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Abstract

Following the Brexit referendum's marginal leave result, the People's Vote March (PVM) protests rallied for a public vote and second referendum that would include the option to remain. Both the pro- and anti-Brexit press reported on PVM protests more than any other Brexit-related demonstration. In doing so, they included politicians' quotations – powerful ideological tools often used by the press to manipulate readers' perception and interpretation of events. Although historically, the press is known to construct protests unfavourably, Tilly (2004) argues that politicians are responsive to protests when they display worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (WUNC). In a dataset of all 572 national UK newspaper articles that reported on PVM protests, this article seeks to show how linguistic features can contribute to WUNC as a methodological framework. It then demonstrates how WUNC can be applied as an additional critical lens in the analysis of concordance lines to interpret how politicians' quotations, and the context in which they are embedded, can contribute to the pro- and anti-Brexit press' respective PVM-opposing and PVM-backing ideologies.

Key words: *WUNC, Critical Discourse Analysis, People's Vote March, protests, British press*

1. Introduction

Corpora and their related methods of analysis are becoming increasingly popular ways of carrying out CDA (Baker, 2009a, p. 73). The combination of quantitative (corpus) and qualitative (CDA) methods have been 'praised as offering a solution to the limitations of the two approaches' (Marchi & Taylor, 2009, p. 2). On the one hand, corpus methods utilise large bodies of electronically coded texts, allowing complex calculations to be carried out to reveal linguistic patterns and frequency information that would otherwise take months to uncover manually (Baker, 2006, pp. 1-2). On the other hand, CDA's rich theoretical underpinning allows for in-depth analysis and thick explanations (Marchi & Taylor, 2009, p. 3). Together, they uncover linguistic patterns that make explicit underlying assumptions that link lexical items to social practices and vice versa (Fitzgerald, 2017, p. 2).

While its advocates feel corpus approaches to CDA can be an ‘extremely productive means of triangulation’ (Baker, 2006, p.17), the synergy is not without its problems. For example, concordance analysis, a popular qualitative corpus method often used in corpus linguistics and CDA in which lexical items are analysed in the context they naturally occur (Baker, 2006), has come under fire for being carried out without explicating what qualitative methods were involved (Rheindorf, 2019, p. 33). To better explicate such methods, critics argue practitioners of CDA should incorporate identifiable and accountable procedures in their qualitative corpus analysis to quell claims that the terms readily associated with concordance analysis (e.g., *close examination & close reading*) are becoming ‘readily available but unspecific token statement[s]’ (Rheindorf, 2019, p. 33).

Kennedy (2022) recently sought to address some of these criticisms by providing a framework that can be used to analyse concordance lines in research concerning the press representation of protests. Drawing on Tilly’s (2004) sociological finding that politicians are responsive to protests when they exhibit WUNC – that is, displays of *worthiness* (credibility), *unity* (pursuit of a common goal), *numbers* (large turnout) and *commitment* (dedication) – Kennedy (2022) operationalised WUNC as a linguistic framework to accompany qualitative corpus methods.

This article makes use of the linguistic WUNC framework, applying it to a context in which it has not yet been used: the press representation of politicians’ quotations. Using the anti-Brexit People’s Vote March (henceforth PVM) protests as a case study, the article uses linguistic elements of WUNC to show how the same or very similar instances of politicians’ speech are represented differently in the pro- and anti-Brexit press, depending on whether the sourced politician is in support or opposition of the People’s Vote protests and campaign. In doing so, the article seeks to demonstrate:

1. How linguistic features can contribute to WUNC as a methodological framework in corpus-assisted CDA.
2. The ways in which WUNC can be applied as an additional critical lens when analysing politicians’ quotations.
3. How this application of WUNC can help to uncover the ideologies of newspapers; specifically, to interpret how politicians’ quotations, and the context in which they are embedded, can contribute to newspapers’ PVM-opposing and PVM-backing ideologies.

2. Brexit and the People’s Vote March protests

In the years following the leave result of the 2016 referendum on the UK’s membership of the European Union (EU), Brexit – the morphological blend of ‘Britain/British’ and ‘exit’ (Mompean & Valenzuela, 2019, p. 7) – was an ‘omnipresent and inescapable news item’ (Koller et al., 2019, p. 1) from the referendum on 23 June 2016 until the UK eventually left the EU on 31 January 2020. Those who voted to leave the EU beat those who voted to remain by a narrow majority (52%), triggering what Rogers (2019, p. 9) calls the ‘gravest’ political and democratic crisis for generations. The result caused

polarising division; in parliament and the press, where support to leave or remain cut across the usual left/right-wing partition, and in the public, where nationwide discontent gave way to numerous major pro-Brexit (leave supporting) and anti-Brexit (remain supporting) protests.

In response to the UK's decision to leave the EU, the People's Vote campaign was founded in April 2018 and organised four protests: People's Vote March, 23 June 2018; People's Vote March for the Future, 20 October 2018; Put it to the People March, 23 March 2019; Final Say March, 19 October 2019. The PVMs largely rallied for a second referendum and/or a public vote ('people's vote') on the final Brexit deal. These protests were divisive, and incredibly provocative among those who considered a second referendum profoundly undemocratic. The marches also made up some of the largest protests in British history, with some statements reporting that more than one million attended the Put it to the People March (BBC, 2019). As such, the leave and remain-supporting press covered the PVM protests more than any other Brexit-related demonstration, and in doing so, used politicians' quotations to aid their reporting.

3. The Reciprocal Power of Politicians' Quotations in the Press

It is a well-established claim in CDA that news media have a significant influence on their readers, limiting their freedom of action by shaping knowledge, attitudes and ideologies (van Dijk, 1996, p. 84) by promoting and defending 'a particular way of thinking' as 'the actual state of affairs' (Smith, 2021, p. 97).

Often, newspapers use quotations as ideological tools of persuasion as they can 'manipulate readers' perception and interpretation of people and events' (Teo, 2000, p. 20). Quotations are all the more ideologically powerful when the reported words belong to an elite source, such as an expert, business representative, or in the context of this research, a politician. Politicians occupy a high rank in the social system, and their vested authorisation (van Leeuwen, 2007, p. 94) gives them the ability to shape the public's perception of issues, which can have a significant impact on future policies and the public's support or rejection of them (Fernandes & De Moya, 2021, p. 8). Because newspapers are intrinsically persuasive and argumentative (Smirnova, 2009, p. 79), the ensuing analysis draws on the assumption that 'all functional aspects of reported speech are determined by the overall task of persuasion' (Smirnova, 2009, p. 80).

Politicians and the press benefit from a reciprocal dynamic. Newspapers use politicians as sources to influence their readers' perceptions of events and 'underscore their own authority' (Ericson et al., 1989, p. 5). At the same time, politicians 'ascribe a great deal of importance to making the news' (Conway, 2021, p. 3), using it to gain access to and shape the preferences of citizens whose opinions shape electoral outcomes and guide policy decisions (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Druckman, 2011, p. 289). As a result, both newspapers and politicians benefit from quotation as a means of achieving their argumentative and persuasive goals.

The employment of politicians' quotations in the leave and remain-supporting press is particularly pertinent in the context of the PVMs. As gatekeepers of public policy and social norms, politicians have considerable power in (de)legitimizing demonstrations. During the period in which the articles under analysis were written, it was unclear whether Brexit would take place at all, despite the (albeit marginal) majority leave result (Zappettini & Krzyżanowski, 2019, p. 381). There was therefore a lot on the line for those that either opposed or supported the PVM, fuelling both negative and positive media portrayals of the protests in the leave and remain-supporting press respectively.

4. WUNC

The journalistic use of reported speech is a 'highly interpretive compositional activity' (Harry, 2014, p. 1042). To make sense of these compositions, this article critically analyses the content of politicians' reported speech and the context in which it occurs through the linguistic application of Tilly's (2004) sociological WUNC framework proposed by Kennedy (2022).

Tilly was a sociologist, political scientist and historian, whose eclectic work and disdain for 'disciplinary orthodoxy' (Michelson & Wellman, 2008, p. 1654) revolutionised our understanding of social movements, social conflict and public contention (Collins, 2010, p. 5). Tilly (2004, p. 3) defines social movements as distinctive forms of 'contentious politics' – contentious because they involve the 'collective making of claims that, if realized, would conflict with someone else's interests' and political because governments feature in the claim making, 'whether as claimants, objects of claims, allies of the objects, or monitors of the contention'. According to Tilly (2004, p. 3), social movements emerge from a synthesis of three elements: (1) a sustained, organised public effort that makes collective claims on target authorities (*a campaign*), (2) the employment of public meetings, rallies, demonstrations, petitions and statements to and in public media (*the social movement repertoire*) and (3) participants' concerted public broadcasts of WUNC (worthiness, unity, numbers and commitment) on the part of themselves and/or their constituencies (*WUNC displays*).

The focus of this article is the third element: WUNC displays. As noted, Tilly (2004) argues politicians are responsive to protests when they display *worthiness* (credibility), *unity* (pursuit of a common goal), *numbers* (large turnout) and *commitment* (dedication). There are three sorts of political claims that can be made through WUNC displays: *program claims* that involve 'stated support for or opposition to actual or proposed actions by the objects of movement claims'; *identity claims* that consist of 'assertions that "we" – the claimants – constitute a unified force to be reckoned with'; and *standing claims* that 'assert ties and similarities to other political actors' such as 'loyal supporters of the regime' (Tilly, 2006, p. 292). When these claims are backed by WUNC displays, they convey the message that 'a distinct political actor has marched onto the scene' and so 'officials ought to pay attention' (Tilly, 2006, p. 292).

Presentations of WUNC are termed displays, broadcasts, and performances because they are 'something protesters deliberately seek to portray' (Wouters & Walgrave, 2017, p. 366), particularly in the media, where protests can

amplify their message to potential supporters. This is because WUNC displays indicate the protests' strength and impact (Tilly, 1999, 2006). That said, if any of the four elements of WUNC are not displayed, protests can lose their strength – entirely unworthy or uncommitted participants, regardless of how numerous and unified they are, 'quite undermine the impact of any demonstration' (Tilly, 2006, p. 291). Nonetheless, a high display of one component of WUNC can compensate for a low value of another – 'a very small number of highly worthy, unified, and committed persons can produce a larger impact' (Tilly, 2006, p. 291). As a result, disputes over protest actions often centre on elements of WUNC. The 'frequent fierceness' of such disputes indicates WUNC displays represent 'serious stakes', embody effective demonstrations, and communicate crucial political messages (Tilly, 2006, p. 292).

While Tilly did not operationalise WUNC as a tool fit for empirical research (Wouters & Walgrave, 2015, p. 114), WUNC has taken centre stage as an analytical and methodological framework in recent sociological studies. Although these studies are few, they have expanded the scope of WUNC and helped to advance the understanding of its relevance to contemporary protests. For example, Wouters & Walgrave's (2015) research provides evidence that journalists draw on elements of dWUNC (d = *diversity*) to narrate protest coverage; Wouters & Walgrave (2017) find that protesters that display high levels of WUNC can better convince politicians to give them attention, sympathise with their claims, and take action on their issues; and Freelon et al.'s (2018) analysis of unity, numbers and commitment on Twitter reveals that social movements can attract the attention of political elites and further policy-relevant goals directly through tweeting.

5. Using WUNC in Qualitative Corpus-Assisted CDA

Outside of sociology, Kennedy (2022) argues that WUNC lends itself as an additional critical lens in CDA because WUNC displays are a performance used by protesters to influence power-holders and challenge social order. Similarly, CDA holds that language is a performance, connecting both micro-levels (language and communication) and macro-levels (power and dominance) of social order to resist social inequality (van Dijk, 2001, p. 352-354). In recognising these complementary aims, Kennedy (2022) mapped Tilly's (1999, 2004, 2006, 2008) conceptualisations of WUNC displays onto a framework rooted in linguistics and CDA that can be used to quantitatively analyse the press representation of protests.

WUNC and CDA's emancipatory aims have particular relevance to the mediated representation of politicians' speech because discursive acts and the institutional and social contexts in which they occur have a dialectical relationship. Contexts shape and affect discourse, and at the same time, discourses influence social and political reality (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 8). Because newspapers and politicians have the ability to shape these realities, the ideologies they perpetuate are often taken as accurate descriptions of the world. As Smith (2021, p. 84) explains, 'the social cognition of reality' is influenced to a high degree by discourses produced through mass media. This article therefore incorporates WUNC and CDA to unmask the 'manipulative manoeuvres' of press representation, and to heighten the awareness of how

such manoeuvres are used as tools of persuasion to impose political beliefs (Wodak et al., 2009, p. 9).

In situating the linguistic WUNC framework in the context of the press representation of politicians' quotations, this article takes the view that a protest's advocates and critics can also use WUNC displays to imbue or take away from a protest's *worthiness*, *unity*, *numbers* and *commitment* – particularly politicians who have vested authority and a platform through which they can publicly voice support or opposition. Subsequently, in demonstrating RQ 1, the analysis will draw on and expand Kennedy's (2022) linguistic WUNC framework to show how linguistic features can contribute to WUNC as a methodological framework in corpus-assisted CDA. In answering RQs 2 and 3, the analysis will demonstrate some of the ways in which WUNC can be applied as an additional critical lens when analysing politician's quotations, and how this application of the framework can be used to interpret the ways in which politicians' quotations, and the context in which they are embedded, can contribute to newspapers' PVM-opposing and PVM-backing ideologies. The analysis examines quotations comprising the same or very similar extracts of the speeches published in both the leave and remain press to demonstrate how the linguistic manifestations of WUNC can be utilised, upheld and discredited in different ideological contexts.

6. Data Collection and Methods

The data for this study comes from a specific PVM sub-corpus, made from a larger corpus created for research on the leave and remain-supporting press representations of pro- and anti-Brexit protests more broadly. The larger corpus was built by collecting articles on Nexis UK from every print and online national daily UK newspaper that reported on any Brexit-related protest in the headline or lead paragraph between June 2016 and December 2019. The resulting corpus of 845 articles and 662,258 words was made of the ten newspapers listed in Table 1 (NB: daily, online and Sunday editions were subsumed under one title).

Leave newspaper	Remain newspaper
The Express (197 articles)	The Independent (254 articles)
The Daily Mail (66 articles)	The Guardian (100 articles)
The Telegraph (52 articles)	The Times (54 articles)
The Sun (44 articles)	The Mirror (49 articles)
The Daily Star (11 articles)	Financial Times (18 articles)

Table 1. Leave and remain newspapers in the original corpus

Because this article is concerned only with politicians' quotations in the context of the PVMs, a sub-corpus was created, comprised of the articles about any of the four aforementioned PVM protests. The resulting sub-corpus stands at 572 articles and 469,069 words – 68% of the total articles and 71% of the total words in the original corpus, evidencing the PVM protests' salience (Table 2).

Leave newspaper	Remain newspaper
The Express (100 articles)	The Independent (219 articles)
The Daily Mail (36 articles)	The Guardian (78 articles)
The Telegraph (20 articles)	The Times (41 articles)
The Sun (29 articles)	The Mirror (32 articles)
The Daily Star (7 articles)	Financial Times (10 articles)

Table 2. Leave and remain newspapers in the PVM sub-corpus

Using the corpus analysis software package AntConc (Anthony, 2019), the PVM sub-corpus was compared to the British English 2006 reference corpus (Baker, 2009b) to create a keyword list using the Log-Likelihood (4-term) keyword statistic with a statistic threshold of $p < 0.01$ and Hardie's Log Ratio effect-size measure. Keyword lists show lexical items that are unusually frequent in the target corpus when compared with another one, allowing researchers to gauge the 'aboutness' (Baker, 2006, p. 128) of their corpus. The keyword list was subsequently sorted by effect-size – a statistical measure that 'indicates the magnitude of an observed finding' (Rosenfeld & Penrod, 2011, p. 342), meaning we can be confident that the difference in size observed is dependable (Gabrielatos, 2018, p. 230). Here, keywords were used to identify the politicians who were frequently included in the coverage of Brexit-related protests. The top ten were chosen for further analysis (NB: roles correct at the time data was published):

Rank	Freq.	Keyness	Effect	Keyword	Politician	Role
5	185	+424.41	9.6347	Farage	Nigel Farage	Leader of the Brexit Party
6	158	+362.46	9.4071	Sadiq	Sadiq Khan	Mayor of London
10	133	+305.1	9.1586	Soubry	Anna Soubry	Conservative MP until February 2019; Leader of the Independent Group for Change
11	132	+302.81	9.1477	Mogg	Jacob Rees-Mogg	Conservative MP; Lord President of the Council and Leader of the House of Commons
12	461	+1033.52	8.9519	Corbyn	Jeremy Corbyn	Leader of the Labour Party
15	108	+247.75	8.8582	Keir	Sir Keir Starmer	Labour's Shadow Brexit Secretary
17	96	+220.22	8.6883	Lammy	David Lammy	Labour MP
20	78	+178.93	8.3887	Thornberry	Emily Thornberry	Labour MP; Shadow Foreign Secretary
23	593	+1315.78	8.3152	Theresa	Theresa May	Prime Minister
24	73	+167.46	8.2931	Bercow	John Bercow	Speaker of the House of Commons

Table 3. The top 10 politicians in the keyword list, sorted by effect-size

Qualitative concordance analysis was then used to examine each keyword in its context to find occasions in which the same or very similar instances of

the politicians' speech occurred in both the leave and remain press. The concordance analysis revealed that the speeches of Soubry, Rees-Mogg and Thornberry were not reported on comparably and Corbyn and Bercow were not used as sources of reported speech in the context of the PVMs. While Khan's quotations were comparable, and have been analysed as part of a broader study, there is not space to include that analysis here. The politicians included in the subsequent analysis are shown in Table 4, alongside their stance on the PVMs.

Politician	Position on the PVMs
Sir Keir Starmer	Support
David Lammy	Support
Nigel Farage	Oppose
Theresa May	Oppose

Table 4. Politicians under analysis and their stance on the PVMs

The examples presented in the ensuing analysis were chosen to show how ideologically disparate newspapers have the ability to ascribe varying levels of WUNC to the same or very similar instances of speech. Rather than short concordance lines, whole text samples of politicians' speech comprising multiple concordance lines were selected to best demonstrate how the linguistic application of WUNC can be used to interpret how politicians' quotations and their surrounding context can contribute to a given newspaper's ideology.

7. Analysis

7.1 Drawing on the Linguistic WUNC Framework

This section outlines the elements of Kennedy's (2022) linguistic WUNC framework that will be drawn upon in the analysis. Kennedy's (2022) linguistic manifestation of *commitment* is expanded upon here to include evaluation, reporting verbs and selective quotation, as these appear to complement aspects typical of the press representation of reported speech.

WORTHINESS: Tilly (2004, p. 4) writes that a protest is *worthy* when its participants are dignified and credible. *Worthiness* increases more so with the presence of elites (Tilly, 2004, p. 4), such as politicians, who can imbue a protest with legitimation. Because a person's social standing (i.e. their dignity and credibility) can be formed, sustained, and reinforced by reference to systems of address (Barker and Galasinski, 2001, p. 74), the analysis considers how referential strategies can aid in the representation of a social actor's *worthiness*. Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor representation taxonomy and (2007) definition of legitimation (by reference to authority) are therefore used to analyse displays of *worthiness*.

UNITY: Tilly (1999, p. 261) notes that *unified* protesters display, among other things, 'direct affirmation of a common program or identity'. These broadcasts show that protesters are part of a collective, signifying a 'oneness in pursuit of specific goals or demands' (Campbell, 2011, p. 44). According to van Dijk (2002, p. 73), people speaking as members of ideological groups

typically use the collective pronoun 'we' and determiner 'our' to refer to themselves and fellow group members. Such pronouns and determiners imply collectivity (Fairclough, 2003) and consensus (Fowler, 1991), indicating a *unified* protest group. The subsequent analysis therefore considers collective pronouns and determiners in the analysis of *unity* displays.

NUMBERS: Tilly (2006, p. 291) claims a protest's *numbers* are displayed through the filling of streets and signing of petitions. Because 'numerical strength aligns with the majoritarian logic of representative democracy', a protest with *numerous* participants suggests the majority of the public support the protesters' views (Wouters & Walgrave, 2017, p. 367-368). A protest's *numbers* can be shown through the quantification of participants, for example, through explicit references to numbers and statistics. Van Leeuwen (2008, p. 37) terms this type of quantification 'aggregation', noting it plays a 'crucial role' in society as 'the majority rules'. The notion of aggregation is therefore used to analyse displays of *numbers*.

COMMITMENT: Tilly (1999, p. 261) writes that protesters' *commitment* is displayed through 'declarations of readiness to persevere' and 'resistance to attack'. Fairclough (2003, p. 164) comments that modality and evaluation can be seen in terms of what speakers *commit* themselves to 'with respect to what is true and what is necessary (modality), and with respect to what is desirable or undesirable, good or bad (evaluation)'. Firstly, expressions of modality indicate different levels of *commitment* to truth (epistemic modality) and *commitment* to obligation (deontic modality) in that 'some are higher in terms of degree of commitment than others' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 170). For example, 'I might do it' encodes a lower level of *commitment* to truth than 'I will definitely do it'. Likewise, 'I could do it' encodes a lower level of *commitment* to obligation than 'I must do it'. Secondly, evaluation refers to the explicit or implicit ways in which speakers *commit* themselves to values (Fairclough, 2003, p. 171). Like modalities, evaluations also exist on a scale. For example, 'it was fantastic' encodes a higher level of evaluative intensity than 'it was okay'. Evaluative expressions can therefore reflect authorial attitude and judgement (Bloor, 2013), particularly in the context of quotation, where authorial evaluation can be deduced from the reporting verbs attributed to a source and which segments of the source's original speech are included in reporting (Smirnova, 2009). As such, modality, the evaluative intensity of reporting verbs, and selective quotation are considered in the analysis of *commitment*.

It is important to emphasise that the elements of WUNC outlined here are not mutually exclusive; concordance lines may show a combination of different WUNC displays. That said, quotations that best exemplify particular elements of WUNC have been categorised under the headings *worthiness*, *unity*, *numbers* or *commitment* to demonstrate how WUNC can be applied as an additional critical lens to interpret the representation of PVM-backing and PVM-opposing politicians' quotations in both the leave and remain press.

7.2 Worthiness: Referential Strategies

Extract 1 (*The Express*; Bosotti, 2018) and Extract 2 (*The Independent*; Adonis, 2018) report on Theresa May refusing to allow a people's vote (second referendum) on the UK's EU membership. In both extracts, May is making

program claims by stating opposition to the action of the PVM (NB: each extract includes superscript numbers (e.g., ¹, ², ³) to refer to specific examples).

(1) Extract 1 [The Express, People's Vote March, 26.10.18]

Prime Minister Theresa May¹ has clearly outlined there will not be another referendum on cutting ties with the EU, saying it would be a "betrayal" of British voters. At the Tory Party conference earlier this month, Mrs May² said: "There are plenty of prominent people British politics, in parliament and out of it, who wants to stop Brexit in its tracks. "Their latest plan is to call a second referendum. They call it a 'people's vote', but we had a people's vote and the people chose to leave."

(2) Extract 2 [The Independent, People's Vote March for the Future, 30.10.18]

Theresa May's³ latest ruse to deny the British people a Final Say on the outcome of her shambolic Brexit talks is to deem the People's Vote campaign a "Politician's Vote". That's been a laughable response right since the start of this campaign, but has become even more so with the fantastic news that *The Independent's* Final Say petition has reached one million signatories. Often dismissed as mindless "clicktivism", the passing of this landmark in fact shows the width and depth of feeling across the country in favour of the people - not politicians in Westminster - being able to decide on their own future.

This section considers how van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor representation taxonomy can be applied to the construction of May as a *worthy* source of the program claims she is making. Moreover, because protests are considered *worthy* when people of high importance support them, van Leeuwen's (2007, p. 92) notion of legitimation by reference to vested institutional authority is considered to explore how *worthiness* can be used to analyse how the context of quoted speech contributes to broader ideological goals.

In Extract 1, *The Express* use titles, or 'honorifics' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 41), to describe May, representing her as a *worthy* and legitimate social actor. Hart (2014, p. 35) distinguishes the different types of titles that can be used as referential strategies: affiliation, which specifies a functional role in a particular institution, and honorification, which involves the addition of titles. Example 1 uses affiliation to refer to May as 'Prime Minister Theresa May', highlighting her functional, governmental role. Foregrounding occupations helps to present social actors as authentic (Osisanwo and Iyoha, 2020, p. 640) and increases their legitimation by reference to authority. Further, Example 2 uses honorification to refer to May as 'Mrs May'. Van Leeuwen (2008) terms this *formal nomination*, a referential strategy in which only surnames are given. Because if something is formal, it carries the semantics of being official and legitimate, referring to May using formal nomination suggests she is *worthy*. These referential strategies emphasise May's authority, constructing her as a *worthy* source whose program claims against having a people's vote should be listened to.

In Extract 2, May is referred to as 'Theresa May' (Example 3). Van Leeuwen (2008) terms this *semiformal nomination*, a referential strategy in which only

the first and surname are given. Both May's role as Prime Minister and her honorifics are omitted, deemphasising her authority and legitimacy. This could have been a strategy to construct May as an *unworthy* source, delegitimising her program claims against a people's vote. Her authority is further delegitimised throughout the extract. Her rejection of a people's vote is described as a 'ruse', her Brexit talks are deemed 'shambolic', and her suggestion that a people's vote is really a politician's vote is 'laughable'.

While Mohd Don and May (2013, p. 748) note that choosing the degree of formality of nominations and (not) including honorifics is an important factor in the representation of social actors, it is difficult to draw conclusions about the ideological underpinnings of three referential strategies in two short extracts. Indeed, it should be noted that because the effect of discourse is incremental (Baker, 2006, p. 13), the single occurrence of a word or phrase does not necessarily provide evidence for the occurrence of high or low levels of WUNC in a text. When there is not enough qualitative data available in concordance lines to confirm initial observations, it seems reasonable to draw on quantitative corpus methods to verify or falsify them. To add weight to the initial claim that affiliation and honorification were used to increase May's *worthiness*, and semiformal nomination (without honorifics) was used to decrease it, we can see if these patterns are consistent across the PVM sub-corpus. To do this, the terms 'Prime Minister Theresa May', 'Mrs May' and 'Theresa May' were searched for using the concordance tool on AntConc (2019) in articles that were published during May's time as Prime Minister. The search returned a total of 193 concordance hits in the leave press and 320 in the remain press. As shown in Figure 1, of the 193 concordance hits in the leave press, 'Prime Minister Theresa May' occurred 31 times (16%), 'Mrs May' occurred 77 times (40%), and 'Theresa May' occurred 85 times (44%). Conversely, of the 320 concordance hits in the remain press, 'Prime Minister Theresa May' occurred 10 times (3%), 'Mrs May' occurred 51 times (16%), and 'Theresa May' occurred 259 times (81%).

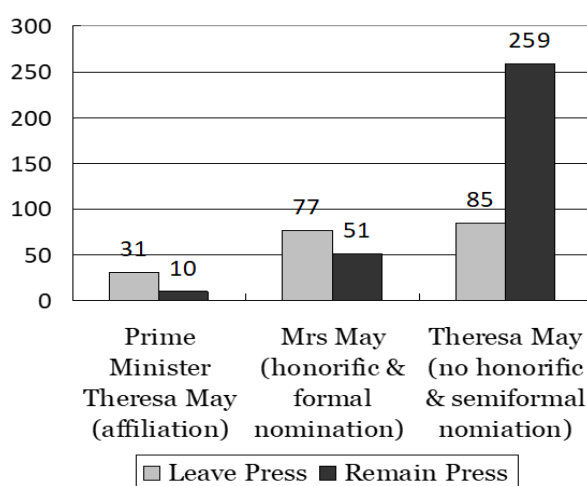


Figure 1. The distribution of three referential strategies in the PVM sub-corpus

These results substantiate the initial observation that the leave press favour affiliation, honorification and formal nomination when referring to May, suggesting they have an ideological interest in representing May as a formal and credible social actor. The remain press use semiformal nomination

significantly more than affiliation, honorification and formal nomination, perhaps in an attempt to background May's vested legitimation and authority and undermine her as a *worthy* social actor. As a *worthy* social actor in the leave press, May's program claims against a people's vote are better legitimated. Conversely, as an *unworthy* social actor in the remain press, May's program claims against the PVM are delegitimated. A potential caveat to this argument is that it is possible some of the more conservative newspapers comprising the leave press may, as a rule, refer to politicians with titles. Nevertheless, the point remains that the more liberal newspapers that largely comprise the remain press could have chosen to use affiliation, honorification and formal nomination more frequently, but did not.

7.3 Unity: Possessive Pronouns

Extract 3 (*The Express*; Langton, 2019) and Extract 4 (*The Independent*; Parfitt, 2019) report on Labour MP David Lammy's address about the Final Say protest before it took place. Lammy makes identity claims in Extract 3 and 4; his quotations consist of assertions that he and fellow PVM-supporters constitute a *unified* force.

(3) Extract 3 [The Express, Final Say, 16.10.19]

Tottenham Labour MP David Lammy said: "On Saturday 19th October the people of the United Kingdom will come together to tell Boris Johnson loud and clear he must seek our consent before he inflicts his Brexit on our country⁴. "Whether it's a deal or no deal, the Brexit the Prime Minister is planning bears no relation to the promises made back in 2016 and it threatens immense harm to our economy, our prosperity, our young people and our United Kingdom⁵. "Support for a People's Vote is growing, and on Saturday 19th a fleet of buses and coaches from all parts of the UK will bring people to London to have their say. "It will be a huge democratic moment for our country⁶ as we say loud and clear that, whatever you think about Brexit, the only clear way out of this mess is to give the people the final say." In a poll of 26,000 adults surveyed by ComRes across the UK, it was found that 54 percent of Britons still supported the referendum result⁷. The 2016 Referendum saw 51 percent vote to Leave, while 48 percent voted to stay in the EU. More people's preferred outcome is now for the UK to leave the European Union at 50 percent against 42 percent to remain⁸. Those who answered with "don't know" were excluded, however, more than half say their preferred outcome is for the UK to leave the EU compared to less than half who say their preferred outcome is for the UK to remain in the EU⁹.

(4) Extract 4 [The Independent, Final Say, 19.10.19]

David Lammy, the Labour MP and a leading supporter of the Final Say campaign, has said the march will be a "huge democratic moment for our country¹⁰". "On Saturday 19 October the people of the United Kingdom will come together to tell Boris Johnson loud and clear he must seek our consent before he inflicts his Brexit on our country¹¹," he added. "Whether it's a deal or no deal, the Brexit the prime

minister is planning bears no relation to the promises made back in 2016 and it threatens immense harm to our economy, our prosperity, our young people and our United Kingdom¹²."

The content of Lammy's speech in both extracts is largely the same. In these, there are numerous displays of *unity*, however, the context of Extract 3 discredits these displays. This section therefore seeks to explore how *unity* can be used to interpret PVM-backing politicians' quotations, and how *unity* can be used to analyse how the context of quoted speech contributes to broader ideological goals.

Van Dijk (2002, p. 73) argues that people speaking as members of ideological groups use the collective pronoun 'we' and determiner 'our' to refer to themselves and group members. Those not included in the deixis of 'our' are depicted as outsiders, establishing a contrast between 'us' and 'them'. Lammy is able to uphold an us/them dichotomy by aligning himself with the people of the UK through the frequent use of the possessive determiner 'our' (Examples 4, 5, 6, 10, 11 & 12). This presents a communal 'us', *unified* in a collective agreement that there should be a public vote on the final Brexit deal. PVM-opposing Boris Johnson is constructed in opposition to the consensus of the in-group through the third-person pronouns 'he' and 'his'. In particular, the contrast between the third-person possessive pronoun 'his' and first-person possessive determiner 'our' in Examples 4 and 11 ('Boris Johnson [...] must seek *our* consent before he inflicts *his* Brexit on *our* country') emphasise the in-group are *unified* against Johnson's Brexit and in support of a final say.

However, the frequent displays of *unity* are undermined in the context of Extract 3 with *The Express's* inclusion of poll results. Opinion polls are 'explicit representations of public opinion' (McLeod & Hertog, 1992, p. 261) often used to communicate protesters' deviance from the norm (McLeod & Detenber, 1999, p. 6). The opinion poll in Extract 3 was then perhaps used to challenge Lammy's identity claim that 'our country' is *unified* in pursuit of a final say as '54 percent of Britons' still support the referendum's leave result. The context of Lammy's quotation in Extract 3 therefore goes against the identity claims that PVM-supporting protesters 'constitute a unified force to be reckoned with' (Tilly, 2006, p. 292), contributing to *The Express's* PVM-opposing ideology.

In contrast, the context of Lammy's quotation in Extract 4 does nothing to undermine his program claims or displays of *unity*. Those reading it are therefore more likely to believe those protesting are reflective of a UK *unified* in consensus, contributing to *The Independent's* PVM-supporting ideology. So, while Extracts 3 and 4 feature nearly identical elements of Lammy's speech, their different contexts allow them to be heard in different ways (Buttny, 1998, p. 55).

7.4 Numbers: Aggregation

Extract 5 (*The Express*; McGrath, 2019) and Extract 6 (*The Guardian*; Adams, 2019) are taken from articles comparing the PVM and the pro-Brexit March to Leave protests' turnout.

(5) Extract 5 [The Express, People's Vote March, 23.03.19]

Mr Farage said: "What has happened this week is not only a national humiliation but it is an outright betrayal, because Mrs May now tells us we're not leaving next Friday despite telling us over a hundred times that we would be, despite putting a piece of law in place supported by 500 MPs. "So there is something going on here that I believe to be one of the saddest chapters in the history of our nation and we will not take this lying down." And asked about the March to Leave supporters being outnumbered today by the People's Vote March in London, he pointed to the 200 plus cheering marchers gathered in a pub car park and said: "There are 17.4 million here, can't you see them?"¹³

(6) Extract 6 [The Guardian, People's Vote March, 23.03.19]

It was impossible watching that sight [the PVM] not to make some comparisons with those few stubborn souls¹⁴ on the ill-fated "March to Leave", moved to trudge along lonely hard-shoulders by Nigel Farage, only to find that he had turned up for the photo opportunity and left them to fend for themselves. Farage, alive to BBC requirements for "balance", had returned to preach on Saturday to his handful of leaderless footsoldiers¹⁵ at a pub car park in Linby, Nottinghamshire: "You are the 17.4 million," he told a crowd of 150.¹⁶ As the thousands upon thousands¹⁷ [of PVM protesters] flowed down towards Parliament Square there was, contrarily, a spirit that the Brexiters have failed over the past three years ever to begin to convey: that of creative optimism.

In Extracts 5 and 6, Farage makes identity claims by suggesting the March to Leave (henceforth MtoL) constitutes a force to be reckoned with. In doing this, he emphasises the MtoL's *numbers* and suggests the PVM's turnout does not represent consensus opinion. Because protests' critics usually provide lower estimates of the number participating in a demonstration than their advocates do (Tilly, 2006, p. 291), this section seeks to explore how *numbers* can be used to interpret PVM-opposing politicians' quotations, and how *numbers* can be used to analyse how the context of quoted speech contributes to broader ideological goals.

Although in Extract 5, Farage is asked about the PVM outnumbering the MtoL, Farage responds by implying the '200 plus cheering marchers' at his protest represent the '17.4 million' that voted to leave the EU (Example 13). The use of numbers here is an example of aggregation. Aggregation is often used to 'manufacture consensus opinion' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 37), in that consensus assumes that the interests of the whole population are undivided and held in common (Fowler, 1991, p. 49). So, while Farage's protest is only 200 strong, referring to the referendum indicates the MtoL has the support of the entire leave-voting population (i.e. more supporters than the PVM). Drawing on the public's preferences in this way reinforces the boundary between what is and is not acceptable, deeming those that do not support the MtoL 'outside the bounds of consideration' (McLeod & Hertog, 1992, p. 262).

Conversely, in Extract 6's comparison of the MtoL's and PVM's turnout, the MtoL's *numbers* are mocked. Although collectivised, the quantifiers 'few' (Example 14) and 'handful' (Example 15) emphasise how small the groups of

protesters are. While Extract 6 also includes Farage's quote claiming the MtoL protesters 'are the 17.4 million', it is followed with the ironic 'he told a crowd of 150' (Example 16), suggesting the 17.4 million that voted to leave are not in support of his protest. Moreover, Extract 6 ends with coverage of the 'thousands upon thousands' of protesters that attended the PVM (Example 17), highlighting how *numerous* the support for the PVM is in comparison to the 'handful of leaderless footsoldiers' that attended the MtoL. As such, Extracts 5 and 6 add weight to the idea that 'power is in numbers' (Wouters & van Camp, 2017, p. 464), as both attempt to construct the protest they support as larger than the one they oppose.

7.5 Commitment: Modality, Reporting Verbs and Selective Quotation

Extract 7 (*The Express*; Hunt, 2019) and Extract 8 (*The Guardian*; Sabbagh, 2018) are taken from articles about an interview about the PVM between Sir Keir Starmer and Andrew Marr on Marr's political talk show. In these extracts, Starmer is making program claims by stating support of the PVM.

(7) Extract 7 [The Express, People's Vote March, 25.03.19]

BBC presenter Andrew Marr clashed with Labour's shadow Brexit secretary Sir Keir Starmer during an extremely heated debate about Britain's departure from the Brussels bloc. BBC host Andrew Marr instantly quizzed¹⁸ the Labour Party frontbencher about why he did not attend the People's Vote march in London on Saturday which saw an estimated one million people travel to the capital to demand another say on Brexit. As the Labour Party's shadow Brexit secretary said he was focused on "winning the argument", it promoted host Marr to quickly reply²⁰: "Where are you winning". Sir Keir said²¹: "I wasn't on the march²² but it was a significant march. The numbers were huge. "It was a very powerful message and although the numbers themselves were high, I think²³ it represents an even bigger number who are anxious about the situation and the position the Prime Minister has got us in to."

(8) Extract 8 [The Guardian, People's Vote March, 21.10.18]

Sir Keir Starmer, the shadow Brexit secretary, described²⁴ Saturday's march as significant and argued²⁵ that both leave and remain supporters were "utterly losing confidence in the prime minister, and that reflects a much bigger concern about where this is going". Appearing on the BBC's Andrew Marr show on Sunday, Starmer reiterated²⁶ that if May's Brexit deal was voted down then one of the options would be another "public vote" in which "remain has to be an option²⁷".

While some elements of Starmer's quotations are the same in both extracts, they exhibit varying displays of *commitment*. This section will therefore explore how *commitment* can be used to interpret PVM-backing politicians' quotations, and how *commitment* can be used to analyse how the context of quoted speech contributes to broader ideological goals.

Extract 7 is represented as an 'extremely heated debate' in which Marr challenges Starmer's *commitment* to the PVM by questioning him about 'why

he did not attend the People's Vote march' and where he is 'winning' the argument for a second referendum. The different types and designation of reporting verbs (RVs) here help to determine who is constructed as having the power in the debate, which has interesting implications for the representation of Starmer's *commitment*. For example, while Marr is attributed evaluative RVs in Examples 18 and 20 that suggest he is combative in his approach ('instantly quizzed', 'quickly reply'), Starmer is ascribed a neutral RV in Example 21 ('said'). Evaluative RVs add interpretation and allow for revoicing (Harry, 2014, p. 1044), whereas neutral RVs lack overt judgement of the source's speech (Harry, 2014, p. 1046), suggesting *The Express* present Marr's quotations in such a way to construct him as the more powerful social actor in the confrontation. Starmer's RVs are not emotive, implying he is not resistant to attack and therefore not *committed* to the PVM (Tilly, 1999, p. 261).

Starmer is quoted saying 'I wasn't on the march' (Example 22), and the entire interaction between Marr and Starmer is built on this. Here, choosing to include this segment of Starmer's speech implies he is completely *uncommitted* to the PVM as it suggests he does not care enough about it to attend it. Moreover, while Starmer asserts categorical epistemic modality in the utterance 'it represents an even bigger number...' (i.e. there are no modals such as 'might' or 'could' that indicate varying degrees of *commitment*), it is introduced by the mental process clause 'I think' (Example 23), expressing a low degree of affinity to the claim (Fairclough, 1992, p.159) through 'subjective marking' (Fairclough, 2003, p. 169).

It is of note that the interaction between Marr and Starmer is not framed as a debate or confrontation in Extract 8. As Marr is not quoted at all, Starmer's speech is unimpeded. The RVs attributed to Starmer here emphasise his *commitment* to the PVM; although Example 24 is more neutral ('described'), the evaluative RVs 'argued' and 'reiterated' (Examples 25 & 26) emphasise that Starmer cares strongly about the PVM's cause. Additionally, Starmer's speech is not introduced by mental process clauses and includes a high degree of *commitment* to implementing a second referendum through the deontic modal 'has to' in Example 27. By being selective with the inclusion of Starmer's quotations and contextualising them with evaluative and neutral reporting verbs, Extracts 7 and 8 are able to construct Starmer as having varying levels of *commitment* to the PVM.

8. Conclusion

By drawing upon and expanding on the linguistic WUNC framework outlined by Kennedy (2022), the article sought to show how identifiable, consistent and transparent categorisations of WUNC can be applied to concordance lines in research concerning the press representation of politicians' speech. Such categorisations were realised through referential strategies (*worthiness*), possessive pronouns and determiners (*unity*), aggregation (*numbers*) and modality, reporting verbs and selective quotation (*commitment*).

The results found that linguistic manifestations of WUNC can be either accentuated or concealed by the press to contribute to the ideologies they seek to perpetuate. In upholding the leave press's PVM-opposing ideology, Extract 1 saw *The Express* using formal and legitimating referential strategies to

represent May, suggesting her program claims against a people's vote should be listened to; in Extract 3 *The Express* included an opinion poll after reporting on Lammy's speech, undermining his identity claim that the country was *unified* in pursuit of a final say; in Extract 5 the aggregation in Farage's quotation indicated the MtoL had more *numerical* support than the PVM; and Extract 7 attacked Starmer's *commitment* to the PVM through the inclusion of low evaluative intensity and selective quotations.

In upholding the remain press's PVM-backing ideology, Extract 2 saw *The Independent* opting to refer to May with semiformal nomination, perhaps to imply her program claims against the PVM lack credibility; Extract 4 did not include any contextual reporting that weakened Lammy's identity claims; in Extract 6, Farage's quote was followed by the ironic 'he told a crowd of 150' and coverage of the thousands of protesters that attended the PVM, emphasising its vast *numerical* support; and Extract 8 constructed Starmer's speech as unchallenged and included evaluative reporting verbs and deontic modality, highlighting his *commitment* to supporting the PVM.

These findings add weight to Wouters and Walgrave's (2015) claim that journalists draw on elements of WUNC to narrate protest coverage. In the context of this article, it seems WUNC was, at least in part, relied on by the leave and remain-supporting press to encourage conformity to specific Brexit-related goals – that is, to either stop or encourage a second referendum that would include an option to remain in the EU and a public vote on the final Brexit deal. As such, because it is through media that wider support for a protest's goals 'can be potentially won – or lost' (Cottle, 2008, p. 853-854), it follows that the more elements of WUNC are discredited in the press, the more unlikely it becomes a protest will achieve its aims.

9. Limitations

While overall, the article has effectively demonstrated how the linguistic manifestations of WUNC can be used in concordance analysis, it should be noted that qualitative corpus methods were required to verify Section 7.1's observations as Extracts 1 and 2 included very few linguistic manifestations of *worthiness*. Moreover, because each section only dealt with one element of WUNC and a total of four politicians, the analysis would have undoubtedly yielded richer and more reliable interpretations if the entire linguistic WUNC framework was applied to all eight extracts, to more instances of different politicians' speech, and to examples that included standing claims. Nevertheless, the article was successful in demonstrating the ways in which the linguistic WUNC framework can be used to analyse politicians' quotations and help to uncover the ideological motivations of newspapers reporting on protests they oppose or support.

Additionally, because 'there is no neat fit between sociological and linguistic categories' (van Leeuwen, 2008, p. 24), more research will need to be carried out by scholars researching different protests in different contexts to expand the linguistic scope and categorisation of *worthiness*, *unity*, *numbers*, and *commitment*. Certainly, there may be more linguistic features that have not yet been explored that could also be representative of WUNC. It is therefore important future studies do not bind themselves too closely to specific categorisations of WUNC lest other relevant linguistic manifestations

be overlooked. Subsequent research may also choose to use more quantitative corpus methods to assess the effects of WUNC – for example, by identifying markers associated with each element of WUNC and assessing their significance in a given text. However, while expansion upon the framework is encouraged, the hope is that the application of WUNC outlined in this article could be used as it currently stands in research of a similar nature.

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