004) for user engagement and orientation (Nielsen Norman group).

Table 1. Freely available online texts selected for analysis

COPYRIGHT	
GOV: Gov.uk institutional platform Subdirectories and itemized hyperlinks about copyright:	https://www.gov.uk
• GOV-cr1: *Patents*, *Trademarks*, *Copyright and Designs*	https://www.gov.uk/browse/business/intellectual-property
• GOV-cr2: *How Copyright Protects Your Work*	https://www.gov.uk/copyright
• GOV-cr3: *Intellectual Property: Copyright*	https://www.gov.uk/browse/business/intellectual-property
• GOV-cr4: *Intellectual Property and Your Work*	https://www.gov.uk/intellectual-property-an-overview
• GOV-cr5: *Guidance. Licence, Sell or Market your Copyright Material*	https://www.gov.uk/guidance/license-sell-or-market-your-copyright-material
COPYLEFT	
TECH: for-profit *Techopedia – The IT Education Site*	https://www.techopedia.com/
• TECH-cl: COPYLEFT article in the *Techopedia Dictionary*	https://www.techopedia.com/definition/3261/copyleft
MUO: partially free online magazine *MakeUseOf – Technology, simplified*	https://www.makeuseof.com/
• MUO-cl: free magazine article Copyleft – *Three Key Concepts You Need to Know*	https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/copyleft-copyright-key-concepts/
GNU: *The GNU Project*, sponsored by the Free Software Foundation	https://www.gnu.org/gnu/thegnuproject.en.html
• GNU-cl: the FAQs page about *What is Copyleft?*	https://www.gnu.org/licenses/copyleft.en.html

We are interested in the diverse status, features and uses of exposition in a highly respected article such as ODL-cr vis-à-vis exposition in non-traditional online intermediaries (Sunstein 2008) with varying credibility, diverse purposes, user situations and communicative contexts. Section 2 introduces the methodology and framework of analysis. As a second step, the texts are analysed consecutively in Sections 3 to 5, and positioned at different points between the knowledge transfer end and the popularization end of the knowledge mediation/communication spectrum. Section 6 looks back and summarizes, with an eye to esteem and credibility in traditional genres and new media.

2. Methodology and framework of analysis

The analysis is strictly qualitative. As suggested in Section 1, ODL's COPYRIGHT (ODL-cr) shows the core features of objective analytical exposition (Werlich 1983; Smith 2003: information mode). It is a cognitively-oriented (Tarp 2008; Bergenholtz – Bothma 2011), semantico-encyclopaedic article (Cacchiani 2018b). Additionally, ODL is held to be an authoritative source of knowledge (ODL), which commands trustworthiness and esteem based on a history of eight subsequent editions, taken-for-granted lexicographic and professional expertise, and the unrivalled reputation of the Oxford University Press. On these grounds, our analysis in Section 3 starts with ODL's COPYRIGHT.

Dictionary function, user profiles and needs are identified following Tarp and associates' Functional Theory of Dictionary (Bergenholtz – Tarp 1995; Tarp 2008; Bergenholtz – Bothma 2011). Crucially, notions such as cognitive and operative function (see also Section 1) can be readily stretched to apply to all passages under scrutiny. In like manner, defining the intended user and encoder profiles, needs and situation for all texts is fully in line with genre-based work and corpus-assisted studies of legal knowledge transfer and mediation, also online (Engberg et al. 2018b).

The move from traditional dictionary article and highly respected publisher (ODL-cr) to freely available content on webpages with diverse purposes and user situations results in variation along multiple dimensions.

As regards article description, insights from Wiegand's long-established Actional-Semantic Theory of Dictionary Form (Wiegand 1977; 1992; 2015) are used to identify key structural and linguistic features of the dictionary article. The theory concentrates on lexicographical meaning descriptions, which provide descriptors about the definiendum within a specific frame-

based structure, as well as (semantico-)encyclopaedic items and comments. The descriptors allow for non-natural condensation, as for example ellipsis of copula between lemma and definition, and cross-references to other articles.

Public libraries in the UK maintain subscriptions for public use to the ODL online and the OR platform, with the express purpose of making specialised knowledge accessible to students and lay-users. This raises a fundamental question about the mediation of knowledge in ODL-cr: besides dialogic reference to other texts and interdiscursive dialogism (Bres 2005), is there recourse to any popularization device? To tackle the issue, we shall draw on Calsamiglia – van Dijk (2004), which provides a set of recontextualizing knowledge-oriented strategies (Jacobi 1987). For instance, the "word *called* term" type of denomination and designation for indirect metalinguistic naming with a word-to-term direction (Loffler-Laurian 1983); exemplification via generalizations and scenarios, hypothetical exemplificatory situations (Calsamiglia – van Dijk 2004); concretizing associative tropes such as analogy, metaphor and similes. Calsamiglia – van Dijk (2004), however, does not work equally well with interlocutive dialogic devices for engaging with users, for which we mostly refer to Bres (2005). These comprise, among others, directives in imperatives and the question-answer pattern, inclusive-*we*, and recourse to the 2nd person to address the user.

Since we concentrate on online texts, in our treatment of exposition we shall consider adherence to certain usability principles in content design (Nielsen 2001, 2015 and Nielsen Norman group) as a measure of the intent of popularization. These principles are used as guidelines to make (ideally) meaningful content clear, fast and easy to read.

- In usability theory, utility content is accessed fast, usable – i.e. it is processed and understood easily – and is useful for the user (Nielsen 2001, 2015). It is split into chunks by topic – ideally, no more than seven chunks per text – and organized in clear text hierarchies of short paragraphs. Lines of 50-70 characters are recommended.
- Bullet and numbered lists assist in grouping together related content (Moran 2016).
- Also regarding comprehension, clear, meaningful (vs. fancy), user-centric headings support scanning and attract the user's interest. Likewise, texts start with meaningful words (Nielsen 2015) for scannability, while abbreviations, initialisms, and acronyms are spelt out in the first instance (Nielsen 2001).

- Whereas usable texts are expected to aim for a 12th grade reading level when addressing readers with college degrees, an 8th grade reading level is recommended for general users. Specialized domain terminology is required when content is designed for specialised users (Nielsen 2015). In what follows, we use WebFX's Readability Test Tool to provide information about the readability scores and, particularly, sentence length and grade or age required to understand the texts under investigation.[2]
- With reference to interaction and engagement, FAQs and – we may want to add – the question/answer (Q/A) pattern deliver good value to website and users. Well-managed/targeted FAQs and questions show that the organization/principal (Goffman 1981)[3] is listening and addressing people's concerns (Farrell 2014). As to imperatives, they should come only with mandatory tasks or when the statement is qualified appropriately, i.e. preceded by information that signals goals and relevance to the audience. Within the economy of this paper, this guideline is stretched to cover other directives as well.

Given the varied nature of the data set, descriptive categories and theoretical perspectives will be prioritized differently as the exploration unfolds. This shall enable us to focus on the status and various forms of exposition at play. We shall position the texts at different points on the knowledge mediation continuum based on the ability to engage and explain, adopt user-centric language (Nielsen Norman group), signal and demonstrate relevance to the user (Nielsen Norman group: user orientation) and, ultimately, popularize content (Calsamiglia – van Dijk 2004).

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2 WebFX's Readability Test Tool is available on https://www.webfx.com/tools/readable/. It provides text scores for the most used readability indicators: Flesh Kincaid Reading Ease and Flesh Kincaid Grade Level; Gunning Fog Score; Coleman Liau Index; Automated Readability Index; Smog Index.

3 In his chapter on participation and *footing* in social interactions, Goffman (1981: 144-146) deconstructs the speaker into three persons and social roles. For our purposes, suffice it to say that the *principal* is responsible for the message, the *author* originates the content, and the *animator* produces the actual utterance. These roles do not need either to conflate into the same person or to be performed simultaneously. Consider, in this respect, ghost writers of presidential speeches, or party leaders talking on behalf of party members and supporters. When anonymous online author and (non-)institutional organization are mutually interchangeable, we can assume that principal and author share values and motivations for writing, and that the author adopts the originator's position, formulates the text and usually animates it.

3. COPYRIGHT (ODL-cr) and COPYLEFT (TECH-cl)

3.1 COPYRIGHT (ODL-cr)

According to the *Preface*, ODL addresses cognitively-oriented user needs and situations. It communicates encyclopaedic knowledge of a cultural and subject-specific nature (Tarp 2008) to novices (law students), lay-users and semi-experts (practitioners in other disciplines) for purposes of inclusion in the community of practice (Wenger 1998; Wenger-Trayner – Wenger-Trayner 2015). Example (1) provides the dictionary article for COPYRIGHT (ODL-cr).

(1) **Copyright** n. The exclusive right to reproduce or authorize others to reproduce artistic, literary, or musical works. It is conferred by the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988, which also extends to sound broadcasting, cinematograph films, and television broadcasts (including cable television). Copyright lasts for the author's lifetime plus 70 years from the end of the year in which he died; it can be assigned or transmitted on death. EU directive 93/98 requires all EU states to ensure that the duration of copyright is the life of the author plus 70 years. Copyright protection for sound recordings lasts for 50 years from the date of their publication; for broadcasts it is 50 years from the end of the year in which the broadcast took place. Directive 91/250 requires all EU member states to protect computer *software by copyright law. The principal remedies for breach of copyright (known as **piracy**) are an action for *damages and *account of profits or an *injunction. It is a criminal offence knowingly to make or deal in articles that infringe a copyright. *See also BERNE CONVENTION.* (ODL-cr)

The article has a readability level of about 12 and, on average, 20.11 words per sentence. As a text that was originally written for paper and then remediated for online, it does not align in any way with usability guidelines. It is a concise modular, non-elementary article (Wiegand 1977, 1992, 2015). Distinctive features include non-natural condensation with copula deletion (e.g. between lemma and definition), third person style and objectification, complex clauses.

The initial definition, integrate core (Wiegand 1977, 1992, 2015), specifies function and application of the superordinate term, *right* (1a). As the article unfolds, semantico-encyclopaedic references are made to national

legislation and procedural information regarding the interpretation and application of the law with a technical explanation. Further detail comes from the shift from national to supranational legislation. By doing so, technical examples merge with external legal references to community law (1b) and cross-references to synopses in the outside matter (1c).

(1a) The exclusive right to reproduce or authorize others to reproduce artistic, literary or musical work.

(1b) It is conferred by the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act 1988, which also extends to sound broadcasting, cinematograph films, and television broadcasts (including cable television). Copyright lasts … EU directive 93/98 requires … Directive 91/250 requires all EU member states to protect computer *software by copyright law.

(1c) *See also BERNE CONVENTION.*

The purpose is twofold: to explain and to provide access to the relevant literature for further study. The relations between *copyright* and other technical terms within copyright law and intellectual property law are brought to the fore in separate complex clauses that form other meaning descriptions. Some examples are associative naming with relational expressions as in (1d), intratextually dialogic analytical definitions with internal cross-referencing (**damages*; **account of profits*; **injunction*) also in combination with metalinguistic naming and internal cross-referencing (*known as* ***piracy***), as in (1e), and additions in the form of relative clauses, such as circumstantial information in (1b) above.

(1d) It is a criminal offence knowingly to make or deal in articles that infringe a copyright.

(1e) The principal remedies for breach of copyright (known as **piracy**) are an action for *damages and *account of profits or an *injunction.

Concretization and exemplification via hypothetical scenarios are not part of this semantico-encyclopaedic article. Moreover, what might be seen as an interlocutive dialogic device (*See*, in 1c) can be readily replaced by typographical conventions for cross-referencing to other matter within the

dictionary, in the interest of lexicographical condensation (e.g. the star key or bold in 1e).

Overall, ODL-cr can be seen as an objective expository text that transfers knowledge to current peripheral though prospective active members of the community of practice, for learning and future inclusion (Wenger 1998; Wenger-Trayner – Wenger-Trayner 2015).

3.2 COPYRIGHT (TECH-cr)

Since the commercial website *Techopedia – The IT Education Site* purports to provide accessible information and "actional advice" to its users – primarily IT professional and technology decision makers (TECH) – we would expect a dictionary article that adjusts to usability guidelines rather than to lexicographic conventions. For example, we expect chunking of meaningful expandable content and user engagement. Yet, the COPYLEFT (TECH-cl) article returns quite an unsatisfactory picture.

(2) **Copyleft**
Definition
What does *Copyleft* mean?
Copyleft is free software license requiring copyright authors to permit some of their work to be reproduced. With copyright law, authors have complete control over their materials. But with copyleft law, users and authors co-exist. Users are permitted to engage in copying and distributing copyrighted materials. However, authors do have some say in who uses the materials based on their intended use. Copyleft does not require source code distribution. Thus, copyleft grants users similar rights to those normally only granted to the copyright authors, including activities such as distribution and copying.
Techopedia explains *Copyleft*
In the mid-1980s, Don Stallman coined the term copyleft in a letter he sent to Richard Stallman. […] Emacs General Public License […] was the original copyleft license. As time went on, this was renamed to the GNU General Public License.
Copyleft laws have provided users the same rights as copyright authors. They not only can review materials protected by copyright laws, but they can also copy, modify and distribute the materials. This gives many the benefit of using copyright materials, a "share all" type of use. However, to use copyleft, it must be determined (usually by the

> copyright author) that the materials are going to be used in a pertinent manner benefiting others for educational or cultural purposes. (TECH-cl)

TECH-cl has a grade level of 11 and, on average, 11.6 words per sentence. Contrary to usability guidelines, it stretches over subsequent screens. *Techopedia explains Copyleft* and matching content are part of screen 2, together with a rectangle used for advertising other products and companies. Contrary to lexicographic practice, a narration about the early history of copyleft (2b: *In the mid-1980s … GNU General Public Licence*) sets apart the primary expository subtypes (2a: *Copyleft is free software … distribution and copying*; 2c: *Copyleft laws have provided … for educational or cultural purposes*). Contrary to both usability guidelines and lexicographic practice for concise expository articles in legal dictionaries, content is diluted and repeated across headings and paragraphs. For example, headings and bylines such as *Definition*, *What does copyleft mean?* and *Techopedia explains Copyleft* are redundant. Also, superordinates replace exact domain terminology. For instance, *license* substitutes for *non-proprietary license*. Furthermore, there are no mediostructural references to terms within the copyleft frame, no encyclopaedic comments, and no external references to encyclopaedic detail.

In short, the article is not written by a professional lexicographer. It fails to provide correct meaning descriptions, exemplifications and illustrative scenarios for the specific situations, conditions and frames activated by the application of copyleft. As a consequence, COPYLEFT (TECH-cl) does not answer lay-user questions and cannot mediate the knowledge needed by IT professionals and technology decision makers either.

4. Copyright (GOV-cr)

On the Gov.uk platform, UK government experts address lay-citizens as anonymous authors and animators for the principal institution (Goffman 1981). They provide quick and easy access to user-friendly content that is especially designed for online communication. The target user seeks information, basic advice and instruction in order to perform some kind of action in compliance with current rules and regulations – i.e. in order to behave prosocially and responsibly (Cacchiani 2018a, 2018b). This accounts for significant departures from the defining features of ODL-cr.

First, exposition is a secondary text type, and instruction is the primary or functionally dominant text type within an operative user situation (Tarp 2008; Bergenholtz – Bothma 2011). Second, usability guidelines and linguistic strategies interact in order to satisfy the intent of popularization (Cacchiani 2018b). As a consequence, content is diluted on the page and schematized in bullet lists with syntactically parallel subcomponents, short paragraphs and short text lines (Moran 2016), as in (3). This applies to both headings that link to subdirectories and meaning descriptions in expository passages as in, respectively, the *Contents* in the bullet list (from *Overview* to – *Stop people using your work*), and the passage opening the *Overview* (*Copyright protects your work … There isn't a register of copyright works in the UK*).

Additionally, knowledge on the platform is expandable and communicated progressively: technical details, circumstantial information and legal references are postponed via shortcuts to source discourses in pdfs or external directories as final landing sites, and to subdirectories down the sitemap. For example, *for example the Berne Convention* and *Find out about all charges*[4] in (4).

As a result, the Gov.uk copyright pages have an average grade level of about 8 and 5.53 average words per sentence – which is in line with usability guidelines for websites that address a large lay audience.

(3) ***How copyright protects your work***
Contents
- Overview
- How long copyright lasts
- License and sell your copyright
- Stop people using your work

Overview
Copyright protects your work and stops others from using it without your permission.
You get copyright protection automatically – you don't have to apply or pay a fee. There isn't a register of copyright works in the UK.
You automatically get copyright protection when you create:
- original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including illustration and photography

[4] *Berne Convention* jump links to *Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and artistic Works (as amended on September 28, 1979)*: wipolex.wipo.int/en/text283693; *Find out about call charges* jump links to *Call charges and phone numbers* (www.gov.uk/call-charges).

- original non-literary written work, such as software, web content and databases

[…]

You can mark your work with the copyright symbol (©), your name and the year of creation. Whether you mark the work or not doesn't affect the level of protection you have.

(GOV-cr1)

(4) ***How copyright protects your work***

[…]

Copyright overseas

Your work could be protected by copyright in other countries through international agreements, for example the Berne Convention.

[…]

Contact the IPO Information Centre if you have a question about international copyright.

IPO Information Centre information@ipo.gov.uk

Telephone: 0300 300 2000

Fax: 01633 817777

Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm

Find out about call charges

(GOV-cr1)

Audience orientation is realized via engagement strategies that pursue interlocutive dialogism (Bres 2005) and user-centric language choices for meaningfulness and comprehension (Nielsen 2015). The Q/A pattern in elliptical reported questions with 2nd-person pronouns and adjectives works towards engagement. Headings like ***How copyright protects your work*** (3) presuppose ignorance on the part of the user, and knowledge on the part of the author. In addition, they signal that the principal institution is listening to the user's needs (Cacchiani 2018b), and is interested in creating and enlarging common ground between participants via the provision of user-friendly responses (Engberg et al. 2018a). The 2nd person is an obvious engagement marker in all "modules" (Bateman 2008: 81) within the page. It is used in headings and framed texts to address users directly and signals relevance to them. That is, it is an associative strategy that creates proximity to the user (Hyland 2010).

Imperatives are frequent. They presuppose knowledge of facts and expertise on the part of the issuer, and encode orientation towards the

addressee, who feels under the obligation to realize the state described. They are found not only in (sub-)headings like *Licence and sell your copyright* or *Stop people using your work*, from the *Contents* in (3), or *Sell your copyright*, from the *Guidance* subdirectory (5) below, but also in framed texts such as *Contact the IPO Information Centre if …* in (4). Forms like "*You can/may* + INF" have similar effects, e.g. *You can mark …* in (3), and *You may decide to…* in (5).

(5) Guidance
License, sell or market your copyright material
[…]

[…]
Copy protection devices
For copyright material issued to the public in an electronic form, you may decide to use technological measures so that it is **not possible to make a copy of your material**, that is, it is **copy-protected**.
[…]
Sell your copyright
If you decide to sell or transfer your copyright there would need to be a written, signed contract stating a transfer has taken place. This is known as an **assignment**.
(GOV-cr5)

In a slightly different manner, topic-giving (sub-)headings with noun phrases (4: *Copyright overseas*) and nominalizations (6: *Owning intellectual property*) also work towards answering potential user questions, but do not pursue proximity (Hyland 2010) at the level of form. ***Intellectual property and your work*** (6) is another example, which combines nominal style and meaningful word selection for user orientation, and the 2nd-person possessive for proximity and user-association (adapted from Barnbrook 2012).

(6) ***Intellectual property and your work***
[…]

Owning intellectual property
You own intellectual property if you:
[…]
- have a brand that could be a trade mark, eg a well-known product name

Intellectual property can:
- have more than one owner

[…]
(GOV-cr4)

Moving on to the comprehension side of audience orientation, all (sub-) headings provide meaningful information and frame chunked content. As far as cognitively-oriented popularization strategies are concerned, legal communication calls for recontextualization of source discourses and intratextual reformulations within expository subtexts. Most of the defining strategies observed in the ODL-cr are also found in GOV-cr (Cacchiani 2018a). What is of special interest to us, however, is the inclusion of informal definitions for associating with the user (e.g. using *you* in 3a) and so-called full-sentence definitions (*If-/When*-definitions in 3b, 4a, 5a, 6a).

(3a) You can mark your work with the copyright symbol (©), your name and the year of creation.

(3b) You automatically get copyright protection when you create:
- original literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic work, including illustration and photography
- original non-literary written work, such as software, web content and databases

(4a) Contact the IPO Information Centre if you have a question about international copyright.

(6a) You own intellectual property if you:
- […]
- have a brand that could be a trade mark, eg a well-known product name.

In a trade-off between usability guidelines (meaningful words to the left) and the End-Weight Principle, meaningful items (terms) tend to precede definitions in a term-to-word direction, also in analytical definitions. Yet, indirect designation (without ellipsis) is present (5a: *that is, it is copy-protected*), also in the form of Loffler-Laurian's (1983) metalinguistic naming (5b: *This is known as an assignment.*).

(5a) …so that it is **not possible to make a copy of your material**, that is, it is **copy-protected**.

(5b) If you decide to sell or transfer your copyright there would need to be a written, signed contract stating a transfer has taken place. This is known as an assignment.

In line with the End-Weight Principle, important information (here, the term) is placed at the end of the clause or sentence. Emphasis on the term in clause-final position signals meaningfulness. Usability guidelines and popularization strategies appear to converge with acronyms and symbols, which follow gloss and explanation for clarity (3a: *the copyright symbol (©)*). Other popularization strategies comprise extensive recourse to exemplification (3b: *including illustration and photography*; *such as software, web content and databases*; 6a: *eg a well-known product name*.). As can be seen, exemplification comes with familiar vocabulary in recontextualizations that do without technical detail. As suggested above, content is expandable, and technical detail is provided via shortcuts to other pages down the map or to source discourses for statutory documentation (4: *for example, the Berne Convention*).

Finally, pre-posed conditional clauses are textual organizers because they introduce the scenarios, causes and preconditions where the state described in the directive or assertive main clause may apply. Giving a statement of the consequence at the outset is a marked but viable option (5b: *If you decide to …there would need to be…*), which qualifies what follows appropriately (Nielsen Norman group). It brings to the fore the goal or reason for reading on, signalling relevance to the user.

As is apparent, exposition on the Gov-cr pages makes a substantial move towards the popularization end of knowledge mediation in a cognitively-oriented and operative situation. The text accommodates the characteristics of the intended lay-user. User engagement and user orientation are established by making extensive recourse to familiar and user-centric language in highly readable texts.

5. *Copyleft* (MUO-cl) and *copyleft* (GNU-cl)

5.1 Copyleft (MUO-cl)

Make Use Of is a for-profit magazine with some free features. "It issues tips and guides on how to make the most of the internet, computer software,

and mobile apps. [Its] mission is to help users understand and navigate modern trends in consumer technology" (MUO). The article *Copyleft vs. Copyright: 3 key concepts you need to know* (MUO-cl) can be accessed freely on MUO's *Technology explained* subdirectory. To reinforce reliability and esteem (Brennan – Pettit 2008), the expert author signs using his real identity – Joel Lee – and provides a passport photo along with a short biosketch about his roles in virtual and real settings. Here, the author provides expository content about *Copyleft* in a primarily cognitively oriented situation:

(7) Copyright infringement is one of the biggest problems of the internet age. Never before] has it been easier to infringe on intellectual property rights, and never before has it been harder to prevent others from stealing one's hard work.
As a creator, you need to protect your intellectual property: photographers should **copyright photos and images**, software developers should **use proper software licenses**, bloggers should **issue DMCA takedown notices**, etc. But that can be quite a headache, especially if you're prolific and your work is popular.
Which is why many creators are adopting copyleft instead. Here's everything you need to know about copyleft licenses and how they differ from copyright licenses.
(MUO-cl)

Following an initial introduction that identifies intended users as *creator(s)*, their needs and goals (7), the text is structured into primarily expository chunks via meaningful (user-centric) headlines. The overall organization can be schematized as follows "GIVEN PROBLEM (7), IF MEANINGFUL STATEMENTS AND MATCHING EXPLANATIONS ***1.***…, ***2.***…, ***3.***… (8a), THEN ***4.***… (8b)", where 1 to 4 are topic-giving sub-headings within the text:

(8a) **1. Copyleft is about user freedom**; **2. Copyleft is more than just permission**; **3. Copyleft isn't always free**
(MUO-cl)

(8b) **4. Is copyleft right for you?**
(MUO-cl)

The intent of popularization is apparent throughout. The text has a grade level of about 11, which meets usability guidelines for readers with college

degrees. Primarily expository responses to questions and explanations of the headings in (8) reveal a preference for meaning descriptions that reconceptualize and recontextualize source discourses with a term-to-word direction, which is in line with the End-Weight Principle and usability research on online reading habits. Consider, for example, metalinguistic naming (9: *Public domain means that …whatever they want with it*) or the initial definition in (10), which combines relevance marking associative patterns, relative clauses, and explanation by function (*The most notable aspect of copyleft licences is that they require users to distribute … that offers … as the original work*).

(9) […]
Public domain means that nobody owns rights to a particular work and anybody is free to do whatever they want with it. You can **take a public domain image**, modify it, and then sell it under your own restrictive license. You can take MIT-licensed source code, modify it, and release it under a stricter license.
(MUO-cl)

(10) The most notable aspect of copyleft licenses is that they **require** users to distribute derivative works under a license that offers the same rights as the original work.
Suppose a photographer releases a copyleft photo for anyone to use. As a user, you're within rights to download that photo, modify it however you want, and then distribute it however you want to whoever you want--but you'd also have to permit anyone else to modify and distribute your work however they want.
This is called a "share-alike" clause.
[…]
(MUO-cl)

As regards popularization strategies, there are word-to-term designations with terms in End-Focus position and avoidance of natural condensation, e.g. at the end of (10), with indirect metalinguistic naming (*This is called a "share-alike" clause*). Likewise, acronyms are in brackets in (11) below, for usability (*GNU General Public License (GPL)*; *Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL)*). Exemplification has a major role. As a matter of fact, hypothetical exemplificatory situations with open conditionals – which are likely to be true in the actual world – precede the main clause (10: *Suppose a photographer…*), and generic statements point to the addressee's ability to perform particular

actions (9: *You can* ***take a public domain image****, modify it…*). The shift from hypothetical scenario to particular facts is illustrated by real-life examples, e.g. ***Red Hat Enterprise Linux*** in (11).

(11) **Red Hat Enterprise Linux is a good practical example of this**.
The Linux kernel is licensed under the GNU General Public License (GPL), which is a copyleft license. Red Hat Enterprise Linux (RHEL) is a commercial operating system built on a modified Linux kernel. The desktop version of RHEL is sold for $49, but to abide by the GPL, the RHEL source code is included in the purchase.
RHEL users are free to modify and redistribute the source code, […].
(MUO-cl)

Within the body of the text, the content is expandable via shortcuts to additional information (bold in the original). Importantly, however, shortcuts to other organizations and cross-references to MUO articles for further reading and additional detail are also provided in separate modules, as background rectangles.

(12) **On the other hand, commercial restrictions are permitted.**
The Creative Commons organization offers two copyleft licenses that creators can use when distributing their works.
The first is the **Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike license** (CC BY-SA), which allows modification and redistribution as long as the original creator is attributed and the derived work is adheres to the "share-alike" clause.
(MUO-cl)

The examples so far clearly show a constellation of unmistakably user-centric language choices in headings, main modules and expansions that jump link to other pages. These comprise general language (7: *Here's everything you need to know about…*), (partial) recurrence (9: *You can take*; 13: *confused; confusing*), informal expressions (7: *But that can be quite a headache*; 13: *yes, but*; *You wrap your head around it*), discourse markers (13: *yes, but*), auxiliary contractions (13: *you're*), ellipsis in questions (13: ***Confused…?***) and syntactic parallelism (e.g. 7, with contrastive focus: *Never before has been easier to … and never before has been harder to…*).

(13) If you're still confused, we recommend these **websites that explain copyright well**.

Confused About Copyright Law? These Online Resources Can Help
It's a confusing subject, yes, but it's important that you wrap your head around it. If you're involved in any sort of creative work, these resources will help you do just that.
READ MORE
(MUO-cl)

The intended users are new to licensing issues and therefore lay-users in that sense, but they are on their way to becoming active participants in the creators' community. (Mutual) engagement is achieved via a number of interlocutive dialogic devices that create proximity (Hyland 2010) and mutual author-user association (Barnbrook 2012). For example, elliptical questions in meaningful Q/A patterns (13), 2nd-person pronouns and adjectives (*you*, *your*) and recommendations that turn the responsibility for carrying out future actions onto the user (8: *you need to*; 13: performative *we recommend*, with exclusive *we* for the expert author and MUO, the principal: *it's important that*, with a relevance adjective).

In line with usability guidelines, 2nd-person imperatives are shortcuts to other pages (13: ***READ MORE***). And, as is often the case with recommendations or other directives, they are qualified by the preceding text, which states (mostly generic) goals or conditions for carrying out the directive speech act (13: *If you're still confused…*).

On these grounds, it is safe to claim that the text can be positioned towards the popularization end of knowledge mediation. Engagement strategies and relevance signals motivate the user, while author and principal reach out to the reader and provide basic knowledge about *copyleft* via a combination of familiar, user-centric and meaningful language, and chunking of expandable content in cognitively-oriented situations. This makes the article usable both in view of the targeted user (creators) and of lay-users in general.

In case the ultimate goal of the intended user is operative, however, the article concludes by advancing an evaluative standpoint about copyleft as a mission and philosophy of life, using reasons to justify the proposition involved and making it acceptable to the user (14).

(14) **Is Copyleft Right for You?**
At the end of the day, copyleft is a philosophy.
It's harder to make money when you commit to copyleft licensing. Even if you do end up making money, you'll likely end up making significantly less than if you played by traditional rules of copyright.

> The only reason to endure such disadvantages is if you truly believe in the copyleft mission: freedom for users.
> (MUO-cl)

Yet, argumentation is no more than a secondary and little represented text type. At best, the article can be understood as having only an inherent argumentative dimension: it tries to orient the user's ways of seeing the world by providing unbiased knowledge in factual-expository content (Amossy 2005).

5.2 *Copyleft* (GNU)

MUO's argumentative dimension is significantly different from the self-promotion and call-to-action that characterize the GNU page. In *What is Copyleft*?, exposition combines with the explicitation of values and philosophy, and the inclusion of positively evaluated products to persuade the user to join the Free Software Foundation community. As a matter of fact, the buttons on the leaderboard and horizontal top banner frame the text, and encourage the user to read content about copyleft within the specific philosophy of the Free Software Foundation (FSF), which supports the GNU Project and achievements (15).

(15) <GNU head> / **GNU Operating System** / JOIN THE FSF
Sponsored by the **Free Software Foundation**
ABOUT GNU / PHILOSOPHY / LICENCES / EDUCATION / SOFTWARE / DOCS / HELP GNU / **more**
(GNU-cl)

The anonymous author identifies fully with the values, motivation and philosophy of the ***Free Software Foundation***, principal and sponsor of the GNU project and the GNU Operating System. Lay-users, of course, may have cognitively-oriented goals and can glean information from the content presented. Still, the intended user is a software developer that may need to know more about copyleft licences (15: *LICENCES*) and philosophy (15: *ABOUT GNU*; *PHILOSOPHY*), and a potentially prospective active member of the community that will use them in operative situations (15: *JOIN THE FSF*). As such, the user may need to move from the *What is copyleft?* page to further specialist detail on other, more enticing, subdirectories of the GNU website (15: *SOFTWARE*; *DOCS*; *MORE* ▼).

The joint focus on licences, community and values frames the entire article: values are key, and cast a positive light on the GNU workings. As the text unfolds, *freedom* (16) and *freedom to redistribute and change GNU software*, for *anyone* (17) and *all users* (16), and the *incentive* (18) for programmers to bring about *improvements* (16), i.e. *improvements to free software* (17), are construed as positive cultural keywords (Rigotti – Rocci 2005). They explain the workings and values of the GNU project and of the FSF community.

(16) **What is Copyleft?**
Copyleft is a general method for making a program (or other work) free (in the sense of freedom, not "zero price"), and requiring all modified and extended versions of the program to be free as well.
The simplest way to make a program free software is to put it in the public domain, uncopyrighted. This allows people to share the program and their improvements, if they are so minded. But it also allows uncooperative people to convert the program into proprietary software. They can make changes, many or few, and distribute the result as a proprietary product. People who receive the program in that modified form do not have the freedom that the original author gave them; the middleman has stripped it away.
(GNU-cl)

(17) In the GNU project, our aim is to give *all* users the freedom to redistribute and change GNU software. If middlemen could strip off the freedom, our code might "have many users," but it would not give them freedom. So instead of putting GNU software in the public domain, we "copyleft" it. Copyleft says that anyone who redistributes the software, with or without changes, must pass along the freedom to further copy and change it. […]
(GNU-cl)

(18) Copyleft also provides an incentive for other programmers to add to free software. […]
Copyleft also helps programmers who want to contribute improvements to free software get permission to do so. […]
(GNU-cl)

(19) A compromise form of copyleft, the GNU Lesser General Public License (LGPL) applies to a few (but not all) GNU libraries. To learn

> more about properly using the LGPL, please read the article Why you shouldn't use the Lesser GPL for your next library.
> (GNU-cl)

The average grade level is about 11, which is understood to be fine with users with college degrees. The standard usability tricks are at play throughout. The interactive meaningful heading in the form of a question (16: ***What is copyleft?***, a FAQ) shows that the expert author and principal is listening to the user. Content is chunked into paragraphs. Acronyms in brackets follow the matching phrase (19b). Expandable content is diluted via shortcuts that cross-refer to other pages on the platform, for meaning descriptions of technical terminology (16a and 18a, for the lay-user), and for technical specifications and more detail (19a: intended for creators). Other references land on technical documentation in source discourses (19b).

(16a) in the sense of freedom, not "zero price"; public domain; proprietary software

(18a) incentive; improvements to free software

(19a) Why you shouldn't use the Lesser GPL for your next library.

(19b) GNU Lesser General Public Licence (LGPL)

As far as meaning descriptions are concerned, the strong preference for term-to-word patterns is in line with the End-Weight Principle, for example in (16b), where the associative type combines with definition by function, exemplification markers in brackets, and a non-finite participial clause.

(16b) Copyleft is a general method for making a program (or other work) free (in the sense of freedom, not "zero price"), and requiring all modified and extended versions of the program to be free as well.

An argumentative passage follows to address the problem of *proprietary software* as a way to *strip freedom away* and present the organization's ideological standpoint on *copyleft* (vs *proprietary software*). Primarily descriptive-expository paragraphs follow in order to provide facts about copyleft and copyleft licenses.

It is interesting to note how meaning representation by function in (17) combines with exclusive-*we*, which sets apart GNU developers –

devoted members of the righteous FSF community – from the bad workings of 3rd-person entities. Community members (*we*) take responsibility for their positive actions, which leads to freedom.

(17a) our aim is to; our code; we "copyleft" [GNU software]

(17b) In the GNU project, our aim is to give all users the freedom to redistribute and change GNU software.

The workings of 3rd-person entities go against freedom and the FSF's positive values:

(16c) …uncooperative people … convert the program into proprietary software… People who receive the program in that modified form do not have the freedom that he original author gave them; the middleman has stripped it away.

(17c) If middlemen could strip off the freedom…

Objective, factual exposition is given in the form of definitions by function.

(16d) Copyleft says that…

(17d) Copyleft also provides an incentive for … Copyleft also helps programmers…

Last, the 2nd person is used with imperatives to engage with the user and encourage them to click on shortcuts to additional detail (20), or caution them, as in (21), which concludes the article with an exclamation mark for emphasis, mutual engagement and principal-user association.

(20) If you would like to copyleft your program with the GNU GPL or the GNU LGPL, please see the license instructions page for advice. (GNU-cl)

(21) A backwards C in a circle has no special legal significance, so it doesn't make a copyright notice. It may be amusing in book covers, posters, and such, but be careful how you represent it in a web page! (GNU-cl)

To conclude, in the GNU article readability guidelines and popularization strategies are used in order to attract and motivate lay-users and (semi-) experts to use the GNU Operating System and join the Free Software Foundation.

6. Conclusions

The purpose of this paper has been to compare and contrast the status of exposition and the representation and communication of knowledge about *copyright* and *copyleft* in old genres and new media. Our research question was one about the ability to mediate legal knowledge beyond the community of discourse and practice and reach out to lay-users or semi-experts.

The classic objective expository article in ODL (ODL-cr), we have seen, illustrates the case of transfer of uncontroversial knowledge for inclusion. The assumption of trustworthiness and reliability based on its long-established history is further reinforced by the experience of a cooperative (Grice 1975) interaction with beneficial outcomes for the intended user. That is, the intended users receive the information they need to improve their situation, based on their specific profile and goals (Tarp 2008). In a mutually enhancing (hence, cooperative) relationship, we may want to add, maximising utility for the user turns out to be beneficial for ODL, e.g. in terms of growing credibility and reputation, increasing product attractiveness, consultation and sales chances in a highly competitive market: the user-consumer is more willing to engage in further and continuing communicative interactions with ODL. By contrast, breaks with lexicographic conventions and departures from the expository text type in non-professional dictionary articles such as Techopedia's COPYLEFT (ODL-cl) may invite users to question the validity of any assumption of trustworthiness and reliability they might have made about Techopedia. One obvious reason for this is that the article fails to answer basic questions of lay-users', who are likely to turn elsewhere for a more comprehensive and satisfactory answer. Also, the article does not provide any actional advice to (semi-)experts.

Moving away from dictionary articles, lexicographical condensation, objectification and conciseness, the texts on online subdirectories like GOV-cr, in the MUO-cl online magazine article and on the GNU-cl FAQs page, depart from the features of classic exposition in the interest of user engagement and user orientation. Consequently, exposition combines with dialogic devices in different degrees and to different purposes.

On the popularization end of legal knowledge mediation, the Gov.uk pages about *copyright* (GOV-cr) reveal thorough reflection on webpage usability. The platform pairs diluted information with expandable content, recontextualization with reconceptualization of source discourses, user-centric language and engagement with users (lay citizens), in order to connect with and motivate them. This is highly likely to result in a history of cooperative interactions and positive user experiences, which provide basic answers to questions about primarily transaction-oriented information in user situations that prioritize operativity over cognitive orientation. By doing this, the platform delivers good value both to the lay end user and to the principal organization (Cacchiani 2018a, 2018b): when citizens receive quick and easy help and support with the knowledge and documentation that they need to behave prosocially and responsibly, the principal organization behind the website gains in credibility. With Marková et al. (2008), this can be seen as context-dependent trust, which reinforces the citizens' taken-for-granted trust in the institution.

A similar line of reasoning applies to the GNU community and the MakeUseOf magazine. Both organizations deliver good value to users – (semi-) experts and lay-users. In GNU-cl and MUO-cl, they pair popularization strategies and usability tools for user orientation, while recourse to user engagement and an emphasis on mutual engagement in MUO-cl are intended to enhance user comprehension. To gain in credibility, MUO pursues unbiased mediation of subject specific knowledge. This counts as a marketing strategy: credibility and trustworthiness result in an increase in active subscribers and pageviews, and higher ranking among the most popular blogs on the web (Business Insider).[5] In slightly different ways, mediating subject-specific knowledge on the GNU-cl page comes with the goal of persuasion, an argumentative dimension and self-promotion – i.e. the promotion of community values and the philosophy shared by members of the Free Software Foundation, which lay-users and semi-experts are encouraged and invited to join.

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