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Contents

Language learning strategies: Perceptions of female Saudi EFL learners

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate the pattern of language learning strategies use among a group of Saudi Arabian English-major university students using Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL). The study also investigates the frequency of strategy use among these students (i.e. what are the most frequently used and least frequently used strategies among this group of Saudi Arabian learners learning English as a foreign language?). The results of this study showed that this group of students used learning strategies with high to medium frequency, and that the highest rank was for metacognitive strategies while the lowest was for memory strategies. The findings of the present study suggest a number of implications for Saudi EFL instruction at the University in which the study was conducted. The findings of this research will also contribute to the knowledge base of language learning strategy research in the Arab region.

1. Introduction

Within the field of education over the last few decades, a gradual but important shift has taken place, resulting in less emphasis on teachers and teaching and more focus on learners and learning. One consequence of the above shift is the stress on, and use of, language learning strategies (LLSs) in second and foreign language (L2/FL) learning and teaching. There has been a great deal of research on language learning strategies investigating a range of learner groups in both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL)

contexts. Results of these studies have successfully contributed to our understanding of the nature, categories, and patterns of strategy use in general, as well as their use in different language skills. While many studies around the world have investigated the use of language learning strategies for improving language skills (Chamot, 1987; Oxford, 1990), most research into language learning strategies involving Arab EFL learners - particularly Saudi Arabian learners - compared to other nationalities and ethnic groups remains in the early stage. Case in point, there are only three documented large-scale strategy studies which feature Saudi participants. A groundbreaking study (Al-Otaibi, 2004) examined Saudi EFL students and how they were using LLSs, but it reported on just one geographical location inside Saudi Arabia. The subjects for the other two studies were ESL students who were living and studying in the United States (Braik, 1986) and (Al-Wahibee, 2000). This is not only the researcher's observation, but also the observation of leading educators in the education field as well (Syed, 2003; McMullen, 2009). In addition, Oxford (2001) has suggested that research on language learning strategies should be replicated and extended in order to generate more consistent and verified information within and across groups of learners. Of particular importance is research on how students from different cultural backgrounds use language learning strategy.

To this end, the purpose of this research is to investigate the pattern of language learning strategy use employed by a specific group of Saudi Arabian university students learning English as a foreign language.

Given the shortage of research on Saudi Arabian EFL learners' pattern of language learning strategy use, this research will aim to explore the pattern of language learning strategy use as perceived and reported by a specific group of Saudi Arabian EFL learners. In particular, the research intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What is the general pattern of language learning strategy use among a

group of Saudi Arabian English-major students, in terms of their overall strategy use and the six categories of the strategies, as presented in the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning?

2. What are the most frequently used and least frequently used strategies among this group of Saudi Arabian EFL learners?

The findings of this research will contribute to the knowledge base of language learning strategy research in the Arab region.

2. Background

When it comes to defining language learning strategies, Oxford and Crookall (1989) have stated that "different researchers use different terms and different concepts" (p. 414). Therefore, a number of definitions for language learning strategies have been used by key figures within the field of second and foreign language education. One of the earliest researchers in this field, Rubin (1975), provided a very broad definition of learning strategies as "the techniques or devices which a learner may use to acquire knowledge" (p. 43). Rubin later wrote that language learning strategies "are strategies which contribute to the development of the language system which the learner constructs and affect learning directly" (1987, p. 22). She also suggested that language learning strategies include "any set of operations, steps, plans, or routines used by the learner to facilitate the obtaining, storage, retrieval, and use of information" (1987, p. 19). Language learning strategies have also been discussed by Chamot (1987), O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and Oxford (1990). Chamot (1987) defined language learning strategies as "techniques, approaches, or deliberate actions that students take in order to facilitate the learning and recall of both linguistic and content area information" (p. 71). She suggested that some language learning strategies are noticeable, but some may not be observable. Similarly, O'Malley and Chamot (1990) viewed language learning strategies as "the special thoughts or behaviours of processing information that individuals use to help them comprehend, learn, or retain new information" (p. 1). They

observed that strategies may be used intentionally, but they can also become habitual and mechanical with practice. Moreover, Oxford (1990) claimed that "learning strategies are steps taken by students to enhance their own learning" (p. 1). She suggested a more specific definition of learning strategies as "specific actions taken by the learner to make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations" (p. 8). She termed learning strategies as a combination of behaviours used by the learners to assist them in better learning, storing, and recovering information. Oxford also considered learning strategies to consist of the particular tactics that an individual used to overcome learning task.

As indicated above, language learning strategies have been defined and classified by many scholars in the field. However, most of these attempts to classify language learning strategies reflect more or less the same categorizations of language learning strategies without any major changes. For example, since the late 1980s, Oxford (1990) has expanded upon the classification system designed by O'Malley et al. (1985). First, Oxford (1990) distinguishes between direct LLS, "which directly involve the subject matter," and indirect LLS, which "do not directly involve the subject matter itself, but are essential to language learning nonetheless" (p. 71). Second, each of these broad categories of LLS is further divided into LLS groups. Oxford outlines three main types of direct LLS: memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies. Memory strategies "aid in entering information into long-term memory and retrieving information when needed for communication." Cognitive LLS "are used for forming and revising internal mental models and receiving and producing messages in the target language." Compensation strategies "are needed to overcome any gaps in knowledge of the language" (Oxford, 1990, p. 71). Oxford (1990) also describes three types of indirect LLS: metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies. Metacognitive strategies "help learners exercise 'executive control' through planning, arranging, focusing, and evaluating their own learning." Affective LLS

"enable learners to control feelings, motivations, and attitudes related to language learning." Finally, social strategies "facilitate interaction with others, often in a discourse situation" (Oxford, 1990, p. 71). These six categories that underlie the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) are used by Oxford and others for a great deal of research in the learning strategy field. In addition to that, Oxford's model outlines a comprehensive, multi-levelled, and theoretically well-conceived taxonomy of language learning strategies. For these reasons, language learning strategies classification in this study will be based on Oxford's (1990) classification system.

3. Methodology

3.1.   Subjects

The participants of this research study were 111 female Saudi Arabian university students who speak Arabic as their native language. They are majoring in English Language and Literature at a state university in Saudi Arabia. The English Language and Literature Programme, in which the participants are enrolled, consists of four years of formal study at the university. In the first two years, students are required to complete courses to boost their English language skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking). In the last two year, students are required to take courses related to literature and linguistics to cultivate their literary appreciation and critical-analytical ability and to deepen their knowledge of the various branches of modern linguistic theory. The participants were recruited from all educational levels at the university (22 freshmen, 18 sophomores, 39 juniors, and 23 seniors). Their ages ranged from 18 to 29, with an average of 21.8 years. As a measure of language self- efficacy or students' perceptions of themselves as learners, the students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from one to three to indicate how successful they thought they were in English (listening, writing, speaking, reading), with 1 being very good, 2 being good, and 3 being poor. The majority (80.4%) of the 102 respondents perceived that their English language was

"good", while only 3.9% perceived that their English language was "poor." They all had the same exposure to English through the Saudi public educational system. All the subjects had studied English formally for six years and were required to complete 130 credit hours as part of their Bachelor Degree's requirements in English Language and Literature.

3.2.   Instrument

As this study aims to determine the language learning strategies employed by a group of Saudi EFL students, a suitable exploration instrument for examining the strategies used among the targeted population had to be chosen. Conducting a survey (using the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, or SILL) among a sample of female Saudi Arabian EFL learners was the first choice made by the researcher. There are many reasons behind using the SILL by the researcher for data collection. First, it is an important instrument in the field of language learning strategy for assessing the frequency of use of LLSs by students. Second, it is one of the most useful manuals of learner strategy assessment tools currently available. In addition to that, it is estimated that 40-50 major studies, including dissertations and theses, have employed the SILL. Approximately 9,000 language learners have been involved in studies using the instrument since it was developed. It has been translated into a number of languages, including Chinese, French, German, and Spanish (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). It has also been stated that the SILL appears to be the only language learning strategy instrument that has been checked for its reliability and validity (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995). Furthermore, Green and Oxford (1995) indicated that the reliability of the SILL, assessed by Cronbach's alpha for internal consistency, is ordinarily in the .90s range. Not only that but there is also considerable evidence that the SILL is valid after being checked in multiple ways, including its construct validity, content validity, and criterion-related validity (Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995).

In order to gather the biographical data that would be required, especially for

the analysis of data, a background questionnaire sheet was added to the back page of the SILL questionnaire. Students were asked to provide details pertaining to their age, and their educational level. Further, as a measure of language self-efficacy, or of students' perception of themselves as learners, the students were asked to rate themselves on a scale from one to three to indicate how successful they thought they were in English (listening, writing, speaking, reading), with 1 being very good, 2 being good, and 3 being poor.

3.3.   Procedure and Data Collection

The questionnaire data were collected from female English-major university students at a state university in Saudi Arabia. As a first step in the process of data collection, the researcher contacted the director of the English Language and Literature Department at the University, explaining the nature and purpose of the study. Permission was readily granted to conduct the study. The researcher then emailed the questionnaire to the director. The students were notified in advance that they would be completing the questionnaire on a certain day. The director had copies of the questionnaires prepared. The test was administered to the students by the training assistants. Before the questionnaires were administered, the training assistants were given guidelines and instructions for administering the questionnaire. The assistants then took the questionnaires to class and the test was administered to the students immediately after they finished their classes, using about 30 minutes. All of the subjects received the same instructions on how to fill out the questionnaires. The subjects were informed that their participation was entirely voluntary. The subjects did not give their names; only their ages, average and level of learning were required.

3.4.   Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) for Microsoft Windows 17.0 was used to complete the analysis of the collected data, following the

instructions in Field (2009). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, standard deviations and percentages, were implemented in order to investigate the demographic data and the use of language learning strategies. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Levene's test were used to determine whether any significant relationships exist among respondents in the use of language learning strategies regarding their background characteristics. In addition, the .05 level of statistical significance was set at all statistical tests in the present study.

4. Results

The descriptive statistics for the six SILL sub-scales are presented in Table 1, and the means and 95% confidence intervals are illustrated in an error bar chart (Figure 1).

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for the six SILL Sub-Scales

SILL sub-scale	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD	Interpretation of Mean
MET	102	1.56	4.89	3.65	.698	High
SOC	102	1.50	5.00	3.51	.852	High
AFF	102	2.20	4.83	3.48	.585	High
COG	102	1.64	4.71	3.42	.674	High
COM	102	1.50	4.83	3.34	.691	Medium
MEM	102	1.85	4.33	3.15	.577	Medium

Interval Plot of MET, SOC, AFF, COG, COM, MEM
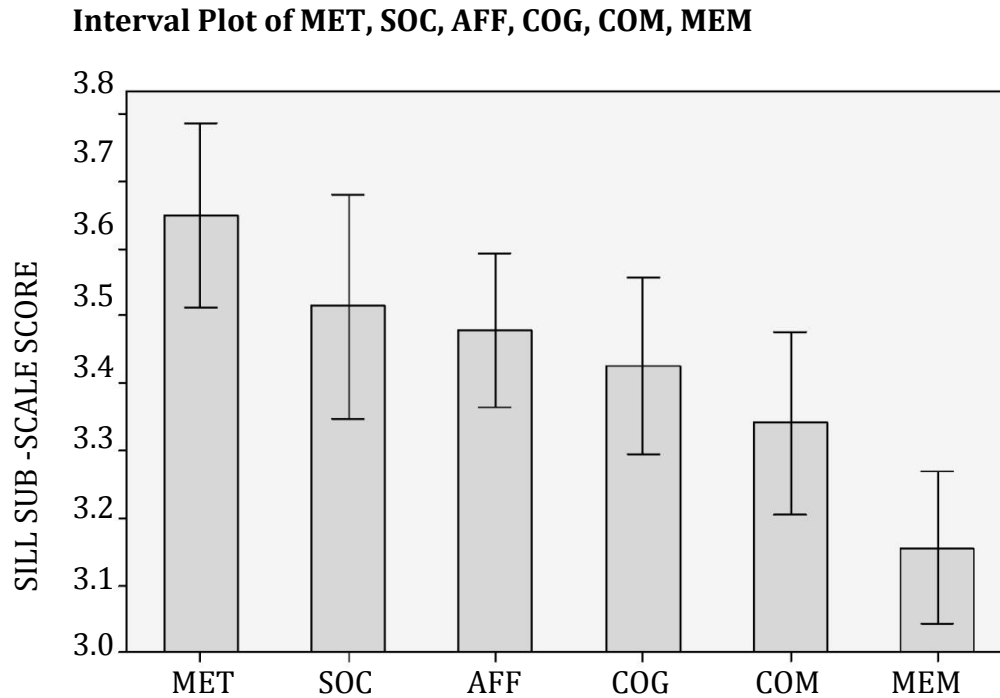
Figure 1. Means ± 95% Confidence Intervals of the six SILL Sub-Scales

A clear trend was displayed (Figure 1) in which the mean SILL sub-scale scores could be ranked into the following order of learning strategies: 1st = Meta- cognitive (MET); 2nd = Social (SOC); 3rd = Affective (AFF); 4th = Cognitive (COG); 5th = Compensation (COM); and 6th = Memory (MEM). Using the categories suggested by Oxford (1990), the results indicated that the students were, on average, high strategy users with respect to MET, SOC, AFF, and COG, and medium strategy users with respect to COM and MEM.

The ANOVA results (Table 2) indicated that there was a significant difference between the mean SILL sub-scale scores at the .05 level, where F (5,606) = 7.114, p = .000.

Table 2
Results of ANOVA to Compare the Means of the six SILL Sub-Scales

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	Degrees of Freedom	Mean Square	F test statistic [a]	*p* value
Between Groups	14.420	5	2.884	7.114	.000*
Within Groups	285.180	606	.471		
Total	299.600	611			

Note: * Significant at *p* < .05.   [a] Welch's correction applied.

Dunnet's T3 post-hoc test (Table 3) indicated that the mean MEM score was significantly lower than the mean scores for SOC, AFF, MET, and COG at *p* < .05. The mean MET score was significantly higher than the mean scores for MEM and COM. There was no significant difference at the .05 level between the mean scores for MET, SOC, AFF, and COG.

Table 3
Results of Dunnet's T3 Post-Hoc Test to compare the Means of the Six SILL Sub-

Scales

PAIRWISE COMPARISON

(I)	(J)	Mean Difference	*P* value
SUBSCALE	SUBSCALE	(I-J)	
MEM	SOC	-.36	.008*
	AFF	-.33	.001*
	MET	-.49	.000*
	COM	-.19	.438
	COG	-.27	.035*
SOC	MEM	.36	.008*
	AFF	.03	1.000
	MET	-.14	.971
	COM	.17	.828
	COG	.08	1.000

AFF	MEM	.33	.001*
	SOC	-.03	1.000
	MET	-.17	.606
	COM	.14	.854
	COG	.05	1.000
MET	MEM	.49	.000*
	SOC	.14	.971
	AFF	.17	.606
	COM	.31	.026*
	COG	.22	.268

Note: * Significant at $p < .05$

With respect to the frequency of use of the six learning strategies, the minimum and maximum values in Table 16 indicated that all six learning strategies were used to a more or less extent by N= 102 students.

In summary, the six learning strategies were used by all of the learners in the sample to some extent. Memory was the least used learning strategy and compensation was used less than the other four learning strategies. The most highly used learning strategies, with no statistically significant differences between them, were metacognitive, social, affective, and cognitive.

5. Discussion

Using the categories suggested by Oxford (1990), it was concluded that the students were, on average, high strategy users with respect to MET, SOC, AFF, and COG, but medium strategy users with respect to COM and MEM.

With respect to RQ1 (What is the general pattern of language learning strategy use among a specific group of Saudi Arabian English-major university students?), the mean MEM score was significantly lower than the mean scores for SOC, AFF, MET, and COG at $p < .05$. There were no significant differences at the .05 level between the mean scores for MET, SOC, AFF, and COG. It was concluded that memory was the least used learning strategy, and compensation was also less frequently used than the other strategies. The most highly used learning strategies, with no significant differences between them, were metacognitive, social, affected, and cognitive. The mean for overall strategy use was moderate. Thus, according to the criteria provided by Oxford (1990) for judging the degree of strategy use (detailed in Table 1), strategies were "sometimes used" by the participants in the current study.

Findings from the survey indicated that the language learning strategy use of Saudi EFL students at the University, as measured by the SILL, was moderate, with an overall mean of 3.41. This finding supports the findings in previous studies. For example, Riazi (2007) reported that the mean of strategy use among 120 female Arabic-speaking Qatari university students was 2.99. It also showed that strategy categories were used in the order of metacognitive, cognitive, compensation, social, memory, and affective. The participants of Riazi's study also reported a greater tendency to use metacognitive, cognitive, and compensation strategies than social, affective, and memory strategies, which conforms, to a large extent, to the findings of the current research. Similarly, the findings of a recent study conducted by Shamis (2003) support the current research results. Shamis' study reports on the current English language learning strategies used by Arabic-speaking English-major students enrolled at An-Najah National University in Palestine. The results of Shamis' study, examining the language learning strategies of a group of Palestinian English-major students, showed that these students were high to medium users of strategies, and that the highest rank was for metacognitive strategies, while the lowest was for compensation strategies. Based on these findings, the

participants in the current study seem to be relatively somehow sophisticated language learning strategy users, using all six categories of strategies at moderate levels. One possible explanation can be offered for this finding is that, these participants studied English in an EFL setting and did not need it for daily survival. Thus, it was not as urgent for them to use most kinds of strategies as it was for learners in an ESL setting (Al-Otaibi, 2004).

With respect to RQ2 (What are the most frequently used and the least frequently used strategies among this group of university EFL learners?), it was concluded that all six language strategies were used by all of the learners to some extent. With regard to each specific category of strategies, the participants in the current study reported using metacognitive strategies more frequently than any other type of strategy. Social strategies were the next most frequently used, followed by affective and cognitive strategies. Finally, compensation strategies and memory strategies were reported as the least frequently used strategies.

Concerning strategy categories, the metacognitive category received the highest rank of use among this group. As mentioned earlier in the literature review, metacognitive strategies involve exercising "executive control" over one's language learning through planning, monitoring, and evaluating. They are techniques that are used for organizing, planning, focusing, and evaluating one's learning. In general, these strategies help learners to gain control over their emotions and motivations related to language learning through self-monitoring. A large number of participants in the current study reported the use of metacognitive strategy, such as planning time in their schedules to study English and noticing their mistakes. The adequate metacognitive strategy use implies that this group of students might have incorporated how to successfully plan, organize, and self-monitor their progress in the language learning process. In addition to that, the high use of metacognitive strategies among Taif University English major students is similar to that observed among students from Asian countries such as Japan, China, Korea, and Taiwan, as reported in some of the studies on Asian students (e.g., Sheorey, 1999; Oxford et al., 1990). It also conforms to the findings of a similar study conducted by Shamis (2003). Shamais' study reported on the language learning strategies used by Arabic-speaking English majors enrolled at An-Najah National University in Palestine. The results of Shamis' study showed that An-Najah English

majors used learning strategies with high to medium frequency, and that the highest rank (79.6%) was for metacognitive strategies. This finding can be attributed to the recent trends in the Arabic education system. Recently, instructors and students in non-Western countries have been departing from rote learning requiring memorization of factual knowledge and moving toward deeper approaches to learning requiring higher levels of skills, such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the instructional materials (Al-Otaibi, 2004).

The next most frequently used strategies among participants in the survey of the study were social strategies. Some studies have established that social strategies are unpopular strategies among Asian students (Noguchi, 1991; Politzer & McGroarty, 1985). This does not hold true in this study. English learners in Saudi Arabia learn English in a setting where English is not used for communicative needs in their social and economic daily lives. As a result, EFL learners are naturally placed in what Kouraogo (1993) called an "input-poor" English learning environment, and they are exposed to inadequate target language input. Furthermore, in EFL contexts in Saudi Arabia, English teaching focuses on rote memorization, translation of texts and identification of correct grammatical forms in reading. Students are not encouraged to ask questions (Al-Swelem, 1997). Thus, less frequent use of social strategies is expected. Contrary to the researcher's expectations, however, social strategies were the second most-preferred strategies by the participants in this study. The majority of the participants used social strategies, such as asking the other person to slow down or to repeat or clarify when they did not understand something in English, to compensate for the lack of meaningful language input. Such social strategies may be used to make up for learners' deficiencies in listening comprehension. Therefore, it can be said that social strategies basically function as compensation strategies for this population. The high usage of social strategies could also be attributed to the development of multimedia and networking technologies, which have increased students' exposure to foreign cultures and more English input. Further research should be conducted to find out whether this is the real cause of strategy preference.

According to Oxford (1990), cognitive strategies are typically found to be the most popular strategies with language learners, because these strategies work directly on incoming information when learning a new language. Cognitive strategies help learners

to use all of their mental processes in understanding and using the target language. They include strategies such as repeating, formally practicing with sound system, taking notes, summarizing, and highlighting. Participants of this study reported high use of cognitive strategies with a mean of 3.42. This finding corresponds with the findings of other studies that investigated cognitive strategies (Davis & Abas, 1991; Oh, 1992; and Takeuchi, 1991). Davis and Abas (1991) used the SILL with 64 language faculty at four tertiary institutions in Indonesia. The findings of their research showed high use of cognitive strategies which is similar to the finding of this research. Likewise, the participants of Oh (1992) study, at the National Fisheries University of Pusan, were medium users of cognitive strategies. In contrast, the findings of a study conducted by Touba (1992), in which he used an Arabic translation of the SILL with over 500 Arab Egyptian university students majoring in a course of preparation to become English teachers, showed extremely low usage of cognitive strategies. Some of the cognitive strategies that students reported using frequently in this research were taking notes, summarizing, practising the sounds of English, and finding patterns in the language. Interestingly, in a study conducted by Ahmed (1988) of 300 Arab Sudanese students of many ages using course notebooks, self-report, observations, and interviews to assess language learning strategies. Fifty strategies were identified, the most common of which were taking notes in the book margin and summarizing. However, in a research done by Red studying strategies of 55 Nepalese university students, textbooks were seen as too valuable to write notes in, as compared with the Sudanese practice of taking notes in book margins (Oxford, 1996).

In comparison with the other strategy categories, compensation and memory strategies were the least frequently used strategies among the participants. Compensation strategies are strategies that enable students to make up for missing knowledge in the process of comprehending or producing the target language.

However, the students were reluctant to use compensation strategies (e.g., they did not use gestures when they had difficulty producing the language), and they did not make up new words when they did not know the right ones. The finding that Taif University students employed compensation strategies less often contrasts with the findings of studies performed by Chang (1991), Yang (1993), and Watanabe (1990), which showed that the compensation category was the highest ranking category. It is natural for

students to make greater use of compensation strategies, as these can allow them to guess the meaning of what they have heard or read or to remain in the conversation despite their limited grammatical and vocabulary knowledge. However, the participants in the current study reported that they use compensation strategies, such as guessing, either to understand unfamiliar English words or to predict what the other person would say next in English. The participants' focus on guessing strategies may be a reflection of the fact that exams are emphasised at the students' University curriculum. The students at this school may have been encouraged to make guesses whenever needed to successfully complete important exams.

Memory strategies were found to be the least used strategies among the participants. Oxford (1990) regarded memory strategies as a powerful mental tool. However, in the current study, the participants reported memory strategies as their least frequently used kind of strategies. This finding seems to be in contradiction with the popular belief that Saudi students prefer strategies involving memorization, as favoured by Qur'anic education (Al-Swelem, 1997). A likely explanation for this contradiction is that the rote memorization that Saudi students are believed to prefer might differ from the specific memory techniques reported in the SILL. These techniques included making a mental picture of a situation in which the word might be used; using rhymes to remember new words; and connecting the sound of a new English word and an image of the word to help remember the word. In other words, the memory strategies considered effective involve an imaginative component as well as memory. It is possible that the participants in the current study were not familiar with these mnemonics or specific techniques to enhance their memory, and therefore they reported using fewer memory strategies.

5.1.   Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusions

This study had some limitations that should be taken into consideration when interpreting the results. First, all of the participants of the study were female Saudi students. Therefore, caution should be exercised in generalizing the findings to other ethnic populations. It should be noted that in this study, the number of participants was limited to those who voluntarily participated in the study. Thus, the generalization of the findings to a larger population with different native languages or cultural backgrounds may be limited. However, for the purpose of instructional implications, it

is possible to apply some of the results to similar contexts. Second, the data were collected through a self-report instrument that may reflect personal perceptions rather than students' actual uses of learning strategies. Future research on language learning strategies may benefit from other data collection procedures, including verbal protocols and observations, in addition to self-report questionnaires. Also, it would have been better if the SILL questionnaire had been translated into Arabic to avoid any language barrier issues on the part of the students.

Apart from the limitations, the overall findings of this study are consistent with studies carried out in other contexts showing that students tend to stick to language learning strategies in the process of their language learning in university programs.

Therefore, it is plausible to think of language learning strategies as a salient learner variable to be considered both theoretically and pedagogically.

The findings of the present study suggest a number of implications for Saudi EFL instruction at the University in which the study was conducted. The finding of a low-medium overall mean of strategy use in the current study indicates that the Saudi EFL students at the University were not aware of the available strategies at their disposal, and hence were not applying the full range of appropriate strategies. Therefore, it is important for teachers to raise students' awareness of the broad range of strategy options available to them. The resulting awareness and expansion of strategy use may improve students' motivation and, thus, can help them to become more self-confident and successful language learners. It is also important to encourage students to find their own ways of overcoming the constraints on language learning and use in their learning environment. These ways may include making efforts to find and communicate with native speakers online, participating in English mailing lists on topics of interest to students, and other similar activities.

In the current study, compensation strategies were reported as the least frequently used strategies. Thus, this result might suggest that compensation strategies should be emphasised more among this population. Teachers should encourage students to overcome their learning obstacles and compensate for the absence of language knowledge through the use of strategies such as guessing intelligently, using synonyms,

and predicting responses.

As obtained in the survey, metacognitive strategies were reported as moderately high used strategies in this population. However, the overall mean was still low compared to other groups of learners in other countries. Therefore, teachers should train students in the effective use of metacognitive strategies, such as planning, organizing, and evaluating their own learning. Teachers should also ask students to plan a language learning schedule and encourage them to discuss and share these in the classroom. Moreover, teachers can assist students in shaping their own learning goals and taking steps to achieve these goals.

The mean of 3.43 for cognitive strategies suggests that the participants may not perform optimally in terms of their cognitive skills in a language classroom. As various researchers have emphasised the importance of cognitive strategies in language learning, these strategies should be introduced to the University EFL students as a fundamental tool in language learning in order to improve their English proficiency. For example, teachers can demonstrate how to analyse the structure of English or how to recognise and use formulas and patterns in English, thus encouraging students to employ these strategies to a greater extent.

The extremely low use of memory strategies in the current study implies that classroom strategy training should particularly emphasise more memory strategies, such as specific memory techniques and systematic mnemonics. Teachers can demonstrate strategies such as using rhymes and flash cards to memorize new vocabulary. The use of these memory strategies might help learners to improve their mental processes in learning English.

All of these recommendations are presented with the intent of facilitating the development of more confident, more strategic, and especially more successful language learners in Saudi Arabia.

In summary, language learning strategies may be accommodated into both teaching materials and classroom teaching and learning activities in the immediate context of this study, as well as in similar ESL/EFL settings. Students should be given more opportunities to learn about and use language learning strategies. Exposing students to

these strategies regularly may enable them to use the strategies more efficiently in the process of their language learning. The teacher's role in helping students to become familiar with and use language learning strategies is important. The teacher should learn about the students, particularly about their interests, motivations, and learning styles. The teacher can determine what language learning strategies his/her students appear to be using by observing their behaviour in class. The language teacher should provide a wide range of learning strategies in order to fulfil different learning styles that meet the needs and expectations of the students. This requires some kind of strategy training that may be tailored to the practiced syllabus.

Research should be replicated so that more consistent information becomes available within and across groups of learners. Particularly important is information on how students from different cultural backgrounds use language learning strategies.

More research on factors affecting strategy choice would be helpful. Learning style is an important factor, along with gender, age, nationality or ethnicity, beliefs, previous educational and cultural experiences, and learning goals. Additionally, it is likely that different kinds of learners (e.g., analytic vs. global or visual vs. auditory) might benefit from different modes of strategy training.

Although international research community has produced innumerable research studies on the use of LLSs, the EFL research community remains in the early stage in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the researcher highly recommends that administrators across the Kingdom to encourage their faculty to get involved in action research. It is time to discover how Saudi EFL students are different from EFL students in other international studies, and to discover how they are similar to other language learners across the world.

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Interpreting morphological variability

in adolescent Japanese-English interlanguage[1]

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Abstract

This study tests three proposed hypotheses for why second language learners produce variable forms of inflectional morphology (e.g., *She goes to bed at nine every night/She go to bed at nine every night*): the Minimal Trees Hypothesis, the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis, and the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis. The source of evidence is written production data elicited from adolescent Japanese classroom learners of English: 90 junior high school students (1st-3rd grade/aged 13-16) and 30 university students (2nd year/aged 19-20). Results show a high level of accuracy in the suppliance of English regular past tense-*d*, plural-*s* and associated syntactic properties (such as overt subjects and Nominative Case marking) and also a lower production rate of subject-verb agreement morphology. This provides some evidence for a dissociation between syntax and morphology as well as possible first language (L1) effects, findings which are problematic for the claims of the Minimal Trees Hypothesis. A discrepancy was also found in suppliance between the same -*s* inflections of subject-verb agreement and plural marking in the written production data, which is not consistent with the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis. The conclusion drawn is that the participants are probably having difficulty accessing morphological forms, which is consistent with the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (MSIH).

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1. Introduction

There has been much evidence showing that second language (L2) learners exhibit variable forms in the production of inflectional morphology (Haznedar, 2001; Lardiere 1998a, b, 2000; Hawkins, 2000; Prévost and White, 2000a, b; Robertson, 2000; Leung, 2001; Ionin and Wexler, 2002). L2 learners of English frequently produce utterances including omission (1a), overuse (1b, c) and substitution (1d) of verbal and nominal inflections.

1.   a. She *go_* to bed at nine every night.   (No.3)[2][JH7th P12]

    b. He sometimes write***d*** letter_ last year. (No.36) [JH 7th P 6]

    c. She doesn't like milk***s***.   (No.6) [JH 7th P 2]

    d. She often play***s*** _ piano last year.   (No.2) [JH 7thP 7]

Considerable debate has recently focused on what causes such variability in morphology by L2 learners (Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 2005; Hawkins and Hattori, 2006; Hawkins, 2007; Tsimpli and Dimitrakopoulou, 2007; Goad and White, 2004; Lardiere, 2008, 2009). This is also a central question in the present study. In generative second language acquisition research, there have been two views. From one view, argued for by the Minimal Trees Hypothesis (Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1996a, b), morphological variability reflects the non-acquisition of underlying syntactic knowledge. An alternative view, proposed by the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Lardiere, 1998a, b; Prévost and White, 2000a, b) and the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis (Goad, White and Steele, 2003), is that morphological variability results from a difficulty with the production of morphological forms. In other words, the former view assumes that the variability is caused by the absence of functional categories in L2 grammar in the morphology-to-syntax mapping (e.g., Eubank, 1993/1994; Meisel, 1997), while the latter view maintains that morphological production is affected by some factors other than the impairment of syntactic knowledge, such as difficulty in accessing forms when there is communication pressure (the view of the MSIH), or difficulty in pronouncing

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[2] Examples here are drawn from the test reported in the present article. 'No.' refers to the item number in the test, 'JH 7th' to Junior High School 7th grade and 'P' to participant.

forms (the view of the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis). As several previous studies have already shown, failure to produce inflectional morphology is in contrast to success with associated syntactic properties regardless of the difference in the participants' L1, age, and stage of L2 grammatical development (Haznedar, 2001; Ionin and Wexler, 2002; Lardiere, 1998a, b; White, 2003a).

In this paper, elicited written production data is examined which was collected from L2 English classroom learners whose L1 Japanese is both similar to and different from English, as illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1 Comparison of properties between L2 English and L1 Japanese

				English SVO	Japanese[3] _OV
Morphology	Verbal	Agreement		+	-
		Past Tense	Regular Verbs	+	+ [*-ta*]
			Irregular Verbs	+	-
	Nominal	Articles	Definite	+	-
			Indefinite	+	-
		Plural		+	- / (+) [*-tati*]
Sytax	Word Order	Verb Raising (Main verbs)	Adverbs	-	?[4]
			Negation	-	?
	Question	Wh-movement		+	-
	Subject	Pro-drop		-	+

(S=subject, V=verb, O=object)

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[3] *-ta*: Kudo, 1995; Kubo and Suwa, 2007. *–tati*: Ueda and Haraguchi, 2008 (see section 5.2).
[4] There has been little consensus about verb raising in head-final languages such as Japanese and Korean (Koizumi, 2000; Fukui and Sakai, 2003, a.o.).

It is argued that the findings in this study are consistent with the view of the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis that variability in morphology reflects a dissociation between target-like syntactic knowledge and a difficulty with the production of morphological forms. The focus is on comparing agreement morphology-*s* with: (1) related syntactic properties such as overt subjects and Nominative Case; (2) regular past tense morphology-*d*; (3) plural morphology-*s*. Anticipating the results, all of these properties clearly show higher production rates than agreement morphology. The differences in production provide evidence for a dissociation between syntax and morphology; the presence of a functional category; and possible L1 effects, which are fully consistent with the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis but not consistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis. In addition, there are differences in production between plural-*s* and agreement-*s* in this written production task, which is problematic for the assumptions of the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis. It is proposed that the MSIH would need to be framed with regard to the complexity of the feature composition for abstract representations (Lardiere, 2000) in order to explain what causes the differences in production of the inflectional morphology which is the focus in this study.

The article is organised as follows. The next section describes the three hypotheses which are relevant to the two different ways of interpreting L2 morphological variability; Section 3 gives the details of the methodology; in Section 4, the results are presented; Section 5 is a discussion of the results; finally in Section 6, the conclusion is reached.

2. Three hypotheses for interpreting morphological variability

It is uncontroversial that L2 learners exhibit inconsistent use of inflectional morphology associated with functional categories. However, there has been little agreement as to the interpretation for such a phenomenon. In recent second language research studies, two different views have been proposed on the inconsistency in morphological production. One view is that optionality reflects the absence of abstract target-like morpho-syntactic representations, which is the claim of the Minimal Trees Hypothesis (Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1996a, b). The alternative view is that optionality results from some factor other than morpho-syntactic knowledge, on which the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Lardiere, 1998a, b, 2000; Prévost and White, 2000a, b)

and the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis (Goad, White and Steele, 2003; Goad and White, 2006) are based. In other words, the difference between the two views is whether L2 variability in morphology reflects the incompleteness of underlying syntactic representations or not.

2.1 The Minimal Trees Hypothesis

The Minimal Trees Hypothesis (Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1996a, b), which has recently been renamed the 'Organic Grammar' approach (2005, 2007), proposes that L2 grammars at the initial state lack functional categories and the associated projections, like L1 initial grammars. This is an application of the Weak Continuity Hypothesis (Clahsen, Eisenbeiss and Penke, 1996; Clahsen, Ensenbeiss and Vainikka, 1994; Clahsen, Penke and Parodi, 1993/1994; Vainikka, 1993/1994) for L1 to L2 acquisition. Vainikka and Young-Scholten (1996a, b) claim that L2 input and overt morphology trigger the acquisition of functional categories: they develop gradually in a hierarchical order, drawn from the full inventory of Universal Grammar (UG)[5], not the L1 grammar. This suggests a close association between the acquisition of morphology and the emergence of functional syntax.

2.2 The Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis

The Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Lardiere, 1998a, b; Prévost and White, 2000a, b) proposes that L2 abstract morpho-syntactic knowledge has no impairment. Several recent studies have provided clear evidence for a dissociation between the inconsistent use of inflectional morphology and the presence of syntactic knowledge. Lardiere (1998a, b) reports that an L1 Chinese advanced proficiency speaker of L2 English produces various syntactic properties (overt subjects/Nominative Case; accusative pronouns; verb placement) more accurately than verbal inflections (subject-verb agreement and past tense). Related results are obtained by Haznedar (2001) in L1 Turkish child data: a discrepancy in production rate between verbal inflections (subject-verb agreement and past tense) and various syntactic properties (copula/auxiliary *be*; overt subject/Nominative Case). In the studies of Prévost and White (2000a, b), there was a divergence in accuracy between verb placement and verb form. Ionin and Wexler (2002) provided similar results from L1 Russian children learning Englishwho produce

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[5] Innate universal linguistic principles assumed by Chomsky (1959, 1965, 1975, 1980, 1981a, b, 1986, 1999).

overt subjects and verb placement more accurately than subject-verb agreement inflection. All of the previous studies have found no randomness in morphological variability: variable use is confined to missing inflection, and does not involve faulty inflection. Such evidence is consistent with the claim that inaccuracy in L2 morphology is caused by learners having difficulty mapping from abstract categories and features to their surface morphological forms. In particular, Lardiere (2000:124) assumes that "complex "outer" layer mappings from morphology to PF" (phonetic form)[6] are problematic for L2 learners. This suggests that the complexity in mapping makes it difficult to produce L2 morphology consistently.

2.3 The Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis

The Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis (Goad, White and Steele, 2003; Goad and White, 2006) proposes that variable production of L2 morphology can be attributed to a transfer of L1 phonological representation. Like the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis, this claim also argues against any syntactic deficit in L2 grammars. However, the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis assumes that if L1 inflectional morphology is prosodified differently to the L2, and L2 learners transfer their L1 prosody into their L2 grammars, this will influence their production of L2 morphology. Also, this may lead to failure to produce overt forms for morphological properties that are abstractly represented in their grammars. For example, Goad and White (2006) argue that Mandarin speakers' failure to supply English regular past tense and 3rd person singular present tense agreement morphology is caused by a different prosodificiation of morphological structure in the L1. In English, regular inflection is adjoined to the prosodic word (PWd), while irregular inflection is PWd-internal. By contrast, in Mandarin, all inflectional morphology is PWd-internal. This potentially makes inflected forms (e.g., *walked, builds*) unpronounceable for Mandarin speakers, coupled with the fact that there is a universal constraint on syllable codas that prevents the merger of more than two segments in a coda. Goad and White (2006) hypothesise that there are ways in which Mandarin speakers can 'accommodate' the overt inflections in some cases, but this leads to persistent variability in production.

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[6] "PF-representation is a representation of the phonetic form of an expression" (Radford, 2009:478).

3. The present study

To further test the claims of the three hypotheses outlined in section 2, a study was undertaken with 120 adolescent L1 Japanese classroom learners of L2 English: 90 junior high school students (1st - 3rd grade/aged 13-16) to investigate L2 grammars at the initial state and in early development and 30 university students (2nd year/aged 19-20) in later development.

3.1 Methodology

This study differs from other previous L2 studies in data mode, the setting for L2 input, participants' L1 background, age, number, length of L2 exposure: the L2 data is written production data collected from 120 Japanese adolescent classroom learners of English at the initial and early transitional states[7], as illustrated in Table 2.

Table 2 L2 data collected in this study

L2 Data Mode	Setting[8] for L2 input	Interlanguage L1-L2	Age (years old)		Number of Participants	Length of Exposure/Residence
Written data	Formal	Japanese-English	13-20		120	8months-7.8years
			JH 7th	13-	30	8 months
			8th	14-	30	1.8 years
			9th	15-	30	2.8 years
			U 2nd	19-	30	7.8 years

(JH=Junior High School, U 2nd =University second year)

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[7] The initial state is the earliest stages of L2 acquisition; the transitional state is the stages in which L2 grammar develops.

[8] There are two settings for L2 acquisition: a naturalistic setting and a formal setting .
In the formal setting, L2 learners are exposed to L2 input via instruction in the classroom, in order to either learn the grammatical properties consciously or to practice the communication.

By contrast, as summarized in Table 3, five previous studies obtained L2 spoken production data in a naturalistic setting[9]. No study reports Japanese-English interlanguage data; the groups are mainly either adults or children[10]; the number of participants is less than 20 people; most studies examined the initial and end state[11] in L2 acquisition. In addition, comparing these previous L2 studies, there is further variation in the participants' L1, age, number, length of L2 exposure.

The properties investigated are drawn from both morphology and syntax properties in order to determine if there is a morphology-syntax correlation. Table 4 compares English with the various L1s in the previous studies (see Table 3) in terms of the four properties considered in this study: subject-verb agreement-s, regular past tense-d, plural marking-s, and subject suppliance/Case. This shows that Japanese has more differences from English than similarities, like Chinese and Korean (see the shaded areas in Table 4).

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[9] In the naturalistic setting, L2 speakers are exposed to the L2 naturalistically outside the classroom.

[10] The definition of age groups (child/adult) in this study comes from the descriptions in each of the previous studies.

[11] The definition of L2 state (initial/end) in this study is also based on the descriptions in the previous studies. It is subject to change, depending on a number of different criteria, such as length of exposure to L2, frequency of the use, and proficiency level. There were some cases where different length of exposure to L2 was interpreted as the same state: White (2003b:92) points out that the adult learners in Epstein et al. (1996) "must be beyond an initial-state grammar" because some of them had 7 years' exposure to L2. The end state is the stage in which L2 grammar shows "lack of change over time" (White, 2003b:244).

Table 3 L2 data of previous studies[12]

Study L2 Data Mode	Setting for L2 input	Interlanguage L1-L2	Age (years old)	Number of Participants	Length of Exposure /Residence
Vainikka& Young-Scholten (1994, 1996a) *Spoken data*	Naturalistic	a.Italian/Spanish -German	15 - 53	11 (Ita4 /S7)	10 - 25months
		b.Turkish/Korean -German	28-60	17 (T11/K6)	1.5 – 24years
White & Prévost (2000a,b) *Spoken data*	Naturalistic	English-French	5	2	0.2 - 29months
		Italian-German	8	2	
		Arab-French;	'adult', 34	2	3 - 54.5months
		Por/Spa-German	17, 22	P1+G1	
Goad, White & Steele (2003) *Spoken data*	Naturalistic	Chinese-English	'adult'	12	0.5 - 5 years
Lardiere (1998a,b,2003) *Spoken data*	Naturalistic	Chinese-English	32/41 (two recordings)	1	10/18 years (two recordings)
White (2003a) *Spoken data*	Naturalistic	Turkish-English	50/51 (two recordings)	1	10/11.5years (two recordings)

(Ita=Italian, Spa/S=Spanish, T=Turkish, K=Korean, Por/P=Portuguese)

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[12] Vainikka and Young-Scholten, 1994:271/272, 1996a:149; White & Prévost, 2000a:207/208, 211; Goad, White and Steele, 2003:254; Lardiere, 1998a:12/13; White, 2003a:129,133.

The description of '*adult*' was used instead of the specific age in each of the studies.

The studies of Lardiere (1998a,b; 2003) and White (2003a) are longitudinal: the L2 data were collected from one subject over 2 time periods.

This table excludes Goad and White's study (2006) because there are no descriptions of both age and length of exposure/residence: "Subjects were 10 intermediate level Mandarin-speaking leaners of English and 9 native English-speaking controls" (2006:6).

Table 4 Comparison of L1properties between this study and the previous studies[13]

	Morphology			Syntax
	Verbal		Nominal	Subject
	Agreement	Past	Plural	Pro-drop
English sVO	+	+	+	-
Japanese _OV	-	+	-/(+)[*-tati*]	+
Korean _OV	-	+	(+)	+
Chinese _VO	-	-	- /(+)[*-men*]	+
Turkish _OV	+	+	+	+
Italian _VO	+	+	+	+
Spanish _VO	+	+	+	+
French sVO	+	+	+	-
German sOV	+	+	+	-

3.2 Participants

All of the 120 adolescent participants in this study were L1 Japanese classroom learners of English from national and private educational institutions in urban areas of Japan. Data collected from the 90 junior high school students were expected to provide information about early L2 development; data collected from the 30 university students were expected to provide information about later development. The reason for testing junior high school students is because Japanese students start learning English in the first grade of junior high school, not of elementary school[14], which is equivalent to the 7th grade in the UK[15]. Two junior high schools and one university[16], after 6-months of

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[13] Ueda and Haraguchi (2008:229): Japanese plural marker *-tati* and Chinese *–men* "are akin to each other in many ways"; the use is optional and restricted to human common nouns, proper nouns, and pronouns (see section 5.2).
   Hawkins, 2001; Lardiere, 2007; Özsoy, 2009.

[14] Since April 2011, they begin learning English in the 5th grade of elementary school.

[15] The grade of junior high school students is shown by the grade in the UK hereafter in this paper.

[16] I am deeply grateful to be offered the headmasters' understanding of this research and the teachers and students' kind cooperation in this study.

difficult negotiations with ten schools[17], kindly agreed to participate in this study on condition that 1) the teachers in charge (not a research student) would collect the data in the English class; 2) the task (including the distribution of materials and instructions) would take less than 40 minutes because it is impossible to take more time out of their tight schedule; 3) the data would be written because it is impractical to collect spoken data which require much more time and effort in class; 4) no detailed information on the schools (e.g. location[18]) would be disclosed. Under these conditions for this study to be accepted, neither a proficiency test nor a spoken production test was allowed. Instead of a proficiency test, length of exposure to English and age (grade) were employed to divide the participants into four groups, each of which had the same number of participants (30 students): those who had received 8 months of classroom instruction in English prior to testing (1st grade junior high school students), those who had received 1.8 years (2nd grade students), those who had received 2.8 years (3rd grade students), and those who had received 7.8 years (2nd year university students). Their ages ranged from 13 to 20. Furthermore, several measures were taken to make the written data as reliable as possible. The number and age of participants were increased in order to fully observe gradual development in early stages of L2 acquisition and to compare with later development. The testing for all four groups was carried out in late January 2011, to make the difference in length of exposure to English regular (see Table 2). In the junior high schools[19], to investigate the English language-learning background, a linguistic background questionnaire was conducted: none of the participants had received intensive/regular English teaching before/after entering junior high schools in either Japan or English-speaking countries. For the university students, the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication)[20] score (the latest score was between 650 and 680 in January 2011 when the TOEIC class finished and the test was conducted) was employed to replace a proficiency test. To avoid possible effects on the results, all of the university students, who had the same major (not English-related), had taken the same number of compulsory English classes in the 1st year and attended the same compulsory TOEIC classes in the 2nd year. The reason for testing the 2nd year university

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[17] Both a pilot study and this study found it hard for a research student without any personal contacts to ask educational institutions for participation in experiments in Japan.

[18] English education in these schools is not influenced directly by regional boards of education.

[19] The two junior high schools were selected on the basis of similarity of deviation values to rule out other possible factors that might affect the results: a deviation value is the percentile a school ranks.

[20] A test that measures L2 learners' ability to understand (e.g. read/listen) English.

students is because the TOEIC classes are scheduled for the 2nd year in the university. In addition, three strategies were designed to ensure a greater quantity of written production data and that it was as spontaneous as possible (see section 3.4).

3.3 Materials

This study employed a picture-stimulus task to elicit written production data. The task contained 63 test sentences in Japanese, each of which was accompanied with a picture and several English words (one to three) to prompt the participants to produce English sentences: for this study, a total of 63 test sentences were created to cover 63 tokens (see Table 5) and each accompanied picture was selected[21] to match each test sentence. There were two types of test items: one was to ask the participants to write an English answer (see sample question 1) and the other was to ask them to form a question sentence (see sample question 2). The participants were instructed to write which kind of answer (either an answer or a question sentence) by a bracketed Japanese prompt after each test sentence, as shown in the sample questions below.

例題 (Sample questions)[22]

１． 栄作は昨夜ビーフシチューを食べましたか。（答え）
Did *Eisaku* eat beef stew last night?　　　(Answer)
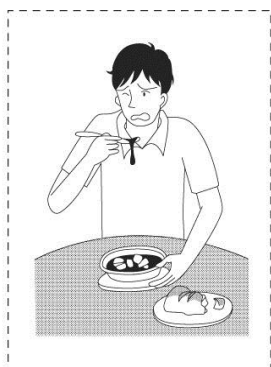
No. beef stew, last night　⇒　(答え) He didn't eat beef stew last night.

(Answer)

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[21] A Japanese website offers us a variety of pictures and sentences as Japanese teaching materials.
[22] English sentences are added for this paper: there was no English sentence in the actual task.

２．　　「玲子が昨日買った物」を尋ねて下さい。（疑問文）
　　　　Please ask a question about what *Reiko* bought yesterday (Question).

Yesterday　　　　　　　⇒(疑問文)**What did she buy yesterday?**

(Question)

As illustrated in Table 5, this task was made of 63 tokens designed to examine both morphological and syntactic properties associated with Tense Phrase (TP) (subject-verb agreement, tense markers, strength of inflection, null/overt subjects, Nominative Case), Complementiser Phrase (CP) (wh-movement) and Determiner Phrase (DP) (articles and plural inflection). In this article, attention is restricted to the analysis of subject-verb agreement, tense markers, overt subjects, Nominative Case in TP and a plural marker in DP in order to test the three hypotheses to interpret morphological variability.

Table 5 Distribution of properties designed in the elicited written production task

			Property	Tokens 63	Test item number1-63
Morphology	Verbal	3p pres	Main V	3	3, 27, 40
			Cop *be*	3	5, 12, 47
			Aux *be*	3	8, 33, 50
		3p past	Main V reg	3	10, 39, 56
			Main V irreg	3	17, 28, 43
	Nominal	Article	*the*	6	2, 4, 13, 40, 48, 60
			a	6	17, 19, 35, 50, 53, 54

			No Article	13	3, 8, 10, 15, 18, 21, 23, 31, 33, 39, 42, 43, 56	
		Plural	*-s*	3	27, 46, 62	
			No Plural	4	6, 30, 52, 58	
Syntax	Word Order	3p pres	Neg	Main V	3	6, 42, 52
		3p past		Main V	3	15, 34, 48
		3p pres		Cop *be*	3	14, 37, 55
		3p pres		Aux *be*	3	20, 45, 53
		3p pres	Adv	Main V	3	18, 31, 62
		3p past		Main V reg	3	2, 21, 23
		3p past		Main V irreg	3	30, 36, 58
		3p pres		Cop *be*	3	25, 59, 61
	Question	3p pres	Who	Subject	3	4, 29, 35
				Object	3	1, 9, 57
			What	Subject	3	38, 44 49
				Object	3	11, 16, 22
		3p past	Who	Subject	3	13, 19, 46
				Object	3	41, 51, 63
			What	Subject	3	24, 54, 60
				Object	3	7, 26, 32
	Subject	Overt Subject		-	63	1 – 63
		Nominative Case		-	63	1 – 63

(3p=3rd person, pres=present tense; Cop=copula *be*, Aux=auxiliary *be*; reg=regular, irreg=irregular; Neg=negation, Adv=adverb)

In addition, a linguistic background questionnaire was conducted for the junior high school students. The questionnaire, which consists of 12 Japanese questions[23], was created to examine whether participants had had other intensive/regular exposure to English before/after entering junior high schools.

3.4 Procedure

The testing of all groups took place in the English class, where each teacher in charge collected the data[24]. Three strategies were used to ensure that the participants provided answers to all the questions in the test, and did so relatively spontaneously without drawing on their metalinguistic knowledge. These strategies were introduced specifically for the 7th grade participants, for whom the task of providing answers to 63 items in only 30 minutes was extremely demanding. The first strategy was to break the test into three sections: participants were asked to write 21 English sentences in 10 minutes in each of the three sections, and were informed when 5 and 10 minutes for each section had elapsed because there was no break between the sections. Secondly, participants were instructed to make their writings as spontaneous as possible. The participants were given only written instructions followed by two illustrative examples before the task (see section 3.3). They were asked to do four things: to answer one question in 20-30 seconds, to write whatever they first thought of without worrying about the correctness of their answers, not to erase their first answers, and to write '*Katakana*[25]' in Japanese or wrong spellings in case that they could not spell words. There were no detailed oral instructions on how to answer before or during the task. Finally, to get the participants focused on producing English sentences[26], all test sentences were described in Japanese and 10 English words (12.3% of the total English

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[23] Due to the time limit set by the schools (see section 3.2), the questionnaire was designed to take 5 minutes to finish.

[24] The research student, not allowed to collect the data in class (see section 3.2), was given a prior opportunity to explain to the teachers in charge how the test would be carried out.

[25] The Japanese syllabary '*Kana*' (*Katakana/Hiragana*) represents 50 phonetic sounds: for example, a vowel such as '*a*' (ア/あ), a consonant-vowel combination such as '*ka*' (カ/か), and a nasal sonorant such as '*n*' (ン/ん). '*Katakana*' is used to transcribe foreign words into Japanese (e.g., カインド=*ka-i-n-do*='kind'; バイク=*ba-i-ku*='bike') and write loan words (e.g., アルバイト=*a-ru-ba-i-to* which is derived from 'arbeit'='part-time job'). By contrast, '*Hiragana*' is used to write function words that '*Kanji*' (=Chinese characters, e.g., 彼女/本/読) does not cover, e.g., 彼女が=*ga*/本を=*o*/読んでいる=*n-de-i-ru*='She is reading a book.'

[26] It is particularly time-consuming for Japanese initial learners to think of the spellings and meanings of English words.

prompt words) were accompanied by their Japanese meanings. The participants were told not to worry about spelling errors in the written instructions.

4. Results

The results in this study concern the four properties associated with TP (subject-verb agreement-*s* and past-tense marker-*d*; overt subjects and Nominative Case) and DP (plural marker-*s*). The findings provide evidence bearing on the three hypotheses for interpreting morphological variability (see section 2).

4.1 Agreement-*s* and overt subjects/Nominative Case

Table 6 shows a sharp contrast between subject-verb agreement-*s* and overt subjects/Nominative Case. Supliance for agreement-*s* is lower than for overt subjects and Nominative Case, although it is assumed that both are determined by the Tense (T) category.

Table 6 Comparison of suppliance rate between agreement-*s* and overt subjects/Nominative Case (%) (Written data)

Proficiency Groups		Agreement-*s*	Overt subjects	Nominative Case
Junior High School (grade)	7th (n=29)	17.2	93.3	100
	8th (n=30)	46.7	90.0	100
	9th (n=30)	23.3	100	100
University (year)	2nd (n=30)	63.3	100	100
Total	n=119	37.6	95.8	100

In agreement-*s*, three kinds of unexpected forms are observed. The absence of a verb is found in the earliest learner group (2 a); by contrast, the misuse of copula (2 b) and past tense (2 c) are predominant in the subsequent proficiency groups.

2.   Expected: She goes to bed at nine every night. (No.3)

   a. She _ nine bed every night.   [JH 7th P23]

   b. She *is* in bed at nine every night.   [JH 8th P2]

   c. She *went* to bed at nine every night.   [JH 9th P8]/ [U2nd P10]

The Japanese adolescent L2 learners performed similarly to Turkish (Haznedar, 2001; White, 2003a), Chinese (Lardiere, 1998a, b; Goad, White and Steele, 2003), and Russian (Inonin and Wexler, 2002) L2 speakers, regardless of the difference in the participants' L1, age, number, length of L2 exposure, L2 input setting, and L2 data mode (see Tables 2 and 3), as summarized in Table 7.

Table 7 Comparison of suppliance rate in previous studies (%)[27](Spoken data)

Study	L1		Agreement-*s*		Overt subjects	Nominative Case
	Agree-ment	Pro-Drop				
Haznedar 2001 1 participant Age: 4 Initial	Turkish		46.67		99	99.9
	+	+				
White 2003a 1 participant Age:50,51 End			1st	78.0	98.5	100
			2nd	81.5	99.4	100
Lardiere1998a,b 1 participant Age:32,41 End	Chinese		1st	4.76		100
			2nd	0.00	98	100
			3rd	4.54		100

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[27] Haznedar, 2001:12, 34, 37; White, 2003a:134/135; White, 2003b:189; Goad, White and Steele, 2003:255/256.
   The descriptions are based on those from each of the previous studies (see footnote 10/11for the details).

Goad, White &Steele 2003 12 participants Age: '*adult*'	-	+	28	/	100
Ionin&Wexler 2002 20 participants Age: 3-13 Initial	Russian +	+	22	98	/

The results in this study, as in the previous studies, clearly show a dissociation between the use of morphological forms and the acquisition of abstract syntactic representations. The high distribution of overt/Nominative subjects suggests that a functional category T[28] is present in their L2 grammar from early on, which is inconsistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis but consistent with the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis.

4.2 Agreement-*s* and regular past tense-*d*

Table 8 illustrates the suppliance rates of both subject-verb agreement and past tense marking. Suppliance for agreement-*s* is lower than for regular past tense-*d*, as in the comparison with overt subjects/Nominative Case (see Table 6).

Table 8 Comparison of suppliance rate between agreement-*s* and regular /irregular past tense (%) (Written data)

Proficiency Groups		Agreement-*s*	-	Regular-*d*	+	Irregular	-
Junior High School (grade)	7th	n=29	17.2	n=27	55.6	n=28	32.1
	8th (n=30)	46.7		50.0		36.7	
	9th (n=30)	23.3		56.7		40.0	
University (year)	2nd (n=30)	63.3		86.7		40.0	

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[28] Functional categories (Tense, Complementiser, Determiner) head a projection but do not assign ϑ-roles. Tense (T) is the category that hosts the tense feature for the whole sentence (Adger, 2003:156,165).

Total		n=119	37.6	n=117	62.3	n=118	37.2

In both regular and irregular past tense contexts, unexpected forms are produced, regardless of proficiency level: faulty use of tense (3 a, b, c) and overuse of auxiliary *do/be* (4 a, b).

3. Expected: She played tennis yesterday.   (No.39: Regular past tense)

        a. She ***was playing*** tennis yesterday. [JH 9th P12]

        b. She ***plays*** tennis yesterday.   [JH 7th P3]

   Expected: He bought a ticket last week.   (No.17: Irregular past tense)

        c. He ***buies*** *the* ticket last week.   [JH 9th P4]

4. Expected: She played tennis yesterday.   (No.39)

        a. She ***did*** *play* tennis yesterday.   [U 2nd P26]

   Expected: He bought a ticket last week.   (No.17)

        b. He ***is*** bought _ ticket last week.   [JH 7th P28]

As summarized in Table 9, the previous L2 studies have similarly shown a divergence in suppliance between the two verbal inflections in the same functional category, although the learners have different L1 values for agreement and past tense, as well as age, number, and length of L2 exposure.

Table 9 Comparison of suppliance rate in previous studies (%)[29] (Spoken data)

Study	L1		Agreement-*s*		Regular Past tense-*d*	Irregular Past tense
	Agree-ment	Past tense				
Haznedar 2001 1 participant Age: 4 Initial	Turkish		46.67		25.65	40.59
	+	+				
Lardiere 1998a,b;2003 1 participant Age: 32,41 End	Chinese		1st	4.76	5.8	46.08
			2nd	0.00		
	−	−	3rd	4.54		
Goad, White &Steele 2003 12 participants Age: '*adult*'			28		57	78
Ionin&Wexler 2002 20 participants Age:3-13 Initial	Russian		22		42	
	+	+				

In addition, this study and some of the previous studies (Haznedar, 2001; Lardiere, 2003; Goad, White and Steele, 2003) similarly demonstrate a further distinction in suppliance within the category of past tense markers, regardless of the difference in the participants' L1, age, number, length of L2 exposure, setting for L2 input, and type of L2 data. The Turkish and Chinese L2 speakers produce irregular past tense more

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[29] Haznedar, 2001:38/39; Lardiere, 2003:184; Goad, White and Steele, 2003:255; White, 2003b:189.

frequently than regular past tense-*d*.   However, the Japanese L2 learners produce regular past tense-*d* more frequently than irregular past tense whose production rate is similar to agreement-*s*. They also produce some overuse cases of the regular -*d* marker, such as buy*ed*, take*d*, and wake*d*, given in 5 (a, b, c).

5.   Expected: He bought a ticket last week.   (No.17)

     a. He buy*ed* _ ticket last week.   [JH 7th P9]

     b. He taked _ ticket last week.   [JH 9th P24]

  Expected: He got up at seven yesterday.   (No.28)

     c. He waked up at seven yesterday. [U 2nd P29]

Such variations in suppliance for these verbal forms may be attributable to L1 effects, which is not consistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis but consistent with the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis. This will be explored in detail in section 5.

4.3 Agreement-*s* and plural-*s*

Table 10 compares the suppliance for subject-verb agreement-*s* with that for plural-*s*. Suppliance for subject-verb agreement-*s* is lower than for plural-*s*.

Table 10 Comparison of suppliance rate between agreement-*s* and plural-*s* (%)(Written data)

Proficiency Groups		Agreement-*s*		Plural-*s*	
	7th	n=29	17.2	n=27	85.2
Junior High School (grade)	8th (n=30)	46.7		70.0	
	9th (n=30)	23.3		70.0	
University (year)	2nd (n=30)	63.3		73.3	
Total		n=119	37.6	n=117	74.6

By contrast, in Table 11, the spontaneous spoken data of White's study (2003a) show no difference in production between the two -*s* inflections.

Table 11 Comparison of suppliance rate in a previous study (%) (Spoken data)

Study	L1		Agreement-*s*		Plural-*s*
	Agree-ment	Plural			
White 2003a[30] 1 participant Age:50,51 End	Turkish		1st	78.0	87
	+	+	2nd	81.5	90

It seems plausible to assume that the high production appears to be affected by the presence of marking in L1, as in the comparison with past tense markers. This is against the Minimal Trees Hypothesis but supports the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis. Furthermore, the results of the written production task, which are not influenced by L1 phonological representation, clearly show that the same -*s* inflections were produced differently. This suggests that the discrepancy cannot be accounted for by the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis (see section 5 for discussion).

5. Discussion

The findings in this study show that suppliance for subject-verb agreement-*s* is lower than for overt subjects/Nominative Case, regular past tense-*d*, and plural-*s*. The differences in production suggest a dissociation between syntax and morphology, the presence of possible L1 effects, and the absence of L1 prosodic transfer.

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[30] White, 2003a:136.

5.1　The relation between morphological variability and syntactic knowledge

The contrasting results between syntactic and morphological properties are inconsistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis, which claims that functional categories are absent because the acquisition of morphology triggers that of syntactic knowledge as in L1 acquisition. The early and near perfect production rate of overt subjects and Nominative Case provides robust evidence for the presence of functional categories with specified features. It is assumed that L2 learners construct an L2 grammar where the Tense category requires an overt specifier to be produced and assigns it Nominative Case from a very early stage of development. This suggests that a low level of subject-verb agreement production, regardless of being in the same functional category, does not correlate with the acquisition of syntactic knowledge. The discrepancy in production suggests a dissociation between syntax and morphology, which is consistent with the claims of the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis. This is a finding which is also replicated in the previous studies of other L2 speakers whose L1 background, age, length of L2 exposure, L2 input setting, and L2 data mode are totally different (see Tables 6 and 7 in section 4.1).

5.2 Possible L1 effects and the complexity of feature composition

This study found variable production rates of inflectional morphology: subject-verb agreement-*s*, regular past tense-*d*, and plural-*s*. The higher production rate of regular past tense-*d* and plural-*s*, compared with agreement-*s*, suggests a possible L1 effect, which is inconsistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis. This suggests that the production rate depends on whether the L1 has corresponding overt morphological forms (exponents of functional categories). For example, Japanese has only a regular past tense form: a suffix-*ta*, like -*d* in English, is always inflected to indicate past tense on verbs (Kudo, 1995; Kubo & Suwa, 2007). This might cause the divergence in production between the two past tense forms (regular>irregular) (see Table 8 in section 4.2) and the overuse of regular past tense-*d* in irregular past tense form contexts (see example 5 in section 4.2). Japanese also has an optional plural marker-*tati*, which is a suffix like English -*s*, but is limited to human common nouns ('*gakusei'-tati* 'students'),

proper nouns ('*Taro'-tati* 'Taro and his group'), and pronouns ('*watashi'-tati* 'we') (Ueda & Haraguchi, 2008). By contrast, Japanese has no overt subject-verb agreement morphology. The previous studies show similar results to this study, although the participants' L1, age, length of L2 exposure, L2 input setting, and L2 data mode are contrasting. The difference in the morphological paradigm between L1 and L2 influences a variety of morphological production rates: the L1 Japanese and Chinese produce agreement-*s* differently to the L1 Turkish speakers (see Tables 6 and 7 in section 4.1), regardless of the similar production rate of syntactic properties. This is consistent with the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis which proposes that morphological variation is attributed to unimpaired L2 grammar but difficulties with mapping from abstract syntax to superficial realization of morphology. In addition, the lower production of subject-verb agreement-*s* can be accounted for by the complexity of feature composition: the L1 Turkish and Russian child speakers show a lower level of agreement production, regardless of the presence of L1 agreement morphology (see Table 7 in section 4.1). The agreement features have "multiple layers of complexity" (Lardiere, 2000:124)[31], which are obstacles to mapping from syntactic features to morphological forms. This account can possibly explain the difference in production rate among these three inflections across studies.

5.3 L1 Prosodic structure

This study shows that Japanese L2 adolescent learners produce plural-*s* more frequently than subject-verb agreement-*s*. The divergence in production rate between the same -*s* inflections is inconsistent with the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis, which proposes that variable L2 production of morphology can be accounted for by L1 prosodic constraints. Given that L2 English inflection is prosodified in the same fashion (adjunction to the PWd), the same L2 English -*s* inflections, as well as -*d*, are expected to be produced in equal proportions by L2 speakers. For example, a Chinese L2 advanced speaker (reported in Lardiere, 2003) shows a similar low production rate in both agreement -*s* and regular past tense-*d* (see Table 9 in section 4.2): the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis (Goad, White and Steele, 2003) argues that her interlanguage grammar allows no adjunction structure required by L2 English inflection. This suggests that the

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[31] In a series of recent studies (2007, 2008, 2009), Lardiere proposes that L2 learners face difficulties in re-assembling L1 features into L2 lexical items: The Feature Reassembly Hypothesis.

Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis concerns the role of L1 prosody in L2 speech production, which is assumed to have no effect on written production. However, the Japanese L2 learners in this study show different suppliance of the three kinds of inflections in the written production task (see Tables 8 and 10 in section 4.2/4.3). Such a difference in suppliance would not be explained even if Japanese verbal inflection[32] shared the same prosodic structure as either English or Chinese: if it were PWd-external like English regular inflection, no asymmetry would be observed between two affixal forms (-*s*/-*d*) and agreement -*s* would be more accurate than irregular past forms; if it were PWd-internal like Chinese and English irregular inflection, irregular forms would show better performance than the other two verbal affixes. This suggests that the discrepancy may be attributable to other factors than L1 prosodic role. This is a finding similar to Snape's study (2007) that tests the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis, based on spoken production data on L1 Japanese' English article use. The different production rates can be explained not by the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis, but by the account of the complexity of feature composition within the framework of the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (see section 2.2/2.3).

6. Conclusion

This study contributes to testing three hypotheses about the interpretation of L2 learners' varied performance in the production of inflectional morphology. The findings drawn from the written production of 120 L1 Japanese L2 English learners clearly show similarity to those from the spoken production data in the other previous studies, regardless of the difference in participants' L1, age, number, and L2 input setting. First, the early and high distribution of overt subjects/Nominative case provides strong evidence for a dissociation between syntax and morphology and the presence of L1 functional categories, which is not consistent with the Minimal Trees Hypothesis. Second, the lower suppliance of agreement-*s*, compared to plural-*s* and regular past tense-*d*, might be attributed to processing problems, caused by the complexity of feature composition and possible L1 effects. Such different production rates of the three inflections cannot be predicted by the Minimal Trees Hypothesis and the Prosodic Transfer Hypothesis. The findings in this study suggest that the variability of L2

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[32] Dintrans (2011:56) assumes that "Japanese past morphology is internal to the PWd."

inflectional morphology is correlated to difficulties with mapping from abstract syntactic knowledge to overt morphological forms, not to impairment of L2 grammar. This provides evidence for the Missing Surface Inflection Hypothesis (Lardiere, 1998a, b, 2000; Prévost and White, 2000a, b). The conclusion leads to a closer examination of how the difference in features between L1 and L2 plays a role in variable L2 representation and of how semantic, phonological, and morphosyntactic features interact. This knowledge would be beneficial to L2 learners who face difficulties in written and spoken productions.

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Parachuted into the Périgord: Media representations of British migrants in south-west France

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Abstract

This paper forms part of a wider study of migrant identity within the context of British lifestyle migration to south-west France. The aim is to situate the research within its wider social context by examining media representations of British migration to France. Extracts from selected media discourse are analysed using elements from the Appraisal framework and from van Leeuwen's Social Actor framework.

Results show a pattern of negative assumptions, with clear demarcation between in- and out-group as newer arrivals are constructed linguistically as a vague mass entity that is a threat to the established residents. These results suggest that lifestyle migration to France has undergone recontextualisation in the promotion of particular ideologies based on social differentiation, with some types of migrant behaviour presented as more acceptable than others. These generalised perspectives will be taken into account when exploring how identity is constructed within local migrant discourse. Bourdieu's concept of habitus is discussed as a way of understanding these distinctions.

1. Introduction

This paper forms part of a doctoral study of British lifestyle migration to south-west France. The main objective of the study is to investigate the "alternative identity" (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009) offered by migration to British settlers in the Ariège département of the Midi-Pyrénées; how they not only self-identify as individuals and claim their position within society, but also how they attempt to position themselves and others within the British community. The study develops the existing sociological

research on lifestyle migration as well as extending current literature on migrant identity as its main focus is upon intra-group identity rather than cross-cultural adaptation. Data has been gathered from interviews and from a former online forum for English-speaking migrants in the Ariège. However, since the local context does not exist in isolation, it is necessary to situate the study within its wider social context. This paper examines a third dataset of media discourse, in order to take a perspective beyond the local/interactional. By broadening the focus to the wider practice of lifestyle migration, we may speculate on the nature of the interactions between local and global discourse (van Dijk, 1997). Other studies of online migrant discourse have shown a reflection of global arguments (Del-Teso-Craviotto, 2009) and it is pertinent to seek insights into how such groups are represented in the media before searching for how such representations are produced locally.

2. Background to the study

The phenomenon of 'lifestyle migration' is conceptualised as a deliberate and often escapist route towards a better or more fulfilling life (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009). Although there is often a need to generate an income in the new life, this is not the impetus behind the decision to migrate, which makes it distinct from economic or labour migration. With a variety of destinations and influencing push/pull factors, it is clear that the concept evades generalisation apart from an underlying "common narrative" of a search for a better quality of life (Benson & O'Reilly, 2009). There are associated material advantages, such as lower property prices and warmer climate, as well as less easily measurable benefits such as a less stressful pace of life and a safer environment (Torkington, 2010). Among the common themes emerging from recent studies of British lifestyle migration to France is that of a rural orientation in the search for an idealised lifestyle that is nevertheless more concerned with "consuming the countryside, rather than earning a living from it" (Buller & Hoggart, 1994, p.200). According to Benson (2011: 37), such consumption is guided by "middle class aesthetic and ecological considerations" when seeking the traditional properties, locally produced food and wine and the slower pace of life that are associated with rural France.

For what reasons did you move to this part of France?

Wanted a better quality of life

Climate

Appreciate French culture

Wanted a simpler, less stressful life

Prior knowledge of the region

Lower property prices

Felt uncomfortable in the UK

Business or career opportunity

Legend:
■ Very important
■ Quite important
■ Not very important
■ Not relevant

0%   20%   40%   60%   80%   100%

Rating of factors by importance (percentage of respondents)

Figure 1: Questionnaire results showing the relative importance of factors influencing migration.

These common narratives are visible among the participants of my own study. In a questionnaire completed by 21 members of the online forum in 2010, lifestyle factors including quality of life and climate were cited as being of the highest importance in the decision to migrate to this département (see Figure 1), an observation echoed by Torkington (2010) in a profiling study of lifestyle migration to the Algarve. By citing factors associated with culture and lifestyle rather than economics, participants appear keen to express their own initiative in actively seeking an improved lifestyle within a distinct culture.

In contrast, more specific pull factors such as prior knowledge of the region were rated as less important. One might expect the relative unimportance of familiarity with the Ariège to be balanced by more significance given to the price of property, as the Ariège is popularly regarded as having relatively affordable property. Average prices shown on French property websites in November 2011 suggested 1556 per m² for the Ariège, compared with neighbouring départements of Aude (1958 m²), Haute-Pyrenees (1637 m²) and Pyrenees-Orientales (2617 per m²) (Immobilier.com). However, only a quarter

of respondents rated affordability as very important. As this paper will demonstrate, lifestyle migration to France is subject to negative stereotyping – the 'Brit' whose decision to migrate is led by property prices rather than appreciation or knowledge – which raises the question of whether migrants are aware of such stereotypes and deliberately avoid alignment with them.

3. Identity in lifestyle migration

In Benson's (2011) study of British migration to the Lot, migrants' lives were said to be characterised by ambivalence derived from tensions between romantic accounts that matched expectations of the new life, and how that life was actually experienced. This is supported by my own observations from the online forum; member postings illustrate how, for those with limited knowledge of the language, local area and way of life, the reality of living in France may prove challenging as there are frequent requests for help with finding English-speaking services as well as everyday matters such as where to buy furniture and wood fuel. We can thus see the potential for a degree of marginalisation; O'Reilly and Benson (2009) suggest that, far from escaping the structural differences of life before migration, the new life may in some cases reproduce inequalities.

Distinctions may be made on multiple levels: by migrants stressing their own agency or 'adventurousness', by using stereotypes, by emphasising the uniqueness of destinations, and by distinguishing between migrants and those who remain in the UK.

On the one hand, we can see a degree of 'agency', or active involvement in shaping one's own experience, as part of an 'individualising modernity' (Giddens, 1991) that drives our self-realising projects. Indeed, in Giddens' view of lifestyle as a set of practices that 'give material form to a particular narrative of self-identity' (*ibid* 81), we can see that what migrants choose to do in the new life is a reflection of their decisions of who to be and how to live. This is enabled by the popularity of migration as a consumer practice, seen in the marketing of foreign property amid images of 'lifestyle' (*French Property News*), and television programmes such as *A Place in the Sun* that follow prospective emigrants in searching for a property that can offer them a 'better way of life'. These interpretations of what constitutes a better lifestyle are the 'visible role models' that help reify the narrative of self-identity (Giddens, 1991: 81).

Alongside these promotions lie the structural conditions that Giddens (1991) argues make it possible for the individual to make 'internally referenced' decisions within the reflexive project of the self. These include the weakening of anchors to external ties such as family, as well as opportunities for more remote working practices such as renting out property or digital working. Add to this the relative ease of migration within the EU, plus the recent property boom in the UK in which many homeowners found themselves with collateral in property, and we can see the role played by the social environment as it is reflexively utilised and interpreted by migrants who attempt to gain a sense of control over their lives.

On the other hand, some recent studies (O'Reilly & Benson, 2009; Oliver & O'Reilly, 2010) have argued that social structures may also constrain the search for a more distinctive way of life. They look to Bourdieu's (1990) theories of *habitus*, or unconscious disposition based on past experience, as a relevant concept for understanding how more internalised aspects such as experience, expectations and aspirations can form a bridge between social structures and individual agency (Jenkins, 1996). Lifestyle, as a product of habitus, becomes a system of distinctive signs or tastes that are socially qualified (Bourdieu, 1984: 170) and these may be more dynamic in a context such as lifestyle migration where social identity will be more fluid. Indeed, the very act of claiming "appreciation of French culture" as an important reason to migrate is an attempt to transform a more British habitus. Bourdieu's concepts of social, cultural and symbolic forms of capital offer a way of understanding such distinctions in a context where economic capital may be less relevant. *Social capital,* such as resources based on group membership, may include one's ability to participate in different social contexts, such as French activities and English speaking networks. *Cultural capital* corresponds to knowledge and skills, such as competence in French or sympathetic restoration of property. *Symbolic* capital, likened to "a reputation for competence" (Bourdieu, 1984: 291), may derive from being "notable" for one's ability to integrate. This is exemplified by Benson's participants who qualify their chosen lifestyle as distinctive from that of others, distinguishing between those who claim knowledge of *how to live* in rural France compared with others who are seen to merely *consume* French life (2010). The enduring nature of habitus and associated forms of social and cultural capital has led to migrants assessing the extent to which they have

exceeded the accomplishments of the other expats in integration and appreciation of French life, in contrast to those who are consumption-led in the search for property.

My research is primarily interested in how such distinctions are expressed in discourse, and how this particular context is situated within the macro perspective of global attitudes towards lifestyle migration. Identity is considered beyond a private view of the self as the concept of 'lifestyle' cannot be viewed in isolation as merely part of the migrant's self-identification. Lifestyle migration is a response to global developments that offer the freedom to change one's life through the means and the knowledge of alternative ways of life. The collectivity of social identity is therefore relevant when considering the social context of lifestyle migration. Social identity can be further differentiated into the separate yet simultaneous facets of *group identity* and *social categorisation* (Jenkins, 1996). Jenkins defines group identity as an internal definition of which its members are conscious (for example 'British'). In contrast, social categorisation is an external definition whereby we define ourselves and others as belonging to different social categories that are not consciously defined as such by their members, such as migrants who are categorised as newcomers.

As the literature and my own pilot studies have shown, social categorisation is clearly present in migrants' narratives and in the forum postings, where members sometimes take a stance against the "flood of expats" and those who "do not know anything about the country or language" (examples posted on the online forum in 2007). Media representations of migration to France help form the social context that informs and influences how local discourse, such as online communication, is produced and interpreted. It will be possible to consider whether local distinctions are embedded within wider stereotypes and socially shared attitudes.

4. Data

While a full corpus investigation of media representations of British migrants in France is outside the scope of this study, an overview of common themes will give an indication of how the British in France are routinely presented. An initial search of the *LexisNexis* publication database in September 2010, using the search criteria *Brits* or *British in France,* yielded thirty-eight articles, mostly from broadsheets, and comprising lifestyle

articles or columns rather than news. Some authors were regular columnists, living in France themselves, who were therefore presenting their observations from an insider's point of view. Each article was read and those that included negative evaluations of British migrants were noted, reducing the number of articles to ten. These ten articles were then read in depth to identify specific examples of negativity towards 'other' British migrants, and these were found to broadly correspond to two common themes: the first representing migrants as sticking to British communities and ways of life, with the second portraying the British migrant as ignorantly following a 'dream', or property bandwagon, with little idea of what they are buying into. Although these excerpts are decontextualised, the aim of this study is to pick out negative evaluations within the media and to see whether a pattern could be determined.

Finally, one article by John Lichfield (2004), "Our man in Normandy", in *The Independent* was selected for its overall focus on the negative consequences of the "new" British invasion, including reference to an out-group within the title (*Find a rustic retreat away from other Brits*). Lichfield describes the towns of the south-west where English is "the most commonly heard language in the Saturday street market", and he contrasts this with his own observations in Normandy, where the lower concentrations of British incomers are not only "welcome, but prized". According to van Leeuwen, (2008, p. 20) texts not only represent social practices but also "explain and legitimate" (or critique) them. It therefore becomes apparent that Lichfield is simultaneously criticising one type of mass migration while also legitimating other variations of this practice, as exemplified by his own, by describing it as welcomed "by small villages and towns which are struggling to survive".

This text therefore offers an example of how lifestyle migration as social practice is recontextualised (van Leeuwen, 2008) into one with an inherent ideology, by which I refer to a framework of values that are shared by a social group (van Dijk, 1990). Such ideological values may underpin the maintenance of social power in the sense that one kind of lifestyle migration is portrayed as more acceptable, or legitimate, than another. Two extracts from the 693-word article were selected for analysis for their reference to both in-group and out-group social actors.

5. Methodology

In order to gain an overview of explicitly negative evaluations within the media and to see whether a pattern could be determined, the evaluative sections of the eight articles were analysed for judgemental language. Analysis of attitudinal meaning is rooted within the Appraisal framework outlined by White (2006) and it analyses the linguistic strategies by which texts activate such assessments. I have selected the sub-system of Attitude and its category of *Judgement* as an appropriate methodology for giving an overview of evaluations made with reference to the culturally-determined value systems conveyed by the writers of these texts.

For a more in-depth analysis of an extract, van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actors framework was selected to examine how social actors and their actions are constructed within one media extract. This framework is particularly relevant for the analysis of collective identity representations in the form of both group identity and social categorisation. The framework brings together a number of linguistic systems within what van Leeuwen refers to as *recontextualisation*, seen here in the sense of how a media text focuses on one aspect of an event and adds evaluation according to the goals of the writer, so it becomes transformed or *recontextualised*. Of the transformation types, the two most relevant to this extract are:

- Rearrangements, seen where grammatical choices such as transitivity can represent social actors and their actions with either an active or passive role.
- Substitutions, whereby elements of the actual social practice are substituted with other elements that give different meanings; for example, the differentiation of social actors.
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6. Analysis and discussion

6.1 Using the Appraisal framework

Within the Appraisal system, the semantic domain of *Judgement* encompasses evaluation of human behaviour with reference not only to rules, but also to the social expectations that are determined by cultural and ideological values (White, 2002). The

most obvious evaluations are those that are explicitly presented using ***attitudinal inscription***, as seen in this criticism of migrant competence where the British migrant is portrayed as ignorantly following a 'dream' with little idea of what they are buying into (the lexical item carrying the judgement is underlined):

"We are talking about the person who buys into a <u>halfbaked</u> dream without realising that

no one can live a dream for ever." (Tominey, 2005), *The Express*.

The extracts also illustrate some interesting use of inscription using lexis that carries a positive/negative sense even when removed from its current context, as seen in the use of 'branded as' below.

"a friend admitted that when she bought an expatriate newspaper at the local supermarket she hid it under other purchases because she felt it <u>branded</u> her as belonging to the "British ghetto"." (Streeter, 2009), *The Independent.*

Most noticeable in these extracts, however, is the frequent occurrence of the word "ghetto", a subjective category of settlement traditionally used to describe isolated minorities forced into particular areas. The choice of "ghetto", rather than, say, "enclave", is therefore unexpected when describing the relatively affluent British migrant who has chosen to follow a 'dream' of a better way of life.

"They form <u>ghettos</u> and buy isolated properties. It's a bit like the Raj." (Thomas, 2007), *The Times*.

"The Best of British group as I call them live in British <u>ghettos</u>, surrounded by British mates, playing golf and bridge, and discussing where you can buy the cheapest Marmite in the area." (Frith Powell, 2006) *The Sunday Times*.

"None of them speaks French. They stay in their <u>ghettoes</u>, just like Arabs in the city suburbs." (attributed to a local resident). (Peregrine, 2007), *The Daily Telegraph*.

"Some French are complaining that the British live in <u>ghettos</u>, overload the health service and dodge the French tax system." (Loos, 2005), *The Daily Telegraph*.

"For the deeply rural French, the immigration is insensitive and offensive, and

some liken the British to the Algerians, gathering in <u>ghettoes</u> in the city suburbs." (Reid, 2007) *The Times.*

It is interesting that little explicit description of the British communities is given to justify the use of the word "ghetto", and the authors therefore position themselves as reflecting a generally accepted world view, often quoted from others, that the British isolate themselves in English-speaking communities. Such references present the evaluation as more factual, or 'given', than if the writers had described the settlements as "like ghettos". By presenting the *British ghettos* as an accepted fact, the reader is not positioned to make a decision as to whether they agree with the label; as White suggests (2004), the reader's acceptance is assumed and the writer's subjectivity is concealed.

A less direct evaluation can be carried using ***attitudinal tokens***. White argues that these are the most manipulative and coercive meanings, as the reader is positioned to interpret them according to some underlying value systems or sociocultural norms (White, 2004). In the example below from The Times, Roche (2004) makes a generalised observation of British behaviour that is outwardly factual in its description of the Brits as limited in their capacity for adventure. Nevertheless, the very act of commenting on such behaviour and generalising the details evokes a particular viewpoint that seems to arise naturally from the stated 'facts': that continuing to behave in an unadventurous British manner is somehow not appropriate within the context of lifestyle migration.

> *"But the adventurous spirit of the Brits in France has its limit. They really want to rebuild on the other side of the Channel the same life they have in England. They listen to the BBC, make sausages and mash and drink too much wine."* (Roche, 2004), *The Times.*

Slightly different are what White (2006) terms ***attitudinal provocations***, which may be triggered by mechanisms such as comparison and metaphor, both of which are common strategies across these extracts. The example below, a quote from a British estate agent working in France for twenty years, brings in a cited comparison to provoke the reader to pass judgement based on an ideological value of how lifestyle migration should be:

> *"The original immigrants came because they really loved France," she says. "Those that come now are here to take advantage of the better style of living and they don't mind whether it is France, Spain or Italy - they simply want a detached house with their own grounds. They come to France because they have seen it on a TV programme. And among them are those who don't want to become part of the French community."* (Loos, 2005), *The Daily Telegraph.*

This apparently factual description forms the basis of the writer's justification to compare the "original immigrants" with those who come to "take advantage". The comparison avoids the use of explicitly negative lexis and instead provokes the reader to interpret the cited behaviour as either valued or inappropriate according to cultural conditioning. Linking this back to Bourdieu's types of capital, the original migrants are portrayed as possessing cultural capital (knowledge) and symbolic capital (integration), whereas the more recent arrivals are represented as in possession of economic capital only.

Other attitudinal provocations include metaphorical language, such as "invasion" and "flood", used here to provoke the reader to make judgement of the recent phenomenon. In the examples below, migration is conceptualised as a flood or invasion in which the British settlers are treated as one mass noun rather than individuals, and consequently assuming a greater and more damaging force:

> *"According to Mike Norman, of estate agency Nord Charente Homes, over the past five years the British have arrived in "a <u>flood</u> that just hasn't stopped."* (Loos, 2005), *The Daily Telegraph.*
> *"The British <u>invasion</u> had started.*" (Duke, 2006), *The Times.*

Overall the analysis suggests that there is a *pattern* of negative assumptions across these extracts. The attitudes embedded within the above examples appear to broadly correspond to the distinctions made by the more established migrants of Benson's study, and they may correspond to what van Dijk (1997) refers to as a link between micro and macro, as migrants such as those identified by Benson may be disassociating from these stereotypes, using discourse to represent themselves as not only distinct from the newcomers, but also as members of a divergent (established) group. As the

existence of "British ghettos" and generalised behaviour is reproduced through these representations, at the same time it normalises and legitimises the ideologies of a social group (van Dijk, 1990). Members who are aware of such ideologies may therefore construct a position of identity in relation to the inherent value system.

6.2 Using the Social Actor framework

The Social Actor framework (van Leeuwen, 2008) was selected to carry out a more detailed analysis of how the British themselves and their actions are constructed in one particular text. Two sections were chosen for their specific ingroup and outgroup references:

"In many cases it is the longer-established British residents who feel most threatened by the "new" British invasion of "Dordogneshire" and its borders. Until, say, five years ago, almost all of the British incomers were seeking holiday or retirement homes. There is now a wave of younger British migrants to the French south-west who want to escape the congestion at home.

Personally, I have some sympathy with long-standing British residents who are uncomfortable at the thought of being swamped by other Britons. In most cases, the older residents say, they chose to live in France because they loved France and the rural French way of life. They did not want a slice of the home counties parachuted into the Périgord."

By John Lichfield, The Independent, January 14, 2004

6.3 Grammatical rearrangements

The Social Actor framework considers role allocation as an aspect of social actor representation. In Figure 2 below, we can see that Lichfield endows the established migrants with both active and passive roles as a means of positive representation. Activation of the established migrants occurs in their actions as the dynamic forces in an activity, mainly in processes where their intellectual actions are foregrounded, such as making decisions based on cultural appreciation (*chose, loved*). They are also given a voice (*say*), unlike the new arrivals. However, reactions also play a significant role in

the representation of established migrants, as they are represented as reacting emotively to the newer influx. Although their reactions are activated using active verbs, they are given passive roles using circumstantialisation (*by* the "new" British invasion; swamped *by* other Britons).   In this way their reactions are foregrounded in grammatical formations that construct a passive role for the older migrants.

Social actors	*longer-established British residents* *long-standing British residents* *British incomers* *the older residents*
Activation: actions	*seeking holiday or retirement homes* *the older residents say* *they chose to live in France* *they loved France and the rural French way of life* *They did not want*
Activation: reactions	*Feel most threatened by the "new" British invasion* *are uncomfortable* *being swamped by other Britons*

Figure 2: Activation of social actors (established migrants)

In contrast, the reactions of the newer migrants are not represented; they are the provokers, not provoked. However, as Figure 3 reveals, the invasion of the younger migrants is not shown as a particularly dynamic process. Although these recent migrants are activated in relation to 'threatening' and 'swamping', they are de-emphasised in the passive clause, including an interesting passivation using *parachuted into,* as if the recent migrants are being dropped in by some outside force rather than as a result of their own agency.

Social actors	• *the "new" British invasion of "Dordogneshire*
	• *a wave of younger British migrants*
	• *other Britons*
	• *a slice of the home counties*
Activation: actions	• *want to escape the congestion at home*
	• *threatened by (activated in relation to 'threatening')*
	• *swamped by (activated in relation to 'swamping')*
	• *parachuted into the Périgord*

Figure 3: Activation of social actors (recent migrants)

## 6.4 Substitution of elements

By analysing the linguistic elements of *determination* we can examine how the identity of social actors is represented (see Figure 4 below). The sub-categories of determination include *categorisation*, which corresponds to Jenkins' *group identities,* where in- and out-group representation is defined by more tangible and recognisable categories of *identification, functionalisation* and *classification*. Figure 4 shows functionalisation in the interesting use of "migrants" to categorise the newer arrivals in comparison with the long-standing "residents", which reflects a more permanent activity.

Van Leeuwen's *differentiation*, where differences between individuals or groups are explicitly shown between "us" and "them" (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 40) corresponds to Jenkins' less easily definable *social categorisation,* and can be seen in Lichfield's explicit reference to the "other" as distinct from the long-standing migrants, as well as "established" against "new", and the generalised "younger" versus "older".
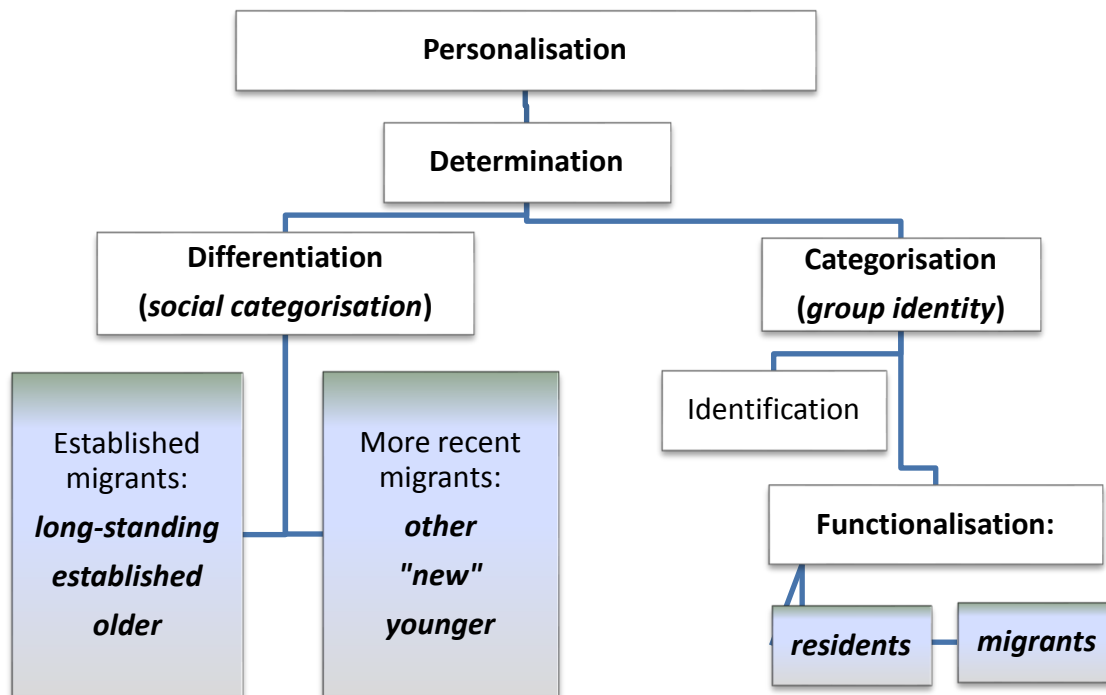
Figure 4: Determination: how identity is specified in the Social Actor framework (after van Leeuwen 2008).

The above strategies are those of personalisation; however, more abstract impersonalisation may also be used to assign a quality, using *abstraction*, or by reference to a place or thing associated with them, which van Leeuwen terms *objectivation.* In these extracts, impersonalisation lends strength to the recent migration and its effect by representing it as a mass force, reinforcing the non-dynamic representations discussed in the previous section as the individual identity of these settlers is made obscure:
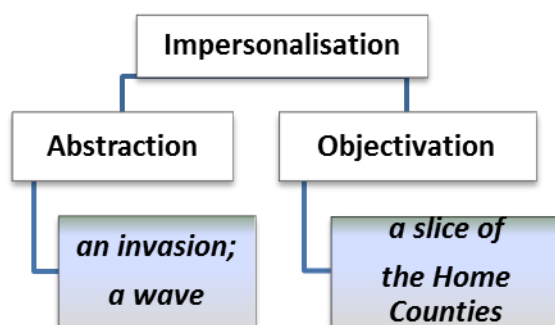
Figure 5: Analysis of Impersonalisation using the Social Actor framework (after van Leeuwen 2008).

The Social Actor framework makes explicit the contrast between the generalised phenomenon of recent migrants, whose only active participation is represented as a desire to escape, and the older migrants who made individual decisions based on appreciation of France and its culture. The in-group of established migrants, whose intellectual processes are foregrounded in their decisions to move to France, are represented as on the receiving end of a 'threat' from the out-group of newer arrivals. The latter are constructed as a vague force, pushed out of the UK and 'dropped' en masse into France.

7. Conclusion

Discourse is the resource through which the social practice of lifestyle migration is represented. This paper has demonstrated the value of situating a local study within its wider social context by examining media discourse. The analysis has demonstrated how writers who participate in lifestyle migration also recontextualise it to promote particular ideologies based on social categorisations. Many texts rely on the reader to apply sociocultural norms of some kind in order to make a negative judgement of British migrants who choose France for its consumable resources, and who live within the confines of British communities.

While the phenomenon does not exhibit the explicit issues of social injustice that we see in contexts of power and discrimination, this is nevertheless an example of discourse used to construct a social reality that discriminates through judgement and

stereotyping. It will be interesting to investigate how far such beliefs permeate local discourse among the migrants themselves, particularly in the construction of identity, to forge distinction within local communities. If so it may represent local reification of the ideologies seen within these media extracts.

Nevertheless, the question remains of how we can ascertain the role of media texts in the promotion of global beliefs that permeate local discourse. While there is occasional evidence of such distinction within online discourse, our interpretations of a text depend on whether we recognise, and agree with, the implicit value systems (2003). It is not unreasonable to propose that, by defining social identities within a value system that includes stereotyping, the social categorisation seen within the media encourages migrants who are aware of it to define their own position and identity in relation to this value system. Van Dijk (1990) has suggested that social representations such as stereotypes can influence information processing, arguing that cognitive processes will favour the easier application of stereotypes that are more easily recalled and applied than alternatives. In this way, an established member of the online forum may focus on the micro details of a new member's contribution if it is consistent with the stereotype, particularly if it allows them an opportunity to emphasise their own positive self-identity in a critical response.

It is also pertinent to consider the consequences of social categorisation on those represented in this way, even if they are not aware of the categorising. We can follow Fairclough's (2003) suggestion to examine participant interests and potential causal effects that such attitudes may have in areas of social life. Firstly, the established migrants may well have an interest in the status quo if they feel that, as established British settlers, they may be unfavourably associated with more recent arrivals. Furthermore, as more settlers arrive, there is a corresponding increase in competition for employment, for attracting guests to tourist accommodation[33] and for property to buy/renovate. In addition, if people frequently read or hear negative portrayals about British migrants in France, this could lead to a significantly negative effect on self-identification, as well as providing justification for those who claim distinction from such groups. It is possible that one's self-belief based on achieving a 'better way of life'

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[33] Many British migrants set up businesses such as guest houses or *gites*.

will be affected if one's social group undergoes routine representation as ignorant followers of the latest property hotspot and unwilling or unable to integrate, or even that they have less right to be in France than those who came before.

Finally, more work remains to be done to investigate exactly what kinds of ideologies are being transmitted here, and the underlying reasons for them. Although lifestyle migration carries associations of individual agency and new opportunities, the enduring nature of habitus may influence migrants to qualify their chosen lifestyle in terms of the particular forms of social or cultural capital that are associated with an acceptable or legitimate manner of lifestyle migration to France. If "habitus causes practices…to be immediately intelligible and foreseeable" (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 58) to those who share its dispositions, then such attempts at claiming distinction can be seen as the "conscious reference to a norm" (*ibid, p.* 58) that is only necessary when the homogeneity of *habitus* is disturbed.

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Right peripheral discourse markers in SMS: the case of *alors*, *donc* and *quoi*

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Abstract

This paper presents a semantic study of the three most frequent right peripheral discourse markers (DMs) in a French text message corpus gathered in Belgium: *quoi*, *alors* and *donc*. Assuming that DMs are essential for interaction, I focus on the specific functions they may fulfil at right peripheral position in text messages, a spontaneous computer mediated communication type with writing constraints determined by the communication medium and the situation. I show that these DMs share a common spectrum of meanings when they are located at right periphery, thus pleading for a position-driven meaning. At the same time, *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* also fulfill proper functions at right periphery, which I describe in propositional, structural and modal terms.

1. Introduction

In this paper, I present an analysis of the most frequent right peripheral discourse markers (DMs)[34], *quoi*, *alors* and *donc*, in a French text message corpus gathered in

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[34] Here, I do not discuss the concept of DMs. Various terms, generally *discourse markers*, *discourse particles* or *pragmatic markers*, are used with different meanings in this field. In line with Degand and Simon-Vandenbergen (2011, p. 288), it is not my aim to come up with the ultimate definition of what constitutes the class of DMs. I follow Lewis's definition, when she says that DM "is a label for an expression that combines the semantics of discourse-relational predications with syntactic dependency on a clausal host and low informational salience" (2006, p. 44). To date, no agreement has been reached regarding fundamental issues of terminology and classification, and rather than going into the details of the argumentation for or against certain terms, I will use *discourse markers* here as a cover term close to what Fraser calls *pragmatic markers* (Fraser 2006, p. 189). I do, however, wish to relax the feature "discourse-segment initial because, although front position is characteristic and frequent with DMs, they can also be very versatile and occur in medial as well as in final position" (Degand & Simon-Vandenbergen 2011, p. 288). Furthermore, I am interested in the distribution of the markers to the extent

Belgium. I have chosen to analyse a corpus that shows graphic immediacy (*immédiat graphique* in Koch & Oesterreicher 2001, p. 614) parameters. Text messaging is an asynchronous and monomodal communication type (Hård af Segerstad 2005, p. 34). It is a spontaneous computer mediated communication type on which writing constraints are placed by the communication medium (space, cost, time, encoding) and by the communication situation (physical channel, cultural use, primary purpose of communication, relation of communicative participants to each other, to the external context, and to the text, following Biber 1988, p. 39), but not very much by traditional written norms (that can be found in snail mail, postcards, homework or even telegrams among others). In addition, involvement (with the audience, with oneself and with concrete reality, as defined by Chafe & Danielewicz 1987, p. 105-110) is characteristic of SMS language, since most messages are sent between people who know each other already. Indeed, senders rely "on the receiver's ability to pragmatic inference when decoding the message" (Hård af Segerstad 2005, p. 46). By analysing DMs, this work aims to provide an empirical access to the dimensions of texting as a genre (Biber 1988).

The use of an SMS corpus distinguishes this study from the considerable amount of research on French *quoi* 'what, as it were, so to speak', *alors* 'at that time, then, so' and *donc* 'so' that have been studied through oral and written corpora (for *quoi*, Andrews 1989, Auchlin 1981, Beeching 2004 & 2006, Hölker 1984; for *alors*, Bouacha 1981, Degand, forthc., Degand & Fagard 2011, Forget 1986, Franckel 1989, Gerecht 1987, Hansen 1997, Hybertie 1996, Jayez 1988, Zenone 1982; for *donc*, Bolly & Degand 2009, Culioli 1990, Degand 2011 & forthc., Ferrari & Rossari 1994, Forget 1986, Hansen 1997, Hybertie 1996, Pander Maat & Degand 2001, Rossari & Jayez 1996 & 1997, Schiffrin 1987, Zenone 1982).

Here, I focus on the relationship between the different meanings of *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* and the right peripheral position they occupy in the sentences. As Degand and Fagard (2011, p.30) maintain, the idea of this relationship joins the functional idea that the form and the function of a linguistic element are related in a determining way (cf. references listed there). In line with these functional studies, my work aims to unravel

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that it allows me to determine their semantics and their functions in the construction of discourse, and I do not take into consideration the notion of modal particle.

how *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* have come to act in the right periphery in a diversity of meanings.

Two specific research questions will help me to reach my goal. Which specific meanings do *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* encode when they occur in the same syntactic position? Which meanings do they share when they occur in the right periphery?

Before proceeding to the analysis of *quoi*, *alors* and *donc*, I would first like to review the literature on the semantics of these three items and to distinguish their common and different uses. Secondly, I will outline the parameters I used to distinguish the position and the meaning of *quoi*, *alors* and *donc*. Thirdly, I will describe the data and the methodology I used for this work.

2. Semantic distribution of *alors*, *donc* and *quoi*

Alors, donc and *quoi* show a wide variety of semantic uses, but they also have features in common (cf. authors mentioned in the previous section). While they all can fulfill DM functions, more precisely as structural and modal markers, only *alors* and *donc* can be propositional markers (following the DMs basic functions presented by Cuenca & Marín 2009). In addition, *quoi* can be pronominal and exclamative.

To distinguish *quoi* as a pronoun from the other uses, the parameters I used are the dependency on a head and the possibility of glossing *quoi* by *quelque chose* 'something'. The fact that *quoi* is attached to the clause shows that *quo*i is an interrogative pronoun as in (1) or a relative pronoun as in (2).

   (1) Tu fai **k** d beau? [SmsFBF[35]]

       'What are you doing?'
   (2) Je te dis **quoi** demain [SmsFBF]

       'I'll let you know tomorrow'

To distinguish its exclamative use, I tested the possibility for *quoi* to be used in isolation or accompanied by a particle and/or the presence of an exclamation or question mark.

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[35] I have chosen to use the original SMS and not its "translated" version, viz. the Standard French version (see Fairon, Klein & Paumier 2006 for the corpus). In order to help readers who do not know French, the English translations are not literal.

In this use, *quoi* emphasises the focus and denotes threatening, defiance (Robert 2010) and impatience (Hölker 1984, p. 49) as in (3).

(3) **Quoi** tu fais quoi demain!? [SmsFBF]

'**Exactly** what are you doing tomorrow!?'

Before examining the structural and modal uses of the three markers, I would like to focus on the propositional uses of *alors* and *quoi.* All meanings are illustrated with corpus examples and I point out how each of these meanings was distinguished in the data.

3. Propositional *alors* and *donc*

3.1 Temporal *alors*

Alors can be temporal, and this is its original meaning (Degand & Fagard 2011, p. 31). The following parameters were used to uncover the temporal uses of *alors*: *alors* with an explicit or implicit reference to time together with the possibility to replace *alors* by *à ce moment-là* 'at that time', *ensuite* 'then'. There are only rare occurrences of this use of *alors* in my texting corpus. Example (4) shows the temporal use of *alors* in contrast with *maintenant* 'now'.

(4) Je t'ai fais dn mal hier et ce n'était pas mon intention,moi-meme j'avais mal et je voulais te dire par ce message que je ne t'en voulais pas.Effectivement je n'avais pas compris **alors** et maintenant je m'en veux. [SmsFBF]

'I hurt you yesterday and it wasn't my intention. I was hurt myself and I want to tell you by this message that I'm not angry against you. Yes, I didn't understand **at that time** and now I hold it against me.'

3.2 Consequential *alors* and *donc*

According to the literature, *alors* and donc can also be used to mark consequential or resultative relations with an argumentative meaning.

In its consequential use, *donc* is in line with the idea (common to most discourse theories) that the basic work of a connector consists of linking two discourse segments

by means of a semantic (causal) relation. For my corpus analysis, I used the following parameter for the identification of consequential *donc*: *donc* can be glossed by *par conséquent* 'consequently' (deduction) (Bolly & Degand 2009, p. 11). In this use, *donc* marks a conclusion or a result. In (5), from the fact that the sender has received calls from the recipient and that his battery has almost run down, the sender provides the reason to talk by SMS, stressed by the use of *donc*.

(5) je viens 2 voir T 2 appels ms G presk + 2 batterie **dc** on va devoir se parler en sms. [SmsFBF]

'I have just seen your two calls but my battery has almost run down **so** we'll have to talk by sms'

Alors can also be consequential. For this consequential *alors* as for *donc,* I used the following parameters in my corpus analysis: *alors* can be paraphrased by *par conséquent* 'consequently' and/or *si bien que* 'so that'. In (6) as in (5), the sender's SMS provides a reason to be understood by her husband. In (7), the sender explains that he is getting on so well that it will be easier for him to win.

(6) on est marie pour la vie **alors**s'il y a bien qq'un qu'on doit ecouter et comprendre c'est l'autre! [SmsFBF]

'We are married for life **so** if there is someone to listen to and to understand, it's the other one!'

(7) je fricote avec des responsable **alors** c'est plus facile de gagner! [SmsFBF]

'I am cooking things up with the people in charge **so** it is easier to win!'

Degand and Fagard (2011, p. 35) distinguish a further use close to causal *alors*: conditional use. In this use, *alors* can be glossed by *dans ce cas* 'in that case'. In (8), the possibility of seeing the sender the day after sending the SMS is linked to the suggestion of texting before the meeting.

(8) déso pr tanto ms javè tp é pui sui alé a la biblio.si t'veu paC sui la jusq 22h.ou dm1,ms **alor** c ptètr mieu qtu m'sms avt pr voir si jsui la. [SmsFBF]

'Sorry for just now but I had exercises and then I went to the library. If you want to see me, I am here until 10 pm or tomorrow, but **in that case** it may be better to text me before to see if I'm there.'

Following Degand and Fagard (2011, p. 35), this conditional use contains a special case: the construction *ou alors* 'or else', that can be glossed by *si…alors* 'if…then' as in (9). The sender wonders if the recipient is working during the year. And *if* the answer is no *then,* the sender wonders if it is a sabbatical year.

(9) tu fais quelques chose cette année **ou alors** c'est une année sabatique [SmsFBF]

'Are you doing anything this year **or** is it a sabbatical year?'

3.3 Structural *alors*, *donc* and *quoi*

In their structural uses, *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* present both similarities and specificities.

To begin with the similarities, the three DMs share a punctuating use. This punctuation use occurs to close off the message. In (10), (11), and (12), *quoi*, *alors*, and *donc* are accompanied by the presentative *voilà* 'that's it', and followed by texting endings.

(10) et en math je suis petée! Ct super dur! Enfin voilà **quoi**! A lundi bisous [SmsFBF]

'and in maths I've bombed! It's very hard! Well **there we are**!' See you on Monday! Kisses'

(11) juste un petit coucou,pour te dire aussi que je n'ai plus de pour non plus **alors** voilà... Bisous à bientot [SmsFBF]

'Just a little hello to tell you that I have no more [missing] for [missing] either **so** that's that... Kisses. See you soon!'

(12) Coucou daphné je te souhaite un super bon anniversaire je crois que ces aujourd8 **donc** voilà lol bizzousssss [SmsFBF]

'Hello Daphné, I wish you a very happy birthday. I think it's today **so** here you are lol kisses'

Quoi is known to be a punctuating marker (Vincent 1993). It can for instance punctuate the last term in an enumeration, but also sum up this list (Beeching 2006, p. 154) as in (13).

(13) G 1sinusite, antibiotik dpuis lundi. C ps cool pcq G les oreilles compltmt bouchées &dla fièvre, chui ds ma bulle **koi**! [SmsFBF]

'I have sinusitis, antibiotics since Monday. This isn't fun because my ears are completely bunged up and a temperature, **so** I'm just wrapped in a cocoon!'

Alors and *donc* can play a role in turn-taking, while this is not the case for *quoi*. Used as Fraser's (2006, p. 190) conversational management markers, *alors* and *donc* can signal a turn change (Schiffrin 1987). In my text messages corpus, the parameter I used for the *alors* and *donc* turn change use was their location at the beginning, as in (14, 15), or at the end of the text message, as in (16, 17).

(14)   **Alors** tu as bien étudié? [SmsFBF]

'**So** have you studied carefully?'

(15)   **Donc** tu avais raté celui de 17h05' ? Et tu arrives à 19h05' à Tournai ? [SmsFBF]

'**So** you missed the 17:05? And you arrive at Tournai at 19:05?'

(16)   OKi, j attend de tes nouvelles **alors**

'Ok, I'm waiting news from you **so**'

(17)   wesh djo je me fais trop trop chier!x) et toi que fais tu **donc**? [SmsFBF]

'hey *djo* I am really bored! x) and what are you doing **then**?'

Specific structural use of *alors* is as follows: according to Bouacha (1981), *alors* can have a "fonction d'attaque du discours". This is a function that forces the priming of a topic. I counted *alors* as expressing this function when it could be glossed by topic shifters, such as *bon* 'well'. In (18), after the beginning of the text, *alors* introduces the topic of the sender's grandfather.

(18) Coucou, **alors** comment va papy? [SmsFBF]

'Hello**, so** how is grandpa?'

Quoi may be used to stress part of the given message. In (19), the focus is on the ease of getting home with a friend who is a neighbour.

(19) Je suis rentrée avec 1 cop qui a pris le mm train que moi et qui kot ds ma rue tranquil **quoi**! [SmsFBF]

'I came home with a friend who took the same train and who lives in my street, **which was nice**!'

Quoi is regularly used to hedge a statement, such as saying that someone is always pessimistic in (20).

(20) Toi, tu es"pessimiste" comme d'hab **quoi**... [SmsFBF]

'You're your usual "pessimistic" self, **you are**...'

To mark the progression from the topic to the focus, *donc* can be used. For this type of use, *donc* can be glossed by *pour en revenir à ce que je disais* 'to get back to what I said' (Bolly & Degand 2009, p. 11). In (21), after explaining that there was a lack of credit until the present time, the sender uses *donc* in order to get back to thanking the recipient.

(21) Marinou jtenvoi mon 1er sms depuis que g d'l'argent!=D **donc** pr encor te remercié d'm avoir appelé tt à l'er ca ma fai plaisir[SmsFBF]

'Marinou I am sending my first sms since I've got credit!=D **so I can** thank you again for just calling me. I was very pleased.'

Donc can also reactualise the preceding discourse (Ferrari & Rossari 1994, p. 40), by repeating it in a synthetic form, by reformulating and clarifying it in an equivalent form. For *donc*'s repetitive use, the following parameters were used: *donc* can be glossed by *en bref* 'briefly' (*recapitulation*), *en d'autres termes* 'in other terms' (*reformulation*), *pour être plus explicite* 'to be more specific' (*explicitation* 'clarification').

With the *recapitulation* use of *donc*, the sender repeats the proposal to have a meeting in (22).

(22) je vais la semaine prochaine à liège voir ma cousine,est cke ca te dirai kon svoi,istoir de se parlé1peu. normalemen je v ou mardi ou jeudi(ca revien au mm pr ma cousine) **dc** au cas où tu veu bien kon svoi di moi qd ca t'arrange le mieu. [SmsFBF]

'I'm going to Liège next week to see my cousin. Would you like to see me, in order to have a chat? Usually I go on Tuesday or Thursday (it doesn't matter to my cousin) **so** if you want to see me, tell me when is more convenient for you.'

With the *reformulation* use of *donc*, the sender explains that he cannot be there for the journey back because he has been in town (Louvain-La-Neuve) all weekend in (23).

> (23) Chui resté a lln pr le we **dc** ne compte pa sur mwa pr le retour! [SmsFBF]
> 'I've been in Louvain-La-Neuve the whole weekend **so** don't expect me for the journey back!'

With the *explicitation* use of *donc* in (24), the sender apologises for not having answered the recipient earlier.

> (24) Je viens de lire mes mess vocaux et oui, en effet il y en avait bien un de toi. **Donc** Déso de pas avoir répondu avt. [SmsFBF]
> 'I've just read my voicemail and yes, actually there was one of yours. **So** I'm sorry to not have answered before.'

To sum up the uses of *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* as structural markers, there is a punctuating use for the three DMs, and *quoi* is more specifically a punctuation marker. *Alors* and *donc* have a role in turn changing while *alors* has a specific function that forces the priming of a topic. *Quoi* can reinforce the preceding topic but also hedge a statement. *Donc* can mark the progression from the topic to the focus. *Donc* can also reactualize the preceding discourse by repeating it with *recapitulation*, *reformulation* and *explicitation*.

3.4 Modal *alors*, *donc* and *quoi*

These three DMs share also pragmatic meanings. The notion they all share is "mutual manifestness" (for *alors* and *donc* Hansen 1997, p. 165; for *quoi*, Beeching 2006, p. 160). According to Sperber and Wilson, something is manifest to an individual if it should be either perceptible or inferable (Sperber & Wilson 1989, p. 65).

In line with this definition, in (25), the sender knows that the recipient understands how boring 15 minutes of an oral examination in Dutch is, and he expresses it with *quoi*. In (26), the sender knows that the recipient did have dinner (perhaps the sender got information during his visit to the recipient, as indicated by the following question about the possible trouble) and expresses it with *alors*. In (27), the sender explains the timetable for Friday before using *donc*, moving on to a request and assuming that the recipient knows the reasons.

(25) Dm1 Nld-oral,15min,lpié **kwa**! [SmsFBF]

'Tomorrow, Dutch oral, 15 minutes. Fun, **or what**!'

(26) Ta bien mangé **alor**?pa faché kjsoi pasé? [SmsFBF]

'Did you eat well **then**? Not angry that I saw you?'

(27) Flo vendredi on va o marché g rdv ac benja à1h àla gare **donc** di à brayan ki vienne... [SmsFBF]

'Flo this Friday we are going to the market. I have an appointment with Benja at 1 pm at the station. **So** tell Brayan to come...'

In its complex form, *ou quoi* 'or what' expresses impatience, surprise and irritation, the same goes for *alors*. These uses link to a strong emotion. Concerning impatience, *ou quoi* is used after a suggestion following the question about an appointment of the sender with her father in (28) and *et alors* before a question indicating the anxiety of the sender in (29).

(28) Tu m'attend ou tu n'as pas le temps? Bizz papounet... Je te di quand je sors **ou quoi**? [SmsFBF]

'Are you waiting for me or don't you have the time? Kiss daddy... I'll let you know when I'm leaving **shall I**?'

(29) **Et alors** puce? Tjs pas rentré? [SmsFBF]

'**So** darling? Not home yet?'

Surprise is indicated by *ou quoi* after the sender is wondering whether the recipient is angry because the latter does not pick up the phone in (30). In (31), *alors* emphasises the exclamation before claiming that the guy known by the recipient is crazy.

(30) Pourquoi tu ne décrochés plus pour ta petite maman adorée?? T'es fâché **ou quoi**? [SmsFBF]

'Why you do not pick up anymore for your adored mum?? Are you angry **or what**?'

(31) Merde **alors**!Ms enfin il est fou ton mec! [SmsFBF]

'Shit **then**! But this guy of yours is crazy!'

To indicate indignation, *ou quoi* is used after the sender asks the recipient whether he is crazy to use the private number, in (32). In (33), the sender accuses the recipient of not answering the phone by using *et alors.*

(32) Ca va **ou quoi** d faire ton numéro privé!?? Moi je réponds pas. [SmsFBF]

'Is it **really** OK to use your private number!?? Personally, I don't answer.'

(33) **et alors** on ne répond pas et on fait croire que ... [SmsFBF]

'**So** you just don't answer and make people think that…'

3.5 Position of *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* in the sentence

In this work, I have tried to show that there is a relation between the DM (*alors*, *donc* and *quoi*) right peripheral position and their meaning, although this relation is neither univocal nor deterministic. In my corpus analysis, the right periphery is defined as the position after the non-finite verb, if present.

In this position, *alors* and *donc* can work within the three DMs basic functions, namely propositional, structural and modal functions, while *quoi* only works with structural and modal functions. There are two other positions in my analysis, the left periphery, that is, outside the argument structure of the verb, and the internal to the argument structure one, mostly after the finite verb and before the non-finite verb, if present. *Alors*, *donc* and *quoi* can also be found in internal position. These positions may include compound constructions, such as *et alors, mais donc* or *putain quoi* 'bloody hell'. The three positions are illustrated in the examples (14), (15), (16), (17), (20), (32) repeated in Fig. 1 below with two new examples (34) and (35).

	Left periphery	**Internal position**	**Right periphery**
Alors	(14) **Alors** tu as bien étudié?	(34) et toi **alors**,tas encore oublié de me dire cmt ca se pa[36]	(16) OKi, j attend de tes nouvelles **alors**
Donc	(15) **Donc** tu avais raté celui de 17h05' ?	(35) Tu savai **dc** tt ossi pq es ce ke vs n'avez tt	(17) et toi que fais tu **donc**?

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[36] 'and **as for you**, you've still forgot to tell me how it *pa* [missing]'

		cache![37]	
Quoi	ø[38]	(32) Ca va **ou quoi** d faire ton numéro privé!??	(20) Toi, tu es"pessimiste" comme d'hab **quoi**...

Figure. 1 Positions of DM alors, donc and quoi with examples 14-17, 20, 32, 34, 35

4. Data and methods

The text message corpus I used is a sample from a corpus of 26,588 French text messages gathered in Belgium (Fairon, Klein & Paumier 2006). This corpus is unique because of its size, its accuracy, "the number of contributions and the amount of meta-data provided" (Fairon & Paumier 2006, p. 4). I selected only texts messages written by French native speakers to prevent the influence of important language variations on my results. I therefore started with a sample of 25,894 text messages by French native speakers.

The objective was to select the most frequent DMs in the right peripheral position in my corpus. First, I created a database with 1,000 messages chosen at random. In order to find DMs in the right periphery more easily, I took into account the three final words of each text message and extracted every DM found. This resulted in a top 3 of the most frequent DMs occurring at the end of the messages.

Taking into account the whole sample of 25,894 text messages, I looked for all *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* occurrences regardless of their positions. This resulted in 1,476 occurrences of *quoi* (cleaned in order to not count *pourquoi*, *n'importe quoi*, *comme quoi* and *quoique/quoi que*), 1,279 *alors* (cleaned in order to not count *alors que/ alors qu'*) and 815 *donc* (cleaned in order to not count *dis donc/ dites donc*).

After this cleaning process, I manually selected all the messages containing *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* in the right periphery. This resulted in 318 messages containing right peripheral *alors*, 139 right peripheral *quoi* and 44 right peripheral *donc*. For each

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[37] '**So** you also knew everything. Why did you hide everything from me?'
[38] No occurrence of *quoi* as DM in left periphery was found in my corpus.

collection of messages containing right peripheral *alors*, *donc* and *quoi*, I manually analysed their semantic distributions.

5. Results

Before proceeding to right peripheral *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* functions, a word should be said on the highly diverging frequencies of the markers under investigation: 318 occurrences of *alors* out of 1,279 (24.86%), 139 of *quoi* out of 1,476 (9.42%) and 44 of *donc* out of 815 (5.4%) are found in right periphery. The right peripheral-global ratios of *alors*, *quoi* and *donc* are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1: The right peripheral-global ratios of *alors*, *quoi* and *donc*
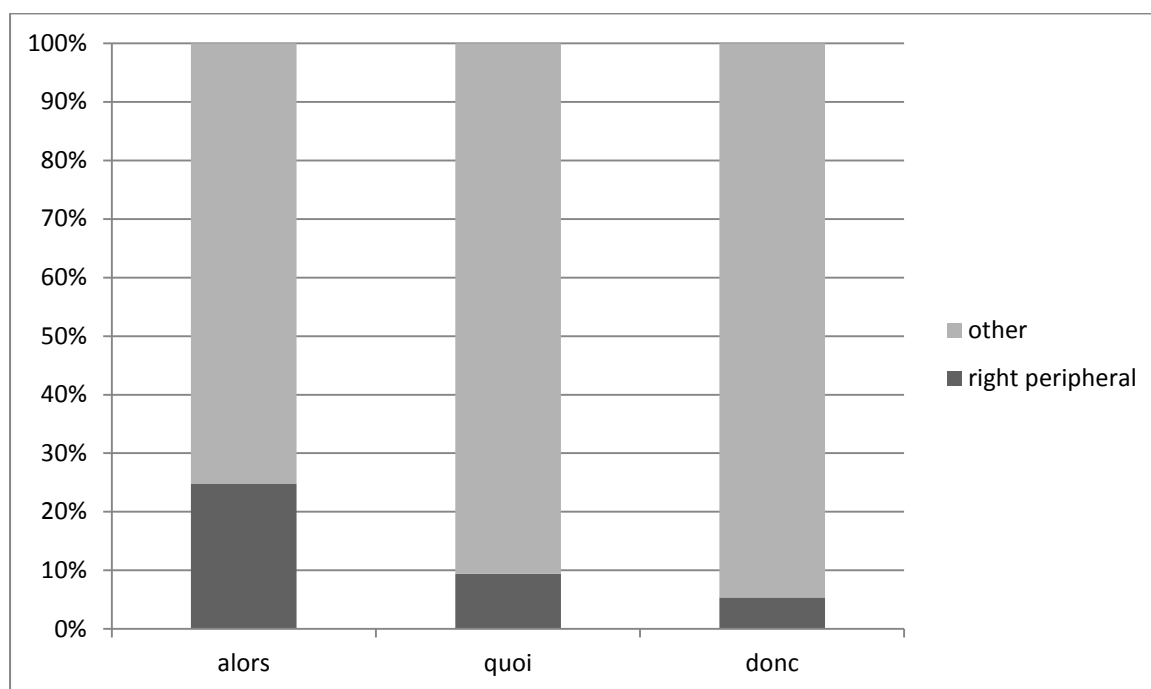
Following the semantic distributions presented in section 2, and considering the right peripheral occurrences only, the results are as follows: *alors* shows 56.60% (180/318) propositional uses, 28.62% (91/318) modal uses and 14.78% (47/318) structural uses. *Quoi* appears with 59.71% (83/139) modal uses, 40.29% (56/139) structural uses and no propositional uses. *Donc* has 50% (22/44) structural uses, 38.64% (17/44) modal uses and 11.36% (5/44) propositional uses. Table 2 gives an overview of the semantic distribution in the three DMs.

It clearly appears that most of the right peripheral DMs have modal functions. These modally functioning DMs can be defined following Cuenca (submitted) as markers that indicate (inter)subjective features between the SMS sender and the recipient.

In comparison, quoi has more modal uses than donc and alors. This result may be explained by the distribution restricted to two functions: structural and modal. Alors has the smallest frequency of modal functions while the number of its propositional occurrences is quite considerable and the number of its structural ones is not negligible. Donc has a medium frequency of modal functions while most of its occurrences are structural and a few are propositional. The number of modal uses of right peripheral alors and donc is probably an underestimation, since no access is given through the corpus to the complete exchange of SMS between sender and recipient. This might, in some cases, lead to erroneous categorization, such as categorizing for a giving turn (structural function) instead of mutual manifestness (modal function) or considering as a consequential use (propositional function) an expression of impatience (modal function).

Table 2: Semantic distributions of *alors*, *quoi* and *donc*
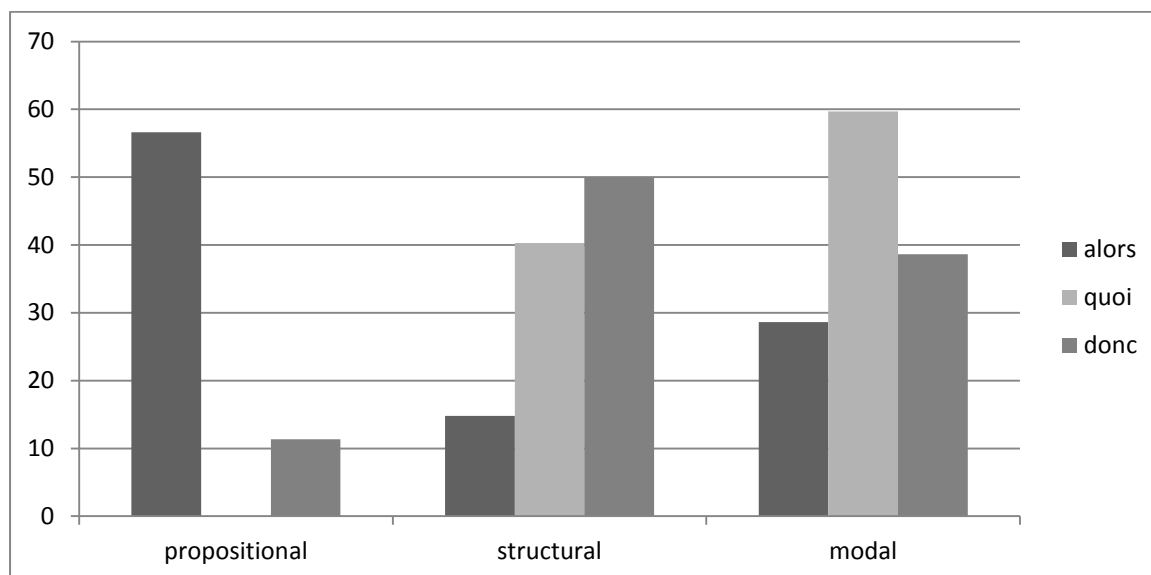
6. Conclusions

The corpus analysis has shown that right peripheral DMs *quoi*, *alors* and *donc* in a texting corpus have mostly modal functions, less structural functions and a few

propositional ones. These results confirm the assumption that DMs are essential for interaction and show that DMs do occur in right peripheral position in text messages.

Considering each right peripheral marker separately, *quoi* is restricted to structural and modal functions though *alors* and *donc* can have propositional, structural and modal functions. *Alors* is mostly propositional, less modal and least structural. Conversely, *donc* is mostly structural, less modal and least propositional. This raises the question of a function specificity of the three most frequent DMs in right periphery and the possibility that these functions are specific to text messaging communication.

In right periphery, the common interpersonal (modal) feature to *alors*, *donc* and *quoi* is mutual manifestness. It seems that SMS language is quite spontaneous, and has a conventionalized form, in which mutual manifestness could be expressed. A corollary question is whether there is a specialization of certain DMs to a type of communication. Unravelling this specific role must, however, remain the topic of ongoing and future research by comparing these results with results from written and oral corpora.

Acknowledgements

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Abstracts of poster presentations:

A diachronic analysis (1980-2010)

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Abstract

Poster presentations have become a major format for scientific communication at conferences and other scientific meetings (Matthews & Matthews, 1996, p. 97). While posters have a research value because their purpose is to share recent research findings with peers (Demarteau et al., 2007), their academic worth has been reconsidered because their abstract, if published in major medical journals, could enhance academic career.

Studies on medical abstracts have been focused on their genre (Samraj, 2005, Salager-Meyer, 1990), on the use of metaphorical strategies (Hidalgo Downing, 2009; Méndez-Cendón, 2003), and on cross-cultural analyses (Bellés-Fortuño, 2010; Bielski, 2008; López Arroyo, 2007; Fernández Antolín, 2006; Martin-Martin & Burgess, 2006). Yet, to the best of my knowledge, there seems to be no investigation about the way in which medical abstracts have evolved. This paper therefore aims to examine the diachronic evolution of medical abstracts of posters presented at medical conferences.

The diachronic investigation of abstract lexico-grammar seems to suggest that a development has occurred toward interdiscursive patterns by means of which hybrid generic frameworks are created by appropriating established conventions associated with other genres and professional practices (Bhatia, 2007).

1. Introduction

Traditionally, medical communication takes the form of research articles,[39] a trend apparently confirmed by the proliferation of new specialised medical journals (in 2010, MEDLINE[40] counted over 11,700 indexed medical journals). However, since scientific progress has to circulate (and be published) as quickly as possible, a suitable way to keep up with it is through poster presentations at conferences.[41] As explained to me (telephone conversation on 5 October, 2009) by the Head of the Publishing Unit of the Istituto Superiore di Sanità, the National Health Institute of Italy (www.iss.it), the medical community has been exploiting medical-poster presentations for several reasons,[42] the most important being that the abstract of a poster can be published in major medical journals – which makes poster abstracts a convenient means for furthering medical careers.

According to Maugh (1974), poster sessions were pioneered in Europe and made their first appearance in the US at the 1974 Biochemistry/Biophysics Meeting. Since then posters have rapidly become a major format for scientific communication at conferences and other scientific meetings (Matthews & Matthews, 1996, p. 97). While posters have a research value because their purpose is to share recent research findings with peers (Demarteau et al., 2007), their academic worth has been reconsidered because their abstract, if published in major medical journals, could enhance academic career.

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[39] Members of the medical community have carried out analysis regarding medical discourse. Noteworthy are the ANSI/NISO *Guidelines for Abstracts* (1997), the *Uniform Requirements* by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (2010), and the various *technical* guidelines for written medical texts (Skelton and Edwards, 2000; Signorino and Fiaschi, 2003; Paraiti and Valentini, 2005; Walker, 2005).

[40] Available at: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/serials/lsiou.html (retrieved 25 November 2011).

[41] From a linguistic perspective, attention has been paid to posters as a hybrid genre, falling between "elements of the research paper and conference visuals or handouts" (Swales, 2004, p. 21; cf. also Swales and Feak, 2000, and Burgess and Fagan, 2004), which indeed make them "visual units" (MacIntosh-Murray, 2007, p. 352).

[42] Amongst others, poster presentations are considered a necessity because lack of time forces the conference committee to require more poster presentations than papers. Secondly, posters facilitate scientific support and communication exchange concerning interesting research questions. Thirdly, posters offer new research projects which may result in future journal publication.

Studies on medical abstracts have been focused on their genre (Samraj, 2005, Salager-Meyer, 1990), on the use of metaphorical strategies (Hidalgo Downing, 2009; Méndez-Cendón, 2003), and on cross-cultural analyses (Bellés-Fortuño, 2010; Bielski, 2008; López Arroyo, 2007; Fernández Antolín, 2006; Martín-Martín & Burgess, 2006). Yet, to the best of my knowledge, there seems to be no investigation about the way in which medical abstracts have evolved. It is therefore the aim of this paper to examine the diachronic evolution of medical abstracts with particular regard to abstracts of posters presented at medical conferences. Since the main purpose of abstracts seems to be that of attracting potential readers, there might be some persuasive features which exploit evaluative language in use. Therefore, I will carry out a corpus-based analysis, examining the keyword lists and the relative collocation patterns generated by a corpus of medical abstracts of poster presentations covering the decades 1980s, 1990s and 2000s, in order to answer the following research questions:

  a) what type of lexical features are employed?
  b) what direction have these taken across time?

A diachronic investigation based on a corpus linguistic approach will be carried out in order to detect the processes undergoing the development of medical discourse and the extent to which traits pertaining to other domains have contaminated contemporary discourse in the medical academic community. Although the most evident *marketized* element of posters is its visual component (Maci, 2011), for the purpose of this paper attention will be paid only to the linguistic features that present traits pertaining to medical argumentation and persuasion. Since persuasion exploits evaluative language in use, I will analyze the keyword lists and the relative collocation patterns generated by two sub-corpora of abstracts of medical posters covering the decades 1980s, 1990s and 2000s. The discussion of the relative results will be carried out in the following paragraphs.

2. Corpus Collection and Methodological Approach

The main problem I encountered in carrying out my research was related to the selection of posters. The Internet offers a myriad of websites regarding scientific poster publication. Indeed, a search by Google using the expression "medical poster publication"

yielded 7,270,000 hits with topics ranging from tips and techniques, to discussions of how to use posters as a tool for professional development in the workplace as well as examples of posters themselves. The large number of Web sites about posters indicates the widespread role posters have in the dissemination of academic medical knowledge, but at the same time such an overdose of information implies that reliability must be the main parameter in poster selection and corpus collection. I therefore checked via the *Journal of Citation Reports* (available at http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/science_products/a-z/journal_citation_reports) all medical journals, ranked according to their Impact Factor (henceforth IF),[43] which were then browsed in order to find publications concerning poster sessions presented at medical conferences, starting my search from 1975, the year after which poster session news was first published. The journal which first started the publication of the abstract of poster sessions during the 1980s was specialized in the epidemiological field (though it stopped publication of poster abstracts in 1994); I therefore decided to concentrate on epidemiology, collecting 2,638 abstracts of posters, that is all the available abstracts related to congress posters published in major journals concerned with epidemiology or dealing with epidemiological issues,[44] forming a corpus of 1,410,058 words. All the abstracts were then grouped into two sub-corpora according to the year of publication, i.e. 1980-1994, 1995-2009, as shown in table 1 below:

Table 1. breakdown of corpus collection.

1980-1994		1995-2009	
# of abstracts	# of words	# of abstracts	# of words
574	174,164	2,064	1,235,894

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[43] The IF is a quantitative tool used for ranking, evaluating, categorizing, and comparing journals. It is a measure of the frequency with which the *average* article in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. This means that the higher the IF, the more prestigious the journal is regarded to be by the academic community. More information about the IF is available at
http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/science/free/essays/impact_factor/.
[44] Permission to collect and investigate posters has been granted by the press houses publishing the journals I selected. When an abstract of a poster is quoted, it will be indicated as PA1, PA2, PA2… etc., according to the chronological order of downloading, followed by the year of publication. The detailed list of journals from which poster abstracts have been collected is in the appendix.

The corpus has been split into two sub-corpora on a chronological basis rather than on a size basis: since there was a dramatic increase in publication of poster abstracts as from 1995, my assumption is that medical abstracts have begun to acquire an academic value which was worth publication in major journals since 1995 – indeed abstracts rather than papers have begun to be indexed in such medical online databases as PubMed and MEDLINE, which were established in 1995 (Pritchard and Weightman, 2005; Canese, 2006). The difference in size of the two subcorpora may pose some problems as to the corpus-based investigation of lexical keyness. Creating two subcorpora of relatively equal size would have doubtlessly been less problematic but would have meant an alteration of any interpretation of my corpus-based approach if I had not taken into consideration 1995 as the turning-point year signalling the academic *worthiness* of medical abstracts. As my research questions tend to point to the linguistic features affecting medical abstracts across time, I think that in order to see such developments I need to take into consideration any lexical variation occurring before and after 1995.

By exploiting the corpus linguistics approach (Hunston, 2002; Baker, 2006), I will try to illustrate the developments that seem to have determined variation in the genre of the medical abstract published in major medical journals. The investigation, based on the analysis of the keywords present in two subcorpora of medical abstracts covering the 1980-2009 time span, has been carried out with Wordsmith Tools (Scott, 2004). In addition, all abstracts have been read in order to better contextualize the quantitative interpretation of the collected data.[45] The resulting data, presented in normalized figures, will be interpreted with the aim of better contextualizing language use in medical discourse. They seem to indicate that a kind of language process has been occurring in medical discourse, but, given the fact these are the abstracts of a genre in an on-going evolution (the congress poster), the present investigation can be regarded as a pilot study, necessary to gather information prior to a more complete study, in order to improve its quality and efficiency and, eventually, reveal any deficiencies in my design.

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[45] Given the fact that medical journals publish only the abstracts of posters, the multimodal analysis of the collected abstracts following Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) cannot be taken into consideration here.

Although the two sub-corpora are of a different size, which may affect the type of keywords to be generated, they are large enough to each create a 500-keyword list. After producing a wordlist for each subcorpora with Wordsmith Tools, I generated the 1980-1994 and the 1995-2009 keyword lists by comparing the two subcorpora, so as to detect any differences across both corpora. The keyness or *saliency* of each corpora has been statistically computed via the log-likelihood test set by default in Wordsmith Tools. Tables 2 and 3 below contain the first 25 keywords out of the 500 keywords generated for each subcorpus.

Table 2. 1980-1994 Keyword list.

N	Key word	Freq.	%	RC. Freq.	RC. %	Keyness
1	AUTHORS	275	0.15	35		753.57
2	WOMEN	732	0.40	1197	0.14	451.82
3	RELATIVE	242	0.13	153	0.02	375.08
4	WHITE		163	0.09	69	312.28
5	INTERVAL	183	0.10	100	0.01	308.73
6	BODY	236	0.13	194	0.02	305.29
7	CI	491	0.27	808	0.09	299.94
8	RACE	103	0.06	10		295.26
9	AGE	752	0.41	1631	0.19	277.74
10	EXPOSURE	240	0.13	231	0.03	272.69
11	ODDS	201	0.11	160	0.02	266.40
12	CONFIDENCE	178	0.10	120	0.01	264.86
13	FAT	136	0.07	77		224.93
14	PREGNANCY	167	0.09	143	0.02	209.22
15	YEARS	706	0.38	1736	0.20	192.15
16	WEIGHT	241	0.13	327	0.04	191.53
17	CASE	238	0.13	320	0.04	191.27
18	WHITES	65	0.04	6		187.72
19	BLACKS	70	0.04	10		187.53
20	BLACK	81	0.04	21		186.66
21	SEX	222	0.12	305	0.04	173.72
22	CAROTENE	52	0.03	2		164.89
23	AGED	256	0.14	414	0.05	160.43
24	INTAKE	150	0.08	157	0.02	157.80
25	IDDM	45	0.02	0		156.83

In order to investigate if and to what extent the priority assigned to a certain item reflects a trend in medical discourse and how such priorities have changed over a thirty-year time span, I have decided to consider only lexical items that do not pertain to the medical field. My analysis has required a cross-check of each word with its

collocation pattern in order to decide whether the word was intended with a medical connotation or not. All domain-specific words have been deleted. The resulting keyword lists therefore comprised words carrying a neutral, non-medical meaning.

Table 3. 1995-2009 Keyword list

N	Key word	Freq.	%	RC. Freq.	RC. %	Keyness
1	CONCLUSIONS	1204	0.14	22	0.01	319.91
2	METHODS	1793	0.21	89	0.05	283.90
3	BACKGROUND	946	0.11	23	0.01	226.95
4	AIM	731	0.08	10		210.38
5	UNIVERSITY	1633	0.19	116	0.06	179.54
6	INTRODUCTION	630	0.07	9		179.36
7	RESULTS	2643	0.30	257	0.14	177.35
8	CONCLUSION	644	0.07	16		153.10
9	DETAILS	565	0.07	10		151.55
10	QUALITY	650	0.07	22	0.01	133.24
11	CONTACT	635	0.07	21	0.01	131.82
12	SOCIO	369	0.04	1		131.74
13	ECONOMIC	466	0.05	9		121.58
14	COUNTRIES	458	0.05	9		118.80
15	BEHAVIOUR	324	0.04	2		107.36
16	APACHE	273	0.03	0		105.11
17	SHOCK	333	0.04	3		104.38
18	#	78561	9.05	15317	8.31	103.31
19	ORG	263	0.03	0		101.26
20	INTENSIVE	322	0.04	3		100.35
21	DOWNLOADED	243	0.03	0		93.56
22	EURPUB	241	0.03	0		92.79
23	OXFORDJOURNALS	241	0.03	0		92.79
24	VOL	241	0.03	0		92.79
25	ILL	293	0.03	3		89.74

3. Results and Discussion

Medical discourse is presented to readers in a highly codified structure that transcends national cultures (Dahl, 2004, p. 1822). Indeed, such a structure has a set of constraints that are set out in the *Uniform requirements for the manuscripts submitted to biomedical journals* realized in 1978. These are commonly known as the *Vancouver Style*, published 1991 in the *British Journal of Medicine* (*BJM*) by the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE), whose updated version (April 2010) may be downloaded from http://www.icmje.org/urm_main.html [25/11/2011]. Medical abstracts follow the

same organizational conventions as other scientific writing, with an *Introduction* (and *Objectives*), *Method*, *Results*, and *Discussion* (which is sometimes called *Conclusions*). It is the latter of these sections that is traditonally regarded as the most relevant in medical discourse by the scientific community, as it is here where the paper "is sold" (Docherty and Smith, 1999, p. 1221) and where communication seems to acquire traits belonging to promotional language.

Table 4. Keyword lists of poster sub-corpora.

1980-1994 keyword list							
N	Key word	Freq.	%	RC. Freq.	RC. %	Keyness	P
1	AUTHORS	275	0.15	35		753.57	0.0000000000
2	WOMEN	732	0.40	1,197	0.14	451.82	0.0000000000
3	RELATIVE	242	0.13	153	0.02	375.08	0.0000000000
4	WHITE		163	0.09	69	312.28	0.0000000000
5	INTERVAL	183	0.10	100	0.01	308.73	0.0000000000
6	BODY	236	0.13	194	0.02	305.29	0.0000000000
7	CI	491	0.27	808	0.09	299.94	0.0000000000
8	RACE	103	0.06	10		295.26	0.0000000000
9	AGE	752	0.41	1,631	0.19	277.74	0.0000000000
10	EXPOSURE	240	0.13	231	0.03	272.69	0.0000000000
11	ODDS	201	0.11	160	0.02	266.40	0.0000000000
12	CONFIDENCE	178	0.10	120	0.01	264.86	0.0000000000
13	FAT	136	0.07	77		224.93	0.0000000000
14	PREGNANCY	167	0.09	143	0.02	209.22	0.0000000000
15	YEARS	706	0.38	1,736	0.20	192.15	0.0000000000
1995-2009 keyword list							
N	Key word	Freq.	%	RC. Freq.	RC. %	Keyness	P
1	CONCLUSIONS		1,204	0.14	22	0.01	319.91	0.0000000000
2	METHODS	1,793	0.21	89	0.05	283.90	0.0000000000
3	BACKGROUND		946	0.11	23	0.01	226.95	0.0000000000
4	AIM	731	0.08	10		210.38	0.0000000000
5	UNIVERSITY	1,633	0.19	116	0.06	179.54	0.0000000000
6	INTRODUCTION	630	0.07	9		179.36	0.0000000000
7	RESULTS	2,643	0.30	257	0.14	177.35	0.0000000000
8	CONCLUSION	644	0.07	16		153.10	0.0000000000
9	DETAILS	565	0.07	10		151.55	0.0000000000
10	QUALITY	650	0.07	22	0.01	133.24	0.0000000000
11	CONTACT	635	0.07	21	0.01	131.82	0.0000000000
12	SOCIO	369	0.04	1		131.74	0.0000000000
13	ECONOMIC	466	0.05	9		121.58	0.0000000000
14	COUNTRIES	458	0.05	9		118.80	0.0000000000
15	BEHAVIOUR	324	0.04	2		107.36	0.0000000000

It is here that the author's research is advertised and it is here that the reader is persuaded. The Discussion section testifies to the manipulation of language in order to convince the reader of the likely truth of a result (Horton, 1995, p. 310). In abstracts, however, space constraints do not facilitate the exploitation of rhetorical devices used to emphasize one viewpoint rather than another in order to to highlight the quality and limitations of the methods, the clinical importance of the research, speculations about the meaning of the results, the directions for future research, as well as claims about the success of the original purpose of the study (Horton, 1995). Abstracts, therefore, follow a well-defined structure with persuasion being realized by different strategies rather than traditional rhetorical tools. My first assumption is therefore that a lack of discursive persuasiveness must be compensated for by lexical items carrying evaluative weight. Such lexical items might have a special position within the elaboration of medical discourse. Table 4 offers the first 15 keywords for both sub-corpora containing non-domain-specific lexical items, which have been selected after a concordance analysis of each word contained in the two keyword lists I spoke of above.

As we can see from the two lists, there seems to be some variation in keyness. The list offers two ranks which apparently suggest a different perspective, as there are no lexical items common to the two sub-corpora.

3.1. The 1980-1994 sub-corpus.

In the 1980-1994 sub-corpus attention seems to be focused on medical investigation based on categorised factors such as *sex* (*women*), *ethnicity* (*white*, *race*) and *age*, as, for instance, the concordance list of *women* below reports:

Figure 1. First ten collocates in the concordance list of women

Attention is also paid to objective *exposure* to diseases and to *body* (which collocates with *mass*) and *fat*, the latter indicating an interest in aesthetic factors. There is also the presence of the term *pregnancy*, which collocates with *interruption*: concern is apparently centred around abortion rather than motherhood. The concordance list of *relevance* reveals that the term is used as a synonym of *importance*, which is used less than the former, which is probably conventionally associated to medical discourse, though not domain-specific.

Usually, the medical studies carried out in this period of time (1980-1994) pay particular attention to the statistical analysis which supports the investigation. This is indeed confirmed by such keywords as *CI*,[46] *confidence*, *interval*, and *odds*, as its concordance list reveals (see Figure 2 below):

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	t. #	os.	. #	os.	. #	os.	t. #	os.
1	medium SBP have lower refusal rates: odds ratios (OR) 0.28 (95% CI 0.24,			22.659 958	6%		0	2%			0	2%
2	proportion of deaths at home (odds ratio 0.65, 95% CI 0.58, 0.70)			19.135 802	5%		0	8%			0	8%
3	smoked cigarettes: test for trend in odds ratio p=0.009 and p=0.02			9.634 390	5%		0	9%			0	9%
4	produced statistically significant odds ratios for many of the relationships			14.959 633	0%		0	3%			0	3%
5	risk of stroke-age and sex adjusted odds ratios 0-33 (95% CI 0-2, 0-6) and			8.581 376	6%		0	2%			0	2%
6	middle quartiles-age and sex adjusted odds ratios 2-1 (95% CI 1-2, 3-9) and 2-1			8.507 373	8%		0	1%			0	1%
7	population. Main outcome measures - Odds ratios (relative risk) for stroke by			8.382 369	9%		0	1%			0	1%
8	with increased risk for lung cancer (odds ratio (OR) = 4.4, 95% confidence			26.492 705	7%		0	8%			0	8%
9	an increasing linear trend in the relative odds for all lung cancer with decreasing			25.359 635	8%		0	4%			0	4%
10	women with FH (fourth quartile odds ratio (OR) = 0.02, 95% confidence			24.791 600	8%		0	2%			0	2%
11	higher risk for basal cell carcinoma (odds ratio (OR) = 4.0, 95% confidence			24.137 547	3%		0	0%			0	0%
12	misclassification shifts the observed odds ratio toward its null value, and may			23.969 537	7%		0	9%			0	9%
13	associated with lighter skin (odds ratio (OR) = 3.2, 95% confidence			23.679 521	8%		0	8%			0	8%
14	repair levels that significantly increased odds ratios were independently			23.671 521	5%		0	8%			0	8%
15	for aspirin (relative to mild users, the odds ratios (ORs) were 0.94 for			22.155 417	5%		0	2%			0	2%
16	confidence interval (CI) 0.6-7.2). The odds ratio for cancer in the family was			21.912 398	1%		0	1%			0	1%
17	last residence before diagnosis. The odds ratio for having lived within 2.6			21.892 397	4%		0	1%			0	1%
18	were more likely to be premature (odds ratio (OR) = 2.6, 95% confidence			20.840 334	3%		0	7%			0	7%
19	smoke/fire (1.9). Young maternal age (odds ratio (OR) = 9.0, 95% confidence			20.343 304	0%		0	6%			0	6%
20	regression was used to estimate odds ratios and 95% confidence intervals			20.295 302	1%		0	5%			0	5%
21	more bother for at least one symptom (odds ratio (OR) = 1.87, 95% confidence			18.664 206	2%		0	9%			0	9%

Figure 2. concordance list of odds.

In the 1980-1994 subcorpus, the word with the highest keyness is *authors*. A concordance list of *authors* (275 hits, TTR 15.78) has revealed that such a term is used

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[46] In statistics, *CI* is the confidence interval within which the estimate parameter taken into consideration and applied to a population sample seems reliable.

with a metadiscursive function, as confirmed by the clusters shown in Table 5, which guides the reader along the poster research path:

Table 5. Common clusters occurring with *author* (1 word on the right)

N	Cluster	Freq.	Length
1	THE **AUTHORS** EXAMINED	23	3
2	THE **AUTHORS** CONDUCTED	18	3
3	THE **AUTHORS** CONDUCTED A	17	3
4	THE **AUTHORS** CONCLUDE	16	3
5	THE **AUTHORS** HAVE	14	3
6	THE **AUTHORS** FOUND	14	3
7	THE **AUTHORS** CONCLUDE	14	3
8	THE **AUTHORS** USED	13	3
9	THE **AUTHORS** EXAMINED	13	3
10	THE **AUTHORS** COMPARED	12	3
11	THE **AUTHORS** STUDIED	11	3
12	THE **AUTHORS** ANALYZED	11	3
13	STUDY TO THE **AUTHORS**	10	3
14	THE **AUTHORS** KNOWLEDGE	8	3
15	THE **AUTHORS**	8	3
16	THE **AUTHORS** IDENTIFIED	6	3
17	THE **AUTHORS** FOUND THAT	6	3

Since the collocation of *authors* reveals that the *authors* referred to are the authors of the poster beig summarized in the abstract taken in consideration, the cluster table offers interesting insights, as it reveals a type of highly impersonal language where the authors' voice is identified with the third person pronoun plural. As we will see in the following paragraphs, this stylistic approach contrasts with the one adopted in the 1995-2009 corpus, where, despite the apparent tendency to systematize scientific research in a highly codified format, and where data are expressed through well-defined and precise medical discourse, there seems to be a less impersonal type of register.

3.2. The 1995-2009 sub-corpus.

The keyword list of the 1995-2009 sub-corpus indicates that it is in this time span that the lexical items *introduction*, *methods, results* and *discussion/conclusion** (IMRD) begin to formally acquire the role of formal section markers within the poster presentation, alongside *aim* and *backgrounds* which are meaningful, as they indicate a new trend not

only in posters, but in medical discourse in general.[47] The generic constraints required by the ICMJE since 1993 have clearly influenced the linguistic pattern of abstracts which ever since 1995 have presented the typical IMRD sections, which is confirmed by the data shown in table 4 below, thus conveying the idea of a pattern as rigidly-organized as the one traditionally found in scientific research articles. What is noteworthy is the fact that the new keywords characterizing such a sub-corpus seem to have the highest keyness, since they are found at the top of the keyword list.

Table 6. Breakdown of the of the IMRD pattern among the two subcorpora

		Introduction	*Objectives / Aims*		*Methods*	*Results*	*Discussion / Conclusion*	
1980-1994	*Frequency*	9	30	/ 10	19	62	13	/ 10
	TTR	0.51	1.51	/ 0.57	1.09	3.55	0.74	/ 0.57
1995-2009	*Frequency*	563	207	/ 36	1543	210	15	/ 644
	TTR	4.55	1.67	/ 0.29	12.48	1.69	0.12	/ 5.21

The table above shows the frequency of the terms indicating the different sections of posters according to ICMJE requirements. Given the difference in size between the two subcorpora, the raw figures have been normalized in order not to present biased data. In addition, all terms have been extracted manually in order to check whether the word was intended as a metadiscursive marker. Interestingly, the TTR indicates a massive presence of the terms indicating the *Introduction, Methods,* and *Conclusion** sections of the poster in the 1995-2009 subcorpus, which seems to suggest a lesser importance attributed to the *Objective*, *Aims* and *Discussion* sections when compared to the 1980-1994 subcorpus. As argued by myself at the International Conference *Genre(s) on the Move*,[48] the diminishing relevance of the other sections is only apparent, as they are substituted by the presence of tables and graphs, which visually explain the *Objectives* or *Aims* and the *Results* of research literally illustrated in the poster.

In the 1995-2009 sub-corpus, particularly interesting is the presence of *university* as a new keyword revealing the institutionalized framework within which research

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[47] This is one of the conclusions I reached in the genre analysis of medical posters (Maci, 2011).

[48] Held in Naples, 9-11 December 2009.

summarized by posters is carried out. Indeed, all posters belonging to this time span have an exact indication as to the author's position and affiliation, which is a clear expression of institutional identity and authorial credibility:

(1) A. Alonso[1], E. Ferndndez-Jarne,[2] C. Fuente,[1] R. M. Pajares,[1] A. Sanchez Villegas,[3] M. A. Martinez-Gonzalez.[1] [1]University of Navarra, Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, Pamplona, Spain; [2]University of Navarra, Department of Cardiology, University Clinic, Pamplona, Spain; [3]University of Las Palmas, Division of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain (PA31_2004)

and which seems to be completely lacking in the 1980-1994 sub-corpus:

(2) H. Gruchow,* B. Bailey and R. Downer (The Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI 53226) (PA1_1983)

Apparently, then, the impersonal approach characterizing the 1980-1994 corpus seems to be lacking in the 1995-2009 corpus, despite the presence of the rigid layout following the IMRD pattern and the massive presence of authors' credentials offered by stating the authors' institutional identity. Indeed, as indicated by the keyword list of table 2 above, all posters offer authors' contact details: the lexical item *contact* occurs 635 times and mainly collocates with *details* (545 hits), as shown by the concordance list below:

C Concord
File Edit View Compute Settings Windows Help

N	Concordance
4	Universita¬ t, Dresden, Germany *Contact details: Uta
5	Centre Ð University of Brescia, Italy *Contact details: gelatti@med.unibs.it
6	and Social Welfare, Zagreb, Croatia *Contact details: dan
7	and Social Welfare, Zagreb, Croatia *Contact details: dan
8	Sa÷ o Teoto« nio, Viseu, Portugal *Contact details: mar
9	2Travel Clinic, Bielefeld, Germany *Contact details: tan
10	Health care (IQWIG), Ko¬ ln, Germany *Contact details: mon

Figure 3. first ten collocates of contact.

Apparently, the analysis of keywords seems to indicate that a shift in medical perspectives and discourse has occurred. This tends towards greater discursive inflexibility in the 1994-2009 sub-corpus than the other one, due to the generic constraints established with the *Vancouver Style*. Yet the reading of all the posters has allowed the identification of a more narrative style in the 1980-1994 sub-corpus and a more disjunctive-like style (cf Leech, 1966) in the 1995-2009 sub-corpus:

(3)   On January 31, 1981, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) announced that toxic-shock syndrome (TSS) had steadily declined during 9/80-12/80. A review of TSS reporting in Wisconsin was therefore initiated. (PA1_1981)

(4)   This case-control study was designed to re-evaluate the association of the morphology of breast tissue seen in mammograms with breast cancer risk and to assess the relation of diet, especially intake of fat and vitamin A, to the high-risk mammographic images. (PA1_1988)

(5)   To evaluate the risk of hospitalization for peptic ulcer disease associated with the use of non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), the authors conducted a nested case-control study in the Tennessee Medicaid population, aged 65 years and older, from 1984 through 1986. (PA1_1990)

(6)   From September 1993, LML also shows occupation of deceased, informant's name, address and relationship to deceased, and deceased's maiden name or alias. (PA1_ 1994)

(7)   Pancreatic adenocarcinoma is an important cause of death from cancer throughout the world. Aim: To determine the epidemiological characteristics of pancreatic cancer (PA2_1998)

(8)   Objectives. To validate a simple questionnaire in Portuguese, for primary migraine diagnosis in epidemiological research. (PA2_2001)

(9)   Objective To examine the effects of short-term cyclic stretch on apoptosis in [...] (PA1_2006)

(10) Introduction: the prevalence of ECC (Early Childhood Caries) has been a significant public health issue. (PA1_2009)

Scientific discourse is the representation of knowledge constructed through the text in terms of *problematization,* i.e., through the authorial expression of progressive and alternative positions by acknowledging, disclaiming and proclaiming, by means of which the prevailing assumption is presented as needing re-examination, re-conceptualization and/or re-evaluation "in order to provide a ground for the more specific purpose, thesis, point, or argument of an essay" (Barton, 1993, p. 48). In the 1980-1994 sub-corpus, problematization seems to acquire argumentative features granted by the much more narrative style. We can see, however, that starting from 1998 the syntactic structures used in abstracts is reminiscent of a syntactic structure where problematization is apparently realized through bulleted sentences. The syntactic aspects of the abstracts belonging to the 1994-2009 sub-corpus has revealed a frequent use of bulleted sentences similar to expressions of disjunctive grammar based on non-finite verbal groups, which can occur both in the *objective* and in the *conclusion* sections.

The 1995-2009 sub-corpus is characterized by the presence of *socio* as a keyword which clearly belongs to other domains, as Figure 4 below shows:

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	t. #	os.	. #	os.	. #	os.	t. #	os.
1	or absence of sealants along with Socio-demographic indicators			4.619	288	4%	0	6%			0	6%
2	or absence of sealants along with Socio-demographic indicators			4.344	277	4%	0	1%			0	1%
3	health programs which considering the socio-economical factors should be			2.543	161	1%	0	7%			0	7%
4	oral health status, unhealthy lifestyles, socio-economic status and ethnic			2.530	160	5%	0	7%			0	7%
5	Children from families with a higher socio-economic status have lower caries			980	59	2%	0	8%			0	8%
6	between caries patterns and socio-economic factors. Results: The			914	55	4%	0	7%			0	7%
7	with molar approximal lesions. The socio-economic status of childrenÕs			888	54	0%	0	7%			0	7%
8	and the relationship between caries and socio-economic factors in pre-school			824	50	2%	0	5%			0	5%
9	P12Ð166 Caries pattern and the related socio-economic factors in pre-school			737	42	3%	0	4%			0	4%
10	study was to get more information on socio-demographic features of HBV			93.393	748	0%	0	7%			0	7%
11	of adolescents and can be related to socio-demographic variables. The			85.896	467	7%	0	9%			0	9%
12	such as obesity is influenced by socio-political and cultural context. This			79.318	212	4%	0	2%			0	2%
13	Domestic violence was associated with socio-demographic and familial variables.			75.369	063	0%	0	8%			0	8%
14	questionnaire comprised questions for socio-demographic characteristics,			75.208	057	9%	0	8%			0	8%
15	pylori infection and its association with socio-demographic factors in a			74.787	039	4%	0	8%			0	8%
16	shift work, socio-demographic and socio-economic indicators, health			65.221	640	6%	0	8%			0	8%
17	about working conditions, shift work, socio-demographic and socio-economic			65.219	640	8%	0	8%			0	8%
18	the population of the HECs on various socio-demographic data of the			63.114	555	7%	0	6%			0	6%
19	found associations were independent of socio-demographic factors, occupational			62.860	545	3%	0	5%			0	5%
20	Western Europe we seem to be beyond socio-economic health differences at			58.528	369	2%	0	1%			0	1%
21	HEALTH ECONOMICS Beyond socio-economic health inequalities:			58.376	364	7%	0	1%			0	1%

Figure 4. Concordance list of socio*

An extraction of the concordance pattern has revealed that *socio** mainly occurs in combination with *economic* (281 hits; TTR 2.27), particularly in the cluster *socio economic status*, and in 62 cases (TTR 0.50) with *demographic*, in the cluster *socio demographic factors*. A concordance list of the cluster *socio economic status* reveals that it is regarded by the medical community as a factor linked to children and to ethnicity as far as individual and institutional medical care is concerned. The concordance list of *socio demographic factors* has similarly revealed a trend by the medical community to regard *socio demography* as a factor contributing to the spread of infections. The dispersion plots of both clusters indicate that they are employed in particular in the first and last years of the 1995-2009 subcorpus, probably indicating a renewed interest in such issues from a medical viewpoint.

The frequency list generated has revealed the presence of the adjective *economic* (466 hits, TTR 3.77) which has not been found in the 1980-1994 subcorpus:

N	Concordance	Set	Tag	Word #	t. #	os.	. #	os.
8	represent a major clinical, social and economic challenge. Innovative			86.481	493	6%	0	0%
9	ChildrenÕs Home because of hard economic, social and psychological			85.723	459	5%	0	9%
10	that 45% of the children are because of economic problems of families, only			85.671	456	5%	0	9%
11	and must address the cultural, social, economic and psychological context in			82.842	338	2%	0	6%
12	due to structural, administrative, social, economic and cultural barriers. Many of			82.751	335	6%	0	6%
13	is an interception of social, cultural, economic and personal factors that			82.702	333	3%	0	6%
14	(effects/changes) Since 2000, 95 economic evaluations have been			77.049	125	7%	0	0%
15	of 2000, post market approval medico-economic evaluations to facilitate			77.029	124	2%	0	0%
16	are not only physical; they are also economic, social and psychological.			69.102	811	2%	0	2%
17	cases followed turns in the trends of economic development and changes in			66.434	706	2%	0	9%
18	work, socio-demographic and socio-economic indicators, health behaviour,			65.221	640	6%	0	8%
19	people to cope not only with everyday economic difficulties but also with			64.599	615	0%	0	7%
20	contribute to the association between economic difficulties and CMD among			64.579	614	4%	0	7%
21	Clear associations between current economic difficulties and CMD were			64.520	610	8%	0	7%
22	to examine the association of current economic difficulties with CMD, and the			64.491	609	1%	0	7%
23	factors to the associations of current economic difficulties with common			64.427	605	9%	0	7%
24	sinki.fi Background Economic difficulties are associated with			64.391	604	9%	0	7%
25	to be shown in our final presentation. Economic difficulties and common			64.326	604	2%	0	7%
26	models, using environmental, social, economic and life-style predictors.			64.146	598	1%	0	7%
27	mediated the effect of womenÕs economic activity (including			61.044	465	6%	0	3%
28	and equity in health on social and economic development as a motivator to			60.453	441	3%	0	3%
29	of disease embedded in the health economic evaluation was developed from			58.809	380	7%	0	1%
30	A systematic search for health economic evaluations was made in			58.764	377	1%	0	1%

Figure 5. Concordance list of economic.

The adjective *economic* collocates in particular with *socio**, as we have seen above, but also with the following:

Table 7. Collocates with *economic* in the 2000-2009 subcorpus.

L1	centre	L2	hits
Socio	**economic**		281
	economic	Status	70
	economic	Differences	27
	economic	Factors	21
	economic	Inequalities	21
	economic	Conditions	19
	economic	Groups	13
	economic	indicator/s	3/13
	economic	Position	11
	economic	Mortality	9
	economic	Strain	8
	economic	Evaluation	6
	economic	Development	5
	economic	Transition	5
	economic	Circumstances	5
	economic	Deprivation	5
	economic	Gradients	4
Perceived	**economic**		4
	economic	Level	4
	economic	Characteristics	3
	economic	analysis	3
Political	**economic**		3
	economic	rates	3
	economic	variables	2
	economic	area	1

While the syntactical construction is in line with medical discourse, as it is generally characterised by an information-packaging framework with high lexical density, the adjective seems to assume a meaningful role in medical discourse, mainly associated with head nouns referring to negative or transitional aspects of society, as excerpt (11) below seems to suggest:

(11)   [...] age population accelerates, chronic diseases become an even more important health and economic problem [...] (PA66_2002)

What seems to result from the analysis of *economic* is that the medical community acquires a critical role in the discussion regarding social problem-related aspects, also confirmed by the presence of terms such as *countries* and *behaviour* in the keyword lists which underline the societal aspects of the disease under investigation. In this discussion researchers pose themselves as expert members of the medical social practice subject to global development. Thus, they confirm their active position within society.

Although these adjectives, i.e. *socioeconomic* and *sociodemographic*, do not occur consistently in my corpus, they nevertheless seem indicative of a change of perspective in medical discourse: since they do not pertain to the medical field, they probably reflect a profound change in medical society.[49] Their presence apparently confirms what has been pointed out by academic research (Bhatia, 2004; Fairclough, 2007): not only are global dynamics and universal regulations mediated and translated by the local configurations of resources and ideas which are context-dependent, but such dynamics also give rise to a complex blending of professional cultures when applied to professional practices. The result of these social/professional practices in discursive terms, i.e. the genre, maintains the formality and constraints imposed by the professional community. Yet such a result is represented through a text in which social variations and tensions coexist. The attention posed on social matters within medicine seems to exploit the strategies of prestige advertising, which is used by corporations to emphasize their more prestigious and favorable status than others. In medicine, a field

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[49] Any social change can be seen as a crisis. Indeed the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED) defines *crisis* as "a vitally important or decisive stage in the progress of anything; a turning-point; also, a state of affairs in which a decisive change for better or worse is imminent; now applied especially to times of difficulty, insecurity, and suspense in politics or commerce".

where separation from trade is codified by ethics, pointing to socio-economic, and socio-demographic factors may seem an indication of self-promotion.

4. Conclusion

In trying to identify the elements in medical discourse which may be seen as a form of marketization, the diachronic investigation of abstracts has revealed that:

(i)   The type of language of medical abstracts has gone from narration to disjunctive mode, the latter resembling bulleted sentences used because of the necessity to follow the IMRD pattern of scientific discourse;

(ii)   Space constraints and the disjunctive mode have probably required a change in the type of lexical items employed in abstracts;

(iii)   The keyword lists generated from my two subcorpora seem to indicate that attention is focused on statistical and empirical analysis in the years 1980-1994 vs a more precise indication of credentials and a particular attention to *socio-economic* issues such as fundamental factors in health care in the 1995-2009 decade;

(iv)   The particular use of the adjective *economic* in the 1995-2009 sub-corpus seems to suggest an *eco-sensitive* medical community in which the researcher has a role in favouring positive changes.

Although medical abstracts seem to maintain their integrity when analysed as a multimodal communicative event, the diachronic investigation of abstract lexical items has revealed a development toward interdiscursive patterns by means of which hybrid generic frameworks are created by appropriating established conventions associated with other genres and professional practices (Bhatia, 2007, pp. 393). In medical abstracts, interdiscursivity may result from the application of rhetoric in bulleted sentences to scientific discourse. This requires new forms of communicative interaction, i.e., new forms of dialogue representing relations between genres (Fairclough, 2005), and is realized as an expression of *participating democracy* (Fairclough, 2005; 2007) through which the entire medical community within the academic world substantiates its active role in the social world by offering strategic plans for social change. Discourse seems therefore endowed with performative power (Fairclough, 2007, pp. 10-14) because by describing a reality which requires social actions, it realizes that very action

in self-promoting forms. The only problematic issue here is that epidemiology is a medical field which has to do with social behavior and the medical approach to the disease *is* social. Therefore, there is the necessity to further investigate across medical fields in order to detect whether the lexical peculiarities observed here are real societal changes reflected in discourse or whether they are just appropriate to the medical field they belong to.

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APPENDIX

YEAR	Posters	IF	*JOURNAL TITLE*	ISSUE	PAGES
1980	PA1-PA21	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	112 (3)	446-452
1981	PA1-PA20	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	113 (3)	445-450
1982	PA1-PA14	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	116 (3)	580-584
1983	PA1-PA24	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	118 (3)	443-449
1984	PA1-PA27	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	120 (3)	492-499
1985	PA1-PA25	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	122 (3)	540-546
1986	PA1-PA30	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	124 (3)	531-539
1987	PA1-PA44	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	126 (4)	767-776
1988	PA1-PA97	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	128 (4)	918-943
1989	PA1-PA48	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	130 (4)	839-852
1990	PA1-PA113	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	132 (4)	792-822
1993	PA1-PA102	5.454	*AMERICAN JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY*	138 (8)	644-671
1993-1	PA103-PA157	3.186	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & COMMUNITY HEALTH*	47	412-426
1994	PA1-PA66	3.186	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & COMMUNITY HEALTH*	48	509-525
1995	PA1-PA3	3.186	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & COMMUNITY HEALTH*	49 (suppl.)	S78-S80
1998	PA1-PA172	1.77	*DIGESTION*	59 (3)	213-265
2001	PA1-PA2	3.68	*CEPHALALGIA*	21 (4)	303-312
2002	PA1-PA242	2.76	*EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH*	12 (1)	35
2003	PA1-PA151	2.76	*EUROPEAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH*	13(2)	91
2004	PA1-PA209	3.186	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & COMMUNITY HEALTH*	58 (suppl.1)	A64-A125
2005	PA1-PA122	4.93	*CRITICAL CARE*	9 (suppl. 2)	S1-S97
2006	PA1-PA424	4.93	*CRITICAL CARE*	10 (suppl. 1)	S1-S194
2007	PA1-PA12	1.07	*INTERVENTION CARDIOLOGICAL ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY*	18	99-105
2007-1	PA13-PA292	2.76	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH*	17	136-240
2008	PA1-PA233	2.76	*JOURNAL OF EPIDEMIOLOGY & PUBLIC HEALTH*	18 (1)	130
2009	PA1-PA215	1.07	*INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PAEDIATRIC DENTISTRY*	19 (suppl.1)	66-170

Should public officers make open declarations of their wealth? Kenyan parliamentary discourse on the fight against corruption

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Abstract

This paper analyses the debate of the Public officers Ethics Bill (2003) as discussed in the Kenyan parliament using the discourse-historical approach (DHA). The bill sought to legislate public officers' ethics as well as provide for public officers, including Members of Parliament (MPs), to annually declare their wealth in a bid to stem rampant corruption and inefficiency in the public sector. However, clauses in the bill went against the expressed intent for transparency envisaged in the bill. These contradictory clauses were retained at the passage of the bill. The analysis of arguments advanced in the retention of the clauses contradicting the intents of transparency in the bill exposes the fallacious arguments put forward, which were protective of power elite interests at the expense of those of the public. The analysis therefore demonstrates the various discourses strategies employed by those for and against the retention of the contradicting clauses as a critique to fallacious arguments that go against the cardinal principle that parliament ought to safeguard public interests.

1. Introduction

During the last half of Kenya's President Daniel arap Moi 24 year autocratic rule, high level politically sanctioned corruption in Kenya had become so rampant that there was a rapid economic decline for most of the general public and massive accumulation of wealth for the politically connected, including ministers and MPs. For instance, one reported scandal in the early 1990's – the Goldenberg scandal – involved siphoning out

of public coffers an estimated $600 million in connected dubious deals in two years. The adverse effect of this pilferage is thought to still have an impact now, two decades later. During the same period, there was also massive irregular allocation of public land and utilities to the politically connected. The consequence of these actions was impoverishment of most Kenyans, such that the per capita income around this period was estimated at $239, while close to 50 % of the population was driven to living below the poverty line (Barkan 2004). There was also a total decay or collapse of infrastructure and social amenities.

At the behest of civil society and international lending partners, a Public officers Ethics Bill was mooted in 2002 to check rampant corruption. However, President Moi declined to assent it into law. In 2003, when President Moi's political party – Kenya African National Union (KANU) was defeated in the 2002 elections, the bill was reintroduced in parliament by the then perceived reformist National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government. The Public officers Ethics Bill constituted one of various legislative measures that had been proposed in curbing corruption, especially high level future corruption by empowering the public in monitoring of public officers' annual wealth profiles through annual declarations of the officers' wealth. Among these officers included MPs and Cabinet Ministers. The bill therefore directly touched on MPs' interests. However, a clause in the 2003 bill, just like in the 2002 one, provided for the confidentiality of wealth declarations by the officers thus making it difficult for the public to access the declarations made. Further clauses actually provided a penalty that was twice as heavy for anyone divulging the contents of the wealth declarations vis-à-vis public officers making false wealth declaration. The net effect of these clauses seemed to be protective of elite interests at the expense of those of the public, for which parliament ought to safeguard. The bill was passed without amendment to these contradictions.

This paper therefore analyses the debate of the Public officers Ethics Bill (2003) as discussed in the Kenyan parliament using the discourse-historical approach (DHA). I conceive the debate of the bill as power elite discourse on the fight against corruption in Kenya where the MPs debate matters that potentially touch on their interests. In the analysis, I seek to answer the following questions:

1)   What arguments were advanced for and against public access to public officers'   wealth declarations?

2)   What is the intrinsic logic of these arguments?

3)   How were the arguments discursively realized?

4)   How can the retention of the contradictory clauses in the bill be explained within Kenya's socio-political context, and what does this means for the fight against corruption?

2. Theoretical Framework

For my analysis, I adopt the Discourse-Historical Approach – DHA (Reisigl & Wodak 2001, 2009; Wodak 2001). DHA, like other approaches in Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), is a problem oriented social research that begins by identifying socio-political issues and problems that involve power relations that engender discrimination, domination, power abuse and control. Then an analysis is made of the discourses and texts that ideologically produce and reproduce such unequal power relations by critiquing such abuses of power with the ultimate aim of engendering more egalitarian power relations in society (Fairclough 2001a & 2001b; Fairclough & Wodak 1997; Van Dijk 2001; Wodak 2001a).

The socio-political issue I focus on in this paper is the fight against corruption as debated in the Kenyan parliament. The contradictory clauses in the debated bill touched on potential instances of abuse of power, and the engendering of inequality and domination, which my analysis seeks to critique. The historical orientation in DHA makes it an appealing framework in the analysis of corruption and parliamentary debates intended to make laws to fight corruption because these twin issues are best understood through a historical examination of the socio-political context in which such debates emerge.

Wodak (2001b, p. 65) and Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p. 32) affirm that DHA, 'adheres to the socio-philosophical orientation of critical theory' and in so doing, pursue a three-pronged critique as briefly reproduced below from Wodak (2001b, p. 65):

1.   Text or discourse immanent critique, which aims at discovering inconsistencies, (self-) contradictions, paradoxes and dilemmas in the text-internal structures.

2.   Socio-diagnostic critique – concerned with demystifying exposure of the – manifest or latent – possibly persuasive or 'manipulative' character of discursive practices.

3.   Prognostic critique, which contributes to the transformation and improvement of communication.

Reisigl and Wodak (2001, p. 34) elaborate that the motivation for the kind of critique in DHA is based on (a) 'sense of justice' and 'conviction of the unrestricted validity of human rights and by awareness of suffering' caused by 'social discrimination, repression, domination, exclusion and exploitation', which is a source of inspiration to take sides 'for emancipation, self determination and social recognition'.   (b) '…conviction that unsatisfactory social conditions can, and therefore must, be subject to methodical transformation towards fewer social disfunctionalities and unjustifiable inequalities', a motivation they acknowledge is 'part utopian'. According to the proponents of DHA, the best political model that best captures the actualization of their envisaged critique is Habermas' deliberative democracy which is based on the free public sphere, which is also tied to the notion of rational argumentation.

DHA adopts the principle of triangulation as a means of ensuring rigor in analysis through incorporating an interdisciplinarity in theory, methods – incorporating fieldwork and ethnography, in teams and in practice. Triangulation in DHA captures four levels of context as reproduced in brief from Wodak (2001b, p. 67) and Wodak (2003, p. 13):

1.   Immediate language or text internal co-text;

2.   The intertextual and interdiscursive relationship between utterances, texts, genres and discourses;

3.   The extralinguistic social/sociological variables and institutional frames of a specific 'context of situation';

4.   The broader socio-political and historical contexts, which the discursive practices are embedded in and related to.

The operationalization of DHA analysis basically takes three interlinked dimensions:

1   Contents or topics of a specific discourse that is of concern to a researcher or a social problem under investigation;

2   Discursive strategies (including argumentation strategies) that are used to achieve the discourse concerns in (1) above. A discursive strategy is defined as "more or less accurate and more or less intentional plan of practices adopted to achieve a particular social, political, psychological or linguistic aim" (Reisigl and Wodak 2001, p. 44);

3   Linguistic means and context dependent realization used to accomplish the discursive strategies and hence the producing or reproducing the discourse concern or problem under investigation. The relevant linguistic devices to focus on should be determined by the specific research questions a researcher is investigating (Meyer 2001).

In operationalizing DHA, the three dimensions of analysis above should constantly engage with the context as outlined above as well as the socio-historical and institutional context in which the social problem under investigation is embedded.

Following the DHA operationalization steps above, the content I focus on is the parliamentary power elite discourse on the fight against corruption in Kenya where the MPs debate matters that potentially touched on their interests. I further particularly focus on the argumentation strategies that MPs use to argue for and against legislation to make wealth declarations open to the public in a bid to fight corruption, and the linguistic realization of the said arguments.

3. Data and Method

The source of my data is the National Assembly of Kenya parliamentary Hansard reports (a verbatim recording of parliamentary proceedings) of the debate of the Public Officers Bill 2003. From the debate of the bill, I firstly identified and extracted all the sections that directly touched on the debate of the clauses on public officers' declaration of wealth. Secondly, I categorized the arguments into two, that is, (a) those in support, and (b) those against public access to wealth declarations for close analysis. However, before analysis, I outlined parliamentary debates as a genre of political discourse as represented in section 4.0. A genre is a conventionalized use of language associated with a particular social activity (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). DHA considers genre analysis

a prerequisite to a detailed analysis of a text (Reisigl and Wodak 2001). I then outlined the wider, as well as the immediate socio-political context in which the need for the enactment of the Public Officers Ethics Bill was mooted as captured in section 5.0 and 5.1 respectively.

4. Parliamentary debates as a genre of discourse

Debates are a fundamental means through which parliament carries out its business, which includes: making laws, regulating taxation and monitoring public expenditure, scrutinizing the conduct of ministers and other public servants, and discussing matters of national importance (Interparliamentary Union 1976). The overriding principle guiding parliament in accomplishing its tasks is that public interests should always prevail over parochial or vested interests. This is a major challenge that parliaments have to grapple with, and how well or badly they carry through this principle may as well be reflective of 'the nature of the state (democratic or authoritarian) … and political culture' (Salih 2005, p. 3)

In the discussion of parliamentary debates as a genre of discourse, I will adopt Van Dijk's (2000; 2004) context model. I adopt the context model because it ties up with the notion of *discursive strategy* in DHA. Both presuppose mental constructs that are goal directed as participants engage in language use, and have a bearing on how and what language is used in specific social situations. Context model, according to Van Dijk, are mental constructs of participants of or about social situations in which they are involved. Context models mediate the instantiation of discourse that is relevant to the ongoing situation by participants. Context models, Van Dijk further observes, are personal, but also bear important social dimensions. This dual character of context models allows for individuals to both have personal interpretations of the context of situation and a common social interpretation as well. Context models are also dynamic and changeable depending on both the changing interpretation of situation and discourse as well.

According to Van Dijk (2000), the parliamentary debates context schema is a construct that the MPs, lay people, and experts posses. Van Dijk postulates that the parliamentary debates schema contains macro and micro categories, as outlined below:

1. Macro categories

   - Domain – this is the broad social domain that a social situation is thought to be part of. Parliamentary debates are in this regard part of the political domain.

   - Global actions – these are the overall actions that instantiate the global domains. The global actions that define parliamentary debates as a political activity include: legislative, deliberative, financial regulation and probity, representation, as well as attendant MPs social acts such as promoting themselves, party and other interests among others.

   - Institutional actors – these are the participants in parliamentary debates in their complex, singular and multiple dimensions, such as MPs, political parties, opposition and government, front and back benchers, parliament itself, and the public.

2. Micro-level categories

   - Setting – this broadly encompasses the time and space and the attendant political and legal significance. Setting may also be seen in terms of the sub-genre of parliamentary activity and its procedures and regulations.

   - Local actions – these are the multiple local actions that constitute political social acts in the global act of debating, legislating and so on.

   - Participants – Van Dijk examines participants in terms of firstly, their *communicative roles*, which encompass the different speaking identities MPs may adopt and the varied audiences they address. Secondly, MPs *interactional roles* such as government and opposition. Thirdly, *Social roles*, which are MPs membership in various social, institutional, interest groups, and so on.

   - Cognition – this involves the knowledge that is brought to bear in parliamentary debates, ranging from the personal, social knowledge, knowledge of what other people know, should know, the aims and intentions of speakers, and so on.

I use the parliamentary debates context schema above as basis for both making sense of MPs talk in the debate I analyze, as well as a means of making a critique of the debate. But before making a critique of the debate, an understanding of the socio-political

context in which the debate is embedded is necessary. The next section outlines this context.

5. The wider socio-political context of the Public Officer Ethics Bill (2003): corruption, the state and the power elite in Kenya

There is a close linkage between the configuration of the state, the power elite and corruption in Kenya. The configuration of the state and the attendant power elite domination in Kenya was systematically achieved through various amendments to the independent constitution, resulting in granting unfettered powers to the presidency at the expense of the judiciary and legislature, thereby enabling the holder of this position to have almost unbridled control of the state and its resources (Katumanga 1999; Lakidi and Mazrui 1973; Salih 2005). In the prevailing situation the state was run like a personal fiefdom, such that, access to or proximity to state power ensured access to wealth, acquired by whatever means. The interconnection between the state, power, the power elite and corruption in Africa, as is the case in Kenya, is aptly captured by Ake (2000, p. 37 – 38) when he writes:

> *In most post colonial Africa, the only way for elites to secure life and property and some freedom was [is] to be in control, at any rate, to share in control of state power.... That was [is] part of the reason why state power was [is] sought with such desperation that political competition tended [tends] to degenerate into warfare. Those who prevail in this struggle privatize the state and take what they can, and those who lose effectively lose all claim to the resources of the state, including protection by the law, and suffer what they must. In these circumstances, everyone desperately wants to be incorporated in the sharing of state power* (Ake, 2000:37-38).

As Ake observes, the restructuring and practices of state power and the concomitant privatization of the state power and resources provided for very fertile ground for the thriving of corruption and cronyism in Africa, and indeed Kenya. With the privatization of the state, doling out and withholding state power and resources become an important means of maintaining political regimes. This was the case in the decade preceding the

introduction of the Bill under discussion here. The then KANU's regime was mired in rampant corruption involving illegal public land transfers, illegitimate acquisition of public land – 'land grabbing', phony state contracts involving various shell companies, bribery, and outright theft (Barkan 2004; Klopp 2000; Taylor 2006). Little or no genuine attempts were made by state organs to hold to account various public officers or politically connected individuals suspected of having engaged in corruption.

5.1 The Public Officer Ethics Bill (2003) and its immediate socio-political background

The public officer ethics bill (2003) was a re-introduction of the bill passed in 2002, but which the then President, Daniel arap Moi, did not assent to. The 2002 bill had been introduced to parliament, hurriedly debated and passed, at the behest of international lenders and donors who had frozen lending to the then broke government. Conditions for resumption of lending were then pegged on the government passing legislation to combat the unbridled corruption in the public sector.

The 2003 bill was introduced shortly after the defeat of the corrupt and repressive KANU regime in December 2002, and the coming to power of the pre-election coalition party – National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) in what was hailed as the second liberation, the first being the gaining of independence from the British colonialists. This regime change imbued in Kenyans so much optimism for a radical shift in the management of political affairs of the country. However, NARC, as constituted, bore the bane of contradiction of many regime changes in Africa within the newly reintroduced multi-party politics in the 1990s. It was saddled with a host of holdover political actors associated with the discredited KANU, as well as constant power struggles (see Gachigua 2006; Murunga and Nasiong'o 2006; Oyugi 2006). As (Matiangi 2004, p. 8) observes of what he calls 'incestuous' regime changes, 'members of the new regime with links to the past regimes tend to subvert, derail or regroup to circumvent efforts to fight graft'.

The overall purpose of the bill was to legislate 'an act of parliament to advance the ethics of public officers, including MPs and the members of the executive, by providing a

code of conduct and ethics for public officers, and requiring financial declarations from certain officers and to provide for connected purposes' (Kenya Gazette supplement 2003, p. 69). The bill contained six parts and several clauses; however, I will only analyze part four of the bill, dealing with 'declarations of income, assets and liabilities', which contained the clauses that contradicted the intent of The public officer ethics bill (2003), and thereby seemingly protective of power elite interests at the expense of public interests that parliamentary legislation ought to advance. Of particular interest for this research are the clauses (28 – 31), which made it difficult for the public to access wealth declarations by public officials. Furthermore, clauses 29 provided for a penalty that was twice as heavy for anyone divulging the contents of the wealth declarations vis-à-vis public officers making false wealth declaration.

6. Data Analysis

In this section, I analyze and critique the arguments advanced in the debate for and against public access to wealth declarations, which will entail assessing the soundness of the arguments employed in the arguments, as well as pointing out how these arguments were discursively realized within the dynamics of parliamentary debates as a genre, and the wider socio-political context of the debates. I have put in italics those segments of discourse that I cite in my analysis.

6.1   Arguments against open public officers' wealth declarations

- Arguments appealing to collective African culture/customs: the thrust of these arguments was that open declaration of wealth goes against African customs or culture:

1) **Mr. Robinson Githae - NARC (Assistant Minister for Justice and Constitutional Affairs)**: … The reason why there is a confidentiality clause is because of *our African custom*. *In some communities*, it is prohibited even to count the number of your children. *It was thought* in order to encourage public officers to list down all their assets, let it be confidential. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 457)

2) **Mr. Kipchumba (KANU)**: ...one aspect of declaring all that we own, or all the property, assets and liabilities, *we are all Africans and we know the African culture*.... Members of parliament don't even tell their wives or spouses what they earn or own. Now you require them to tell Kenyans what they have. I think you will receive a lot of resistance. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 493)

The arguments advanced here, firstly, appeal to the supposed collective sentiment of the African culture and customs, as realized in the expressions: ***our*** *African custom* and ***we are all Africans*** *and* ***we*** *know the African culture*. The logic regarding such customs, which is based on superstition that counting ones children and property would invite personal tragedy, may have been applicable to private life, however, this reasoning ignores the public nature and hence the public interest and need for transparency that goes with public service in modern public institutions. A related argument advanced by Kipchumba goes, if MPs don't tell their spouses what they own, who are Kenyans to expect such disclosures. This argument transposes private opinions and imposes them in a public sphere without due regard to the different logics of these spheres. These arguments thus both erroneously appeal to collective sentiment of the African customs (*argumentum ad populum*), as well as false authority (*argumentum ad verecundiam*) through erroneously transposing the logics of superstition and private beliefs to modern public affairs. Secondly, in citing the relevant African custom, Githae clearly indicates that it is only practiced by *some communities* in whom power is invested to decide for the whole nation. Thirdly, there is the internal contradiction that the African custom does not allow one to enumerate their wealth yet it seems agreeable that, as the bill proposes, that public officers' wealth can be listed albeit confidentially. Fourthly, both MPs evade expressing their arguments as explicitly their own. They are framed as matters of collective African custom/culture, as collective MPs perspective, or in Githae's case employing the vague agentless passive structure: 'It was thought in order to encourage public officers to list down all their assets, let it be confidential'.

- Arguments invoking dangerous or threatening consequences if open declaration of wealth was legislated included:

3) **Mr. Moses Wetangula (NARC)**: ...unless in pursuance of criminal investigation, under no circumstances should the information given in confidence by anybody under this Act be let loose to *anybody who wants to see it*. This bill with all its

noble intentions can easily *be an instrument* for witch-hunts, abuse or subsequent reckless prosecution of people. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 496).

4) **Mr. Kipchumba (KANU)**: ...we are against where *people* get information to scandalize certain people. I think we put in regulations in the Bill that will safeguard *individuals being scandalized* just because of what they own. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 493).

5) **Mr. Mutula Kilonzo (responding to the debate on behalf of the Leader of the Official Opposition - KANU)**: Mr. Deputy speaker, Sir, allow me to raise the following issue: supposing after we pass this law, I go and publish the list of what I have – as I will – and I declare, and then it is open, what will stop *the practice* of being abducted going on in South America and other countries in Europe being adopted here. *Somebody* comes and openly has access to the list of your assets, he finds that you can afford Ksh. 3 million, he goes and picks your favourite child and he calls you and says: "we know that in your bank account you have Ksh. 3 million; we got that information from the declaration you gave to the commission; unless I get Ksh. 3 million, I will send to you the finger of your child in the course of the evening". (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 493).

The basic argument advanced here is that open declarations of wealth portend dangers such as abductions, blackmail, witch-hunt, reckless prosecution and potential for scandalizing those who have declared wealth (*argumentum ad baculum*). These arguments beg the questions: Why would MPs fear for such ills to occur? Who are the would be perpetrators of the evil acts cited? And are these reactions an indicator of other underlying fears by the elite? The likely perpetrators of these ills are strategically left vague, realized indefinite pronouns: *anybody, somebody, people*; as activity and instrument respectively, without actors, such as *the practice, an instrument*; or as passive constructions: *individuals being scandalized*. The MPs are keenly aware of the risk of implying ill motive of the public.

A possible cause of this fear can be explained historically. In the late 1980s through the 90s, politically sanctioned corruption in Kenya had become so rampant, causing a rapid economic decline for most of the general public and massive accumulation of wealth for the politically connected. In one of the major scandals in the 1990s – 'Goldenberg' scandal, an estimated US$ 600 million was siphoned out of public coffers (Taylor 2006).

Further, Barkan (2004:89) observes that 'from 1990 through 2002, annual per capita income in Kenya fell from US$271 to $239 and poverty rose from 48 to 56 percent. Basic social services and infrastructure, particularly roads, decayed or collapsed. The civil service, the legislature, and the judiciary became impotent, little more than rubber stamps for Moi's (then president) repressive policies'. This coupled with the patronage system of politics that informs Kenyan politics, where accumulation of wealth and proximity to government are closely linked makes open declarations of wealth for the elite who benefited from political largesse very uncomfortable, (see, Barkan 1984; Hornsby 1989, for patronage in post-independent Kenya; and Holmquist 2002; Katumanga 1999 for analysis stretching to the colonial period). Secondly, open disclosure of wealth would certainly have exposed concrete evidence to the much talked about inequalities between the rich and the poor, which are reported to be among the highest in the world (Society for International Development 2004). Concrete exposure of such dramatic evidence is potentially politically explosive.

- Arguments that open declarations of wealth by public officers would scare off people of integrity from public service, and only attract reckless ones, thus, resulting in undesirable consequences (*argumentum at consequentiam*):

6) **Mr. Mutula Kilonzo**: ... You allow this blanket permission for anybody to inspect your assets at will.... Violation of privacy will be extreme and the dangers of blackmail will be so real that instead of attracting people of integrity, which this law hopes to do, we will end up attracting people who do not care at all. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 549).

7) **Mr. Kipchumba**: ... very soon we might have rich public servants running away from public service, yet they are very productive, just because they do not want anybody to know what they own. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 494).

These arguments do not clearly demonstrate why people of integrity or the rich and productive people should be scared off from public service for openly disclosing their wealth; in fact it seems that people of integrity, and who have nothing to fear would be better served in such an arrangement.

- Arguments invoking right to privacy: these arguments open declaration of wealth infringes on the privacy and choice of an individual and therefore should be rejected.

8) **Mr. Raila Odinga (Minister for Roads, Public Works and Housing – NARC):** (*translated from Kiswahili*) what we do not want is people's privacy to intruded. Kenyans too have their privacy. To make a wealth declaration and make it open to public scrutiny is to mean that not everybody enjoys the right to privacy. … Let open declarations be a personal choice. … I oppose the idea of openly publishing people's declarations. In what country is this done? What kind of law is this? One is entitled to privacy! Because one is not a thief. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 493).

Related to the argument above, is that access to the declaration of wealth by a public officer should only be made in cases where there were criminal charges preferred against the officer. A person's privacy should only be encroached when there is a justified cause such as misconduct. These arguments ignore the history of the fight of corruption in Kenya, which had demonstrated that when damning information on corruption was confined to the elite and state institutions, corrupt practices were never punished, were glossed over or covered up, hence, the need for the public involvement in monitoring the elite.

6.2   Arguments for open public officers' wealth declarations

- Arguments for transparency and accountability in public affairs:

9)   **Mr. Mirugi Kariuki (NARC)**: …Mr. Deputy Speaker, sir, I am a little concerned by Clause 29 of this bill. We are living at a time of transparency, yet we are talking about confidentiality under clause 29. I believe that the purpose of making public officers accountable is to ensure that the members of public are informed what they have acquired. There is no way a member of the public who may be willing to offer or challenge information disclosed to the commission by the public officer will be able to do so. I am proposing that, in fact, clause 29 is unnecessary. …We want the public officers to come clean and declare their wealth and income. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is what happens in other jurisdictions (*cites the case of America*). (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 456-457).

- Arguments about parts of bill contradicting spirit of the bill:

10) **Mr. Mukiri (NARC)**: Mr. Temporary Speaker, Sir, I feel that section 29 is undoing this Act. I do not know why the Minister introduced section 29. ... the purpose of this section beats the spirit of and the purpose of this Act. The aim of this Bill is for people to be transparent, accountable and be able to declare their property. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 591).

11) **Mr. Paul Muite (chairman departmental committee on Administration of Legal Justice and Legal Affairs)**: (the declaration of wealth)... is absolutely confidential, so much that the sentence for disclosure is punitive. (*Cites the relevant section)* ...So the thrust of punishment is disclosure. Therefore, the question is: what are we seeking to achieve by enacting this bill if the weight is against disclosure? ...Is the objective of the bill merely to comply with what the donors are asking us to do in order for us to get aid? Or is the objective the policy decision by us, as Kenyans, to truly confront corruption? If it is the later, no case can be made for confidentiality. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 584).

These arguments appealed to the accepted legislative principle that clauses of a bill should not be inimical to the spirit of the bill. The penalty for leaking the declared information to the public that is twice heavier than that of a public officer giving a false wealth declaration negated the spirit of the bill, which was to combat corruption in the public sector.

▪ Arguments about public interests and public good weighing against private rights:

12) **Mr. Muchiri (NARC)**: ... I do not know why we were being told yesterday that section 70 is being infringed. That is not correct. I am not a lawyer, but I have a lot of interest in law. Section 70 of the constitution states that you should not infringe on the privacy of an individual at home or his property, but that should not be at the expense of the public. (*Quotes the section*). The constitution therefore, states that if it is in the public interest, we should infringe into your privacy. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 580).

13) **Mr. Paul Muite**: ...Statistics the world over show that the media is the most effective organ to fight corruption. It is the whistle blower. We have witnessed it even in this country... (*Cites local case and the Watergate scandal in US*). If truly our intention is to confront corruption as a nation, we

must make this register available for inspection. That way, members of the public will monitor how individuals will be acquiring their wealth…. Obviously, we are talking about the public good. In the process of trying to achieve the public good, several factors should be weighed, one against the other. In this case, we could be having in mind the reputation of individuals. However, public interest must always carry the day. Therefore, when you accept a public position, you must accept scrutiny by the media. (Kenya, Republic of 2003, p. 584-5).

These arguments are against unfettered right to privacy as advocated for by proponents of making public officers' wealth declaration confidential. In arguing their position, Mr. Muchiri and Mr. Muite appeal to the principle of public interest, which is widely held to inform the conduct of public affairs. In their arguments, they consider the public disclosure of public officers' wealth as being in the interest of the public, and thus overriding rights to privacy on this issue in a bid to foster transparency and accountability of public officers.

7. Conclusion

From the discussion above of the arguments advanced by those for and against declaration of wealth by public officers being open to public scrutiny, the following observations can be discerned. The overall framing of arguments advanced against public access to public officers' wealth declarations was largely fallacious or problematic and manipulatively invoked risks, dangers and violations as a basis for rejecting public access to public officers' wealth declarations. The overall framing of arguments advanced for public access to public officers' wealth declarations was largely based on straight-forward arguments invoking principles of public good, transparency, accountability, good practices, and pointing out that clauses in the bill contradicted the spirit of the bill (part-whole contradictions).

On the basis of the observation above, how can the passage of the bill despite its glaring contradictions be explained vis-à-vis the arguments advanced? A possible explanation can be adduced from the prevailing political practice in Kenya at the time of debating the bill, where the political elite sought to configure state power so as to privatize state

power and resources, and then use proximity to state power as a patronage system to perpetuate their power. Therefore, the fallacious arguments against public officers' wealth declarations being open to public scrutiny should be seen as a strategy to foreclose exposure of elite manipulative use of power that open access to public officers wealth declarations would expose. For instance, with regard to how public officers obtained their wealth and indeed that such declarations would dramatically expose the huge gap between the poor and the rich in Kenya, which is described as one of the worst in the world.

Based on the observation above the findings in this data suggest that straight forward logical arguments urging for genuine legislation to fight corruption are not necessarily successful in the face of a structural configuration of the state to serve elite interests. However, given a dearth of in-depth critical analysis of parliamentary debates in Kenya on such topical issues such as corruption, there is greater need to systematically analyze and expose fallacious arguments advanced by the elite in Kenya which seek to forestall genuine attempts at making laws to fight the vice. Such critiques would be essential in bolstering arguments to the country's quest for wider political reforms that would make it possible for state power to serve public interest.

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