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Language, Discourse & Society

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Language & Society
Research Committee 25 of the
International Sociological Association

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

I am pleased to introduce to you the fourth issue "*Language, Discourse and Society*", which completes the second year of this journal, published by Language & Society, Research Committee 25 of the International Sociological Association.

The present issue includes 7 articles. The first article, "Syria's Arab Spring: Language Enrichment in the Midst of Revolution", authored by Naassima Neggaz, analyzes linguistic transformations of the Arabic language that have been taking place since the start of the revolution in March 2011, demonstrating both the changing nature of the Arabic language and the significant impact that conflict situations may carry upon it. Neggaz's findings advance sociolinguistic studies of language creativity in zones of political repression and conflict. The second article, "Discurso (discurso político), constructivismo y retórica: los eslóganes del 15-M", by David Pujante and Esperanza Morales López, is concerned with the interplay between social movements, conflicts and language. By analysing a discursive-rhetoric creativity which is directly related to the need to build a new citizen discourse in Spain, the article convincingly demonstrates that rhetoric slogans activate a new cognitive framework for the interpretation of the recent history of Spanish democracy.

While not directly concerned with social struggle and political activism, the third article, "Street paper, assistance and protagonism: a critical discourse analysis of Cais magazine" by Viviane de Melo Resende offers important insights on issues of political relevance, such as the connections between social representations, public discourse and social change. Resende's article presents an analysis, based on systemic functional linguistics and critical discourse analysis, of an interview conducted by the author with Cais magazine's editor. Although Cais is a street paper that aims to offer working opportunities and social programs for people experiencing homelessness in Portugal, the analysis of cohesion, transitivity, modality and assumptions presented in the article indicates that people in homelessness are positioned in a passive standing in terms of action for social change.

The fourth article, "Generic structures of Nigerian and South African quasi-judicial public hearings", written by Akin Odebunmi and Foluke Unuabonah is another example of how research on language in society may shed some light on the interplay between public discourse, social representations and social structures. Quasi-judicial public hearings are public meetings which are created in order to obtain public testimonies or comments about the

legal rights of specific parties. Thus, the discourse structures of the hearings are important in revealing the discursive patterns used in collecting the information necessary in the pursuit of justice. Through a thoughtful comparison of the discourse structure identified in the quasi-judicial public hearing on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) administration in Nigeria and the discourse structure identified in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearings, the paper identifies five convergent discursive macrostructures but also some differences in the two case/studies, which call for further in-depth comparative linguistic studies.

The fifth article of the issue, Bruria Margolin's "Cohesive devices and their contextual conditions in modern Hebrew" analyzes Modern Hebrew prose as reflected in the anthology "Thirty Years, Thirty Stories", which includes contributions by top authors such as Yoram Kaniuk, Amos Oz, Yehoshua Kenaz, David Grossman, A.B. Yehoshua, Savyon Liebrecht and others. Margolin explores Modern Hebrew prose by means of two main theoretical concepts, "cohesion" and "coherence", illustrating the use of linguistic, grammatical and syntactic cohesive devices and the various contextual conditions affecting author preference for the different types of cohesive devices.

The last two articles of this issue are both concerned with spoken language, albeit investigating it with different methodologies. The sixth article, "Linguistic Taboos in the Igbo Society: A Sociolinguistic Investigation" by Gbenga Fakuade, Ngozi Kemdirim, Ikechukwu Nnaji and Florence Nwosu investigates linguistic taboos in the Igbo society in terms of their classification and socio-cultural factors affecting their usage. Fakuade and colleagues' use of a quali-quantitative methodology, based on questionnaires and oral interviews, produces some interesting results, for instance showing that while religion and decorum-related linguistic taboos are unmentioned and have no permissible alternatives because they are closely tied to different Igbo deities, taboos related to morality, veneration and fear have euphemisms. In light of their linguistic and social relevance of taboos, the authors advocate the inclusion of their knowledge in both Igbo language in curricula and Igbo textbooks in schools.

The final article, "Self-disclosure in troubles talk sequences. Italian young adults talk about romantic problems" authored by Ilaria Riccioni, Ramona Bongelli, Silvia Lo Bue and Andrzej Zuczkowski, aims to investigate how self-disclosure emerges in actual and naturally occurring interaction, where a person talks about his or her troubles. The authors use Conversation Analysis, a methodology developed for research on talk in interaction, to

analyse the pragma-linguistic features of self-disclosure, considered as a social and dialogic phenomenon.

As usual, but not by the force of habit, I would like to thank the editorial board for generously contributing their expertise, and Kali Michael from American University, Washington DC (USA), who has contributed as editorial assistant for the first issue of the Journal. Another big thank you goes to the reviewer who assisted the authors in bringing their contribution to the high standards they have reached in their current form. Finally, I would highlight that all the articles in this issue, as well as the articles included in the past issues, are research-based articles. This means that *Language, Discourse & Society* is growing as a journal that challenges established knowledge and research lines. I believe this is something we should be aware and proud of.

Language, Discourse & Society has its ISSN code and it's going to be listed in the most important databases of Open Access Journals. I would like to highlight that all published articles in *Language, Discourse & Society* are eligible for the two RC 25 awards, The "Language & Society Graduate Student Award" and the "Language & Society Academic Award". More details are available in this issue. If you are interested in proposing an article, you may find the call for papers for *Language, Discourse, & Society* in this issue.

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SYRIA'S ARAB SPRING: LANGUAGE ENRICHMENT IN THE MIDST OF REVOLUTION

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Abstract

This paper analyzes linguistic transformations of the Arabic language that have been taking place since the start of the revolution in March 2011. Building on Basil Bernstein's sociolinguistic theory of language codes (2002), the paper starts by providing an analysis of the communication codes developed by several Syrian communities (in Damascus, Ḥomṣ, and Ḥama) since the 1970s. In doing so, the paper argues that restricted codes were used by individuals across social classes and religious communities in the face of an oppressing regime. The paper then moves to the examination of the current impact of the political demonstrations and activism on the Arabic language in Syria, and argues that four significant changes are noticeable: a creativity process through which new words have been formed, while other existing words have undergone semantic changes (using Laurie Bauer's theory of naming needs); the rise of popular Syrian slogans adopted and quoted in the Arabic media in their dialectal form; a battle of words taking place between the anti-Assad demonstrators and the pro-Assad counterparts; and a symbolic use of language to show the unity of the Syrian people. These findings demonstrate both the changing nature of the Arabic language and the significant impact conflict situations may carry upon it. While these findings apply to Syria and its particular case in the Arab Spring, they may advance sociolinguistic studies of language creativity in zones of political repression and conflict.

Keywords: Syria, Arabic Language, Language Change, Arab Spring, Conflict, Theory of Language Codes

1. Introduction

“*Laqad Walla Zamañ al-Sukuñ: Lan Tabqa Sūriyya Mamlakat al-Şamī*” (“The Time of Silence is Gone: Syria Will No Longer Remain the Mute Kingdom”). This slogan published the first month of the Syrian uprising on the Syrian website *Al-Ra’y*, the official website of a Syrian political party called “*Hizb al-Sha‘b al-Dīmoqrātī*, The Democratic People’s Party (<http://www.araae.com/portal/>), expresses the significant shift Syria has been experiencing since the outburst of the first demonstrations in March 2011. While Syria had been the “Kingdom of Silence” for more than forty consecutive years, this silence suddenly broke. Politics, which had been a taboo no one dared to talk about, even amongst family members, became the object of slogans chanted in rhymed poetry or songs, expressing the deepest truths about decades of fear, oppression, and humiliation. Since the start of protests in March 2011, the revolt has been carried out on the streets of Syria by the common people. For over a year and a half, the revolt has given symbolical names to its Friday-demonstrations, each carrying a specific significance and sending a particular message, whether it be an internal message or a broader one meant for an international audience. Overall, the meanings associated with the names chosen for each Friday have tended to emphasize the unity of the Syrian people in their struggle against the Assad regime. These names have attracted attention due to their thoughtful character and sharp singularity. The creativity demonstrated by the Syrian protestors goes beyond the symbolic naming of Fridays of revolt. Innovative strategies have been taking place in transforming the Arabic language itself and adapting it to the needs of the present situation. This paper will explore the creative processes associated with language-change and development in naming needs.¹

The first section of the paper will take a careful look at the pre-revolution period in Syria, and more particularly the last thirty years (1980-2011). It will provide an analysis of the communication codes developed by several Syrian communities (examples will be studied in Damascus, Ḥimş, and Ḥamāh) in the context of dictatorship and severe lack of freedom of speech. Building on Basil Bernstein’s sociolinguistic theory of language codes (2002), the paper will show how restricted codes were used by individuals across social classes and religious communities in the face of an oppressive regime.

¹ The findings of this paper are based on interviews of Syrian nationals from several cities (Damascus, Ḥimş, and Ḥamāh for the most part). I particularly would like to thank Omar Adi, a Syrian national from Ḥimş, for his critical help and involvement in the project.

The paper will then move to examining the current impact of political demonstrations and activism on the Arabic language in Syria. Five significant changes can be noticed. The first, I argue, is a creative process through which new words have been formed, while other existing words have undergone semantic changes. This section of the paper relies on the theories of naming needs elaborated by Laurie Bauer (2001) and Pavol Stekauer (1998) and argues that the revolution found itself facing a lexical gap, due to years of restricted communication on political matters. The second effect of the uprising on the language is the rise of popular Syrian slogans that are being adopted and quoted in the Arabic media in their dialectal form. These local dialectal expressions have been transmitted through Arabic newspapers and television channels, providing exposure of the Syrian dialect to the entire Arab world. The third impact of the Syrian revolution on the Arabic language is the creation of new Arabic proverbs by way of transforming existing proverbs. In this case, Syrians have demonstrated a particularly high level of creativity by adapting old proverbs to a new reality. The fourth is a battle of words that has been taking place between the anti-Assad demonstrators and their pro-Assad counterparts. Language has become a tool of war between groups who want to promote a certain view of reality against another. The fifth element is the symbolic use of language to show the unity of the Syrian people. Indeed, demonstrators across Syria have adopted slogans from other cities or regions and, in doing so, have made it a point to preserve certain phrases in their original dialect, however different they may have been from their own local dialect.

2. Basil Bernstein's Sociolinguistic Theory of Language Codes and the Syrian Case:

Understanding the nature of the Syrian dictatorship is critical in order to grasp the level of fear amongst the population and the degree to which everyday communication has been impacted by it. In 1971, linguist Basil Bernstein introduced the concepts of restricted and elaborated language codes, in his study *Class, Codes and Control: The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse*.

His analysis was based on the idea of an intrinsic relationship between social class and language characteristics amongst defined social groups. James Atherton (2002) defined the difference between elaborated and restricted codes as follows:

The essence of the distinction is in what the language is suited for. The restricted code works better than the elaborated code for situations in which there is a great deal of shared and taken-for-granted knowledge in the group of speakers. It is economical and rich, conveying a vast amount of meaning with a few words, each of which has a complex set of connotations and acts like an index, pointing the hearer to a lot more information which remains unsaid.²

While Bernstein's theory aimed at analyzing linguistic dynamics amongst social classes, his theory of restricted codes is well-suited and applicable to another category of speakers: members of a social group who live under oppressive and dictatorial rule. We will now delve into how restricted codes have been created, used and transmitted amongst defined groups in Syria, between the 1980s and the first revolutionary sparks in 2011.

The ascent to power of the late President Hafez Al-Assad on November 13, 1970, following a military coup in his own party, symbolized the starting point of a new era in modern Syria. The Alawite minority of Syria, today highly represented in high-level positions in the government and the army, began to occupy the major positions in every sector, and the authoritarian state that developed systematically crushed any dissidents ruthlessly. The state operated on a vast security and intelligence apparatus, called the "*Mukhābarāt*," present at every level of social life, and spied on the population for the sake of the regime. In this context, freedom of speech was completely banned. Even today, Syrians are all aware of what is called *al-thālūth al-muḥarram* (the three taboos or forbidden elements), which include religion, politics, and sexuality. The media was placed under the total control of the state, with attempts to limit the spread of satellite TV in order to cut Syria off from the outside world.

The oppressive nature of the regime and its surveillance increased further after the violence of the late 1970s. These events, mentioned as "*Aḥdāth al-Thamānīnāt*" in Arabic (or the events of the 1980s), saw a peak in violence, including several explosions, executions, and assassinations. A violent battle took place between the regime and the Muslim Brothers, each one blaming the other for the acts of violence, particularly those perpetrated against the Alawite community. The Ḥamāh episode³ in February 1982 opened a new page in the history of Syrian authoritarianism, which would see an increase in regime violence and repression towards any insurgent or perceived opponent. The violence started in 1978, with small scale massacres until the Ḥamāh episode in February 1982, during which forty thousand people were killed, fifteen

² James Atherton, *Doceo; Language Codes* (2002), which can be fully accessed at the following link: http://www.doceo.co.uk/background/language_codes.htm

thousand disappeared, and about one hundred thousand were displaced. These figures have been given by several human rights organizations; the official figures given by the Syrian regime differ. Surveillance intensified within the country: Syrians interviewed for this study report that to merely say that “things are not good” (in Syrian Arabic, the expression would be “*al-waḍa‘ mūmnīh*”) could lead one to be thrown in jail. Fear of the *Mukhābarāt* led Syrians to mistrust each other, whether their neighbors, the seller at the grocery store, or even sometimes their own family members. Another aspect of this fear was the fact that the *Mukhābarāt* had unlimited power to accuse someone of something they did not do. This was a common feature of everyday life, and Syrians knew they had to always remain in good terms with anyone who might belong to this group. Because every Syrian was being watched and monitored at all times, language started to be impacted and take the marks of this atypical situation.

In this context, speakers belonging to a closed group (kin) started creating new codes for communication in order to speak of what was forbidden or dangerous. It is important to note that these codes were developed amongst a closely defined group, usually including family members, close friends, or relatives with whom a sense of trust had been developed. These groups can be defined as small speech communities, a key concept in sociolinguistics. John Gumperz (1968) defined a speech community as “any human aggregate characterized by regular and frequent interaction by means of a shared body of verbal signs and set off from similar aggregates by significant differences in language usage.”⁴ Speech communities indeed refer to groups of people who share a set of norms and expectations on how to use language. In our case, we are dealing with smaller speech communities that include only highly trusted individuals. The restricted codes used by these speech communities differ from one group to another.

The following are examples of codes developed amongst a group of close family members and university friends in Ḥimṣ, Ḥamāh, and Damascus between 1980 and 2011. In order to speak of someone who is hiding from the regime, a group would say that the person is *marḍān* (sick). Other groups would say that he is studying: *‘am yadruss*, or that he is having exams *‘andu fhussāt*. Others would say that he is busy (*mashgūl*). To describe someone who is being held (by the *mukhābarāt*) or in jail, it was common to say that he was at his aunt’s house (*huwa fī bayt khāltu*). To refer to a sensitive group, particularly the *mukhābarāt*, Syrians also developed specific codes such as: *Khattu heluw* (his handwriting is beautiful), which meant that

⁴ John Gumperz, “The Speech Community,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, pp. 381-6. Macmillan. [Reprinted in P. Giglioli, ed. 1972, *Language and Social Context*: 219-31.]

the specified was a *mukhbir*, or part of the *mukhābarā*. This person usually wrote reports for the intelligence agency (*yaktub taqārīr* or he is ‘*awānī*, someone who helps the intelligence, only writing reports for them). Another way of suggesting that a person wrote reports was by saying *Yalī bālī bālak*, which we could translate as “you know what I mean?” The phrase, when used, is often accompanied by some form of body language as well, like moving the head, as well as using a specific tone of voice.

These codes were all the more important considering the extent to which the *mukhābarā* apparatus was widespread within every layer of society. It most often included people in one’s own building, at the grocery store, and amongst neighbors. The theory of restricted codes is particularly helpful for understanding transformations of speech used to counter surveillance amongst Syrian communities. The theory explains how these codes differ from one group to another and how meaning attributed to codes is bound to the closeness of the people within that particular group. Atherton (2002) defined the members of a group sharing codes:

Within the restricted code, speakers draw on background knowledge and shared understanding. This type of code creates a sense of includedness [sic], a feeling of belonging to a certain group. Restricted codes can be found among friends and families and other intimately knit groups.⁵

In Syria, every family or closed social group had its own codes, which were developed amongst people who were close enough to trust each other. Restricted codes often functioned behind closed doors, and were inherited from generation to generation, over forty years. In terms of the nature of the codes created, one can notice the presence of semantic fields: studying or general health, for instance, are used to denote arrest. Speakers would use words belonging to the same semantic category in order to convey an altered meaning which only they know about and can understand. These fields were chosen because they embody every day conversation topics for which no one could be suspected of betrayal by the regime. Another characteristic of these codes is their brevity: restricted codes indeed tend to convey extensive meaning in a limited number of words. Examples such as *khattu heluw* or *marḍān*, as mentioned previously, attest of this fact.

The Syrian case teaches us two critical elements in the theory of restricted codes. The first is the significance of fear in the creation of restricted codes amongst communities. The second is the availability of these codes across social classes: restricted codes in Syria are indeed not

⁵ James Atherton, *Doceo; Language Codes* (2002), which can be fully accessed at the following link: http://www.doceo.co.uk/background/language_codes.htm

limited to the lower social classes, but apply to the entire population, regardless of their position in the social spectrum. The people interviewed for this research indeed included Syrians of all age as well as religious and geographical background. Now, considering speech characteristics in Syria under the authoritarian regime of Hafez al-Assad and his son Bashar al-Assad, how did these language features evolve after the first protests that took place in March 2011? How did the demonstrations impact language codes and use?

3. Language Changes in the midst of Syria's Revolution: an Examination of Five Linguistic Transformations

3.1 New Word Formation

Years of restricted communication on political matters had noticeable consequences in Syria. When the Syrian revolution started, it found itself facing a lexical gap. New terms were needed to openly describe a political reality whose existence had only been hinted at previously. Each major political entity needed a defining name, which had been absent from the commonly used vocabulary until then. To address this gap, Syrians created new words to name entities and concepts.

The concept of the lexical gap is described by Laurie Bauer in his theory of naming needs (2001), which argues that productive processes in word formation are the outcome of an existing lexical gap. Particularly relevant to our case is Pavol Stekauer's onomasiological theory of English word formation (1998), because it takes the naming demands of a speech community as a point of departure.⁶ Stekauer uses the concept of "the extra-linguistic reality" to shed light on the forces behind the coinage of new designations: phenomena that are outside the linguistic reality urge people to coin new terms.

I argue that Syrian protestors found themselves facing a naming need and answered it by creatively producing new words. An example of this process can be seen in the new word "*minḥibbakjī*," coined by protestors to designate regime partisans. The process of its creation merits some explanation. The term was coined using the pro-regime campaign organized by the government and branding the term "*minḥibbak*." This expression started to be chanted towards President Bashar al-Assad by his supporters, meaning "we love you." The demonstrators used

⁶ Pavol Stekauer, *Onomasiological Theory of English Word Formation*. Michigan: J. Benjamins Pub. Co., 1998. See also Stekauer, "Fundamental Principles of An Onomasiological Theory of Word Formation in English," *Onomasiology Online* 2, 1-42 (<http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/stekauer1051.pdf>).

this slogan and added the suffix –ji, a common suffix used in Syrian dialect to create the name of the doer of the action or the function out of a noun. In Syrian dialect, we can observe this process in the following names: “*Kahrabjī*” (electrician), coined out of “*kahraba*,” meaning electricity; *maṣlahjī* (opportunist), coined out of the noun “*maṣlaha*,” meaning interest. In current Syria, the term refers to any person who is pro-Assad and it is widely used by anti-regime protestors. A variant of *minḥibbakjī* is “*minḥibbakjahṣhī*,” another term coined for Bashar’s partisans, using “*minḥibbak*,” adding to it the Arabic word “*jahṣh*,” meaning donkey, and creating an adjective with the addition of a final “jī.”

A comical Facebook page on the revolution was created by the anti-regime partisans and symbolically named “*minḥibbakjiyyāt*.” The name of the page is critical for several reasons: first, it uses the ironic term “*minḥibbakjī*,” which resonates strongly amongst Syrians. Second, it added the suffix “*jiyyāt*” in order to draw upon the Arab concept of “*yumiyyāt*,” which are diaries of high literary standard. Other such cases of literary genres include the following: *adabiyyāt*, *nathriyyāt*, *nizāriyyāt*, the latter in reference to Nizār Qabbānī, a Syrian diplomat, poet and publisher (1923-1998), or *raḥbāniyyat* (from the Raḥbānī brothers, a group of Lebanese composers, musicians and poets⁷). The creation of the term “*minḥibbakjiyyāt*” is a satirical way of turning pro-Bashar slogans into ridicule, all the more since Bashar’s partisans are thought to be unreasonable people who are not able to think with lucidity.

Another example of word formation is the term *shabbīḥ*, and its plural form *shabbīḥa*, which refers to armed men in civilian clothing who assault protestors. This word comes from the root “*shabḥ*,” plural *shubuḥ* or *ashbaḥ*, meaning spirit, or ghost. Although the word *shabbīḥ* was created in pre-revolution Syria, it has gained unprecedented popularity since the revolution started. The term was originally coined to refer to a specific type of car, a 1994 Mercedes S class, which Syrians commonly named “*shabaḥ*.” This expensive car was mostly used by a group of “thugs,”⁸ mafia-like individuals who were feared by the people and known to be involved in stealing and smuggling through the ports of Latakia, Baniyas, and Tartous. These gangs, directly linked to the Alawite leadership, were called “*shabbīḥa*,” by most people in Syria. Since the beginning of the revolution, the term has been reappropriated by Syrians to refer to these armed men in civilian clothing assaulting protestors. The term *shabbīḥ*, and its plural form *shabbīḥa* particularly, have gained international notoriety: the words have been quoted in international media outlets (newspapers, television, and Internet websites) in the

⁷ The Raḥbānī brothers are: Assi, 1923-86; Mansour, 1925-2009; and Elias, born in 1938.

⁸ See the article by Nayla Razzouk and Caroline Alexander, “Syrian Thugs Are Assad’s Tool in Protest Crackdown, Groups Say,” Bloomberg Businessweek, May 2012.

United States, Europe, and other parts of the world. The online encyclopedia *Wikipedia* has dedicated an explanatory page to the term, noting its importance and relevance (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shabiha). If the word “*shabbiḥa*” was not created by the revolution, it underwent significant semantic change and gained notoriety through the revolution. Often compared to the Egyptian term “*baltagiyya*,” an Egyptian term meaning “thugs” or “gangs” hired to attack regime opponents and demonstrators, the word “*shabbiḥa*” has become the nickname of the Syrian military apparatus.

Another example of word formation in the context of the Syrian revolution is the nicknames given to President Bashar al-Assad and his regime: “*al-Ṣuhyū-Asadī*”⁹ for the regime, and “*Bashārūn*”¹⁰ for Bashar. The first nickname, *al-Ṣuhyū-Asadī*,” is a word created from two terms: the adjective “*ṣuhyūnī*” (Zionist), and the name “Assad.” The implication behind this coinage is the belief that Bashar al-Assad is a Zionist, who has been serving the interests of Israel against his own people. A second connotation is linked to the harsh repression and massacres perpetrated by the Assad forces against the people. The same idea is implied in the second nickname, “*Bashārūn*,” which has been coined using two nouns: Bashar and Sharon, referring to the former Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. These words have become so common both in Syria and amongst the Syrian community abroad that they have become part of mainstream vocabulary. Hence, Syrian protestors have redefined government entities in their country through the creation of a new terminology, which has been in use since the beginning of the revolution. This new terminology is the direct consequence of the existing lexical gap Syrian demonstrators have been facing.

3.1.2 Semantic Change

The second aspect of the creative process I would like to introduce is semantic change. Semantic change is evident in how both protestors and regime partisans have expressed their own perception of reality. In his theory of semantic change, Johachim Grzega (2004)¹¹ established a typology of forces triggering semantic change, which included changes in the referent (changes in the world) and world-view, but also insult or flattery. These forces were certainly at play in the semantic changes that took place in post-revolution Syrian language.

⁹ This nickname is used throughout the internet, whether Facebook, Youtube, Flickr, or Twitter. Here is an example on a Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/daeel.news?filter=3>

¹⁰ This second nickname for Bashar al-Assad is also widely used throughout the Internet. The following is an example on Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DoK1sGDwILM>

¹¹ Grzega, Joachim, *Bezeichnungswandel: Wie, Warum, Wozu? Ein Beitrag zur englischen und allgemeinen Onomasiologie*, Heidelberg: Winter, 2004.

Both pro and anti-revolution Syrians have altered the meaning of ordinary vocabulary to use it in a new symbolic manner.

A good example of this dynamic is the word *mundassīn*,¹² which has undergone semantic change: while it previously meant ‘hidden’, it has now become a pejorative term used by the Syrian regime to define people who squeeze into demonstrations in order to provoke chaos. This term and the accusation behind it led many Syrians who supported the revolution to treat the topic with irony.¹³ Another example of semantic change by regime partisans is the term *fawra*, meaning something that spills over (usually for boiling coffee). The term has been used by the regime to refer to the revolution: instead of *thawra*, the regime claimed it is a *fawra*, playing on the similar sonorities of the two words. The idea behind this naming process is that the revolution is only a disorganized movement of people without an aim or purpose, and of temporary nature. One can notice that the lexical field of these terms used by the regime is one that emphasizes chaos, troublesome individuals, and illegitimacy. These are all the more powerful since they are being reiterated in the media on a daily basis, with the purpose of defining reality from a specific standpoint.

Protestors have also been creative in granting names to entities and people. A new nickname has been given to Bashar al-Assad: *al-baṭṭa*, or the duck. The origin of this name comes from the scandal around the secret emails sent to Bashar by his secret lover Hadīl al-‘Alī.¹⁴ In her emails to the President, Hadīl called him “duck,” which translates into “*al-baṭṭa*” in Arabic. Since the revelation of these emails, *al-baṭṭa* has become a common nickname for Bashar throughout the Internet.

Other names include *būq* (plural *abuāq*) which in standard Arabic means trumpet. The term’s meaning has been transformed by the protestors to refer to anyone who speaks in defense of the regime in the media. It has been widely used as a way of condemning this practice: *abuāq al-niẓām* are the defenders of the regime, its officials and anyone who speaks in their defense. New names have also been coined by the Syrian protestors for Hizbullah and their leader Hasan Nasrallah. Hizbullah (the party of Allah, God) has been called *hizb al-llā* (the party of *al-llā*, which was the name of an ancient Arabian deity in pre-Islamic times, and

¹² A song mocking the idea of “*mundassīn*” put forth by the regime, along other accusations of the protestors being salafis or armed groups, has been put on Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIGVSoXXx3c>
<http://the-syrian.com/archives/55433>

¹³ The official website of political cartoonist Ali Ferzat speaks of the term and its meaning: <http://www.ali-ferzat.com/ar/%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A7%D8%A1-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86-%D9%85%D9%86%D8%AF%D8%B3%D9%8A%D9%86.html>

¹⁴ Comical pages mocking this episode are numerous on the internet. An example is to be found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3zMqpVQDgdY&feature=related>

is opposed to Allah, the one and only divinity in Islam), and Hasan Nasrallah Hasan Nasr *al-llaī*. These terms are all the more powerful since they attack Hizbullah and its leader on the grounds of religious beliefs, suggesting that they do not adhere to any Islamic values but are rather followers of a pagan deity. The anger towards Hizbullah and its leader is due to their support of the Syrian regime, regardless of the regime's repression of its own people.

Arabic language has been used symbolically in Syria since the revolution started. Hence, since the death of the martyr singer from Hama Ibrahim Qashoush,¹⁵ who authored several anti-regime songs, Syrians have associated his name with singing against the regime and in support of the revolution. Instead of saying “the singer of Dar‘ā,” they would say “Qashoush Dar‘ā.” This appellation is well-known and is used throughout the country.

Other cases of semantic change in everyday vocabulary include the ways in which most Syrians describe someone who sides with neither the regime nor the revolution. While the term *al aghlabiyya al-ṣāmitah*, or the silent majority, was used in the first year of the revolution, the expression has not been in use since, because of its inaccuracy. Most Syrians have indeed joined the revolution and only a minority has not taken side yet. This minority is referred to as *ramādī*, or grey, by most Syrians. The term is highly pejorative and denotes indecisiveness and lack of courage. Syrians who speak about the revolution regularly use this term amongst themselves.

It is important to note that the level of fear due to the *mukhābarāt* apparatus is still very strong in Syria, leading people to use coded language on heated topics, particularly on the phone, which is believed to be under surveillance.¹⁶ Hence, expressions such as *'am tmaṭir* (it is raining) or *'andna ḥafla* (we are having a party) are used to indicate that there is a demonstration going on. The semantic field of rain has been largely used to express the idea of protests and their consequences. Heavy rain is used to indicate the gunfire from the Syrian forces. These tools have been used due to the impossibility still of speaking clearly about demonstrations and their organizers, who would be exposed to regime retaliation. Here again the semantic fields of physical health, work, and study are commonly used by demonstrators and other anti-regime dissidents to speak about the revolution. The phrase *māshī al ḥāl* is known amongst Syrians to mean that things are not very well; and the sentence “one has one week left before coming out of the hospital” means that the person will be back from hiding in

¹⁵ Ibrahim Qashoush was killed in Ḥamāh in July 2011 by regime forces.

¹⁶ A report by *al-Jazeera* has been issued on the topic, it is available at the following link:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcSNjYN-6nk>

a week. This way of handling dangerous and risky topics is certainly not singular to the Syrian case but it remains widespread in Syria. Another phenomenon one can witness in Syrian is the transformation of these codes from verbal to electronic form. Throughout the Internet, whether in emails, Facebook messages or others, Syrians who are at risk of being targeted by the regime have used coded forms of communication.

Last but not least, the impact of the revolution on the Syrian language has been so strong that certain existing words have become fully associated with the revolution, regardless of their usage. This is the case of the word *tansiqiyya*, which means “coordination.” Since the beginning of the revolution, the term has acquired a new meaning: people speak of *tansiqiyyat al-thawra*, to refer to the organization units of the revolution. While it used to denote any type of coordination, the word is now primarily used to refer to the coordination committee of the revolution. Semantic change has been a significant component of language change in Syria following the Arab Spring. Existing vocabulary has acquired both new meanings and new usages. As put forth in Grzega’s theory of semantic change, the forces at play behind these transformations included changes in the world-view, as well as insult and flattery.

3.2 The Second Consequence of the Revolution on the Arabic Language is the Rise of Popular Slogans and Songs in the Syrian Dialect.

The Syrian dialect has experienced significant world-exposure since the beginning of the uprising: it has been put at the forefront in the international Arabic media. Local and dialectal expressions chanted by the Syrian protestors have been distributed through Arabic newspapers and television channels, providing exposure of the Syrian dialect to the entire Arab world. Several slogans have made their way to an international audience in their original form: the slogan *maḥnā ghairak yā Allah*, (we only have you, Allah), for instance, is known by a worldwide audience. The same can be said of late peace activist Ibrahim Qashoush’s song *Yalla Erḥal yā Bashar*,¹⁷ which has become the official song of the Syrian revolution. The slogans *thawrat al-ḥurriyya wa al-karāma*, (the revolution of freedom and dignity) and *silmiyye* (peacefulness) have also been a marker of the Syrian uprising.

Popular and humorous slogans in the Syrian dialect have been chanted to express Syrians’ anger and their awareness of the political games surrounding them, be it the inaction of the international community, Hizbullah’s support of the regime, or the unfailing backing of Russia. The following are examples of these slogans: *Ila sayyid al-muqāwama* (*Hassan Nasrallah*),

¹⁷ A translation of the lyrics of the song into English is available at the following link: <http://www.nowlebanon.com/BlogDetails.aspx?TID=1640&FID=6>

*waqif 'ad-dūr! 'am nkhalīṣ min sayyid al-mumāna'a wa jāyyinak,*¹⁸ (“to Mr. Resistance [Hassan Nasrallah], wait in line, we ate getting rid of Mr. “I refuse” and we are coming to you”). *Lafrūf, faqaṭ al-ab bidāfi 'an ibnu bihadihi al-sharāṣah: yā tara fī shī?*¹⁹ (“Lavrov, only a father would defend his son in such an aggressive way: is there something we do not know?”). This slogan accuses Sergey Lavrov, the Foreign Minister of Russia, of defending Bashar and trying anything to protect him. Another example of a popular slogan in the Syrian dialect is the following: *al-qalaq al-duwālī...wa ṣirmāṭnā sawā,*²⁰ (“The international community’s concern: our shoes are no different”). This slogan addresses the international community directly, accusing it of not really caring: its concern is like their shoes, meaning that it carries no significance for Syrians.

One can notice both the boldness and dark humor of these slogans, which speak of many Syrians’ impatience with the current state of affairs. The fact that they were coined and remained in dialectal Arabic and not in literary form is all the more suggestive of their lively and expressive nature. Most of these slogans would indeed lose most of their meaning if they were to be translated or expressed in formal Arabic. To the contrary, the dialectal form relates to a shared and lived experience on the ground and resonates more deeply with Syrians. This fact underlines the importance of internal communication amongst Syrians and the need to express feelings and perceptions in the midst of the current events. Many of these slogans have appeared in the international media, particularly the Arabic media in their original form. They have provided exposure of the Syrian dialect and Syrians’ way of thinking to an international audience.

Although most slogans that reach popularity are dialectal slogans, there are also several examples of slogans in literary Arabic. One of them is the following: *awqifū al qatl, nurīd an nabnī watanan li kul al sūriyyin,* spoken by a young girl, Reema Dali, in front of the Syrian Parliament, in the middle of Damascus; the girl chanting the slogan was alone, wearing a red dress. This led to a large campaign by partisans of the revolution, who used this slogan as a symbol for their fight for freedom.

Dialectal slogans and songs have certainly increased the tight bonds amongst partisans of the revolution in Syria. Another feature of this phenomenon are oaths created by Syrian

¹⁸ The Arabic form of the slogan reads as the following:

”الى سيد المقاومة، وقف علدور!! عم نخلص من سيد الممانعة وجايينك“

¹⁹ ”لافروف، فقط الاب يدافع عن ابته بهذه الشراسة، يا ترى في شي؟“

²⁰ ”القلق الدولي...وصرمايتنا سوا“

revolutionaries, and called *Qassam al-thawra*.²¹ The idea behind it is to swear allegiance to the revolutionary forces. Demonstrators marching on the streets of Syria tend to chant this oath in groups, often following the lead of one of the demonstrators. *Qassam al-thawra* is critical because it symbolizes the belonging to a group and adherence to a cause.

3.3 The Third Feature is the Transformation of Old Proverbs into New Sayings Linked to the Revolution.

Another interesting aspect of Arabic language use in the revolution is the transformation of some Arabic proverbs into dialectal proverbs with a new meaning. There are numerous examples of this phenomenon in Syria. Demonstrators have commonly drawn on existing Arabic proverbs to create new ones with a different meaning, often one based on a dark sense of humor. I will consider here what I consider the most significant examples of these proverbs, which have been raised on banners and demonstration boards.

The first example is the following new saying: *inna al-ṭa'ifiyya rajas min 'amal al-niẓām fa-ajtanibuh*²² (sectarianism is the product of the regime, so avoid it). This saying was coined out of the Qur'anic verse, which reads: "*inna al-fitnah rajas min 'amal al-shaytān fa-ajtanibuh*"²³ (*fitna*, or civil strife, is the outcome of the devil's work, so avoid it). The new saying emphasizes the unity of the Syrian people against the regime, regardless of their sectarian identities. Syrians have staunchly promoted the concept of unity of the people in face of the regime, answering the accusations of sectarian strife and division promoted by the Syrian government and international media. A second example is the new proverb *la tu'ajil muẓāharat al-yūm ila al-ghad*,²⁴ (do not postpone today's demonstration to tomorrow) coined from the original Arabic saying *la tu'ajil 'amal al yūm ila al-ghad*, (do not postpone today's work to tomorrow). This is a poignant way of calling people to demonstrate today and not postpone their brave actions of resistance to the next day. A third example is *mundass dahr, wa lā minḥibbakjī shahr*,²⁵ (better be a *mundass* all your life than a *minḥibbakjī* for a single month), from the original proverb *A'zab dahr wa la armal shahr*, (better be single all your life than widow for a month). This proverb expresses the shame of being a regime partisan, even if only for a single month. It is another powerful saying coined in order to call people to rally to the revolutionary movement. A similar example is the old proverb in Syrian dialect *alf kilmet*

²¹ Examples of people chanting this oath on the streets of Syria can be found at the following links:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bGbmjIGNzWs> and <http://www.youtube.com/watch?=PIkEFNu32QQ>

²² "ان الطائفية رجس من عمل النظام فاجتنبوها"

²³ "يا ايها الذين آمنوا انما الخمر والميسر والأنصاب والأزلام رجس من عمل الشيطان فاجتنبوه لعلكم تفلحون"

²⁴ "لا تؤجل مظاهرة اليوم إلى الغد"

²⁵ "منندس دهر ولا منحبكجي شهر"

*jabaan wa la i'ulu Allah yarhamu*²⁶ (it is better to say a thousand times coward than to say rest in peace), which has become *alf kilmet Allah yarhamu wa la i'ulu as-suri jabaan*²⁷ (it is better to say a thousand times rest in peace than to say that the Syrian is a coward).

A fourth case is *man rāqaba al-nās māṭ*,²⁸ (he who observes people dies), from the proverb *man rāqaba al-nās māṭa hāmman*²⁹ (he who observes people dies out of worries). This proverb has been addressed to the Arab observers to Syria, pointing out that the regime would not hesitate to kill them. Another proverb coined at the occasion of the UN observation mission to Syria is the following: *ab'ad 'an al-murāqib wa ghanīlū*,³⁰ (“stay away from the observer and sing to him”) originating from the original Arabic proverb *ab'ad 'an al-shar wa ghanīlū*³¹ (“stay away from the observer and sing to him”).

Fifth, I would like to offer here proverbs that have been coined to address the regime and its characteristics. The first example is the old proverb *al bāb li iji minhu rih sakaru wa istirih*,³² (the door from which wind comes, close it and relax), from which the following new saying has been coined: *al-niḡām ili bīḡik minū shabbīḡ, saqtu wa istariḡ*³³ (the regime from which comes a *shabbīḡ*, make it fall and relax). The second is the Arabic proverb *tajrī al ryāḡ bimā lā tashtahī as-sufun*,³⁴ (“the winds do not blow in the ways that the ships wish they would”), which has become *tajrī al-muḡāharah bimā lā yashtahī al-Assad*³⁵ (“the demonstration will not bring about what Assad wants”). The original proverb expresses the idea of bad luck.

Perhaps a more local transformation because of its dialectal form is the following example: *rubba dābatin lam taliduhu ummak*³⁶ (“this is the donkey that your mother did not give birth to”) which has been coined from the original local saying: *rubba akhin lam taliduhu ummak*³⁷ (“this is the brother that your mother did not give birth to”). It is important to explain the meaning behind this proverb: Syrian protestors coined it after Kofi Annan’s visit to Syria. This visit came after a first observation mission by the Arab League from December 2011 to February 2012, and led by the Sudanese military commander Muhammad al-Dabi. Syrian protestors have played with the similar sonorities of the name of the Sudanese commander,

²⁶ “الف كلمة جبان ولا يقولو الله يرحمو”

²⁷ “الف كلمة الله يرحمو ولا يقولو السوري جبان”

²⁸ “من راقب الناس مات”

²⁹ “من راقب الناس مات هما”

³⁰ “ابعد عن المراقب وغانيلو”

³¹ “ابعد عن الشر وغانيلو”

³² “الباب الي بيحك منو الريح.. سكرو واستريح”

³³ “النظام الي بيحك منو شبيح..سقطو واستريح”

³⁴ “تجري الرياح بما لا تشتهي السفن”

³⁵ “تجري المظاهرات بما لا يشتهي الأسد”

³⁶ “رب دابة لم تلده أمك”

³⁷ “رب أخ لم تلده أمك”

Dabi, and the Arabic word meaning donkey, *dāba*. The idea behind this proverb was to suggest familial links between Muhammad al-Dabi and Kofi Annan, who both ended their mission with no significant outcome. Last but not least, Syrian protestors have transformed the old words traditionally chanted by the *musaharātī*³⁸ during the month of Ramadan. They have created the following new adaptation: *Yā Nāīm waḥad adāīm, Bashār al-Assad wallah mānū dāīm, intaha ḥukm al-bahāīm, la illah illalah, wa al-asad ‘adūllah, lak ‘ūmū ‘alā suḥūrkun, al-jaysh al-ḥurija izūrkun*³⁹. Hence, we do see that Syrians have been very creative in transforming existing expressions and proverbs in order to adapt them to a new reality. Powerful new expressions have been coined, chanted, and repeated across Syria by people of various age and from different regions.

3.4 The Fourth Impact of the Syrian Revolution on the Arabic Language is the Battle of Words that has been Taking Place between Pro- and Anti-Regime Partisans.

Language has become a tool of war between groups who want to promote different views of reality. In this vein, each group has assigned names to the other party and has used their particular terms as symbols of their struggle. In the case of the regime, the narrative has focused on the idea of a plot: it accuses armed terrorist groups of killing soldiers and civilians and spreading fear in the country. “Armed groups” or *majmu‘āt musallahah* in Arabic is a recurrent expression in the speeches of the Syrian government representatives. In the official media of the Syrian regime, these words have made the title of a countless number of newspaper articles. Along with the idea of the active presence of an external armed group fighting the regime in Syria, the government has put forth the idea of *mu’amara*, or conspiracy, organized by outside groups and governments who have a stake in putting an end to the Syrian regime. This term, *mu’amara*, is consistently used by the official Syrian media. *Mu’amara al-kawniyya*, or the universal conspiracy, has become the credo the regime goes by.

The Syrian government does not recognize the idea of an authentic revolutionary movement in Syria. The idea of *thawra* (revolution) is categorically rejected by the Syrian regime and its officials. Speaking of the same phenomenon, the government and the protestors give it different names: *mu’amara* and *thawra* battle each other in order to label a single reality in radically

³⁸ The *musaharātī* wakes people up before dawn during the holy month of Ramadan so that they may eat before the start of their fast. It is an old tradition in the Middle East.

³⁹ يا نايم وحد الدايم .. بشار الاسد والله مانو دايم .. انتهي حكم البهائم .. لا اله الا الله .. والاسد عدو الله .. لك قوموا على سحووركن .. الجيش الحر اجا يزوركن.

The song is played on Youtube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FGsm7hPjemM>

different manners. This naming battle is often mocked by the Syrian demonstrators themselves, who use the regime's own words of accusation ironically: "when did you join the conspiracy?" is a question commonly asked amongst protestors, meaning "when did you join the revolution?"

The same competition in naming can be noticed in the concept of *mundass*, (plural *mundassīn*) used by the regime to describe the demonstrators, meaning "infiltrator." The basic idea behind this name is the fact that the common people are not leading a revolution for human rights and dignity; rather, it is an armed movement controlled by outsiders who have a hidden agenda. The term *mundass* has been mocked by the protestors as well; they often ask each other "when did you become a *mundass*?" instead of asking: "when did you join the revolution?" The song *Qalu 'anna mundassīn*⁴⁰ is an example of this mocking process. Other names given to the protestors by the regime include: *musallahīn* (armed groups), *mukharribīn* (trouble-makers) and *salafīyyīn* (salafists). In the case of the demonstrators, they have not been lacking naming strategies of their own. As aforementioned, partisans of the regime have received a plethora of names, such as *shabbīh*, usually used in its plural form *shabbīha*, since these men tend to always act in groups and not alone. The terms *minḥibbakjī* and their variants (*minḥibbakjahshī*, *minkibbak*, we will throw you in the garbage, or *minjībak*, meaning we will get to you) have also been widely used by Syrians to refer to any person siding with the regime. Other names include *būq* (plural *abuāq*) which in standard Arabic means trumpet. The term's meaning has been transformed by the protestors to refer to anyone who speaks in defense of the regime. It has been widely used as a way of condemning this practice: *abuāq al-nizām* are the defenders of the regime, its officials and any person who speaks in their defense. The current Minister of Foreign Affairs in Syria has been called *multahim al-qārrāt*, devourer of continents, following his claim that he would rid of Europe from the map.

A characteristic example of the linguistic battle taking place in Syria is the very idea of the evolution of the revolutionary movement. While pro-regime Syrians have been describing the movement by saying *khillsit*, meaning "it is ending" or "it is dying," pro-revolution partisans have answered *qarrabit*, which means "it is getting close," or "victory is close." This linguistic contradiction between *qarrabit* and *khillsit* symbolizes the overall opposition between the regime and the revolution.

⁴⁰ The song can be listened to at the following website: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZIGVSoXXx3c>

3.5 The Fifth Element is the Symbolic Use of Language to Show the Unity of the Syrian People.

A theme of great importance in the revolution has been that of the unity of the Syrian people. Slogans, songs and proverbs have emphasized the idea of one Syrian people regardless of religious and ethnical backgrounds. Syrian protestors have been creative in showing their unity across cities and regions of Syria, through language. Hence, demonstrators have adopted slogans from other cities or regions and, in doing so; have made it a point to preserve certain phrases in their original dialect, however different they may have been from their own local accent. A good example of this phenomenon can be seen in the reiteration of the phrase *ḥenna*, originally from Dar‘ā and meaning *naḥnu* or “we” in English. Instead of using *neḥna* which is the dialectal phrase common in Damascus (or *nehne* in Ḥamāh, and Ḥimṣ), protestors have purposefully used *henna*. The slogan “Ya Dar‘ā ḥenna ma‘akī lal-mawt,” meaning “Oh Dar‘ā we are with you till death,” is an example of this phenomenon.

Another aspect of this expression of unity amongst Syrians has been the dialogue of slogans amongst Syrian cities. It has been common to notice slogans on boards answering one another from one city or region of Syria to the other. I will provide two examples: the first is the slogan from ‘Amuda “Greetings from the bride of the north, ‘Amuda (city, with Kurds) to the bride of the occupied south, Majdal Shams,” and the answer from Majdal Shams “‘Amuda bows to you, how beautiful would it be to live in one same country (signed: Majdal Shams the occupied, the sold Golan). In this case, Majdal Shams is located in the occupied Golan Heights, not under de facto control of the Syrian regime. ‘Amuda is a town in the Governorate of Al-Hasakah, in northeaster Syria, and is mostly Kurdish. The second example is a slogan found in the town of Kefernebel, in Edlib, reading: “One, one, one, Kefernebel and ‘Amuda are one,” and signed “The local committee of occupied Kefernebel.” The slogan was answered later in the town of ‘Amuda, in the following manner: “One, one, one, ‘Amuda and Kefernebel are one, the Syrian people is one” and signed “the local committee of ‘Amuda.” One of the interesting aspects of this last slogan is the fact that it was written in Kurdish, the town of Kefernebel being mainly inhabited by Kurds.

Another example that has been carried on boards in two Syrian cities is the following conversation between al-Zabadānī and Dārayyā. The dialogue is as follows: *min tha’irat al-zabadani: Dārayyā ibtasimi, ‘unbuki yazdad hala kul yum*⁴¹ (From the female rebels of al-Zabadānī: Dārayyā smile, your grapes are getting more beautiful everyday). The answer in Dārayyā reads: *tansiqqiyat Dārayyā to al-Zabadānī: thuwwar al-Zabadānī, ‘unbuna yastamid*

⁴¹ “داريا ابتسمي عنبك يز داد حلى كل يوم”

*halawatahu min tufahukum, wa yastamid humrat khududihi min haya'ikum*⁴² (the organizing committee of *Dārayyā* to the rebels of *al-Zabadānī*, our grapes get their sweetness from your apples, and they get their red cheeks from your timidity).⁴³

4. Conclusion

The findings of this paper show that the Arabic language has been deeply affected by the revolution in Syria. It bears the marks of a lived experience, that of millions of people who have needed to create meaning to express the reality of a situation only they know about. Before the revolution started, under the Ba'ath rule, language had already been impacted by years of fear and oppression; Syrians had found creative ways to communicate ideas without running the risk of repression. They used restricted codes, which were shared amongst small speech communities. This usage of restricted codes demonstrates the relevance of fear as a factor for the elaboration of such codes. Linguistic theories of communication codes would benefit from more thorough studies about the impact of fear on speech, particularly in authoritarian societies.

After the first revolutionary sparks in the country, new linguistic transformations have taken place: the Arabic language and its Syrian dialectal forms have evidenced new word formations, semantic changes, the creation of new proverbs, and other phenomena that will bear a long-term mark on the linguistic fabric of Syria. Both the Assad regime and the protestors have created new strategies of communication that express their own view of reality. Language has been highly marked by the battles on the ground, and naming needs have opened the door to many linguistic innovations. While the theories of naming needs and lexical gap are powerful instruments to help us understand these creative processes, attention should be called to the theme of conflict and its impact on language use. The linguistic transformations we observe today in Syria are the outcome of a battle between large speech communities with a diverging view of reality. These linguistic changes are all the more significant since they have been used by most Syrians since the start of the uprising. We can notice, for instance, how Syrians have been using these new linguistic forms to speak of other revolutions occurring outside Syria. In the case of Sudan, Syrians have been speaking of the regime and its opponents in the following terms: *shabbīḥ* for anyone related to the regime and *mundass* for the partisans of the revolution.

⁴² "نوار الزبداني عنينا يستمد حلاوته من تفاحكم... ويستمد حمرة خدوده من حياكم"

⁴³ The boards have been posted on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/messages/579555529>

These findings demonstrate both the changing nature of the Arabic language and the significant impact conflict situations may carry upon it. While these findings apply to Syria and its particular place in the Arab Spring, they may advance sociolinguistic studies of language innovation in zones of political repression and conflict. More significantly, the concept of naming need is at the centre of these findings, which highlights the theory's relevance when analyzing word formation and speech creativity. Al-hājah umm al-ikhtira', "need is the mother of creativity", says an old Arabic proverb.

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(<http://www1.ku-eichstaett.de/SLF/EngluVglSW/stekauer1051.pdf>).

The data brought forth in this study has been collected through interviews as well as closely following the developments in Syria through the Arabic and international media (TV, radio channels, newspapers, Internet).

Websites:

www.aljazeera.net

www.alarabiya.net

www.youtube.com (a large number of protest videos have been posted on this website)

www.facebook.com

<http://www.arrae.com/portal/> (*Al-Ra'y* is the official website of a Syrian political party called “*Hizb al-Sha‘b al-Dīmoqrātī*, The Democratic People’s Party)

Examples of names of Fridays can be found at the following website:

<http://the-syrian.com/archives/55433>.

Certain Fridays have been associated with the Christian and Alawite communities, while others have had a more Islamic tone. An online voting system on Facebook has been put into place to allow people worldwide to vote and choose the name of the following Friday:

<https://www.facebook.com/Syrian.Revolution>

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DISCURSO (DISCURSO POLÍTICO), CONSTRUCTIVISMO Y RETÓRICA: LOS ESLÓGANES DEL 15-M*

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Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es el análisis de los eslóganes del movimiento ciudadano que irrumpió en las plazas públicas de las principales ciudades españolas en torno al 15 de mayo de 2011 (de ahí el nombre de movimiento del 15M o de los indignados). Este movimiento seguía la estela de los surgidos en Islandia y en Grecia, y también de las revoluciones de la primavera árabe. La característica principal de los discursos de este movimiento ciudadano, que se condensaron en eslóganes, es su gran creatividad discursivo-retórica. Una creatividad que está en relación directa con la necesidad de construir un discurso ciudadano distinto a los discursos gubernamentales que han conducido a la actual crisis político-social y financiera.

Nuestra perspectiva para analizar el potencial creativo de tales discurso se enmarca en la teórica constructivista, teniendo en cuenta las dimensiones socio-cognitiva y pragmático-retórica. Ofrecemos por razones de espacio, del total de eslóganes que hemos analizado hasta la fecha, tres ejemplos representativos del conjunto. Procuramos probar que tales eslóganes activan un marco cognitivo nuevo, para una interpretación de la historia reciente de la democracia española que es totalmente diferente a la del *status quo*.

Palabras clave: Análisis crítico del discurso, discurso político, discursos de cambio social, constructivismo, retórica, eslóganes políticos.

Abstract

Our purpose in this paper is an analysis of the *15M movement*, the social movement that burst into the public squares of Spain's major cities around 15th May 2011 (from this event came the name of the 15M movement or the *indignados movement*). This group was already emerging in the wake of the social movements in Iceland and Greece against capitalism, as well in the wake of the "Arab Spring" revolutions. The main characteristics of the 15M speeches, mainly focused on their slogans, is their discursive-rhetoric creativity, a creativity that is directly related to the need to build a new citizen discourse, different from the institutional discourses that have led to the current political and financial crisis.

Our perspective when analysing the creative potential of these slogans is based on constructivist theory, taking into account socio-cognitive and pragmatic-rhetoric dimensions. For reasons of space, we present an analysis of three representative slogans taken from the whole study to date. Our main conclusion is that such slogans activate a new cognitive framework for the interpretation of the recent history of Spanish democracy, which is totally different from that of the *status quo*.

Keywords: Critical discourse analysis, political discourse, discourses of social change, constructivism, rhetorics, political slogans.

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1. Introducción

El análisis de los discursos de tipo político ha sido un área de investigación del Análisis del Discurso que en la última década ha resultado bastante fructífero por la atención cada vez mayor a los cambios socio-políticos de la sociedad globalizada. Al mismo tiempo, desde esta óptica, el término de *discurso político* se entiende cada vez más en un sentido amplio para incluir tanto las prácticas discursivas generadas por los profesionales de la política como las que realizan los diferentes grupos sociales con propuestas de cambio político tanto a nivel nacional como internacional. En todos los casos, consideramos que se trata de *propuestas discursivas ideológicas* con las que los actores pretenden *construir* una determinada visión del

mundo, conseguir así la adhesión del ciudadano al proyecto político propio y provocar cambios reales en las instituciones.

Entendemos por estas *propuestas o construcciones discursivas* algo parecido a los *signos ideológicos* de Voloshinov (1929), que activan objetivaciones simbólicas del mundo (Berger y Luckmann, 1968); también semejante a nociones como *visiones del mundo* (Bourdieu, 1990), *imaginarios* (Castoriadis, 1975), *representaciones sociales* (Moscovici, 1981) o *marcos cognitivos* (Lakoff, 2007), entre otras denominaciones.

Desde esta aproximación al estudio del significado ideológico, consideramos que el discurso político en particular tiene que ser analizado a su vez desde una doble perspectiva: *socio-cognitiva y retórico-constructivista*; con el fin de dar cuenta de las siguientes premisas: la construcción de significado es inseparable de la selección intencionada que realiza el agente de las prácticas comunicativas; inseparable de la acción humana y del contexto en el que se insertan tales prácticas; así como de las construcciones cognitivas de los actores sociales. En esta línea, el enfoque teórico-metodológico que defendemos en este trabajo parte de posiciones constructivistas del conocimiento y del discurso, muy alejadas de la tradición racionalista y de la teoría cognitiva representacional (más detalles en Harré, 1981: 212;⁴⁴ Forgas, 1981: 259; Capra, 1996: 275ss.; y Morales López 2011); asimismo, nuestra propuesta se acerca a las posiciones teóricas que defienden una cognición corporizada que dé cuenta tanto del conocimiento como de la experiencia emocional (Bateson, 1972; Lakoff y Johnson, 1980; Varela, Thompson y Rosch 1990; Maturana y Varela 1990; Maturana 1996, 2006; Bruner, 1991; Capra, 1996; Damasio, 1994 y 2010; Gomila y Calvo, 2008, entre otros).

Desde esta posición teórica, hemos analizado los eslóganes creados espontáneamente por el *movimiento del 15M* (también conocido como *movimiento de los indignados*), de los cuales en este trabajo mostraremos tres ejemplos que nos parecen ilustrativos de todo el conjunto. El análisis de estos discursos, fruto de las concentraciones masivas de ciudadanos en las plazas de las principales ciudades españolas en 2011, creemos, constituye un ejemplo de análisis crítico del discurso aplicado al estudio de nuevos lenguajes y narrativas surgidos en los grupos sociales; un tipo de discursos que quizás puedan constituir, como indica Sousa de Santos (2009: 48), diferentes imaginarios de solución a los problemas actuales,⁴⁵ porque en definitiva su única

⁴⁴ “Lingering Cartesianism is everywhere, suggesting that if anything is cognitive it must be individual and private (and then how can we find out about it in publicly reliable ways?). The error of identifying the cognitive with the inner processes of individuals...” (Harré, 1981: 212).

⁴⁵ En concreto, nos referimos a la profunda crisis económica, consecuencia del modelo neoliberal que comenzó en Estados Unidos, tras la caída de Lehman Brothers, y que pronto se trasladó a Europa, particularmente, a los países del sur de Europa, además de Irlanda.

finalidad es provocar cambios sociales (Morales López, 2012a y 2012b; Montesano Montessori y Morales López, 2013).

2. Marco teórico

Tal como hemos indicado más arriba, nuestra visión del discurso es tanto una perspectiva socio-cognitiva, como pragmática y retórico-constructivista. Consideramos en primer lugar, la dimensión socio-cognitiva, aludiendo primero brevemente a la teoría cognitiva clásica, de la cual nosotros nos desviamos completamente.

2.1. *Perspectiva socio-cognitiva*

La teoría cognitiva que ha dominado el pensamiento científico desde la década de los setenta ha sido la conocida como teoría representacional y modular de la cognición humana; una visión racionalista, que ha servido de base también para explicar la relación entre cognición y discurso. Desde esta aproximación, se concibe la cognición como la representación mental de un mundo con existencia independiente, y parcelado a su vez otras sub-representaciones diferentes (Capra, 1996: 275). Por ejemplo, para la explicación del proceso de significación, esta teoría postula la existencia de varios estadios cognitivos independientes o modulares (veritativo, inferencial, y contextual) que se activarían con la realización de las distintas unidades lingüísticas.

Otra perspectiva socio-cognitiva diferente (y para nosotros más interesante) se remonta, por ejemplo, a los estudios de Bartlett (1932); este autor, a partir de sus investigaciones sobre la memoria, propuso la noción de esquema o marco (*schema* o *frame*) para explicar cómo organiza el conocimiento en su experiencia interaccional cotidiana. Desde esta visión, la construcción de la cognición está inseparablemente unida a lo social y se construye en la interacción (Condor y Antaki, 1997: 475). Ideas parecidas pueden encontrarse en el interaccionismo simbólico de Mead, en Bateson y más tarde en Goffman, Gumperz, George Lakoff, y Scollon y Wong Scollon; pero también en Wittgenstein, Vygotsky y Voloshinov (véase referencia a estos autores en Morales López, 2011; y en Salvador, 2012). Asimismo, en esta misma tradición podríamos situar la posición constructivista radical de los biólogos chilenos Humberto Maturana y Francisco Varela (1990), menos conocidos en la tradición discursiva, pero enormemente influyentes en los estudios sistémicos o de la complejidad (Capra, 1996).

Maturana y Varela establecen una relación estrecha entre el lenguaje, el conocimiento, las emociones y las relaciones sociales (Maturana 2006; Maturana y Varela 1990; Maturana 1996). En una de las últimas referencias de Maturana (2006: 96-97), este autor explica esta interrelación en los siguientes términos:

Language is a manner of coexistence in coordinations of doings, not a property or faculty of the brain or of what we call the “mind.” Language occurs as a flow of recursive interactions between organisms operating as totalities; language is not a symbolic system of communication about entities of the world; language is not constituted by the doings that are coordinated; language occurs in the continuously changing present of the flow of living in recursive coordinations of doings... and emotions in the flow of [human beings’] coexistence as they language together...
We do not construct the worlds that we live, we just live them

La comunicación es, pues, un proceso interconectado con la acción humana y con la actividad mental; una mente que no es algo separado de la corporeidad ni de uno de sus atributos, las emociones, como también se demuestra desde estudios neurológicos recientes (Damasio, 1994 y 2010). Por tanto, para Maturana y Varela (1990), la cognición es parte integrante de la interacción de un sujeto (racional y emocional a la vez) con su entorno. Esta interacción provoca cambios estructurales en la red de este individuo, la cual resulta así organizativamente cerrada y autopoiesica (no lineal) (Capra, 1996: 279).

Podríamos todavía decir, buscando los orígenes de este pensamiento en los inicios de la contemporaneidad, que ya, en *Über Wahrheit und Lüge im außermoralischen Sinne*, Nietzsche considera las reacciones emotivas estimuladas por el encuentro con las cosas el origen de nuestro conocimiento y de nuestra manera de constituir conceptualmente el entendimiento del mundo. Nos lo recuerda Vattimo recientemente (Couceiro-Bueno, 2012: 10).

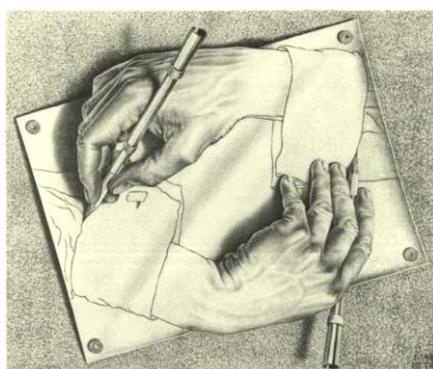
2.2. *La perspectiva pragmática y retórico-constructivista*

Desde la segunda dimensión que constituye nuestra aproximación teórica, consideramos, en primer lugar, el discurso como un proceso socio-semiótico. Esto quiere decir, que la construcción de significado simbólico establece una relación dialéctica con la realidad social. Uno de los lingüistas que ha defendido con más claridad esta perspectiva ha sido Halliday (1977: 50) cuando explica su visión del lenguaje:

[...] a sociological event, a semiotic encounter through which the meanings that constitute the social system are exchanged. The individual member is, by virtue of his membership, a ‘meaner’, one who

means. By his acts of meaning and those of other individual meaners, the social reality is created, maintained in good order, and continuously shaped and modified

Los actos simbólicos crean significado, porque el agente desempeña siempre un rol social en un grupo concreto, pero a su vez este significado simbólico crea la realidad social. Se trata, pues, de un proceso circular que Maturana y Varela (1990: 204) explican gráficamente con la figura del grabador de Escher (cuyas manos se dibujan mutuamente) y que les lleva a la siguiente conclusión: “Estamos continuamente inmersos dentro de esta circular de una interacción a otra, cuyos resultados dependen de la historia”.



La forma más básica de esta construcción de la realidad social se produce, para Halliday (1977), en la conversación espontánea, en los encuentros cotidianos. Por ello mismo también, la persistencia y el cambio en el sistema social –y en la cultura en general–, quedan reflejados en los textos, al mismo tiempo que se reproducen a través de estos textos. Esta relación dialéctica ha implicado la diversificación de los textos mismos como expresión y creación de significados sociales nuevos (también significados ideológicos, añadimos nosotros) en contextos concretos.

De alguna manera, los principios que rigen todos estos planteamientos existían en la antigua sofística. También tuvieron presencia en la segunda mitad del siglo XX, aunque no alcanzaron, hasta décadas después, la repercusión y el prestigio universitario que tuvieron los de origen aristotélico-cartesiano. Nuestra propuesta actual (que sitúa el conocimiento y la verdad en la dimensión de la intersubjetividad, en la construcción social de discursos con la finalidad de llevar persuasivamente a la sociedad hacia acuerdos eficaces para los problemas con que se encuentra en cada momento de su historia), ni siquiera podemos decir que sea hoy mayoritariamente seguida por la comunidad académica. Aunque es mucha la fuerza de la *Nietzsche-Renaissance* (Pujante, 1997: 167-168).

Respecto al desarrollo propiamente de la Nueva Retórica a partir de la segunda mitad del siglo XX (sin contar con el precursor Nietzsche (2000): hermenéutica y retórica van de la mano), debemos mencionar a una tríada fundacional y fundamental: Perelman (1957) (en Perelman y Olbrechts-Tyteca, 1989), Lausberg (1975) y Martin, 1974) como reformuladores de la tradición retórica. También desde los años 70 del siglo pasado existen ámbitos teóricos de especial relevancia con pensamiento crítico al racionalismo logicista de origen aristotélico, un racionalismo del que decía Ortega y Gasset ya tempranamente: “Hoy nos parece demasiado petulante esta actitud” (Ortega, 1976: 41). Ese pensamiento crítico ha sustentado las reivindicaciones retóricas, incluso cuando no coincidían en intereses. Concretamente nos referimos a la ética discursiva de Apel y Habermas (Habermas, 2001), a quienes debemos la teoría consensual de la verdad, y al constructivismo de Lorenz, Lorenzen y Kamlah (Nicolás y Frapolli, 2012: 611-624), con su teoría dialógica de la verdad: ambas teorías consolidadas en los años 70 del siglo XX. En esta línea deberíamos dar también un lugar preferente a los planteamientos hermenéuticos (Gadamer), en amplia relación con la Fenomenología (Heidegger, Ricoeur), el postestructuralismo (Foucault) o el pragmatismo (Rorty). Línea en la que se inserta la ya mencionada tradición antropológica americana (Goffman) y la pragmático-lingüística (Austin, Peirce). Dentro de la teoría literaria, se encuentran en esta misma tradición las aportaciones de los deconstructivistas que se ocupan de la retórica en algunos de sus trabajos (como es el caso de Paul de Man o de Stanley Fish). Toda esta sólida panorámica de pensamiento crítico, también llamado en algunas de sus manifestaciones *pensamiento débil* (Rovatti y Vattimo, 1988), fue durante un par de décadas preterida o desconocida en España, al menos en los ámbitos filológicos, por el poder cultural de los planteamientos lingüístico-cartesianos.

Si el conocimiento de la realidad personal y social pasa por la construcción discursiva, hemos de reconocer la potencialidad del discurso para el cambio. Todo lo que conocemos lo conocemos a través de formulaciones lingüísticas. Esas formulaciones son adquisiciones sociales en principio, pero pueden reformularse y se reformulan de hecho en el proceso creativo del dialogismo diario, con nosotros mismos y con los demás miembros de la sociedad, puesto que todos estamos instalados en la evolución histórica de los hechos. La verdad (tanto individual como social, dado que somos individuos de una sociedad) es el resultado de la eficaz conectividad entre el *objeto*, la *expresión* sobre el objeto y las *condiciones* en las que introducimos la expresión sobre el objeto. No podemos olvidarnos en ningún momento de la situación de habla (hablante, oyente, escritor, lector) en la que los participantes aplican procedimientos para la validación de lo que se dice. Algo semejante al *consenso* de Peirce o al

dictum de Wittgenstein: debo determinar las condiciones bajo las que digo que algo es verdadero.

Como nos dice Lorenz, “el concepto semántico de verdad oculta del contexto la situación de habla, en que se afirma la expresión problemática, y en especial el hablante y el oyente, cuyo papel se considera como irrelevante para la definición de «verdadero»” (Lorenz, 1972: 615).

Ya en la antigua sofística, origen de toda la *theoria recepta* sobre el discurso, las expresiones discursivas se vigorizaban por medio de los recursos retóricos para que fueran reconocidas por los auditorios como la propuesta más eficaz y práctica, y, por tanto, la expresión de la verdad social de su momento.

La base entonces, en la retórica, como ahora en las teorías intersubjetivistas de la verdad, es que el conocimiento consiste en una acción comunicativa. Los discursos, antiguamente y a lo largo de la historia hasta el momento actual, tal y como nos recuerda recientemente Albaladejo (2009), se construyen en tanto que componente comunicativo de la actividad cultural y social. En virtud de la acción comunicativa social se comparten distintos planteamientos, y se llega a un acuerdo o a un replanteamiento de los asuntos que nos atañen como hijos de la *polis* (llamémosle Estado, llamémosle Comunidad Europea, llamémosle mundo globalizado). Todo conocimiento, por tanto, está lingüísticamente mediado. A través de nuestras construcciones interpretativo-lingüísticas del mundo llegamos a un entendimiento de parcelas de dicho mundo que se validan o no socialmente en las acciones comunicativas. La verdad social se realiza, por tanto, en la dimensión intersubjetiva humana de la comunicación, donde tanto la consideración de las condiciones que hacen posible el entendimiento, como la consideración del hablante y el oyente, junto con su subjetividad y sus emociones, son fundamentales para la definición de lo verdadero para un tiempo y un lugar concretos.

Estas ideas socio-cognitivas y constructivistas constituyen, desde nuestro punto de vista, un fundamento imprescindible en la investigación sobre el discurso político en la actualidad; especialmente, la investigación sobre los discursos que hacen propuestas de cambio social y, por tanto, construyen imaginarios nuevos para situaciones sociales específicas. Las razones en las que nos apoyamos son las siguientes: a) se trata de una propuesta teórica que adopta una perspectiva holística y sistémica en la investigación de estos tipos de discursos; es decir, no prescinde de ninguna de las dimensiones que construyen el significado discursivo: el significado semiótico junto a la acción, el contexto y la representación cognitiva de los sujetos; b) supera la perspectiva realista y racionalista a la hora de explicar el conocimiento y la creación de significado, porque parte de la premisa básica de que la realidad no existe fuera del discurso, pero tampoco en el discurso mismo, sino en la relación dialéctica del discurso con

quien lo ha proferido como agente social, con sus emociones, con otros textos anteriores y con el entorno que hace posible tal discurso; y c) proporciona herramientas teórico-metodológicas para preguntarnos por qué unos determinados discursos surgen en momentos sociales concretos, cuál es la fuerza discursiva que los ha generado y si esta fuerza puede producir un efecto perlocutivo o persuasivo, es decir, es capaz de incitar a la acción en el entorno particular en el que han surgido.

3. Aproximación al objeto y a la metodología de análisis del objeto

3.1. Objeto de estudio: El discurso del 15-M, una construcción dialógica. Los eslóganes

Vamos a considerar en este trabajo varios eslóganes de las manifestaciones y acampadas del 15-M como ilustrativos de un discurso que nace de dicho movimiento y que se va construyendo día a día en el dialogismo grupal del movimiento. Un discurso que se construye en la plaza pública (hoy en la calle, en lugares desacralizados), en un entorno de libertad de opinión y decisión como lo fue en la tradición oratoria de las democracias griega y romana así como en todas las democracias que en el mundo han sido. Esto es algo de lo que los participantes del movimiento 15-M son muy conscientes, pues, al discurso parlamentario bipartidista del Congreso de los Diputados, que es el imperante en la política española (y que consideran los participantes en el movimiento de la calle como algo inoperante y degradado democráticamente, por las necesarias disciplinas de partido al votar y por la corrupción política manifiesta en las últimas décadas⁴⁶), ellos oponen el diálogo creativo, de nuevas propuestas, un diálogo con el que intentan construir la alternativa para salir de la crisis provocada por los financieros, los banqueros y los políticos que los apoyan.

Estos eslóganes son, pues, enunciados proferidos por ciudadanos anónimos, que se adhieren al movimiento espontáneo del 15-M. Se trata de actores sin nombre, de quienes lo único que sabemos es que estaban *indignados* y por ello acuden a la plaza pública de su ciudad. En cada una de ellas había acampado un grupo de gente y por ellas pasaba continuamente mucha otra para informarse, participar en las asambleas y, en fin, para adherirse al grupo y expresar así su indignación colectiva por la forma como se había ejercido hasta el momento la democracia

⁴⁶ La crisis económico-financiera que se inicia en 2008 tiene su particular versión en España con una impresionante burbuja inmobiliaria. Tras ello, la ciudadanía va constatando poco a poco que la clase política de los dos principales partidos políticos (PP y PSOE) han sido fieles servidores del neoliberalismo y de la especulación financiera. Navarro et al. (2012) utilizan dos metáforas muy ilustradoras para describir este proceso: *casino financiero* y la *puerta giratoria bien engrasada* (esta última, para referirse a la estrecha relación y el continuo traspaso de poder entre la política y el capital financiero).

española. Los acampados y/o los ciudadanos, de manera espontánea, escribían algo a mano y lo colgaban en un mural, a manera de eslogan; también se podía traer escrito o pedir que se escribiera en las terminales de ordenadores que había en el punto de información. Estas terminales enviaban continuamente información a través de las redes sociales y de las diferentes *webs* del movimiento en cada una de las ciudades donde se ubicaban. Estos eslóganes eran portados también por los ciudadanos en las diversas manifestaciones o concentraciones que se realizaban. Un ejemplo de estos eslóganes es “Dímelo en la calle”, con múltiples variantes:



Los eslóganes son, por tanto, la expresión escueta, concentrada, la condensación casi aforística de todo el pensamiento que se estaba configurando en esos días de acampada en los que se debatía, con un orden ejemplar y con un absoluto respeto a todos los participantes, la forma de solucionar unos problemas que los poderes públicos se habían mostrado incapaces de resolver.⁴⁷ Este pensamiento en construcción, e inspirado en su nacimiento en el libro de Stéphane Hessel *Indignez-vous* (de aquí toman el nombre de *movimiento de los indignados*), se fue alimentando posteriormente de propuestas como las del grupo de economistas Attac (www.attac.tv) y con ideas de economistas como Vicenç Navarro, Juan Torres López y Alberto Garzón Espinosa –recogidas más tarde en el libro *Hay alternativas. Propuesta para crear empleo y bienestar social en España* (Navarro, Torres López y Garzón Espinosa, 2011), entre otros–. Y, aunque el contenido lingüístico de las pancartas, por su propio carácter (una frase identificativa en un contexto político como expresión repetitiva de una idea o de un propósito ideológico), solían ser breves, en ocasiones eran todo un manifiesto, como en el siguiente caso:

⁴⁷ Para un estudio del slogan en la argumentación publicitaria, se puede consultar Péraire (2012).



De entre la gran variedad de eslóganes que se pudieron ver en las calles españolas durante las acampadas y las manifestaciones del 15-M, escogemos tres para este trabajo. La segunda autora ha realizado con Montesano Montessori otro trabajo analítico sobre los eslóganes de este grupo (Montesano Montessori y Morales López, 2013); en este último trabajo, las autoras analizan la diversidad de estrategias discursivas que construyen; y, desde la perspectiva teórico-analítica, intentan aunar algunas de las ideas de la perspectiva constructivista aquí defendida con la metodología de ACD (Wodak y Fairclough, principalmente) y la teoría del discurso de Laclau y Mouffe. En el presente trabajo (Pujante y Morales López), nos centramos totalmente en el desarrollo de la perspectiva constructivista.

3.2. Metodología

La perspectiva teórica que hemos desgranado en el apartado 2 nos conduce inevitablemente a la selección de un método que se basa en los siguientes dos presupuestos: 1) el uso de la tradición etnográfica para la recogida de los datos y su posterior análisis; y 2) la utilización de la perspectiva funcionalista e interdisciplinaria en el análisis propiamente dicho.

La etnografía obliga a una relación dialéctica entre los datos, y los contextos local y global en los que se insertan los discursos analizados (tal como también señalan Scollon y Wong Scollon, 2001: 17-21; y Blommaert y Jie, 2010: 85; entre otros). Con esta relación dialéctica se consigue determinar, en primer lugar, la relevancia de los discursos seleccionados y su conexión con el resto de prácticas discursivas afines; y, en segundo lugar, determinar los recursos discursivos que son cruciales para la construcción de significado.

La perspectiva funcionalista implica considerar que el punto de partida en el análisis discursivo es el del significado que construyen los participantes a través de la selección intencionada de los diversos recursos discursivos que tienen a su alcance (*inuentio* según la clásica terminología retórica). Tales recursos pueden ser tanto de tipo pragmático-discursivo como retórico-elocutivo y argumentativo. Por este motivo, nuestro método tiene en cuenta las

aportaciones analíticas de la pragmática (actos de habla, inferencias que se activan a través de los indicios de contextualización, etc.) y también de la tradición retórica (figuras diversas, tipos de argumentos, etc.). En trabajos anteriores (Pujante y Morales-López, 2008, 2009, 2012, entre los últimos), hemos intentando mostrar que la confluencia de estas dos tradiciones discursivas, la pragmática y la retórica (al fin y a la postre todo discurso retórico es una estructura textual-pragmática, Pujante, 2003: 93-94), nos permite realizar un análisis más completo de los diferentes niveles de significación de los discursos.

En particular, para el análisis de los discursos del 15M, nos interesa analizar desde los planteamientos teóricos expuestos (y en lo que respecta a la manifestación final elocutiva, especialmente con ayuda de los recursos elocutivos retóricos) la vigorización lingüística que representaron sus eslóganes. De entre la gran variedad de eslóganes que se crearon en las plazas de las diferentes ciudades españolas (colgados también en las diversas plataformas de Internet de los diferentes grupos), escogemos, como se ha indicado, tres de ellos, con la intención de mostrar al mismo tiempo el grado de creatividad lingüística (característica que estaba presente en la mayor parte de todos los que fueron surgiendo progresivamente), y su potencialidad para la persuasión y la acción comunicativa. Nuestra intención no es la mera comprensión del sentido de las palabras, sino la búsqueda de la *validez* de las expresiones que aparecen en dichos eslóganes y que nace de la conectividad entre el habla y la acción (en su intencionalidad ilocutiva y en su eficacia perlocutiva). Las frases de las pancartas nacen de unos *usos de habla* en relación con unas *determinadas circunstancias socio-políticas*: una profunda crisis económica que estaba afectando también a los pilares del sistema democrático mismo. Las creaciones dialógicas a las que pudimos asistir en esos días son usos del habla española que tenían como finalidad hacer evidente una situación social y política nueva (así lo reconoció también buena parte de la población española, en numerosas encuestas realizadas⁴⁸).

Las nuevas construcciones que vimos en las pancartas del 15-M beben de las situaciones de *introducción del habla* (Lorenz, 2012: 611-624), de las estructuras aprendidas del habla en la infancia y en la adolescencia. A los creadores de esas expresiones les era necesario respetar los principios, las situaciones básicas comunes a todos los hablantes del español, pues la falta de respeto impediría el *consenso racional* que perseguían respecto a sus interlocutores de la misma lengua: la sociedad española en plena crisis financiera. Es decir, que si se rompen las

⁴⁸ Véase la publicada por El País (23 octubre 2011) (http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2011/10/23/actualidad/1319392784_983542.html), en la cual se concluye que el 73% de la población está de acuerdo con las propuestas de los *indignados*. Este acuerdo aún se mantiene un año más tarde: http://politica.elpais.com/politica/2012/10/06/actualidad/1349540108_595750.html).

reglas básicas del habla española, los demás hablantes no podrán entender lo que se les dice. Pero desde ese respeto necesario, en una nueva situación social, se hace necesario introducir expresiones renovadas, reformular los usos del habla, frente a las repeticiones gastadas de los usos habituales que no hacen presente la nueva situación social, personal y vital.

La potencialidad de la creación expresiva nos permite esbozar nuevas alternativas para las nuevas situaciones, hasta ahora lingüísticamente inarticuladas. Estas reconstrucciones, estas nuevas expresiones sobre la situación social y política de España en los últimos años, se validan en la relación entre expresión (eslóganes del 15-M), objeto (estado de la economía y la política españolas) y circunstancia o acción (condiciones de introducción de dicha expresión, situación en la que se aprende a introducir la nueva expresión). Son siempre unas situaciones especiales, distintas, límite, las que obligan al ser humano a reformulaciones lingüísticas que expresen lo que la lengua hasta el momento no ha sido capaz de expresar.

3.3. Creatividad expresiva y mecanismos elocutivos retóricos

La capacidad creativa, exigida y condicionada por la necesidad de comprensión de situaciones nuevas, la podemos mostrar, en los ejemplos seleccionados, valiéndonos de la teoría retórica elocutiva. La gran tradición retórica construyó una compleja teoría sobre los tropos y las figuras retóricas, intentando ofrecer respuesta a los cambios que se dan, en la línea elocutiva del discurso, con la intención de ser más eficaz en la interpretación del mundo y de esa manera obligar, con la *enérgeia* (Lausberg, 1975: 810-819) constructiva, a que los oyentes actuaran en el sentido en que los discursos proponían soluciones políticas y sociales. Esta teoría tropológica y figural, sin embargo, ha sido utilizada durante miles de años y de manera exclusiva para dar razón de la estética y el adorno discursivo, olvidando su finalidad social, origen y única razón del discurso retórico, al que hoy debemos llamar (para que el término *retórico*, tan mal utilizado durante siglos, no entorpezca) discurso de la persuasión social.

En las últimas décadas del siglo XX de manera tímida y de forma más habitual en estudios de finales del XX y comienzos del XXI, se ha observado el interés por recuperar procedimientos tropológicos como la metáfora para mostrar los orígenes de las conceptualizaciones en las que basamos nuestra visión del mundo. Un ejemplo clásico es el de Lakoff y Johnson (1980). Como desde otro ámbito nos recuerdan Nerlich, Clarke y Dingwall (2000), además de la metáfora es importante para la lingüística cognitiva el papel cognitivo de otros tropos y figuras retóricas como la aliteración, los préstamos lingüísticos o los clichés. Apoyándose en un determinado imaginario cultural, estas figuras refuerzan estereotipos culturales y modifican otros, como podremos ver en los ejemplos que analizamos a

continuación. Evidentemente las metáforas ni el resto de procedimientos retóricos de construcción discursiva no pueden estudiarse de manera aislada en el texto (error milenario), sino insertas en un imaginario cultural que refuerzan o modifican.

Si la teoría tropológica y figural recupera su sentido primero, las complejas expresiones de que da cuenta dicha teoría vuelven a activar la relación entre *expresión* novedosa, *objeto* del que se habla y *condiciones* que obligan a la reconstrucción de los usos de habla habituales. Lejos de constituirse en inventario de expresiones para ornamentar discursos (tal y como se ha entendido y se sigue entendiendo la retórica en muchos ámbitos, incluso filológicos, en los que pervive esta concepción obsoleta), la compleja teoría retórica de la *elocutio* (Pujante, 2011 y 2012) nos sirve hoy como un útil valiosísimo para describir los mecanismos que *reconstruyen* las situaciones de introducción del habla (los modos aprendidos en nuestra infancia y adolescencia), con la intención de expresar los objetos del mundo en las circunstancias en las que vivimos y que nos exigen determinadas acciones sociales y personales. El modo de decir novedoso, en retórica, siempre estuvo conectado con la circunstancia que lo exigía. Y en la conectividad de la *expresión* con la nueva *circunstancia* de la que da cuenta y el *objeto* sobre el que se habla, en esa conectividad se encuentra la validez expresiva (Martín Jiménez, 2012).

En este trabajo, y en razón de los ejemplos escogidos, nos valemos de la tradición retórica en lo que respecta a los mecanismos elocutivos tropológicos y figurales, para mostrar cómo aparecen nuevas formas expresivas, que, en su novedad constructiva, pretenden expresar una situación especial, como es la que desencadena las manifestaciones del 15M. Situación para la que las viejas expresiones que se han usado hasta el momento para hablar de las condiciones socio-políticas de España (principalmente el discurso de los políticos) se muestran inservibles, porque no expresan el modo de ver y de sentir la situación del país por parte de los jóvenes y de un grupo de ciudadanos amplio.

La mecánica discursivo-elocutiva nos permite ver cómo partiendo de unas bases inalienables que son las del aprendizaje del habla, en este caso el habla española (pero también de otras lenguas importantes en la globalización que vivimos, principalmente el inglés), se puede forzar una reconstrucción expresiva que, respetando las situaciones básicas de la lengua en la que estemos situados, y por tanto haciendo que todo receptor reconozca que seguimos situados en ella, se da, sin embargo, por medio del reprocesamiento creativo, nueva cuenta verbal de la nueva circunstancia.

4. El análisis de tres eslóganes del 15-M

Eslogan 1: “Parados: ¡moveos!”



Nos encontramos ante una *figura de pensamiento o de sentencia*, pues su efecto no depende de la estructura lingüística, de la forma física del decir (Pujante, 2003: 258). Las llamadas figuras de pensamiento en la teoría retórica, si bien no se muestran como formas físicas especiales del decir (por lo que puede resultar más complicado el reconocerlas), sí manifiestan una fuerza y una energía expresiva que las hace especialmente convincentes. Seguimos, en nuestras denominaciones, la muy útil clasificación-resumen que hace Lausberg en su *Manual de retórica literaria* de todas las aportaciones de la tradición retórica en lo referente a las figuras de sentencia (Lausberg, 1975).

“Parados, moveos” es una *figura frente al público*, puesto que la figura nace del trato con el público, del manifiesto acercamiento del emisor al público, al que interpela; lo que no sucede en otros eslóganes, donde simplemente se hacen propuestas, pero sin esa manera directa de dirigirse al interlocutor (Pujante, 2003: 261).

Es una de las *figuras de la alocución*, en concreto un *apóstrofe* (Pujante, 2003: 262). Se apostrofa –dentro del conjunto de la sociedad española, a la que va dirigida toda la construcción discursiva del 15-M– a un grupo concreto: el de los “parados”. La originaria multiplicidad en el auditorio (público presente, televisivo o de las redes sociales), que leía los eslóganes que poblaban estas acampadas y manifestaciones, se focaliza en algunos eslóganes, como en este caso, que va dirigido a los “parados”. Es una *división ilocutiva* (como diría Fill, 1986). Así se consigue canalizar un *pathos* que no puede canalizarse en un discurso con interlocutor coral.

Pero junto a lo dicho tenemos que añadir que estamos también ante una *figura frente al asunto*, pues no es puramente apelativa, pretende llamar la atención sobre la necesaria movilización de las personas sin trabajo. Quien dice “¡Parados, moveos!” no solo crea una

expresión con fuerza especial elocutiva, también refuerza, subraya expresivamente la necesidad de moverse socialmente. Mirando este aspecto, la figuración que se crea entra dentro de la categoría de las *figuras semánticas* (Pujante, 2003: 268), en concreto el eslogan hace una *antítesis* en su variante *oxímoron*. El oxímoron consiste en colocar en contacto palabras de sentido opuesto (Lausberg, 1975: 210-223).

En el caso que estamos estudiando, la complejidad de la reconstrucción de la situación de introducción de habla es mayor, pues el oxímoron solo funciona cuando activamos, en un contexto en el que “parado” significa “persona sin trabajo”, su otro valor semántico, el de “persona que no se mueve”. En tal caso hemos hecho una *metalepsis*: la utilización de un sinónimo (“persona que está parada, que no se mueve”) en el contexto semántico que es propio del otro (“persona sin trabajo, en el paro”). El valor sinonímico inapropiado al contexto es el que se activa para crear entonces el oxímoron. Una construcción tropológica trae la construcción figural, como en una caída de fichas de dominó unas sobre otras. Así la breve expresión se preña de significado, de posibilidades, en una complejísima reconstrucción de habla con apariencia de sencillez, lo que hace todavía más eficaz la expresión: en su brevedad y en su sencillez expresiva, pero con una enorme potencialidad discursiva.

1) EXPRESIÓN FIGURAL (“¡Parados, moveos!”)
1.1) Figura de pensamiento o sentencia
1.1.1) Figura frente al público
1.1.1.1) Figura de alocución: apóstrofe (ilocución dividida)
1.1.2) Figura frente al asunto
1.1.2.1) Figura semántica: antítesis en variante oxímoron [dependiente de una previa construcción tropológica: una <i>metalepsis</i>]

El “parado” es persona sin trabajo, pero básicamente en la lengua española una “persona parada” es la que no se mueve, y en la necesidad de la movilización (física y mental) está la clave del final del “paro”. El parado no puede permanecer pasivo. Un parado tiene que activarse, moverse socialmente, movilizarse, si quiere salir del *impasse* en el que lo han colocado los errores y las ineptitudes de los políticos en los diferentes gobiernos. Todo esto se concentra expresivamente en el eslogan “¡Parados, moveos!”, consiguiendo en tan económica forma expresiva una tan compleja expresividad.

Eslogan 2: “Si luchamos podemos perder, si no estamos perdid@s”



Una vez más nos encontramos ante una expresión breve que acumula una gran expresividad. Nos encontramos ahora ante una *figura de dicción: figura por orden* que se denomina *isocolon*, donde a su vez apreciamos un *zeugma*. Y los finales de las dos unidades que componen la frase muestran un *políptoton* o *polipote*, que es una repetición relajada del mismo verbo en variedades flexivas (Pujante, 2003: 244).

El isocolon es la yuxtaposición coordinada de dos o más miembros o incisos, mostrando el mismo orden en sus respectivos elementos (Lausberg, 1975: 166). En este caso contamos con dos miembros: “Si luchamos podemos perder, / si no [luchamos] estamos perdidos”. La economía expresiva pasa por la realización de un zeugma (una detracción parentética, que consiste en referir a un solo verbo diferentes expresiones, A (X/Y), Lausberg, 1975: 149): se evita la repetición de “luchamos”. Los dos miembros del isocolon configuran, a su vez, un políptoton en epífora: una repetición relajada de las formas perifrásticas de “perder” como final de ambos miembros: “... podemos perder/... estamos perdidos”. El esquema sería el siguiente:

Si	luchamos	podemos	perder,
A	B		CD
si no	[luchamos]	estamos	perdidos
A'	[B]		CD'

Eslogan 3: “Me gustas democracia pero estás como ausente”



En este caso nos encontramos ante un eslogan que es una doble *recontextualización*: Su origen textual se encuentra en un verso de Pablo Neruda: “Me gustas cuando callas, porque estás como ausente”, primer verso del poema 15 de *Veinte poemas de amor y una canción desesperada*, que se repite de manera variada o estricta dos veces más a lo largo del poema:

Me gustas cuando callas porque estás como ausente,
 y me oyes desde lejos, y mi voz no te toca.
 Parece que los ojos se te hubieran volado
 y parece que un beso te cerrara la boca.
 Como todas las cosas están llenas de mi alma
 emerges de las cosas, llena del alma mía.
 Mariposa de sueño, te pareces a mi alma,
 y te pareces a la palabra melancolía;
Me gustas cuando callas y estás como distante.
 Y estás como quejándote, mariposa en arrullo.
 Y me oyes desde lejos, y mi voz no te alcanza:
 déjame que me calle con el silencio tuyo.
 Déjame que te hable también con tu silencio
 claro como una lámpara, simple como un anillo.
 Eres como la noche, callada y constelada.
 Tu silencio es de estrella, tan lejano y sencillo.
Me gustas cuando callas porque estás como ausente.
 Distante y dolorosa como si hubieras muerto.
 Una palabra entonces, una sonrisa bastan.
 Y estoy alegre, alegre de que no sea cierto.

La primera recontextualización se la debemos al cantante Javier Krahe, que en su disco *Toser y cantar* tiene una canción que se titula “Me gustas democracia”.⁴⁹ Comienza así: “Me gustas democracia, porque estás como ausente”. En dicha canción, el juego es irónico; el cantautor dice que le gusta precisamente la democracia que tenemos porque es una democracia formal, porque parece no serlo, no estar presente: está como ausente.

Me gustas, Democracia, porque estás como ausente
 con tu disfraz parlamentario,
 con tus listas cerradas, tu Rey, tan prominente,

⁴⁹ <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jL4Dbnv68o> (downloaded 20-9-2012).

por no decir extraordinario,
tus escaños marcados a ocultas de la gente,
a la luz del lingote y del rosario.

Me gustas, ya te digo, pero a veces querría
tenerte algo más presente
y tocarte, palparte y echarte fantasía,
te toco poco últimamente.
Pero, en fin, ahí estás, mucho peor sería
que te esfumaras como antiguamente.

Los sesos rebozados de delfín
que Franco se zampaba en el Azor
nos muestran hasta qué grado era ruin
el frígido y cristiano dictador.

Fue un tiempo de pololos, tinieblas y torturas...
volvamos al aquí y ahora
donde tú, Democracia, ya sé que me procuras
alguna ley conciliadora,
pero caes a menudo en sucias imposturas,
fealdades que el buen gusto deplora.

Como el marco legal siempre le queda chico,
y a eso el rico es muy sensible,
si tirando, aflojando, empleando un tiempo y pico,
se hace un embudo más flexible,
que tú apañes la ley a medida del rico
al fin y al cabo es muy comprensible.

¿Pero qué hay del que tiene poca voz,
privado de ejercer tantos derechos,
por qué al nudista pones albornoz,
qué hay de los raros, qué hay de los maltrechos?

Y tus representantes selectos, Democracia,
tus güelfos y tus gibelinos,
cada día que pasa me hacen menos gracia,
sus chistes son para pollinos.
A enmendar tus carencias te veo muy reacia

y están mis sentimientos muy cansinos.

Y como ya me aburre decir continuamente
 "eso no estaba en el programa"
 no cuentes con que vaya hacia ti cuatrianualmente,
 no compartamos más la cama,
 vamos a separarnos civilizadamente.
 Y sigue tú viviendo de tu fama.

Cuando veas mi imagen taciturna
 por las cívicas sendas de la vida
 verás que no me acercan a tu urna.
 No alarguemos ya más la despedida.

En el blog *Música de fondo* leemos:

Acaso el cantautor Javier Krahe (Madrid, 30 de marzo de 1944) se haya convertido en autor de eslóganes sin proponérselo. Aunque ha declarado, y cantado, en más de una ocasión que no le inspiran las gracias de la clase dirigente, la canción *¡Ay Democracia!* de su disco *Toser y cantar* (18 Chulos, 2010) ha sido utilizada tanto para ilustrar la jornada electoral en el blog del periodista Ignacio Escolar, como para inspirar pancartas mostradas durante las manifestaciones del 15-M; que lo han visto estos ojitos⁵⁰

El eslogan de la pancarta del 15M que elegimos para el análisis, sin embargo, tiene una interesante variante con respecto a la variante inicial de Krahe. Una conjunción adversativa “pero” en lugar de una causal “porque”. Con esta variante se rompe la ironía inicial del texto del cantautor. Lo mismo que a Neruda, en su contexto amoroso, le gustaba la amada *porque* estaba como ausente; a Krahe también, aunque irónicamente, le gusta la democracia *porque* está como ausente, en un equivalente total en su planteamiento político con el planteamiento amoroso de Neruda. Sin embargo la pancarta elimina la ironía: el ciudadano que ha tomado la cita de Krahe (no sabemos si conoce el origen nerudiano) nos dice que le gusta la democracia, *pero* lamenta que esté como ausente, siente que la democracia en la que vive no parece serlo. La ironía del verso de Krahe se convierte, en esta segunda recontextualización, en un lamento, en la manifestación pública de una carencia, en una crítica manifiesta, directa al sistema.

⁵⁰ <http://musicadefondo.wordpress.com/tag/javier-krahe/> (20-9-2012).

5. Discusión y conclusiones

El marco teórico constructivista que ha guiado nuestro análisis postula la inseparabilidad entre el sujeto enunciador (con todo su bagaje subjetivo y emocional), lo enunciado (y su conexión con otros enunciados: es decir, el proceso de recontextualización), los interlocutores en el espacio físico en el que se ha proferido así como los interlocutores que lo están recibiendo a través de las redes sociales, el contexto local en el que ha sido emitido, el entorno socio-político que ha dado origen a este acto de enunciación y la acción o acciones que los actores sociales presentes realizan de manera simultánea a estos actos comunicativos. Cuando tenemos en cuenta todas estas variables de manera conjunta creemos que estamos en mejor disposición para entender el significado complejo de los eslóganes seleccionados y la finalidad social de su creación.

Los procedimientos retóricos a que hemos recurrido para explicar la construcción creativa de los eslóganes aquí analizados superan en esta propuesta teórico-práctica que ofrecemos la antigua concepción tropológica sancionada por el *sermo ornatos* o discurso adornado, donde los tropos y figuras retóricas solo se entendían como plus ornamental. (Aquí nos valemos de ellos para analizar con precisión los procedimientos de reconstrucción de expresiones invalidadas por el uso tópico, desacreditado e inservible). Nos movemos, por tanto, en un camino que transitó con excelentes resultados el tándem Lakoff y Johnson (1980). Aunque los estudios posteriores (en el ámbito del análisis del discurso que se ha interesado por estos procedimientos) se han centrado durante demasiado tiempo y casi en exclusiva en el tropo por excelencia que es la metáfora, además de la metáfora es importante para la lingüística cognitiva el papel cognitivo de otros tropos y figuras retóricas como la aliteración, los préstamos lingüísticos o los clichés. Apoyándose en un determinado imaginario cultural, estas figuras refuerzan, tal y como hemos podido ver en nuestro análisis, estereotipos culturales, a la vez que modifican otros. Como ya hemos indicado, ni las metáforas ni el resto de procedimientos retóricos de construcción discursiva se pueden estudiar de manera aislada en el texto (error milenario), sino insertas en un imaginario cultural que refuerzan o modifican.

Los datos analizados en este trabajo constituyen enunciados proferidos por ciudadanos anónimos que canalizan su protesta (su *indignación*) frente a una crisis que no han provocado. El resultado discursivo, como hemos demostrado en nuestro análisis, es un gran número de eslóganes muy creativos en el plano del significado, pero también elaborados con gran complejidad retórico-discursiva.

Para interpretar el sentido social y razón última de la enorme creatividad que caracteriza básicamente a estos discursos, creemos que es necesario tener en cuenta los siguientes aspectos. En primer lugar, considerar las circunstancias comunicativas y contextuales en las que estos mensajes se realizan. Se trata de eslóganes enunciados, obviamente, por individuos concretos, pero lo importante es que emergen de una acción comunicativa colectiva desarrollada en las numerosas asambleas, los paneles informativos, los blogs, las webs, etc. (Castells, 2012). Estos eslóganes serían, en nuestra opinión, el resultado de una “cognición distribuida”, un proceso cognitivo co-construido, resultado de la coordinación de actores diversos participando en el proceso comunicativo que se estaba desarrollando simultáneamente en las plazas públicas de muchas de nuestras ciudades.

Esta coordinación comunicativa era algo nuevo y, sobre todo, inesperado. Para muchos adultos, era una vuelta a las luchas democráticas de los años setenta (ocurridas tras la muerte del dictador Franco), pero para todos (jóvenes y adultos) era un proceso comunicativo distinto, inserto, como hemos indicado, en situaciones especiales, límite, que obligaban a estos ciudadanos a reformulaciones lingüísticas no expresadas hasta el momento en la democracia española. Los eslóganes surgían así, en la línea de Maturana y Varela (1990), en un *fluir* de interacciones continuas, de emociones y de acciones novedosas, en un momento socio-político que empezaba a considerarse conjuntamente por todos como una nueva etapa en nuestra joven democracia.

Nos encontramos, de esta manera, con discursos que han surgido del trabajo cooperativo de actores concretos que estaban viviendo un estado emocional y experiencial distinto, corporizado e inmerso en un determinado campo de sensación (Capra, 1996: 301). Para el sociólogo Castells (2012: 210), en su reciente reflexión sobre el movimiento del 15M y sobre el resto de levantamientos (mundo árabe, Islandia y Wall Street), estos ciudadanos consiguieron superar una de las emociones más primitivas, la del miedo; ello les permitió pasar a la acción.

Además, estos eslóganes se convertían a su vez en fuente potencial de otras posibilidades de cooperación y de creación más extensas porque, al estar expuestos en los paneles informativos de cada una de las plazas y al distribuirse continuamente, por los ciudadanos mismos, a través de los medios *on line*, atraían a más gente a las plazas. También por esta distribución masiva a través de las diversas redes sociales los medios de comunicación empezaron a prestarles atención (bien apoyándolos desde los *media* más orientados a la izquierda, bien denostándolos por los *media* más conservadores).

El segundo aspecto que creemos importante considerar en estos eslóganes es su finalidad comunicativa. En nuestra opinión, todos ellos confluyen en una función común, la activación

de un nuevo marco cognitivo que permitía desvelar y mostrar la profunda crisis de nuestra democracia. Por tanto, son eslóganes que se dirigen a una determinada audiencia (en este caso, la ciudadanía española y/o la clase política dirigente, aunque también algunos de ellos estaban escritos en inglés, lo cual indicaba que se habían creado para la ciudadanía global y/o para los poderes políticos internacionales) para transmitirle una nueva forma de interpretar la presente crisis socio-política, completamente opuesta a la interpretación ofrecida desde los poderes políticos. Estos eslóganes quieren evidenciar/revelar cómo los pilares de nuestra joven democracia se estaban tambaleando por la actuación mediocre y corrupta de nuestra clase política, dependiente del poder financiero neoliberal e incapaz de albergar ideas creativas para defender el interés de la ciudadanía; asimismo, intentan convencerla de la urgencia de construir algo nuevo entre todos (al respecto, véase también Salvador 2012: 17-18).

La necesidad de apelar a una noción como la de marco cognitivo, para dar cuenta de la construcción ideológica que se activa a través de los diferentes mensajes del movimiento del 15M, nos muestra cómo en el estudio de determinados discursos ideológicos (entre ellos los de cambio social) no basta un análisis de tipo pragmático-retórico. Con este nivel de análisis solamente daríamos cuenta de las intenciones particulares o funciones sociales de los distintos actos comunicativos transmitidos a través de cada uno de los eslóganes; pero seríamos incapaces de advertir por qué tales discursos fueron percibidos por la ciudadanía como verdades nuevas (Bruner, 1991), que invalidaban la confianza depositada en nuestra clase política dirigente. Para ello, es necesario reconocer que hay discursos que activan marcos de interpretación nuevos, porque suponen construcciones ideológicas distintas (imaginarios nuevos, como indica Castoriadis, 1975), a partir de las cuales muchos significados sociales y políticos cambian completamente. En este sentido, podríamos decir que, en la interpretación de la vida socio-política española, ha habido un antes y un después desde la irrupción del 15M (a pesar de que ello aún no ha provocado cambios políticos sustanciales, como se señala también en Montesano Montessori y Morales López, 2013; y en Castells, 2012: 146).

Estas dos características de los eslóganes señaladas (el grado de cooperación en el proceso de su construcción y su finalidad novedosa para activar un nuevo marco) contrastan con la principal característica del discurso político en las democracias actuales: asegurar la pervivencia del partido político propio, totalmente burocratizado y hermético a nuevas ideas, en competencia feroz por el poder con el resto de partidos (Castells, 2009); de ahí que estos discursos tengan como funciones casi únicas la auto-legitimación constante y la deslegitimación del adversario (Pujante y Morales-López, 2008, 2009; Morales-López, 2012d). Estas dos funciones han conseguido desplazar al discurso político creativo, espontáneo y ético,

precisamente el que la ciudadanía española empezó a reconocer en el movimiento del 15M. Frente a este discurso nuevo, el de los principales partidos españoles resulta algo caduco y añejo, como ejemplo evidente de comunicación política *estratégica* (“cálculo egocéntrico de resultados”, según Habermas 1981: 367), con una clara orientación hacia la persuasión partidista.

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**STREET PAPER, ASSISTANCE AND PROTAGONISM:
A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CAIS MAGAZINE**

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Abstract

This paper integrates a research project that aims to investigate five street papers, in the Portuguese language, linked to the International Network of Street Papers. Street papers are defined as independent publications aimed at offering working opportunities and social programs for people experiencing homelessness in addition to assuring a wider range of social support. The distribution of these publications occurs on the streets, sold by homeless people (Alexandre; Resende, 2010), but beyond the structural changes of journalistic routines and practices, is there a discursive change implied, in terms of discourses activated for the representation of homelessness? To investigate this question, the research project includes a collection of recent texts from five different publications and interviews with the editors of each of them. This paper focuses on only one of them, *Cais* magazine, from Lisbon, and is limited to analyzing, by means of systemic functional linguistics (Halliday, 2004; Gouveia, 2009) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 2003; Resende, 2009), the interview conducted with the magazine's editor in July 2011. Due to the interest in the extent of homeless people's participation in producing *Cais* magazine, we selected an excerpt in which the 'vendors' are represented. Although it is not explicitly textured in the surface of the text, the analysis of cohesion, transitivity, modality and assumptions was capable of showing that people in homelessness appear to be positioned in a passive standing in terms of action for social change.

Keywords: critical discourse analysis, alternative media, street papers, homelessness

1. Introduction

This paper presents the partial results of research associated with the integrated project, “Publications in Portuguese language about the homeless population: critical discourse analysis”, whose aim is to investigate the five local publications, written in Portuguese, specifically geared towards the homeless population. They include: *Ocas* magazine and *O Trecheiro* newspaper, from São Paulo; *Boca de Rua* newspaper, from Porto Alegre; *Aurora da Rua* newspaper, from Salvador; and *Cais* magazine, from Lisbon.⁵¹

The integrated project includes, on the one hand, a collection of recent publications that compose a documentary corpus. On the other hand, it includes interviews with the editors of each of the five periodicals. This paper focuses only on *Cais* magazine and is limited to analyzing, by means of systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and critical discourse analysis (CDA) tools, an excerpt of the interview conducted with the magazine’s editor in July 2011. Due to the interest in the extent of homeless people’s participation in producing *Cais* magazine, we selected an excerpt in which the ‘vendors’ are represented. Thus, I will analyze here only one street paper out of a more comprehensive study. It is the first one we approached in the study, and although we have already carried out research in the other four contexts, by no means is it my intent to generalize the results here, primarily because the Portuguese magazine should not be compared to the Brazilian papers, given the very specificities of each case.

The results of this particular analysis are not supposed to represent all street papers in the Portuguese language, nor even all street papers that use this same basic business model. This is a localized and particular piece of research, and generalization is not on the agenda here. However, I would state that *Cais* magazine is the only Portuguese street paper in the International Network of Street Papers (INSP), while four Brazilian initiatives are in this same network. The Brazilian periodicals, in general, are very different contexts, in comparison with the Portuguese one, as I will briefly comment at the very end of this paper.

In addition to the introduction and final remarks, this paper is organized in four sections. The first section discusses critical discourse analysis according to the theoretical model chosen for the study. The second addresses the street press in general and *Cais* magazine in particular. The

⁵¹ The integrated project is supported by the Foundation for Research Support of the Federal District (*Fundação de Apoio à Pesquisa do Distrito Federal – FAP-DF*), Process # 193.000.039/2012. Under my coordination, the following researchers take part in the project team: María del Pilar Tobar Acosta, Gersiney Pablo Santos and Andreia Alves dos Santos.

third contextualizes the interview carried out in Lisbon.⁵² The last section presents critical discourse analysis of the data, while appropriating analytical categories developed in SFL and CDA.

2. Critical discourse analysis and language in society: an overview of a complex field

First of all, critical discourse analysis (CDA) needs to be defined, albeit briefly. When mentioning CDA, it is necessary to elucidate which CDA version is being referred to. CDA is not a homogenous theoretical body; rather, it is constituted of heterogeneous approaches labeled ‘critical discourse analysis’ (Blommaert, 2005). In Resende (2009), I highlighted that, despite displaying diverse theoretical and methodological premises, the CDA versions have certain common characteristics that assure coherence in the field. There are at least three common traits: *interdisciplinarity*, *positioning*, and the *use of linguistic categories as tools* for social critique.

All of the different versions of CDA recognize that transgressing disciplinary boundaries is a basic assumption for analyzing partially discursive social problems, given the internal relationship between language and society (Pardo Abril, 2007). Therefore, each one of the differing CDA versions seeks to operationalize concepts and categories that were developed in the social sciences (Wodak, 2003). Some CDA approaches constitute influential theoretical and methodological bodies, with adept researchers in Brazil and throughout Latin America. This includes the contributions of Norman Fairclough, Teun van Dijk, Theo van Leeuwen and Ruth Wodak, all of whom establish different interdisciplinary relations in their versions of CDA.⁵³

When referring to CDA, one must also consider the developments brought by Latin American researchers (Resende; Ramalho, 2013). Latin researchers not only contributed to disseminating CDA as a theory and investigational method, but they also created their own approaches, questioning already legitimized approaches and introducing advancements that could not and should not be taken for granted (available examples are Magalhães, 2000; Meurer, 2004; Pardo Abril, 2008; Pardo, 2008; Montecino, 2010; Ramalho, 2010; Resende, 2010; and Ramalho & Resende, 2011). It is therefore important to highlight the connection of the integrated project discussed here with the Latin American Network of Critical Discourse

⁵² This interview in Lisbon was possible thanks to the support of the Centre for Social Studies (*Centro de Estudos Sociais*, CES), University of Coimbra, Portugal, under award “Grants for Young Researchers”.

⁵³ See, for example, Fairclough (2003), van Dijk (2008), van Leeuwen (2008), Wodak (1996).

Analysis of Extreme Poverty (*Red Latinoamericana de Análisis Crítico del Discurso de la extrema pobreza, REDLAD*).⁵⁴

In addition to the interdisciplinary nature of CDA, another intrinsic characteristic of differing theoretical-methodological approaches is positioning. In all of its lines, CDA proposes critical approaches for text analysis while assuming a clear position regarding social problems of a discursive nature and denying the myth of “scientific impartiality”. The aim is therefore to unveil discourses and ideologies that sustain domination structures. According to this principle, a more adequate concept of ideology would be from Thompson (1995), for whom ideologies are symbolic constructions at the service of power relations, understood as domination. What interests CDA is not the abstract notion of power, but *power abuse* in specific contexts (van Dijk, 2008).

Fairclough’s CDA version focuses on the relationship between discourse and social change. A crucial matter, when focusing on social change, is the relationship between structure and action, or between individual and society. It is very useful to discuss this by means of critical realism (CR), with its *transformational model of social activity*, especially when one intends to overcome, on the one hand, a structuralist approach – focused on structure and not accounting for the possibility of creative action – and, on the other hand, a voluntarist approach – focused on the agency and not accounting for the previous character of structures in relation to social action (Bhaskar, 1989).

Under the influence of the theoretical model of society developed in CR, the focus of CDA is not on social structure or on individual action, but on the relationship between structure and action, as a means of simultaneously focusing on the constraints and possibilities that arise from structure, which informs the action, and the potential effects of the reifying or transforming structures, by means of action. According to this model, society provides the conditions for human action, but only exists within human actions, which always use some preexisting form of social order (Bhaskar, 1998). This temporal asymmetry between structure

⁵⁴ Excerpts of research studies conducted by this network members were released as collective publications, such as the books *El discurso sobre la pobreza en América Latina* (Pardo, ed., 2008) and *Discurso, pobreza y exclusión en América Latina* (Montecino, ed., 2010), and the special issue of *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*. The network has also contributed to the formulation of interdisciplinary CDA relations, both theoretically and methodologically. REDLAD is a productive example of how discourse analyst potential widens when working in groups. I believe in collective initiatives – I think the formation of research networks congregating researchers with common interests expands our capacity for acting on the problems we investigate. In the Brazilian case, for example, researchers in this network, in addition to conducting research projects, are working together with the social movement National Movement of Homeless Population (*Movimento Nacional da População de Rua – MNPR*) and with the governmental organization Intersectoral Monitoring Committee of the National Policy to Combat Homelessness (*Comitê Interministerial de Acompanhamento e Monitoramento da Política Nacional de Enfrentamento à Situação de Rua – CIAMRua*).

and action implies that it is not a relationship among equals. This leads to an intermediate organization entity: the position-practice system. Social practices and positions are, according to Bhaskar, mediators between abstract social structures and concrete social action.

Theories regarding practices and positions, conceived as intermediate entities between structure and action, focus on the *structural conditions for action* and consider the transformational relationship between social structure and agency. This CR ontology can be applied to social organization at the semiotic level: *semiotic structures* in terms of social structure abstraction; *texts* in terms of social action concreteness – the materialization of our discursive actions; *orders of discourse* and their constituting elements – genres, discourses and styles – in terms of intermediate organizational entities (Fairclough, 2003; see below). This approach allows us to focus not on the semiotic systems *per se*, nor on the isolated discursive action, but rather on the relationship established between semiotic systems and textual production in specific contexts, associated with the positions occupied in the practices performed.

According to Harvey (1992), all social practices are composed of many articulate *moments* that cannot be reduced to a single one. In CDA recontextualization (Chouliaraki; Fairclough, 1999), the moments constituting social practice are: semiosis, material activity, social relations and social actors, with their underlying creeds, values, desires, and underlying ideologies. In this perspective, the semiotic moment (intersubjective construction of meaning through language) is one of the moments of social practice, along with other moments that should also be privileged in the analysis (Resende, 2010). The semiotic moment, which constitutes and is informed by other social elements, also possesses its internal moments, conceived in three dimensions: discursive action, discursive representation and discursive identification (Fairclough, 2003).

Discursive action concerns the manners in which we act upon the world and on other people through the language materialized in texts. Discursive representation refers to the relatively stable forms of representing experience – the same aspect in the world (such as homelessness) can be represented by different discourses, which can display a competitive relation (such as the assistance and the protagonist discourses). It is in this sense that we are able to identify different political discourses; for instance, the neoliberal discourse opposed to discourses “for another type of globalization” (Santos, 2000). The discursive identification concerns means of identification through texts, which includes identities and otherness. Discursive action, representation and identification are related respectively to genres, discourses and styles. According to Fairclough (2010, p. 232), “Genres are semiotic ways of acting and interacting

(...). Discourses are semiotic ways of construing aspects of the world (physical, social or mental) which can generally be identified with different positions or perspectives of different groups of social actors (...). Styles are identities, or ‘ways of being’, in their semiotic aspect”.

Positioning and the interdisciplinary nature of CDA are of crucial importance in addressing the different versions in this field. Moreover, they imply a third characteristic central to CDA: the use of linguistic theories and categories is not assumed; rather, it emerges from data and from the analysis goals (Resende, 2009). Linguistics, therefore, becomes an instrument for social critique, since the aim of the analysis is criticism sustained by text analysis (Quiroz, 2008). The selection of linguistic categories used in critical discourse studies should therefore be justified by its use in analyzing discursive materializations of social problems. In CDA, the mere description of a linguistic phenomenon is undesirable when lacking critical purpose.

These three basic CDA characteristics are closely interconnected. Because CDA addresses the use of language in order to explore and expose the role of discourse in the production and reproduction of social inequalities (Richardson, 2007), its investigative interest extrapolates merely linguistic phenomena. This wider scope, in which processes of discursive change are analyzed considering social processes, requires articulation with other disciplines; that is, by assuming an interdisciplinary approach. In established interdisciplinary relationships, linguistic categories become useful tools for engaging in social critique.

3. The street press and Cais magazine

It is already commonplace to state that neoliberalism reduced the role of national states, undermining the achievements of the welfare state – both in terms of the contractual rights of workers and the universal rights of citizens. The withdrawal of social services is referred to by Bourdieu (1998) as the “resignation of the state” and, according to Buarque (2001, p. 241), “non-governmental organizations emerged due to the failure of the state regarding the lack of response to problems arising from new ethical values of society”.

In this context, non-governmental organizations emerge, in order to fill the void left by the state in terms of service supply, but social organizations and movements which pressure the state emerge as well, claiming for rights and denouncing the violation of these very rights. These vanguard movements prove to be extremely important in forming the collective social actor who is capable of working toward a common goal (Resende, 2008). Could this be the case of street papers, which “explicitly promote themselves as instruments of progressive social

change” (Howley, 2003, p. 274) and declare their aim to be generating income and *opening a channel of expression* for the homeless population?

Tied to the International Network of Street Papers (INSP), there are today more than 100 of publications, from more than 40 countries and representing all continents. These publications are modeled from two pioneering publications in this genre: *Street News*, from New York, launched in 1989, and *The Big Issue*, which has circulated in London since 1991 and has inspired many existing street papers today. These two initiatives are, however, very different: on the one hand, *Street News* was a “self-managed” paper, i.e., “written, produced and distributed by the homeless, the unemployed and the working poor – voices that are rarely heard” (Howley, 2003, p. 280); and *The Big Issue*, on the other hand, is produced by professional journalists; as Hanks and Swithinbank (1997, p. 152), respectively advisor and editor of *The Big Issue*, state: “Many people assume that *The Big Issue* is written and produced by homeless people. However, our first priority is to ensure that what we sell is a quality product. Therefore, all the editorial staff are (*sic*) trained, professional journalists”.

This is a huge difference, and according to Torck (2001), these frames result from different objectives or different approaches which position these initiatives differently in the “scale canonical-non-canonical press” (Torck, 2001, p. 386). Thus, concerning the street papers in the Portuguese language pertaining to INSP, we ask ourselves: Do these publications and organizations promote *protagonism* for social change or are they vertical interventions? In what position are they situated in the tension between assistance and protagonist discourses? One of the aims of this study is, therefore, to understand up to which point these initiatives constitute possibilities of self-representation for social groups which are generally represented negatively in the media, and which have little space to express their own voices.

The street papers addressed in our project are all members of INSP, which acts “as a global platform for unheard voices and advocates for the needs and the rights of people living in poverty”.⁵⁵ According to the INSP, street papers are defined as “independent newspapers and magazines that provide unique employment opportunities for people experiencing poverty and homelessness” and “offer their vendors ongoing social support”.⁵⁶

In relation to income generation, the distribution of these publications takes place on the streets, sold by homeless people or people in risk situations. Each vendor administers the amount of newspapers or magazines they intend to commercialize, pays a unit value that is not more than half the price of the issue, and keeps all the money from the sale. As for the wider

⁵⁵ <http://www.street-papers.org>

⁵⁶ <http://www.street-papers.org/about-us/>

social support, these initiatives are usually projects of far-reaching non-governmental organizations that support the publication as well as other institutional projects. That is the case of the street papers in scope.

We shall now look at the specific case of *Cais*, which is our object of study here. *Cais* magazine is supported by *Associação Cais*, a social solidarity association created in 1994, whose mission is “to contribute globally to improve living conditions of the homeless, who are socially and economically vulnerable, in situation of destitution, exclusion and risk”.⁵⁷ After 2003, their range of action expanded with the creation of *Centro Cais*, which supports “homeless people and other excluded and impoverished groups”.⁵⁸ Today, there are two of these centers, one in Lisbon and another in Porto. The association states its aims: “including in the agenda themes related to poverty and social exclusion; increasing networking and consolidating partnerships; recognizing the value of beneficiaries (users) of the social system when critical elements are present; developing and implementing social intervention strategies that are adequate to the needs of the target population”.⁵⁹ In addition to the magazine, the association manages other projects, and *Cais* magazine, one of these projects, is defined as “a schooling instrument *for homeless participation*” (my italics). The magazine, the first creation of the association, declares its aim to be “awakening readers and public opinion for the social problems regarding homelessness and other forms of exclusion”.⁶⁰

Local initiatives such as these – organized in a global network – announce a different model of media, the so-called *advocacy journalism* (Waisbord, 2009). Beyond the structural changes of journalistic routines and practices, is a discursive change also implied in terms of discourses activated for the representation of the homeless situation and for the identification of homeless people in street papers? As we have seen, discourses are relatively stable means of representation that associate different perspectives about the world. Aside from its representational aspect, by the dialectic between language and society, we understand that different discourses, materialized in concrete texts, produce effects on society; that is, the text meanings can affect our understanding of social processes and of the way we react to these processes (Fairclough, 2003).

According to van Dijk (1991), the access to discursive spaces is an important issue to be addressed in CDA. In the case of street papers, it matters to know *to which point homeless people act in defining the news and the composition of texts and images*, if there is a system of

⁵⁷ <http://www.cais.pt>

⁵⁸ <http://www.cais.pt/page/view/25/sobre-a-cais/centros-cais>

⁵⁹ <http://www.cais.pt/page/view/4/sobre-a-cais/missao>

⁶⁰ <http://www.cais.pt/projectos/view/5/revista-cais>

sharing and exchange, in the production stages, which can overcome assistance and favor an effective protagonism, an articulation of particular modes of fight for the guarantee of rights. In this sense, Walty (2007) reflects on the establishment of partnerships between intellectuals (journalists, students, liberal professionals, teachers and professors, etc.) and homeless people in text composition, understood as enunciations composed of distinct voices, which could fuse together creating a third voice and widening public space. Speculating about the nature of this partnership, the authoress asks herself how intellectuals and homeless people relate in the context of street papers: “Are street papers an example of a process of searching for the common word?” (Walty, 2007, pp. 83-84).

The alternative media, therefore, could be characterized as an opportunity for democratized access to discursive technologies and to discursive media genres; for example, making it possible to exchange experiences among parted social groups, favoring mutual recognition, which is important for overcoming rooted prejudices. In the field of representation, discursive hybridisms could emerge from there and could allow for new ways of understanding society and problems associated with the poor distribution of resources and opportunities.

In order to understand these practices and their functioning in relation to other social practices and wider conjunctures, the integrated project needs an element achieved in field. Aware of this, we carried out research in Lisbon, São Paulo, Salvador and Porto Alegre, but here, due to the limits of a paper, I will discuss only a particular part of the Lisbon experience (on Brazilian street papers, see also Resende & Acosta (2011), Acosta (2012), and Santos (2012). Thus, considering that the understanding of this network of practices could not result from the isolated analysis of the published texts, the next section will concentrate on the reflection about the interview conducted in Lisbon.

4. In Lisbon: data generation and collection

The integrated project which this work is a part of proposes a qualitative study in which data analysis is based on CDA. The data generation/collection (Resende, 2009) includes focus interviews and documentary data.⁶¹

During the research stage in Portugal, I visited the *Centro Cais* in Lisbon on July 1st, 2011. Before the interviews, the editor showed me the large facilities of *Associação Cais – Círculo de*

⁶¹ It is worth noting that the project was approved by the Ethics Committee of the Human Science Institute of the University of Brasília in July 2010.

Apoio à Integração dos Sem-Abrigo.⁶² On the top floor lies the administrative services and edition; on the ground floor, there is a convenience room, with a television, couches, and computers; a cafeteria that serves lunch for 1€50; a food bank and a deposit for clothes donation; and the historical archives of the magazine. There is also a spacious external area. A flow of people was using the space, including mostly female professionals who provided services for *Centro Cais* attending the “users” of the Center.⁶³

We sat at the cafeteria for the interview. A *focus interview* was recorded with the editor of *Cais* magazine.⁶⁴ Focus interviews allow interaction to develop more freely, while still focusing on specific points of interest (Doncaster, 1998). When conducting a focus interview, it is not desirable to pose a list of questions, though it is useful to raise the themes that will be addressed by following topic guidelines (Gaskell, 2005). The topic guideline for the interview was elaborated according to the following thematic framework:

TOPIC GUIDELINE FOR FOCAL INTERVIEWS WITH EDITORS: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK
1. Creation of publication (history/ accomplishments / difficulties / partnerships / team)
2. Organization and interaction of the action group: production team and homeless people
3. Experience with working in the publication (benefits / responsibilities / difficulties/ accomplishments)
4. Production/ edition / publication of texts (participation or lack of participation of homeless people)
5. Effects on public policies (or lack of)

The excerpt of the interview selected for analysis in this paper is guided by thematic framework 4, so the interview is explored considering homeless participation or lack of participation in text production, according to representations by the editor.

With regards to the history of *Cais*, the editor told me that the magazine experienced three different phases since its creation at the end of 1994. In the beginning, *Cais* had less textual content and more images – based on the concept of photojournalism. Since this initial phase, it was a magazine that sought to be interesting for mainstream readers, and not a magazine specifically about homelessness. After 2001, *Cais* became a thematic magazine, geared toward current themes: each edition explored a specific theme, and many people were invited to

⁶² The space which *Centro Cais* occupies in Lisbon is a concession of the municipal government.

⁶³ “Users” is the term to describe the people attended by the services offered at the Center. According to the editor, in the interview he conceded, “They are people who are institutionalized; many of them living in the streets were picked up by institutions. People go there, where they can only sleep and dine, but during the day, they have to leave. For them not to go back to the streets, some of them go to Cais, where they spend the day, have lunch for one Euro and a half, use the computer, attend English courses, Portuguese courses for foreigners, soccer, and, recently, technology classes, computer classes, and are occupied all day long”.

⁶⁴ The director of the publication had been contacted by e-mail in April 2010, when he displayed interest and agreed to collaborate in the research. I contacted the editor in May 2011.

collaborate with texts and photographs. Afterwards, the aim became “to create a magazine following the model of the commercial press; a magazine with many sections. (...) This is the format of a more open magazine, more mainstream, more journalistic” (Interview with the editor).

The thematic sections are fixed: they appear in all issues and are always signed by the same people – specialists who donate their texts to the association, thus becoming *Cais* correspondents. The correspondents are mostly people involved in the academic world; many are university professors. The sections orbit around themes such as the environment, technology, entrepreneurship, justice, society, politics, and sports. Among other permanent sections, there is also a “vendor’s page”, which depicts one of the magazine’s sellers in each edition – this section is the focus of the interview excerpt selected for analysis here.

The association initiatives, as well as the magazine, are supported by covenants with many sponsors, including the state. When I asked if the association or the magazine has or had any influence over the formulation of public policies, the editor answered thus:

Hum... I don't believe so. I don't believe so. What it happens is... the association is renowned for its tutelage of social services of the state, the government, the ministry, there has been growing recognition throughout the years, not only of *Cais* but also of many private social service institutions, which are plentiful in Portugal, around 500. There are many people working. *Cais* has been growing with every administration. *Cais* is distinguished as an institution of merit, and even of public utility, therefore it has that stature. There you go. But that is different from *Cais* Association managing per se... Perhaps it is able to create certain pressure... Who can exert this pressing influence over the government is National Confederation of Social Service Organizations. In other words, there are 500 in the confederation, so it does provide strength. *Cais* is one, plus 499, that can be pressure. There is a confederation, and that confederation has meetings with ministries of labor, social security, and presents solutions, presents ideas; it is a partnership, it can provide power of influence. In that case, yes. (Interview with the editor)

One notes, therefore, that *Associação Cais*, as a private social security institution, does act in the gap left by the withdrawal of the state, offering training services (language courses and use of technologies, for example), organizing the donation of food and clothes, acting as a space for socialization, and offering the possibility of income generation represented by magazine sales. It is not, however, a movement with claims that exert pressure over the state.

Also on July 1st, copies of the last five editions of *Cais* magazine were collected. These texts compose other analytical corpora of the research study. The analyses of texts published in *Cais* will allow for an investigation of the representation of the homeless situation and citizenship

rights, as well as the construction of identification of homeless people, in the volumes of the publication in which the theme is treated – since homelessness is not a theme of every edition of *Cais*. In this respect, the editor told me:

The magazine does not address the so-called painful aspects of the life of the group it benefits, the homeless, poverty. *Cais* doesn't go deep down to show the misery, *Cais* has to show the good side of things. Readers don't want to read about misery, tragedies... And therefore the foundation is to make a magazine that interests people into buying it. (Interview with the editor)

This information contradicts the stated goal of *Cais* - “awakening readers and public opinion for the social problems regarding homelessness and other forms of exclusion”.⁶⁵ Bringing this theme into society's debate agenda could be a form of explicitly combating the invisibility of the social issue, a compromise also taken on by the institution. The relevance of this compromise is emphasized in Pardo (2008, p. 26):

We know that ignorance continues to be one of the best tools for exercising abuse and submission. For this reason, we believe that bringing into light what people who live in a situation of extreme poverty feel and think about their own needs (...) is, at the same time, a form of starting to trace the path toward social justice.

Data generated in Lisbon will be under focus in a later stage of the investigation. This paper will explore only a snippet of the transcribed interview with the editor. From the text resulting from the transcription of the interview, I focus on an excerpt which specifically addresses homeless participation in the production of texts for the magazine. My specific interest here is to map the discursive modes of representation of homeless people classified as “vendors” in the interview.

5. Resentation: the participation of vendors in the intwrview with the editor

In this section, I will explore how participation (or lack of participation) of homeless people in producing the magazine is represented in the interview conducted in Lisbon, with the editor of

⁶⁵ <http://www.cais.pt/projectos/view/5/revista-cais>

Cais.⁶⁶ From the transcription of the interview, given the limitations of the academic paper, only one excerpt was selected, which deals specifically with the position that *Cais* vendors occupy in the dynamic of the magazine. The selection addresses the “vendor’s page”, a recurring section in all editions of the magazine, in which a vendor of the magazine is represented. The representation in this section is depicted by a colored photograph, in close-up, under which is read “REVISTA CAIS” (*Cais* Magazine), in capital letters, and in the line below: An instrument of preparation for homeless participation. Beside the image, a quote from the depicted person is represented, disclosing his/her experience as a *Cais* vendor.⁶⁷ The text appears with quotation marks and in the first person, making it seem like his/her own text or a transcription of his/her speech. However, in the interview with the editor, when we spoke of this section, he told me:

Editor – Esta é a página do vendedor. Então temos vários vendedores, e para dar um certo protagonismo ao vendedor, para o público que comprar a revista também olhar melhor para o vendedor, não é só na rua, ele está aqui também. Para dar mais, mais... dignificar também o vendedor, a figura do vendedor.

Viviane – E aí eles escrevem um pequeno texto [

Editor –] Não, isso sou eu é que escrevo. Ou seja, isto é... eu pergunto à pessoa ‘Ó, meu amigo, para si, o que sente quando vende a revista *Cais* na rua?’ Ele me fala ‘Ah, eu gosto muito, falo com as pessoas, ganho algum dinheiro, pra mim tá bom’. Eu escrevo isso. Tás a ver?⁶⁸

 Editor – *This is the vendor’s page. So we have many vendors, and in order to convey a certain protagonism to the vendor, for the reader who buys the magazine to take a better look at the vendor, not only in the streets, he is here too. In order to give more, more... to dignify the vendor, the image of the vendor.*

Viviane – *So they write a small text. [*

Editor –] *No, I’m the one who writes it. In other words, it’s like... I ask the person: “Say, buddy, tell me what you feel when you sell *Cais* magazine on the streets?” He answers “Oh, I really like it, I talk to people, I make some money, it’s good for me”. I write that. Do you see?⁶⁹*

⁶⁶ As the scope here is the representation of the group by the editor in this particular interview, I will not discuss data like age distribution, ethnic pertain, gender, health/disability status, literacy and spoken language skills among *Cais* vendors.

⁶⁷ In this paper, my aim is not to analyze the ‘vendor’s page’ itself. If it was the case, it would be worthy to use insights from Kress & van Leeuwen (2006), known for their work on social semiotic and multimodal analysis (an example is in Sant’Ana & Resende, 2013).

⁶⁸ As the interview was made in Portuguese language, I maintain here the original. See the translation below.

⁶⁹ In the transcription, interpolations were identified by means of brackets [], and the incomplete ideas in spoken and recorded text are signaled with an ellipsis.

In order to start analyzing this excerpt, I shall try to identify how the element “vendor” (“*vendedor*”) appears represented in the structure of the sentences. For this, I shall resort to the system of Transitivity developed in the field of SFL. It is not my goal here, however, to scrutinize the details of the complex system of Transitivity as proposed by Halliday (2004), and for this reason I will abstain from detailing processes and the associated participants. I will only use the referential as a tool to verify the degree of agentivity attributed to the participant “vendor” in the representation of the editor, without, however, using the nomenclature of the specific jargon of this linguistic theory, except when necessary. In terms of the recontextualization of this referential in CDA, the system of Transitivity relates to the representational meaning, in the way we represent aspects of the world and how, in this task, we mobilize discourses.

The excerpt deals with the section “vendor’s page”, and this is the subject which initiates the quote in the dialogue. The editor states “This is the vendor’s page”, and we were actually looking at that section of an issue of the magazine. Everything that follows from this first sentence of the editor in the excerpt is qualification, description, and circumstantialization of the section. Indeed, there are many prepositional structures in this excerpt, with circumstantial value of finality and purpose: “*in order to* convey a certain protagonism to the vendor”, “*for* the reader (...) to also take a better look at the vendor”, “*In order to* give more, more... to dignify the vendor”. What the editor discursively accomplished in this first excerpt, therefore, is a circumstantiated justification of the section in focus.

If we look at the role bestowed to the “vendor” in the representation of purpose present in the first line of the editor in the excerpt, the following map can be drawn:

Utterance	Place of “salesperson” in the utterance
(i) This is the vendor’s page.	Modifier/ qualifier of “page”
(ii) So we have many vendors, and	Attribute of ‘to have’ (it is <i>Cais</i> who has)
(iii) in order to convey a certain protagonism to the vendor,	Beneficiary of <i>Cais</i> action (it is <i>Cais</i> who conveys)
(iv) for the reader who buys the magazine to take a better look at the vendor,	Phenomenon: object of the appreciation of <i>Cais</i> consumers (it is the reader who looks)
(v) not only in the streets, he is here too.	Carrier in circumstantial relational processes (to be)
(vi) In order to give more, more... to dignify the vendor.	Beneficiary of <i>Cais</i> action (it is <i>Cais</i> who dignifies)

Table 1 – Mapping of the element “vendor” in the representation

In all cases, the element ‘vendor’ has an overshadowed agency; it is represented as a mostly passive entity – in none of these instances is an action in the world represented by this group. *Cais* vendors are represented by the editor mainly as objects of the actions conducted by *Cais* (to convey protagonism and to dignify in (iii) and (vi)). Note that, in the instance “in order to convey *a certain* protagonism to the vendor”, even this protagonism (of which the vendor is a passive object) is textured as a low-affinity modality – that is, the pre-modification of “protagonism” by “a certain” weakens the protagonism in the representation, diluting the enunciator’s compromise with that which he enunciates.⁷⁰

The group ‘vendor’ is also represented as an object of scrutiny and appreciation by the consumer of the magazine (in (iv)). In this case, by complementing with ‘better’ textured in “better look”, the comment activates the assumption that the group is not well viewed – that is only assumed, because it is not stated clearly, but can be inferred from the textual surface. Another structure of presupposition appears in the lexical selection of “to dignify”, since, by suffixation with ‘-fy’, ‘dignify’ means ‘bestow dignity’. Thus, the identification of homeless people in this excerpt, notably of the group identified as *Cais* ‘vendors’, is negative – people are identified as passive, by the choices of the processes that represent them and their position in clause structures, in addition to being identified with a bad and undignified view.

During the whole text of the interview, there are no representations of the group as being capable of acting to operate changes in the state of things. There is only one instance in which the *Cais* ‘vendor’ takes an active position in the clause structure – this occurs in utterance (v), “he is here too” –, but as a Carrier in a Circumstantial Relational Process, which represents a condition more than an action.

In the sequence, the transcription shows an intervention of mine, when, guided by the quotation marks presented in the section “vendor’s page”, I presume that the texts were written by the vendors: “So they write a small text”. The editor quickly corrects me, stating that he is the one who writes the small quoted texts appearing alongside the photographs of vendors represented in this page.⁷¹ In his explanation, he hesitates – “In other words, it’s like ...” – and

⁷⁰ According to Fairclough (2003, p. 166), “the question of modality can be seen as the question of what people commit themselves to when they make *statements*, ask *questions*, make *demands* or *offers*”. Statements and questions refer to exchange of knowledge; demands and offers refer to exchange of activity. In knowledge exchange, the modality is *epistemic* and refers to committal to the ‘truth’; in activity exchange, the modality is *deontic*, referring to committing to obligations/ needs. In the example in focus, we have a low affinity epistemic modality.

⁷¹ At the end of the interview, when I specifically asked about participation of homeless people in the magazine production, the editor confirmed the lack of effective participation of vendors in the production of this section:

then informs that he asks the person how s/he feels as a vendor of *Cais* magazine, and textures the information in the text which will be published. However well-intentioned the formulation of this question is posed – and I never doubted the excellent intention of the people who dedicate themselves to this initiative, nor is it my goal to judge this –, we must recognize that we are dealing with a power relation that limits what the vendor can say to the editor when asked “tell me what you feel when you sell *Cais* magazines on the streets?”. And this voice, already constrained by the power relation, is retextured by the institutional voice which, in turn, has interest in formulating a positive representation of *Cais* sales, and reframes this voice in an already fixed design: “I really like it, I talk to people, I make some money, it’s good for me”.⁷²

This can justify the relexicalization present in the last sentence of the first comment of the editor in the excerpt: “to dignify the vendor, *the image of the vendor*”. In this representation, “the vendor” is relexicalized as “the image of the vendor”. It is not the self-representation or even representation of a specific vendor on the page, but the discursive creation of a group with more or less homogenous characteristics. It thus conforms to what can be called “the image of the vendor”. Therefore, with regards to the representation of the group ‘vendors’ in the interview, a condition of passivity or immobility is assumed. Discursively, this is constructed by the absence of ‘doing’ processes and by the denial of participation in the production processes of the magazine.

6. Final remarks

The representation of ‘vendors’ in the excerpts tends to depict a condition of passivity, which is confirmed in the analysis of processes associated with this element in clause structures, by the lack of ‘doing’ processes, which could represent its material action in the world. There is no representation of the group as being capable of acting, of assuming an active position in the transformation of the situation or even of participating in the decision-making regarding actions in this direction.

Although it is not explicitly textured in the surface of the text, the analysis of clause structures and assumptions was capable of showing that homeless people are represented in the

“[in] the vendor’s page, the person does not participate; he only allows himself to be photographed and gives an opinion about selling”.

⁷² According to Torck (2001, p. 387), “The power of writing, and its elite dimension, the intellectual role of the journalist as a ‘maître à penser’ and as a privileged addressee of political power (...) could also play a role in the absence of homeless people’s voices’ in street papers”.

text as passive; they appear to be positioned in a passive standing in terms of action for social change. This representation of the homeless group classified as ‘vendors’ gains relevance if we agree with Spivak (2010, p. 55) in that “the possibility of collectivity itself is [or can be] persistently foreclosed through the manipulation of (...) agency”. According to the analyzed data, the sale of *Cais* magazine undertakes instrumental value, that of income generator, but does not associate symbolic value to this action, in representation. The absence of this group’s participation in the production processes of the magazine keeps its voices silent – they do not give an opinion in defining agendas nor do they self-represent in published texts.

In terms of discourses mobilized by *Associação Cais* guiding its practice, we can say that the assistance discourse is strong, and that the protagonist discourse, though enunciated in the definition of the magazine as “an instrument of preparation for homeless *participation*” (Cais, 2011, my italics), does not resist the assistance tendency.⁷³ For Resende (2008, p. 287), this is associated with a wider discursive change, of which the situation in this Association can be a consequence:

The celebration of civil society participation in the public sphere used to guarantee interest in mobilization projects, [but] currently, society’s participation seems to incline towards suppressing the absence of services abandoned by the State, in programs that society is invited to participate in terms of volunteer work. The mobilization discourse seems to have weakened in struggle with the assistance discourse – while the social mobilization discourse preaches society’s protagonism in resolving social problems (such as poverty, for example), the assistance discourse recognizes social problems but privileges solutions that do not emanate from the populations that suffer from the identified problems, but from assistance/charity of other sectors of society.

If we consider that people involved in practices of the Association and the magazine are people engaged in the cause against extreme poverty, we can ask ourselves why they assimilate discourses whose effect is a reduction of their ‘conditions of possibility’. In this sense, the role of the discursive element is emphasized, since the massive circulation of powerful discourses – such as the assistance discourse or the discourse of structure immobility or of organization incapability for protagonism – results in disarticulation of forces engaged in alternatives and the weakening of public debate.

I do not intend to make a deconstructive criticism of the effort engaged in this initiative. We know that leaving the streets is a difficult process, and the type of support offered by *Associação Cais* may be crucial for the individual who struggles with this process. *Cais*

⁷³ <http://www.cais.pt/projectos/view/5/revista-cais>

magazine, as an instrument of income generation, seems to be successful, and this effort should not be downplayed. However, an initiative at the scale of *Associação Cais*, with the support of the media and quality of the magazine, could represent an effective symbolic space for self-representation and self-organization. And this could mean much more, favoring the expression of voices many times silenced by the media and the formation of a collective social actor capable of mobilizing for social change. According to Critical Realism terms, a review of this nature in the production practices of the magazine would not only encourage the emergence of new discourses, hybrids in its origin, as well as new ‘conditions of possibility’, in which protagonism could be a fact.

It must be recognized that there is an effort towards incorporating a protagonist role, if not specifically for vendors, at least for “users” of *Associação Cais*.⁷⁴ This effort can be seen in the organizational dynamics of the section *Repórteres de Rua* (Street Reporters). The pages published in this section are effectively a collaborative production, a result of workshops where participants are encouraged to collaborate with suggestions for agenda setting and textual products of collective authorship. I attended one of these workshops, also during my July 2011 visit, and I consider this project of great relevance for the construction of a new type of relationship dynamics in *Cais* magazine. At the time, I had the opportunity to record an inspiring interview with the project coordinator, and this material, to be analyzed further, will be the subject of a future paper.

With regard to the integrated project, from which this article is drawn, though some of the Brazilian data are still being analyzed, we already know that in the Brazilian production, at least in street papers *O Trecheiro*, *Aurora da Rua* and *Boca de Rua*, there is indeed more effective homeless people participation – in the production of texts. The comparison between the Portuguese and the Brazilian contexts is, however, complex: in Brazil, a very active social movement on the issue of homelessness is growing stronger every day, the National Movement of Homeless Population (*Movimento Nacional da População de Rua* – MNPR), and our studies show some kinds of relationship between Brazilian street papers and this social movement, especially in the cases of *O Trecheiro* and *Aurora da Rua*. I believe that this social movement, in the Brazilian context, is a catalyst for protagonism in street papers gestated there, but for now this is nothing more than an open question, yet to be investigated.

⁷⁴ “Users” is the term to describe the people attended by the services offered at the Center.

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GENERIC STRUCTURES OF NIGERIAN AND SOUTH AFRICAN QUASI-JUDICIAL PUBLIC HEARINGS

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Abstract

A quasi-judicial public hearing is a public meeting which is created in order to obtain public testimonies or comments about the legal rights of specific parties. Thus, the discourse structure of the hearings are important in revealing the discursive patterns used in collecting information necessary in the pursuit of justice. Past studies on the language of quasi-judicial public hearings have focused on rhetorical, sociolinguistic and critical discourse aspects of the hearings but have not carried out comparative linguistic studies of the hearings. This paper focuses on the comparison of the discourse structure identified in the quasi-judicial public hearing on the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) administration in Nigeria and the discourse structure identified in the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hearing, using centrally Halliday and Hassan's (1989) and Ansary and Babaii's (2005) Generic Structure Potential (GSP) models. The paper utilises ten hearing sessions of the FCT hearing in Nigeria and the hearing session of the South African TRC used by McCormick and Bock (1999).). Five macrostructures in the FCT hearing were similar to those of the TRC hearing, namely, Affirmation Order/introduction, Invitation of Perspectives/elicitation, Presentation/narrative, Interrogation/questions and Finis/concluding remarks. Affirmation, Interrogation Compliance, Prayer, Prayer Demand and Admission were not identified in the latter. This implicates the necessity for further in-depth comparative linguistic studies of quasi-judicial public hearings between African and other nations to establish the convergent and divergent structural and discursive patterns in the hearings.

Keywords: discourse macrostructures, South African TRC hearing, Nigerian 2008 FCT, administration hearing

1. Introduction

A public hearing is a public meeting which is created in order to obtain public testimonies or comments (Meinig, 1998). It is a process which involves oral presentations, written evidence and elicitations. Two types of hearing have been identified in the literature, namely, legislative and quasi-judicial. A legislative public hearing is a legislative process which is meant to obtain public input on legislative decisions on matters of policy while a quasi-judicial public hearing is a judicial process which involves the legal rights of specific parties, where interactants depend on words to present their evidence and convince the hearing panel to write recommendations in their favour (Meinig 998). Extant literature on the hearings has tilted more to the former (see Gring-Pemle, 2001; Buttny and Cohen, 2007; and Simon & Jerit, 2007) than to the latter for the reason that while the former is a regular process in any country, the latter is an initiative only of a highly democratised society. Hence, more instances of quasi-judicial hearing are found in the West and South Africa than in Africa in general, inclusive Nigeria, which now is having a rising record of it having experienced about the 10th of such hearings in 2012.

In Africa, scholars have studied, from the grammatical, critical discourse and discourse-pragmatic perspectives, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in South Africa (Anthonissen, 2006; Bock et al, 2006; Verdoolaege, 2006; Lubbe, 2007; Bock, 2008; Verdoolaege, 2009a and 2009b) and the Nigerian quasi-judicial public hearing on the Federal Capital Territory administration (Unuabonah 2011, Unuabonah, 2012). From the discourse-pragmatic view point, the studies have analysed the generic structure and pragmatic functions of the discourses in the two cardinal locations separately but have not compared them to establish their convergences and divergences. Given that undertaking this task in respect of the two countries will be too demanding and impossible in a single article, we have focused only on the generic structures of the two in the present paper, concentrating on the 2008 hearing on the Federal Capital Territory in Nigeria and 1995 Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing in South Africa.

2 The 2008 Hearing on the Federal Capital Territory and the 1995 Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa

Quasi-judicial public hearings, also known as investigative hearings, public inquiries or parliamentary inquiries, are usually conducted by the executive and legislative arms of government, and are handled by a committee chaired by senators, judges and elder statesmen. The hearings have the following basic structure: presentation of testimonies by witnesses, interrogation of witnesses by the committee chairman and members, prayers by witnesses, and a close.

In Nigeria, in the past few years, there has been a steady rise in the number of quasi-judicial public hearings, which may be linked to the return to democratic rule which encourages democratic processes such as public hearings. Some of these hearings include the Human Rights Violations Investigation Commission of 1999, the power sector probe of 2008, the public hearing on security exchange commission, the public hearing on the aviation sector of 2012, the 2012 public hearings on Dana plane crash and the oil subsidy.

The 2008 hearing has a historical antecedent in the creation of Abuja, the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Nigeria in 1976. The creation was considered expedient because of the congestion in Lagos, the former FCT. The capital territory was carved out of three states, namely, Niger, Plateau and Kwara states. Owing to inadequate resources and the lack of respect for planning regulations on the part of the citizens who lived in Abuja at the time, the Master Plan of the territory was not followed. In 2003, the twelfth Minister of the FCT, Mallam Nasiru el-Rufai, was mandated to transform Abuja into a capital city by following the Master Plan. This led to demolitions and revocations of titles of lands (Makinde, 2008), the sale of government houses, and, consequently the ejection of civil servants from these houses, itself arising from Government's privatisation of public structures in 1999.

In 2008, the Nigerian Senate commissioned the Senate committees on FCT and Housing, led by Senator Abubakar Sodangi, the chairman of the Senate committee on FCT, to investigate the FCT administration between 1999 and 2007. The hearing panel was inaugurated on the 9th of April, 2008 and it completed its assignment on the 14th of May, 2008. Issues handled in the hearing included the ejection, demolition of property and revocation of titles of lands and property in the FCT. The committee received about two thousand testimonies from different persons who felt wronged by the past FCT administrations. Some of these persons appeared before the hearing panel and presented their cases; some officials of the FCT who were implicated in the complaints submitted were also invited to defend their actions.

The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearing was created by the Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act No. 34 of 1995 to promote national unity and reconciliation (TRC Report, 1998). The Commission consisted of three subcommittees: the Human Rights Violations Committee, the Amnesty Committee and the Committee on Reparation and Rehabilitation. The Human Rights Violations Committee (HRVC) organised public hearings in places where apartheid victims could come forward to give testimonies about their experiences during the apartheid regime. The HRVC gathered close to 22,000 statements, which covered 37,000 violations. Such violations included killing, abduction, or attempts of such, and conspiracies (TRC Report, 1998). In each of the South African regions, the HRVC selected a number of statements for public hearing. At the hearings, the victims were given a forum to talk about the human rights violations they had experienced during the period of apartheid. The testimonies revealed the degree to which apartheid had had a destructive effect on the lives of many South Africans (Verdoolaege, 2009a).

Initial, non-sworn or tape recorded statements were collected by statement takers who had carried out similar work in the past. These statements were handed over to the Investigation Unit for checking and corroboration. After the statements had been checked, the HRVC invited affected individuals to give testimonies at a local public hearing site at or near the place in which the violations had occurred. The people who accepted the invitation were first invited to preparatory sessions in which trained briefers explained to them the nature of the events at public hearings, and assisted them in the way their experiences would be structured, described and presented (McCormick & Bock, 1999).

3. The Current Study

Studies on the language and discourse of the TRC have focused on the transcription processes and ideological implications in the language behaviours at the hearings. Bock et. al (2006) analyse “what has been lost” in the interpretation and transcription process of two TRC testimonies. They contend that the official TRC records only allow access to a limited truth, as the records are inadequate in many ways and that a number of “truths”, which are narrative and factual in nature, have inevitably been lost through the interpretation and transcription process. They examine some significant omissions and errors in the official record of TRC and suggest that the inaccuracy not only compromises, to an extent, the goals of TRC, but also casts a measure of doubt on the value of some TRC scholarship. They recommend that researchers

using these should check them against the original testimonies in the language in which they were given. Although this study on TRC is related to the present study, it differs on the grounds that issues of interpretation and transcription do not arise in the analysis of the FCT hearing.

Utilising critical linguistic and critical discourse analytic theoretic perspectives, Lubbe (2007) carries out a comparative analysis of the reportage in the South African press in respect of the Guguletu 7 events in 1986 and the 1997 amnesty application. He suggests that the ideological milieu in the mid-eighties can be described in terms of a state of emergency, Soviet expansionism, racism, fear and rage, while that of the nineties can be described in terms of a new cluster of themes, namely, democracy, non-racism, equality, reconciliation, nation building and compensation. This study differs from the present one not only because it focuses exclusively on the ideological implications of the setting that served as a background to issues handled in the TRC sessions but also because it does not address the generic structure of the interactions.

Bock (2007) carries out a discourse analytic study of the South African TRC hearing, using the theories of genre, appraisal, transitivity and periodicity. She argues that within multilingual contexts such as the one in which the TRC was situated, code-switching functions as an appraisal resource. She also describes the macro-generic structure of the TRC testimony and explores the social discourse testifiers drawn on in the construal of identities in the interactions. She argues that while the activists share a collective social identity, they select differentially from the discourses available for this construal, and infuse these with their own individual identities to create testimonies which are distinctive and unique even though they refer to common experiences. This study connects partially with the present one at the level of generic structure, but it separates from it in respect of the limited range of macro structural elements identified and the aspects of the sociolinguistic contents explored.

Verdoolaege (2009) examines TRC hearings from the perspective of critical discourse analysis and asserts that it is through the discursive level that the TRC has exerted, and is still exerting, an enduring impact on the South African society. She opines that the TRC provides a discursive forum for thousands of ordinary citizens and, that by means of testimonies from apartheid victims and perpetrators, the TRC comprised an officially recognised archive of the apartheid past. She adds that the reconciliation discourse created at the TRC victim hearings formed a template for talking about a traumatic past, and opened up the debate on reconciliation. The point of separation between the present study and Verdoolaege's lies in the latter's concentration on the sociological significance of the TRC hearing, whereas the former handles the generic structures of the TRC and the FCT hearings.

In Nigeria, Unuabonah (2011) undertakes a critical discourse analysis of the 2008 national quasi-judicial public hearing on the Federal Capital Territory in Nigeria using van Dijk's sociocognitive approach. She opines that the event models of the interactants feature global topics and local semantics, together with argumentative and rhetorical strategies. These are influenced by protective, suppressive, defensive and restorative ideologies. Unuabonah (2012) examines the interactional formats and pragmatic roles of language in the hearing. She identifies ten discourse macrostructural elements in the hearing, and traces communicativeness in the sessions to shared knowledge of public hearing procedures, shared knowledge of landed property law, shared knowledge of government involvement and shared knowledge of the Abuja metropolis. She also posits that thirteen pragmatic acts characterised the language. In her concluding remarks, she attempts to establish some parallels between the generic structure of the TRC and that of the FCT, but this effort is preliminary and non-exclusive when compared to the present research.

3.1 Genre and Generic Structure

Genre analysis is the study of situated linguistic behaviour in institutionalised academic or professional settings (Bhatia, 1997). For Bhatia (2002:5), a generic description can serve as a resource of "knowledge of procedures, practices and conventions that make the text possible and relevant to a particular socio-rhetorical context." Two linguistic theoretical engagements in which genre is integrated are Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) (Halliday and Hasan, 1989; Henry and Roseberry, 1997; and Ansary and Babaii, 2005 and 2009) and the Specific Purposes approach (Swales, 1990; Bhatia, 1997 and 2002). They deal with the identification of the recurring patterns used in organising the content of a genre and the relation of these patterns to specific linguistic features (Bruce, 2009).

The SFL model, found most relevant to the current research, considers the interaction between linguistic patterns and context in its description of any genre. Halliday and Hasan (1989) opine that the context of a text consists of the context of situation and the context of culture. The context of situation refers to register, which is made up of field, mode and tenor. The field refers to the 'kind of activity in which language is playing a role. The tenor of discourse refers to is the individuals taking part in the discourse, the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles as well as the speech roles and relationships they are involved in. The mode is concerned with the role language is playing in the discourse. It looks at the symbolic organisation of the text, the status that it has and its function in the context (see also Martin and Rose, 2003).

The Generic Structure Potential (GSP) is a condensed statement of the conditions under which a text is considered appropriate to a specific Contextual Configuration (CC). The CC is ‘an account of the significant attributes of a social activity’ (Halliday and Hasan 1989:63). It expresses the total range of optional, iterative and obligatory elements, together with the way they are ordered in a text. Halliday and Hasan (1989) examine a set of spoken shop interactions with related discourse elements and establish the GSP of a ‘Shop Transaction’ catalogued below:

$$[(G).(SI)^{\downarrow}][\downarrow(SE.)^{\downarrow}\{SR^{\downarrow}SC^{\downarrow}\}^{\downarrow}S^{\downarrow}]P^{\downarrow}PC^{\downarrow}(^{\downarrow}F)$$

The round brackets () in the GSP indicate the optionality of enclosed elements. The dot between the elements means ‘more than one’ option in sequence (.). The square brackets [] specify the restraint on sequence, i.e. neither SE nor SR may follow P. The arrows (\downarrow) show iteration while the braces with curved arrows { } indicate that the degree of iteration for the elements in the square brackets is equal. In other words, if SR occurs twice, then SC must also occur twice. The caret sign (^) shows the sequence of the elements. In addition to the symbols recognised by Halliday and Hasan (1989), Ansary and Babaii (2005) propose the subscripts (_n) and (_m), which refer to the iteration of sets.

It is possible to express the total range of obligatory, optional, and iterative elements and their sequence in such a way that all the possibilities and/or potential of text structure for every text appropriate to a specific CC may be exhausted. Thus, it is possible to state the GSP of any genre. The notations proposed by Halliday and Hassan, together with the additions by Ansary and Babaii, are adopted in this study.

3.2 Methodology

The data for this study consist of video recordings, obtained from African Independent Television (AIT), Alagbado, Lagos. Ten hearing sessions of the 2008 FCT quasi-judicial public hearing and the South African hearing session utilised by McCormick and Bock (1999) were selected. Conversations in the sampled videos were transcribed. Both these and the texts available from the sampled discourse from South Africa were analysed with insights from the Generic Structure model. This analysis was complemented with aspects of collocation, sentence types, affixation and vocabulary types to determine the textual properties of the discourses. A full discussion of each of these items has been attempted in Unuabonah (2012). The structures of the two hearings were compared to establish their connection and separation.

4. Analysis and Findings:

4.1 The GSP of the Quasi-judicial Public Hearing on FCT Administration

Ten generic structural elements have been identified in the FCTPH: Affirmation Order (AO), Affirmation (A), Invitation of Perspectives (IP), Presentation (P), Interrogation (I), Interrogation Compliance (IC), Prayer Demand (PD), Prayer (Pr), Admission (A), and Finis (F). The generic structure potential (GSP) of the hearing has been catalogued as follows:

$$\begin{array}{c} \Downarrow \Downarrow \\ AO \wedge A \wedge IP \wedge [P_{(Pr)}] \wedge \{I \wedge IC\}_n \wedge (PD) \wedge (Pr) \wedge Ad \wedge (F) \end{array}$$

PD, Pr and F, being in round brackets, are optional while AO, A, IP, P, I, IC, and Ad, are obligatory; I and IC, bounded by braces, are recursive. In other words, both I and IC occur twice. The subscript $_{(n)}$ indicates the number of times a set is repeated. The subscript $_{(Pr)}$ indicates that Prayer can occur as part of Presentation. The square brackets specify the restraint in the sequence. This means that Prayer can either be a part of Presentation or can occur after PD. It cannot occur after AO, A, IP, I or IC.

The GSP presented here is a condensed statement suggesting that a hearing session in a Nigerian quasi-judicial public hearing starts with an Affirmation Order which is followed by the Affirmation itself. From this point, the chairman invites the complainants/defendants (C/D) to make their own presentations and are complied with in Presentation. Then, the hearing panel interrogates the C/D and he/she complies by answering the questions raised. The questioning continues until the hearing panel is satisfied that all questions have been asked and answered. The chairman of the hearing panel then demands that a prayer be made, which is complied with. However, defendants do not state any prayer. In addition, some complainants are not allowed to say their prayers because the hearing panel knows that these prayers are already written in their submissions. Thus, this makes PD and Pr optional elements. Thereafter, the written presentations and other documented evidence such as court orders, certificates of occupancy and pictures are admitted by the chairman of the hearing panel. Thus, Admission is an obligatory element. Finis is an optional element which occurs after Admission. Here, the chairman may thank the C/D for appearing at the hearing. He may also make promises, comments and, sometimes, ask last minute questions, after which the hearing session comes to an end.

FCTPH texts are characterised by plain words, and legal, property, political, financial and medical jargons; fixed and free collocations; antonyms and synonyms; affixes, compounds, abronyms, and clips; and interrogative, declarative, and imperative sentences. These linguistic features and their mappings with specific stages of the generic structure have been fully discussed in Unuabonah (2012) and Unuabonah (forthcoming). A table is presented below to show a summary of the linguistic patterns in the hearing.

Table 1. Lexical and Grammatical Features of FCTPH texts

Macro-rhetorical Elements	Lexical patterns	Grammatical features
Affirmation Order (AO)	Plain words	Imperative, interrogative, declarative
Affirmation (A)	Plain words	Imperative, declarative
Invitation of perspectives (IP)	Plain words	Imperative, declarative
Presentation (P)	Plain words, political, legal, medical, property and financial jargon; fixed and free collocations; antonyms; affixes, abronyms and compounds	Declarative, interrogative
Interrogations (I)	Plain words, political, legal, property, medical and financial jargon; fixed and free collocations; affixes, clipping, abronyms and compounds	Interrogative, declarative, imperative
Interrogation Compliance (IC)	Plain words, political, legal, property medical, and financial jargon; fixed and free collocations; synonyms; affixes, clipping abronyms and compounds	Declarative, imperative,
Prayer Demand (PD)	Plain words	Interrogative, imperative
Prayer (Pr)	Plain words, political jargon, property jargon; affixes	Imperative
Admission (Ad)	Plain words, political jargon	Declarative, imperative
Finis (F)	Plain words, legal jargon; affixes	Declarative, imperative, interrogative

4.2 The comparison of the TRC and the FCT hearing studies

As mentioned earlier, only one of the studies on the TRC has analysed its discourse structure. This study, carried out by McCormick and Bock (1999), analysed the data using Labov's (1972) theory of personal narratives. It identifies the following structural elements: introduction, elicitation, narrative, questions and concluding remarks. 'Introduction' captures the chairperson's welcome address, invitation of the witness to take the oath, and the

introduction of the facilitator. ‘Elicitation’ matches with the facilitator’s introduction of the topic and the invitation of the witness to speak; ‘Narrative’ is similar to ‘Presentation while questions’ correlates with ‘Interrogation’. ‘Concluding remarks’ is the same as ‘Finis’ in FCTPH.

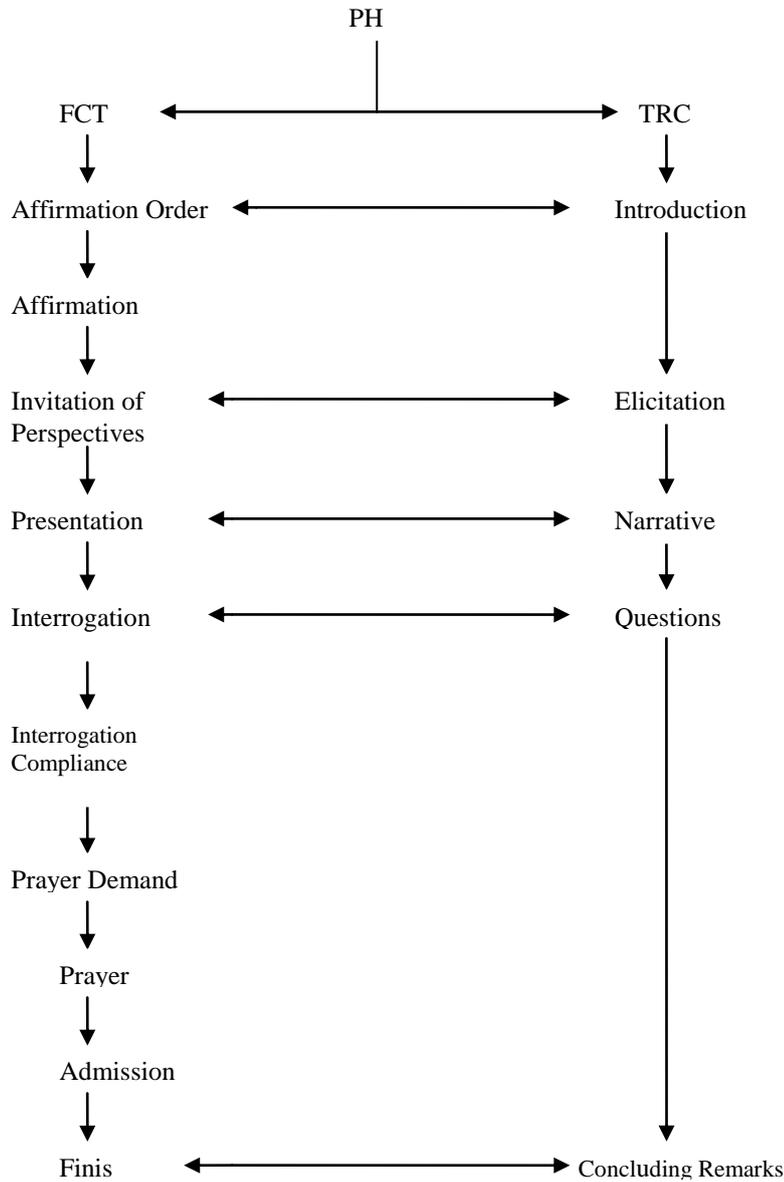


Figure 1: A chart showing points of convergence and divergence in the interactional

4.3 Structure of FCT and TRC hearings

Five points of convergence are identified in FCTPH and TRCH. The terms, *Compliance* and *Finis* are adopted from Halliday and Hassan (1989). For example, Halliday uses *Compliance* to

show the response to a question or demand while he uses *Finis* to classify the element that signals the closure of an interaction.

The term *Affirmation Order* in FCTPH is used to signify the order issued to take the oath. In the TRC study, *Introduction* is used to represent the order to take the oath and the oath-taking itself and this plays down the significance of the elements that make up the macrostructure. Also, the TRC study favours the use of the term *narrative*, considering that it uses Labov's (1979) theory of personal narratives. Also, the term *Interrogation* is used in the present study rather than *questions* because it is evident that during this stage, the hearing panel uses other functional sentence types such as statements and commands (See Table 1), which are meant to investigate the issues raised by the witnesses. Also, *questions* is not an adequate term to qualify the answers given by the witnesses. Thus, the term *Interrogation Compliance* is used. Although the authors of the TRC paper do not recognise *Affirmation* (the oath-taking stage), *Interrogation Compliance* (which focuses on the answers to the *questions*), *Prayer Demand* and *Prayer* in the TRC hearing, it is evident that these elements feature in the hearing (See table 2 and the discussion that ensues). *Admission* of submissions do not occur at all in the TRC hearing.

Macro-rhetorical Elements	Sentential Examples: FCT Hearing	Sentential Examples: TRC Hearing
Affirmation Order (AO)/Introduction	Please can you affirm him with the Bible?	In a moment I am going to ask one of our Commissioners to assist you, but before that would you please stand for the taking of the oath.
Affirmation (A)	I Chika Okeke Okafor, do solemnly swear That the evidence that I shall give before this honourable committee shall be the truth the whole truth and nothing but the truth. So help me God	Duly sworn states
Invitation of Perspectives (IP)/ Elicitation Presentation(P)/ Narrative	Ok please tell us your name again and tell us your complaint. Eh my chairman, my own case is purely a case of demolition... in 1995, I was at the National Political Conference during the national eh service. I just woke up one day and they called me from my office anyway that both my office and the estate at Karu was being demolished...The Idu plot is still vacant plot. Nobody has put anything there.	Ms Cupido your son Clive was at school at Kasselsvlei Senior Secondary School in 1985, is that right? Well I was sitting, and me and my husband was sitting waiting for Clive to come home. Because that's the day that Boesak and Tutu had the march in Cape Town.Clive came home early – eleven o'clock the morning and then he told me this march is going to have a lot of trouble.
Interrogations (I)/ Questions	For how many years?	Thank you Ms Cupido. Now you told us that there was somebody else there when

Interrogation Compliance (IC) Prayer Demand (PD)	Almost eh ah four years now, nothing there. What is your prayer?	your son was killed, Errol van Rensburg? Errol van Rensburg. What is it that you would like the Truth Commission to do?
Prayer (Pr)	My prayer sir is that I should be entitled to the compensation	I feel that the truth must come out, people should know that it wasn't my son that kept the policeman, it was Lawrence Davids ... he must give a statement and - and Errol van Rensburg.
Admission (Ad)	So your submission is eh admitted as Exhibit eh 82.	---
Finis (F)/ Concluding remarks	So we want to thank you Chief. We wish you all the best.	I know it hasn't been easy for you to come and tell the story and it must of been hanging over you and now you have been very brave and done it, so thank you very much indeed.

Table 2: A comparison of discourse structures in the FCTPH and the TRC Hearing

The table above shows the similarities and differences between the structure identified in the McCormick and Bock's study of the TRC hearing and that in the FCTH. While the latter is identified with ten discourse macrostructural elements, using the generic structure approach (Unuabonah 2012), the former is associated with five discourse elements, using the narrative approach (McCormick and Bock 1999).

In terms of linguistic structures, the TRC differs from the FCTPH. For example, in 'elicitation' in the TRC study, there are a series of statements, questions and answers that make up this stage of the interaction. This is because there is a facilitator who helps the witness to give an account of past events. These statements and questions are meant to guide the witness in giving their testimony. Thus, 'elicitation' in the TRC study is made up of declaratives and interrogatives; on the other hand, 'Invitation of perspectives' in the FCTPH is made up of declaratives, interrogatives and imperatives. Imperatives occurred more often than declaratives or interrogatives in the FCTPH hearing. From the extract used in the TRC study, declaratives seem to occur more often than interrogatives. This shows the importance of carrying out a detailed analysis of the macrostructural elements that make up each stage of the interaction.

In addition, the generic structure approach used in the present study shows that I and IC are recursive in FCTPH; the TRC extract used in McCormick and Bock (1999) demonstrates that 'elicitation' and 'questions' are recursive. The narrative approach used by the authors did not show this feature. This is illustrated in the example below:

Extract 1: Elicitation

Facilitator: *Thank you Chairperson, hello Ms Cupido and welcome again.*

Witness: Hello and thank you very much for hearing me.

Facilitator: Ms Cupido your son Clive was at school at Kasselsvlei Senior Secondary School in 1985.

Is that right?

Witness: That's right.

Facilitator: Right, and in the evenings after school he used to go and study with a friend at the friend's house.

Witness: --- That's right.

Facilitator: Is that right, that friend was Albert van der Berg, is that right?

Witness: --- That's right.

Facilitator: *Yes, and so on that night of the 29th of August he was with his friend studying.*

Witness: --- That's right.

From this extract, it is evident that the facilitator makes use of a number of statements to help the witness narrate her story. This is because the facilitator had already obtained the information which the witness is expected to narrate. This makes the TRC hearing different from the FCT hearing as there was no facilitator to help the complainant/defendant. These statements, questions and answers are repeated until a point when the witness finally floods out the whole narrative and does not need the facilitator to encourage her to speak. This also shows that while elicitation in the TRC study is recursive, its equivalent in the present study, that is IP, is not recursive. In the FCT hearing (See Unuabonah, 2012), imperatives are mainly used i.e. *Yes Barrister, tell us your particulars and state your complaints.*

Extract 2: Questions

Facilitator: Thank you Ms Cupido. Now you told us that there was somebody else there when your son was killed, Errol van Rensburg.

Witness: Errol van Rensburg.

Facilitator: Was he a friend of your son's? [sic]

Witness: Not actually, but he was there, he is the key witness. And this chap that sat at the hospital, Lawrence Davids.

Facilitator: So Errol was with Clive when they were - was Errol also injured?

Witness: Errol wasn't injured.

From the extract above, it is evident that *questions* which also include the answers of the witnesses are recursive just as we have in the FCT study; however, the approach used in the TRC study did not indicate the recursive nature of these elements.

Also, Prayer Demand and Prayer which are identified in the present study are omitted in the TRC study. These elements do exist in the TRC hearing but were not identified by the authors. This is shown in the extract below:

Extract 3:

Facilitator: What is it that you would like the Truth Commission to do?

Witness: I feel that the truth must come out, people should know that it wasn't my son that kept the policeman, it was Lawrence Davids,... he must give a statement and - and Errol van Rensburg.

From this extract, the utterance of the facilitator corresponds to *Prayer Demand* while the utterance of the witness corresponds to *Prayer*. The authors apparently have integrated this with the *questions* point of the interaction. That is why the term *questions* is inadequate to cover a range of discourse macrostructures which fulfill different pragmatic functions in the hearing. *Admission* does not come up in the TRC hearing as legal documents may have been collected before the hearing itself. In the FCT hearing, documents are given to the hearing panel before the hearing and admitted during the hearing as shown in the example below:

Extract 4

Sodangi: So your submission is eh admitted as exhibit eh 82.

This type of situation did not arise in the TRC hearing extract.

5. Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion, a comparative analysis of the discourse formats of the 2008 national quasi-judicial public hearing on the Federal Capital Territory administration in Nigeria and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission hearings in South Africa identified by McCormick and Bock (1999) has been conducted. The Generic Structure Potential model and the grammatical paradigm adopted have clearly established their similarities at Presentation/narrative and Finis/concluding remarks stages and differences at Affirmation Order/Introduction, Invitation of Perspectives/elicitation and Interrogation/Questions stages of the interaction.

Evidently, the convergences emerge from the universal nature and form of quasi-judicial public hearings. This implies that irrespective of setting or location, such features are

capable of occurring in the interactions. The divergences are largely a product of the localisation and adaptation of the procedures. In other words, the peculiarities exhibited in the hearings come alive as a result of the modifications done to the universal process in Nigeria and South Africa. It is this singular point that fully establishes the rationale for studying the interactional structure of the hearing in the two countries. Thus, further comparative linguistic analyses of, say, topic control and turn-taking patterns can be carried out on quasi-judicial public hearings in Nigeria and other parts of the world in order to have a clearer understanding of the discursive patterns in the interaction, especially in terms of how they have connected with or pulled off from the central procedure.

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COHESIVE DEVICES AND THEIR CONTEXTUAL CONDITIONS IN MODERN HEBREW PROSE

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Abstract

This paper identifies the linguistic, grammatical and syntactic cohesive devices used in a corpus of thirty Modern Hebrew prose stories. Based on the corpus examined in this paper, it appears that authors writing in Modern Hebrew usually use linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices to create the text's primary linear cohesive axis, while they employ syntactic cohesive devices to generate the secondary axes. The paper demonstrates the use of linguistic, grammatical and syntactic cohesive devices in these Modern Hebrew stories and examines the various contextual conditions affecting author preference for the different types of cohesive devices.

Keywords: Cohesion, Coherence, Cohesive devices, Linguistic cohesive devices, Grammatical cohesive devices, Syntactic cohesive devices

1. Introduction

In the field of discourse studies, two major terms have been coined to delineate a text as a closed and meaningful linguistic unit (Celce Murcia & Olstain, 2000; Van Dijk, 2008, Margolin, 2012): cohesion and coherence. Cohesion usually refers to the overt textual attributes of the discourse, while coherence to its covert attributes (e.g., Bublitz, 1999; Tanskanen, 2006; Margolin, 2012), though this distinction is neither precise nor unequivocal. Indeed, the overt linguistic devices in a discourse, i.e., the cohesive devices, point out the meaningful relations among the parts of the text and are thus part of its coherence components (Olshtain & Haskel-Shaham, 2012). Cohesion has been widely accepted for textual analysis, because it refers to the

grammatical and lexical elements on the surface of a text which can form connections between parts of the text (Connor, 1996). Coherence, on the other hand, has been regarded as a vague notion (Sinclair, 1991) with little practical value for the analyst (Bublitz, 1999). The simplest definition of discourse coherence is that "discourse as a sequence of propositions is coherent if facts (events, actions, situations) it refers to are related" (Van Dijk, 2008 p.185). That is, a discourse is coherent for language users if they are able to create a mental model for it (Van Dijk and Kintsch, 1983). Scholars generally agree that cohesion is a textual attribute that helps the author reveal coherence (Martin, 1992; Thompson, 1994; Olshtain & Haskel-Shaham, 2012), while coherence is dependent upon the author and the reader and their evaluation of the text (Tanskanen, 2006).

In addition to the problematic distinction between cohesion and coherence, scholarly opinions are also divided regarding the nature of cohesion. Some (e.g., Crystal, 2004) argue that cohesion can be achieved only when the linguistic structures and the semantic meanings in the text are mutually dependent. Others (e.g., Leech et al., 2001p.83) define cohesion as a means of connecting ideas to linguistic arrangements in order to generate the text. Despite these differing scholarly opinions regarding the nature of cohesion, all are in agreement that cohesion is an important tool for producing a text and its meaning. Using cohesion, the author joins the linguistic units into a textual continuum that enables the reader to follow the text's logical or chronological sequence. In this paper, cohesion refers to the use of overt linguistic devices to indicate the relations among the sentences and the parts of the text (Connor, 1996) and to generate textual unity (Tanskanen, 2006). These cohesive devices help the reader associate previous words or phrases with the subsequent ones (Shen, 2010).

Halliday and Hasan (1976) set down the methodological foundations for the term cohesion. They defined the term as the linguistic devices an author uses to generate a textual continuum and classified these devices into five groups: reference, substitution, ellipsis, lexical cohesion and conjunctions. According to Halliday and Hasan, reference, substitution and ellipsis are grammatical cohesive devices, lexical cohesions are linguistic cohesive devices and conjunctions are grammatical devices with a lexical component.

Researchers agree on the methodological importance of the cohesion model proposed by Halliday and Hasan (Tanskanen, 2006), and many use this model to examine textual cohesion (e.g., Connor, 1984; Shen, 2010). Moreover, in many studies examining the topic of cohesion (e.g., Hadely, 1987; Enkvist, 1990; Tanskanen, 2006), researchers agree in principle that cohesion comprises two components, referred to by Halliday and Hasan (1976) as reiteration and collocation. Reiteration refers to the repetition of identical or different lexical items:

synonym, generalization, differentiation, and contradiction (Olshtain & Haskel-Shaham, 2012), while collocation is concerned with the associative meanings among linguistic items. In this paper, I describe cohesion as comprising reiteration and collocation. I use the term "explicit cohesive devices" to refer to reiterative cohesive devices, including reference and repetition. The term "implicit cohesive devices" refers to collocative cohesive devices, including substitution and ellipsis.

Linguists have adopted cohesion as a reliable analytical tool because it refers both to the grammatical and to the lexical components of a text (Connor, 1996). Yet despite the importance of this topic, not many researchers have examined cohesion in various patterns of discourse (Tanskanen, 2006). Hence, the pragmatic conditions necessitating the use of these or other cohesive devices should be examined, as should the contextual conditions determining the preferences for using various devices in a particular language (Widdowson, 1992, p. 109).

In this paper, I put forward two hypotheses. First, the linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices used in the corpus of Modern Hebrew prose examined in this paper generate a linear discourse with clear-cut connections. Second, the linear pattern of discourse in this corpus is generated not only by these linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices, but also by syntactic cohesive devices. The authors represented in this corpus use syntactic devices in addition to linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices to lend support to the text's cohesive linear axis, especially in cases of long paragraphs, thus creating secondary cohesive axes.

2. What are syntactic cohesive devices?

The syntactic cohesive devices identified in the examined corpus are sentences that have been focused syntactically through the use of topicalization. Topicalization or thematization (Verma, 1976, p. 143; Ben Horin, 1976; Margolin, 2011) manifests itself through the placement of an unusual component at the beginning of a sentence such that the sentence's psychological structure, informative structure and pragmatic structure are not related. Topicalization also emerges in the sentence intonation. Hence, topicalization is created by placing an unusual thematic component at the beginning of a sentence as the topic in the topic-comment binary structure and by changing the sentence intonation to create a syntactically focused sentence (Margolin, 2000).

In the examined corpus, topicalization can be classified into six main models: simple topicalization, focalized topicalization, double topicalization, triple topicalization, quadruple topicalization and multiple topicalization. These topicalization types are differentiated by the number of irregular components at the beginning of the sentence and by their intonation patterns. Simple topicalization involves placing one irregular component, the simple topic, at

the beginning of a sentence and stressing the pause between topic and comment. Focalized topicalization is marked by one irregular component, the stressed topic, which is placed at the beginning of a sentence and stressed. In double, triple and quadruple topicalization models, the topic is constructed from two, three or four components respectively, each of which can serve as a separate topic for the comment. In the case of multiple topicalization, the degree of stress placed on the multiple components is not equal (Margolin, 2011).

In the examined corpus of Modern Hebrew prose, the frequency of sentences focused by means of topicalization indicates that these authors view topicalization as essential in organizing the discourse text. Furthermore, the authors in the examined corpus use topicalization to preserve the thematic component in the form of information to be stored actively by the reader. Through topicalization, an author seeks to distinguish between the thematic participants and the "non-thematic" participants so that the thematic participants are stored in the reader's consciousness, while the unexpected or "new" components are highlighted in the text.

Two dichotomies used to categorize the message should be taken into consideration when examining new components in a discourse: discourse-new vs. discourse-old, and hearer-new vs. hearer-old (Prince, 1992). In terms of the discourse, old information is information that already existed, while information that is old to the hearer is information the author is sure belongs to the hearer's general knowledge. This distinction emphasizes the fact that what is new in a discourse is not necessarily new to the hearer (Lambrecht, 1994). Information that is familiar to the hearer may be new in the discourse. Presenting what is "new" in a discourse is one of the cognitive constraints of languages, and authors always choose to mark a new referent in the discourse (Chafe, 1987). Such a referent is one that has not yet been mentioned in the discourse (Prince, 1997). One of the ways authors choose to mark such new referents is through topicalization. The topic marks the old information in the discourse, and the comment is used to introduce new referents into the discourse.

2. Methodology

The aim of the current study is to identify and describe the cohesive devices in a corpus of Modern Hebrew prose comprising the work of thirty authors. The resulting model of cohesion emerges from the need to describe cohesion in various discourse patterns and to discover the

contextual conditions necessitating the use of one type of device or another in a particular language.

2.1 Data collection

The data for this study were derived from a closed corpus. The corpus, chosen to reflect Modern Hebrew prose, was compiled from thirty short stories published in the anthology *Thirty Years, Thirty Stories - An Anthology of Hebrew Stories from the 60s to the 90s*, edited by Z. Stavi (1993). While the anthology's editor believes the stories in the collection constitute “an expression of personal taste that is totally subjective” (p. 13), they were selected for reflecting the state of written language in Modern Hebrew prose. The authors of the stories in the anthology are among the top authors of Modern Hebrew prose, including Yoram Kaniuk, Amos Oz, Yehoshua Kenaz, David Grossman, A.B. Yehoshua, Savyon Liebrecht and others.

2.2 Research tool

Two tools were used in this study to determine the cohesive devices used in the examined corpus. The first tool is the taxonomy of cohesive relationships proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976), which has become the standard in this field. Halliday and Hasan claim that to understand a text we need to be continually aware of its linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices. The second tool is a syntactical tool developed specifically for this study to analyze topicalization. Topicalization reinforces the discourse's linear cohesive axis by using the topic to mark an old textual referent that refers back to preceding referents. Topicalization also generates the discourse's secondary cohesive axes by using the comment to mark a new textual referent that refers to subsequent referents. In this paper, these two tools are used to demonstrate cohesiveness in the examined corpus and to consider the contextual conditions affecting the author's choice of cohesive devices.

3. Discussion

3.1 Constructing the cohesive axis by means of linguistic and grammatical devices

As noted, in this paper I base my description of linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices on the cohesion model proposed by Halliday and Hasan (1976), and define each of the principles of cohesion accordingly. Reference is defined as a semantic relationship in which one item in a text refers to another by means of identity of meanings. Reference can be endophoric or

exophoric. An endophoric reference is found in the text and may be anaphoric or cataphoric. When the endophoric reference item is a personal pronoun or a demonstrative pronoun, the reference is made explicit by means of identification with the reference item. When the endophoric reference item is a possessive pronoun, an objective pronoun or the definite article, the reference is made explicit through a comparison to the reference item (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 304, p. 309). When references appear in a text more than once, they produce a network of meaning among the various parts of the discourse (Hadley, 1987).

Substitution is a formal connection between linguistic forms but not between meanings. A specific linguistic structure is substituted by another identical linguistic form that is substituted for it, though their meanings are not the same (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 308). Substitution is used when an author wants to avoid repeating a particular lexical item and can replace it with another lexical item that will not impair the structural function of the previous item (Bloor & Bloor, 1995). Ellipsis is a form of substitution: "substitution with zero." Ellipsis occurs when a specific structural component is left out and another component fills in the missing information (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, p. 142). Substitution and ellipsis are used as linguistic mechanisms that help express specific linguistic structures more economically in order to avoid repetitions of familiar words, phrases or clauses within the text.

Lexical cohesion is achieved by means of verbal and synonymic repetition using synonyms, subordinates or hyponyms, and superordinates or hypernyms (ibid, p. 278). According to Halliday and Hasan, conjunctions differ from cohesive devices in that they are cohesive by virtue of their specific meaning. Conjunctions mark various types of semantic connections and are therefore indirect rather than direct cohesive devices (ibid, p. 226).

The following examples from *Thirty Years, Thirty Stories* are analyzed for cohesion. The paragraphs were chosen based upon the assumption that in short paragraphs the authors relied mainly on explicit cohesive devices, including reference and repetition, to produce the cohesive axis. In longer paragraphs, the authors used also implicit cohesive devices, including substitution and ellipsis, and tended to add syntactical devices to support the linear cohesive axis and to produce secondary cohesive axes.

Taganka, Here / Reuven Miran: 221

1

Gregory himself lived in peace mainly with himself. Most things went in one of

2

3

his ears and out the other without tarrying too long in his head. But a small portion

through explicit cohesive devices, including reference and repetition, as depicted in the following chart:

1.		Mr. Birne	
2.	tree stumps		
3.	their roots		<i>reference (possessive pronoun)</i>
4.	from them		<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>
5.	gave them	Mr. Birne	<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>

Mr. Birne: lexical cohesion (repetition)

An examination of all the paragraphs in the *Thirty Years, Thirty Stories* anthology that do not contain syntactic cohesive devices but rather only linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices indicated that all are relatively short paragraphs. In the examined corpus, the authors only tend to use linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices in very short paragraphs. In longer paragraphs they tend to add syntactic cohesive devices, specifically in the form of constructions focused by topicalization. The examination also revealed a tendency to use explicit cohesive devices such as reference and lexical cohesiveness in short paragraphs. Implicit cohesive devices such as substitution and ellipsis, which deal with associative meanings among linguistic items, were not often used.

3.2 Constructing the cohesive axis by means of syntactic devices

The authors in the examined corpus tend to use syntactic devices in longer paragraphs. In particular, these authors use simple topicalization and double topicalization as syntactic means of cohesion. In Hebrew, simple topicalization involves changing the order of the sentence components by transferring one of them to the beginning of the sentence and introducing a pause in intonation between the thematic component and the rhematic component. The sentences below have been focused by means of simple topicalization. For purposes of simplification, their components are referred to as “simple topic” (ST) and “comment” (CT). The pause in intonation between the topic and the comment is indicated by means of the sign >.

- | | | | | |
|----|------------------------|---|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | ST | | CT | |
| 1. | <u>At the cemetery</u> | > | <u>they tore my garment and my mother's garment.</u> | (After Tu BeShvat / Ruth Almog: 27). |

Two adverbial phrases have been placed at the beginning of this sentence as the double fronted topic. This double topic comprises two components, each of which can serve as the topic. A pause separates the simple double fronted topic and the comment, marked by the author with a comma. There is also a pause between the two components of the double topic, also marked by a comma.

ST CT

Sentence 11: On top of the bedsprings > was spread out an old towel.

ST CT

Sentence 13: Under the bed > was a broom.

In these two sentences, the adverbial phrases of place at the beginning serve as the simple fronted topics. The simple topic and the comment are separated by a stressed pause, not marked with a comma. The textual function of such focused sentences is to create linear cohesion, as illustrated in the following chart illustrating the linear cohesion of the above paragraph. The focused structures are underlined to indicate their role in producing linear cohesion.

1.	(Schneider's) bed	
2.	the sheets	<i>substitution</i>
3.	one of the sheets	<i>lexical cohesion (hyponym)</i>
4.	<u>the bed</u> ----- <u>cupboard</u>	<i>the bed: substitution</i>
5.	It	<i>reference (personal pronoun)</i>
6.	the cupboard	<i>reference (definite article)</i>
7.	----- In it	<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>
8.	The mattress	<i>substitution</i>
9.	from it	<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>
10.	it	<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>
11.	<u>the bedsprings</u> ----- <u>the towel</u>	<i>the bedsprings: substitution</i>
12.	----- belonged to	<i>belonged to: ellipsis</i>
13.	<u>bed</u> ----- <u>a broom</u>	<i>the bed: substitution</i>

The chart shows the linguistic, grammatical and syntactic cohesive devices used to generate the paragraph's linear cohesive axis. The linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices include reference, lexical cohesion, substitution and ellipsis. The paragraph contains explicit cohesive

lot more than seventy years", and his tongue would poke out and shake all the time

like some kind of snail peeking out of its shell here and there to see the big

11 ST

CT

world. With the fortune teller and with Dr. Levenstein he would consult regularly

12

about matters of male potency. And the old fat Bucharian woman who could not

get up from a sitting position without help, who would sit at the entrance to her

cellar all day long, muttering lamentations in Bucharian to herself and sucking

the mouthpiece of a hookah made out of tin — even she would come to the

13

fortuneteller from time to time to ask him when the letter would arrive. The secret

14

of the letter was known only to her and to him. And I still recall his wife and her

two brothers who made it big and became taxi drivers on Ben Yehuda Street and

15 ST

they even managed after the State was established to buy their own taxi, but the

CT

fortune teller I never saw again.

The above paragraph is long and cumbersome. It contains 15 sentences, nine of which (60%) are focused sentences. The 3:2 ratio of focused to non-focused sentences in this paragraph is a consequence of its length and the number of referents it contains. The focused sentences are as follows:

ST

CT

Sentence 1: For two years < lived the fortune teller together with his wife in a small

room at the corner of the yard.

ST

Sentence 2: And at the end of the second year, about a week after Kalman was released

CT

from the prison and came to live with us, < we woke up one morning and

we discovered that the fortune teller and his wife had disappeared and were

gone, simply fled owing us rent for seven months.

ST

CT

Sentence 3:During the entire time that one was at our house, > there was not even one

person in the entire neighborhood that did not come to have his fortune told

by him.

ST CT

Sentence 4:In that > the fortuneteller resembled old Doctor Levenstein, who was closely

acquainted with the pains and heartaches of every person in the

neighborhood.

ST CT

Sentence 5:And like him > also had four or five formulas that were valid for everything.

ST CT

Sentence 6:And like him > also had two three regular clients who needed him every two or three days.

ST

CT

Sentence 9:And when asked his age > he would answer: "A lot of years, thank God, a lot

more than seventy years".

ST

CT

Sentence 11:With the fortune teller and with Dr. Levenstein > he would consult regularly about matters of male potency.

FT

>

CT

Sentence 15:But the fortune teller I never saw again.

The above sentences are syntactically focused by means of topicalization. In each sentence special syntactic devices are used to emphasize the focus of information. Seven of the nine sentences are focused using simple topicalization, while one (Sentence 2) uses double topicalization. Sentence 15 is focused by means of focalized topicalization, and its topic is a

focalized topic (FT). The order of the components in these sentences is not the usual order in Hebrew: SVO. In all these sentences, an adverbial phrase is placed at the beginning of the sentence in the topic position. These adverbial phrases are descriptions of time (Sentences 1, 2 and 3), objects (Sentences 4, 11 and 15) and modal descriptions (Sentences 5 and 6). All except Sentence 15 include a pause in intonation between the topic and the comment, not marked by a comma. In all the sentences, the verb precedes its subject when the subject is not a personal pronoun or inflected in the verb.

The textual function of the sentences focused by simple topicalization is to produce linear cohesion, as illustrated in the following chart depicting the paragraph's linear cohesion.

1.	<u>two years-----</u>	<u>fortune teller</u>		
2.	<u>the second-----year</u>	<u>fortune teller</u>	<i>the second year: lexical cohesion (hyponym)</i>	<i>fortune teller: lexical cohesion (reiteration)</i>
3.	<u>time-----</u>	<u>that one</u>	<i>time: lexical cohesion (hyponym)</i>	<i>that one: reference (demonstrative pronoun)</i>
4.		<u>the fortune teller-----</u>	<u>Doctor Levenstein</u>	<i>fortune teller: reference (definite article)</i>
5.		<u>who-----</u>	<u>like him</u>	<i>who: reference (personal pronoun); like him: reference (demonstrative pronoun)</i>
6.		<u>like him-----</u>	<u>clients-----</u>	<i>like him lexical cohesion (reiteration)</i>
7.				<i>Rachamim substitution</i>
8.				<i>Rachamim lexical cohesion (reiteration)</i>
9.				<i>his age reference (possessive pronoun)</i>
10.				<i>his tongue reference (possessive pronoun)</i>
11.		<u>fortune teller-----</u>	<u>Doctor Levenstein---</u>	<i>would consult ellipsis</i>
12.		fortune teller		<i>lexical cohesion (reiteration)</i>
13.		to him		<i>reference (objective pronoun)</i>
14.		his wife		<i>reference (possessive pronoun)</i>
15.		<u>the fortune teller</u>	<u>I</u>	<i>reference (definite article)</i>

According to the chart, the sentences focused by simple topicalization clearly generate secondary cohesive axes by introducing new referents along the linear cohesive axis. The first secondary cohesive axis is temporal: two years-----the second year----the time. The second

cohesive axis refers to Dr. Levenstein, and the third refers to Rachamim the stonecutter. These secondary cohesive axes are linked to the primary cohesive axis, which refers to the fortuneteller. The considerable use of sentences focused by simple topicalization in this paragraph meets the need to create cohesion in this long and cumbersome paragraph with its numerous referents.

An examination of all the paragraphs in the *Thirty Years, Thirty Stories* anthology reveals that the authors choose among a variety of syntactic cohesive devices depending upon paragraph length and number of referents. When a paragraph is short and does not have many referents, the author tends to use only linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices to produce linear cohesion. When a paragraph is long or contains many referents, the author tends to use simple topicalization and double topicalization structures to produce linear cohesion. The linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices include explicit cohesive devices such as reference and lexical cohesion, as well as implicit cohesive devices such as substitution and ellipsis.

4. Conclusion

Even though many studies have examined cohesion, very few have put forward models of cohesion characterized by the rhetorical patterns of different languages. This paper has identified a cohesion model in a corpus comprising thirty stories written in Modern Hebrew. This model is characterized not only by linguistic and grammatical linguistic devices, but also by syntactic devices used by the authors to produce a linear discourse pattern with clear connections.

In the examined corpus, the grammatical cohesive devices in Modern Hebrew prose refer to reference, substitution and ellipsis, the linguistic cohesive devices refer to the repetition of identical lexical items, using synonyms, subordinates or hyponyms, and the syntactic devices are sentences focused by means of simple and double topicalization. The authors in this corpus use a simple or double fronted topic at the beginning of the sentence to refer to existing referents in the discourse, thus generating the primary linear cohesive axis. They use the comment to introduce new referents in the discourse, thus generating secondary cohesive axes. The contextual conditions for producing these secondary cohesive axes are paragraph length and complexity. When a paragraph is long or cumbersome, the author tends to use many syntactic cohesive devices, while for short and clear paragraphs, the author makes do with linguistic and grammatical cohesive devices.

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LINGUISTIC TABOOS IN THE IGBO SOCIETY: A SOCIOLINGUISTIC INVESTIGATION

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Abstract

This article investigates linguistic taboos in the Igbo society in terms of their classification and socio-cultural factors affecting their usage. The article classifies linguistic taboos in the Igbo society into five categories: morality-related linguistic taboos, veneration-related linguistic taboos, decorum-related linguistic taboos, religion-related linguistic taboos and fear-related linguistic taboos. The article argues that while religion and decorum-related linguistic taboos are unmentioned and have no permissible alternatives because they are closely tied to different Igbo deities, morality, veneration and fear-related ones have euphemisms. It notes also that taboo expressions are hardly taught in schools and advocates the teaching of linguistic taboos to learners of Igbo as a second language. It advocates further the inclusion of this aspect of the Igbo language in the school curriculum and Igbo textbooks. Two principal methods were used to collect data for this study: questionnaire and oral interview. The data collected were presented in tabular form, using descriptive statistics.

Keywords: Linguistic taboo, Igbo, second language education, school curricula

1. Introduction

Language is used to serve a variety of needs which are either negative or positive in every society. Therefore, in linguistics, language is seen as a double-edged sword that should be used tactfully as it could be used to soothe, mend, sway or destroy. As a result of the negative consequences of language use, the Igbos have put in place certain linguistic norms which guide their use of words and expressions at different occasions and to people of different sexes, ages

and classes. This is in consonance with Holme's (2001) observation that individuals in a community share criteria for language use, such as rules of speaking, attitudes and values as well as socio-cultural understanding with regard to speech. This is because language is one of the ways by which the moral conduct of a society is determined. Thus, every Igbo native speaker is always cautious in his use of words so as not to breach the linguistic rules of his community, because if this happens, it is seen as taboo in his use of words.

Linguistic taboos are words or expressions to be avoided because using them directly in public is seen as violation of certain moral codes. Put in other words, linguistic taboos have their usage controlled by certain circumstances or reasons such as religion, culture or norms. In an attempt not to violate Igbo culture, linguistic taboos are expressed in the forms of euphemism: proverbs, idioms, metaphors, paraphrases, etc. This aspect of the Igbo language is not being taught in schools. Igbo language teachers avoid using taboo words; neither do they draw their students' attention to their usage. There is no doubt that the non-teaching of these Igbo words or expressions has created a gap in the teaching and learning of the language. Thus, this study investigates the linguistic prejudice towards taboo expressions in the Igbo society and its implications for teaching the Igbo language both as a first and second language.

2. The Sociolinguistic Setting

Igbo is one of the three major Nigerian languages spoken in eastern Nigeria. The other two are Hausa and Yoruba. The speakers of the language are also referred to as Igbo people. The early missionaries by default called them "Ibo" due to their inability to pronounce the diagraph /gb/. By a similar default they were also variously referred to in history as "Iboe" or Eboe. Igbo is the dominant tribe in Eastern Nigeria and the only tribe in the present South-East region of the country. Igbo people are also found in the south south region in states such as Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom. The core Igbo States are: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States.

There are many accounts on the origin of the Igbo people. The first is that the Igbo tribe descended from Israel and /or Egypt. The premise upon which the belief was built was the similarity in the culture of circumcision, how the people care for lactating mothers and the industriousness of the people among the culture areas. Basden (1983) observed that the judicial system of the Igbo people resembled that of the Jews. The second account of the origin of the people holds that the people originated somewhere at the confluence of the Niger and Benue rivers and moved to their present abode with time. This account seems to be in consonance

with the linguistic belief that the “proto-kwa” originated from about that spot. The third version holds that the Igbo people were originally located in their present abode by the creator and located in Nri in the present Anambra State.

The Igbo society is an egalitarian and republican society. The kind of traditional hegemony found among the Hausa in the North and the Yoruba in the Western region is lacking among the Igbo people. The society is also highly segmented into small towns and villages. Each being close-knit, independent and exclusive – a situation that might be responsible for the high number of dialects in the language. The above nature of the society rendered the British Indirect Rule unworkable among the people. The society was governed along the axis of clan (with, usually, the oldest man having the last say). The Igbo population is presently put at over 25 million in Nigeria – a figure that is highly contested. Research has shown that Igbo is the most widespread ethnic group in all of Africa, if not the entire world. They are found in all continents of the world and in fairly large numbers.

3. What is Linguistic Taboo?

Linguistic taboos are words that many people consider offensive or shocking. Apte (1994) was of the view that linguistic taboos are words that are avoided because they are deemed unfit for normal linguistic usage and by a community’s consensus, are banned in everyday language in the public domain. Diez (nd) said that taboo words are those words that are considered in bad taste by some people or that are better avoided because they mention realities that are stark or vulgar. He claimed further that they are words that refer to sex, religion, necessities such as the act of emptying the bladder or bowels and so on.

In their own views, Akmajian, Dermers, Farmers and Harnish (2004) considered taboo words as those words that are to be avoided entirely or at least avoided in mixed company. For Trudgill (1974), linguistic taboo is anything that is associated with things that are not said, particularly in words and expressions in a given society. Mbaya (2002) defines linguistic taboos as those words or expressions in a language which are avoided as a result of their indecency, shocking character or immorality and in order not to hurt the other members of the society. Troike (2003) pointed out that attitude towards language considered taboo in a speech community is extremely strong and taboo violation may be sanctioned by imputation of immorality, illness or death.

Linguistic taboos are not only words referring to obscenity alone. Sacred language can also be tabooed, that is language to be avoided outside the context of sacred rituals. In Igbo society,

it is a taboo to use the language for a different occasion in a context that it is not meant for. For instance, to use the language for the blessing of Kolanut in places other than in its religious situational context; or to use words for marriage activity in burial occasions (Kemdirim, 2009).

Despite the similarities or some uniformity of taboo words among societies, they vary also from culture to culture, because what is taboo in one culture may be a norm in another. Le and Le (2006) asserted that the degree of avoidance of taboo words in language are culture specific, such that what is tabooed in one society may be the norm in another, as taboo is based on the cultural values and beliefs of the linguistic community towards certain topic; Trudgill (1986) posited that taboo language is just a matter of convention where the normal use of an item in a language is inhibited due to a particular social value and beliefs.

Akmajian et. al (2004) stated that what counts as taboo is defined by culture and not by anything inherent in the language itself. In the same vein, Farb (1974) had observed earlier that any word is an innocent collection of sounds until a community surrounds it with connotations and decrees that it cannot be used in certain speech situations. He stated further that it is the symbolic value the specific culture attaches to the words and expressions that makes them become taboo.

Linguistic taboos are expressed in different ways by different societies. They are obliquely expressed in the form of paraphrases, synonyms, euphemisms, antonyms and other coded words. Wardhaugh (2000), in an attempt to explain this, stated that certain things are not said, not because they cannot be said, but because people do not talk about them or if they are talked about, they are discussed in very roundabout ways. He further stated that euphemistic words and expressions allow us to talk about unpleasant things to disguise or neutralize the unpleasantness. This is applicable to the Igbo language where, instead of taboo expressions, certain euphemistic expressions such as proverbs, idioms, metaphors, satire, synonyms and antonyms are used.

4. Theoretical Model

Recent models in the study of linguistic taboo strive to classify taboos according to tradition and norm of the concerned community, this notwithstanding, the different classifications share certain characteristics. Taboo words have different forms which vary from society to society. In western society, the most severe taboos are those associated with excretion, sex and Christian religion. According to Trudgill (1986), the strongest taboo words in the English-speaking world

are still associated with sex, followed by those associated with excretion. In Norway, they are mostly expressions connected with the devil and in Roman Catholic culture, they are words essentially associated with religion. What exactly constitutes the taboo words of a society is largely determined by the codes of that society.

Hongxu et al (1990), analyzing linguistic taboos in Chinese, viewed taboos as a socio-cultural phenomenon associated with superstition, custom, and hierarchical power. For them, taboos fall under two categories: macrolinguistic and microlinguistic. By macrolinguistic, it is meant that certain words are perceived by almost all speakers in a speech community to be despicable and filthy such as sex and death. By microlinguistic taboos, it is meant that certain words are perceived as taboos in relation to a specific context. For the analysis of the Chinese taboos, Hongxu et al (1990) proposed a framework which includes a “macrocontext”, which includes situational factors such as register and interlocutors. This results in several varieties of taboo: absolute taboo, a quasi-taboo and non-taboo (Qanbar, 2011).

According to Apte (1994), the linguistic taboos can be grouped into four types: (i) Swear or curse words, i.e. words which when uttered involve damnation, misfortune, or disrespect of the targeted object or person; (ii) obscene words, i.e. words referring to sexual organs and acts; (iii) four-lettered words, which are only acceptable in English, with example of acceptable English obscenities being words such as “cunt”, “fuck”, “shit”, and “cock”, such words only having four letters in their spellings; and (iv) dirty words, i.e. words that refer to sexual organs, acts and scatological substances (menstruation, urine, faeces, spittle). Jay (1996) categorized linguistic taboos into eight types:

- (i) Taboo or obscene language – these are expressions restricted from public use, such as “fuck” and “bitch”;
- (ii) Blasphemy – the use of religious terminology to denigrate God and religious institutions, icons and so on;
- (iii) Profanity – the use of religious expressions and terminology in an unrespectable manner. The intention of the speaker is not to denigrate God or anything associated with religion but may be rather to express emotional reactions towards certain stimuli;
- (iv) Insults and radical slurs – verbal attacks on other people by denoting the physical, mental or psychological qualities of the victims, e.g. coconut head (for unintelligent person), monkey (for ugly person);
- (v) Expletives – emotional words that are in the form of interjections, and that are not directed to anyone specifically, but are used by speakers to release frustration and emotion;

- (vi) Vulgarisms – crude or raw expressions which are regarded as distasteful and offensive. They are used to devalue the thing or individual referred to or described;
- (vii) Cursing; and
- (viii) Slang – this is usually developed by social groups to identify and solidify in-group members.

Steiner (1975) categorized verbal taboos into six groups: (i) personal names, (ii) names of gods, (iii) names of kings and other sacred persons, (iv) names of the dead, (v) names of relations, and (vi) common words – these include taboos placed on names of objects and things that are associated with different professions, names of dangerous animals, etc. Omamor (1981) classified linguistic taboos into five categories: (i) cleansing – effect type, (ii) fear-related type, (iii) royal-related, (iv) fear-related type, and (v) family-relationship type.

Oyetade's (1994) classification of taboo expressions in the Yoruba language mirrors Omamor's; even though he classifies them into four types: (i) propriety-related taboos, which are those that enable the society members to conform with the acceptable moral standard with regard to decorum; (ii) taboo for averting ominous consequences which emanate from people's belief system; (iii) veneration type which is used to give honour to a specific class of people such as kings, elders etc.; and (iv) fear-centred taboos which centre on the belief in the existence of supernatural forces that have been claimed to have control over human beings.

Qanbar (2011) proposed a general classification of taboo words and expressions in the Yemeni society into two broad categories: (i) context-specific and (ii) general. These two categories, according to him, also branch out into other subcategories.

The words under context-specific category are neutral and non-taboo but they get tabooed in particular contexts. Context-specific taboos are divided into two subcategories: non-taboo words, and words related to the hearer's physical or social defects; while the subcategories under the category general include the unmentionable (the words under this subcategory should be euphemized in polite speech), and mentionable with minimizers which include words that are to be mentioned along with other fixed conventional expressions which Qanbar (2011) called minimizers. According to him, non-taboo words are neutral in meaning in everyday speech such as pig, dog, aew, etc., but become taboos in certain contexts when used as swear words. He claimed further that religion has played a role in tabooing these words. The animals mentioned above are associated with impurity and uncleanness (dog and pig). Qanbar (2011) claimed further that Jews are associated with treachery and meanness due to the nature of the relationship between the Muslims and the Jews throughout history.

Qanbar (2011) further divided taboo words under general into two subcategories: (i) absolutely forbidden words which are referred to as the unmentionable and (ii) permissible or mentionable with minimizers. The unmentionable are the absolute forbidden words and they are divided into five subcategories:

- (i) Words or terms referring to the private organs of the human body and their functions, and body effluvia (snot, faeces, menstrual fluid, etc.);
- (ii) Words or terms referring to religion (blasphemy) or words against religious figures and symbols;
- (iii) Words or terms referring to national or historical or the present political figures or political system;
- (iv) The first names of one's female members of the family mentioned in public or before an outsider;
- (v) Words referring to things that you give away to the poor and the needy, or friends on social occasions.

According to Qanbar (2011), the first three subcategories are known in the literature as the triad of taboos, which almost could be found in most of the cultures across the world, i.e., the triangle of sex, religion and politics, though the degree of the tabooeness varies.

The mentionable with minimizers category is unique to Yemeni culture, and includes words and phrases that are considered taboos and shocking if mentioned unaccompanied with certain fixed conventional phrases. The function of these phrases is to mitigate and minimize the illocutionary force of the tabooed item and make it acceptable. This category is divided into three subcategories according to Qanbar (2011):

- (i) Words or phrases referring to unclean places or objects (for example sewages, bathrooms, footwear, etc.);
- (ii) Words or phrases referring to metaphysical things that go beyond the control of the human being (for example: supernatural creatures like jennies, ghosts; certain diseases, accidents resulting in the deformation of human body the, such as getting burned);
- (iii) Words or phrases referring to the expressions of admiration for things or objects we admire and like.

From the various classifications of linguistic taboos as enunciated above, it is clear that linguistic taboos are not only culture-dependent, there are also socio-cultural factors which determine the use of taboo words or their euphemistic equivalents. Therefore all the models discussed above will form the basis for our classification of linguistic taboos in the Igbo society.

5. Method

Two principal methods were used to collect data for this study: questionnaire and oral interview. Two types of questionnaire were used, one for native Igbo speakers and the other for teachers of the Igbo language. Fifty (50) copies of questionnaire were administered among native speakers of the Igbo language, while one hundred and sixty six (166) of another set of questionnaires were administered among teachers of the Igbo language. The same figures were completed and returned for analysis. This was made possible because the researchers and research assistants monitored and supervised the completion of the questionnaires by the respondents.

In addition, forty (40) Igbo native speakers who were 40 years of age and above were interviewed about taboo words and expressions in the language. People within this age bracket are conversant with the customs, tradition and values of Igbo people. The language consultants were chosen across different groups: the Ezes, the Nzes, the Ichies and the Ozos. During the interview, the language consultants were asked to define/explain linguistic taboos, the circumstances surrounding their usage, the types, etc. Besides the traditional title holders, a total of about 50 persons, representing different social classes, provided us with verbal information on linguistic taboos in Igbo society. The data collected were presented in tables, using descriptive statistics.

6. Analysis and Discussion of Data

6.1 Types of Linguistic Taboo in the Igbo Society

Table 1: Morality-related linguistic taboos

Taboo	Euphemism	Gloss	Translation
Amụ	Ihe o jiri buru nwoke	What makes him male	Penis
Otu	Ihe o jiri buru nwanyi	What makes her female	Vagina
Onu nsị	Ojọ		Anus
Ara	Obi/Nkeiru	Chest/The front	Breast
Ike	Ukwu	Hip	Buttock
Akpa amụ	Ogodo	Loin cloth	Scrotum
Aji ike	Abuba	Feather	Pubic hairs
Imu nwa	Irida	To come down	Delivery of a baby
Nso	Ihu Onwa	Seeing the moon	Menstruation
Ime	Ahu mgbanwe	Body change	Pregnancy
Ira	Inwe mmeko	Having relationship	Sexing
Inyu nsị	inọ n'azu ulọ	Going or staying behind the house	To defecate

Table 1 contains Igbo words that are tabooed on moral grounds. The table contains the taboo words, the euphemisms, the glosses and the English translations. These words are hardly used in public and to conform with the acceptable moral standard of the Igbo society, there are permissible alternatives for these words to neutralize their unpleasantness. In fact the tabooedness of this category and stigmatized status of these words are usually instilled from early childhood, and it forms a part of childhood language socialization (Qanbar, 2011).

Table 2: Veneration-related taboo words

Taboo words	Euphemisms	English translation
Personal name of a king	Eze	His Royal Highness
King's Wife's personal name	Lqolq	Her Royal Highness
Personal name of other titled persons	Chief, Nze, Ozo, Ichie	Chief, Nze, Ozo, Elder
Personal name of married/unmarried man	Maazi	Mr.
Personal name of married woman	Oriaku/Odoziaku	Mrs.
Personal name of unmarried woman	Nwaada	Miss
Personal name of one's mother	Mama/Nne	Mother
Personal name of one's father	Papa/Nna	Father
Personal name of one's male elder	Dede/Ndaa	Elder brother, uncle, Kinsmen
Personal name of one's female elder	Danne/Ndaa	Elder sister, Aunt, Kinswomen

Personal name of one's grandmother	Nne ochie	Grand mother
Personal name of one's grandfather	Nna ochie	Grand father
Personal name of one's husband	Nna ukwu	Master
Personal name of one's wife	Oriaku/ Odoziaku	Wealth eater/preserver
Personal name of one's In-law	Ogo	In-law

Table 2 presents 15 veneration-related taboo words. These taboo expressions in the Igbo society are meant to give respect to a certain class of people. These are kings, title holders, married and unmarried grown-ups, relations and the elderly.

The Igbo people value respect for elders and this is so because it is their belief that the higher one's status, the higher the honour and respect. Just as the elderly and important people are venerated, they can otherwise be vilified if they are people of questionable characters. Thus witches, wizards, thieves, kidnappers, ritualists and wicked people are not so respected, regardless of their age.

Table 3: Decorum – related linguistic taboos

Taboo words	English Equivalent	Literal translation	When used
Akwuna	Flirt	Harlot	Promiscuous person
Ofogiri	Loafer	Soup made with bad spice	Person of no ambition
Onye iberibe	Worthless person	Worthless person	Worthless person
Ewu	Stupid person	Goat	Foolish person
Aturu	Senseless person	Sheep	Unexpected behaviour
Isiaku	Unintelligent person	Coconut head	Unintelligent person
Mma ihu abuo	Unreliable person	Double edged knife	Untrustworthy person
Mbe	Trickster	Tortoise	Tricky person
Onye ara	Mentally deranged person	Mad person	A person who behaves abnormally
Ezi	Dirty person	Pig	A dirty person
Nkita ara	Quarrelsome person	Mad dog	A quarrelsome person
Onye isi ike	Stubborn person	Head Strong	A disobedient person
Taata	Child	Baby	Behaviour below one's standard
Onye ire abuo	Liar	Two tongued person	An untruthful person
Enwe/mkpi	Monster	Monkey/he goat	An ugly person
Eri	Lanky	Rope	A skinny person
Onye oshi	Dupe	Thief	A dubious person
Nne/Nna gi	Mother fucker	Your mother/father	An offender that did something that pained one severely.

In table 3, we have decorum-related linguistic taboos. These are taboo words that hurt people's feelings because they devalue the thing being referred to. They are sometimes used to condemn or disapprove of people's unbecoming acts which are frowned at by the Igbos. They are also used to ridicule people that engage in unruly behaviour so as to make them turn over a new leaf. It is

important to note that the respondents did not provide a euphemism for this type of linguistic taboo.

Table 4: Religion-related linguistic taboos

Taboo words	English Translations
Ọnwụ gbuo gị	May death strike you
Afọ tookwa gị	May your stomach be swollen
Mmiri rie gị	May you drown in water
Nkịta rachaa gị anya	May a dog lick your eyes.
Kịtịkpa gbagbuo gị	May leprosy strike you to death
Egbe eluigwe gbagbuo gị	May thunder strike you to death
Husikwaa anya	May you suffer severely in life
Chukwu kpọọ gị ọkụ	May God strike you with fire/roast you to ashes
Tagbuokwa onwe gị n'ahụhụ	May you suffer untold hardship
Ala kugbuo gị	May the god of the earth kill you
Agụ tagbuokwaa gị	May lion bite you to death
Eke lookwaa gị	May a python swallow you
Nne na nna gị nwụọkwa	May your mother & father die
Ama gị chikwaa	May your kindred be wiped out.

The taboo expressions in table 4 represent religion-related linguistic taboos. The examples here have their roots in the belief system of the people. The Igbos believe that there are powers behind every word that has to do with the Igbo religion. Therefore, these types of taboo expressions that bring evil consequences are expressly forbidden or unmentionable, because in situations where any of these ominous consequences occur, it is believed that there is a force (spirit) behind them.

Table 5: Fear-related linguistic taboos

Taboo words	Euphemism	English interpretation
Name of the dead	O/o	She/he/it
Name of a person in mask	Mmanwụ	Masquerade
Ghost	kpọkpọitiri/Mmuo	Thick darkness
No kola to offer a visitor	Ojị ejula ụlọ	Kola has filled the house
Agwọ	Eriri	Rope
Osu/oru	Ndị aka ịkpa/ekpe	The left- handed people

Table 5 provides examples of fear-related linguistic taboos. These types of taboo words are related to religion-related taboo. They are hardly freely uttered in Igbo society. For example, it is tabooed to call the dead by name, and also the person inside the mask. Similarly, when there is no kolanut in the house to offer a visitor, the host is forbidden from saying so. Rather, he will ironically say “there is excess kola nut in the house” (Oji ejula ulo). If it is in the night he will say “night has taken kola” (abali ewerela oji). It is the belief among the Igbo people that if a person says he has

no kola, the person is said to be cursing his household and it is believed that the blessing associated with kola nut will elude such a household.

From our discussion above, linguistic taboos in Igbo society can be classified into five types; (i) morality-related, (ii) decorum-related, (iii) veneration-related, (iv) religion-related and (v) fear-related. These five can be broadly re-grouped into two: euphemized and non-euphemized taboos. It is important to indicate therefore, that morality – related, venerated-related, and fear-related taboo expressions have permissible alternatives or euphemisms, while religion-related and decorum-related do not seem to have such permissible alternatives or euphemisms. Linguistic taboos that have to do with the Igbo deities, or totems, or objects that have connection with the deities are not only dreaded, they are treated with fear. And since fear-related taboos are connected to religion-related ones, they are outrightly unmentionable so as not to invite or incur the wrath of the gods, thus they have no permissible alternatives. One undeniable belief is the magical power of the spoken word. It is as if uttering these words may bring about the occurrence of the object, action, or phenomenon it refers to (Qanbar 2011). It is as if the tabooed object were like a radioactive fuel rod, which will have dire effects on anyone who comes into direct contact with it unless they know how to defend themselves (Allau and Burrige 2006).

Apparent in our tables above are different styles of avoiding or replacing taboo words in Igbo society. The styles range from using euphemisms, proverbs, creating antonyms, metaphoric expressions and whole constructions. Figure 1 below captures the types of linguistic taboos in Igbo society.

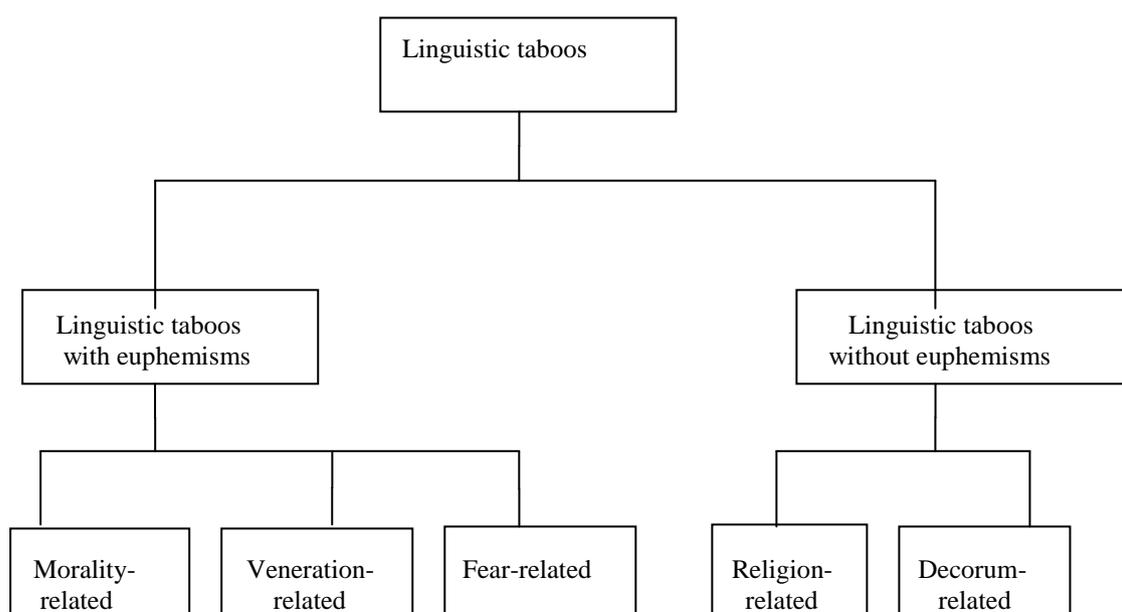


Fig. 1: Linguistic Taboos in the Igbo Society

6.2 Occasional usage of linguistic taboos in the Igbo society

Responses from the language consultants during the oral interview and to questionnaire questions indicate that there are occasions when some of these taboo expressions are used. Tables 6 and 7 below give the highlights of such occasions.

Table 6: Reasons for infringement on taboo expressions by Native Igbo speakers

Occasions	No of Respondents	Percentage
To express anger	18	36%
To express frustration	11	22%
To express surprise	5	10%
To express jocular insults	9	18%
To express hatred	7	14%

Table 6 shows that 36% of the respondents were of the view that taboo words were used to express anger in Igbo society; 22%, 10%, 18% and 14% claimed that taboo words were used to show frustration, surprise, jocular insults and hatred, respectively.

Table 7: Occasions in which taboo words are used in Igbo society

Occasions	No of Respondents	Percentage
Jocular occasion	13	26%
During libation to gods	3	6%
Adverse situation	4	8%
Aggressive situation	16	32%
Situation full of surprise	14	28%

Table 7 shows that taboo words could be used in Igbo society on different occasions. 26% of the respondents claimed that taboo words are used in jocular occasions; while 6%, 8%, 32% and 28% were of the view that taboo expressions were used during libation to gods, adverse occasion, aggressive situation and situation full of surprises, respectively. Table 6 & 7 have shown that there are occasions when taboo expressions are used in the Igbo society. Having discussed these exceptional situations when taboo expressions are used, the paper now considers the implications of linguistic taboos for second language (L2) learning.

7. Implications for Second Language (L2) Learning

The declared official policy on languages in Nigeria is as contained in sections 55 and 97 of the 1999 constitution and in the various language provisions to be found in some places in the National Policy on Education (NPE). The policy makes provisions in effect for three national languages, namely, Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Under this policy, the school child is required to acquire or learn at least three different languages in the course of his formal education, namely, his mother tongue, one national language selected from among Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba. Thus, the Igbo language is supposed to be taught as a second language in secondary school in the Western and Northern part of Nigeria, where Yoruba and Hausa is the predominant language respectively.

The question that arises is: Are learners of Igbo language as L2 supposed to be taught taboo expressions, since these expressions are forbidden or unmentionable? Our findings show that teachers of the Igbo language are in support of teaching taboo expressions to L2 learners. Out of 166 respondents, 122 are in support of teaching taboo words to learners of Igbo as L2. They were of the view that both the raw taboo expressions and their euphemisms or permissible alternatives should be introduced to the learners. They claimed further that the teaching will not only make the learners linguistically competent in the language, it will improve the learners' skill in being able to write effectively in the language and will also help them to have a firm background in the underpinnings of speaking competency in the language. In fact, taboo words in the Igbo language are an aspect of the linguistic item that gives insight into the culture and world-view of the society. For the teaching of the Igbo language to second language learners to be effective, teachers of the Igbo language need to teach taboo expressions in their natural and euphemistic forms. This is to make learners understand the constituents of linguistic taboos in Igbo society and their usage.

Curriculum is the broadest context in which planning for language teaching takes place either at the national or community level. Therefore, when focusing on conversational Igbo, Igbo curriculum planners should introduce a new module such as linguistic taboo. Therefore, linguistic taboos should be reflected as well as incorporated into pedagogical texts to ensure that this aspect of the language is addressed.

8. Conclusion

We have established in this paper that linguistic taboos exist in the Igbo language. We have also shown that linguistic taboos in the Igbo society can be classified into five; morality-related, veneration-related, decorum-related, religion-related and fear-related linguistic taboos, which can be broadly grouped into linguistic taboos with euphemisms and linguistic taboos without euphemism.

The article has shown that while religion-related and decorum-related linguistic taboos do not have permissible alternatives because they are related to different deities, morality, veneration and fear-related ones have permissible alternatives. The implications of linguistic taboos for Igbo as a second language have been considered in this paper. The paper has argued that linguistic taboos should be included in the curriculum of the Igbo language at secondary school level and above.

For effective and meaningful teaching of the Igbo language as a second language (L2) to take place, we have argued in this paper that teachers of Igbo language need to teach linguistic taboos in their natural and permissible alternative forms, where applicable. By extension, linguistic taboos should be incorporated into pedagogical texts to ensure that this aspect of the language is addressed and well taught to second language learners. This opinion re-echoes Oyetade's (1944) view that since adequate knowledge of a language goes beyond grammatical ability to include knowing how to use the facilities available in the language appropriately, one would like to suggest that when we teach foreigners African languages, it should not be the study of grammar, vocabulary and the phonological pattern of these languages alone. It should also include aspects of the people's culture. This will be of immense benefit to them in using the languages appropriately in specific communicative situations.

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APPENDIX A: Questionnaire for Native Speakers of Igbo on Linguistic Taboos in Igbo Society

This questionnaire is designed for linguistic taboos in Igbo society. Your honest answers to the following questions will help tremendously in reaching firm conclusions about linguistic taboos in Igbo society.

1. What are taboo words?-----
2. Are there linguistic taboos in Igbo language?-----
3. Give some examples of such taboo words and their euphemisms-----
4. What are the reasons for these linguistic taboos in Igbo language?-----
5. What effect does taboo place on some Igbo words and have on the lives of the Igbo native speakers
6. Are there native speakers who infringe on Igbo taboo words?-----
7. What do you think are the reasons for using taboo words?-----
8. In what occasions do they use them?-----
9. What are the consequences of breach in Igbo taboo words?-----
10. Do you encourage the teaching of taboo words in schools? What reason informed your answer?-----

APPENDIX B: Questionnaire for teachers of Igbo language on linguistic taboos in Igbo society

This questionnaire is designed for linguistic taboos in Igbo society. Your honest answers to the following questions will help tremendously in reaching firm conclusions about linguistic taboos in Igbo society. Please circle the letters corresponding to the correct answers and provide answers in writing where applicable.

1. Are there taboo words in Igbo language? (a) Yes (b) No
2. Do you teach taboo words to learners of Igbo language as L1 and L2? (a) Yes (b) No
3. Are taboo words found in both Igbo texts for L1 and L2? (a) Yes (b) No
4. The non-use and teaching of Igbo taboo words to learners of the language as L1 and L2 is because of: (a) Immorality (b) Shame (c) Indecency (d) All of the above.
5. In spite of the taboo of some words in Igbo language, are there people who use them in class? (a) Yes (b) No (c) No idea
6. Which is the reason for the use of taboo words in Igbo language class? (a) To show affection, (b) to protest, (c) to curse (d) To show courtesy.
7. Does non-teaching of Igbo taboo words mean complete learning of the language? (a) Yes (b) No
8. Do you agree that non-teaching of taboo words to learners of Igbo language as a second language will make them violate the rules of taboo words? (a) Yes (b) No
9. Should taboo words be taught to learners of Igbo language as L1 and L2? (a) Yes (b) No
10. Give reasons for your answers in question 9 above: -----
11. In which of these ways should taboo words be taught? (a) In euphemistic forms (b) In both natural and euphemistic forms
12. Is there need to incorporate taboo words in Igbo language curriculum? (a) Yes (b) No
13. Which is the reason for incorporating taboo words in the Igbo curriculum? (a) They are part of Igbo language (b) To learn the language adequately.

The authors

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**SELF-DISCLOSURE IN TROUBLES TALK SEQUENCES.
ITALIAN YOUNG ADULTS TALK ABOUT ROMANTIC PROBLEMS**

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Abstract

This paper aims to investigate how self-disclosure (i.e., the activity to deliberately reveal something personal or private - feelings, thought, beliefs, personal experiences, etc.- to somebody else) emerges in troubles talk conversational sequences.

Trouble talk is quite a common activity in informal everyday talk (especially in a close relationship), during which the party who talks about her/his trouble often produces self-narratives. Our attempt is to integrate different domains of research, since as far as we know, on the one hand, only a few conversation analysts who have dealt with troubles talk explicitly emphasized the topic of self-disclosure within these kinds of sequences and, on the other, studies about self-disclosure did not explicitly consider the conversational script of troubles talk.

We particularly analyse the pragma-linguistic features of such sequences, considered as social and dialogic constructions.

Keywords: troubles talk, self-disclosure, romantic problems, dialogical co-construction, and mitigation.

1. Introduction

The present study aims to investigate *self-disclosure* as a conversational event within the dialogic script of *troubles talk*. Self-disclosure is usually defined as a set of verbal and non-verbal messages during an interaction through which someone deliberately reveals something personal or private (feelings, thought, beliefs, personal experiences etc.) to somebody else – often significant – with whom s/he intends to establish or strengthen a close, intimate relationship (Jones & Archer, 1976; Derlega et al., 1976; Archer, 1980; Archer & Cook, 1986; Derlega et al., 1993; Hendrick, 1981; Hendrick et al., 1988; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004; Greene et al., 2006). The results of quantitative and qualitative studies on this topic suggest that this phenomenon is strictly related to the:

(1) *Situational and communicative context*. In particular, a set of studies focused on how this activity is structured in different contexts, such as: *psychotherapeutic* (Pizer, 1997; Stricker, 2003), *political* (for example Collins & Miller, 1994) and *ordinary*, specifically in intimate relationships (Altman et al., 1981; Dindia, 1997; Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004);

(2) *Speaker's individual characteristics*, e.g. personality traits (Sprecher & Hendrick, 2004) and speakers' perception of self-images (Gilbert & Cambon, 2003). For this reason, the concept of self-disclosure is often presented as closely related to that of *self-presentation*;

(3) *Specific relationship between interlocutors*. Self-disclosure emerges more frequently in intimate relations (Schmidt & Cornelius, 1987). Therefore, self-disclosure and intimate relationships seem to feed off of each other. If, on the one hand, intimate relations favour self-disclosure, on the other, only the reciprocal sharing of thoughts, feelings, dreams, passions, convictions, histories etc. allow to achieve a real intimacy between people (Berne, 1970; Derlega et al., 1976; Derlega et al., 1993; Derlega et al., 2008). Speakers often use self-disclosure to receive social support, as well as to clarify some aspects of their ego (Derlega et al., 2008).

The term “troubles talk”, first introduced within the context of Conversation Analysis by Gail Jefferson (Jefferson & Lee, 1981/1992; Jefferson, 1984, 1988), refers to a “package” (i.e., a relatively long sequence of talk) in which the parties negotiate a peculiar conversational activity: *telling someone about a personal trouble*. That trouble is understood as an event, a situation or a state of affairs which represents a source of concern, worry, discomfort, embarrassment, distress or anxiety; that is to say, the emotional component plays a primary role. Such conversational activity is identifiable by typical structural features (internal organization, dialogic roles, linguistic actions etc.) and is quite common in informal everyday

talk (especially in a close relationship). In analysing such sequences, it is possible to notice that the party who talks about her/his trouble often produces self-narratives, where prominence is given to self-disclosure.

Several scholars have approached this conversational phenomenon from different perspectives. Boxer (1993a, 1993b, 1996) analysed the role of indirect complaint as a speech act, used to open a troubles talk, seek agreement, and forge a common bond between speaker and addressee. Traverso (1996), referring to the same conversational events, talked about *confidences*, as a typical model of “familiar” interactions, highlighting that the dialogues can show different structural features according to the speaker’s aims: self-narrative and self-disclosure (*confidence-révélation*) on the one hand, or rather simply an emotional outlet (*confidence-épanchement*), on the other. Differently, Buttny (2004) dealt with the analysis of conversations mainly concerning social problems (e.g., racial discrimination, teenage parenthood, or interpersonal and family relationships during therapy).

Other studies analysed troubles talk, from different theoretical and methodological perspectives (including the analysis of spontaneous interactions, but also surveys and interviews), highlighting, for example, the potential role played in the choice of attitudes and linguistic actions performed by cultural differences (Geyer, 1988; Samter et al., 1997; Barbee & Cunningham, 2000; Burleson & Mortenson, 2003; Mortenson, 2009) and gender differences (Tannen, 1990; Michaud & Warner, 1997; Basow & Rubenfeld, 2003; MacGeorge et al., 2004), but also the fact that these kinds of sequences are a preferential ‘place’ for the emerging of social support (Goldsmith, 1999, 2004; Goldsmith & MacGeorge, 2000; MacGeorge et al., 2004; Verhofstadt et al., 2007; Burleson et al., 2009; Virtanen & Isotalus, 2011).

Finally, we mention Korobov & Thorne (2007, 2009) and Morgan & Korobov (2012), who investigated conversational exchanges about problems among young adults, with the main aim of studying the construction of personal and interpersonal identities. The authors analysed datasets of videotaped conversations, focussing on the production of *troubles talk narratives*, in order to explore how young adults share with same sex friends stories about their romantic experiences. Also these studies did not explicitly analyse self-disclosure as a conversational collaborative activity.

As far as we know however, on the one hand, only a few conversation analysts who have dealt with troubles talk explicitly emphasized the topic of self-disclosure within these kinds of sequences – we can mention Grainger et al. (1990), Coupland et al. (1991) and Traverso (1996), the former studying this topic in geriatric contexts from the Accommodation Theory perspective, the latter in “familiar” conversations. On the other hand, studies about self-

disclosure did not explicitly consider the conversational script of troubles talk. In self-disclosure literature, there are many studies devoted to specific aspects such as gender differences in self-disclosure (Hill & Stull, 1987); cultural features of the phenomenon (Kito, 2005; Schug et al., 2010); factors affecting the decision to narrate some aspects of themselves to others (Derlega et al., 2008).

The present study aims to integrate these two domains of research on the basis of a qualitative analysis carried out on a corpus of naturally occurring conversations, identifiable as examples of troubles talk, in which the phenomenon of self-disclosure is present in a relevant way. We particularly analyse the pragma-linguistic features of such sequences, considered as social and dialogic constructions.

2. Our previous studies

Our interest in troubles telling sequences began when, since 2000, with the contribution of undergraduate students in Communication Sciences, we started to collect a corpus of spoken Italian. The audio was recorded in ecological contexts. Participants in the conversation were, mainly, people linked by a close bond of affection (friends, partners, siblings, parents and children etc.). It was surprising to notice, from the beginning of the collection, the significant recurrence of that peculiar dialogical situation identifiable as ‘talking to a friend about a personal problem’. It was even more interesting to observe how the recursivity is not limited to the conversational event in itself, but it manifests itself also through *well-defined structural features*, beyond the specific contextual situations.

Our data show that the problems which people talk about are almost always accompanied from the, more or less explicit, expression of related feelings and moods, so much that the *Troubles Teller's* (hereinafter TT) main aim seems to be not ‘to solve the problem in actual fact’ but rather ‘to unburden her/himself’, that is to talk about her/his own emotional experience (Jefferson, Lee 1981/1992); in some cases, but not necessarily in every case, the TT may ask the *Troubles Recipient* (hereinafter TR) for opinions and/or advice.

One of the main results of our previous studies (Riccioni, 2008; Zuczkowski & Riccioni, 2010, 2013) regards the interlocutors’ taking on and negotiation of reciprocal conversational roles, that often give rise to peculiar interactional outcomes. With the term ‘roles’, we refer both to those generic, “global” and complementary ones that we named *confider* (the party who talks about her/his trouble) and *confidant/e* (the addressee of the confidence) and to the “local”

ones, strictly dependent on the specific dialogic actions they perform. For example, the interlocutor designed as a confidant/e, within such a global role, seems to have a certain freedom of action: s/he can be a *container* (listening to the confider, accepting her/his emotional outlet and expressing a tactful, non-intrusive support), an *ally* (taking the side of the interlocutor, often against a third person or a situation identified as the ‘source’ of the trouble), an *advice-giver* (offering – more or less explicitly – suggestions, even if not requested by the other), a *confider* in her/his turn (taking the opportunity for talking about her/his problems) or even as an *enemy* (appearing in different ways critical and devaluing toward the confider) .

3. Present study

We analysed a set of self-narrative sequences, found in a corpus of conversations, classifiable as troubles talk exchanges in which self-disclosure emerges

3.1 Data

The dataset is made up of a corpus of 20 conversations (total length 2hrs 39’ 14’’) in which the parties are talking about the TT’s troubles regarding her/his sentimental (heterosexual) relationships. This choice has been motivated by two main factors: 1) *sentimental problems* is one of the most recurring topics in our wider corpus of troubles talk conversations; 2) this topic allows us to connect our results to those of Korobov & Thorne (2007, 2009) and Morgan & Korobov (2012), related to similar, though not identical⁷⁵, corpora.

The partner, “source” of the trouble, and who is not present at the moment of the interaction, is sometimes a stable boyfriend or girlfriend, is sometimes an ex-partner, or is sometimes a person the TT is flirting with. Speakers involved are young adults (all university students, Italian native speakers), tied by friendship (only in one conversation are the parties siblings). 16 conversations are between two girls; 4 are between a girl and a boy (in 2 of these the girl has the role of TT, in the other 2 that of TR).

Each conversation, audiotaped in ecological contexts and transcribed by using a simplified version of Jefferson system (1985), has been assigned a code (*TT-11/01* and subsequent) in

⁷⁵ Their data were collected from spontaneous (Korobov & Thorne 2007, 2009) or solicited – by a semi-structured group interview - conversations (Korobov 2011), among voluntary University students and videotaped in a room on campus.

order to facilitate going back from the presented excerpts to the whole transcript. All the names of people or places have been replaced.

3.2 Procedures

The qualitative analysis was conducted by the four authors who periodically met in order to compare and discuss the results of their previous individual analyses. They integrated a qualitative thematic analysis with a pragma-linguistic one, using tools coming from Discourse Analysis and Conversation Analysis.

3.3 Aims

The main aims of the study were to identify:

- *how the TT's self-images emerge during revelation*, i.e., how the TT speaks about how s/he describes her/himself, what s/he reveals (emotions, states of mind, thoughts, convictions etc.), how s/he manages his/her own face (in relation both to the interlocutor and to the third absent);
- *how dialogic co-construction of self-disclosure occurs*: i.e., how and through which linguistic actions and strategies the self-revelation is performed, “in” and “across” the conversation, thanks to/through the negotiation process and to the co-contribution of the TT and the TR.

4. Results

4.1. The Ego that reveals

Our analysis shows that the emotional topic allows the TT the possibility to share explicitly his/her thoughts, state of mind and behaviour related to the problematic situation. In other terms, the TT's self-disclosure focuses on his/her emotional, cognitive and behavioural experiences.

As one can easily imagine, these three dimensions are strictly related (for example, the TT can convey his/her “mental confusion” connected to the understanding of his/her own feelings, to the interpretation of the events, as well as to the more appropriate behaviour to be adopted). As for the expression of feelings and mental states/climates, we frequently found:

- *experiences of suffering* related to a relation/story that is finished or perceived “at the terminus”, such as in the following example:

(1) *TT-11/12* (Elisa)

- 1 Dedicarmi più a me stessa (.) e:: lasciare che le cose vengano da sole (.) però nel frattempo ci sto male
To dedicate myself more to myself (.) and:: let things happen on their own (.) but meanwhile I feel bad
- 2 >cioè non è che è 'na cosa facile!< (.) Perché c'hai paura che comunque è come penso io che la storia
>*well it's not an easy thing!*< (.) *Because you're afraid that anyway it's like I think that the relationship*
- 3 sia finita pertanto che non:: (..) non lo vogliamo ammettere' e comunque per passare il tempo ci
is over but we don't (..) want to admit it so to make time pass we
- 4 allontaneremo ancora di più (...) perché se no (...) saremmo tornati insieme.
move even further apart (...) because otherwise we would have got back together.

- *positive feelings that are interwoven with the negative ones.* In the excerpt (2), the TT speaks about her feelings, conflicting but simultaneously present inside her (the TT, almost reluctantly, realizes that she cares for her ex-boyfriend and gets excited when she meets him or when other people talk about him). In the example (3), the TT asserts that she feels happy - also if she doesn't want to show it – when her boyfriend looks for her and she feels sad when he goes away

(2) *TT-11/10* (Daniela)

- 1 Un po' sì. Perché fondamentalmente ci tengo ancora a lui. Perché se no è impossì- cioè, una persona
A little, yes. Because basically I still care for him. Because if not it's impossì- that's to say, a person
- 2 che non ci tiene più a te, entra in casa tua e si emoziona,
who doesn't care for you anymore, comes into your house and gets all worked up,
- 3 ti vede per strada e si emoziona, te ne parlano e si emoziona, io non ce la faccio più.
sees you in the street and gets all worked up, talks to you about him and gets all worked up.
- 4 Cioè io sono stremata! Non ce la faccio più. Voglio andare via da Xxxxxx! Basta!
- 5 *I'm worn out! I can't take it anymore! I want to leave Xxxxxx! I've had enough!*

(3) *TT-11/02 (Ambra)*

- 1 Anche se faccio la tosta quando viene capito e e:: però dentro so' contenta poi alla fine che
Even if I fake being tough, you know and and:: but I'm happy inside at the end of the day that
- 2 lui mi cerca ancora e tutto, solo che la sensazione del dopo quando se ne va,
he is still interested in me and everything, the only thing is the feeling of when he goes away afterwards,
- 3 è un po' triste.
it's a little sad.

- *experiences of disenchantment towards the other person, such as in the example (4), or of generalized frustration, subsequent to the closure of a relationship, such as in the example (5):*

(4) *TT-11/03 (Federica)*

- 1 (...) Una delusione dietro l'altra, (.) un- una conferma dietro l'altra del fatto che
(...) One disappointment after another, (.) on- one confirmation after another of the fact that
- 2 lui non c'abbia interesse verso de me (..) che non sia interessato!
he has no interest in me (..) that he's not interested!

(5) *TT-11/14 (Serena)*

- 1 Va be' ventun anni, ventun anni, ogni volta, (.) voglio qualcosa e
Ok twenty one years old, twenty one years old, every time, (.) I want something and
- 2 >non riesco mai a ottenella.< Cioè so' arrivata a un punto che::,
>I can never get it.< That's to say I've got to the point that::,
- 3 cioè veramente (.) n::on glie la faccio più!
well really (.) I can't take it anymore!

- *experiences of worry that, in the following example (6), materialize themselves in the fear of having to give up to his/her freedom and autonomy in favour of the relationship:*

(6) TT-11/17 (Alessia)

- 1 Cioè una delle cose che temo di più del rapporto, ma in genere anche nella vita,
Well, one of the things that I'm most afraid about in a relationship, but also generally in life
- 2 è:: perdere:: >l'indipendenza, l'autonomia, la libertà< (.) cioè libertà di scelta su
is:: losing >independence, autonomy, freedom< (.) That's to say freedom to choose on
- 3 m:: tutti i fronti (..) >cioè intesa proprio in senso assoluto<(..) anche:: cioè la libertà
m:: on every side >that is to say really meaning in an widest sense< (...) also:: well the freedom
- 4 di fare le le p- piccolissime cose(..) non lo so, è come se:: tante volte nell'altro
to do the the s- smallest things (..) I don't know, it's like if:: many times in the other person
- 5 vedo una:: una limitazio- cioè magari so' io che mi autolimito in in tutte le:: le circostanze (..)
I see a:: limitat-- that's to say maybe I know that I limit myself in in every circumstance (..)
- 6 e che comunque lo lo faccio (..) con la consapevolezza
and I know (...) I'm doing it.

- *confusion, uncertainty, difficulty in making clear his/her feelings for the other, such as in the following example (in which TT talks about her ex boyfriend):*

(7) TT-11/10 (Daniela)

Non so se mi sta a cuore come persona. Mi ci sono talmente affezionata!
I don't know if I have feelings for him. I've got really attached to him!

4.1.1 Conflict (uncertainty, doubt)

The topic of emotive-cognitive conflict (often a source of confusion and difficulties in decision making) is highly recurrent in the dialogues of our corpus. Sometimes, conflict concerns the emotions of the TT towards the other person, such as in the example (7); some others, conflict concerns how to read the partner's emotions, such as in the example (8), in which the TT, in order to explain to her interlocutor what she intends to tell to her boyfriend, with whom she is flirting, puts up a *fictional dialogue*:

(8) TT-11/18 (Rachele)

- 1 ((inspira)) Perché io inizialmente volevo inizia' il discorso dicendo:: (..) 'na roba del tipo,
 ((Deep sigh)) *Because at the beginning I wanted to start the conversation saying (..) something like,*
- 2 “Te devo lascia' perde' oppure no?” Nel senso >e lui m'avrebbe detto< “In che senso
do I have to leave you alone or not? And that > he would have answered< “What do you mean
- 3 me devi lascia perde?” >io je dicevo< “Nel senso che, tu mi piaci, è:: da un po' de tempo tanto ormai
leave me alone?” >I would have answered him< “I mean I like you, it's:: quite some time now
- 4 che, l'avrai capito tanto, te invito a usci', vedo d'usci' con te:, però eh io, non ho ancora capito
that, you have understood, that I would have like to ask you out: but I still don't understand
- 5 te cosa c'hai in testa. E, è ora per me di capirlo perché::,
what's going on inside your head. And now it's time for me to understand it because,
- 6 non me va de continua' così.” (..) Quindi,
I don't feel like going on like this.” (..) So,

In some cases the TT clearly recognizes this conflict and his/her “incoherence” (9), that often leads to an impasse that involves not only the emotive and cognitive levels but also the behavioural levels. This results in a “decision block” (frequently in our corpus, the TT asserts to be aware of having to make a decision and, at the same time, of not being able to make one, at least in this moment), such as in the example (10):

(9) TT-11/10 (Daniela)

- 1 Non lo so::, mi rendo conto che sono incoerente però sinceramente non so.
I don't know, I realise I'm not a very consistent person but I really don't know.
- 2 Non so perché capito?
I don't know why you know what I mean?

(10) TT-11/02 (Ambra)

- 1 Devo fare devo prendere una decisione che non lo so, non so
I have to make I have to take a decision that I don't know, I don't know

- 2 *che devo fa' Manue', non lo so!*
 what I have to do. Manue', I don't know.

Specifically, the analysis of our corpus showed a certain recursion of the locution *non so/non lo so* [I don't know] (Weatherall, 2011), often related with other interjections that in Italian convey doubt and uncertainty, such as *boh, mah* etc. According to Korobov & Thorne (2007), such markers could be considered (as well as the approximation, humour and shift of focus) *mitigation devices* used in order to save the speaker's and interlocutor's faces and to facilitate the negotiation process.

4.1.2 Past behaviours

When the TT speaks about him/herself, often s/he refers to the behavioural dimensions, both to those already performed (in relation to which s/he can express satisfaction or remorse) and to those that s/he proposes to do, as well as, to those that seem to be experienced as peculiar of him/her self or that appear to be functional to save the own positive and negative face (Brown & Levinson, 1987). In particular, in the following example (11), the TT, trying to put herself in her boyfriend's shoes (using a fictional monologue), expresses her regret for how she treated him:

(11) TT-11/11 (Lisa)

- 1 *ma vedi, infatti io ho sbagliato in una cosa a un certo punto, a un certo punto ho sbagliato*
 But look, I really did make a mistake in one thing at a certain point, at a certain point I made a mistake
- 2 *nel cominciare a dirgli "Ti ho eliminato da facebook!", "Ho levato le foto*
 starting out by telling him "I have unfriended you from Facebook!", "I have taken down the photos
- 3 *dalla stanza!", "Non ti voglio più vedere!", "Non ti voglio più sentire!",*
 from my room!", "I don't want to see you anymore!", "I don't want to hear from you anymore!",
- 4 *perché lui a un certo punto si è sentito preso in sopra "Ma che è cretina?*
 because at a certain point he felt I was taking the mickey out of him "But is she a cretin?
- 5 *Cioè non solo praticamente mi metti i piedi in faccia, per giunta mi telefoni per dirmi*
 That's to say not only do you treat me so badly what's more you called me to tell me
- 6 *'non ti fare più vedere né sentire!', 'ti ho eliminato da facebook',*

'I don't want to see you or hear from you anymore!', *'I unfriended you from Facebook!'*

- 7 'non ho più foto di te nella stanza', giustamente fa "Eh io che
'I don't have any photos of you in my room anymore!', he answers rightly *"What the*
- 8 *cazzo ti dovrei dire?"* [...] Perché ovviamente lui avrà detto "Ma questa è pazza?
fuck should I tell you? [...] Because obviously he would have said *"But is she crazy?*
- 9 Cioè che cazzo vuole da me? Cioè non solo ha sbagliato
That is to say what the fuck does she want from me? That's to say not did she make a mistake
- 10 e per giunta mi dice 'non ti fare vedere, non ti fare sentire'" e infatti lui al messaggio
what's more she told me 'don't come round, don't get in touch'" and sure enough to the message
- 11 "Non ti fare vedere, non ti fare sentire" non ha più risposto "Tu sei- tu sei fusa!"
"Don't come round, don't get in touch" he didn't answer anymore "You're- you're out of your mind!"

Sometimes, the TT, speaking about his/her own attitudes and behaviours, highlights the attempt to save his/her positive face also if s/he recognizes – such as in the example (12) – the conflict between the external self-image ("the strong", i.e. that s/he wants to present to the other) and the interior self-image (i.e. what the person knows to be, in other words, how s/he perceive him/herself):

(12) *TT-11/02* (Ambra)

- 1 Ci sono momenti in cui lo vedo e so' contentissima anche se, credimi eh,
There are moments when I see him and I'm really happy even if, believe me,
- 2 sto facendo la dura perché non glielo do a vedere!
I'm putting on a brave face because I don't want him to see it!

According to Korobov & Thorne (2007), in these types of dialogues also, humour and laughter can be considered as devices useful to save the own positive face, since they are used to mitigate the intensity of the TT's emotional involvement in the problem (see also the Jefferson's concept of "troubles resistance", 1984).

At the same time, for the authors, the same devices would act as mitigation devices (Caffi, 1999, 2007) able to save the negative face of the interlocutor (TR): in fact they would be a way to share with the friend a problem (and its related experiences), but without encumbering

him/her with an excessive emotional burden. In this way, on the one hand, the TT presents him/herself able to “manage” the problem (if I can make a joke about it, it means that I can manage it); on the other, s/he shows that s/he doesn’t want to pour out an emotional outburst - that could result in an unpleasant and/or embarrassing effect - on the TR.

(13) *TT-11/18* (Rachele)

- 1 [...] allora io l’ho chiamato, >perché me so’ rotta le palle non ne posso più je lo devo di’<,

[...] so I called him >because I busted my balls I can’t take it anymore I have to tell him that<,
- 2 l’ho chiamato al telefono j’ho detto:: “Sente, io:: ho bisogno di parlarti:: a quattrocchi,

I called on the phone and I told him:: “Listen, I need to talk to you:: face to face,
- 3 e::hm bisogna che me dedichi un po’ d’attenzione, se te stasera non puoi,

h’m you need to give me some of your attention, if you can’t make it this evening,
- 4 io pensavo de- >coje’ l’occasione stasera per parlarti ma siccome

I thought of- >taking advantage of the situation this evening to talk to you, but seeing as
- 5 stasera non puoi<, o io te raggiungo giù al maneggio se te c’hai tempo stasera

you can’t make it this evening<, either I’ll come and see you at the stables if you’ve got time this evening
- 6 oppure dimme te, quando possiamo, però a breve, entro mercoledì” j’ho detto. E lui m’ha detto

otherwise you tell me, when we can, but soon, before Wednesday” I told him. And he told me
- 7 “Mercoledì che festa c’è?” [((ride))] e io ho detto “Nessuna fe(h)sta! E’ che io te vojo

“Where’s the party on Wednesday ((laughs)) and I told him “No party! It’s because I want
- 8 parla’ entro mercoledì! [...]

to talk to you before Wednesday. [...]

4.1.3 Criticism of the other

In some cases, the self-presentation – in particular, that related to the own personal characteristics and/or to the own behaviours, experienced as positive or negative - goes/ through the contraposition to the other (and sometimes the criticism). The example (14) calls in to question the “maturity” of the partner (and by reflex, also his/her own).

(14) *TT-11/03* (Federica)

- 1 Sì domenica! Io c'avevo l'esame:: mercoledì (.) no giovedì e io domenica sera dopo
Yes Sunday! I had an exam Wednesday (.) no Thursday and I Sunday evening after
- 2 >m'ha ospitato Lara perché io non c'ho neanche più casa a Xxxxxxx< e:: domenica vado
>*Lara had put me up because I don't have a house in Xxxxxxx anymore< and Sunday I go*
- 3 da lui gli dico:: che sono a Xxxxxxx, lui me viene a prende' con la macchina
to him and say I'm in Xxxxxxx and he comes and picks me up in the car
- 4 >e ce mettemo a fa' una passeggiatina!< e lui me racconta com'è and- com'è stato bello stare::
>*and we start walking< and he's telling me how it wen- how great it was to stay*
- 5 all'Mtv day che però:: ehm:: diversamente da Bologna Roma non era tutto 'sto granché mm::
at MTVday but erm unlike Bologna Rome wasn't that much hmm
- 6 che:: tutto il tempo del concerto c'era (.) faceva vedere anche l'Mtv day di Milano eccetera (.)
all the way through the concert there was (.) they also showed Milan's MTVday etc. (.)
- 7 Sinceramente poco m'interessa >perché quando vedi che c'è qualcosa d'importante
Sincerely I don't care that much >because when you see that there is something important
- 8 che ti devo di' metti da parte il resto< è possibile che non non non c'è
I have to say to you you have to put aside the other things< is it possible there isn't isn't
- 9 un minimo de maturità (..) no?
the least bit of maturity (..) right?

Also in the following examples the presentation of the own position/point of view and of the own right reasons passes through the criticism of the partner. In particular, the expressed concepts are: in (15) “I was clear, I am in the right position; he makes a mistake, he is wrong”; in (17) “I am valid and I am not worth a boyfriend (as him) who betrays me”.

(15) *TT-11/01* (Chiara)

- 1 No, CHE VUOL DI' PIU' CHIARA OH! (.) LUI LO SAPEVA
No, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT YOU HAVE TO BE CLEARER! (.) HE KNEW

- 2 BENISSIMO CHE I- ER- ERO IN UNA FASE DI DI TRANSIZIONE IN CUI
ALL TOO WELL THAT I- WA- WAS IN A TRANSITION PERIOD IN WHICH
- 3 STAVO ASPETTANDO UNA RISPOSTA, MI E' ARRIVATA QUELLA RISPOSTA,
I WAS WAITING FOR AN ANSWER, THAT ANSWER ARRIVED,
- 4 MI E'ARRIVATA QUELLA CONFERMA NEL MOMENTO IN CUI MI E' ARRIVATA,
THAT CONFIRMATION ARRIVED IN THE MOMENT IN WHICH IT ARRIVED,
- 5 L'HO PRESA E L'HO COMUNICATA! QUINDI PIU' CHIARA DI C::HE?! (...)
I TOOK IT AND I COMMUNICATED IT! SO CLEARER THAN WHAT?! (...)
- 6 PIU' CHIARA DI CHE?! SE UNO NON VUOLE CAPIRE,
SO CLEARER THAN WHAT?! IF SOMEONE DOESN'T WANT TO UNDERSTAND,
- 7 non capisce. Se uno si vuole nascondere dietro ai pretesti e o a fare il sant'uomo non capisce!
they don't understand. If someone wants to hide behind excuses or be a saint they don't understand!
- 8 Che a me ti metti a fare Silvio Pellico e scrivi le le le tue sofferenze me ne sbatto,
I don't care that you start being Silvio Pellico and write about your suffering,
- 9 perché so io quanti pianti mi sono fatta dietro a lui!
because I know how much I cried over him!

(16) *TT-11/07* (Rebecca)

- 1 Glie faccio una bastardata del genere poi se loro due se lascia o non se lascia
I do something really bad to them then if those two split up or don't split up
- 2 so' cavoli loro, però io intanto me vendico dicemo tra virgolette, poi se
it's their own business, but meanwhile let's say I'll get my own back in inverted commas, then if
- 3 veramente lo perdo per sempre allora a 'sto punto è meglio perché io preferisco perderlo
I really do lose him forever then at this moment it's better that way because I'd prefer losing him
- 4 per sempre che ave' (.) un ragazzo del genere al mio fianco, perché sinceramente non ho fatto niente de
forever than having (.) a guy like that at my side, because sincerely I have done nothing
- 5 male per avecce uno come Lorenzo vicino a me!

wrong to have someone like Lorenzo by my side!

4.2. Self-disclosure as a co-construction

Conversation Analysis considers everyday talk the outcome of a process of co-production, at both a global (the whole conversation) and a local (macro- and micro-sequences) level. In other words, dialogic activities and roles are phenomena that arise from a joint participation, collaboration and constant negotiation between conversational partners. Adopting this perspective, we can point out that self-disclosure within a troubles talk sequence is the outcome of an implicit and collaborative interpersonal communicative project. In other words, we observe that self-disclosure and self-presentation often emerge from the interaction with the conversational partner that, not only is involved in the dialogue by the TT (who, for example, explicitly and/or implicitly, requests her/his attention and participation), but often contributes, actively and autonomously (with questions and comments), to bring out contents of personal, intimate nature.

It is possible to identify a set of pragmatic strategies in order to co-construct self-narrative sequences and self-disclosure in troubles talk dialogues, as concerns both the role of TT and TR. In particular, we verified the occurrence of some linguistic devices identified by Norrick (2008), analyzing the phenomenon of collaborative storytelling.

4.2.1 Focus on TT

We noticed, for example that the TT uses:

- discourse markers with both meta-textual (*cioè* [that is], *quindi* [then], *allora* [so], *ma* [but], etc.), in order to extend the narrative sequence, and interactive function, as phatic signals (*capito?* [understood?], *capisci?* [(do you) see/understand?], tag questions, etc.) in order to encourage the interlocutor's involvement and to verify her/his attention and comprehension. It is possible to find both types of pragmatic markers – together with the use of vocatives – in the following excerpt, where the TT is confiding to her friend her own feelings of trouble and confusion toward an, maybe not definitively, ended love story:

(17) *TT-11/08* (Fiamma)

1 [...] Ah >poi me fa< “Sono bloccato da tre giorni da un tendine infiammato al collo”.

Ah >he tells me< “I've been laid up for three days with an inflamed tendon in the neck”.

2 →E:h “sto soffrendo come un cane”. Poi me fa “buona notte”. Cioè co- scazzato.

E:hm "I'm suffering like a dog". Then he says "Good night". That is wi- So pissed off.

3 E dopo io glie l'ho rimandato [l'sms] e quello me l'ha rimandato alle tre.

And afterwards I sent it [the sms] him back and he sent me another at three o' clock.

4 →Cioè m'ha risposto dopo tanto. E:: mhm:: e niente quindi lui mi ha detto così però,

That's to say he answered me after some time. And uhm:: so he told me that but,

5 →cioè me dice "Come te posso aiuta" poi me dice "se te vedo:: è una pazzia",

that is he tells me "How can I help you" then he says "If I see you, it's crazy",

6 →cioè quindi capito Rosse'?

that's to say you understand Rosse'?

- response tokens (*mhm* [uhm], *boh* [who knows], *sì* [yes], etc.) which often spread a sense of confusion and/or uncertainty, in order to stimulate the interlocutor to take her/his turn:

(18) *TT-11/16* (Anna, TT – Roberta, TR)

1 R Ma ma state insieme voi due?

But but are you two together?

2 A →Ma non lo so, e non- boh, guarda non me ce fa pensa',

I don't know, and don- who knows, look don't make me think about it,

- further explanations about a situation already presented. In the excerpt (19) the TT, by using Direct Reported Speech (Holt, 1996, 2000; Drew, 1998), reaffirms her position and feelings toward her ex-boyfriend:

(19) *TT-11/01* (Chiara)

1 Oh::! Se Maurizio dice cazzate se Maurizio dice cazzate (.) è un conto, io a MauRIZIO non gli ho detto

Oh! If Maurizio talks bullshit if Maurizio talks bullshit (.) it's one thing, I didn't tell MauRIZIO

2 "In questo momento non voglio stare con te", io gli ho detto a MAURIZIO

"At the moment I didn't want to be with you", I told MAURIZIO

3 "Oh sono giunta alla consapevolezza che non voglio stare più con te PERCHE' NON TI AMO PIU'!

“Oh I’ve become aware that I don’t want to be with you BECAUSE I DON’T LOVE YOU ANYMORE!

- 4 (.) NON TI AMO PIU’! (...) E QUANDO M’HA DETTO “Io perché ti aspetto,
(.) *I DON’T LOVE YOU ANYMORE! (...) AND WHEN HE TOLD ME “I’ll wait for you,*
- 5 se tu torni, cambi idea, me lo dici” “Maurizio, ma non ti preoccupare, non c’è bisogno
if you come back, if you change your mind, tell me”. “Maurizio don’t worry you don’t need
- 6 che mi dici se cambi idea, me lo dici, io se cambio idea, anche se tu stai co’
to tell me if you change your mind, tell me because if I change my mind, even if you’re with
- 7 Claudia Schiffer, vengo per una questione di onestà e te lo dico, ma non aspettarti che accada
Claudia Schiffer, I’ll come and tell you for a question of honesty, but don’t wait for this to happen
- 8 perché non è questo che io sto, su questo che io sto lavorando non su i- sul ritorno indietro
because it’s not this that I’m, this that I’m working on not on th- on going backwards
- 9 ma su un guardare avanti al futuro, >è la stessa cosa che devi fare tu’.<
but I’m looking ahead and >it’s the same thing you have to do<”.
- 10 Ma più chiaro di così, che ti devo dire!
How can I put it any clearer!

4.2.2 Focus on TR

As far as the TR is concerned, we found the use of some linguistic strategies aimed at the collaborative construction of self-disclosure. For example:

- questions for a better understanding of the TT’s feelings and moods, as in the two following excerpts:

(20) *TT-11/08* (Rossella)

- 1 Va be’ lui in realtà è in imbarazzo Fia’. Considera quello che c’è stato prima, (.)
- 2 *Alright in reality he’s embarrassed Fia’. Think about what happened before. (.)*
- 3 perché a te non te creerebbe imbarazzo incontrarlo?
because to you, wouldn’t it make you embarrassed to meet him?

(21) *TT-11/02* (Melissa)

((sospiro)) Ma tu stai, cioè ti: ti fa stare bene questa cosa?

((*Deep sigh*)) *But are you, that is to say does this thing make you feel good?*

- proposals about possible interpretations, conclusions and consequences of situations and behaviours, as in the following excerpt:

(22) *TT-11/08* (Rossella)

1 Cioè a lui farebbe tantissimo piacere starti vicino adesso. Perché anche lui come te se la (.)

So it would make him really happy to be close to you now. Because he too like you (.)

2 se immaginava la laurea tua:: in maniera completamente diversa.

imagined your graduation day in a completely different way.

- other back-channels (non-lexical, as *ah*, *mhm* [uhm], etc.; interjections, as *Eh!* [That's right!], *Oddio!* [Oh dear/Oh my God!], etc.; laughing, sighing, etc.) aiming at stimulating an extension of the narration by the TT and/or at communicating agreement and disagreement. In the following example we present a sequence drawn by a conversation in which the TT is telling her friend about the ambivalent feelings that she experiences toward her ex-boyfriend. We can observe, besides other back-channels, a sentence completion, agreed by the TT, who seems stimulated by this kind of intervention, to clarify her position:

(23) *TT-11/10* (Daniela, TT – Eleonora, TR)

1 E Sindrome della crocerossina?

Good samaritan syndrome?

2 D No! No. Assolutamente. Anzi. Se io lo vedessi tutti i giorni distrutto

No! No. Absolutely. Anything but. If I saw him devastated every day

3 penso che::, sarei una delle persone più contente del mondo. Ma non perché si fa male.

I think that I'd be the one of the happiest people in the world. But not because he's hurting.

4 Perché mi::, =

Because I, =

- 5 E → = Ti avvalorla la tesi! =
 = *Because he would back up your theory!* =
- 6 D = Brava! Mi avvalorerebbe sempre di più::, cioè mi allontanerebbe voglio di'. Sempre di più capito?
 = *Right! he would back, so he'd keep me at a distance, what I want to say is. Always more, you know?*
- 7 E → Mhm mhm. =
Mmm mmm =
- 8 D = Mi confermerebbe il fatto che è un testa di cavolo. E quindi sarei contenta da quel punto di vista.
 = *He would confirm the fact that he's a moron. And so I'd be happy from that point of view.*
- 9 Vorrei insultarlo senza sentirmi in colpa.
I'd like to insult him without feeling guilty.

4.2.3 Irony

The same conversation offers another interesting matter regarding the use of the irony within this kind of sequence. This irony, in our corpus, seems to be used with both a mitigating (Korobov & Thorne 2007, 2009) and an affiliative function (Jefferson et al., 1987; Edwards, 2005). In the following excerpt the parties co-construct an exchange, matched by laughing, of which the TT's ex-boyfriend becomes the butt of the joke:

(24) *TT-11/10* (Daniela, TT – Eleonora, TR)

- 1 D Eh, te lo dico ancora. Se mi arriva all'orecchio soprattutto una notizia bella, cioè tipo frequenta
I'll tell you again. If a little bird tells me good news especially, like he's going out
- 2 una, sta con una, (.) s'è fatto bello,! =
with a girl, he's with a girl, (.) he's become handsome!
- 3 E = Ma quando mai! ((ridendo)) =
 = *But when did he ever ((laughing))*
- 4 D = S'è fatto intellige[n]te,!
 = *He's become intellige[nt]!*
- 5 E [E::h!] ((ridendo))
 [Huh ((laughing))
- 6 D Non me lo dite!
Don't tell me!

7 E Ma tu credi ancora alle favole eh!
So you still believe in fairy tales right!

8 D Va be' non me lo dite. Non sto scherzando. Non me lo dite veramente.
Alright don't tell me. I'm not kidding. Really don't tell me.

4.2.4 Asking for advice

Other strategies, used by the conversational partners for co-constructing the self-disclosure, emerge from our analysis, probably as peculiar of troubles telling sequences. For example, we can find an explicit seeking for advice by the TT, followed by the TR's suggestion, offered in a more or less directive way. The following sequence shows how this interactive dynamic leads the TT, not only to negotiate with her interlocutor a plan of behaviour, but also, at least in appearance, to clarify inwardly her own feelings. In this conversation the TT addresses to one of her friends in seeking some advice about what to say to a guy she needs to "clear things" up with.

(25) TT-11/18 (Rachele, TT – Sandro, TR)

1 S La parola amore deve essere, deve essere ELIMINATA dal vo- dalla-dalla-
The word love must be, must be ELIMINATED from you- from- from-

2 da ogni tipologia [di dialogo.]
from any type [of dialogue.]

3 R [(ride)) Pe(h)rché?
 [(laughs)) W(h)hy?

4 S (.) Perché te lo dico subito, a meno che non vuoi che fugga a ga-a gambe levate.
 (.) *Now I'll tell you why, at least if you don't want that he runs li- like hell.*

6 R Eh je dico allora che mi piace. Stando più sul:.,
And then I tell him that I like him. Staying very,

7 S (...) Brava je dici "guarda me piaci (.) è un po':: ehm:: in realtà:: sto bene
 (...) *Well done, now go and tell him "Look really (.) I've liked you hem for a while now I feel good*

8 a usci' con te:: ", ehm:: (.) non dire che è un po' che ce pensi,

when I go out with you”, hem (.) you mustn’t tell him that you’ve been thinking about him for a while,

9 R Non je devo di’ che è un po’ che ce penso?

I mustn’t tell him I’ve been thinking about him for a while?

10 S (.) No.

(.) No.

[...]

11 R >Comunque va beh,< io non- non userò la parola amore, userò la parola:.,

>Ok alright,< I won’t use the word love, I’ll use the word,

12 S BRAVA! =

WELL DONE! =

13 R = Piacere.

= Like.

14 S Brava.

Well done

15 R >PERCHE’ va beh< non è che s- che lo amo inf- [infatti], innamorata =

>Because ok< it’s not that I’m I’m in love in eff- [in effect] in love with him =

16 S

[Brava]

[Good]

17 R = è per di’ nel senso che non è che è ‘na semplice cotta,

= it’s just to say that it’s not just infatuation,

18 un pochino de più de una semplice cotta.

it’s a little more than a simple infatuation.

Despite the fact that the conversations that make up our corpus have numerous examples where advice is given by the TR without an explicit (and often also without an implicit) request, in some cases it happens that the TT asks for some advice but the TR does not comply with that request: on the contrary, s/he proposes alternative linguistic actions, above all aiming at stressing that the solution depends only on the TT’s considered and autonomous decision. At

times, as in the following excerpt, the TR, after having remarked that the only one who has “to decide” is the TT, expresses an indirect suggestion, telling how she would act if she were her, but always remarking (lines 3 and 9) that this is her own point of view, linked to the person that she believes to be (*per come sono fatta io* [because of the way I am]):

(26) *TT-11/02* (Ambra, TT – Melissa, TR)

1 M Mhm:: cioè: a me dis-, a me dispiace che tu possa stare così (.) però sei tu che devi decidere.
What I want to say is: I'm sor- I'm sorry that you can feel like this but it's you who has to decide.

2 A [[Certo!]
[[Of course]

3 M →[[Io per come] sono fatta io, mi allontanerei anche se lui, cioè ha bisogno di me,
[[Because of the way] I am, I'd keep my distance even if he, that's to say he needed me,

4 mi vuole sentire.
he wants to hear from me

5 A Mhm, mhm
Mmm, mmm

6 M Io sì ti posso ascoltare, ti posso rispondere al telefono, mi posso prendere un caffè
Yes, I can listen to you, I can answer you on the telephone, I can have a coffee

7 con te, però finisce lì.
with you, but that's all

8 A Mhm, mhm
Mmm mmm

9 M → Cioè per come sono fatta io, perché non:: non lo so.
That's to say because of the way I am, because I don't I don't know.

6. Discussion

As far as we know, our study investigated a “territory” still little known, i.e., the conversational organization of self-disclosure within the troubles telling sequences. Furthermore, our study unlike most of the studies on self-disclosure, is based on the analysis of conversational data recorded in an ecological context. The dialogical situation of troubles talk among intimates is a preferred “place” for self-disclosure, since:

- on the one hand, friendship, familiarity and intimacy relationships between interlocutors of these types of conversations seem to make (it) easier and natural to open up to the confidence;
- on the other hand, the distinctive dialogical activity of troubles talk strictly consists of the activity of talking about personal problems and worries and it implies per se the speaker’s revelation.

The qualitative analysis of our corpus of conversations aimed to identify: (1) their specific themes, (2) the linguistic strategies used by the TT, as well as (3) the co-constructive activities performed by both TT and TR. The results of our analysis points out that:

1. when the TT talks about her/himself, s/he mainly focuses on her/his experiences related to emotional, cognitive and behavioural dimensions. Often these domains are in conflict with each other and the problem under discussion is presented as originated and powered by the acknowledgment of an impasse and/or a conflict, for example, between different emotional experiences or between “reason” and “sentiment” etc.;
2. during self-revelation activity, the TT uses *facework* strategies aimed to preserve both her/his own face (positive and negative) and the TR’s;
3. finally, self-disclosure in troubles talk sequences may be considered as the outcome of dialogical co-construction, in which the TR plays a significant role and not simply a passive one. The TR contributes to the construction of the TT’s self-disclosure using not only a range of pragmatic strategies, such as requests for specification and back-channels (with the main aim to stimulate an extension of the TT’s narration), but also suggesting plausible interpretations of the events, hypothesizing possible conclusions and consequences of situations and behaviours.

It is interesting to note that our results are consistent with those of Korobov & Thorne (2007, 2009) in terms of the detection of (a) recurrent emotional topics in troubles talk conversations regarding romantic problems and (b) mitigation devices used by the TT in order to save both her/his and the interlocutor’s face by attenuating the impact of a self-disclosure,.

Specifically, as for the recurrent topics, one of the main links of our study with Korobov & Thorne (2007) concerns the identification of the specific subjects regarding the problems of couples. The authors identified in the dialogues they analysed (and specifically in the narrative sequences) a set of problematic situations: general relational instability, asymmetry of interest, problems of infidelity or trust, problems with others interfering with one's relationship (above all, jealousy and competition). In our corpus, in addition to these categories of problems, we identified the following problematic areas that at times can intertwine within the same conversation:

- relational instability (mainly considered as a continuous “shilly-shallying”, a constant breaking and then resuming the relationship), because of which the TT is doubtful and confused;
- asymmetry of interest (considered as the TT's perception of a different level of intensity in the sentimental involvement between her/himself and her/his partner);
 - infidelity and trust betrayal;
 - jealousy (considered both as a feeling that the TT experiences and as a partner's feeling, of which the TT is suffering the consequences);
 - the definitive end of the relationship;
 - “logistic” problems and, in general, reasons beyond one's control, as, for example, the spatial distance that divides the couple, the lack of time for staying with her/his partner.

As for the mitigating rhetorical devices such as displaying uncertainty or ignorance, laughing or being ironic and auto-irony, our results also accord with Korobov & Thorne (2007, 2009). These strategies seem to be useful for saving both one's own and one's conversational partner's face, by attenuating epistemic or emotional positions, avoiding to impose oneself or to upset and burden her/his friend, but establishing affiliation with her/him. Given our limited dataset as regards the corpus size and the demographic homogeneity of the conversational partners involved (Italian native speakers, university students, young adults, largely women, unmarried who are talking about troubles regarding sentimental heterosexual relationships), there are restrictions regarding the generalizability of our findings.

In our future research we would like to enlarge qualitatively and quantitatively our corpus and to integrate the qualitative analysis with a quantitative one.

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APPENDIX A: Transcription Notes

[]	Square brackets mark the start and end of overlapping speech.
[[Double brackets indicate simultaneous speech orientations to prior turn
<u>Underlining</u>	Indicates emphasis.
CAPITALS	Mark speech that is hearably louder than surrounding speech.
°Degree signs°	Enclose hearably quieter speech.
(.)(.) (...)	Indicates a micropause.
(4'')	Indicates a timed pause
((comment))	Additional comments from the transcriber, e.g. about features of context or delivery.
(single parentheses)	Transcriptionist doubt
Co::lons	Show degrees of elongation of the prior sound.

Comma,	Continuation marker; indicates a suspensive tone, irrespective of grammar.
Question mark?	Questioning intonation.
Exclamation mark!	Exclamatory intonation.
Full stop.	Falling, stopping intonation, irrespective of grammar.
‘ (Apostrophe)	Sounds’ omission or contraction.
Hyphen-	Marks a cut-off of the preceding sound.
>he said<	‘Greater than’ and ‘lesser than’ signs enclose speeded-up talk. They are used the other way round for slower talk.
=	‘Equals’ signs mark the immediate ‘latching’ of successive talk, whether of one or more speakers, with no interval.
“quotation marks”	Indicate Direct Reported Speech.
hhh	Laughter
.hh	Audible inbreaths
te(h)xt	speech with simultaneous laughter

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ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE AWARD & GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD

from: Stéphanie Cassilde, Chair of the RC25 Award Committee

Dear members, I am pleased to announce the creation of two RC 25 awards. The « Language & Society Graduate Student Award » is dedicated to promising researcher. The « Language & Society Academic Award » is devoted to active scholars in the field. Both awards are linked to *Language, Discourse & Society*, which is the new e-journal of RC 25. These awards were defined in accordance with the full board and we exchange a lot to create all steps of the selection process. The first edition of RC 25 awards will take place in Buenos Aires with a ceremony at RC 25's reception. I am looking forward to read your work in *Language, Discourse & Society* and to see you there.

Purpose

The purpose of the award for Academic Excellence is to promote scholarship and to recognize academic excellence in the field of language and society.

The purpose of the Graduate Students Awards is to promote graduate student scholarship and to recognize academic excellence in the field of language and society.

Recognition

Both the winner the Award for Academic Excellence and the winner of the Graduate Student Award will be recognized with an engraved plaque at the RC25 reception. Awards will also be announced in the RC25 newsletter.

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All articles written and published in the new RC 25 journal, *Language, Discourse & Society* are eligible. *Language, Discourse & Society* publishes articles written in the official languages of the ISA: English, French and Spanish. All articles published since the past Interim Conference or World Congress and at least three months in advance of the next Interim conference or the World Congress will be considered for the Award.

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All articles published in the new RC 25 journal, *Language, Discourse & Society* that are written by scholars holding a Ph.D. at the time of submission are eligible. *Language, Discourse & Society* publishes articles written in the official languages of the ISA: English, French and Spanish. All articles published since the past Interim Conference or World Congress and at least three months in advance of the next Interim conference or the World Congress will be considered for the Award.

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The RC25 journal is peer-reviewed. All reviewers will submit a short evaluation of articles during the blind peer-review process for submission to the journal editor. The editor will forward a selection of published articles recommended by the peer-reviewers to the Award Committee. All articles recommended for the award will undergo an independent review by the Awards Committee. The Awards Committee consists of three scholars and a chair; it will evaluate articles in English, French and Spanish.

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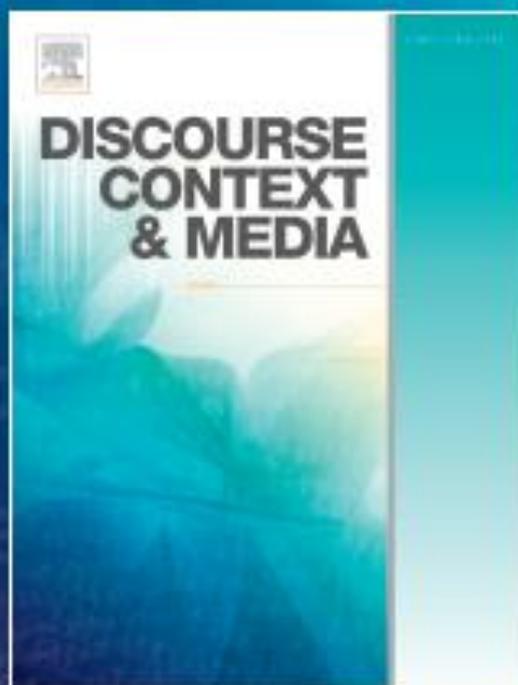


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