"BR…EXIT". A Diatextual Analysis of Public Discourse on Migrant Italian Talents

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Abstract

The theoretical and methodological framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is a powerful resource to face the ideological intricacies of the public debate on a specific aspect of migrant people: 'brain exit'. The relevance of brain drain (Docquier and Rapoport 2012) has been explored at several levels; however, the aim of our study is to focus on its significance for Discursive Psychology as well. The way in which it is discussed brings into play the interpretative repertories of basic objects in the organization of the culture of a community, such as 'work', 'family', 'education', 'Self', 'nation'. Our study aims to detect the discursive pathways that oppose the 'professional realization' to the 'emotional enhancement' as referring to the Self, to the families and to the politicians as well as to the whole community. Starting from various sources of 'dia-textual' (Manuti and Mininni and 2017) data, our research aims to evaluate which are the difficulties of this displacement, doubts and victories of brain drain. To satisfy this purpose, a Sentiment Analysis and Diatextual Analysis was carried out, assuming that the courageous choice to leave depends on a high motivation of the worker who sets aside his affections for work satisfaction: not by chance, in English in the binomial 'brain drain' and 'drain heart', the heart is almost moved to the background. Diatextual Approach as a format of Critical Discourse Analysis answers the need to 'enlarge the paradigm', starting from the research question about how the speech represented the social goals and how large their area of influence can be.

Key words: *Brain drain, Italian workers, Critical Discourse Analysis, Diatextual Approach, Socio-Epistemic Rhetoric*

1. Introduction

Talents dropping is one of the biggest problems that Italy is facing and this negative phenomenon is falling back into national competitiveness. The world situation of flexibility in the work context does not seem to touch the Peninsula, that to be admired for its historical-cultural heritage, but Italy becomes a place from which one must fight to either survive or flight. People,

who decide to flight, are defined 'brain drain'. The brain drain phenomenon is theorised as the abandonment of a Nation in favour of another from skilled people or people with higher education, generally following a job offer with better conditions of reward or life (Grubel 1994). This definition, although complete, doesn't seize the complexity and evolution of the big migration phenomenon. For example, it does not describe who these skilled people are. Starting from the presupposition that there is not yet an exhaustive definition of skilled people migrations, it is possible to refer to them as mobility. There is an increase in qualified people leaving Italy in recent times, but this is not too recent and it does not only involve Italy. This phenomenon was already present with the Grand Tours, where students from well-to-do classes began this tour to discover the classical world, where Italy was one of the most sought-after destinations. Actually, the phenomenon has even more distant roots, dating back to the classical world: in particular when Greece was reduced to a Roman province and the Romans travelled to Greece to be 'colonized' by classical culture.

Today, however, there is a departure of qualified human capital with no possibility of making up for this lack because Italy is no longer an attractive destination. In addition, this phenomenon has become socially known as prey of common sense. This aspect is amplified by media talks that compare the phenomenon of brains fleeing to mass migration, without considering the personal and interpersonal dimension. In addition, it is a phenomenon that is heavily influenced by socio-cultural and linguistic aspects. In fact, there are several ways to give a name to the escape of qualified human capital: there are languages in which the dimension of escape or exodus prevails. For example, in Romance languages, 'fuga di cervelli' in Italian is known as 'exode de cervaux' in French, but if we take into consideration German languages it comes to be mainly associated with 'brain drain'. So who are the brain drain people? According to the Aspen Institute report (Milio et al. 2012), Italian qualified people that are more likely to flee are academics and researchers in order to circulate knowledge ('brain circulation', in fact), but also those people working in the ICT sector, then followed by other professional categories as a result of the change in the labour market and the emerge of new forms of career that go beyond the traditional one. It is becoming an emerging phenomenon, and the way in which it is discussed brings into play the interpretative repertories of basic objects in the organization of the culture of a community, such as 'work', 'family', 'formation', 'Self', 'nation'.

Our study aims to detect the discursive resources that oppose the 'professional realization' to the 'emotional enhancement' of the Self. Every 'brain on the run' is a mind in search of a life story. The interpretative repertories circulating in the public debate expropriate an inter-personal experience of its singularity, anchoring the phenomenon in its generality to argumentative contexts that are not entirely compatible with the psychosocial dynamics of its production.

2. *Diatextual Approach as Critical Discourse Analysis*

The Diatextual Approach is a way of practising Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), which is made possible through the interweaving of the developments

in discursive social psychology, cultural psychology and critical psychology. The relationship between text (discourse) and context is defined as 'diatext' (Manuti and Mininni 2017), whose Greek etymology, from '*dia*' ('*through*'), clarifies that the sense-making practices of all human experiences derive precisely from the dense plot of intricacies between text and context. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) argue that CDA starts from the perception of a problem in society. For this reason, the brain drain phenomenon should also be studied in a perspective of Discursive Psychology with a CDA (Fairclough 2003) approach, a theoretical and methodological resource to face the ideological implications of the public debate on a specific aspect of migrant people labelled as 'brain exit'.

The relevance of brain drain (Docquier and Rapoport 2012) has been explored at several levels (social, economic, political), but migrant skilled workers are 'people' that leave their countries of birth and their affection. Hence, they are not just a 'capital' that produces, but they are first of all human beings distinguished by high motivation and, at the same time, they have a lot of difficulties and doubts. Many social problems, such as brain drain, have temporal markers and identifying them is the first step towards collecting media(ted) texts on such issues. This is expressed in public mediate discourses that are important to analyse in order to understand the social problem, because the Internet leaves a trace, so public mediated discourses have a 'long life' (Carvalho 2008). In this perspective, CDA considers discourses as social practices, bringing out from them the critical and ideological point of view and, for this reason, it is necessary to consider the context of enunciation. The discursive orientation in social psychology enhances the theory of social representations (Moscovici 1961) in its dialogical focus (Markova 2004), highlighting the dynamics of sense enunciation that constitute them. Starting from the assumption that sense-making springs from the living rooting of the text in its context of enunciation, the diatextual analyst aims to detect any index of its constitutive dynamics, enhancing the Gestalt Principle of the 'part-all' link (Mininni, Scardigno and Rubino 2008), i.e. attempting to compose the determinants of the enunciation of meaning at the micro-level (e.g. lexical units, phrase, sentence, grammar) with those detectable at the macro-level (discursive genre, narrative programme, figures of speech, etc.). If we consider them not as products, but in the process of their 'making themselves', social representations emerge as 'interpretative repertoires' (Potter and Wetherell 1987) in which the various positions in the social articulations of belonging allow people to build their own experience of world. If social representations operate as interpretive repertoires, not only is their ability to express the radical rhetorical dimension of man evident (Billig 2005), but also their inevitable function of giving voice to the ideological confrontation in which the social world is organized. When confronted with the discursively produced sense-making, the diatextual analyst seeks to grasp its ideological order, i.e. how the meanings set forth are functional to a given social design and/or that 'set of shared, contested and negotiated stories' (Ben-habib 2002) which generates culture. The core of the diatextual approach is represented by the commitment to highlight, in the examined discursive events, traces of the Subjectivity of the enunciator, of the Argumentative of the topic and of the enunciative Modality ('SAM model') (Mininni 2005). The interpretation of the markers identified by the SAM model let us penetrate into the 'Socio-

Epistemic Rhetoric' (Berlin 1993), which is a construct capable of accounting for the inherent dynamics in the syntagma 'X has the culture of z', whereby 'z' can identify almost any area of human experience, for example 'violence' or 'peace', 'sport' or 'poetry', 'music' or 'ecology' and so on. This expression evokes the profound, robust patemic root of the cultural mind that leads people (and communities) to recognize themselves in some 'passions', that is to 'dedicate' their existence to 'objects' capable of making it 'sensitive' or ' worthy ' (Mininni 1997). Having the culture of 'z' means recognizing in 'z' that special horizon of meaning that gives order and momentum to one's life. The inherent interpretative ability in the 'culture of z' shines from the socio-epistemic rhetoric of 'z', that is, from the ways in which 'z' enunciates, in the social formats of discourses, a certain cognitive structure, that is a given 'world view' (Mininni 1999).

This creation of worldview is the innovative element that allows to practice CDA in a new way. In this case, a text is put into discourse, into a corpus of meaning potentialities inspired and animated by the vital breath of intentionality (Mininni et al. 1995).   This is why talk-in-interaction is considered constitutive of human mind. However, if the mind is discursive, then it constantly takes into account the others and their value system, which translate to 'socio-epistemic rhetoric'.

The construct of 'socio-epistemic rhetoric' aims to give substance to 'common speech' (Mininni 2013), that is to the various practices of enunciation of 'common sense'. As is well known, critical psychology has been committed to valorising 'common sense' as a model of understanding identified a century ago by Antonio Gramsci for the analysis of ideological confrontation and social struggle for cultural hegemony (Colucci and Montali 2013). 'Common speech' shows that 'common sense' is constituted by an interweaving of more or less contrasting positions that allows people to adapt their own enunciative intentions to varying the contexts in which they are inserted. Since the most diverse interpretative experiences are agglutinated in 'activating/common sense', which can be oriented ideologically, it is necessary to examine the dynamics of thickening. To this end we can profile from the notion of socio-epistemic rhetoric.

The diatextual approach attempts to fulfil this task by unravelling the socio-epistemic rhetoric with which the cultural mind constructs its reference objects, which are mostly controversial. The most productive research tracks are the 'positioning theory' proposed by narrative semiotics (Titscher et al. 2000) and the 'theory of mitigation', proposed by pragmalinguistics and psychostylistics (Caffi 2009). The comparison between the socio-epistemic rhetoric allows to detect the difference between orientations aimed at concealing the conditions of domination in which some enunciative positions of meaning are found, so that some people find it more difficult to legitimize the validity claims of their arguments and, therefore, to assert their demands for freedom and autonomy. In this way, the Diatextual Analysis helps to frame the human sciences in a 'humanizing' perspective, capable of elaborating proposals for the construction of social relationships inspired by more shared ideals of dignity.

In the specific case of brain exit, the ideological value inherent in the framework metaphor of the 'brain drain' works by sublimating condensation:

a rhetorical strategy that focuses on the paradox. In fact, the brain is only 'one' organ in the physical structure of the human body, but at the same time it is 'the organ of the mind', understood above all in its intellectual and creative capacity. Therefore, to present the phenomenon of the movement of people, usually of high schooling, from their territory of citizenship to other places as a 'brain drain' involves, on the one hand, a reduction of the historical-social complexity of people to their biological substratum. On the other, the evocation of a value judgment on their intellectual abilities, credited by default as 'excellent' and / or 'extraordinary'. The various 'brain drain' from Italy are allowed to believe that they are all as Enrico Fermi and Rita Levi Montalcini revived.

Starting from this methodological framework, to understand the 'voices' of Italian Brain Drain, it is important to make reference to the political, social, cultural and professional sphere. Italy is still divided into two parts: the North and the South. On the one hand, in the North of the Peninsula, young people have the possibility to study in prestigious universities and have more opportunities to find satisfying and well-paid jobs; on the other hand, the South of Italy is still characterized by prechariatus because of the lack of public funding. In this landscape, southern Italians have accounted for the majority of skilled migrants, but the increase of lack of opportunities and professional identification has also led northern Italians to go abroad. Nevertheless, the Italian government generally thinks that Italy offers a competitive wage level, a highly skilled workforce and does not look at brain drain as an emergency.

According to our argument, what unites this variety of discourses is the presence of an emotional implication, albeit at different levels; what changes from one genre to another is the practice of sense-making. Specifically, the different discursive genres mediated on the brain drain give rise to different social representations of the phenomenon. To support this argument, it has been necessary to analyze the voices of actors involved in the brain drain phenomenon that were collected between 2016 to 2018, when we registered an increase in Italian flights from a majority of skilled people. For this reason, the research aims at investigating the mediated social representation of the Italian Brain Drain phenomenon, by analysing the following data:

1. questions and answers written by Italians who would like to leave taken from a Q&A page from the website *italiansinfuga.com*;

2. interviews conducted by journalists from newspaper *Il Fatto Quotidiano* to Italian brains on the run in the online column dedicated to the stories of life of fleeing brains[1];

3. posts written as letters by parents of the brain fleeing from the section 'Heart of Mother and Father' of the blog *mammedicervelliinfuga.com*;

4. online debates of Italian politicians on the phenomenon of Brain Drain, collected in the online journals of the various Italian political parties[2].

The first two typese of textual data (1 and 2) are included in an intensified framework of migration that determines the greater engagement with the experience of mobility. In other words, because Italian emigrants live the

mobility in first person, they are directly involved in the migration framework. In contrast, the engagement with migration is attenuated in the second group (3 and 4) – since parents and politicians live indirectly the mobility – while the emotional involvement of actors is different.

Considering the practices of sense making as the result of dense intricacies of texts and contexts, where in the case of our research contexts are the virtual environment of Q&A sites and blogs, we started to investigate the emotional involvement of brain drain's actors by means of a software tool for Sentiment Analysis (Pang and Lee 2008), useful to extrapolate quantitatively polarity (positive, negative or neutral) from textual data. Sentiment Analysis is a useful clue to understand if and how textual extracts are emotionally coloured. To understand the sense attributed by actors to different discourses genres emotionally (whether coloured or not) it was necessary to use diatextual analysis as a qualitative methodology. The results confirm the existence of four types of socio-epistemic rhetoric.

3. Rhetoric of the 'Where'

Leaving one's own birth land is a difficult and courageous choice that depends on high motivation but, at the same time, is characterized by lots of doubts and worries. Following the digital revolution and the digital natives (Prensky 2001), the Internet becomes a virtual space where people can help one another. Communities are spontaneously created when members focusing on their business negotiate meanings that affect their interests and their whole existence in an inter-subjective space (Papapicco et al. 2017). The construction of these virtual contexts emphasize their 'transactive' nature, 'since the intentions are "negotiated" according to the law of demand and offer of meaning' (Mininni 2010: 25). It deals with Q&A sites, where there is a mutual support, but it is an asymmetric construction of knowledge because there is an expert that tries to solve a dilemma. In this specific case, the Q&A site analysed is *Italiansinfuga*, a virtual space where Italian people who are going away can find the support of other Italian people who already live abroad. This site counts about 7,286 Internet users signed up and is divided in different sections based on destinations of 'professional flight'. The destinations with the latest virtual communication acts are: Australia; Germany; Switzerland and United Kingdom. The prevalence of positive sentiment is a demonstration of a hope sense that is the main feature of the new skilled migration phenomenon in Italy.

This sense of hope emerges also because new media, as Q&A sites or Street View, allow to create new form of virtual association, that constitute a way to know the host country in advance in order to build a 'project of migration': this is an important advantage. In this project of migration, falls the hope to find a decent and acceptable job position, as explicated in the following example, referred to an intention of a migration in Germany:

(1)   *"Se vado in Germania, posso svilupparmi? Posso **lavorare bene e guadagnare bene**? Quali sono i posti più accessibili?"*

["If I go to Germany, can I improve? Can I **work** well and **earn well**? What are the most accessible places?"]

In this case, migration is seen as a possibility to increase respectable conditions of work but overall, to improve the lifestyle. However, despite the high level of education, the main barriers to reach the goal of migration remain the different language and the diverse cost of life. The former is minimized in Italian Switzerland, where there are higher costs of life; but properly in this area there is the occurrence of the expression 'offer a job position' rather than 'find a job', as shown in the following examples:

(2)   *"Da alcuni giorni il mio ragazzo ha **avuto un'offerta di lavoro** in Svizzera, sebbene alloggerà ai confini dell'Italia dai suoi parenti, quindi dovrebbe lavorare come frontaliere."*

["For some days my boyfriend has **had a job offer** in Switzerland, although he will stay on the borders of Italy by his relatives, so he should work as a frontier worker"]

(3)   *"Salve, ho recentemente **ricevuto una proposta di lavoro** a Lugano, dove necessariamente dovrei optare per un trasferimento. Ingressi di lavoro rigidi non mi permettono di valutare l'ipotesi frontaliere. La mia domanda è puramente economica. In Italia ho uno stipendio che si aggira intorno ai 2300 euro a Milano su 12 mensilità."*

["Hi, I recently **received a job offer** in Lugano, where I would necessarily have to opt for a transfer. Rigid work entrances do not allow me to evaluate the border hypothesis. My question is purely economic. In Italy I have a salary that is around 2,300 euros in Milan in 12 monthly payments."]

The action of receiving a job offer and not finding a job means that Italian skilled people are very attractive in terms of attitude and expertise, but the different outcome regarding the choice to go or not to go depends on various motivations at the basis of the Italian brain drain phenomenon. In fact, there are different drivers: some drivers fall into the push-pull model, in which the low income of the origin areas push the brains to leave; other drivers instead concern the will to experiment new lifestyles or to make new experiences in an independent way, in this case migration is seen as the possibility of growth and the achievement of autonomy.

It is precisely because of these motivational variables that different types of migrations are outlined as follows:

1.   it is possible to distinguish an increase in skilled female migrations. Women, for the first time, start to leave alone and in independent way to achieve career advancement abroad. This is an important piece of data, because the migration phenomenon becomes synonymous of gender equality, but women try to escape from Italy, where there are not any relevant career opportunities;

2. it is possible to see a rise of migration of young skilled people in the figure of students or doctoral students. Nowadays it is more and more frequent for students to commit themselves with abroad exchange programmes or to leave to increase their post-graduated expertise. In the case of PhD students, in order to promote *brain circulation*, i.e. knowledge sharing arising from research practices;

3. it is possible to underline a new form of migration, referred to as 'sun migration', the movement of retired skilled people towards warm geographical areas or, at the opposite, old skilled people that reach different geographical areas to reconnect with loved ones, such as children already emigrated.

While there are Italian parents of brain drain that have not the possibility to travel, so they not only use technology to feel closer to distant relatives, but have used blogs to create a network of fleeing brains.

4. Rhetoric of 'One Way Ticket'

The different outcome regarding the choice to go or not to go depends on various motivations: some drivers fall in the push-pull model, in which the low income of the origin areas push the brains to leave, as emerges from the interviews of Italian skilled people, who are already abroad, like Ilaria P. and Nicola M. Ilaria is a restorer, born in Naples, but she moved in different parts of Italy then emigrated to London at the age of 25 to pursuit her dream: working as a restaurer. Despite the common vision about brain exit, there is a clear project in Ilaria's choice, in fact she starts her interview comparing herself to a 'compass' always directed to United Kingdom. This is an explanatory metaphor, that means, on the one hand, aiming high; on the other, geographically United Kingdom is situated in the North of Italy, so as to compass heads towards to the North of Europe, Ilaria's choice is the right direction. On the contrary, following Ilaria's voice the sub-socio-espistemic rhetoric of 'charity' emerges. In Italy the working sphere in the restauration context becomes more and more a beg of unpaid internship, that is lived by skilled people as a way to devaluate their competencies, in the face of lifelong learning requests in the current job logic. It is exactly in this deviation between high level of skills and a lack of opportunities that a humiliation sense emerges and pushes to leave. In Ilaria's narration we also see a constant reference to the semantic sphere of 'coin', with the occurrence of the term 'value'. It can be hypothesized that it is inherent in her a logic of work based on the production: that is difficult in a climate of job flexibility, In fact, Ilaria asserts that in London she has not been able to find a job in her field, but above all a job that allows her to earn a living. Even the use of the verb 'maintain' calls back the sense of stability of work, which does not refer to a dimension of flexibility. In this public discourse we can also see the worries and difficulties of Italian skilled people abroad: one of these worries is the approach with a new language and the adaptability to a new culture. Ilaria uses the term 'mentality' referring to new culture; this terminological choice is not accidental, because it means that the difficulties that skilled people meet abroad have consequences first at a psychological level; mentality is the psychological substratum of a social group. In the case of Ilaria and Nicola

too, the rhetoric of 'call back' of Italy on brain drain emerges. This call-back is more visible in Nicola's interview, who starts saying 'My dream is to return to Italy: in Apulia, Sicily or Tuscany'. Nicola is an Apulian Architect who migrates to Aalborg, in Denmark, after his doctoral studies in Australia. This interview can highlight the lack of dignity in Italian job situation, but Nicola has a different perspective of work context compared to Ilaria. He considers the satisfaction towards his job as more important. In Nicola's words, the needs of Italian skilled people emerge. For example, Nicola explains the need to improve security in Italy, as the Danish model teaches. Consequently, we see the desperate need of freedom and respect for others. To the question about what Nicola would transfer to Denmark from Italy, he replies saying that he would transfer 'The Sun and many other things', an expression that can be again understood as having a great sense of nostalgia and, mostly, a sense of powerlessness/impracticability.

5. *Rhetoric of 'Heart of Mum and Dad'*

When the expat seems to be the only one way to guarantee a satisfying level of life, in a culture such as the Italian one, where the main values are linked to the cure of sons. In this system of values, a migration of skilled people, above all of young generation, lived by parents as an abandonment or, in the majority of case, the brain drain arouses worries. In psychological terms, this situation states the syndrome of 'empty nest', i.e. the psychological state that affects parents when children leave their home. Traditionally, the migration chain was understood as the mechanism that links migrants to parents, friends or people who come from the same area. Following the digital revolution, new forms of association are compared in order to restrain their worries, a new migration chain takes the shape: parents start to leave with their children. Italian parents, who have not the possibility to leave, organize themselves in virtual communities to share information, advice or create a network to find a host family for their expat skilled children that will become the adoptive family. This requirement of association depends on the fact that parents or compatriots, who host the newcomer, no longer constitute new migration chain. This virtual chain is realized in the blog 'mammedicervelliinfuga.com', created by the sociologist Brunella Rallo, that defined parents of brain drain 'parents with luggage', but this luggage is more and more virtual. In fact, currently, the blog counts about 4,500 parents signed. They take part to different sections of blog that are:

1. 'the case of toolkit', column of parents who have not yet found the right tools to live peacefully the condition of brain drain's parents;

2. 'transfer and advice', column dedicated to practical advice and suggestion to start a common project of migration;

3. 'mum find mum', column dedicated to those who look for information to travel, friends of travel or friends/families to their sons;

4. 'heart of mum and dad', column dedicated to public narration, free thought and poetry of parents.

In order to satisfy the previous hypothesis by adopting a diatextual perspective, the public discourses of parents were analysed, i.e. 27 letters of

mums and dads were collected in the extended period 2015-2018, that is the moment of the increase in the brain drain phenomenon. Each public discourse starts with 'Letter of mum' or 'Letter of dad' and, in order to guarantee the privacy, the name of mums and dads are pseudonyms.

The prevalence of negative sentiment shows how parents of brain drain are suffering for the distance situation of their sons. In these public discourses, that have a letter form, parents report a lack of control on their sons' destiny and the distance increases the inability to help them. In particular, parents refer the impossibility to think about the opportunity of their skilled sons to live abroad, as demonstrate in the following example:

(4)   *"Lettera di mamma Ancenta: Care "colleghe", ho quattro figli, di cui due in fuga... uno a Zurigo e uno ad Alba (Cuneo). Francesco ha 36 anni è un ricercatore, professore cardiologo all'Università di Zurigo. È cominciato tutto per caso, quando ancora si doveva laureare in Medicina e fu invitato a New York al Mount Sinai Hospital per preparare la tesi. Un colpo al cuore per me... era il primo figlio che si allontanava da casa. E' stato a New York tre mesi, che a me sono sembrati tre anni, è tornato si è laureato e poi è ripartito per Zurigo per la Specializzazione in Cardiologia. Al termine è ripartito per il Dottorato. Ora ha un contratto di sei anni presso l'Università di Zurigo, si è sposato e aspettano una bimba per Gennaio che crescerà lontano da me. Si trova molto bene in Svizzera, tutto funziona e la vita non è difficile come da noi. Gli manca la sua famiglia, il suo Paese... ma si rende conto che se vuole lavorare deve stare lì. Mi consola dicendomi che prima o poi tornerà, ma io non ci credo... Marco ha 29 anni, lavora alle Risorse Umane della Ferrero ed è molto contento del suo lavoro. Gli avevano appena confermato un contratto indeterminato alla Fox di Roma quando lo ha chiamato la FIAT a Torino e in seguito l'ha contattato la Ferrero ancora più lontano...Anche lui dice che tornerà...Ancenta"*

["Letter from Mamma Ancenta: Dear "co-workers", I have four children, two of whom are on the run ... one in Zurich and one in Alba (Cuneo). Francesco is 36 years old and is a researcher, a cardiologist professor at the University of Zurich. It all started by chance, when he still had to graduate in Medicine and was invited to New York at Mount Sinai Hospital to prepare the thesis. A blow to the heart for me ... it was the first child to leave home. He was in New York three months, which I thought was three years old, he returned, he graduated and then left for Zurich for Specialization in Cardiology. At the end he left for the Doctorate. Now he has a six-year contract at the University of Zurich, he is married and they are waiting for a child for January who will grow up away from me. It is very good in Switzerland, everything works and life is not as difficult as it is for us. He misses his family, his country ... but he realizes that if he wants to work he has to stay there. It comforts me by telling me that sooner or later it will come back, but I do not believe it ... Marco is 29, works at the Human

Resources of Ferrero and is very happy with his work. They had just confirmed an indefinite contract at the Fox in Rome when he called the FIAT in Turin and then contacted the Ferrero even farther ... He also says that he will return ... Ancenta"]

In each letter, parents start to describe their worries, but at the end of the public discourse, there is an awareness process about the duty to leave their sons free to take an important decision of their future. However, this awareness process is actually characterized by a sense of resignation that justifies the prevalence of negative sentiment. In most extracts there is a rhetoric of digitalization of the migration chain and so the importance of relationships creation. Through new media, for example blogs, parents are able to create a network where containing and sharing their worries, but these links are actually weak relations. These weak connections result efficient in order to get an initial knowledge of the host country, but the lack of traditional forms of association show the real weakness of virtual relationships. Technologies allow skilled migrant people to know in advance how will be the host country, but, in most case, there is an unavailability to continue face-to-face relationships in the host country. This situation of 'liquid' relationships arouses concerns in parents.

In addition, extracts show a sense of parents' confusion due to the leave of their sons. This aspect emerges also in the expression. In fact, there is a presence of multiple rhetorical strategies, as similes and metaphors. Migrant skilled people are often compared to a 'bird'. As a bird is ready to leave the nest, so the skilled sons leave their family (eg. *'Un pennuto piuttosto precoce'* [A rather early bird bird]). Regarding metaphors, parents often think to migration as the action of flight, as in, e.g., *'Buon volo Ludo!'* [Good flight Ludo]). Both the similes and the metaphors curve inwards into the semantic sphere of birds that leave the nest to take off, but in the case of brain drain, the action of 'take off' is replaced with that of 'stand out'. This is the case of skilled people who decide to leave in order to find better opportunities. In fact, the courageous choice of leaving their own native land depends on a high motivation of the Italian skill people, who set aside their affections for work satisfaction: not by chance, in English in the binomial 'brain drain' and 'drain heart', the heart is almost moved to the background.

6. Rhetoric of 'Italians First!'

In the politician debates about brain drain, the sentiment results neutral. This neutrality is the sum of positive and negative voices. In fact, both current and previous government, have taken the brain drain phenomenon on the basis of common sense, often linked to a traditional migration phenomenon. As shown in the political slogan 'Italians first', or skilled people are people 'not to have between feet', according to the political vision, migration is this movement to the North, that highlights the logic of a World division into North and South.

In fact, to reduce these differences, in the South of Italy the concept of emigration to the South or to encourage skilled people to stay in the South is

shown in Figure 1, where there is a slogan made by LUM University, a private Italian university:

Figure 1: Lum University spot

7. Conclusion

The diatextual approach as a practice of Critical Discourse Analysis allows to detect the enunciative dynamics of common sense attributable to the various discursive genres in which the theme of the 'brain drain' is addressed. In the stories of the protagonists, their experience of 'brains escape' is presented mostly as a rewarding search for the best conditions for self-fulfilment ('own dreams'). In the letters or posts of parents/relatives, the decision of the 'escaped brains' is presented as a painful choice, because it involves the weakening of emotional bonds. There is still a prevalence of a sense of pride for a choice of life that, despite many difficulties, allows them to succeed as 'flying birds'. In the political debate, the 'brain drain' phenomenon is mostly evoked as a justification for closing policies towards masses of migrants. These dynamics activate the ideological comparison between two socio-epistemic rhetorics synthesized in the contrast between two metaphor-frames ('backpack in shoulders' vs. 'wind inside') and between two deontic modalizers ('must' vs. 'want').

In this opposition between metaphors and deontics emerge the ideologies linked to the public debate mediated on the brains in flight. In fact, society is divided into those who have a more 'conservative' and more 'revolutionary/innovative' ideology. In fact, between a conservative world view about 'brain drain' phenomenon, these socio-epistemic rhetorics that describe the Italian common mental machinery of brain drain open up new scenarios of value reflection on the relationship between the brain drains-family and the brain drains-State. There emerges a relationship oriented to the banal familiarism/nationalism (Billig 2005), in which, to the will/necessity of the brain in flight to depart is contrasted by the culture of the family and by the state of withholding.

In contrast to this 'banal' vision characterized by conservative ideology, an innovative vision is emerging that reconsiders the construct of 'flight' and 'brain'. These expressions, in fact, so recurrent in the media, are imperfect and inaccurate. It is not ethically correct to identify the whole with the part, even if this is the very support of human rationality, but a person is not just a brain; it is instead a human being, his life and his personal history, his dreams and aspirations, even his talent, his abilities and knowledge, that is, that is, they are never an exclusive product of brain matter. Nor should we speak of 'escape' when we refer to human beings who freely choose to go and live and work in another country. People are never owned by the state, an institution or a company, which is why it should begin to replace the expression 'brain drain' with 'talented human capital mobility'.

Notes

1. See https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/cervelli-fuga/

2. See https://www.ilfoglio.it/gli-speciali-del-foglio/2018/10/03/news/elogio-dei-cervelli-in-fuga-216939/

   https://www.huffingtonpost.it/news/fuga-dei-cervelli/

   http://espresso.repubblica.it/affari/2019/12/19/news/laureati-in-fuga-dall-italia-tutti-i-numeri-di-un-emergenza-nazionale-1.342138

   https://www.ilfattoquotidiano.it/2019/02/13/gli-italiani-scappano-allestero-quando-per-i-politici-la-soluzione-e-un-biglietto-gratis-per-linterrail/4969179/

   https://www.econopoly.ilsole24ore.com/2019/08/09/fuga-cervelli/

   https://www.proversi.it/discussioni/pro-contro/188-la-fuga-dei-cervelli-e-un-fenomeno-causato-da-politiche-inadeguate

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