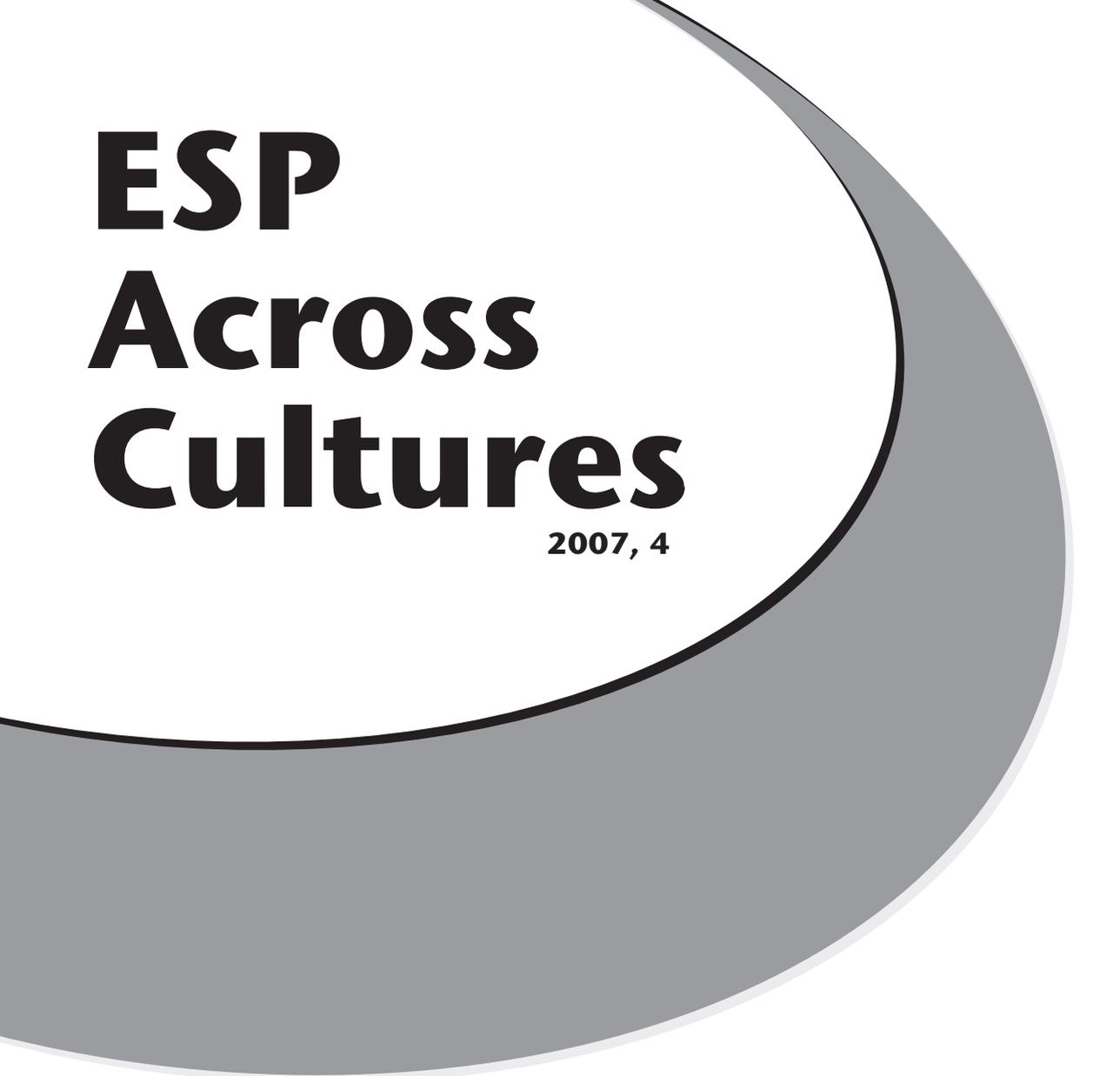


ESP Across Cultures

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ESP Across Cultures

Chief Editors

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Foreword

Welcome to volume 4 of *ESP Across Cultures*. It would be hard to imagine a more varied selection of papers in terms of provenance of the authors and range of topics. And yet there are two common threads uniting them all: a concern with English in specialized discourse coupled with a cross-cultural analysis, be that across ‘small cultures’ or ‘large cultures’.

Besides renewing our gratitude to the members of our editorial board who have acted as referees for the numerous papers submitted to our journal, we wish to thank all those scholars who are not on the editorial board but who have kindly accepted to referee papers for our journal over the past few years. Our thanks go to:

Ylva Berglund	Magnus Ljung
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We are always pleased to receive any suggestions and comments that you may wish to make concerning our journal, and we hope you will enjoy the selection of papers to be found in the current issue.

The Editors

Christopher Williams
Denise Milizia

Going ‘glocal’, multimodally speaking

Sandra Campagna

Abstract

This paper aims to illustrate instances of glocalization in a multimodal format.

The multimodal configuration of websites advertising products in the worldwide food and beverage sector will be explored within an SFL framework. The main purpose is to compare and contrast the realization, actualized in the semiotic interplay, of similar/different customizing policies adopted by global brands represented online. The “semiotic landscape” (i.e. the space allocated to multimodal representation of culture-specific values, in Kress & van Leeuwen’s terms) of the selected ads will be seen here as a repository of visual, acoustic, verbal cues signalling how the ‘global’ meets the ‘local’.

The hypertextual configuration of the selected texts will be described within the overall methodological framework indicated in Kress & van Leeuwen’s (1996, 1998, 2001, 2002) canonical work on multimodal representation and on the basis of Lemke’s (2002) guidelines on the interpretation of hypertexts.

Within this general SFL framework, this paper will expand in particular on the notion of Iedema’s (2003) “resemiotization” as a dynamic multimodal tool and will extend its meaning potential to the treatment of colour, in line with the application of the sensory coding orientations which regulate promotional texts.

1. Introduction

Before working for television as a film director, I worked for some years with my husband, Jean, a free-lance photographer. I met Jean in Vienna. When I left Vienna, every day for six months he sent me a few pictures with enigmatic or poetic captions, and often without captions. I had no idea about photography and I didn’t understand at all what he was trying to tell me with these pictures of twisted

trunks, dark water puddles, crazy reflections, cracked walls. I didn't realize at all that images had their own language. I had to learn gradually how to read them. I just thought that he was a bit strange. I didn't see at all the emotional charge he was putting into them and even now I don't always understand the metaphorical or philosophical meaning of them because he gives them a very personal interpretation. After all, this language is open and people may read it in their own way [...] Now that I have learned a bit about this peculiar language of images, I use it in my films because I think that often pictures that do not have a direct meaning for people can touch them at some unconscious level in a way that helps me to express specific moods (Mohr & Mohr 2003: 58-67).

Simone Mohr's gradual acceptance of the openness (to interpretation) of visual language and her progressive realization of the emotional implications concealed in the peculiar language of images testify both to the centrality acquired by visual language in our culture and to the independence of the visual mode from verbal communication. Yet it is her personal narration of how she has gradually learnt to read images in the form of her husband's photographs which makes sense of the "peculiar language of images". Her 'voice over' is embedded in those photos and the two modes combined reveal not only her perception of the visual material she has received from her husband but provide insights into her perception of her marital relationship. This final 'product' of personal narration, made up of Simone Mohr's voice and of her husband's photos, is a good example of how I define a "semiotic text" and the two moments signalling Simone's perception of reading those images, quoted above, instantiate "semiotic change".

2. Aims and materials

This paper deals with semiotic texts in the context of web advertising and with the changes that these texts undergo as a result of different multimodal tools at work.

The following two main aims characterize the present study. First, I intend to explore the hypertextual configuration of websites advertising global products in the food and beverage sector to locate examples of 'glocalization'¹ as a reflection of similar/different customizing policies respectively adopted by the global brands at issue. Second, I attempt to identify the role fulfilled by the various semiotic modes at work and their effects on the selected texts. For this purpose, I propose to apply (and expand on) Iedema's (*ibid.*) notion of "resemiotization" to identify the specific 'tasks' respectively performed by the various semiotic components at work and their effects on the selected texts.

The semiotic texts selected for analysis are:

¹ The term 'glocalization' is a lexical blend. It combines the words 'globalization' and 'localization' and indicates "the creation of products or services intended for the global market, but customized to suit the local culture" (definition accessible at <http://www.wordspy.com>).

1. The Coca-Cola Worldwide homepage (accessible at <http://www.cocacola.com/worldwide>);
2. The Heinz homepage (accessible at <http://www.heinz.com>).

The hypertextual configuration of these ads will be described within the overall methodological framework outlined in Kress & van Leeuwen's (1996, 1998, 2001, 2002) seminal work on multimodal representation and on the basis of Lemke's (2002) guidelines on the interpretation of hypertextual configuration. As mentioned above, within this general SFL framework, this paper will apply and reinterpret the notion of Iedema's "resemiotization" as a dynamic multimodal tool.

3. The state of the art in multimodality

In this section I will describe recent developments in multimodal theory. Then, I will move on to consider the links between multimodality and resemiotization.

Multimodal theory fundamentally challenges the centrality of written language in our Western society, which has been traditionally dominated by literacy. The diminishing role of the verbal is not only due to the pervasiveness of the visual, which has considerably affected most areas of communication in recent decades, but also to the emergence of other modes of communication, like the gestural and the acoustic. In fact multimodality involves "the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined" (Kress & van Leeuwen 2001: 20). At the heart of this definition lies a move from linguistics to semiotics which, in turn, involves a shift from a monomodal approach (language in spoken and written form) to a multimodal one (signs conveyed in various forms other than language: visual, gestural, acoustic). This allowance for different affordances used for sign interpretation is related to the concept of "semiotic landscape", a crucial concept in multimodal studies. The term suggests a geographical, territorial metaphor, which reveals cultural specificity and the time specificity of sign interpretation. In fact, as clarified in Kress & van Leeuwen (1996: 33):

The place of visual communication in a given society can only be understood in the context of, on the one hand, the range of forms or modes of public communication available in that society, and, on the other hand, their uses and valuations. We refer to this as the semiotic landscape.

To further clarify the geographical metaphor and its transposition to semiotics, we need to think about factors other than natural (concerning the configuration of the land) or environmental which condition territorial landscapes. Human intervention on landscapes is the product of socially-mediated choices constrained by time and cultural factors. Human intervention coupled with natural, environmental factors actively contributes to constructing the history of a landscape. Moreover, a landscape is not a static product inasmuch as it is constantly being reshaped, hence transformed, by the passing of time and by the process of change

in societal values which affect the perception and interpretation of landscapes on the part of the beholder.

Thus, the geographical metaphor, transferred to the realm of semiosis, restates both the plurality of factors (or signs) contributing to and affecting interpretation and the individual, relativist nature of the interpretative process proper. Indeed a semiotic landscape can be seen and decoded differently according to the points of view of the beholder².

The shift from a monomodal linguistic approach to a multimodal semiotic one raises a few questions concerning the communicative function (and hierarchical importance) of the modes employed for semiotic interpretation as Kress (2003: 35) has argued:

The co-presence of other modes raises the question of their function: are they merely replicating what language does, are they ancillary, marginal, or do they play a full role, and if they do, is it the same role as that of writing or a different role? And if they play a different role, is that because of their constitution, their make-up, because of their own affordances?

Another concept which is worth exploring, in that it appears to be intrinsically rooted in multimodal theory, is the concept of “transduction”. It refers to how the various modes combine and interrelate to regenerate meaning. Transduction “accounts for the shift of ‘semiotic material’ across modes” (Kress 2003: 35). A further crucial point which characterizes multimodal debate and is related to the notion of “transduction” regards the definition of ‘text’, a product no longer paradigmatically ascribable to the written mode, preferably in book format, at least in our Western cultural tradition dominated by literacy. Indeed the textual ‘chemistry’, so to speak, enhanced by the multiple combinations of the cross-modal semiotic material in transit, brings back the volatile notion of “semiotic text”, a complex product whose volatility is amplified in hypertextual communication and whose complexity is re-defined by exposure to the Web medium. In fact, as Garzone (2007) argues convincingly, although semiotic texts present features which are also used in traditional printed texts (for example recourse to visuals), exposure to the Web medium has favoured a complex process of ‘genre migration’ which has deeply affected the intrinsic structure and communicative purposes of these texts: “After migration to the Web, a given genre does retain its original purpose (as defined in social terms), although it realizes it in an environment which allows the use of media whose affordances are profoundly different from those of the traditional printed medium” (*ibid.*: 26).

² The tendency in multimodal theory to take into account the beholder’s point of view in interpreting the semiotic landscape shows conformity with the radical shift in focus from text to audience advocated by Cultural Studies. This change of emphasis, which stems from researching on the real viewers and on how they respond to films, has considerably affected film theory by challenging its traditional view of a silent, idealized audience.

4. From multimodality to resemiotization

Although both the concept of “transduction” and the redefinition of ‘text’ in multimodal terms account for change in the semiotic text, nevertheless it is Iedema’s notion of “resemiotization” which acknowledges the dynamic component in the semiotic text as an inherent trait by foregrounding its property of reification of meaning. Iedema identifies textual recontextualizations in the process of meaning making. These are the various sequential phases which re-orient textual reading and interpretation as a result of multimodal transduction:

Resemiotization is about how meaning making shifts from context to context, from practice to practice, or from one stage of a practice to the next (Iedema *ibid.*: 41).

I summarize the main example quoted in Iedema to clarify this point. The example consists in comparing and contrasting two versions of Apple Mac manuals to illustrate how different semiotic resources have been selected for delivering instructions to the Mac user. The earlier version, which dates back to 1992, foregrounds the verbal mode, whilst in the later version of the iMac manual, which appeared in 1999, centrality is given to the visual mode. More specifically, in the earlier version (in black and white) the visuals only elaborate (that is, only pictorially illustrate) the written text, which is in actual fact a detailed explanation to the user on how to operate the Mac. By contrast, the later version (in colour) magnifies the visuals by placing them above the written instructions which, however, have been reduced to a minimum. This shift in emphasis is also enhanced by other factors:

1. the dimension of the visuals (which occupy three-quarters of the page);
2. their dominant position over the written text;
3. the role of the ‘Ideal’ versus the ‘Real’ that the visuals fulfil, multimodally speaking³;
4. the user-oriented perspective indicated by specific design choices like the hands of the hypothetical user actively operating the iMac contrasting with the company-oriented perspective in the earlier version.

Not only does this displacement from verbal to visual (predictably) confirm a trend towards multimodal appreciation in the last decade but it also corroborates Iedema’s view on the reification of meaning. Indeed Iedema shows that in the

³ According to multimodal theory, visual compositions can be read, and interpreted, on the basis of an imaginary vertical axis which divides them into two sections: the lower section, which contains factual, matter-of-fact information, corresponds to the realm of the ‘Real’; the upper section instead, which contains emotive, promised, idealized information, corresponds to the realm of the ‘Ideal’. The ‘Real/Ideal’ dichotomy is typical of advertising texts (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996: 186-202). The colourful (realistic) photographs placed in the ‘Ideal’ position in the later version of the Apple Mac manual mimic the alluring promise of idealized information typically featuring advertising texts.

manuals discussed the Apple image has undergone a re-vamping process which goes well beyond a cosmetic refurbishing of product description:

The iMac manual does not just displace language by visualizing its meanings, but reconfigures the domain of novice computer use into a discourse, a semiotic complex, that manifests transparency, accessibility, ease and perhaps even desirability, pleasure (Iedema *ibid.*: 48).

In a nutshell, resemiotization does not merely involve a cosmetic process of image change constrained by the pressure of modernization; rather, it deals with more radical transformations resulting from the deployment of different semiotic resources. As Iedema argues convincingly, although the later version of the Apple iMac may appear as a simplified, modernized, user-friendly manual, it is in fact a totally new text: an informative text resemiotized into a promotional one thanks to the predominance of the visual mode.

5. Re-semiotizing resemiotization

The link between multimodality and resemiotization treated in Iedema needs to be clarified. While on the one hand Iedema (*ibid.*: 30) claims that “multimodal analysis should be complemented with a dynamic view on semiosis”, and identifies this dynamic view with the process of resemiotization, on the other hand, he redefines resemiotization as an alternative view to multimodality. This alternative point of view is further restated when a “division of labour” is introduced and different tasks are allocated respectively to resemiotization and multimodality. In fact, while resemiotization is an analytical tool particularly suited to the interpretation of dynamic processes, a multimodal approach proves to be successful particularly when applied to finished and finite (static) texts:

Often oriented to finished and finite texts, multimodal analysis considers the complexity of texts or representations as they are, and less frequently how it is that such constructs come about, or how it is that they transmogrify as (part of larger) dynamic processes (*ibid.*: 30).

Thus, generally speaking, multimodal analysis addresses the following ‘products’ (finished and finite, static texts): “interaction, film, sound, computational ‘texts’, museum displays and the like”. It follows that unfinished (dynamic) texts should fall instead within the realm of resemiotization. Hence, hypertexts, as paradigmatic icons of potentially endless processes, should only successfully be analysed in resemiotizing terms. Now, although I recognize diversity in orientation respectively allocated to each semiotic tool, I claim that resemiotization represents a complementary view to that of multimodal analysis, rather than an alternative perspective.

Iedema’s practical analysis of the two Apple texts confirms this view. Summing up, these texts were analysed multimodally when they were considered in their static dimension, namely as fixed semiotics in paper format. They were read as

pages and the canonical multimodal divide of 'Ideal' and 'Real' categories was applied. At a later stage the same texts (still in paper format) were re-read and re-interpreted as processes and were resemiotized (re-labelled) as new texts: a manual transformed into a promotional text⁴. This operation was conducted despite the unaltered medium (still the printed static format), which corroborates the argument that resemiotization does not represent an alternative to multimodality, rather its continuation⁵ and that both analytical tools can successfully be applied to the analysis of static and dynamic (hypertextual) texts.

Thus, I propose to apply the dynamic concept of resemiotization combined with multimodal analysis to the interpretation of 'static'⁶ website homepages.

6. Instantiating semiotic change

The two selected texts will be considered mainly from a holistic point of view in line with Lemke's (2002: 310) proposal "to begin a multimodal analysis with the visual-organizational composition of the whole page". Given the 'static' format of the two homepages, which induces comparison with the written page, the parameters of information value, salience and framing will be applied here in consonance with Kress & van Leeuwen's (1998) approach to the analysis of newspaper front pages.

Briefly, these parameters have proved to be instrumental to the interpretation of page layout. More specifically, information value is indicated by the position that the various compositional elements occupy on the page: left/right; top/bottom; centre/margin.

Salience is indicated by visual prominence and is conveyed through contrast: for instance, by placing elements in the foreground/background; or by contrast in tonal value or colour, etc.

Framing applies to criteria of connection/disconnection. Framing devices, such as continuity/discontinuity of colour or thickness/weakness of framelines, may indicate unity or separateness.

The two (home)pages present a similar visual-organizational composition defined by the following features:

⁴ This semiotic shift confirms claims of "colonization" in professional and academic genres due to the invasion of promotional values in most forms of discourse (Bhatia 2005).

⁵ In the Apple texts it is precisely the application of the 'Ideal' and 'Real' divide (used in multimodal theory) that triggers the process of resemiotization. The prominence of the visual over the written text in the recent version of the iMac manual is the crucial element at the basis of this semiotic shift.

⁶ Although the terms *static* and *dynamic* have been used to discriminate between elements which are related on a screenpage with no hypertextual links (static) and hyperlinked elements (dynamic) (Burn & Parker 2003: 31), a webpage as a whole is never really static by definition. It is potentially (when not overtly) dynamic and its dynamic potential can be activated either by simply moving the mouse over the various links, or by actively clicking on the potentially dynamic components of the page.



Figure 1. The Coca-Cola Worldwide Homepage, accessible at: <http://www.cocacola.com/worldwide>



Figure 2. The Heinz Homepage, accessible at: <http://www.heinz.com>

1. both texts show a top frame with the corresponding logos on the left;
2. the overall organization is very much like a typical printed page of text, that is, it is horizontally constructed⁷:

⁷ Constructing information horizontally is in line with our (culture-specific) “reading path”, which is characterized by approaching texts from left to right. This ‘left-right’ structure in visual communication corresponds to a ‘before-after’ structure in spoken language (Kress & van Leeuwen 1998: 193).

3. the two texts can be divided horizontally (like two pages) and contents can be read in terms of ‘Given’ and ‘New’ information with a central limbo zone signalling transition;
4. colour contrast (red is the leading vibrant colour in both texts) marks salience and framing.

However, the two (home)pages differ mainly with regard to the information value attached to the colour red and to how ‘glocalization’ is constructed and conveyed visually and verbally. I will illustrate these points by describing the two texts more in detail.

The Coca-Cola Worldwide (home)page presents a triptych structure⁸. The left portion, the ‘Given’, consists of the global mission statement of the company (“The Coca-Cola Company refreshes people across the globe”), visually replicated by the dynamic icon of the globe next to the logo, and of a verbal invitation to use the map (“Take a look at some of our websites around the world to discover how we are meeting the demands of local tastes and cultures with nearly 400 brands in over 200 countries”), in turn visually replicated by the corresponding vector placed next to the message “Use the Map”. The limbo zone, the ‘Mediator’, is the map of the world the users are invited to click on to select specific countries. The right portion consists of three framed texts vertically placed. The first two simply offer an alternative traversal⁹ for the user, who can decide to find and select a region either by clicking directly on the map or by digiting the name of the selected country in the appropriate box. The result of this dual operation is the ‘New’, placed at the bottom of the three framed texts, which consists of a preview of the homepage of the Coca-Cola local image.

Apart from the vibrant red on the top frame (encompassing the company’s logo) restated below the “Preview” local image and encompassing the local company’s website address, the whole text displays a uniform grey background colour providing cohesive unity and contrasting with the vibrant red on the top frame. The colour red is here associated not with the product but with its refreshing quality. In fact, “although ‘the’ meaning of red-in-general, of the abstract signifier ‘red’ cannot be established, the red end of the scale remains associated with warmth, energy, salience and foregrounding, and the blue end with cold, calm distance and backgrounding” (Kress & van Leeuwen 2002: 357). Here colour also identifies (differently) the local realizations visible in the “Preview” section. In general, red is predominant in most countries. By contrast, in all the accessible African regions red is replaced by local hues (yellow, green, orange) echoing African nature. In other countries, like China and Russia, for instance, red also performs an ideation-

⁸ Triptych structures consist of horizontal compositions divided into three parts: the first on the left featuring ‘Given’ information, followed by a central limbo zone acting as ‘The Mediator’, and the third on the right featuring ‘New’ information (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996: 217).

⁹ Traversals are the possible trajectories users can follow through the web of a hypertext (Lemke 2002: 300).

al function due to its strong political denotation, whilst in Norway the predominant colour is white clearly evoking the snow. Thus, colour variation correlates with local specificities.

The Heinz (home)page also presents a triptych structure¹⁰. The left portion, the ‘Given’, consists of a framed upper section equally divided into two parts. Here the left side (in turn, the ‘Given’ is related to its corresponding right portion) reproduces the image of one of the many Heinz products¹¹ available. Next to the image, on the right (hence the ‘New’), follows a description of the selected product with an implicit invitation to “try”.

The right portion of the (home)page, paralleling the Coca-Cola text, consists of three framed texts vertically placed. Saliency is given to the upper frame “Our Brands” which displays images of all the Heinz products. This (dynamic) array of products is permanently on the move to allow users to select the product they want. Once a product has been selected, it appears on the prominent framed upper section on the left portion of the (home)page with its corresponding description and implicit invitation to “try”.

Below the moving carousel of products, the link “Our Brands” provides the whole list of products pictorially illustrated above. Unlike the Coca-Cola text, in this section the verbal mode does not merely replicate the visual by offering the user another possible traversal to access the same source of information. Instead, it expands on the promotional ad placed next to the product image in the framed section on the left by providing overall information not only on the selected brand but on all the other brands affiliated to Heinz. This ‘glocal’ move is overtly stated whenever we click on any product in the “Our Brand” section:

Heinz means a lot of things to a lot of people. In America, it’s become almost synonymous with Ketchup. In England, “Beanz Meanz Heinz.” But did you know that Heinz is also a leader in markets that include baby food, tuna fish, potatoes, frozen entrées and much more?

Here’s your chance to get acquainted with all that Heinz has to offer, learn about nutrition and “meet” the associations with whom Heinz is affiliated.

As shown in the following extracts, the shift from ‘global’ to ‘local’ is further reiterated in the ads which accompany the images of the products, in line with Heinz’s promotional campaign, aimed at product differentiation and cultural brand specificity:

¹⁰ Here, the limbo zone in the triptych structure is represented by a menu of anchor links vertically organized under the following informative headers: “Investors”, “In the News”, “Company Info”. This transition zone provides information on the global Heinz corporation and equally relates to both parts of the page which focus on product specification.

¹¹ Users are invited to select a brand out of the wide variety offered by Heinz. Once they have selected a brand, the new product, (now the ‘Given’) appears on the left-hand side of the framed section at issue.

1. “Classico”

Add authentic-style taste to any meal with Classico pasta sauce! Inspired by regional Italian Recipes, these rich sauces are available in more than 20 unique varieties from Fire Roasted Tomato to our newer Spicy Tomato & Basil.

2. “Greenseas”

Australian families have been bringing Greenseas tuna products into their homes for nearly 40 years. And it’s no wonder why. Our high-quality, healthy tuna and salmon comes in a variety of savory styles and flavours, including: Herb & Garlic, Honey & Soy, Sweet Chili, even Tuna lunch kits, and much more!

3. “tinytums”

tinytums.co.uk is the definitive baby food site in the UK for parents, carers, health care professionals and mums and dads-to-be. Click here for information on Pregnancy, Products and Feeding your baby.

4. “Plasmon”

Parents everywhere trust Heinz. That’s why in Italy, the Plasmon Environmental Oasis Program is the hallmark of purity and safety.

If we examine the text in terms of the treatment of colour, salience is enhanced by the colour red¹² contrasting with a uniform (cohesive) white on the background. Moreover, whereas in the Coca-Cola text the colour red (symbolically) reflects the freshness of the product and its energetic impact, here it directly correlates with the colour of the Heinz product par excellence (Heinz tomato Ketchup), thus performing a purely descriptive function rather than enhancing a symbolic association.

The following considerations stem from the analysis of the two (home)pages with regard to the hypotheses of glocalization, resemiotization and claims of ‘division of labour’ in the semiotics at work advanced in the present study.

As to the first, although both (home)pages similarly construct glocalization by inviting the user to select a country/a brand among a list of options, they indicate different reading paths. On the Coca-Cola (home)page (henceforth referred to as Page 1), the suggested reading path is linear: from left to right; whereas on the Heinz (home)page (henceforth referred to as Page 2), the suggested reading path is non-linear: from left to right and then back to left again. This linear/non-linear divide reflects different orientations in the construction of glocalization, which in turn reflect different promotional campaigns. The linear move from global to local on Page 1 indicates emphasis on the refreshing quality of a single (unique) product differently marketed according to local needs. Conversely, the non-linear move on Page 2 accounts for a promotional campaign based on product differentiation.

¹² The colour red cohesively links logo, product images, framelines and typefaces.

As to the second, both texts resemiotize Given/New information into the Premise/Action sequence, where the Premise is the necessary pre-requisite for triggering curiosity (and campaigning for products) and the Action which follows is the operational result of the curiosity previously aroused.

As to claims of semiotic autonomy, the two texts differ considerably. Page 1 displays a certain degree of “semiotic mutual cooperation” in that, as noted, the visual and the verbal co-occur (and replicate) representations of global/local identities. However, this cooperation does not include the colour element, which seems to operate independently as a marker of local identity.

Page 2, instead, presents a higher degree of autonomy in the interplay of the various semiotic modes. As noted, the verbal mode does not merely describe the represented products but it considerably expands on the visual by carrying a high informative load.

7. Conclusion

As stated in the Introduction, this paper deals with the dynamic construction of semiotic texts, that is, with “semiotic change”, with regard to the representation of global/local identities reflected in a specific sector of hyperadvertising.

To this purpose, instances of ‘glocalization’ in the form of two website homepages have been located and analysed combining a multimodal approach with Iedema’s notion of resemiotization to explore how the ‘global’ meets the ‘local’ in the semiotic representation of the selected homepages and how these moves from global to local reflect similar/different promotional campaigns.

Given the prevailing multimodal focus of the present study, the concept of ‘glocalization’ as a marketing strategy (see footnote 1) has been deliberately backgrounded.

Results confirm the importance of integrating multimodality with resemiotization to interpret semiotic changes dynamically. In fact, as shown in Section 6, the two texts analysed reveal a high degree of resemiotization. This reification of meaning primarily involves a shift from an informative to a promotional orientation in textual representation, which is realized through semiotic change as a marker of glocalization.

More specifically, although the selected (home)pages similarly resemiotize Given/New information into the Premise/Action sequence, they construct glocalization differently, namely, by suggesting linear/non-linear reading paths which reflect different promotional campaigns.

The two texts also differ considerably with regard to the claims of semiotic autonomy advanced in the present study. In particular, on Page 1 the visual and the verbal co-occur and replicate representations of global/local identities, thus enhancing “semiotic mutual cooperation” in line with the patterns of linearity expressed in the suggested reading path. Nevertheless, this cooperation does not

include the colour element which instead seems to operate independently as a marker of local identity¹³.

In contrast with Page 1, Page 2 displays a higher degree of semiotic autonomy mainly reflected in the different tasks respectively allocated to the visual and the verbal, aimed at constructing a promotional campaign based on product differentiation. Again, it is worth noting the diversity in the treatment of colour as an indicator of global/local identity. Different orientations in the treatment of colour correspond to different promotional campaigns. The Coca-Cola company promotes one product globally, hence the local image is actualized through local appreciation (semiotically characterized by colour variation) of the same (unique) product. On the other hand, Heinz constructs its promotional image through the display of a variety of different products (not just the classic Heinz Ketchup) globally advertised and purchased.

The high degree of resemiotization in the texts analysed and the variety of possible combinations in the semiotic interplay¹⁴ reflect a 'dynamic' tendency in hypertextual representation. This dynamic character is further confirmed by a recent tendency in online communication characterized by the pervasive contamination of animated elements. Animation varies from the visual/acoustic cues increasingly used in web advertising to the progressively high recourse to pop-up windows invading web genres other than promotional texts proper (Janoscka 2004).

The illustrated sample, albeit minimal, indicates the extent of dynamic potential exploitable, multimodally speaking, even on 'static' pages where strategic recourse to animation is almost non-existent.

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¹³ This independent behaviour of the colour mode contrasts with expectations of its subservience to the other semiotic modes, advanced in the literature, according to which colour "can combine freely with many other modes, in architecture, typography, product design, document design, etc., but not exist on its own" (Kress & van Leeuwen 2002: 351).

¹⁴ This constellation of varieties (or possible combinations of co-occurring modes in one text) is precisely what constitutes the 'uniqueness' of a semiotic text. Each text is a 'holistic' product defined on the basis of its intermodal interplay. As explained in Santulli (2007: 33): "[...] it is in the text that the semantic and pragmatic interaction *between* modes is exploited, so that what could be codified independently according to the rules of each different code becomes a cohesive whole, a *Gestalt*, whose communicative value is greater than the sum of its parts".

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English for Academic Purposes in Iran: a study of perceptions of English needs in academic contexts¹

Zohreh Eslami, Abbas Eslami-Rasekh & Blanca Quiroz

Abstract

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) stands out as a major dominant strand of ESP (English for Specific Purposes). In countries like Iran, where English is mainly used for academic purposes, EAP plays a highly important role. However, EAP programs have been developed without conducting a systematic needs analysis from both the students' and instructors' perspective. Hence, the purpose of this study is to describe the perception that EAP students and instructors have of the English language needs of the students. Respondents consisted of 693 EAP students majoring in different academic fields and 37 instructors. The findings show a mismatch between learner needs and preferences and their reported experience of classroom instruction. The results also show a discrepancy between the perceptions of EAP learners in different academic fields and between learners and instructors. The study has implications for curriculum design and instructional delivery of EAP courses for college level students.

1. Introduction

EAP² has established itself as a distinct and dynamic area within the field of ELT with sound theoretical foundations which can guide various practical concerns (Bloor 1998). A frequently cited taxonomy of the area of ESP according to the field of target activity and type of learner by Strevens (1977) suggests that all ESP

¹ The authors are grateful to the anonymous reviewers for providing valuable suggestions and clear comments for the revision of the paper.

² In this paper we refer only to EAP, not ESP or ESAP, based on the above definition of EAP as 'educational ESP'.

courses are either ‘occupational’ or ‘educational’ in nature. ‘Educational ESP’, later renamed as EAP, is currently a major strand of ESP (Flowerdew 1990; Johns & Dudley-Evans 1991). It has developed in diverse directions and has become increasingly international in scope (Johns & Dudley-Evans 1991; Sysoyev 2000).

In expanding circle countries (Kachru 1989) like Iran, where English is mainly used for academic purposes, EAP plays a highly important role. Additionally, in Iran, after the Islamic Revolution, in an effort to defy westernization of the country, there has been a strong tendency to teach EAP, which is perceived to be a variety of English that can be somewhat separated from the dominant culture attached to it. Therefore, EAP has increasingly expanded so that it currently forms a considerable part of the curricula for all academic fields at universities.

Despite the government’s high level of investment in EAP programs, there is very limited research (exceptions are: Atai 2000; Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh 2004; Gooniband 1988; Khajeie 1993) addressing the effectiveness of these programs from learners’ and instructors’ perspectives. Current EAP practice is largely ad-hoc, lacking in course design, teacher training, sufficient instruction time, and proper evaluation. The challenges will necessarily involve developing true specific-purpose curricula based on learners’ needs which would provide the appropriate context for sustainable language programs. Another concern is that learners’ and teachers’ voices on the effectiveness of these programs and the use of locally published textbooks are not heard.

The objective of the study is to examine Iranian EAP learners’ perceptions with regard to the importance of English, instructional activities, classroom practices and problematic areas in EAP programs compared to instructors’ perceptions. More specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the EAP instructors’ and EAP students’ perceptions of the importance of English, and instructional practices in EAP classes?
2. What are the EAP students’ perceptions of the classroom practices *being used* in their classes?
3. Are there any significant differences between the learners’ perceptions in different academic fields?
4. Are there any significant differences between the learners’ perceptions and their instructors’?

2. Needs analysis

Insights gained from nearly two decades of research in second and foreign language development in natural as well as formal education settings have made us aware that language learning is primarily a learner- and learning-oriented activity (Brown 2001; Nunan 1988; Savignon & Wang 2003; Wright 1990). The learner-centred approach to language learning builds on the premise that teaching/learning programs should be responsive to learners’ needs (Hutchinson & Waters 1987; Savignon & Wang 2003). As Hamp-Lyons (2001) points out, EAP begins with the

learner and the situation, whereas General English begins with the language. English for Academic Purposes curriculum development is guided by learner needs leading to a research area known as ‘needs analysis’ or ‘needs assessment’. Hence, the needs analysis initiates and guides ESP/EAP curriculum development, involving surveying the learners to collect data on their background and goals, linguistic and behavioural demands, and preferred learning/teaching strategies (Jasso-Aguilar 1999).

An important question in relation to needs analysis is how the notion of ‘need’ is to be conceptualized. According to Brindley (1989: 65) the main source of the ambiguity in the concept of language needs is the distinction between various concepts of need, namely the distinction between *necessities* or *demands*, and learners’ *wants* and the methods of bridging the gap between these two. Similarly, Berwick (1989) defines ‘need’ as a measurable discrepancy or the gap between the existing conditions and the desired future state. Benesch (1996) believes that we need to go beyond the descriptive approach to needs analysis and consider critical needs analysis. Critical needs analysis acknowledges the existing demands but considers the target situation demands as a site of possible reform. Benesch believes that needs analysis has so far surrendered to the domination of the institutes and authorities and suggests that we need to consider needs analysis as a political and subjective process and EAP classrooms as a site of struggle. Critical needs analysis assumes that institutions are hierarchical and those at the bottom are entitled to more power than they have and therefore areas where greater equality might be achieved should be explored.

It is highly important to consider the ‘need’ in relation to the unique characteristics of the local educational context in which the study takes place (Holmes & Celani 2006). Students’ needs in different contexts are diverse and the analysis of needs can be effective if the academic language needs are accurately defined and seek utmost specificity within the specific target use (Deutch 2003). It is based on these assertions that we will embark on analysing the status of EAP in Iran.

3. The Iranian context

EAP practice started in Iran in the early 1960s with joint projects between Iranian universities and Western academic centres (Cowan 1974; Bates 1978) with a focus on teaching English to engineering and medical students. Programs implemented during this time mainly aimed at enabling the learners to gain advanced levels of discipline-specific reading ability through intensive reading courses. Several discipline-specific English textbooks were published during this time. The emphasis on EAP and its sustainability even after the Islamic Revolution in Iran is academically similar to the ESP situation in Brazil as reported by Holmes & Celani (2006).

Since the Islamic Revolution in Iran (1978), there has been a systematic move supervised by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology (MSRT) to estab-

lish uniform discipline-based EAP programs for universities. This move has led to the compilation of several ESP textbooks for students of medicine, engineering, science, social sciences, humanities, law, geography, agriculture and other academic fields. The purpose of these programs is to provide courses more closely geared to the learners' needs in special fields of study, and in so doing to enhance the students' level of motivation and interest (Atai 2000). However, since the courses were not designed based on any systematic needs analysis, the program designers' goals do not seem to have been fulfilled (Atai 2000).

The EAP curriculum for all university students includes one to three EAP courses which are either taught by English or content area instructors. These courses are three credit courses and taught three hours per week. The first course is 'General English' and the other two courses (three credit hours each) get increasingly more discipline-specific. The main purpose for teaching EAP is to facilitate the academic English level of students to enable them to read discipline-specific texts in English, be present at conferences, and/or translate the English texts into Persian. An important section of the graduate entrance exam is students' level of competence in their related EAP field.

There is high uniformity in all the textbooks as far as the structure, organization, and subsections are concerned and there is a noticeable emphasis on developing reading skills. They commonly include reading excerpts related to the students' academic fields followed by exercises on reading comprehension skills, vocabulary and word analysis exercises, and short paragraphs for translation.

Despite the uniformity in the teaching materials, EAP practice is mainly ad hoc, lacking in course design, systematic needs analysis, teacher education, proper evaluation and systematic research on the effectiveness of these programs (Atai 2000; Gooniband 1988; Tahririan 1990). Therefore, careful examination of the concordance of classroom practice with the attitudes and perceptions of learners is seen to be important in determining the success of EAP programs.

The present study was therefore carried out in order to broaden the scope of studies undertaken so far in the area of students' and instructors' perceptions of their language learning needs. The other aim of the study was to analyse the needs of EAP learners from different academic backgrounds in relation to the socio-political climate of the country concerning the role of English, and the limited exposure of the students to the English language.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participants

4.1.1. Students

Because of practical limitations, the researchers used nonprobability sample designs (Cohen & Manion 1994) to select the student population for this study.

More specifically, ‘quota sampling’, which is the nonprobability equivalent of stratified sampling (Nachmias & Nachmias 1981), was used. Moreover, since specific academic disciplines are shown to affect the needs of the students (Ferris & Tagg 1996), the student’s field of study was used as an important criterion for sampling (Table 1). There were 393 females and 300 males in the sample. Their ages ranged from 20 to 25 years and they were all undergraduates.

Table 1. Total number and percentage of students in the three academic fields

Academic Field	Number	Percent (%)
Medicine	268	38.7
Engineering	223	32.2
Humanities	202	29.1
Total	693	100

The students were enrolled in the EAP courses in the academic year of 2005-2006. The sample was taken from Esfahan University, Iran University of Science and Technology, Esfahan University of Technology, and Tehran University. Medical students were selected from the medical Universities of Tehran and Esfahan.

4.1.2. Instructors

The instructors sample included the instructors (ELT experts and subject-matter experts) who taught EAP courses at the universities included in our students’ sample. Their age was between 28 and 55 years and their experience in teaching English at university level ranged from three to 19 years. Only 33% of the instructors were PhD holders. The rest were MA or MSc holders. Fifty-one percent of the instructors had specialty in TEFL, English literature, or linguistics and 41% were subject-matter specialists.

4.2. The questionnaire

The questionnaire used in this study was a modified version of the one used by Atai (2000), and Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh (2004). In addition to some demographic information, students’ rank ordering of the importance of different language skills to their academic and professional goals, frequency of different instructional activities used in their classes, and their perceived importance of different problematic areas in EAP courses were included³.

To ensure the appropriateness and comprehensibility of the questionnaire

³ Due to the use of Persian language and different scripts and length of the questionnaire, the questionnaires are not included here. A copy can be obtained from the authors via email.

items, four instructors were consulted, six classroom observations were conducted and a general discussion was held in three EAP classes. To make sure that students understood the items in the questionnaire, students' native language (Persian) was used. The questionnaire was piloted with 30 students and 5 instructors representative of the actual participants of the study. Based on the results, and the students' comments, the questionnaire was modified and finalized for large-scale data collection.

The students' questionnaire consisted of 53 items and was divided into four parts. Part A of the questionnaire contained items asking about participants' demographic information. Part B of the questionnaire contained 21 items related to the perception of the importance of language skills, language components, and instructional activities. The items were ranked on a Likert Scale ranging from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). Part C (13 items) asked students to specify how frequently different instructional activities were used in their classes ranging from 1 (never) to 4 (always). Part D included 19 items and asked about the importance of different problems in the EAP programs based on a ranking scale ranging from 1 (least important) to 5 (most important). For practical reasons (length and focus of the study), part D of the survey for both students and faculty is not discussed in this paper. The questionnaire was distributed to the students either by the researchers or the instructors in their classes.

The questionnaire for the faculty members was slightly different from that of the students. In Part A demographic information related to the instructors was elicited. In Part B the perceptions of the faculty members concerning the importance of language skills and components to students' studies and careers were elicited. The last part of the faculty members' questionnaire (Part C) asked for their perceptions of the importance of different problems in EAP instruction and implementation. The instructors' perceptions regarding the frequency of use of different instructional activities was not elicited because the result of the pilot study showed that what the instructors report was highly different from what was observed in their classes which, according to Dörnyei (2003), is evidence of the desirability effect. Of the 72 copies of the questionnaires delivered to the instructors, 51% completed and returned the survey to the researchers.

Table 2. Reliability coefficient (a) of both instruments and each subscale

Instruments and their subscale	No. of cases	No. of items	Reliability Coefficient
Students' questionnaire	693	53	0.9232
Instructors' questionnaire	37	40	0.8771
Language skills, abilities and instructional activities	730	21	0.8413
Instructional activities used in classes	693	13	0.8593
Existing problems	730	19	0.8561

The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of instruments and each subscale were estimated as shown in Table 2. All the reliability coefficients were high enough (higher than 0.80) to enable the researchers to conduct statistical analyses of the entire questionnaires and their subscales.

5. Data analysis

Statistical procedures employed include descriptive statistics for various items on the survey to examine overall frequencies, totals, percentages, means, and standard deviations. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine whether there were significant mean differences based on the students' field of the study. Mann-Whitney *U* tests were used to examine the differences between the students' responses and those of the instructors.

5.1. Results

In the following subsections the results of the data analysis are presented in relation to the research questions and the two main groups of participants. We will first explore the result of the students' perception of the importance of different language skills, language components, and instructional activities. Then the perception of the frequency of use of different instructional activities in the classes will be reported. Following the students' section, the result of the instructors' questionnaire will be presented.

a) Students' perceptions of the importance of different language skills, language components, and instructional activities

Part B of the survey was designed to examine the students' perceptions concerning the importance of different language skills and instructional activities to their academic studies and future professions. Table 3 shows the results.

In terms of the importance of English for students' success in their academic studies (Question 1), the majority of the students perceived English as very important or important (Engineering 93.8%; Medicine 90.3%; Humanities 80%) with no significant differences among the three groups. However, the importance of English for success in future career was ranked significantly higher by students of engineering and lowest by students in humanities ($p < 0.05$).

Questions 3-5 asked about the importance of basic language components (grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation) in students' careers and field of study. The students consistently perceived all the three components as fairly important. The highest ranking was given to vocabulary (Medicine, $M = 4.50$; Engineering, $M = 4.55$; Humanities, $M = 4.51$) and the lowest ranking to pronunciation (Medicine, $M = 3.33$; Engineering, $M = 3.10$; Humanities, $M = 3.23$). There was no significant difference among the three groups of students.

In response to the importance of the four language skills in their fields of study and careers (Items 18-21), all the participants ranked reading as most important,

Table 3. Students' ranking of the importance of language skills and instructional activities

Skills/abilities/instructional activities	Medicine	Engineering	Humanities
	M SD	M SD	M SD
1. Proficiency in English for current studies	3.81 1.25	3.90 1.27	3.55 1.11
2. Proficiency in English for future career *	3.04 1.01	3.91 1.02	3.00 1.09
3. Grammar	3.45 1.01	3.51 1.23	3.33 1.03
4. Vocabulary	4.50 0.89	4.55 0.87	4.51 0.91
5. Pronunciation	3.33 1.05	3.10 1.14	3.23 1.33
6. Reading general English texts	3.40 0.94	3.46 0.87	3.92 1.02
7. Reading specialized English texts	4.53 0.89	4.60 1.12	4.74 0.92
8. Speed reading	3.98 1.33	3.87 0.98	4.01 0.89
9. Reading to extract specific details*	4.01 0.97	4.20 1.01	3.53 0.98
10. Reading for main ideas*	3.75 1.09	3.56 1.11	4.25 1.01
11. Use graphs, figures, and tables for text comprehension*	3.97 1.07	3.89 1.01	3.01 1.01
12. Use Internet to find sources in English, online reading*	4.25 1.05	4.88 0.93	3.66 1.07
13. Use English-English dictionary efficiently	4.35 1.23	4.41 1.01	4.54 1.00
14. Taking part in class discussions in English	3.98 1.02	3.77 1.09	4.01 0.93
15. Giving oral presentations	3.12 1.19	3.01 1.01	3.78 0.98
16. Small group work	3.89 0.99	3.98 1.02	3.77 1.04
17. Translation activities*	4.01 0.88	4.03 0.98	4.75 0.97
18. Importance of reading	4.05 0.87	4.22 0.77	4.30 0.97
19. Importance of writing*	3.56 1.25	3.79 1.10	4.38 0.98
20. Importance of listening*	3.33 1.14	4.25 1.01	3.11 1.24
21. Importance of speaking*	3.25 1.01	4.09 1.05	3.01 1.11

* Shows a significant difference between the groups at $p < .05$

followed by writing, listening, and speaking, respectively. This result is similar to Atai's study (2000) conducted in Iran with college EAP students, and Chia, Johnson, Chia & Olive's study (1999) which focused on medical college students' perceived needs in China. There was a significant difference among the three academic groups regarding the perceived importance of speaking and listening. Listening and speaking were perceived as significantly more important by students of engineering than students of medicine and humanities. In contrast, writing was perceived as significantly more important by humanities majors compared to engineering and medical students.

Since reading is considered as the most important skill in EAP, we included more items to delve more into this skill and examine how students and faculty members perceive the importance of different kinds of reading and its related components. Items 6-12 dealt with different aspects of the reading skill. Reading to understand discipline-specific textbooks in English was perceived as *most important* by the overwhelming majority of the students (Medicine 91.6%; Engineering 92.6%; Humanities 95.9%). There was a significant difference between the students in humanities compared with students in engineering and medicine as far as reading for getting the main idea (skimming) and reading to extract specific details (scanning) were concerned. Students in humanities ranked reading for main ideas as more important (Humanities, $M = 4.25$) than the other two groups (Medicine, $M = 3.75$; Engineering, $M = 3.56$). In contrast, students in medical fields and engineering ranked reading for specific details as more important compared to students in humanities (Medicine, $M = 4.01$; Engineering, $M = 4.20$; Humanities, $M = 3.53$). Furthermore, ability to use graphs, tables, and figures for reading comprehension was ranked as significantly more important by students in engineering and medicine compared to students in humanities (Medicine, $M = 3.97$; Engineering, $M = 3.89$; Humanities, $M = 3.01$).

As far as the use of the Internet and reading Internet sources was concerned, most students in all fields considered reading online documents and ability to use the Internet to find sources in English as *highly important* or *important* (mean range of 3.66-4.88). The mean for students in humanities was significantly lower than engineering and medical students (Medicine, $M = 4.25$; Engineering, $M = 4.88$; Humanities, $M = 3.66$). Our results are different from Atai (2000: 191) in which reading Internet sources was found to be the least important reading-based skill for all categories of respondents. This could be due to the increasing use of the Internet by students and improvements in availability of and access to computers and the Internet.

In relation to instructional activities (items 14-16), the majority of the students in all fields of study considered taking part in discussions, group work and giving presentations (learner-centred activities) as *highly important* (4) or *important* (3) (mean above 3) and there was no significant difference among the three groups. Being able to use an English-to-English dictionary (item 13) was considered *highly important* or *most important* by all three groups (mean range of 4.35-

4.54) with no significant difference among the three groups of students. However the use of translation activities was considered as significantly more important by students in the humanities than students in medicine or engineering (Medicine, $M = 4.01$; Engineering, $M = 4.03$; Humanities, $M = 4.75$).

b) Students' perceptions of the implementation of EAP programs in class

The purpose of Part C of the survey (13 items) was to gain insights into the implementation issues of EAP programs. The overall frequencies in response to these items, shown in Table 4, revealed few differences across different fields of study. More than half of the students in all academic fields perceived that participation, small group activities, research, and the use of the Internet (items 1, 2, 7, 8) are used *never* or *sometimes*. Discussion and participation activities are reported to be used significantly less for students in humanities ($M = 2.02$) than in engineering fields ($M = 2.65$) or in medical fields ($M = 2.24$). This pattern could be an indication that, according to students' perceptions, EAP classes are highly teacher-centred and students are not actively involved in classroom discussions and activities. On the other hand, students from all three fields believed that translation activities inside and outside of class (items 3 and 6) constitute a major amount of their class work. Most students reported the use of translation activities as *always* or *often* with no significant difference among the groups. In general, students in humanities reported a higher use of translation activities in their classes than students in engineering and medical fields. Similarly, the results show that English is used as the dominant language in classroom activities significantly less for students in humanities ($M = 2.47$) than students in the other two fields (Engineering, $M = 3.23$; Medicine, $M = 3.04$). Most likely, large class sizes, lack of teacher preparation with student-centred approaches, and students' low level of proficiency account for the trends we are observing in the use of different classroom activities.

The students' ranking of the emphasis on the different language skills (items 4, 9 and 10) show that most of the emphasis is put on reading (Medicine, $M = 3.44$; Engineering, $M = 3.37$; Humanities, $M = 3.50$), and then on writing (Medicine, $M = 2.60$; Engineering, $M = 2.76$; Humanities, $M = 2.70$). Oral skills are much less emphasized than reading and writing (Medicine, $M = 2.47$; Engineering, $M = 2.34$; Humanities, $M = 2.47$).

Among the language components (items 11, 12 and 13), vocabulary and grammar receive much more emphasis than pronunciation. There is no significant difference among students in different academic fields in relation to any of these components.

c) Instructors' perceptions of the importance of different language skills, language components, and instructional activities

Table 5 at page 32 shows the instructors' rankings of the degree of importance of language skills and language components to students' academic studies.

Table 4. Students' ranking of the frequency of use of instructional activities in EAP classes

Instructional activity	Never		Sometimes		Often		Always		Total		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	M	SD
1. Class discussions*											
Medicine	35	13	147	55	73	27	13	5	268	2.24	0.78
Engineering	23	10	69	31	93	42	38	17	223	2.65	0.79
Humanities	46	23	115	57	31	15	10	5	202	2.02	0.88
2. Small group activities											
Medicine	248	93	20	7	0	0	0	0	268	1.07	0.81
Engineering	204	91	19	9	0	0	0	0	223	1.03	0.77
Humanities	171	85	22	11	9	4	0	0	202	1.20	0.72
3. Sentence by sentence translation											
Medicine	14	5	35	13	89	33	130	49	268	3.25	0.93
Engineering	13	6	25	11	73	33	112	50	223	3.27	1.19
Humanities	9	4	23	11	56	28	114	57	202	3.40	0.92
4. Emphasis on oral skills											
Medicine	21	8	139	52	70	26	38	14	268	2.47	0.86
Engineering	20	9	136	61	38	17	29	13	223	2.34	0.77
Humanities	18	9	115	57	24	12	45	22	202	2.47	0.89
5. Use of English in most class activities*											
Medicine	12	4	47	36	128	37	81	23	268	3.04	0.84
Engineering	11	5	30	36	78	35	104	24	223	3.23	0.93
Humanities	6	3	104	47	43	26	39	24	202	2.47	0.79
6. Translation is important part of class											
Medicine	9	3	48	18	88	33	123	46	268	3.21	1.19
Engineering	10	5	34	15	77	34	102	46	223	3.21	0.99
Humanities	8	4	20	10	80	40	94	46	202	3.29	1.01
7. Use of Internet											
Medicine	51	19	101	38	96	36	20	7	268	2.32	0.77
Engineering	36	16	99	44	77	35	11	5	223	2.28	0.83
Humanities	61	30	87	43	36	18	18	9	202	2.05	0.91
8. Doing instructor-related library research											
Medicine	51	19	118	44	69	26	30	11	268	2.29	0.83
Engineering	40	18	96	43	53	24	34	15	223	2.36	0.77
Humanities	22	11	97	48	52	26	31	15	202	2.51	0.73
9. Writing activities											
Medicine	10	4	125	46	80	30	53	20	268	2.66	0.88
Engineering	20	9	101	45	56	25	60	27	223	2.76	0.93
Humanities	8	4	92	46	55	27	47	23	202	2.70	1.10
10. Reading activities (reading for comprehension)											
Medicine	0	0	9	3	131	49	128	48	268	3.44	0.59
Engineering	0	0	11	5	116	52	96	43	223	3.38	0.92
Humanities	0	0	6	3	89	44	107	53	202	3.50	0.87
11. Vocabulary-related activities											
Medicine	9	3	74	28	98	37	87	32	268	2.98	0.64
Engineering	5	2	70	31	84	38	64	29	223	2.92	0.79
Humanities	4	2	64	32	79	39	55	27	202	2.91	0.86
12. Grammar-related activities											
Medicine	8	3	87	32	109	41	64	24	268	2.85	0.81
Engineering	11	5	80	36	92	41	40	18	223	2.72	0.75
Humanities	6	3	78	39	97	48	21	10	202	2.65	0.89
13. Pronunciation-related activities											
Medicine	49	18	144	54	43	16	32	12	268	2.21	0.97
Engineering	33	15	139	62	33	15	18	8	223	2.16	0.89
Humanities	20	10	136	67	26	13	20	10	202	2.22	0.83

* Shows statistically significant difference between the groups at $p < .05$

Table 5. Instructors' perceptions of the importance of language skills and language components compared to students'

Skills/abilities/instructional activities	Students	Instructors
	M SD	M SD
1. Proficiency in English for current studies	3.71 1.25	3.92 0.96
2. Proficiency in English for future career*	3.33 1.01	3.91 1.02
3. Grammar*	3.42 0.05	4.31 1.11
4. Vocabulary	4.51 0.89	4.57 0.87
5. Pronunciation	3.22 1.05	3.01 1.14
6. Reading general English texts	3.60 0.97	3.96 0.85
7. Reading specialized English texts	4.63 0.89	4.73 0.93
8. Speed reading	3.95 1.33	4.02 0.98
9. Reading to extract specific details	3.90 1.99	4.01 0.88
10. Reading for main ideas*	3.85 1.07	4.56 0.86
11. Use graphs, figures, and tables for text comprehension*	3.97 1.05	4.59 1.01
12. Use Internet to find sources in English, online reading*	4.26 1.06	4.88 0.93
13. Use English-English dictionary efficiently	4.42 1.13	4.51 0.96
14. Taking part in class discussions in English	3.92 1.02	3.77 1.01
15. Giving oral presentations	3.36 1.11	3.07 0.91
16. Small group work*	3.88 1.01	3.31 1.02
17. Translation activities*	4.23 0.91	4.83 0.88
18. Importance of reading	4.18 0.88	4.42 0.79
19. Importance of writing	3.91 1.11	3.99 0.91
20. Importance of listening	3.56 1.13	3.75 0.89
21. Importance of speaking	3.44 1.07	3.79 0.92

* Shows a significant difference between the groups at $p < .05$

The instructors felt English was more important for the students' future career compared with students and the difference was significant. Students and instructors both found reading as the most important skill followed by writing, listening, and speaking respectively. Our results are different from Atai's (2000) study in

which writing was perceived as the least important skill by both faculty and students. The reason could be that instructors and students are both more aware these days of the increasing demand for academic writing in English for international conferences and journals, especially if students enter graduate school.

Reading to understand discipline-specific textbooks in English was perceived as the *most important* skill by the overwhelming majority of the students ($M = 4.63$) and instructors ($M = 4.73$). Reading for main ideas, and using graphs, figures, and tables for text comprehension was perceived as significantly more important by instructors compared to students. Similarly online reading was perceived as highly important by both students ($M = 4.26$) and instructors ($M = 4.88$) with a significant difference between the two groups. What is noteworthy is that both students and faculty members believed online reading to be a highly important skill; however, most students responded that this activity is used *Never* or *Sometimes*.

Grammar was perceived as significantly more important by the instructors ($M = 4.32$) than students ($M = 3.42$), which reveals that grammar-focused instruction by instructors is still perceived to be highly important and that there is more emphasis on accuracy than fluency. Similarly, translation activity was perceived to be significantly more important to students' studies by instructors ($M = 4.83$) compared to students ($M = 4.23$). On the contrary, more student-centred activities such as small group work was considered significantly more important by students ($M = 3.88$) than instructors ($M = 3.31$). Although not significant, a similar trend was found for taking part in class discussions and giving oral presentations in that students perceived these activities to be more important than faculty members did. These results demonstrate that although students show more interest in communicative activities, the use of the grammar translation method with a heavy emphasis on grammar and translation is still prominent in Iranian universities (Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh 2004).

As shown above, a divergence of opinions between these two groups was noted. We will now move to the concluding remarks and the implications of this study for EAP programs.

6. Conclusions

The needs analysis has established the needs of EAP students in different fields of study as perceived by students and instructors in Iran. The results show that instructors may not always be the best judges of students' needs.

There were also differences among different groups of students based on their field of study. The findings of this study, like those of Atai (2000), Chia *et al.* (1999) and Ferris & Tagg (1996), stress the importance of examining the precise needs of students in different academic fields in order to prepare them most effectively for the tasks and expectations that lie ahead of them.

These results, similar to Eslami-Rasekh & Valizadeh's (2004) study of general

English students in Iran, demonstrate that although students show more interest in communicative activities, the use of the grammar translation method with a heavy emphasis on grammar and translation is still prominent in Iranian universities. This is an indication that EAP learners in Iran are experiencing a fairly traditional, form-focused L2 education with little opportunity to use English for communicative purposes. Unfortunately, the EAP programs in Iran in their present condition do not seem to help students acquire the kind of knowledge and skill they need to utilize their knowledge of English in real-life situations to communicate with foreign counterparts, or to participate in international conferences (Biria & Tahririan 1994). Students may therefore appreciate and benefit from the opportunities to practise English in ways that allow them to express their own meaning during the classroom activities. Activities or tasks designed to engage them in making meaning offer an opportunity to learn English by using the language in context rather than simply recognizing or memorizing grammatical rules.

As Strevens (1977) states, after several decades in which education centred its effect on the teacher, the present trend focuses attention on the learner and ways of learning. In order to respond to new educational requirements EAP should focus on the learner, his/her needs, and his/her contribution to the teaching-learning situation. The literature related to EAP supports the claim of its being compatible with communicative teaching. Additionally, Biria & Tahririan (1994) have supported the benefits of communicative language teaching in EAP classes in Iran by experimental findings of their study. Most previous work in EAP has focused more on the content of teaching (what) than on the methodology (how). As Todd (2003) argues, a greater emphasis needs to be placed on methodology in EAP.

As Benesch (1996: 736) asserts, needs analysis is a political and subjective process. Critical needs analysis assumes that institutions are hierarchical and those at the bottom are often entitled to more power than they have. Based on this ideology, learners, who are at the bottom of the hierarchy in top-down educational systems such as Iran, need to be given more power and their voices should be heard in order to facilitate reform. Possibilities for change do exist even in the existing structures of the country. Faculty members need to become aware of what their students *demand*, versus what the institutions deem necessary and take action accordingly.

Our study contributes to the still-scarce literature on the academic needs of Iranian EAP students. However, this study is not without limitations. We used only questionnaires to collect data on EAP students' needs; other studies could investigate the needs of students by qualitative means such as ethnographic observations of classrooms and interviews.

Because needs analysis is by definition context-specific, it is hoped that this study has shed light on the needs of Iranian EAP students from different disciplines and has brought into focus the discrepancies between students' perceptions and instructors' perceptions of students' language learning needs and problems in EAP instruction and delivery.

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Same genre, same discipline; however, there are differences: a cross-cultural analysis of logical markers in academic writing¹

Pilar Mur Dueñas

Abstract

The inclusion of lexico-grammatical features that provide a text with cohesion and coherence seems crucial for an academic text to be acceptable by the disciplinary community members it is addressed to. Among these cohesive lexico-grammatical features logical markers – which establish links between arguments and ideas explicitly marking semantic relations – play an outstanding role. Besides their textual and ideational function, it can be argued that logical markers also contribute to establishing a particular writer-reader relationship, thus also acquiring an interpersonal potential. Additive, contrastive and consecutive logical markers are analysed cross-culturally in this paper within the framework of metadiscourse. It has been found that the extent of use of logical markers is dependent on the disciplines within which academic texts are written and on their generic nature (Hyland 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005; Hyland & Tse 2004). It is argued here that not only the discipline or small culture (Atkinson 2004) but also the language and/or national (big) culture in which research articles are written might condition the extent of use of logical markers. Additive, contrastive and consecutive logical markers are analysed in a comparable corpus of 24 research articles in the field of Business Management, 12 of them written in English by scholars based at US universities published in international journals and 12 written in Spanish by scholars based at Spanish universities published in national journals. Logical markers – especially contrastive and conclusive ones – are generally more frequent

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in the research articles in English than those in Spanish. The greater/lesser use of these explicit signals of the semantic relationship between two parts of the discourse may respond to favoured “writer-responsible” or “reader-responsible” styles respectively. In that sense logical markers are seen to contribute to establishing a particular interactive relationship between writers and readers that differs in the two contexts.

1. Introduction

The inclusion of lexico-grammatical features that contribute to a text’s cohesion and coherence seems crucial for an academic text to be considered acceptable by the disciplinary community to which it is addressed. Within the framework of metadiscourse these lexico-grammatical features are grouped into different categories: logical markers, code glosses, sequencers, topicalizers, endophoric markers and evidentials. It has been recently claimed that the particular realization of these metadiscourse categories not only contributes to the texture of a text but also makes them potentially interpersonal in that their use is at least partially determined by the writers’ assessment of readers’ needs and expectations (Hyland 2004, 2005; Hyland & Tse 2004). This idea has led Hyland & Tse to change the terminology under which the above metadiscourse categories were grouped from *textual* to *interactive*, abandoning the Hallidayan term stemming from the distinction of the three planes of discourse in favour of Thompson’s (2001) distinction between interactive and interactional aspects of language. In this new light all metadiscourse is considered interpersonal since its use conditions and is conditioned by the writer-reader relationship built through the text. As such, the new conceptualization and terminology better account for overlaps among the three planes of discourse. The interactive dimension, according to Hyland (2005: 49), “concerns the writer’s awareness of a participating audience and the ways he or she seeks to accommodate its probable knowledge, interests, rhetorical expectations and processing abilities”. The focus will be placed in this paper on the first of these interactive metadiscourse categories, logical markers and, more specifically, on logical markers expressing addition (e.g. *further*, *in addition*, *moreover*, *furthermore*), contrast (e.g. *rather*, *however*, *in contrast*, *nevertheless*) and consequence (e.g. *therefore*, *thus*, *consequently*, *hence*).

Previous analyses of logical markers in academic writing have shown that their use is dependent on the discipline to which the texts belong and on their generic nature (Hyland 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005; Hyland & Tse 2004). A few studies have also highlighted that the linguistic/cultural context may condition the use of these markers in academic writing (Mauranen 1993; Valero Garcés 1996; Fernández Polo 1999). It is the aim of this paper to throw more light onto the possible influence of the language culture on the use of this particular metadiscourse category in a particular genre of academic texts. The paper focuses on the cross-cultural analysis of logical markers (additive, contrastive and consecutive) in research arti-

cles (RAs) from the same discipline, Business Management (BM), written in English and addressed to an international readership and written in Spanish and addressed to a national readership.

Logical markers establish links between arguments and ideas, enabling writers to structure their texts and to provide them with unity. As explicit metadiscursive signals, they can ensure that information is processed by readers as intended. Further, through these markers readers are smoothly led through the discourse (Vande Kopple 1985: 83); that is, they can ease the reading process, as readers no longer have to infer the semantic relationship that is established between what has already been stated and what comes next. That relationship is spelt out for them.

Logical markers are included in most metadiscourse taxonomies, even though they are sometimes referred to with different headings: logical connectors (Vande Kopple 1985), connectors (Mauranen 1993), logical connectives (Crismore *et al.* 1993; Hyland 1999, 2000), text connectors (Bunton 1999) and transitions (Hyland 2004, 2005; Hyland & Tse 2004). They are considered by some of these authors to be embedded within a broader category of textual metadiscourse, i.e. within text connectives (Vande Kopple 1985), or within textual markers (Crismore *et al.* 1993). Many other scholars, however, classify them in their taxonomies as one separate category (e.g. Mauranen 1993; Hyland 1999, 2000, 2004, 2005; Bunton 1999; Dafouz 2003; Hyland & Tse 2004). In agreement with the latter, logical markers are seen as a category of metadiscourse, realized by lexico-grammatical features that perform a clear function in the text: making explicit the semantic relationship between two discourse units; their function is different from that of other subcategories included within text connectives (Vande Kopple 1985) or textual markers (Crismore *et al.* 1993) such as sequencers, reminders, announcements or topicalizers, and may be analysed independently as a self-standing category.

The analysis will exclusively focus on parenthetical logical markers (Montolío 2001: 35) or inter-sentential uses of logical markers; that is, only logical markers which join two main clauses and which are most frequently separated from the rest of the discourse by punctuation marks will be analysed. Logical markers that are integrated in the sentence will not be looked into as they are not considered explicit metadiscoursal markers. As Crismore *et al.* (1993: 49) state, “subordinating conjunctions like *because* or *which* cannot be omitted without destroying the well-formedness of the dependent clause – thus their primary function is syntactic, not metadiscursive”; hence, these markers will not be analysed here. In contrast, parenthetical connectors such as the ones in the following examples do not destroy the well-formedness of the clause when left out and, consequently, their main function can be considered metadiscursive².

² It is acknowledged that logico-semantic relationships of addition, contrast and consequence can be achieved intra- and inter-sententially by means of other lexico-grammatical elements besides logical markers, such as nouns, verbs, prepositional phrases, adverbial phrases, etc. However, the analysis will be restricted to metadiscoursal, sentence-level, uses of logical markers.

(1) These data are not immune to the possibility of common method bias – always a concern when single-source, self-report data are used. However, a key predictor of work group aggression did not include information from the focal individual. In addition, the differential relations are counter to what might be generated by common method bias. Further, many of the relationships are consistent with prior empirical and theoretical work on aggression. (AMJ1)

(2) Así, los individuos que tienen una conducta tipo «A» son más vulnerables a padecer trastornos relacionados con este síndrome. Sin embargo, debemos admitir que el Burnout es consecuencia de un determinado tipo de cultura. Una misma profesión, dependiendo del tipo de organización en el que se desarrolle, poseerá diferentes sistemas cognitivos y simbólicos. Por tanto, la experiencia de Burnout será también diferente. (AD2)

[Thus, individuals who present conduct type “A” are more prone to suffer from disorders related to this syndrome. However, we should admit that Burnout is a consequence of a given culture. The same profession, depending on the type of organization in which it is developed, will entail different cognitive and symbolic systems. Therefore, the Burnout experience will also be different].

In this present cross-cultural analysis of logical markers, Atkinson’s (2004) problematized conceptualization of culture will be of particular relevance. Atkinson considers that a “received” view of culture has pervaded second language studies and contrastive rhetoric studies and he proposes a “non-standard” view of culture for Intercultural Rhetoric (Connor 2004a, 2004b) and EAP studies. From a post-modern view of culture and following Holliday (1999), Atkinson draws a distinction between small (e.g. professional, academic, student, etc.) and big (e.g. national) cultures. According to him, an individual can be a member of several small cultures in one or several big cultures. The important point is that there are areas of overlap between small and big cultures; that is, the norms, values and conventions of one small culture and those of the big culture will partially overlap. Thus, according to this view of culture, the analysis to be presented here focuses on texts in a given small, disciplinary culture (that of Business Management) and on how the use of particular lexico-grammatical features may be subject to variation in two big cultures (American and Spanish) across it.

2. Corpus and methodology

The comparable corpus consists of 24 RAs in the field of Business Management (137,478 words); 12 of them are written in English and published in international journals in the American context (79,585 words) while the other 12 are written in Spanish and published in national journals in the Spanish context (57,893 words). Four journals were selected in each context of publication: *Academy of Management Journal* (AMJ), *Strategic Management Journal* (SMJ), *Journal of Management* (JM), and *Journal of International Management* (JIM) in the American context and *Alta Dirección* (AD), *Dirección y Organización de Empresas*

(DyO), *Revista Europea de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa* (REDyEE) and *Investigaciones Europeas de Dirección y Economía de la Empresa* (IE) in the Spanish context; three RAs were taken from each of the journals. They were published in 2003 and 2004. Only empirical RAs were selected. They were either downloaded from the web or scanned and carefully revised. The main criterion for including or excluding a given RA in the corpus was the affiliation of the scholars, rather than their surnames and their alleged nativeness. Consequently, the RAs in English are written by scholars based at US universities and the RAs in Spanish are written by scholars based at Spanish universities; thus, although not necessarily native speakers of one or the other language, the authors of the RAs are acquainted with the American and Spanish academic worlds respectively.

In order to extract all types of logical markers present in the corpus, the RAs were carefully read and scanned in search of these devices, following a corpus-driven methodology (Tognini Bonelli 2001). Once a type was considered a logical marker, the corresponding tokens were searched for in the corpus using *Wordsmith Tools 4.0* (Scott 2004). Their context was then carefully examined to ensure that they do not appear within quotations and that they actually function as logical markers³. All types of logical markers spotted are provided below in the detailed analysis of each subcategory (additive, contrastive and consecutive). In the light of the overall quantitative data and taking into account the number of RAs including each of the types, tentative conclusions can be reached as to what logical markers are more likely used to express a logical semantic relation (of addition, contrast and consequence) in BM RAs in one and the other language culture. The extraction of types from the corpus and their classification is undertaken bearing in mind existing categorizations of discourse markers and connectors, in particular those of Quirk *et al.* (1985), Halliday & Hasan (1976), Martin (1992) and Fraser (1996, 1999) for the texts in English and those of Montolío (2001), Portolés (2001) and Martín Zorraquino & Portolés (1999) for the texts in Spanish.

3. Logical markers in the corpus

Logical markers in the English and Spanish texts are realized by means of conjunctions (e.g. *but*, *and* in English, *pero*, *y* in Spanish), adverbs, (e.g. *however*, *additionally*, *conversely*, *similarly*, *further*, *yet*, *rather*, *instead*, *thus*, *therefore* in English, *igualmente*, *asimismo*, *además*, *adicionalmente*, *así* in Spanish), prepositional phrases and adverbial expressions (e.g. *as a result*, *in contrast*, *in addition*, *by contrast*, *on the other hand* in English, *en conclusión*, *en consecuencia*, *por otro lado*, *por*

³ The qualitative analysis of the tokens thus makes it possible to discern actual instances of additive, contrastive and consecutive logical markers from those which are not. The analysis, however, does not go beyond this categorization according to their context in order to determine their efficient or appropriate use.

otra parte, por el contrario, en cambio, por tanto in Spanish). Inter-sentential logical markers are most frequently used initially in a sentence in both subcorpora although they might also appear in mid-position, as in the following examples taken from the corpus, which have also been included in the counts:

(3) In the organizations of a culture with high UA, the use of technology, rules, and rituals are widely applied to impose order and predictability on an otherwise uncertain environment. UA is, therefore, an indicator of the degree to which a culture values a sense of control; we propose that UA will relate to the perceptions of controllability that discriminate threat and opportunity. (SMJ3)

(4) Another limitation is related to external validity. Because the sample was drawn from acute-care hospitals in a southwestern state, the generalizability of our findings for other states or other types of health care providers or other industries may not be valid. We are hopeful that our sample does, nevertheless, represent organizations operating in a highly complex industry setting. (JM3)

(5) Los confiados en la suerte, por el contrario, son más propensos al desamparo y al empleo de estrategias de afrontamiento centradas en la emoción. (AD2)
[Those who trust luck, on the contrary, are more prone to vulnerability and to use conflict strategies centred on emotion].

(6) Finalmente, de forma abrumadora (98,9%) los encuestados afirman no arrepentirse de haberse incorporado a la empresa y también mayoritariamente (84,1%) consideran que sus empresas son familiares. Parece existir, por consiguiente, un sentido de identidad como empresa familiar y un sentimiento de satisfacción con esa realidad. (AD1)
[Finally, overwhelmingly (98.9%), respondents state that they do not regret having joined the firm and also the majority (84.1%) believe that their firms are family business. There seems to be, thus, a sense of identity as a family business and a feeling of satisfaction with this situation].

Before looking at each particular subcategory of logical markers (additive, contrastive and consecutive) in detail, the overall use of logical markers in both subcorpora is contrastively analysed. Table 1 presents the number of logical markers in each of the RAs in the corpus.

Both the raw counts and the number of logical markers per 1,000 words indicate that Spanish BM scholars make explicit the semantic relationship between two independent parts of the discourse through a logical marker less frequently than American-based BM scholars. The latter use 5.9 logical markers per 1,000 words and an average of 39.4 logical makers per RA, while the former include 4.5 logical markers per 1,000 words and an average of 21.9 markers per RA. Tokens of logical markers per RA range from 23 to 88 in the subcorpus in English and from 11 to 57 in the Spanish subcorpus.

In terms of the number of logical markers per RA, more RAs in English than in Spanish contain 45 logical markers or above (4 vs. 1), and whereas no RA in English contains fewer than 15 logical markers, four RAs in Spanish do so.

Table 1. Logical markers in the corpus

American subcorpus		Spanish subcorpus	
AMJ1	21	AD1	16
AMJ2	57	AD2	13
AMJ3	43	AD3	8
JM1	24	DyO1	27
JM2	24	DyO2	40
JM3	42	DyO3	12
SMJ1	84	REDyEE1	25
SMJ2	51	REDyEE2	15
SMJ3	27	REDyEE3	50
JIM1	29	IE1	31
JIM2	23	IE2	16
JIM3	48	IE3	10
TOTAL	473	TOTAL	236
Per 1,000 words	5.94	Per 1,000 words	4.54

Table 2. Range of logical markers per RA in the corpus

	> 15	15-30	30-45	45-60	<60
American subcorpus	–	6	2	3	1
Spanish subcorpus	4	5	2	1	–

It can be inferred from these results that Spanish BM scholars are less prone to clearly indicate to their readers the semantic relations between arguments through logical markers. These results are consistent with Valero Garcés' (1996) in her analysis of English and Spanish economic RAs and with those of Fernández Polo (1999: 154-184) who, in his study of internal and external connectors (comparative, additive, consequential and temporal) in scientific popularizations, also finds connectors to be more frequent in the English texts than in the Spanish ones and, for that matter, in translations from English into Spanish.

The results for the three subtypes of logical markers (i.e. additive, contrastive and consecutive) will be now analysed in detail.

3.1. Additive logical markers

These logical markers signal a relationship of parallelism or continuation. They indicate that what comes next is in the same argumentative line as the previous discourse unit. Additive logical markers then “unen a un miembro discursivo anterior otro con la misma orientación argumentativa” (Martín Zorraquino & Portolés 1999: 4093)⁴.

⁴ “link a preceding discourse unit to another with the same argumentative orientation” (my translation).

Table 3 shows that the frequency of use of additive logical markers per 1,000 words is very similar in the two subcorpora. The results are normalized per 1,000 words given the different length of the RAs in the two subcorpora.

Table 3. Additive logical markers in the corpus

American subcorpus		Spanish subcorpus	
TOTAL	101	TOTAL	84
Per 1,000 words	1.27	Per 1,000 words	1.45

All types of additive logical markers found both in the American and Spanish subcorpora are listed in decreasing frequency of use in Table 4. As outlined in the methodology section, the list is the result of a careful reading of the texts included in the corpus. Particular attention was paid to leaving out those tokens which do not function as additive logical markers in the particular context in which they are included or which do not adjust to the conditions required to be considered metadiscursive outlined above. For example, in the subcorpus in English, those instances of *in addition to* functioning as a preposition (example 7a), of *further* functioning as determinative (example 8a), of *similarly* functioning as an adverbial of manner (example 9a), and of *and* used intra-sententially linking two phrases were excluded from the counts, whereas tokens of the above types functioning as additive logical markers (examples 7b, 8b, 9b) were kept.

(7) (a) Our outcome measures in addition to satisfaction, then, are the degree to which these market, efficiency, and learning motives have been realized. (JM1-I)

(b) In doing so, managers may provide their high-potential CSR's with opportunities for recovering from emotional exhaustion before returning to the frontline. In addition, managers may find it helpful to send high-conscientiousness CSR's to training programs focused on coping skills appropriate for recognizing and dealing with emotional exhaustion. (JM2-D)

(8) (a) Further research is needed to determine whether market sorting based on secondary indicators of qualitative differences is equally efficacious across industries. (SMJ1-D)

(b) *Hypothesis 1: The cultural value of uncertainty avoidance is associated with variations in the degree to which indicators of controllability are associated with the labels threat and opportunity.*

Further, we propose that UA is uniquely associated with strategic issue controllability and, in turn, with discriminating threats and opportunities. (SMJ3-I)

(9) (a) Targets were dispersed similarly with 54 based in the US, 9 in the UK, 3 in Germany, 1 each in France and Canada, and 10 other. (JM1-M)

(b) Although our measure of internationalization, percentage of foreign sales, correlates significantly with several other measures of internationalization, none of these measures taps the type of overseas involvement. Also, internationalization is a *process* that is not fully captured in studies with a cross-sectional design, suggest-

ing the need for longitudinal research in this area. Similarly, the measure of formal ethics structure does not fully capture the possible differences among firms with respect to the detail addressed in their codes of ethics or possible sanctions against violators of the ethics codes. (JIM3-1)

Much in the same way in the Spanish subcorpus examples of *además de* functioning as a preposition, of *igualmente* functioning as an adverbial of manner or, as in the case of the American subcorpus, of *y* used intrasententially linking two phrases or clauses were not counted as tokens. All the types of additive logical markers in Spanish presented in the following list (Table 4) are considered so by Montolío (2001). However, there is not full agreement between her work and that of Portolés (2001), for whom some of the discourse markers Montolío (2001) considers additive would not be classified in this category or would not be considered connectors at all, as his conceptualization of connectors as discourse markers is more restricted. In this paper Montolío's (2001) wider categorization is considered to serve best the purpose of exhaustively analysing the realization of a particular function in a given academic genre. In the case of English, the types of markers in the list have been found in at least one of the works taken as reference mentioned above.

Table 4. Types of additive logical markers found in the corpus

	American subcorpus			Spanish subcorpus	
	Total	(%)		Total	(%)
- <i>In addition</i>	21	20.8	- <i>Además</i>	21	25.0
- <i>Further</i>	19	18.8	- <i>Por otro lado</i>	12	14.3
- <i>Moreover</i>	19	18.8	- <i>Por otra parte</i>	11	13.1
- <i>Similarly</i> ⁵	10	8.9	- <i>Por su parte</i>	10	11.9
- <i>Additionally</i>	8	7.9	- <i>Igualmente</i>	8	9.5
- <i>Likewise</i>	8	7.9	- <i>Asimismo</i>	7	8.3
- <i>Also</i>	6	5.9	- <i>Y</i>	5	6.0
- <i>And</i>	5	5.9	- <i>Adicionalmente</i>	4	4.8
- <i>Furthermore</i>	5	5.0	- <i>A su vez</i>	2	2.4
			- <i>De igual forma</i>	2	2.4
			- <i>De igual modo</i>	1	1.2
			- <i>Incluso</i>	1	1.2
TOTAL	101		TOTAL	84	

⁵ In line with the Spanish categorization of additive markers proposed by Montolío (2001) and with some authors such as Halliday & Hasan (1976) and Fraser (1996, 1999), comparative markers are considered additive. For Martin (1992), however, comparative logico-semantic relations constitute a different category, which includes relations of similarity and contrast. Hyland (2005) also changes his classification of logical connectives or transitions of previous taxonomies (i.e. additive, contrastive and consequential) into addition, comparison and consequence.

The most frequent additive logical marker in the RAs in English is *in addition*. It is used at least once in 11 out of the 12 RAs composing the subcorpus. Although *further* and *moreover* are very close to *in addition* in terms of high frequency of use, they appear in five and six RAs respectively. Despite the fact that manuals on academic writing do not recommend the use of *and* in sentence-initial position, this logical marker is included in three RAs. In the case of the Spanish subcorpus, the most common additive logical marker is *además*, which appears the same number of times as *in addition* (21), but which is included in fewer RAs, nine. Following *además* come two markers (*por otro lado*, *por otra parte*) that can function as sequencers in certain contexts but which in the cases counted here lack the first element of the sequence, that is, they are used in isolation, not preceded by an opening marker such as *por un lado* or *por una parte*; therefore, it is believed, in accordance with Montolío (2001: 150), that they are intended to show that what comes next is a related, subsequent argumentative step and are thus to be interpreted as additive. Finally, as in the case of the sub-corpus in English, three Spanish BM scholars use *y* initially in a sentence.

3.2. Contrastive logical markers

The relationship that these logical markers signal is that of opposition or contrast. Writers use a contrastive or counterargumentative logical marker when they want to confront two ideas in such a way that the second one somehow modifies the first. Contrastive logical markers then “vinculan dos miembros del discurso, de tal modo que el segundo se presenta como supresor o atenuador de alguna conclusión que se pudiera obtener del primero” (Martín Zorraquino & Portolés 1999: 4109)⁶.

Unlike additive markers, whose frequency of use is very similar in both sub-corpora, more contrastive logical markers per 1,000 words are found in the RAs in English than in those in Spanish.

Table 5. Contrastive logical markers in the corpus

American subcorpus		Spanish subcorpus	
TOTAL	173	TOTAL	87
Per 1,000 words	2.2	Per 1,000 words	1.5

Spanish BM scholars use on average a similar number of additive and contrastive logical markers per RA (7 vs. 7.3), but American-based BM scholars use on average nearly half the number of additive markers per RA (8.4 vs. 14.1).

⁶ “link two discourse units in such a way that the second unit is presented as suppressing or attenuating a conclusion which could be drawn from the first one” (my translation).

Table 6. Types of contrastive logical markers in the corpus

	American subcorpus			Spanish subcorpus	
	Total	(%)		Total	(%)
- <i>However</i>	101	58.4	- <i>Sin embargo</i>	35	40.2
- <i>But</i>	10	5.8	- <i>No obstante</i>	17	19.5
- <i>Yet</i>	8	4.6	- <i>Por el contrario</i>	11	12.6
- <i>Rather</i>	8	4.6	- <i>Pero</i>	7	8.1
- <i>Nevertheless</i>	8	4.6	- <i>En cambio</i>	7	8.1
- <i>Instead</i>	7	4.1	- <i>Ahora bien</i>	4	4.6
- <i>Alternatively</i>	7	4.1	- <i>A pesar de ello</i>	3	3.5
- <i>On the other hand</i>	6	3.5	- <i>Con todo</i>	2	2.3
- <i>Conversely</i>	6	3.5	- <i>Aun así</i>	1	1.2
- <i>In contrast</i>	4	2.3			
- <i>By contrast</i>	3	1.7			
- <i>Though</i>	3	1.7			
- <i>Needless to say</i>	1	0.6			
- <i>Otherwise</i>	1	0.6			
TOTAL	173		TOTAL	87	

In other words, whereas Spanish BM scholars use additive and contrastive logical markers to nearly the same extent, BM scholars writing in English use more contrastive than additive logical markers. These results point to a rhetorical difference in terms of how American and Spanish BM scholars develop their argumentation; Spanish scholars seem to develop their arguments or present their ideas cumulatively and antithetically to the same extent. American-based scholars, on the other hand, seem to develop their arguments and ideas antithetically much more frequently. These findings would seem to support Barton's (1995) conclusion that contrast is a valuable basis for academic argumentation in the Anglophone cultural context, at least in comparison with the Spanish context in the particular disciplinary community being explored.

The list of contrastive markers in the comparable corpus (Table 6) stems from the reading of the texts, and their consideration as contrastive markers responds to the analysis of previous categorizations of conjunctions, connectors and other markers⁷. The analysis of the context of the tokens extracted led to the exclusion of some items not functioning as metadiscursive contrastive logical markers. For instance, tokens of *but* or its Spanish counterpart *pero* used intrasententially linking two phrases or clauses were excluded from the counts. Also excluded were instances of *yet* used as an adverb, of *rather* followed by *than* functioning as a preposition, of *instead* followed by *of* thus functioning as a preposition, of *in con-*

⁷ Again, the types of contrastive logical markers presented in the list are considered as such by Montolío (2001), although her categorization differs from that of other discourse analysts, such as Portolés (2001).

trast followed by *to* also functioning as a preposition, as well as of *though* functioning as a subordinate conjunction. In addition, only those tokens of *on the other hand* not coming after their corresponding opening sequencer marker, *on the one hand*, were taken into account.

However is by far the most frequent logical marker in the subcorpus in English when it comes to introducing an argument or idea that opposes a previous stretch of discourse. It is included in all RAs and its frequency of use ranges from three (JM1, JIM2) to 17 (SMJ1) tokens per RA. In comparison, the following markers are less frequently used. *But* is included as the first element of the sentence in four RAs, even though its use in that position – as well as that of *and* – tends not to be recommended in manuals⁸. As for Spanish BM scholars, they also seem to have a ‘favourite’ contrastive logical marker, *sin embargo*, although their preference is not as strong as *however* is for their American-based colleagues; there are other contrastive markers like *no obstante* and *por el contrario* that are also used quite frequently.

3.3. Consecutive logical markers

These markers entail a relationship of result or consequence between two parts of the discourse. Consecutive logical markers then “presentan el miembro del discurso en el que se encuentran como una consecuencia de un miembro anterior” (Martín Zorraquino & Portolés 1999: 4099)⁹.

The frequency counts of consecutive logical markers are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. Consecutive logical markers in the corpus

American subcorpus		Spanish subcorpus	
TOTAL	199	TOTAL	92
Per 1,000 words	2.50	Per 1,000 words	1.59

Consecutive logical markers are more frequently used by BM scholars publishing their RAs in English than by Spanish ones. Whereas in the American subcorpus 2.50 consecutive markers are used per 1,000 words, in the Spanish subcorpus that average drops to 1.59. Indeed, American BM scholars include on average 16.6 consecutive logical markers per RA, whereas Spanish scholars include on average 7.6.

The list of consecutive logical markers presented in Table 8 has ensued from the detailed analysis of the corpus, relating possible types stemming from the texts

⁸ For an account of this issue as seen by a number of non-native English scholars and undergraduates from different disciplines, see Chang & Swales (1999: 161-163).

⁹ “present the discourse unit in which they appear as a consequence of a previous unit” (my translation).

to the existing categorizations of consecutive conjunctions, connectors and markers in both languages. During the frequency counting process, *thus*, *then*, *as a result* and *so* in the case of the American subcorpus and *así*, *pues* and *entonces* in the case of the Spanish subcorpus were carefully examined to leave out those tokens which do not function as consecutive logical markers in the corpus.

Table 8. Consecutive logical markers in the corpus

	American subcorpus			Spanish subcorpus	
	Total	(%)		Total	(%)
- <i>Thus</i>	83	41.7	- <i>Por tanto</i>	31	33.7
- <i>Therefore</i>	42	21.1	- <i>Así</i>	30	32.6
- <i>Consequently</i>	27	13.6	- <i>Por (todo) ello</i>	10	10.9
- <i>Then</i>	13	6.5	- <i>Así pues</i>	6	6.5
- <i>As a result</i>	10	5.0	- <i>Por lo tanto</i>	3	3.3
- <i>Hence</i>	10	5.0	- <i>Pues</i>	3	3.3
- <i>As such</i>	7	3.5	- <i>Por este motivo</i> ¹⁰	3	3.3
- <i>Accordingly</i>	6	3.0	- <i>Por consiguiente</i>	2	2.2
- <i>So</i>	1	0.5	- <i>Por esta razón</i>	2	2.2
			- <i>Entonces</i>	1	1.1
			- <i>En consecuencia</i>	1	1.1
TOTAL	199		TOTAL	92	

BM scholars writing in English for an international readership use *thus* most frequently to make explicit the cause-effect relationship between two parts of the discourse. *Thus* accounts for 41.7% of the total number of consecutive logical markers in the subcorpus in English and it is included in 10 out of the 12 RAs, its use ranging from four (AMJ1, JM1 and JIM2) to 17 (AMJ3) tokens per RA. *Therefore* is also frequently included in RAs in English to express a relationship of consequence between two parts of the discourse. It is used at least twice in nine RAs. Although *consequently* comes third in terms of frequency, its use cannot be considered as significant as the use of the two previous consecutive markers, since it is only included in four RAs. Spanish BM scholars are found to make a similarly frequent use of the consecutive markers *por tanto* and *así*. Taken together they account for nearly two thirds (66.3%) of the total number of tokens. In comparison, the other nine types found in the subcorpus present a much lower use rate.

¹⁰ There is disagreement among Spanish linguists as to whether or not fully grammaticalized discursive forms such as *por este motivo* or *por esta razón* can be considered connectors or not. From a grammatical point of view, these forms which can be inflected and modified are not taken to be connectors (Martín Zorraquino & Portolés 1999). Nevertheless, they are included in Montolio's (2001) analysis of connectors. In line with this last author I believe that they are functionally and semantically very similar to the rest of grammaticalized markers included in the corpus and for that reason they have been counted as tokens.

Interestingly, the two most frequent consecutive logical markers in both subcorpora can be taken to be counterparts in the two linguistic systems: *thus* → *así* and *therefore* → *por tanto*, even though their particular use and function may not be completely equivalent.

The results found are in line with those of Moreno (1998). In her analysis of premise-conclusion sequences in RAs from Business and Economics in English and in Spanish, she also finds *thus* and *por tanto* to be the most common anaphoric adverbial phrases respectively. In addition, although she finds no statistically significant difference in the overall extent of use of premise-conclusion signals, she reports some specific differences in the frequency of occurrence of anaphoric premise-conclusion intersentential relations realized by an adverbial phrase, which correspond to the consecutive logical markers analysed here; she similarly shows that these markers are more common in the RAs in English than in those in Spanish.

4. Concluding remarks

The frequency of use of three semantically different types of logical markers (i.e. additive, contrastive, and consecutive) has been analysed in a comparable corpus of RAs in the field of Business Management written in English and Spanish and the main types which realize each logical function in both sets of articles have been highlighted. RAs written in English and intended for an international readership have been seen to present a higher number of logical markers than those written in Spanish for a local readership, especially as far as contrastive and consecutive markers are concerned. Spanish BM scholars make explicit the relationship between two independent discourse units through a logical marker less frequently than their American counterparts.

A lower number of logical markers in a text entails a greater decoding effort on the part of readers, as they need to work out the semantic relationship between different parts of the discourse. Accordingly, authors of BM RAs in English published internationally seem to be more explicit in indicating these relations, and they ensure more firmly that the reader will interpret the text as intended. The higher frequency of logical markers in the RAs in English may be considered an indicator of the tendency towards a writer-responsible style of writing texts in the English language/culture, versus the tendency towards a reader-responsible style (Hinds 1987) in the Spanish language/culture. The results are in line with those of previous cross-cultural English-Spanish analyses of academic discourse (e.g. Valero Garcés 1996, Fernández Polo 1999), which also show that the use of connectors is more common in English texts than in Spanish ones and underscore the reader-responsible style of the latter versus the writer-responsible style of the former. It should be pointed out that, as acknowledged by Mauraen (1993), there is nothing inherently persuasive in the lower or higher extent of inclusion of metadiscourse features in general and of logical markers in particular, but rather

their high occurrence may be persuasive in one context but not in another, especially when the readership in the new context differs and readers' expectations may accordingly be different. It would be interesting to explore further whether other mechanisms used to signal semantic relations between discourse units other than parenthetical logical markers are included to a similar or different extent in BM RAs in the two contexts so that this difference in the writer and reader responsibility tendency is emphasized or, on the contrary, counter-balanced.

It has been found that whereas additive markers are used to the same extent in both subcorpora, contrastive and consecutive markers are far more frequent in the RAs in English than in the RAs in Spanish. The different incidence of use of additive and contrastive logical markers in the subcorpora implies that American-based BM scholars are more inclined to oppose or confront ideas and arguments than Spanish BM scholars, who more commonly elaborate their argumentation by adding or accumulating ideas. This stands out as a significant rhetorical difference in how arguments are persuasively built in BM RAs in both languages or cultural contexts. Parallel analyses in RAs in other disciplines, and also in other academic genres could be carried out in the future to see whether these tendencies in the use of logical markers are specific to this genre and discipline or whether they are characteristic of academic writing in general in each language.

It should also be outlined that the two language cultures of the RAs analysed imply a different readership (national vs. international). It may be the case that research published for an international audience draws more intensely on the explicit signalling of contrasts and consequences by means of logical markers than research published nationally in Spanish or other languages. In order to explore the influence of this variable in the use of logical markers, the results of this research could be compared with those obtained from the analysis of RAs in English for a national readership.

In any case it can be concluded that not only the generic nature of the texts and the small or disciplinary culture in which they are produced condition the use made of certain metadiscursive features, but that it is also influenced by other factors, such as the cultural context in which they are written and distributed. In the light of these results, when Spanish BM scholars endeavour to draft their RAs in English for an international readership, they may tend to include fewer logical markers than their peers embedded in the Anglophone cultural context may expect. Also, the presentation of arguments antithetically in their RAs may be underused in the eyes of their peers reading international articles in English. Consequently, Spanish BM scholars should be made aware of these rhetorical differences so that, if necessary, they can adjust their conventions in their language to those possibly regarded as more persuasive and appreciated by the new readership they will be addressing. Finally, also from a pedagogical point of view, the list of types found in the corpus, organized by frequency of use, may help (Spanish) BM scholars make appropriate lexico-grammatical choices in terms of which

markers to choose when drafting their RAs in English for their international publication.

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Appropriating English as the world's local language of global communication¹

Shanta Nair-Venugopal

Abstract

Something has happened indeed to English as the *lingua franca* of international trade and commerce in its appropriation within the localized workplaces of 'post colonial' sites as the forces of globalization push towards cross- and intercultural communication. As this paper attempts to show, an indigenous variant of English, the most pervasive language of colonization, operates as a functional model of interaction for localized business communication in Malaysia. In a counterpoint to the lucrative global commodification of English for business communication it drives home the axiom that you can only sell in the customer's 'language' in the multiple sites of the world's New Englishes. The forms and features of English identified in these localized business settings not only demonstrate the evolution of English as a local language, with its implications for normativity and intelligibility in serving localized language and communication needs, but also the seemingly inextinguishable global relevance of English past post colonialism. To ignore the incidence and viability of this 'glocalization' of English in the workplace, spoken in its 'un-English' ways, is to deny the pragmatic relevance of a model that is just as vital for an economy as the international standard varieties favoured by the big businesses of *realpolitik* international capitalism.

1. Introduction

On the premise that "we live in a world which increasingly acknowledges the quotidian conflation of the economic and the cultural" (Robertson 1995: 31), it is

¹ This is a slightly revised version of the paper that was presented at the conference on Language and Global Communication held at the University of Cardiff, Wales, 7-9 July 2005.

clear that something has happened to English as the *lingua franca* of international trade. Its appropriation within the localized workplaces of 'post colonial' sites echoes the observation by Cope & Kalantzis (2000: 6) that at the same time as English "is becoming a *lingua mundi*, a world language, and a *lingua franca*, a common language of commerce, media and politics, English is also breaking into multiple and increasingly differentiated Englishes, marked by accent, national origin, subcultural styles and professional or technical communities." This paper attempts to show how an indigenous variant of English operates as a functional model of interaction in its appropriation of localized business communication. Business communication in the context of this paper refers to the following genres of language use:

1. advertisements (as a genre for marketing products and services of a business enterprise);
2. service encounters;
3. workplace interactions between co-workers.

It is generally acknowledged that advertising adapts to local language use, such as speaking in the local idiom to either interact or transact and sell, while knowledge of local practices, values and norms – dubbed 'local knowledge' – facilitates sales. Furthermore, it is almost axiomatic to say that one can only sell in the customer's language. In the multiple sites of the world's New Englishes this may thus even refer to localized English or a functional model of interaction, such as the local speech repertoire in multilingual or pluricultural post-colonial contexts of use, as in Malaysian business. The counterpoint to such language use is the lucrative global commodification of models of 'standardized' English for business communication with which it is invariably juxtaposed worldwide.

2. Some reconceptualizations

Appadurai (1996) observes that the local/global nexus focuses on the specific and disjointed ways in which global flows of ideas, media, finance, technologies, people, and risks affect and are affected by particular and diverse localities. English may be added to this list of global flows. And if the glocal refers to "a *particular version* of a very general phenomenon" (Robertson 1995: 40), then the glocalization of English can refer to the use of a localized variety of English as *the* global world language to sell internationally branded products in localized markets to differentiated consumers through the appropriation of English. This is based on the assumption that 'glocalization' also refers to the ability to deliver global marketing strategy and brand awareness as personalized information which makes it as relevant as possible to the local market. This is to say that it "involves *the construction* of increasingly differentiated consumers" (*ibid.*: 29). And riding on globalization, 'commodification' can be defined as saleable products and/or online customized "deliverables" (Singh, Kell & Pandian 2002) that are "designed, packaged, advertised and marketed in ways similar to that of manufactured goods"

(*ibid.*: 63). The usefulness of this definition to the discussion here is not diminished by its specific reference to the ELT industry, which markets *Business English* and *English Communication* as commodities worldwide too (see Nair-Venugopal 2002 and 2006).

3. Supporting context

In 2002, the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (henceforth HSBC) launched a new global worldwide advertising campaign designed to define the distinct personality of the group's brand and introduce it as "The World's Local Bank". In Malaysia, a Malay tagline, *Bank Sedunia Memahami Hasrat Setempat*, was also used. It roughly translates into "a global bank that understands local needs". The campaign, which was partly developed in Malaysia, appeared on TV, in print and online in all the 81 countries and territories that HSBC serves worldwide. This gives us an idea of the global reach of HSBC, which is incidentally one of the world's five largest banks today. The advertisements have since appeared in the *Financial Times*, *Wall Street Journal Europe*, *The Economist*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Fortune*, *National Geographic*, *Forbes Global*, *Business Week* and *The Wall Street Journal* (Asia and New York), *CNN*, *CNBC* and *BBC World*. HSBC has since then marketed its credit cards as 'local offers'.

The tagline "The World's Local Bank" provided some of the impetus for this paper because it was developed only after a worldwide consumer research study found that "while people appreciated the value of international organisations and services, they questioned the prevailing 'one size fits all' global model. Consumers wanted to be treated as individuals and to feel that the companies cared about them, recognised their needs and understood what makes their community unique" (*The Star*, March 13, 2002). In underpinning HSBC's stated philosophy that the world's rich and diverse cultures and people should be treated with respect, the tagline also reinforces the importance of local knowledge. It 'guarantees' that anyone who banks with HSBC benefits from the services and advice of a company with international experience, which it claims is delivered by people sensitive to the practices and needs of their community. This strategized philosophy shaped regional and local advertising and marketing activity for HSBC worldwide which has reaped its rewards.

4. Aims and objectives

Firstly, the forms and features of English as a functional model of interaction of business communication in data examples of localized advertisements and business interactions are discussed to demonstrate the evolution of English as a local language, analogous to the HSBC tagline, serving localized language and communication needs. This is besides its seemingly inextinguishable global relevance in business contexts.

Secondly, it is contended that to ignore the incidence and viability of the 'globalization' of English in such contexts, spoken in its 'un-English' ways (with all its implications for normativity and intelligibility) is to deny the pragmatic relevance of models that are just as vital for an economy as international standard varieties. This is basically the countervailing stance to the dissenting Malaysian discourse on such localized language use, as 'standardized' English is valorized by the establishment and the media as the language of both the new economy and the knowledge economy. Despite the pervasive use of Malaysian English as the localized variety in many domains of use, even public, it is the use of standardized English that is advocated in the firm belief that Malaysia's economic success will be partly determined only by its ability to tap into globalization through superior English skills, i.e. the widespread use of models of 'standardized' English or international standard varieties of English.

In keeping with such beliefs, English has in fact replaced Bahasa Malaysia (the official variant of Malay, the national language) as the language of instruction for science and mathematics since January 2004 in Malaysia. However, there has been some resistance to this from Malay language loyalists who have viewed the change as an erosion of Malay language policy; even extending their arguments to include an erosion of Malay rights. Yet the change is basically only a matter of logging on to the database of English which is acknowledged today as the world's most influential language of knowledge as a 'neutral instrument' of learning for academic purposes, especially for Science and Technology (EST). In contrast, the Malaysian workplace (like other sites of intra- and intercultural encounter and communication) continues to be an arena for competing codes. For instance, the use of Chinese dialects is still prevalent in the interactions of Chinese businessmen although the demographic composition of Chinese organizations has changed in keeping with government imperatives on restructuring the Malaysian workplace to reflect national demographic ratios and ethnic profiles in accordance with the New Economic Policy of 1971 as affirmative political action. The effects of such code contestations are seen in the forms of acculturation present in language choice, variation and change, and as code alternation in the form of switches and mixes, borrowings and crossings in the Malaysian workplace (see Nair-Venugopal 2000a and c, 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2006).

However, notwithstanding the effects of local policies, international standard varieties of English are the favoured language models for advertising the products of large multi/transnational corporations – the big businesses of *realpolitik* international capitalism. These are invariably the national standard varieties of North American, British, or even Australian English which appear to be the symbolic choice for ascribed prestigious brand identity. They are interspersed occasionally with 'exotic' accented English speech for dramatic effect. Witness the global advertising campaigns for national iconic products such as Finland's Nokia 6300 or E65, Sweden's Volvo S70, Germany's BMW 5 series, Japan's Toshiba Notebook and Korea's Samsung 42" Plasma TV (a few examples of some of the world's more rec-

ognizable products) and the more eponymous Apple iPod, Sony PlayStation 3, and Nintendo Wii. Although the ethnolinguistic mix of the actors in the commercials for these products may vary considerably in order to graphically represent (and capture) the global market for the product on billboards and other media, the English language forms employed are invariably those of standard British/American English. These are targeted at the English-educated, professional or middle classes which are predicted to rise globally (Graddol 1997). At the very least they are aimed at 'English-knowing' consumers in developed and developing societies.

On the other hand, there is a perceptible difference in the language used to advertise essential commodities such as petrol – for instance, by Mobil or Esso – and popular but non-essential products such as franchised fast food products – for instance, Kentucky Fried Chicken (henceforth KFC) or hair care products like Brylcreem which generate a considerable volume of sales because of affordability. Such language use contrasts with the use of 'standardized' English presented *inter alia* as a 'one size fits all' global language model in the advertisements for international brands which points to linguistic commodification.

Focusing, therefore, on the language use of advertisements for the local versus global market, I highlight two effects of the appropriation of English as localized language use to support the claim above. Namely, these are 'cosmopolitanism' and 'neutrality', as juxtapositions of neo-liberal capitalism with its attendant claims of free-flows and democracy.

'Cosmopolitanism' essentially refers to worldiness, such as in *citizenship of the world*, and (by extension) to an appreciation or consideration for cultures besides one's own. There appear to be two aspects or principles to cosmopolitanism. For the locals diversity "happens to be the principle which allows all locals to stick to their respective cultures" (Hannerz 1990, cited by Robertson 1995: 29). Yet cosmopolitanisms are largely dependent on the carving out of 'special niches' of local cultures by 'other people'. Presumably, then, this allows for local people themselves to do the same with 'other' peoples' cultures. Thus "there can be no cosmopolitans without locals" (*ibid.*), and this point has some bearing on the particular nature of the intellectual interest in and the approach to the local/global issue (Robertson *ibid.*). 'Neutrality', on the other hand, refers to the balance achieved between heterogeneity and homogeneity as two contradictory forces if globalization or globalism is taken to be an axial phenomenon in relation to that of localization or localism/tribalism. However, when it is complementarized as in Robertson's multidimensional view of glocalization, it can be argued that neutrality may also refer to approximations of difference. So while differences may exist, these may not be distinctive enough to be viewed as polarities.

Hence the test for globalized products in penetrating localized markets would be "to embody applications of local cosmopolitanism wherever they seek their markets" (Singh, Kell & Pandian 2002: 102). This is to cultivate and improve product marketing in the best way that they can through local enrichment of their

advertising strategy, i.e. through local knowledge and language use. In fact, localized advertisements for globally franchised fast foods, such as KFC, typify the globalization of English in its ‘glocalization’ (as a particular construction of locality), in the commercials for the local variations of fried chicken in Malaysia, such as the indigenous ‘hot and spicy’ or ‘*extra* hot and spicy’ flavours. Additionally, service encounters and workplace interactions in local business contexts in Malaysia also indicate the ascendancy of localized English language use (as is evident in the data examples below).

5. Data and discussion

Example 1: Radio advertisement for KFC

In this advertisement played over Malaysian radio stations, a new KFC promotion offers both a piece of chicken and a burgher (with a side order) for customers who may be vulnerably undecided about choice.

1. Frontliner: Welcome to KFC sir. Can I help you?
2. Customer: One OR Fillet burger please.
3. Frontliner: One OR Fillet burger. Anything else?
4. Customer: Er, chicken for me.
5. Frontliner: Chicken? That’s all?
6. Customer: Yup. Burger.
7. Frontliner: Burger?
8. Customer: Ya.
9. Frontliner: Just now you said chicken.
10. Customer: Burger.
11. Frontliner: One OR Fillet burger.
12. Customer: That’s right. Chicken.
13. Frontliner: Chicken?
14. Customer: Ya burger.
15. Frontliner: Burger?
16. Commentator: Want it all? You can with the new KFC X-Meal. A piece of
17. chicken, an OR Fillet burger and a choice of side order. KFC X-
18. Meal. Extra choice, extra variety.

At first glance this appears to be a rather bland, even confusing advertisement for the globally ubiquitous franchised fast food product. But it succeeds as a localized advertisement partly because of the clearly Malaysian English accent and intonation of both customer and ‘frontliner’, and partly because of the innuendo of the rejoinder “just now you said chicken”, uttered as an accusation on falling pitch. It suggests that the indecisiveness in placing the order is because of the list of purportedly attractive combinations that are available for a meal at the outlet thus spoiling the customer for choice. However, the same advertisement might not succeed in a British setting, for instance, because of the localized prosodic and discourse features. In stating the fairly obvious then, a globalized product is more saleable when it becomes a localized deliverable, although some of the taglines so

familiar to KFC such as “Finger-lickin’ good” from the 1970s are still used in Malaysia (and presumably elsewhere). A concrete example of the extension of the local/global dialectic as a local/cosmopolitan distinction is the ‘hot and spicy’ version of the famous fried chicken which is offered in all Malaysian KFC outlets as the localized alternative to the original version that is referred to as OR (Original Recipe) on the menu.

So although the advert mimics the language routines so typical of the forms and patterns of service encounter interactions (predicted to prevail worldwide: see Graddol 1997: 43), especially the openings (lines 1-2), the contextual specifics on the ground appear to have changed the prescribed configurations of the routines that service counter personnel are invariably trained in. Linguistic cosmopolitanisms have invaded the marketing space for such globalized products as localisms whose vital force is the “mark of cultural independence” (Butler 1997: 109). These localisms privilege mutual intelligibility over normativity, and hybridity over uniformity as in the rejoinder in Malaysian or localized English (line 9).

Neutrality, on the other hand, is represented by the commentator’s sales pitch which is delivered in a superimposed American accent, presumably in an attempt to stay close to the source of the globally franchised product, i.e. the state of Kentucky in the USA as the mythical ‘home’ of the world’s best fried chicken.

We may now posit that the brand identity of KFC has become a ‘disembedding’ in the local cosmopolitanisms of both hybridized language use and in the ‘hot and spicy’ local version of fried chicken that is available in Malaysia. Presumably other versions will also be available in ‘othered’ contexts of localized consumption elsewhere. It is the global brand identity of KFC that has thus been ‘lifted out’ from its original local American context and rearticulated “across wide spans of time-space” (Giddens 1991: 21) in other contexts of global consumption. In contrast, the original brand identity of KFC as encapsulated in its world-renowned Original Recipe remains symbolically impervious to the forces of “hybridization” (see Pieterse 1995 for an account).

Example 2²: *Service counter interaction at a Delifrance café*

We see that the kinds of linguistic routines in English that are conventionally associated with service encounters are being displaced by localized usage and interactional styles in a franchised outlet in Malaysia of the ‘authentic’ French bakery café *Delifrance*.

1. C: Hi.
2. S: Ya?
3. C: I would like this erm=
4. S: =sandwiches?
5. C: Ya sandwiches. Em you have seafood?

² Data supplied by Ong Sue Lyn 2005.

6. S: Seafood (.) yes we have.
 7. C: Seafood right.
 8. S: Seafood on which bread? [We have croissant, baguette, ciabatta,
 9. C: [One seafood with this. What do you call this one?
 10. S: This er ciabatta, soft bread but hard both side.
 11. C: Seafood on this =
 12. S: = seafood with ciabatta.
 13. C: Hm and another one ...
 14. S: Another one?
 15. C: What is that?
 16. S: It's er blackpepper chicken.
 17. C: Blackpepper chicken. Okay, erm I want this one with croissant. [Croissant,
 18. S: [Croissant.
 19. C: right.
 20. S: This case you can have a set [meal here.
 21. C: [I'm having two.
 22. S: Sandwich, soup, and soft drink at only eleven-eighty =
 23. C: = Ya sure. Set meal. Two sets then.
 24. S: Kak, dua sup kak [Sister, 2 soups, sister]
 25. C: How much is it?
 26. S: It's processing oh. Twenty-four seventy-eight for two set.
 27. C: Here's thirty.
 28. S: Thirty ringgit³ in. OK. Your balance here. [Thank you. Enjoy your meal.
 29. C: [Thank you.

I now turn to the speech data of a service encounter in real time in a franchised Delifrance bakery café outlet which makes sandwiches from traditional French and other European breads like ciabatta. It is demonstrably evident that the forms and patterns of the linguistic routines conventionally prescribed for effective service encounters in English (Graddol 1997; Cameron 2000) are being displaced by localized usage and interactional styles. Although the closings in this data example are generic, conventionalized routines for service encounters (lines 28-29), the openings are, however, quintessentially Malaysian (lines 1-2) where a *Hi* may not be reciprocated as a greeting in a business outlet. Specifically in this data example, the response *Ya* serves as an acknowledgement in anticipation of an order by the customer. That *Ya* is a variant of 'yes' (lines 5 and 23) is evident in this example, while the lack of pluralization in *both side* and *two set* (lines 10 and 26 respectively) denotes variation as localized English forms of speech vis-à-vis standard English usage. The question in line 5 (*Em you have seafood?*) is typical of localized speech in its reduction. But the answer in a complete sentence in line 6, which is the second part of the adjacency pair, sounds too stilted in the informal setting of a café. Typically Malaysian, however, is *sure* (line 23) for 'certainly', and *oh* (line 26) for affirmation or emphasis as it is said on a falling note.

³ Malaysian currency.

Example 3: Radio advertisement for the hair grooming product Brylcreem

(Police car siren sounds)

1. Announcer: We have spotted a hair criminal and there he goes by the bushes.
2. Oh that's just awful! What we're gonna do is get our Brylcreem
3. hairstylist to pin him down and give him a swift makeover. One,
4. two, three (native-speaker accent) ((running sounds in the background))
5. Hair Criminal: Hey, what you doing la? Wei, I can sue you all you know! Eh,
6. hei, hei, what? Wah! Eh eh, OK ah my hair? (CME⁴ - Chinese accent)
7. Commentator: All this week, the Hitz Dot FM Cruisers will take on the role of
8. hair police who'll then arrest hair criminals who need a hair
9. makeover. We're on the lookout to charge 40 criminals with one
10. hundred ringgit worth of Brylcreem products and put them on
11. parole. Among them, one will be acquitted and rewarded with two
12. thousand ringgit cash plus Brylcreem products. The Hitz Dot FM
13. hair criminals (Australian native-speaker accent)
14. Hair Criminal: For more info ah, you log on to Hitz Dot FM (CME - Chinese accent)

This gimmicky advertisement was aired over a radio network called the Hitz DOT FM which is very popular with young and upwardly mobile largely English-educated or English-knowing Malaysians. We see clear juxtapositions of local cosmopolitanisms as well as neutrality at work in the racy interaction between an unsuspecting victim of a hair make-over and his pursuers, the 'hair police' from the same radio network, working in the interests of Brylcreem's grooming image. The local cosmopolitanism of the former's 'ethnolect' (see Nair-Venugopal 2000a, b, and c, 2001, 2003) as a Chinese Malaysian speaker of English is in stark contrast to the neutrality of the Australian native speaker accent of the latter, which presumably represents the more worldly and more glamorous international image of using Brylcreem's hair grooming products. The 'hair criminal', on the other hand, is caricatured as an unkempt local individual who is ultimately made over into a well-groomed Brylcreem aficionado. His stereotypical Chinese Malaysian accent-edness is the ultimate local cosmopolitanism in this advertisement. When we consider that the original tagline for Brylcreem in the 1950s was "A little dab'll do ya" we see the extent to which the appropriation of English through local cosmopolitanisms and neutrality has changed the face of the marketing of what were once considered 'foreign' products in particularized local markets in places such as Malaysia.

Example 4: Radio advertisement for BMW 3 Series

1. Man: A BMW X-3 sports edition. Stylish, fast, flexible. It's the ultimate sports
2. utility vehicle. Now, (.) a BMW X-3 valued at 378,000 ringgit could be yours
3. for just, 30 ringgit. (Educated Malaysian English//EME)
4. Crowd: Thirty ringgit? (Colloquial Malaysian English/CME)
5. Commentator: Spend just 30 ringgit on synergy petrol at any ESSO and Mobil service sta-
6. tions from now till 13th June and you could enter a contest to win one of

⁴ Colloquial Malaysian English.

7. two BMW X-3s. How do we know you love the admiring looks? At ESSO
 8. and Mobil, we're drivers too. (Educated Malaysian English/EME)

The last point I want to make in relation to the effects of the appropriation of English in local advertisements is how these work not only as complementarities but also as approximations of difference in localized language use as in this advertisement for Mobil and Esso. The style-shifting between Educated Malaysian English (EME) at a higher point on the Malaysian speech continuum in English and Colloquial Malaysian English (CME) at a lower point appears to be a local cosmopolitanism at work, but the difference between the two groups of speakers is not significant. Both belong to the same speech community of Malaysian speakers of English and the sociolectal variation of ME is analogous to its speech continuum (see Nair-Venugopal 2000a).

Example 5⁵: *Workplace interaction in a Malaysian business setting*

1. Trainer: b what does b say ah? (.) the implied condition (.)
2. can you see the word condition? (.)
3. okay in a (.) you have the word warrantee (.)
4. in c (.) you also have the word (.) warrantee
5. so what's the difference between a warrantee
6. and a condition (.) what's the difference
7. between a warrantee and a condition? (15.0)
8. okay we talk very simple (.)
9. vacuum cleaner ah (writes on the board)
10. you get the guarantee card isn't it?
11. right (.) the guarantee card isn't it (.)
12. they say that all the mechanical defects
13. et cetera (.) you can (.) what you call it?
14. we will repair (3.0) free of charge (.)
15. within say (.) two years (.) isn't it? (2.0)
16. you have that (3.0)
17. now this is what you can call a warrantee (5.0).

Finally, I present a data example of a workplace interaction obtained in real time from the ground to illustrate the ascendancy of forms of localized English in the situated discourse of the Malaysian workplace as shared “ways of speaking” (Hymes 1974a and b; Figueroa 1994). The context of the interactions discussed is a training session on aspects of the hire purchase agreement conducted by a lawyer hired as trainer by a finance company.

In this segment the lawyer as a local trainer realizes that the participants lack the specialized knowledge for a full understanding of the legal import of the terms *condition* and *warrantee* as they are used in the company's hire purchase agreement, and adjusts her speech style to take account of it. In down-shifting (from

⁵ Data originally obtained for a large-scale study on language choice and communication in Malaysian business (see Nair-Venugopal 2000a).

line 8 onwards) to accommodate to what she perceives to be a correspondingly appropriate level of language ability, she creates a pathway for the understanding of the two words as they are used in the agreement with their legal implications. The metacommunicative line “okay we talk very simple” (line 8) marks the downshift from EME into the speech style and forms of CME which she believes will ensure their comprehension, having waited for a response to the question on the difference between the two terms for as long as 15 seconds. This style shift demonstrates her ability to accommodate to variable language competence and insufficient technical knowledge which goes beyond “good enough” English and attests to insider knowledge of shared “ways of speaking” (Hymes 1974a and b; Figueroa 1994). The overarching goal of the trainer in educating the trainees on the legal aspects of hire purchase is achieved through interactive engagement with them and in the use of the signalled style shift (line 8) into CME as a community norm of spoken English.

6. Conclusion

The data examples of three types of business communication for comparative purposes, namely, two advertisements of globalized products, a service encounter and an interaction at the workplace, show how an indigenous variant of English operates as a functional model of interaction for localized business communication. The forms and features of English identified in the localized business contexts demonstrate its evolution as a local language, with its implications for normativity and intelligibility in serving language and communication needs in Malaysia as one of the world's sites of multiple Englishes.

The relationship between a localized variety of English and English as a global language can be seen to be analogous to that between hybridity or heterogeneity and uniformity or homogeneity, both of which are influential forces affecting global economies and cultures and patterns of consumption. The use of local cosmopolitanisms and neutrality have been highlighted as two effects of the appropriation of English as localized language use to illustrate how they colour and shape specifically local advertisements for franchised or internationally reputed products in Malaysia.

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The metaphors of financial bubbles in British and American discourses

Michel Van der Yeught

Abstract

This paper analyses the metaphors developed by British and American authors during the speculative bubbles which make stock prices rise and later crash, thus causing the ruin of many investors. Although the earliest texts studied here were published over three centuries ago and on both sides of the Atlantic, their major metaphors appear to be extremely similar and stable through time and space. They seem to follow a logic of their own which forms a sort of common and spontaneous explanatory framework originally laid out by the British and later largely enriched by the Americans. Using Lakoff & Johnson (1980), the paper analyses four major recurring metaphors and, using Werth, it identifies an underlying megametaphor which connects them together. The resulting network of metaphors offers a transnational and transhistorical description of speculative bubbles in Anglo-American financial culture. The study is based on a diversified corpus of sixteen texts written by British and American observers, journalists, economists and financial historians. The analytical tools it proposes will be useful to students in business and economics trying to make sense of metaphorical comments when they study speculative episodes from discourses in English.

1. Introduction

When the stock prices of US high-tech companies collapsed in the spring of 2000, most observers commented that the “Internet Bubble” had burst. By using the image of the bubble, they spontaneously resorted to a three-century-old British metaphor which still typifies the speculative excesses and crashes of the stock markets. The bubble metaphor is not one of a kind in discourses on speculation. Many other age-old images are regularly called into action whenever a new finan-

cial crisis occurs. They characterize the specialized language of the stock market and they form a distinct pictorial culture which has left a lasting influence on discourses on speculative bubbles. The aim of this paper is to study these enduring metaphors and to examine how they interconnect. Indeed, although each speculative episode has its own special features, the metaphors that describe bubbles are all strangely similar and recurrent in British and American discourses. Over the years, they seem to have developed into a coherent explanatory network that many writers consciously or unconsciously share and use. The analysis shows how, thanks to an underlying megametaphor, the four different metaphors examined here relate to one another, and how they combine to form a coherent and continuous whole which makes sense of financial bubbles in Anglo-American contexts. They are studied as they develop chronologically during bubble episodes. The analysis is based on Lakoff & Johnson's *Metaphors We Live By* (1980) and Werth's *Text Worlds: Representing Conceptual Space in Discourse* (1999). The sources of the selected metaphors form a corpus of sixteen different types of discourse written by contemporary British and American observers, journalists, economists and financial historians. Discourse here is defined after Benveniste (1966: 129-130) as any language production larger than the sentence unit.

2. Two basic metaphors in discourses on speculation: the flying and levitation metaphors

2.1. The original bubble metaphor

The metaphoric character of discourses on speculative bubbles is rooted in the bubble metaphor itself. The image dates back to 1720 when the first financial bubble that occurred in an English-speaking country developed in London. The public was lured into believing that the so-called South Sea Company had fantastic trading prospects in South America, and people from all walks of life scrambled to buy the company's stock. In 1720, speculation was so intense that the stock's price increased from some £150 in February to £1,000 in June, only to collapse to £160 in December (Carswell 1960: 115, 162, 207). The crash triggered a crisis of confidence which severely shook England's financial system and many vivid metaphors were then coined to describe the abnormality of the situation and to express the dismay of contemporary participants and witnesses. The South Sea Company and the risky business ventures which were launched in its wake were called "bubble companies" to show that their shares could rise like soap bubbles while blown up by investors' money and pop instantly when fashion abated (Mackay 1995 [1841]: 54-63). The bubble metaphor precisely fits the definition proposed by Lakoff & Johnson (*ibid.*). The two authors explain that metaphors are not mere rhetorical embellishments covering the underlying core meaning of reality; they permeate our everyday language and our way of thinking. According to Lakoff & Johnson (*ibid.*: 5), "The essence of metaphor is understanding and

experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another”. For nearly three centuries thereafter in Britain and in the US, public opinion and experts have thought about stock market booms and crashes in terms of speculative bubbles, and this metaphor ranks among the most enduring images in financial discourse. It is so intrinsically connected with stock market speculation that it has become almost necessary and inevitable. It has turned into what Donald N. McCloskey (1985: 78) calls “a master metaphor” which best expresses an idea. This “master metaphor” has in turn spawned numerous other images of which two are now examined.

2.2. *The “stock price increase is flying” metaphor*

The first metaphor derived from the image of the rising bubble can be expressed as STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS FLYING¹. Basically, speculative episodes are initially characterized by a sharp increase in stock prices. As Stuart Banner (1998: 41) explains: “The eightfold rise in the value of shares in the South Sea company during the first half of 1720 put the securities market in the public spotlight”. Other examples include General Electric’s stock which went up from \$128 to \$396 on the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) from March to September 1928 and Radio Corporation of America’s which rose from \$94 to \$505 in the same period (Allen 1964 [1931]: 264). Most authors express this mathematical increase in prices as some form of flying. They say that stock prices jump, surge, rise, take flight, take off, soar or skyrocket. Although jumping, surging, rising are not technically equivalent to flying, they can surely be considered to be preparatory movements leading to flight. Furthermore, the STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS FLYING metaphor does not only express upward movements which can be achieved by climbing up a ladder, a tree, a hill, or by heaving oneself up a rope. The metaphor expresses a separation from solid and visible support, as in flying. The flying metaphor is as old as the bubble companies themselves. Supporting evidence can be found in many documents contemporary with the South Sea Company. For example, in *The Stock Jobber*, a farce by William Chetwood, one character named ‘Bubble’ presents to his friend ‘Cheat-all’ the various bubble companies he proposes to offer to the investing public. One idea is “a project for building a fleet of flying ships of the greatest burden”, an ironic and obvious reference at the time to the maritime South Sea Company and to its rising shares (Carswell 1960: 141). The “flying ship” theme must have been popular then because it is central to another play, *Exchange Alley*, published in 1720. Here, traders who go by the names of ‘Bite’ and ‘Mississippi’ (to “bite” someone was Exchange Alley² slang meaning to make money at someone’s expense, while Mississippi is a reference to the French speculative Mississippi Company) invest in a “Flying Ships” company whose

¹ Following Lakoff & Johnson (*ibid.*), metaphors are mentioned in capital letters.

² Exchange Alley was a narrow street running from Cornhill to Lombard Street in the City of London where speculation raged during the South Sea Bubble.

shares go up and down depending on the most absurd circumstances (Banner 1998: 50-51). Another example dates back to 1841, long before human flight was achieved. In *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*, Charles Mackay clearly confirms the flying metaphor when he compares the South Sea Company and the following bubble projects to Icarus flying too close to the sun: “Enterprise, like Icarus, had soared too high, and melted the wax of her wings; like Icarus, she had fallen into a sea, and learned while floundering in its waves, that her proper element was the solid ground. She has never since attempted so high a flight” (Mackay 1995 [1841]: 88). From its very origin, the image of speculative bubbles is related to the STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS FLYING metaphor. The bubble image combines the frailty of the business projects with the ‘flying capacity’ of their shares.

Since the end of the 19th century, technical stock charts have helped visualize the flying metaphors related to indices and shares by measuring accurately their upward movements in size and time. This visual experience has generated many variants of the STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS FLYING metaphor which include frequent use of hyperbole. These variants show how the traditional metaphor of the bubble is transformed through history by the changing cultural atmosphere of the times. For example, in 1931 the American journalist Frederick L. Allen (1931: 256) used a classic literary variant of the flying metaphor when he wrote that “By the summer of 1929, prices had soared [...] into the blue and cloudless empyrean”. In 2000, conversely, an American economist, Robert Shiller (2000: 6), was clearly influenced by space technology when he visualized rising Internet stock prices as “a rocket taking off through the top of the chart”. A similar scientifically-induced variant of the bubble metaphor is proposed by a historian, Steve Frazer (2005: 400), who describes the 1929 bubble as “[...] a hardly imaginable stratosphere of prosperity”. Still, the basic flying image is stable through time and it helps authors and readers experience price increases in terms of the same ascending movement³.

Lakoff & Johnson (*ibid.*: 16) also showed that movements in space had a metaphorical content. They propose that, generally speaking, ascending metaphors have positive connotations whereas descending metaphors are connoted negatively: in a nutshell, GOOD IS UP, BAD IS DOWN. However, in the specific case of speculative bubbles, upward movements are not exclusively positive: they express ambivalent connotations. On the one hand, stock price rises conjure up favourable images of future profits and wealth increase, but on the other, the suddenness and intensity of speculative price takeoffs are causes for perplexity and worry. Because flying implies separation from solid ground, the flying metaphor contains the threats of a potential fall. The higher they fly, the harder they crash is the underlying rationale of its negative connotations as a familiar variant of the well-known proverb “The bigger they come, the harder they fall”.

³ For additional flying metaphors, see Mackay (1995 [1841]: 64, 70, 88); Carswell (1960: 152, 156, 162); Brenner (2002: 180).

Referring to the 1929 bubble, Allen (1964 [1931]: 263) wrote that stock prices had reached a “perilous altitude”. In 1997, the London-based *Economist* thought that stock prices were “sickeningly high” (*The Economist* 5 April 1997: 83). In a similar way, Robert Shiller (2000: 14) expressed the uneasiness of the American public when faced with the booming stock market in the late 1990s: “Most people I meet, from all walks of life, are puzzled over the apparently high levels of the stock market. We are unsure whether the market levels make any sense”. This negative connotation associated with the STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS FLYING metaphor generates the second metaphor which is now examined.

2.3. *The “stock price increase is weightlessness” metaphor*

This second metaphor follows and complements the first one by conveying an additional feeling of puzzled anxiety. As speculation gradually affects the stock market, stock prices not only seem to fly up, but they appear to remain sky-high for no apparent reason. Just like bubbles effortlessly rising in the air, they look increasingly weightless and immune to the laws of gravity. They seem to leave the world of earthly realities and become truly immaterial. The weightlessness metaphor is also as old as the bubble metaphor itself. The image of the “flying ships of the greatest burden” mentioned in 2.2. shows that the ships not only fly but that they defy the laws of gravity (signalled by “burden”). Similarly, a modern economist, Burton Malkiel (1999: 31-33, 35-94), develops a long metaphor which compares speculative stock prices to “castles in the air”. Steve Fraser (2005: 400) explains that in 1929 the NYSE defied the laws of gravity (“the gravity-defying aerial performance of the Market”). For another economist, Robert Brenner (2002: 138, 182), the stock exchange in the 1990s was like a spaceship (“The stock market goes into orbit”) which “levitated” above the real economy. His colleague, Robert Pollin (2003: 56), uses the same image in a chapter entitled ‘The Wall Street levitation’. The weightlessness metaphor is thus reiterated in time, from the “flying ships” of the 18th century to the “castles in the air” of the 20th and the spaceships of the 21st.

The STOCK PRICE INCREASE IS WEIGHTLESSNESS metaphor provides a fine example of what Fauconnier & Turner (2002: 239) call “counterfactuality”, i.e. “a forced incompatibility between [mental] spaces in a network”. The ordinary law of gravity in the stock market’s mental space states that “what goes up must come down” and bubbles defy this law. The counterfactual analogy of the bubble’s mental space introduces an element of puzzled anxiety in discourses on speculation. In the real world, gravity attracts things down, including stock prices. But in speculative times, their eerie resistance to the laws of stock market physics is perceived as unnatural and disquieting. That is why these metaphors generally come with anticounterfactual warnings attached. During the Internet Bubble, *The Economist* repeatedly reminded its readers that in the real stock market world gravity normally affects stock prices and that weightlessness is dangerous. Two

years before the 2000 crash, one of its articles warned: “The law of gravity has not been repealed” (18 April 1998: 81). And one year before: “[...] gravity will assert itself sooner or later” (30 January 1999: 15).

3. The megametaphor of speculative disembedding

The ‘flying’ and ‘weightlessness’ metaphors are not used at random in discourses on speculation. Under various forms they consistently recur through history and they are frequently complementary. As a matter of fact, an underlying megametaphor can show how they can combine to produce a metaphorical explanatory framework which makes sense of speculative bubbles.

A Dutch discourse analyst, Paul Werth (1999: 317, 323), has shown that the various metaphors in a given discourse could be interrelated by a “sustained metaphorical undercurrent”, which he also calls a “megametaphor”. The underlying sustained megametaphor connects the different surface metaphors into an ensemble and gives it a deeper and more coherent meaning. Similarly, we propose to show that in the discourses on speculative bubbles, the recurrent ‘flying’ and ‘weightlessness’ metaphors are meaningfully interconnected by an underlying megametaphor which we call the megametaphor of speculative disembedding.

The term ‘disembedding’ is not neutral. It is derived from the concept of ‘embeddedness’ which was coined by the Hungarian economist and historian Karl Polanyi. In *The Great Transformation*, a book he wrote in 1944, Polanyi explained that economic production is not an autonomous activity purely regulated by markets. On the contrary, he thinks that economic systems have always been deeply “embedded” in social relations. According to him, the Industrial Revolution “disembedded” economic activity from social practice in the 19th century and it created an autonomous market-regulated economy in Britain. In Polanyi’s (2001 [1944]: 60, 79, 81) view, this evolution had many disastrous effects: it “implied no less than the wholesale destruction of the traditional fabric of society” and it threatened Britain with “social dislocation”.

The concept of embeddedness is itself based on a metaphor. Polanyi compares society to a coal mine. The economy is embedded in the depths of social practice just as coal is embedded in the rockwalls of a mine (Fred Block cited in Polanyi 2001 [1944]: xxiv, n. 10). Similarly, the metaphor of embeddedness can be applied to financial activity. The stock market does not operate as an autonomous activity; it is deeply embedded in the economic system. And just as the Industrial Revolution disembedded the economy from society, speculation in effect disembeds the stock market from the economy. At the time of the South Sea Bubble, witnesses observed this type of divorce between stock trading and business, as the Dutch newspaper *Mercurie Historique et Politique* reported in July 1720:

The sole topic of conversation revolves around the shares of this company which have produced vast fortunes for many people in such a short space of time.

Moreover, it is to be noted that trade has completely slowed down [...] and that the owners of capital prefer to speculate on shares than to work at their normal business (Chancellor 1999: 76-77).

For his part, Robert Brenner (2002: 142) clearly expresses the disembedding effect of the Internet Bubble when he writes: “The growth of [equity prices] took a life of its own”.

In that context, the numerous flying and weightlessness speculative metaphors, although extremely varied in form, appear to contain one common underlying message, the disembeddedness of the stock market from the economy. They combine as successive discourse signals indicating that stock prices are being disconnected from the real production of goods and services. The megametaphor of speculative disembedding is rarely expressed as such in discourses but it clearly operates as a metaphorical undercurrent connecting the surface metaphors. The disembedding process implies both a movement upwards (flying) and a disengagement from weighty matter (weightlessness). In the two following quotations by Robert Brenner, the disembedding megametaphor appears in the words and phrases “unhitch itself from” and “disconnection” which show that the stock market is losing touch with “underlying” economic reality. The flying and weightlessness metaphors are respectively expressed by “heights”, “rise” and “levitated”:

(1) [...] the growth of share prices seemed for a time to unhitch itself from any dependence at all on the growth of profits and in which technology shares scaled unparalleled heights (2002: 180).

(2) Most definitive, of course, was the absurd disconnection between the rise of paper wealth and the growth of actual output, and particularly of profits, in the underlying economy. Apparent wealth thus levitated with little reference to the actual creation of goods and services (2002: 182).

The disembedding megametaphor is not only an image. It plays a heuristic part in the understanding of financial bubbles by expressing metaphorically what economic graphs describe. In *Irrational Exuberance*, a book he wrote on the Internet Bubble, the economist Robert Shiller (2000: 6-8, Figures 1.1 and 1.2) presented charts which clearly illustrate the disembedding effect of speculation. The graphs show that in normal times stock prices evolve parallel to companies' earnings, but that they shot well above them in the speculative periods of the 1900s, 1928-1929, 1987 and the 1990s⁴.

These developments account for the enduring success of the bubble metaphor over time. Because bubbles are generally defined as hollow balls of air or gas ris-

⁴ For additional examples of the disembedding effects of speculation see Mackay (1995 [1841]: 50); Carswell (1960: 143); Chancellor (1999: 76-77); Galbraith (1961 [1954]: 23, 85-86); Pollin (2003: 39, 56, 59, 61); Brenner (2002: 188).

ing to the surface of a liquid or indeed sometimes of a solid (see *Longman* 1992: 150), they appear as disembedding themselves from the element where they are formed. And because they are weightless and empty, the bubble metaphor appears as a simple and clear compound of the flying, weightlessness and disembeddedness metaphors rolled into one. As the original prototype of all speculative images, it offers popular perception a real-life visual comparison which clarifies the speculative disconnection from the economy that still puzzles economists to this day. The initial bubble metaphor has spawned hundreds of different metaphors which retain some of its original elements (flying or weightlessness) and which have in common the underlying disembedding message. The fact that many experts still resort to the bubble term to explain speculative excesses (*Shiller* 2000: 118-132; *Brenner* 2002; *Hassett* 2002) shows that the bubble metaphor is still a powerful and meaningful image two hundred years after its inception.

4. Metaphors and speculators: the gambling and madness metaphors

The explanatory message conveyed by the disembedding metaphor is that speculative bubbles put economic logic upside down. Not only does the stock market emancipate itself from the economy, but it drives economic activity instead of being driven by it. As an American journalist, Tom Shachtman (1979: 37), remarked about the economy in 1929: “A European observer noted that although European stock markets reflected the economies of their countries in a steady, conservative fashion, the American stock markets had a different function – they *led* the economy of the country”. In most discourses, this inversion of economic logic is considered absurd and dangerous. Authors assume that since price increases are caused by speculators, financial bubbles reveal some irrational streak in their behaviour. To make their point, authors use two new metaphors which they apply to stock market operators: the gambling and the madness metaphors.

4.1. *The gambling metaphor*

The gambling metaphor finalizes the message of the disembedding megametaphor by indicating that the divorce between the stock market and the economy has now reached completion. Indeed, it suggests that financial markets have no economic function left except as gambling venues. The gambling metaphor may be expressed in two equivalent ways: SPECULATORS ARE GAMBLERS or THE STOCK MARKET IS A CASINO.

The gambling metaphor has long been part of the Anglo-American stock market culture and many books, such as *Wall Street: The Other Las Vegas* by Nicholas Darvas, develop it at length. For Darvas (1964: 31, 35), the New York Stock Exchange is nothing but a casino, a lottery, a gambling enterprise, an exclusive gambling club and shares are gambling counters (“When I buy stocks I am buying chips in a casino”;

ibid.: 39). Similarly, John K. Galbraith (1990: 8) identified a “casino manifestation” in the stock market rise of the 1980s and during the Internet Bubble, Alan Greenspan, the then chairman of the US Federal Reserve, defined Internet shares as being “lottery tickets” (*The Economist* 8 January 1999: 84).

In this respect, the best-known passage on speculation in economic literature was written by John M. Keynes in his *General Theory* (1936). His text resorts to the classic bubble metaphor but it gives it a clear meaning by combining the disembedding image (enterprise is led by speculation instead of the other way around) and the casino metaphor. The final result is a metaphorical explanatory framework which criticizes speculation as practised by the Americans in the 1920s:

Speculators may do no harm as bubbles on a steady stream of enterprise. But the position is serious when enterprise becomes a bubble on a whirlpool of speculation. When the capital development of a country becomes a by-product of the activities of a casino, the job is likely to be ill done (1936: 159)⁵.

4.2. *The madness metaphor*

The madness metaphor can be expressed in two complementary variants: SPECULATION IS MADNESS and SPECULATION IS IRRATIONALITY. They spread in discourses at the climax of the bubble, when investors keep buying stocks at excessive prices before an imminent crash. They convey the final idea that operators are irrational and that observers can no longer make any sense of the evolution of the market. Their origin possibly dates back to Isaac Newton who, after successively gaining and losing from speculating in the South Sea Company, remarked that “he could calculate the motions of the heavenly bodies but not the madness of the people” (Carswell 1960: 131).

British and American discourses are particularly fertile when it comes to expressing the utter madness or irrationality of speculators. A historian of financial crises, Charles Kindleberger (2000 [1978]: 24-25), has compiled from historical sources a long list of speculative psychopathologies from which we select the following examples: “manias”, “blind passion”, “frenzies”, “feverish speculation”, “epidemic desire to become rich quick”, “intoxicated investors”, “people without ears to hear or eyes to see”, “investors living in a fool’s paradise”, “craze”. Alan Greenspan’s 1996 warning against the “irrational exuberance” of the stock market is probably the most famous understatement of the madness metaphor by a top US official. Many variants explicitly infer that speculative madness is contagious and can swiftly contaminate society at large: contagion, epidemic, national mania,

⁵ For additional gambling metaphors, see Mackay (1995 [1841]: 70, 71); Carswell (1960: 152, 156, 162); Shiller (2000: 41-42); Brenner (2002: 180).

mass hysteria, mass insanity, collective madness. A subvariant of this species could be SPECULATION IS A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE.

During the final stages of financial bubbles, the gambling and madness metaphors often ominously combine before the impending crash as can be seen in the following quotation from *The Economist* published one year before the Internet meltdown:

Whereas investors on Wall Street are merely exuberant, the casino capitalists who spend seven or eight hours a day at their PCs trading Internet shares appear to be stark, staring mad [...] Many of the online gamblers who have earned a fortune in paper profits betting their savings on shares in Yahoo!, Amazon and the rest will never get their money. (*The Economist* 30 January 1999: 15)

It is easy for experts to give evidence of speculators' follies. For example, Galbraith recalls the feverish passion of American investors for air stocks in the 1920s, and how they over-invested in the Seaboard Airline Company, only to find out, but too late, that Seaboard Airline was not an airline at all, but a railroad company (1961 [1955]: 48-49)⁶.

5. Where British and American speculative metaphors differ

The American stock market emerged a century later than England's but US brokers quickly adopted the language and the practices that had been perfected in London. They were also deeply influenced by the South Sea Bubble which had left its impact on American colonial society: "When the South Sea Bubble burst in 1720, Americans interpreted the event much the same way as it was interpreted in England; it was widely understood as proof of the danger posed by stockjobbing. [...] As in England, the word 'bubble' itself became a general pejorative term" (Banner 1998: 126). The Americans adopted speculative metaphors as part of their English financial heritage and their own numerous speculative episodes largely influenced the British in their turn, so much so that it is now difficult to differentiate British from American metaphors. In one respect, however, British metaphors come out with a distinctive flavour that sets them apart: they almost always smell of the sea. The original financial trauma involved an overseas trading company and shook a sea-faring nation: it left a long-lasting maritime mark on the British speculative culture. Stuart Banner observes: "The fall of the South Sea Company had so great an influence on attitudes toward the market that marine imagery was consistently used to describe this relationship between market insiders and investors" (Banner 1998: 55). British metaphors are indeed rich in floods (of securities proposed to the public), waves (of rising and falling prices), whirlpools (of speculation),

⁶ For additional madness metaphors, see Mackay (1995 [1841]: 49, 55, 57, 71); Galbraith (1990: 1, 3, 19).

sharks and pirates (well-connected insiders), deep seas (of debt). The British metaphors we have quoted include ‘flying ships’ and Icarus falling into the sea and floundering in the waves (see 2.2.) As recently as the 1930s, John Maynard Keynes proved to be a scrupulous heir to the British culture of marine metaphors (see 4.1.). His mention of a casino capitalism is definitely Anglo-American, but even though his bubbles clearly disembed themselves from the “steady stream of enterprise”, they do not fly, they float “on a whirlpool of speculation”.

As a largely continental nation, the Americans have experienced speculative episodes which have been very different from one another, involving land, canals, railroads, heavy industry, new technology, so that American-made metaphors tend to draw on a larger and more diversified speculative culture. They include “castles in the air”, “space ships”, “levitation”. Still, the original bubble image has been kept as the archetypal mould of all speculative metaphors on both sides of the Atlantic and has been successfully exported to many countries.

6. Conclusion

We have identified and analysed four metaphors which repeatedly occur in British and American discourses on financial bubbles. They successively develop as bubbles form and burst. In chronological order they are: (i) the flying metaphor, (ii) the weightlessness metaphor, (iii) the gambling metaphor, and (iv) the madness metaphor.

These metaphors combine into a meaningful sequence of signals because they are interconnected by an underlying megametaphor which provides the basic explanatory framework making sense of financial bubbles. The disembedding megametaphor’s message is that (i) by increasing too fast (ii) and with no economic justification, speculative prices disconnect the stock market from the economy and subvert economic logic. As a result, (iii) the stock market’s function is marginalized into that of a game of chance and (iv) persistent speculators are irrational.

The diversity of our corpus shows that bubble metaphors have been extensively used by laymen and experts alike. These figures are not mere ornaments of speech. They help authors explain the nature of speculation, and removing them from articulate expression would reduce its capacity to describe and convince. They clearly illustrate Donald N. McCloskey’s (1985: 76) argument that thinking processes are inherently related to metaphorical expression: “Perhaps thinking is metaphorical. Perhaps to remove metaphor is to remove thought”.

Of course, not all discourses invariably reproduce the same explanatory pattern in exactly the same way. Because using metaphors is part of the authors’ freedom of expression, some may indulge in certain metaphors and others may change the order of their occurrence. However, given the long and similar traditions of stock market practice both in Britain and in America, most discourses spontaneously refer to some part of the underlying metaphorical framework when they deal with speculation. As a transnational and transhistorical metaphor-

ical explanation of speculative bubbles, it has become part of a common British and American financial culture. The distinctly maritime flavour of the British metaphors, which is also due to the origins of the South Sea Bubble, adds diversity to the Anglo-American speculative culture without damaging it.

Finally, one of the dramatic aspects of financial bubbles is that their outcome is highly uncertain and that the resulting suspense – inordinate wealth or financial ruin are at stake – stimulates journalistic comment. That is where studying discourse metaphors may come in handy for ESP specialists. In effect, bubble metaphors may be viewed as the discursive symptoms of bubbles and, because we have identified their basic chronological order of occurrence, they may operate as signals suggesting potential evolution. For example, a large debate raged during the Internet Bubble as the proponents of the “new economy” opposed the more cautious analysts about the outcome of the stock market boom. The former believed the rise would be long-lasting whereas the latter considered it unsustainable and expected a crash. A careful coverage of *The Economist’s* financial articles between 1996 and 2000 shows that the four bubble metaphors basically appeared in the order presented above. The gambling and madness metaphors occurred last and, according to our explanatory framework, announced a potential crash. The analytical tools proposed in this research paper may then be useful to the ESP classes who study business English through real time press coverage. In speculative periods, students might identify and relate the metaphors they find in newspaper articles and other media comments. If they observe that the flying and weightlessness metaphors multiply and morph into a disembedding mega-metaphor, they may infer that a bubble is probably in the making. Then they may predict the emergence of the casino and madness metaphors together with an inevitable crash. Sharing the same metaphorical bubble culture as English-speaking journalists will enable them not only to understand events and texts better but also to anticipate them.

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A note on the corpus

It is impossible to build an exhaustive corpus of discourses on speculative bubbles in English. Even if limited to the British and American literature on the subject, books and press articles are too numerous to record, let alone compile. The author has therefore tried to make the corpus practical and representative. It is composed of sixteen different types of British and American discourses and the authors, who include both financial experts and laymen, are contemporary witnesses, journalists, financial historians and economists. Many of these texts are well-known classics, such as Keynes's *General Theory* or Galbraith's *The Great Crash 1929*. However, it is interesting to observe that the high-flying specialist and the common man generally resort to similar types of metaphors when it comes to expressing their interpretations of financial bubbles. This corpus could of course be considerably extended, but adding new documents might not significantly alter the present analysis of bubble metaphors. On the contrary, new material would probably provide additional evidence of its validity.

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An initial corpus-driven analysis of the language of call centre operators and customers

Martin Warren

Abstract

This study adopts a corpus-driven approach to analysing patterns of spoken language use of operators and customers in the call centre industry. The data analysed come from a specialized corpus of inbound (i.e. from the USA) telephone service encounters collected in the Philippines. The paper employs some of the methodologies of corpus-driven analyses that are of practical relevance to practitioners in the call centre industry. It demonstrates the ways in which the findings of corpus linguistics research can contribute to our understanding of intercultural workplace communication, and so potentially lead to a better understanding of such communication practices. Some of the most frequently occurring patterns of language use are described and discussed in relation to the negotiation of situated meanings and the role played by small culture (Holliday 1999), in particular organizational culture. The contribution of institutionalized participant roles is found to be closely connected with issues of face management by operators and customers. It is shown that these patterns of language use can also help to identify key aspects of the communication process. Finally, the implications of some of the findings for the vocational training of call centre operators are discussed.

1. Introduction

The call centre industry is fast expanding, found virtually in all vertical industries, and especially associated with banks, insurance companies, airlines and hotels (callcentre.co.uk). To date, much of the research into the call centre industry focuses on issues of technology and operations management (see, for example, Mendeny 1996; Barber 2000; Dawson 2001; Waite 2001; Bocklund & Bengtson

2002; Sharp 2003; Abbott 2004). Waite (2001), for instance, provides a practical guide on how to navigate the business, technical, and financial issues in building and managing a customer contact centre. Menday (1996) discusses service level, operations, and project management, and Cleveland & Mayben (1997) examine the details and mathematics of forecasting, staffing, scheduling, and budgeting. There are others (see, for example, Hook 1998) who focus on call centre people issues such as recruitment and selection, training and skills development, and call centre motivation and culture. A recent study (Mukherjee & Malhotra 2006), for example, reveals that a clear understanding of the role of frontline staff plays a critical role in explaining employee perceptions of service quality. To date, surprisingly little is known of the language processes and usage of operator-customer interaction. One exception to this observation is a study by Seddon (1999) who found that the only reliable method to determine the factors that cause unwelcome call volume was to sit with agents as they made or received calls to listen to and classify call messages based on function. Another exception is a set of studies compiled by Baker, Emmison & Firth (2005) which describe linguistic investigations of naturally-occurring spoken interaction in telephone helplines dealing with the provision of healthcare, emotional support and counselling, technical assistance and consumer rights, tourism and finance in the US, the UK, Australia, Scandinavia, the Netherlands, and Ireland.

This study differs from the kinds of call centre concerns and issues outlined above in that it is a corpus linguistics study, whose aim is “the analysis and description of *language use, as realised in text(s)*” (Tognini Bonelli 2001: 2). The paper describes a corpus-driven study of a specialized corpus of inbound call centre discourses, comprising naturally-occurring telephone service encounters. The corpus-driven approach to linguistic analysis is an inductive, ‘bottom-up’ study of the language (*ibid.*: 14), which emphasizes that theoretical statements are a product of the evidence from the corpus (*ibid.*: 75). In the economic context of the Philippines, a relatively poor and underdeveloped country in which many university graduates end up doing relatively menial work compared to their counterparts elsewhere in the region and beyond, both the educational background and the English language proficiency of the call centre operators are of a high standard. In this study, therefore, the English language level of the call centre operators is not seen as a central issue when discussing their English language usage.

The first aim of the study is to illustrate how basic word and word combination frequency searches of a corpus alone are able to reveal recurrent patterns of language use that are of potential benefit to those in the call centre industry. Another aim of the study is to describe how the call centre operators and customers create and negotiate meanings in the small culture communicative event of call centre telephone service encounters, through investigating the respective choice, and patterning, of words made by the two sets of speakers. An analysis of the speaker’s choice of single words and word associations can illustrate how meanings, experiences and participant identities are encoded and conveyed

directly by the choice of particular words, and indirectly by patterns of lexical co-occurrences (Stubbs 1996: 97-98). This paper, therefore, not only discusses the use of individual words, but also, and more importantly, “which words collocate, and which words occur in which grammatical constructions” (Stubbs 1996: 97-98); in other words, the choices that a speaker makes of lexical and grammatical patterns to produce different meanings (see, for example, Sinclair 1991; Hunston 2002; Tognini Bonelli 2001). The findings will be accounted for by examining the socio-cultural, physical and linguistic contexts in which the interactions are situated.

2. The notion of small culture

This study uses the term ‘culture’ in line with Holliday (1999) and adopts his notion of ‘small culture’, as opposed to ‘large culture’. Holliday makes the case for adopting the term ‘small culture’ to describe “small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behaviour” (*ibid.*: 237). These small cultures stand in contrast to what Holliday terms ‘large cultures’ which he argues can lead to “culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping” (*ibid.*: 237). The work of Hofstede (see, for example, 1991), in which he presents his taxonomy of dimensions onto which large cultures are plotted, and the work of Hall (see, for example, 1976), which employs the notions of low-context and high-context cultures to capture the key components of ‘national culture’, both represent work which has attempted to describe ‘large culture’ across a range of behaviours. Holliday argues that “ethnic, national or international difference provides only one lamination” (*ibid.*: 260) with respect to culture in what he describes as our increasingly “multi-cultural at very level” (*ibid.*: 260) societies. Another criticism of large culture levelled by Holliday (*ibid.*: 244) is that it runs contrary to our increasingly globalized world in which we lead cosmopolitan and multicultural existences and in which geographical boundaries are becoming less and less relevant. Studies of small culture, which includes institutions such as “work, leisure, interest and discourse” (*ibid.*: 260), are seen as appropriate in this study in which an institutionalized discourse of a particular speech community (i.e. call centre operators) has patterns of language use which is distinct from their interlocutors (i.e. call centre customers). Such discourse can therefore be viewed as the site of intercultural communication. Holliday (1999: 252) makes the case that the notion of ESP in applied linguistics which is premised on the existence of different speech communities, each with particular patterns of language behaviour, is an implicit acknowledgement of the existence of small cultures. Holliday’s notion of culture is supported by others such as Sarangi & Roberts (1999) who describe how institutional, professional and life world discourses interact to form multi-layered ‘hybrid discourses’ such as the discourses examined in this study where the highly routinized and institutionalized discourse of the operators meets the less routinized, but also institutionalized, discourse of the customers. In this study, then,

it is argued that the patterns of language use identified manifest the institutionalized roles of the participants and hence the situated small culture. The identification of these patterns is of potential benefit to the call centre industry in general and to language trainers in particular.

3. Data of study

This study examines a specialized corpus of call centre discourse. A specialized corpus is a “corpus of texts of a particular type”, aiming to be “representative of a given type of text” and being used by researchers “to investigate a particular type of language” (Hunston 2002: 14). The specialized corpus contains approximately three hours of data with 52 inbound calls. The total number of words spoken is 28,468, and the length of the calls ranges from 28 to 1,159 words. The call centre operators spoke 15,972 words (i.e. 56.1% of the total talk), while the customers spoke 12,496 words (43.9%). As Table 1 shows, all of the possible permutations of gender mix between the operators and the customers are represented in the corpus. Male participants are more numerous for both the operators (i.e. 32 versus 20) and for customers (i.e. 29 versus 23).

Table 1. Gender mix in the telephone service encounters

Operator - Customer Female - Male	Operator - Customer Female - Female	Operator - Customer Male - Female	Operator - Customer Male - Male
12	8	15	17

All of the data are orthographically transcribed, and the corpus was interrogated using the software ConcGram© (Greaves 2005) which has integrated functions, such as creating word frequency lists, comparing wordlists, and generating concordances.

4. Findings and discussion

This study compares the top fifty most frequent words and the top twenty three-word contiguous word associations spoken by the two sets of speakers. The word frequency lists for the operators and customers are given in full in the Appendix.

4.1. Comparison of self- and other-address forms

One of the disparities between the word frequency lists lies in the ways in which the two sets of speakers employ self- and other-address forms (see Table 2).

Table 2. Comparison of self- and other-address forms (100 most frequent words)

Operators (1-100)			Customers (1-100)		
1:	YOU	3.71%	1:	I	3.17%
3:	I	2.10%	3:	YOU	2.07%
7:	YOUR	1.28%	11:	MY	0.86%
17:	WE	0.79%	13:	ME	0.74%
23:	ME	0.59%	40:	WE	0.31%
24:	SIR	0.57%	57:	I'VE	0.23%
34:	I'M	0.41%	76:	YOU'RE	0.17%
40:	MA'AM	0.38%			
49:	YOU'RE	0.33%			
56:	MY	0.27%			
69:	OUR	0.21%			
72:	US	0.19%			

Table 2 shows that the operators employ both a greater number and a greater variety of forms of address (12) than the customers (7). Of these twelve forms, five are other-address (YOU, YOUR, SIR, MA'AM, and YOU'RE) and seven self-address forms (I, WE, ME, I'M, MY, OUR and US). For the customers, there are only two other-address (YOU and YOU'RE) and five self-address forms (I, MY, ME, WE, and I'M). The higher number of forms used by the operators can be accounted for by their much more frequent use of the honorifics SIR (99 times) and MA'AM (66 times), compared to the customers who only use both of these honorifics eight times, and so these two honorifics do not appear in the top 100 most frequent words used by the customers. The use of the honorific SIR is discussed again later in the paper.

The operators also make far greater use of other-address forms, WE (ranked 17 as opposed to 40 for customers), US and OUR, which are not in the customers' top 100 word frequency list at all. These differing patterns of use are a product of the operators using these forms in a non-inclusive way (i.e. they do not refer to the speaker plus hearer) to refer to themselves and the company as a whole which can have the effect of impersonalizing (Brown & Levinson 1987; Kasper & Rose 2002; Watts 2003) the message being communicated by the operators.

The operators are therefore seen to be more other-oriented and the customers more self-oriented from the reverse rankings of the address forms YOU and I in the two lists. Again, this can be explained by the respective institutionalized roles of the two sets of participants, namely each customer is phoning to ask for some kind of service for her/himself, and the operator's role is to provide that service to the customer. There is, therefore, a power differential in the context of this small culture. The operators might have 'expert' power (French & Raven 1959) in that they have expertise in terms of knowledge and/or information that the customers usually do not have, but this is more than countered by the customers having 'legitimate' power (*ibid.*) over the operators due to their designated roles in this small culture in which they are basically being served by the operator who has been trained in how to put into practice customer care skills.

4.2. Comparison of words shared by operators and customers

Table 3 below contains the most frequent 'lexically-rich' words used by the two sets of speakers in the top 50 words of the word frequency lists (see Appendix). Lexical words, or 'content words' or 'information words', are nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. They are the words that are usually described as carrying the information. Analysing the relative frequencies of different lexically rich words used by the operators and customers will enable an understanding of the ideational meanings negotiated between the speakers. In this study, we have broadened the category to include 'lexically rich' words which is a category that transcends the traditional division between lexical and grammatical words. So-called grammatical words will also be seen to carry information in the discussion that follows (also see the discussion of GET). Analysing the relative frequencies of different lexically rich words used by the operators and customers will enable an understanding of the ideational meanings negotiated between the speakers.

Table 3. Comparison of lexically-rich words (50 most frequent words)

Operators				Customers			
8:	OK	30:	DO	8:	OK	32:	KNOW
10:	HAVE	33:	PLEASE	14:	HAVE	33:	NUMBER
16:	SO	38:	HELP	19:	BE	35:	YEAH
18:	JUST	39:	HOW	22:	RIGHT	37:	NOT
22:	BE	40:	MA'AM	23:	JUST	39:	NO
24:	SIR	42:	RIGHT	24:	SO	43:	NEED
25:	NUMBER	45:	NOW	25:	GET	44:	GOT
26:	THANK	50:	HERE	27:	DO	45:	HOW
27:	YES			28:	NOW	49:	THERE
28:	NAME			29:	YES	50:	THEN

From Table 3, the lexically-rich words which are frequently used by both sets of speakers are extracted (see Table 4), and then lists of the lexically-rich words which are only used frequently by either the operators or the customers are compiled (see Table 5). From the word frequency lists alone presented in Table 4, it might be assumed that there are similar patterns of language use across the two sets of speakers.

When these common, or shared, words are examined in context, it can be seen that while the words themselves may occur with similar levels of frequency between call centre operators and customers, the actual patterns of usage in the local discourse contexts reveal some interesting differences. In this paper, this point is illustrated by looking in detail at the patterns of use of OK, RIGHT, JUST and HAVE.

Table 4. Shared lexically-rich words in top 50 most frequent words

Operators		Customers	
8:	OK	8:	OK
10:	HAVE	14:	HAVE
16:	SO	19:	BE
18:	JUST	22:	RIGHT
22:	BE	23:	JUST
25:	NUMBER	24:	SO
27:	YES	27:	DO
30:	DO	28:	NOW
39:	HOW	29:	YES
42:	RIGHT	33:	NUMBER
45:	NOW	45:	HOW

OK

The word OK can perform structural and propositional functions in text. When it brackets units of talk (Schiffrin 1987), or indicates how the utterance that contains it is a response to, or a continuation of, some portion of the prior discourse (Levinson 1983: 88), it is a discourse marker. The operators' use (215, 1.23%) of OK shows that it is used as a discourse marker (see, for example, Stenström 1994) on 69 occasions (i.e. approximately 32% of all instances) with the remaining 146 instances conveying propositional meaning rather than having a primarily discourse organizational function. These two uses of OK are also found in the customers' talk, but the use of OK as a discourse marker is less common (25 instances, 15%) and 85% of the usage of this word by the customers is to convey propositional meaning.

Another difference in the use of OK between the sets of speakers is that the operators use it in utterance initial position 70% of the time, with the remainder occurring in utterance medial and utterance final positions. The customers, however, tend to use OK in utterance initial position more often (83%) with only 17% of the instances occurring in utterance medial or final positions. This difference in usage in terms of utterance position is linked to another difference, which is that the main functions of OK are not the same for operators and customers. The operators mainly use OK to confirm what the other speaker has said and then continue to speak, or to introduce new information. The most frequent forms of this function are listed below:

- OK SO (18)
- OK LET ME and OK LET'S (16)
- OK I WILL and OK I'LL (17)

The customers use OK primarily to acknowledge and confirm what the operator has said, and the most frequent forms of this function are given below:

- OK (40)
- OK + THANK YOU (20)

- OK + ALRIGHT and OK + RIGHT (7)
- OK + OK (7)
- OK + GOOD and OK + FINE (5)

This difference in usage is based on the two sets of speakers using OK for different functions. One of the products of this is that the customers are more likely to say only OK (40, 21.7%), as a minimal response, in a turn to confirm or acknowledge what the previous speaker has said, while this pattern of usage is much less frequent for the operators (16, 8.5%). This pattern also explains in part the fact that customers are more likely than the operators to begin their utterances with OK. The patterns of language use are, again, a product of the institutionalized roles of the participants resulting in the discourses exhibiting characteristics of this particular small culture.

RIGHT

The difference in the occurrence of minimal responses found with OK is further evidenced in the patterns of use of RIGHT. Again, the customers are more likely to simply say RIGHT (19, 28.8%) as a minimal response to confirm or acknowledge what the operator has said, whereas the operators say RIGHT on its own only three times (4.7%). Another difference in the patterns of use is when RIGHT is used to emphasize what is being said. It is found that the operators are roughly twice as likely to use RIGHT for this function (22, 35%), compared with the customers (11, 16.6%). The most common form of this function for both sets of speakers is RIGHT NOW (16 instances spoken by operators and nine by customers), and for the operators other forms are RIGHT IN FRONT (5) and RIGHT AT MY PHONE (1), and for customers RIGHT UNDERNEATH (5) and RIGHT AMOUNT (1). Both operators and customers have similar patterns of use for RIGHT when used as a tag (10 and 11, respectively) and the confirmatory THAT'S RIGHT (nine and eight). There are also instances of both the operators (5) and customers (3) using RIGHT in the sense of 'not left'.

JUST

The next word which is frequently used by both operators (134, 0.77%) and customers (65, 0.47%) is JUST. Again, an interesting difference is found in how this word is used by the two sets of speakers. The operators primarily use JUST to hedge a request made to the customers, as can be seen from the most frequent forms listed below:

- JUST A MOMENT (27)
- JUST GIVE, JUST SEND, JUST NEED, JUST ASK, JUST TRY, JUST TELL (22) (i.e. JUST + verb)
- JUST TO VERIFY and JUST TO CHECK (21)
- JUST WITH ME (18)
- LET ME JUST (16)

- JUST + negative (4)
- JUST MAKE SURE (3)

Generally speaking, then, the operators employ JUST to mitigate requests or to mitigate the need to explain a procedural point of some kind. This use is described by pragmaticists (see, for example, Brown & Levinson 1987; Kasper & Rose 2002; Watts 2003) as minimizing the imposition for the benefit of the hearer and contributing to maintaining the face of the participants. The customers, on the other hand, mainly use JUST to emphasize the immediacy of what is being said. The main forms employed by the customers are listed below:

- I JUST (30)
- JUST + A MOMENT AGO (19)
- JUST + DON'T and JUST + CAN'T (5)

There are no instances of customers saying LET ME JUST to the operators. They use the word JUST more often to intensify what is being said rather than to hedge it. This difference may be explained by the institutional roles of the participants with the customers in a position where they do not feel the need to hedge when making a request to the operators. The operators, however, are clearly in a different role (i.e. one of relative subservience) in this small culture encounter and frequently hedge what they say. This discussion of JUST only illustrates one form of hedging that distinguishes the respective roles of the speakers, and there are other forms which could be further investigated.

The last word that is frequently used by both operators and customers – HAVE – is discussed later in the paper when contiguous word associations are examined.

4.3. Comparison of words used differently by operators and customers

The following discusses those words which are frequently used by one group of speakers but not the other (see Table 5 below) – SIR, THANK and NAME by the operators, and GET, KNOW and NEED by the customers.

Table 5. Words in top 50 most frequent words not shared by operators and customers

Operators		Customers	
24:	SIR	25:	GET
26:	THANK	32:	KNOW
28:	NAME	35:	YEAH
33:	PLEASE	37:	NOT
38:	HELP	39:	NO
40:	MA'AM	43:	NEED
50:	HERE	44:	GOT
		49:	THERE
		50:	THEN

Operators: SIR

It has been discussed that the operators make use of the honorific SIR (99, 0.57%) much more often than the customers (8, 0.064%) due to their institutionalized roles in this small culture setting. It is also useful to look into the specific patterns of use for this honorific by the operators, who use SIR for two functions. One function is to signal deference to the customer (37) and the other is to mitigate speech acts (62).

The main forms used by the operators to signal deference are listed below. These are all fairly predictable patterns of use for honorifics such as SIR in a service encounter in which the service provider is expected to give overt signals of deference (Brown & Levinson 1987) to the customer/client:

- YES SIR (20)
- I SEE SIR and I UNDERSTAND SIR (7)
- OK SIR (5)
- THAT'S RIGHT SIR (3)
- YOU'RE WELCOME SIR (2)

The second function of SIR is to mitigate certain forms of speech acts and this supports the earlier discussion of JUST, which is used much more often to mitigate speech acts by the operators. The reason is that operators are more likely to mitigate speech acts due to their institutionalized role in these telephone service encounters in which there is an inherent power differential based on the customers' legitimate power over the service provider. Hence this is another example of the speakers minimizing the imposition and so attending to face work. The three kinds of speech act that are mitigated by SIR are given below:

- Give a dispreferred response such as a disagreement (35), utterance initial
- Give an instruction (14), utterance medial
- Ask a question (13), utterance final

What is also interesting is that the position of SIR in these speech acts also follows fairly predictable patterns. In dispreferred responses (Schegloff *et al.* 1977; Sacks 1987; Yule 1996), SIR is typically utterance initial. When giving instructions, SIR tends to be utterance medial. When asking questions, it is usually utterance final.

Operators: THANK

Another marker of the subservient role of the operators relative to the customers is the higher frequency of the word THANK (88, 0.51%), compared to customers (33, 0.24%). In all instances, both for operators and customers, THANK is co-selected with the collocate YOU, making it the invariant core of a lexical item (Sinclair 2004). The use of this phrase also underlines the often formulaic nature of the operators' talk, and this aspect is returned to when word associations are examined. Two formulaic expressions, THANK YOU FOR CALLING XXXX (41) and THANK YOU FOR HOLDING/WAITING (10), account for many of the

instances, with the remainder mostly functioning as a response to information solicited from the customers (21). The position of this phrase is also quite predictable with THANK YOU occurring mainly in utterance initial position (65).

Operators: NAME

NAME is spoken more frequently by the operators (82, 0.47%) than the customers (24, 0.17%). Similarly, this higher frequency is more evidence of the more formulaic nature of the operators' talk. In these service encounters, there are certain moves which are obligatory for the operators to perform and one of these is to identify the customer by name in order to retrieve or record the customer's details, and sometimes operators introduce themselves to the customers (e.g. MY NAME IS XXXX, 13 times). The result of this formulaicity is that NAME is frequently spoken in a question (51), with the question mostly containing a modal verb (33), resulting in the forms CAN I HAVE YOUR + NAME (13), MAY I HAVE YOUR + NAME (11), or the less deferential CAN I GET YOUR + NAME (3), and MAY I GET YOUR + NAME. On the relatively few occasions (7) that customers ask operators for their names, they all use the less deferential form WHAT'S YOUR + NAME, which further underscores the institutionalized power differential that exists between the two sets of speakers, and which manifests itself in the patterns of language use in the data in a number of ways.

Customers: GET

The frequency of use of GET by the customers (62, 0.45%) is almost double that of the operators (33, 0.19%). The word GET, in combination with its collocates, is very productive with multiple meanings. When used by the customers, GET is often part of a phrasal verb (e.g. GET THROUGH, GET INTO, GET OUT, GET ON, GET BACK). The customers tend to co-select GET with a range of collocates to generate sixteen different meanings (see Table 6).

Table 6. Customers: multiple meanings of GET in combination with other words

get = receive (14)	get it = understand (3)
get = obtain (10)	get = become (2)
get = have (6)	get there = arrive (2)
get through/into = access (4)	get back = return (2)
get = possess (4)	get out = send (2)
get out = take something out (4)	get to = go to (1)
get = be (3)	get on = join (1)
get it off = remove (3)	get it to = make it do (1)

The operators, however, employ GET to impart a much narrower range of meanings, which partly explains the much lower frequency of use. The operators seem to use GET to generate only five meanings: *to obtain* (13), *to have* (12), *to receive* (4), *to be* (2), and *to return* (2). This restricted use of GET also illustrates that the operators are much less likely to use GET in the form of a phrasal verb.

Customers frequently use GET in combination with the collocates I and ME (48), which links back to customers in these telephone service encounters being inevitably more self-oriented given their communicative goals. Due to the overall communicative purpose of the interaction, the customers quite often use GET in combination with a negative construction (16, 25.8%). It might be worth investigating further to see whether the operators are aware of all the other possible meanings used by the customers. If operators prove to be unaware of the many meanings generated by GET, in combination with its collocates, training materials could be developed to rectify this shortcoming.

Customers: KNOW

The customers use KNOW (55, 0.40%) more often than the operators (32, 0.18%). The word KNOW is either used to convey a propositional meaning by the customers (45, 81.8%) or as a filler or an appealer (Stenström 1994) when it is in the invariant form YOU KNOW. The following phrasings are found in the specialized corpus studied:

- I DON'T KNOW and I KNOW NOTHING (22)
- YOU KNOW and DO YOU KNOW (20)
- NEED TO KNOW and WANT TO KNOW (3)

As discussed previously, the institutionalized roles of the participants are clearly at work again here in this small culture context. The customers are often seeking answers or information that they perceive they ought to know. This explains the relatively high occurrence of the word KNOW with DON'T and NOTHING (22, 38.6%), and that it is mostly propositional. The operators' use of KNOW is more likely to be non-propositional (12 out of 32, 26.3%). In addition, there are fewer instances of KNOW combined with DON'T (7, 18.4%) and no instances of KNOW + NOTHING. These findings are, again, in line with the institutionalized role of the operator as the provider of answers and/or information to the customer, again reflecting the communicative purpose of these discourses situated in this particular small culture.

Customers: NEED

The customers use NEED (41, 0.30%) proportionately slightly more than the operators do (39, 0.22%). The analysis of NEED shows that it has predictable patterns both in terms of orientation and the structures in which it occurs. Most of the customers' use of NEED (31, 75.6%) is self-oriented and co-selected with the subject pronoun I, i.e. I (DON'T) NEED. There are only two instances (4.7%) of YOU NEED, where YOU refers to the operators; and six instances (14.6%) of YOU/WE NEED, where the subject pronoun is used generally. These findings further illustrate the role of the customer in the service encounter.

The reverse of this pattern is found in the operators' talk with I NEED

accounting for 35.8% of instances, and YOU NEED, where YOU refers to the customers, accounting for 28.2% of instances. There is also a tendency for operators to use WE NEED (30.7%), where WE refers to the company and the speaker herself or himself and has the effect of impersonalizing the request from the operator.

The structures in which NEED occurs are predictable and uniform across all instances in the call centre corpus. They are listed below in rank order based on frequency:

1. Proform + NEED + infinitive (50)
2. Proform + NEED + determiner + noun (22)
3. I + NEED + noun (8)

4.4. *Contiguous three-word associations*

With respect to the top twenty contiguous three-word associations used by the two sets of speakers (see Appendix), in this section we look at contiguous occurrences of word associations which are sometimes termed ‘clusters’, ‘bundles’, or ‘n-grams’ by others (see, for example, Biber *et al.* 1999; Carter & McCarthy 2006).

The most significant finding from an examination of the lists is the much higher frequency of occurrence of three-word associations in the operators’ talk compared with the customers’. For example, the top five three-word associations used by the operators range in frequency from 50-25 instances, but for the customers the range is much lower at between 14-8 instances. This difference is a product of certain discourse moves, and the speech acts associated with those moves, being highly predictable in these service encounters both in terms of occurrence and the actual words spoken on the part of the operators. Thus three-word associations are found to be relating to the opening sequence when the operator thanks the customer for calling the organization (e.g. THANK YOU FOR, YOU FOR CALLING, FOR CALLING XXX), introduces herself or himself (e.g. MY NAME IS), offers to assist the customer (e.g. CAN I HELP, HOW CAN I, MAY I HELP), asks for standard details or information (e.g. LET ME JUST, CAN I HAVE, DO YOU HAVE), and ends by thanking the customer for making the call (e.g. THANK YOU VERY).

As described, the service encounter from the customers’ perspective is much less predictable, and therefore has far fewer predictable contiguous word associations. Nonetheless, the study finds three-word associations relating to the customers’ requests for information or assistance (e.g. I NEED TO, I DON’T KNOW, DO YOU HAVE, I DON’T HAVE, ARE YOU SAYING, CAN’T GET IT), responses to questions from the operators regarding the customers’ details (account/policy/purchase order numbers, name and so on) (e.g. XXX UNIT #, NUMBER IS #, MY NAME IS), and, on occasion, expressions of thanks at the end of the service encounter (e.g. THANK YOU VERY).

HAVE

The word HAVE has been chosen for more detailed analysis because it figures quite prominently in the three-word associations used by both operators and customers. Despite its overall high frequency of occurrence, HAVE in the operators' talk is double the frequency in the customers' talk (194, 1.11% versus 100, 0.73%). Table 7 describes the operators' use of three-word associations with HAVE, and Table 8 the customers'.

Table 7. Operators: three-word associations with HAVE

Word association	Freq.	%
I HAVE YOUR	28	0.16
MAY I HAVE	24	0.14
CAN I HAVE	15	0.09
DO YOU HAVE	11	0.06
YOU HAVE A	10	0.06

Table 8. Customers: three-word associations with HAVE

Word association	Freq.	%
DO YOU HAVE	8	0.06
I DON'T HAVE	6	0.04
I HAVE BEEN	5	0.04
BECAUSE I HAVE	4	0.03
[CAN I HAVE	0]	
[MAY I HAVE	0]	

Tables 7 and 8 show more interesting differences in the patterns of language use between the operators and the customers. For example, the most frequent three-word association with HAVE spoken by the operators is I HAVE YOUR, and the second most frequent association for the customers is I DON'T HAVE, reflecting very clearly their respective roles and overarching communicative purposes. These tables also show that many of the associations are parts of questions, and so the operators are found to be asking with MAY I HAVE, CAN I HAVE, and DO YOU HAVE, whereas the customers only use DO YOU HAVE which is also a relatively more direct question form. This is another example of the relative power differential between the participants in these service encounters. In other words, when the operators use question forms that serve to mitigate requests, and so minimize the imposition.

The subject matter of the questions elicited by the two forms (i.e. with and without a modal verb) is listed below:

MAY I HAVE/CAN I HAVE

- your name, your full name, your first and last name, your complete name, your whole name, the full name of the account holder
- your email address
- the zip code of the address
- your phone number, your cell phone number
- a policy number, your loan number, a social security number, your contract number
- the last four numbers of the card, the last four digits of the credit card, your card number, your/the new credit card number
- a CD writer
- the return authorization

DO YOU HAVE

- any number
- a pen and paper
- my computer icon showing there
- anything else you need
- any other ...

The above shows a discernible pattern of language use when the operators choose which question form to employ. The operators select either MAY I HAVE or CAN I HAVE when requesting personal details and other kinds of information from the customers, and so these forms may play a part in mitigating the face threat to the hearer. Questions using the structure DO YOU HAVE, on the other hand, are of a less intrusive nature, such as asking if the customer needs additional help, if they can find icons on their computer screen, if they have writing utensils, or if they have any other form of identification when they do not have their policy/contract/loan/etc. number. This pattern of language use shows, as noted earlier, that the operators more frequently seek to mitigate speech acts which place any kind of demand on the customer, a practice which is in keeping with service providers being mindful to practise their customer care skills in order to be perceived to be providing a quality service to customers.

5. Conclusions

This study has used some basic corpus linguistics methodologies, namely the generation of single word and contiguous word association frequency lists, to describe a specialized corpus of inbound call centre discourses. It has shown that such an examination of frequencies and patterning of word co-selection can be useful to describe the institutionalized small culture of these service encounters, identify participant roles, analyse the pragmatic use of languages use by the two sets of speakers, and offer a useful introduction to some of the language patterns in this genre.

Corpus linguists are interested in uncovering recurrent patterns of language use, using computer-mediated methods applied to (preferably) large collections of representative texts (Sinclair 1991). Despite the relatively small size of the specialized corpus studied, consistent and generalizable patterns of language use have been found. Future studies investigating a larger call centre corpus may put to the test the assumption that the findings presented here are not likely to change very much, given the nature of this kind of call centre discourse with its relatively high proportions of predictable formulaic expressions in the utterances, particularly on the part of the call centre operators.

Future studies might compare the language used by male and female operators and customers, the communicative role of discourse intonation in the telephone interactions (Cheng 2004), and examine other aspects of the multi-faceted cultural dimensions of the discourse (Cheng & Warren 2006). It would also be interesting to compare call centre operators and customers from different countries (i.e. different cultures and mother tongues).

The findings of the study also have applications for the call centre industry through raising the language awareness of its employees and highlighting possible areas in need of language training. The existence of a corpus of call centre talk can serve as an invaluable language resource and serves to underline the usefulness of the notion of small cultures in informing the analysis of language use. As Holliday (1999) points out, the existence of small cultures, and a better understanding of their implications for language use, needs to be given more attention in the field of English for specific purposes. A corpus provides real-life examples of best (and less than best) workplace practice, reveals patterns of language use to highlight in language training, and provides real-world dialogues that can be edited and used in training call centre operators how to handle the unexpected.

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APPENDIX: Word Lists in Frequency Order

Word	Freq.	%	
OPERATORS			
1	YOU	646	3.71
2	THE	545	3.13
3	I	366	2.10
4	TO	316	1.82
5	IS	273	1.57
6	THAT	268	1.54
7	YOUR	222	1.28
8	OK	215	1.23
9	AND	206	1.18
10	HAVE	194	1.11
11	FOR	190	1.09
12	IT	190	1.09
13	A	157	0.90
14	CAN	155	0.89
15	THIS	147	0.84
16	SO	146	0.84
17	WE	137	0.79
18	JUST	134	0.77
19	IN	133	0.76
20	ON	117	0.67
21	OF	110	0.63
22	BE	109	0.63
23	ME	102	0.59
24	SIR	99	0.57
25	NUMBER	96	0.55
26	THANK	88	0.51
27	YES	88	0.51
28	NAME	82	0.47
29	IT'S	81	0.47
30	DO	79	0.45
31	'RE	78	0.45
32	WOULD	74	0.43
33	PLEASE	73	0.42
34	I'M	71	0.41
35	ARE	70	0.40
36	MAY	69	0.40
37	WHAT	67	0.38
38	HELP	66	0.38
39	HOW	66	0.38
40	MA'AM	66	0.38
41	THAT'S	66	0.38
42	RIGHT	63	0.36
43	BUT	59	0.34
44	ONE	59	0.34
45	NOW	58	0.33
46	OR	57	0.33
47	WILL	57	0.33
48	WITH	57	0.33
49	YOU'RE	57	0.33
50	HERE	56	0.32

Word	Freq.	%
CUSTOMERS		
1 I	436	3.17
2 THE	411	2.99
3 YOU	284	2.07
4 TO	282	2.05
5 IT	230	1.67
6 AND	210	1.53
7 THAT	180	1.31
8 OK	166	1.21
9 A	163	1.19
10 IS	158	1.15
11 MY	118	0.86
12 IN	116	0.84
13 ME	101	0.74
14 HAVE	100	0.73
15 ON	100	0.73
16 FOR	78	0.57
17 WHAT	78	0.57
18 THIS	75	0.55
19 BE	73	0.53
20 IT'S	69	0.50
21 I'M	66	0.48
22 RIGHT	66	0.48
23 JUST	65	0.47
24 SO	65	0.47
25 GET	62	0.45
26 OF	62	0.45
27 DO	61	0.44
28 NOW	61	0.44
29 YES	58	0.42
30 CAN	56	0.41
31 DON'T	55	0.40
32 KNOW	55	0.40
33 NUMBER	53	0.39
34 WAS	49	0.36
35 YEAH	49	0.36
36 'VE	48	0.35
37 NOT	47	0.34
38 WITH	44	0.32
39 NO	43	0.31
40 WE	43	0.31
41 YOUR	43	0.31
42 THEY	42	0.31
43 NEED	41	0.30
44 GOT	40	0.29
45 HOW	40	0.29
46 OUT	40	0.29
47 ONE	38	0.28
48 OR	37	0.27
49 THERE	37	0.27
50 THEN	36	0.26

Word	Freq.	%	
CONTIGUOUS THREE-WORD ASSOCIATIONS			
OPERATORS (1-20)			
1	I HELP YOU	50	0.29
2	THANK YOU FOR	47	0.27
3	YOU FOR CALLING	36	0.21
4	I HAVE YOUR	28	0.16
5	CAN I HELP	25	0.14
6	HOW CAN I	25	0.14
7	MAY I HELP	25	0.14
8	MAY I HAVE	24	0.14
9	MY NAME IS	21	0.12
10	HOW MAY I	20	0.11
11	LET ME JUST	16	0.09
12	CAN I HAVE	15	0.09
13	HELP YOU TODAY	15	0.09
14	FOR CALLING ...	13	0.07
15	... UNIT #	11	0.06
16	DO YOU HAVE	11	0.06
17	THANK YOU VERY	10	0.06
18	YOU HAVE A	10	0.06
19	YOU WANT TO	10	0.06
20	YOUR PHONE NUMBER	10	0.06
CUSTOMERS (1-20)			
1	I NEED TO	14	0.10
2	I DON'T KNOW	12	0.09
3	... UNIT #	11	0.08
4	MY NAME IS	9	0.07
5	DO YOU HAVE	8	0.06
6	YOU VERY MUCH	8	0.06
7	WHAT DO YOU	7	0.05
8	I DON'T HAVE	6	0.04
9	I WANT TO	6	0.04
10	THANK YOU VERY	6	0.04
11	AND I DON'T	5	0.04
12	I HAVE BEEN	5	0.04
13	NUMBER IS #	5	0.04
14	THE START BUTTON	5	0.04
15	TO GET THE	5	0.04
16	YOU SENT ME	5	0.04
17	ARE YOU SAYING	4	0.03
18	BECAUSE I HAVE	4	0.03
19	CAN'T GET IT	4	0.03
20	CHECK FOR #	4	0.03

Crossovers in legal cultures in Westminster and Edinburgh: some recent changes in the language of the law¹

Christopher Williams

Abstract

In this paper I describe and analyse some of the changes that have been taking place in the language of the law in the United Kingdom over the last few years. As is well known, legal language tends to be intrinsically conservative in any country or organization. However, the specific nature and evolution of the English legal system, based on Common Law and the principle of precedent, and on the general idea that legally binding documents should contain all foreseeable hypotheses rather than outlining general questions of principle, have produced a particularly cumbersome and antiquated type of legal language. This unique brand of legal English was exported over time from the mother country to its colonies and dominions. Since the early 1970s the Plain Language movement has been actively campaigning to modernize legal language, with varying degrees of success. In Williams (2005) I asserted that it has been in the English-speaking countries in the southern hemisphere, notably Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, that there has been a greater willingness by the authorities to modernize the language of legislative texts with respect to the more 'conservative' legal establishments of nations of the northern hemisphere, especially the United Kingdom and the United States.

Recently, however, changes have been introduced in the drafting of a few laws in the UK, not only in Westminster but also in Scotland. This can be seen, firstly,

¹ I am very grateful to Andy Beattie at the Office of the Scottish Parliamentary Counsel and to David Halsey of Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs for their observations and comments on an earlier draft of this paper. I wish to thank Sophie Cacciaguidi-Fahy for her comments on a subsequent draft of this paper. All remaining inaccuracies and shortcomings are, of course, my own.

in the passing of five pieces of restyled tax legislation since 2001 in the UK, thus bringing to fruition a sizeable part of the mammoth project set up in 1996 to rewrite UK (primary) direct tax law in a more user-friendly way; and secondly in the drafting of a number of recent Acts passed by the Scottish Parliament which follow the principles of Plain Language.

After providing a succinct summary of the language of the law in the English-speaking world, I analyse and contextualize the recent changes in the UK mentioned above, highlighting not only the innovative features introduced and some of the difficulties encountered by those attempting to restyle legislative texts, but also the models on which these innovations have been based. I conclude by asking whether it would be more accurate to speak of ‘legal Englishes’, given the diversity of legal cultures existing in the English-speaking world today, or whether the use of the plural form might be misleading insofar as the effects of worldwide cross-cultural phenomena such as the Plain Language movement and of international institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the World Trade Organization would seem to be gradually ironing out some of the differences between national legal cultures, leading to a greater homogeneity and standardization of legal language in the English-speaking world.

1. Introduction

Much has been written about the intrinsically conservative nature of the language of the law which, together with the language of religion, is often considered to be the genre of language most resistant to change. The evolution of legal English has also been widely studied, and its specificities and idiosyncrasies have been highlighted by various authors (see, for example, Tiersma 1999). The complexity and long-windedness of legal English have been criticized for centuries, but it was David Melinkoff’s groundbreaking work in 1963, *The Language of the Law*, with its stigmatization of legal English, that sparked the movement to reform the way the English-speaking legal profession writes (Wydick 2000: 38).

In the early 1970s the first attempts at adopting a more user-friendly language were under way in the US in the sphere of private law. And in May 1973 in the UK the members of the Renton Committee were appointed “with a view to achieving greater simplicity and clarity in statute law, to review the form in which public Bills are drafted” (Renton 1978). Meanwhile the Plain Language movement was rapidly gaining ground.

The development and objectives of this movement as it spread to other English-speaking countries have been well documented elsewhere (a good overview of Plain Language worldwide is provided by Asprey 2003), so they will not be dwelt upon here. Suffice it to say that arguably the greatest successes in terms of reforming legal English have been in Australia and New Zealand, where the respective Offices of Parliamentary Counsel are openly committed to endorsing the principles of Plain Language in drafting legislation. Indeed, the Australian

Office of Parliamentary Counsel not only provides an online Plain English Manual (2003) but also a wealth of related material and links to Plain Language websites and activities worldwide.

Some of the laws passed in South Africa have also been drafted in accordance with the principles of Plain Language, notably the Labour Relations Act 1995 and the Constitution of 1996. But for a nation that has 11 official languages and pressing socio-economic problems to face, it has proved hard to sustain the impetus of the Plain Language movement after the initial surge of enthusiasm for change following the collapse of apartheid and the transition to democracy. In Canada some provinces such as Alberta have drafted laws according to Plain Language principles, while others have not. British Columbia has also promoted a series of Plain Language initiatives. However, Canadian authorities are currently rewriting Employment Insurance legislation “based on the International Plain Language movement” (Service Canada 2007). In Ireland too there has been mixed progress, with innovation occurring mainly in the private sphere: in 2000 the Law Reform Commission published a report advocating the use of Plain Language, but this would not seem to have produced any noticeable results to date, except in the field of tax and financial legislative drafting.

Despite the fact that the Plain Language movement first became active in the United States and subsequently in the United Kingdom before spreading to Canada, Australia, New Zealand and ultimately South Africa, there have been few serious attempts by the American and British political establishments to reform legislative drafting. This state of affairs led me to hypothesize the existence of “a North-South divide” (Williams 2006: 239), with the English-speaking countries of the southern hemisphere showing an inclination to innovate the language of legislation while most of the legal establishments of the English-speaking countries of the northern hemisphere displayed greater resistance to change. This division seemed to find further confirmation in the essentially traditional way legal texts were drafted in English by major international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. A cursory glance at the English version of the European Constitution of 2004 should suffice, with its adoption of old-fashioned legal adverbials such as *hereinafter* and *therein*, not to mention its massive use of the modal auxiliary *shall* – the fifth most common word in the entire text (see Williams & Milizia forthcoming) – so heavily contested by many Plain Language exponents.

Recent events, however, suggest that there are growing signs of change occurring within the legal establishment of the UK in drafting legislative texts. The changes could hardly be defined as yet as sweeping or revolutionary, neither is there any guarantee that they will lead to a more general trend towards innovative legal language. But both the areas I wish to focus on below have at least the potential to act as a catalyst for changes that could be far-reaching.

2. Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs Tax Law Rewrite Project

2.1. *Birth of the Project and the influences shaping its development*

In the UK there is no dedicated plain-language function in central government (Carr 2006: 27). The Renton Committee on the Preparation of Legislation, set up in 1973, was “the first official enquiry since 1870 to consider how Acts of Parliament should be drafted” (Renton 2006: 6). However, as Lord Renton himself lamented shortly before his death in 2007:

[...] the Parliamentary draftsmen and the Civil Servants did not welcome our recommendations, for it meant that, instead of drafting legislation in varied ways that they preferred, it would have to be drafted in accordance with broad principles which we had defined. Therefore, although those principles had been welcomed by the Lords and the Commons, the Civil Servants and Draftsmen carried on in their own way. The Lord Chancellor and the rest of we Parliamentarians were simply ignored, except occasionally; and so our statutes have not for the most part improved their drafting – and clarity has not been achieved to a great enough extent (*ibid.*).

When making his proviso – “except occasionally” – Lord Renton may have had in mind the ongoing project to rewrite the UK's tax law which was first set up in 1996 under John Major's Conservative government. Kenneth Clarke, Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, jocularly stressed in 1997 the enormity of the task at hand:

In last year's Budget I announced a project to rewrite Inland Revenue tax legislation in plain English. That is a tall order. The project is as ambitious as translating the whole of *War and Peace* into lucid Swahili. In fact, it is more ambitious. I am told that *War and Peace* is only 1,500 pages long. Inland Revenue tax law is 6,000 pages long and was not written by a Tolstoy ('Plans for 1997' in HM Revenue & Customs 2007)².

That year the Revenue and Custom's Tax Law Rewrite Project (RCTLRP) became operative. It explicitly acknowledged its debt to Australia and New Zealand in the initial stages of its development:

Similar projects are under way in Australia and New Zealand. We have continued to keep in close touch with both projects – which are two or three years ahead of us – and we are very grateful for the help we have received from both countries (*ibid.*).

² The RCTLRP's website is itself a model of clarity and provides detailed information about how the tax laws have been redrafted, including an annual report of its activities.

In December 1993 the Australian government had announced its intention to set up the Tax Law Improvement Project, “a three year project, funded from 1 July 1994, to simplify the income tax law. The aim is to rewrite the law with a better structure and make it easier to understand” (Australian Office of Parliamentary Counsel 1995)³. The Australian Project in turn acknowledged the influence of the Rewrite Project of New Zealand’s Inland Revenue Department which, in 1995, was already “well into the process of rewriting” its tax laws (*ibid.*).

In Australia, the first phase of the project was completed in 1997, though since then there have been further attempts at restyling tax-related legislation: in 1999 the Tax Law Improvement Project embarked on another major reform of the language of tax law. In New Zealand the project has taken much longer than was first envisaged, and parts of the Income Tax Act are still being redrafted, the key objective being “to produce tax legislation that is clear, uses plain language and is structurally consistent. This should make it easier for taxpayers to identify and comply with their income tax obligations, and ultimately save them time and money” (New Zealand Inland Revenue Department 2007). The RCTLRP has observed, however, that it has been “impossible to quantify the likely benefits” of rewriting tax legislation and that “neither Australia nor New Zealand, although further advanced with their rewrite projects, have yet been able to establish any better information on these aspects” (‘Plans for 1999/2000’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007).

The initial expectation that the RCTLRP would last five years has proved to be over-optimistic. After more than a decade – and at an annual cost of £3 million – it shows no imminent signs of having exhausted its role. The policy favoured by the RCTLRP has been to introduce rewritten tax law in stages – known as ‘staged implementation’. The alternative is the so-called ‘Big Bang’ approach of introducing the reformed tax law under one bill. But this was rejected by the working party chaired by Lord Howe of Aberavon⁴ which published its report on 7 November 1996, stating that 6,000 pages of tax legislation would be “too much for Parliament to handle in a single Bill, and that a number of Bills will be needed” (‘Plans for 1997’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007). The planning framework – known as the ‘ghost code’ – laid down in 1997 was that the project would produce “about seven acts” (*ibid.*).

Particular importance was given to the question of the ordering of the legislation, not only to “give a logical flow to the finished product” but also to envisage “how each stage fits into the whole” (‘Plans for 1998/99’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007). Here too the RCTLRP was influenced by the experiences of similar projects in Australia and New Zealand:

³ The 1995 progress report ‘Building the new tax law’ opens with two maxims by Albert Einstein: “Everything should be made as simple as possible; but not simpler”, and “The hardest thing in the world to understand is income tax law”.

⁴ Lord Howe continued to chair the Project’s Steering Committee until December 2005 when he was replaced by Lord Newton of Braintree.

We decided not to reorder material before rewriting it since a pre-determined structure may constrain the later rewriting. This has proven to be the case in the Australian and New Zealand rewrite projects (*ibid.*).

Rewritten legislation produced by the RCTLRP to date includes the Capital Allowances Act 2001, the Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, the Income Tax (PAYE) Regulations 2003, and the Income Tax (Trading and Other Income) Act 2005. On 20 March 2007 the Income Tax Act (ITA) was given Royal Assent and came into force on 6 April 2007. We will focus our attention on this last piece of legislation.

2.2. Some stylistic features of the Income Tax Act 2007

The ITA is a massive text stretching to over 308,000 words (728 pages in its PDF version). Details relating to various aspects of how the laws were drafted are available at the official website. The main principles in drafting reform are outlined in the subsection entitled ‘Drafting style’ which are worth reporting in full:

We use colloquial English wherever we can, adopting shorter sentences in the active, rather than passive, voice. We replace archaic expressions with more modern ones, taking care not to change the law inadvertently by rewriting words or expressions that have a well understood meaning⁵. We harmonise definitions across the Acts where possible, and then make it easier for the reader to find defined terms. We group similar rules together in one place, and make greater use of signposts to guide the reader to other relevant provisions. And we continue to explore other techniques for making legislation more accessible.

These techniques include:

- the use of shorter subsections and sections as well as shorter sentences;
- method statements;
- formulas;
- the use of tables where appropriate;
- the use of abbreviated references to Acts;
- the use of lettered conditions;
- the use of informative labels for definitions wherever possible;
- our attempt to achieve gender neutral drafting so far as it is practicable to do so at reasonable cost to brevity and intelligibility; and
- the use of non-statutory explanatory materials such as Explanatory Notes and Tables of Origins and Destinations.
- We remain willing to consider new techniques and to develop existing ones if we can improve the legislation still further by doing so (‘Tax law rewrite – report and plans, 2006/07’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007).

⁵ Such words and expressions were called ‘sacred phrases’ by the Committee set up to restyle the US Federal Rules of Civil Procedure: see Kimble (2005: 55).

The claim of using “colloquial English wherever we can” is particularly striking⁶. In the late 1960s, Crystal & Davy (1969: 194) defined the language of legal documents as being characterized by its exceptionally high degree of formality and as being “about as far removed as possible from informal spontaneous conversation”. Legal drafters applying the principles of Plain Language have naturally tried to reduce this exceptionally formal quality, and it is in this sense that a restyled text originally written in antiquated and cumbersome prose might appear to be more ‘colloquial’. However, it might be more accurate to speak of a shift towards a type of standard formal English that a non-expert can understand rather than towards colloquial English.

In her assessment of the New Zealand tax rewriting project of which she was a member, Margaret Nixon singles out three examples of “colloquial expressions”, namely *This section is about*, *The fact that* and *gets a negative result*, which have been introduced into New Zealand’s redrafted tax laws (Nixon 2004: 24). The UK’s ITA contains two instances of *This section is about*, 19 of *The fact that*, and just one instance where the verb *get* is used: “Subsection (2) applies if an individual (a) gets married or enters into a civil partnership in a tax year” (Income Tax Act 2007: 25). But in general the style is decidedly formal, as may be seen in these two samples from the ITA taken at random:

If there is a letting of accommodation only part of which is furnished holiday accommodation, just and reasonable apportionments are to be made for the purpose of determining what is comprised in the trade treated as carried on (Income Tax Act 2007: 63).

Expenses cannot be used to reduce the beneficiary’s income for income tax purposes so far as they are expenses which have fallen, or may fall, to be taken into account for the purpose of calculating the trustees’ liability to income tax for any tax year (*ibid.*: 265).

The text is also highly technical, which is inevitable given the intrinsically complex nature of the taxation system. However, it is clear that considerable thought has gone into how to restructure the text in order to make it easier to follow. The pol-

⁶ Linguists such as Hundt & Mair (1999) and Leech & Smith (2006) have analysed the tendency of British and American English in recent decades towards “colloquialization”, i.e. the absorption of norms of spoken language into written language. What they are referring to are phenomena such as the increased use of progressive forms (e.g. “I’m lovin’ it”) instead of non-progressive forms, or of the *be going to* construction at the expense of other types of future time reference, even in relatively formal genres of language such as government-sponsored forms or university prospectuses. But it is hard to imagine such forms of colloquialization spreading to prescriptive legal texts, given the specific regulatory function they are required to perform. To give just one eloquent example, the percentage of cases of the progressive form of verbal constructions in British legislative texts has remained stable at one per cent for over 350 years (Williams 2005: 78). Recent legislative texts drafted in Plain Language are no exception in this regard.

icy of splitting up complex clauses into a number of shorter clauses or sentences is a noticeable and welcome innovation. Indeed, the only occasions where I have been able to identify what might be termed a more ‘colloquial’ style of legal drafting can be found in the ITA where the connectors *and* and *but* come in initial position in the sentence so as to break down the amount of information into more manageable chunks by splitting one sentence into two, or even three as is the case below:

- (5) “Allowable agricultural expenses”, in relation to an agricultural estate, means any expenses attributable to the estate which are deductible –
 - (a) in respect of maintenance, repairs, insurance or management of the estate, and
 - (b) otherwise than in respect of interest payable on a loan.
- (6) But expenses attributable to the parts of the estate used wholly for purposes other than those of husbandry are to be ignored.
- (7) And if parts of the estate are used both –
 - (a) for purposes of husbandry, and
 - (b) for other purposes, the expenses in respect of those parts are to be reduced so far as those parts are used for the other purposes (*ibid.*: 61-62).

But occurs in initial position in the ITA on 107 occasions, and in medial position on 223 occasions: thus almost one in three cases (32.4%) occur in initial position, a remarkably high proportion for such a formal type of text. I have compared this figure by taking a total of 11 UK Acts of Parliament passed in 2006-2007 where, out of 330 occurrences of *but*, 68 (20.6%) come in initial position, and 262 in medial position⁷. *And*, on the other hand, can be found in initial position in the ITA in only five instances, an indication of its more colloquial status with respect to *but* in initial position. Significantly (though not surprisingly), there were no cases of *and* in initial position in the other 11 Acts of Parliament mentioned above.

Moreover, the ITA text has indeed been ‘cleansed’ of archaic terms. Of the legal words listed in Office of Scottish Parliamentary Counsel (2006: 31: see section 3 below) as “generally considered to have served their time”, namely *aforesaid*, *forthwith*, *foregoing*, *hereinafter*, *notwithstanding*, *said*, *therein* and *whatsoever*⁸, the ITA contains only three instances of *notwithstanding*. A considerable portion of the text is also free of the controversial modal auxiliary that so typifies traditional

⁷ The initial vs. medial proportions are very uneven within the 11 texts. Some Acts are totally devoid of *but* in initial position, e.g. the Childcare Act 2006 (0 out of 18 instances), whereas in two of the Acts *but* in initial position is more common than in medial position, namely the Charities Act 2006 (26 instances out of 48) and the Equality Act 2006 (13 instances out of 19).

⁸ In its rewrite of Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003, the RCTLRP replaced the antiquated phrase ‘perquisites and profits whatsoever’ with ‘any gratuity or other profit or incidental benefit of any kind obtained by the employee’, as well as replacing ‘emoluments’ with ‘earnings’ (‘Plans for 2003/2004’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007).

legal texts, i.e. *shall*. In its ‘Plans for 1997’ the RCTLRP had explicitly stated “We will avoid using *shall*, except where it imposes statutory duties” (HM Revenue & Customs 2007). Although there are 59 instances of *shall* in the text, its first occurrence comes after 224,647 words. Furthermore, many of the cases where it is adopted refer to substitutions being made where the Act is textually amending an older Act.

Must, the *be to* construction, and the present tense would seem to be the alternatives to *shall* most widely used within the text. Examples of all three can be found in the following extract:

- (4) “The tax year 2007-08” means the tax year beginning on 6 April 2007 (and any corresponding expression in which two years are similarly mentioned is to be read in the same way).
- (5) Every assessment to income tax must be made for a tax year (Income Tax Act 2007: 4).

As for the claim of drafting sentences “in the active, rather than passive, voice”, a closer scrutiny of the 356 cases of *must* in the text highlights the fact that, as is often the case with legal drafting manuals, the stigmatization of the passive form is largely rhetorical and not matched by the facts. If we exclude the 107 cases where *must* is followed by a stative verb (generally *be*, but there are also cases of other statives such as *arise* or *consist*) we discover that *must* is followed by passive constructions in 124 cases, as opposed to 125 cases where the active form is used. In other words, *must* occurs in the passive form in almost 50 per cent of cases where there is a choice between active and passive voice.

Nevertheless, taken as a whole, the newly drafted tax laws are a vast improvement with respect to their predecessors. As to whether these drafting techniques might be applied to other areas of legislation, the RCTLRP is guarded in its forecast: “Parliamentary Counsel perceive that the style in which ITEPA [Income Tax (Earnings and Pensions) Act 2003] is written is a model of best practice and could, potentially, be rolled out across Government” (‘Plans for 2006/07’ in HM Revenue & Customs 2007). The use of the hypothetical conditional modal *could*, further hedged by the adverbial *potentially*, would seem to suggest that, at least for the time being, Westminster’s experiment in restyling legislative texts in Plain Language will be confined to tax law alone.

3. The Scottish Parliament and Plain Language

3.1. *The debate about restyling Scottish legal drafting and the influences shaping its development*

Calls for reforming the language of the law in Scotland go as far back as 1425 when a commission was appointed “to see and examine the bulkis of law of this realme [...] and mend the laws that need amendment” (cited in Office of

Parliamentary Counsel 2006: 1). The specificity of Scottish legal culture, past and present, with its unique blend of influences from both Civil law and Common law traditions, is briefly outlined below:

Although Scots common law has much more in common with continental civilian tradition than its English counterpart the fact that responsibility for legislating for Scotland lay with the Westminster Parliament for almost 3 centuries means that the degree of precision in Scottish Acts reflects that which appears in Acts which apply to other parts of the UK (not least because many Acts apply to the UK as a whole). The establishment of the Scottish Parliament has presented an opportunity for divergence in the style of Scottish legislation and it has been noticed that Acts of the Scottish Parliament seem to be remarkably short and succinct compared with legislation enacted at Westminster albeit that factors other than drafters drawing on the civilian traditions of Scots law may be at least partly responsible for this shift (*ibid.*: 8).

Soon after its creation in 1998, the Scottish Parliament began investigating how to improve legal drafting techniques. If the RCTLRP in Westminster looked exclusively to Australia and New Zealand as providing the most advanced models on which to base the rewriting of tax laws, the Scottish Subordinate Legislation Committee was influenced not only by English-language jurisdictions but also by other European models. The Committee highlighted the Plain Language initiatives adopted above all in Sweden but also Germany, as can be seen in the debate reported in Scottish Parliament (2005a)⁹. However, the Committee also expressed an interest in developments occurring in Australia, notably the Legislation Instruments Act 2003 at Commonwealth level which “provides for steps to be taken to promote the legal effectiveness, clarity, and intelligibility to anticipated users of legislative instruments” (Scottish Parliament 2005b) and, at Victorian State level, the Subordinate Legislation Act 1994, which “provides for guidelines on drafting practice to be adhered to” (*ibid.*).

In February 2006 the Office of the Scottish Parliamentary Counsel (OSPC) issued a booklet entitled *Plain Language and Legislation* which is available online and in audio format. It is divided into four chapters:

Chapter 1 – *what is plain language?* – explains what plain language is and gives some historical context to its association with the law.

Chapter 2 – *drafting legislation in plain language* – makes some objective observations about the interaction between the desire to use plain language and the constraints placed on the legislative drafter.

Chapter 3 – *international comparisons* – describes steps which legislative drafters in other countries have taken to enhance the clarity and accessibility of legislation.

Chapter 4 – *plain language techniques* – gives some examples of techniques cur-

⁹ See also the Submission from the Faculty of Advocates contained in the report at <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/business/committees/subleg/papers-05/sup05-03.pdf>.

rently associated with plain language drafting (Office of the Scottish Parliamentary Counsel 2006: 1).

The importance of the United Kingdom's RCTLRP in providing a model for restyling legislation is explicitly acknowledged:

The Scottish Parliament adopted a design for its Bills and Acts which is similar in style to that used in the Tax Law Rewrite Project and is more user friendly than the form previously used for Scottish legislation enacted at Westminster (*ibid.*: 19).

In Chapter 3, which contains an overview of how the Plain Language movement has affected legal drafting conventions worldwide, the booklet briefly examines developments not only in the UK but also in Ireland, Jersey, New Zealand, Australia and Canada. Of the non-English-speaking countries Sweden is again singled out as being the most advanced in the EU:

Sweden wishes to instil a new drafting culture within the EU and, in particular, considers that the old tradition of writing for experts rather than for the citizens of the EU must be changed (*ibid.*: 26).

Chapter 3 ends with an assessment of what the EU has done in recent years to make Community legislation more accessible and written in a style which, according to the European Council of Ministers' resolution of 8 June 1993, "should be clear, simple, concise and unambiguous" (*ibid.*).

The final Chapter of the booklet outlines some of the techniques that should be applied in drafting legislation in a more modern, user-friendly way.

3.2. Changes in drafting Scottish laws since 2000

To try to ascertain whether OSPC drafters have indeed modernized the language of legislation, I decided to examine a number of Acts passed by the Scottish Parliament, splitting the texts into two subcorpora. The first set of texts consists of the 11 Acts passed in 2000, making a total of 149,628 words¹⁰; the second set consists of 30 out of the 36 Acts passed between 1st January 2006 and 31st October 2007, making a total of 561,952 words. The reason for excluding six of the Acts (all related to transport) from the 2006-2007 subcorpus is because they were not drafted by the OSPC but rather by private lawyers insofar as they were introduced by external bodies (local authorities or private companies) and not by members of the Scottish Parliament¹¹.

¹⁰ The Scottish Parliament only managed to pass one Act, the Mental Health (Public Safety and Appeals) (Scotland) Act 1999, before entering the new millennium.

¹¹ I am indebted to Andy Beattie (personal communication) for drawing my attention to this point.

The length of text varies enormously, from 141 words (St Andrew’s Day Bank Holiday (Scotland) Act 2007) to 85,567 words (Bankruptcy and Diligence etc. (Scotland) Act 2007). The average length of text is 17,356 words.

I adopted two simple criteria to evaluate whether any noticeable changes had been made in drafting conventions between 2000 and 2006-2007: a) the frequency of archaic words, and b) the frequency of the modal auxiliary *shall* with respect to *must*.

a) The frequency of archaic words

We noted earlier that the terms listed by the OSPC as requiring replacement “with modern alternatives” (*ibid.*: 31) are: *aforesaid*, *forthwith*, *foregoing*, *hereinafter*, *notwithstanding*, *said*, *therein* and *whatsoever*. Not all of these terms could strictly be considered as archaic: *notwithstanding* and *whatsoever* are indicators, rather, of a highly formal style, the latter playing an essentially rhetorical role, i.e. it is redundant in functional terms, as can be seen in the following citation where the presence of *any* makes *whatsoever* superfluous:

Subsection (6) is without prejudice to the right of any person whatsoever to make representations to the authority as respects the report (Planning etc. (Scotland) Act 2006, Section 9(7)).

However, the other terms listed are all typical of an antiquated style of legalese. If we examine the 11 texts in the 2000 subcorpus we obtain the following:

Table 1. Frequency of archaic terms in the 2000 subcorpus (149,628 words)

Term	Number of occurrences	Frequency per 1 million words
<i>aforesaid</i>	1	7
<i>forthwith</i>	20	134
<i>foregoing</i>	3	20
<i>hereinafter</i>	1	7
<i>notwithstanding</i>	25	167
<i>said</i>	29	194
<i>therein</i>	6	40
<i>whatsoever</i>	1	7

The 2006-2007 subcorpus gives the following results:

Table 2. Frequency of archaic terms in the 2006-2007 subcorpus (561,952 words)

Term	Number of occurrences	Frequency per 1 million words
<i>aforesaid</i>	3	5
<i>forthwith</i>	15	27
<i>foregoing</i>	5	9
<i>hereinafter</i>	0	0
<i>notwithstanding</i>	25	44
<i>said</i>	20	36
<i>therein</i>	0	0
<i>whatsoever</i>	6	11

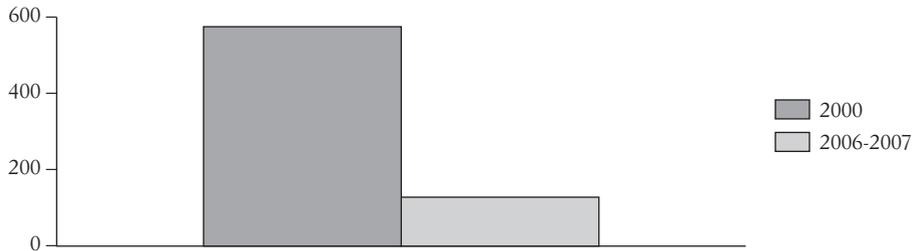


Figure 1. Frequency of archaic terms per 1 million words in 2000 and in 2006-2007

Thus we can observe a reduction of roughly 75% in the use of these terms between 2000 and 2006-2007, dropping from an average frequency of one per 1740 words in 2000 to one per 7594 in more recent texts¹², as can be seen in the graph above¹³.

Notwithstanding, *said* and *forthwith* remain the three most frequently used ‘archaic’ terms in both subcorpora. Of the terms listed, two have disappeared completely from the 2006-2007 texts, *hereinafter* and *therein*, words still used in the English versions of EU texts (for example, they appear respectively six and four times in the Constitution of 2004).

b) The frequency of *shall* and *must*

We noted earlier that the RCTLRP has a policy of avoiding *shall* “except where it imposes statutory duties” (HM Revenue & Customs 2007). However, to the best of my knowledge, no mention is made of what to use in place of *shall*. The OSPC, on the other hand, provides slightly more detailed guidelines about using modal and semi-modal auxiliaries:

Shall, must, is to, will

Debate rages over use of *shall* or *must* when imposing duties. Preference for *must* is gaining momentum: many consider using *shall* to indicate the imperative mood to be more ambiguous as it is more commonly understood as a way of making a statement about the future than as a means of imposing an obligation. Other options may be available if there is disagreement on preferred style (e.g. *it is for, is to* or *are not to*).

Declarations and applications

¹² In the six transport-related Acts of 2006-2007 drafted by private lawyers the average is one per 2690 words.

¹³ The distribution of archaic terms tends to vary enormously even among texts drafted in the same period. For example, 22 out of the total number of 29 instances of *said* in the 2000 subcorpus occur in a single text (Abolition of Feudal Tenure etc. (Scotland) Act 2000). It would be interesting to see whether the distribution of archaic words varies according to the size and subject areas of the acts in question. However, a detailed analysis has not been carried out here for reasons of space.

The most criticised usage of *shall* is when it is used for declaratory or descriptive purposes (e.g. *shall be guilty of, shall apply*). Declarative use can however sometimes find favour because of the resonance it can add (e.g. *there shall be a Scottish Parliament*) (*ibid.*: 35).

What we would expect to find, therefore, if we compare the two subcorpora, is a reduced use of *shall* and an increase in *must* in more recent texts. And this is indeed the case, as is outlined below:

Table 3. Frequency of *shall* and *must*

Texts from 2000 (149,628 words):

1608 occurrences of *shall* (1 every 93 words, i.e. 10,753 occurrences per 1 million words)

162 occurrences of *must* (1 every 924 words, i.e. 1082 occurrences per 1 million words)

Texts from 2006-2007 (561,952 words):

1266 occurrences of *shall* (1 every 444 words, i.e. 2252 occurrences per 1 million words)

1574 occurrences of *must* (1 every 357 words, i.e. 2801 occurrences per 1 million words)¹⁴

In brief, within the space of six or seven years, the frequency of *shall* has dropped in Scottish Acts by almost 80%, whereas the use of *must* has more than doubled, as can be seen in Figure 2.

However, if we look at the individual texts of 2006-2007 we can see that the changes are not uniformly spread. Nine of the 30 texts are completely devoid of *shall*, though five of these *shall*-free texts are extremely short, and of the remaining four, two are almost identical in structure and content, namely Budget (Scotland) Act 2006 and Budget (Scotland) Act 2007. A further four texts have a very low mean frequency of *shall*, i.e. less than one occurrence per 3000 words. At the other extreme Family Law (Scotland) Act 2006 has by far the highest concentration of *shall*, with 160 occurrences in 9231 words, i.e. one per every 58 words¹⁵.

It should also be pointed out that, as is the case with the ITA analysed in section 2, many of the occurrences of *shall* are where the Act is textually amending an older Act. Drafters often adopt the style of the Act being amended when making textual changes and so they continue to use *shall* in these circumstances even if they use *must* or other formulations elsewhere.

Taken as a whole, then, the changes being made in the drafting of Scottish laws are tangible and evidently ongoing.

¹⁴ In the six Acts drafted by private lawyers the average frequency is one per 125 words for *shall*, and one per 1278 words for *must*.

¹⁵ As yardsticks of comparison, the English version of the EU Constitution 2004 contains an occurrence of *shall* every 39 words, whereas the ITA 2007 cited above in section 2 contains an occurrence every 5235 words.



Figure 2. Frequency of *shall* and *must* per 1 million words in 2000 and in 2006-2007

4. Legal English or legal Englishes?

By way of conclusion, let us briefly put the changes currently taking place in legal drafting conventions in Westminster and Edinburgh into a wider context. It is no coincidence that both the United Kingdom's RCTLRP and Scotland's OSPSC take Australia as the most advanced model in the English-speaking world as regards legal drafting techniques. Since the mid-1990s all Australian legislation, both national and federal, has been drafted following the principles of Plain Language. The same is true of New Zealand as of 1997 (Tanner 2004: 9).

Given that every community – on a national and also on a more local level – develops its own legal culture and language to suit its own specific needs, it could be argued that while the template of legal English originated in England, the legal systems of English-speaking countries have evolved each in their own distinctive way, thus leading to a plurality of legal Englishes today. After all, the plural expression 'world Englishes' – referring to the various types of English used by a myriad of communities throughout the world today – has been widely accepted in linguistic circles for well over 20 years.

On the other hand, if we observe the ways in which the language of the law has been developing in the English-speaking world as a whole over the last twenty years or so, the overall trend appears to be towards standardization and homogenization. This is in no small part due to the influence of the Plain Language movement which is truly international in scope, with noteworthy exponents coming from a rich variety of countries. Modern technology and the Internet, allowing for the instant spread and exchange of information, have reinforced this tendency towards standardization in written texts and the need to reach an agreement over the exact meaning of terms. The globalizing trend in legal discourse (Gotti 2006) – spearheaded by the United States as the world's leading economic superpower – has resulted in the ever-growing importance of English as "the legal lingua franca of a shrinking world" (Drolshammer & Vogt 2003). Leaving aside the political question as to whether 'global English' is a form of linguistic imperialism or merely a "practical lingua franca" (Ives: 2006), it is now possible to speak of "legal globalization" which "covers all legal relations in a global society under the primacy of

common law and its language, resulting in the reordering of the power dynamics of legal English” (Frade 2007: 48).

Moreover, the prolonged existence of international organizations such as the United Nations or the European Union has also tended to bring about a gradual harmonization of national legal systems and cultures. This tendency has received further momentum in recent years thanks to the growing importance of relatively new institutions such as the World Trade Organization which establishes the rules governing international commerce.

In practice we need to take a nuanced view of what we mean by legal English, given that it comprises several subgenres. If we take into consideration, for example, courtroom discourse as is used not only by judges, lawyers and court officials but also by witnesses and other members of the lay public, constituting “perhaps the closest approximation to everyday speech of all public legal discourses” (Maley 1994: 13)¹⁶, then there may well be a case for upholding the existence of legal Englishes in the plural, especially if one thinks of the variety of discourse communities residing in the ‘Outer circle’ and ‘Expanding circle’ of users of English (respectively as a second language and as a foreign language: see Kachru 1989). A case in point could be, for example, in Nigeria where English is the official language used in some of the courts (generally the superior courts) but where none of the participants may be native speakers of English, thus giving rise to specific acrolectal, mesolectal, and even basilectal forms of English during cross-examination, especially by witnesses and other members of the lay public, which are evidence of a peculiar non-native variety of English that may differ markedly from the type of discourse to be heard in courts by native English speakers in an English-speaking country¹⁷.

On the other hand, the language of legal documents tends to be written in a relatively standardized way wherever English is used for drafting written texts of a legally binding nature. As regards this particular type of legal English, then, it would probably be more appropriate to stick to the singular form.

The recent changes that I have described in this paper suggest that the language of the law in the UK is becoming less archaic and slightly more user-friendly than it used to be. It remains to be seen whether the impetus set in motion by these changes will affect legal drafting conventions elsewhere in the UK.

¹⁶ However, according to Mattila (2006: 4) courtroom language can also be “especially formal, even archaic”.

¹⁷ I wish to thank Tunde Opeibe (personal communication) for drawing my attention to this aspect of Nigerian courtroom discourse in English.

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Notes on contributors

Sandra Campagna is Associate Professor of English at the Faculty of Economics, University of Turin. Her principal research areas are translation studies, cross-cultural studies (with particular reference to crosscultural humour) and sociolinguistics, where she has worked on the concept of “belonging” in multiracial communities in the UK. Her recent research interests are in the fields of intercultural communication in economic discourse and the web language domain. Within this research area she has developed hypertextual discourse analysis in a multimodal perspective. Her publications include two monograph studies: *Il Tono Comico. Prospettive Crossculturali*. Torino, Edizioni Libreria Cortina (1999); *Discoursal Strategies On-line: An Intercultural Approach to the Language of Charities*. Torino, Edizioni Libreria Cortina (2004).

Zohreh Eslami is an Assistant Professor in ESL education in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture at Texas A&M University where she teaches ESL Methodology, English in international contexts, and Assessment of ELLs, at both graduate and undergraduate level. She is currently teaching basic writing to Engineering students at Texas A&M University in Qatar and serves as the coordinator of the collaborative primary teacher education program between Texas A&M University and Qatar University. She received her PhD in Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education (SLATE) from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Abbass Eslami-Rasekh is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at Esfahan University in Iran. He has taught graduate and undergraduate level courses in English as a second language for the last 10 years. His research interests include issues related to the education of EFL and EAP students, EAP needs assessment, discourse analysis, and translation.

Pilar Mur Dueñas graduated in English at the University of Zaragoza (Spain). She subsequently obtained a competitive scholarship to carry on her doctoral studies at the same university, where she worked as a research fellow for three years. She has recently read her PhD thesis entitled “A contribution to the intercultural analysis of metadiscourse in Business Management RAs in English and in Spanish: a corpus-driven approach”. She is currently a junior lecturer at the University of Zaragoza. Her research interests focus on written academic discourse, and more specifically on the intercultural analysis of metadiscourse devices in research article writing.

Shanta Nair-Venugopal, formerly Professor in sociolinguistics and intercultural communication with the School of Language Studies and Linguistics, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, is currently a principal fellow at the Institute of Occidental Studies. Her publications include books, chapters in books and anthologies, and articles in *World Englishes*, *Asian Englishes*, *IJSL*, *LAIC*, *JIC*, *JAPC*, *Discourse & Communication* and *ESP Across Cultures*. She sits on the executive editorial board of the *Journal of Asian Pacific Communication* as well as *ESP Across Cultures* and has been featured as an interculturalist from the Asian Pacific region in *Business Discourse* (Palgrave Macmillan).

Blanca Quiroz is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture in the College of Education and Human Development, Texas A & M University. In 2005 she received her Ed.D in Human Development and Psychology from the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. She has extensive experience in conducting research with immigrant Latino populations, especially with Latino parents and their children. She is interested in studying the role of language on learning maths and science for ESL students and other cognitive aspects of bilingualism.

Michel Van der Yeught is a Senior Lecturer in financial English at the University of Toulon (France). His research interests focus on the English of the stock market (terminology, metaphors, culture and history). Recent publications include articles about the professional language and culture in Oliver Stone’s film *Wall Street*, the hyperbolic nicknames of stock market tycoons and a study of implicit messages in the New York Stock Exchange’s promotional campaigns. He is a regular contributor to *ASp*, the journal of the GERAS, a French ESP research group. He is currently working on a first non-American history of Wall Street.

Martin Warren is a Professor in the Department of English of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. He currently teaches and conducts research in the areas of corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, intercultural communication, and pragmatics. He has published a number of articles, many co-authored with Winnie Cheng, based largely on analyses of the Hong Kong Corpus of Spoken English.

Christopher Williams is Professor of English at the Law Faculty at the University of Foggia. His main research interests are in the field of tense, aspect and modality in contemporary English and in specialized discourse, particularly legal English. His most recent monographic work is *Tradition and Change in Legal English: Verbal Constructions in Prescriptive Texts* (Peter Lang). He is currently co-editing with Ilse Depraetere a volume on future time reference in contemporary English, to be published in a special issue of *English Language & Linguistics*. He is co-editor of *ESP Across Cultures*.

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