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“WELCOME, *AMIGO!*” THE (RE)CONSTRUCTION OF SPANISH AND LATINO IDENTITIES IN AVT The case of animated films in Italian dubbing

The aim of this paper is to explore the way in which Spanish and Latino identities are represented, constructed and (re)constructed in Anglo-American animated films and in their Italian dubbed versions. Ramírez Berg has pointed out that Hollywood films provide stereotypical Latino images, considering “U.S. Latinos and Latin Americans [...] as people with identical characteristics; as such, they could all be uniformly depicted stereotypically as bandits, harlots, Latin lovers, and so forth” (Ramírez Berg 2002, 6). Minutella has argued that in recent animated films “the portrayal of US Latinos and Latin Americans, especially Mexicans, is quite often through Latino stereotypes/caricatures” (2021, 195). De Bonis (2014) and Dore (2019) among others have shown how multilingualism is used in films and TV series as a means to generate humour.

This paper analyses a corpus of recent Anglo-American animated films containing characters speaking Spanish-accented English and portrayed as being Spanish, Mexican, Colombian/Latin-American or Latinos. Examples are taken from films such as the *Shrek* saga (2001-2010), *Puss in Boots* (2011), *Gnomeo & Juliet* (2011), *Rango* (2011), *Despicable Me 2* (2013), *Turbo* (2013), *Planes* (2013), *The Book of Life* (2014), *Ferdinand* (2017), *Coco* (2017) and *Encanto* (2021). The paper describes the way(s) in which Spanish and Latino identities are constructed in the animated films constituting the corpus. The main features of the verbal and visual representation of Spanish and Latino characters are pointed out, exploring how the non-native identity of such characters is constructed. The paper shows that typical linguistic features conveying linguacultural Otherness are instances of code-switching and code-mixing, as well as the use of Spanish-accented English. The corpus contains several characters who are depicted in a humorous and stereotypical way, although attempts to realistically portray Spanish or Latin-American identities can also be observed in some cases. This occurs for instance in more recent films such as *Coco* (2017) and *Encanto* (2021).

The paper further investigates how the linguistic diversity of these characters is dealt with in Italian dubbing. It discusses the translation strategies adopted by Italian dubbing professionals to approach the presence of Spanish-accented English and of the Spanish language in the film dialogues. It examines whether the Spanish/Latino identities are retained/preserved, reduced, neutralized or subverted in the Italian versions (De Bonis 2014; Minutella 2021). Cases of retention, hypercharacterisation (Parini 2009, 163; Minutella 2021), reduction, neutralization and subversion/adaptation are discussed, trying to ascertain whether any regularities in the way this Otherness is treated in Italian dubbing emerge.

Keywords: animated films; dubbing; Latino identity; Spanish identity; stereotypes.

which have been particularly chosen by those users who were banned from Facebook or Twitter and therefore moved to a platform with a less strict content moderation policy (Vergani et al. 2022). According to 2022 data, Telegram is the third most used chat platform in Italy with 15.5 million users, after WhatsApp and Messenger. Despite its large use, Telegram is only starting to receive extensive attention from scholars.

In this work I analyze 5 Italian Telegram groups that offer alternative information – @giorgiobianchiphotojournalist, @ByoBluOfficial, @davide_zedda, @ugofuoco, and @cesaresacchetti. The analysis has been developed adopting the combined perspectives of Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus-based Discourse Analysis (Baker et al. 2008). These methodological frameworks are particularly useful to analyze textual productions with similar characteristics within a specific cultural and social context, for instance, the current post-truth environment. Through a linguistic and terminological analysis of the corpus made by the 5 Telegram groups, I explore how the nationalist Italian identity is built and promoted in the counter-informative sphere on Telegram and how the authors of these channels depict the country and its issues.

4 of the 5 groups selected for the study are managed by a single individual, while @ByoBluOfficial is the only one administered by a private news website. All the groups have more than 60,000 followers, although only the authors are allowed to post messages. The channels present themselves as alternative or counter-informative sources of information and many of them have anti-system messages in their descriptions. Most of the groups have been known for spreading conspiracy theories together with conservative and nationalistic content.

To obtain data from the Telegram groups – which are all open to non-followers as well – I used a Python script based on the Telegram API, available on GitHub (Yousefi 2019). I downloaded the last 1000 messages from each group in the same period, in order to analyze content spread during the same timeframe – August 2023 – and related to the same events. Being interested in the spreading of nationalistic content in all these channels as part of the same anti-system and counter-informative environment, I decided to consider them as a single entity in the corpus creation. I therefore obtained a corpus of 605,536 words from 5000 messages. Then, I developed a linguistic study using the text analysis software Sketch Engine for keyword extraction and concordance search.

The preliminary results suggest that nationalistic content spread through these groups is frequently associated with conspiracy theories and misinformation. The first 10 keywords obtained include terms used to discuss environmental conspiracy theories and health misinformation, such as *scie* (“trails”, often used in “chemtrails”), Schwab, the economist who created the World Economic Forum at the center of the Great Replacement conspiracy theory, and *geoingegneria* (geo-engineering).

Searching for the concordances of words related to the concepts of nation, homeland and identity, the results show the description of a wounded country, which doesn’t receive the respect that it deserves. The following sentences have been found searching for the words *Italia* (Italy), *nazione* (nation), *sovranità* (sovereignty) and their modifiers:

1. *L'Italia non è libera, è una **nazione** schiava degli Stati Uniti*
Italy is not free, it is a slave nation under the United States
2. *O l'Italia ritornerà **sovrana** economicamente, o l'Italia morirà*
Italy will either return to be economically sovereign, or it will die
3. *Il nucleo della famiglia tradizionale senza il quale la **nazione** si estingue*
The nucleus of the traditional family without which the nation will be extinguished

4. *Poteri che hanno colonizzato l'Italia dal dopoguerra in poi*
The powers that have colonized Italy since the postwar period
5. *Il partito che ha consegnato l'Italia ai trafficanti di esseri umani*
The party that handed Italy over to the human traffickers

The same search also reveals that Italy is depicted as a beautiful country with great historical relevance. The frequency of expressions about its ancient Roman roots and Christian values is interestingly high. This confirms the widely analyzed tendency of nationalistic groups to recall the glorious past of their countries as well as their religious traditions.

The results obtained up to this point show that nationalistic content spread through Italian Telegram channels present many of the features that can be observed in nationalist newspapers or nationalist politicians' speeches. However, the presence of nationalistic rhetoric combined with conspiracy theories and false claims on social issues and protected groups differentiates Telegram's nationalistic discourse from mainstream nationalistic discourse, in which such dis-/misinformation is less frequent. It also reinforces the results of previous studies showing the use of such discourse combination – misleading and patriotic discourses – by conservative groups and individuals.

Keywords: nationalism; identity; Telegram; misinformation.

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“I’VE GONE VEGGIE BUT NOTHING SERIOUS” A corpus-assisted critical thematic analysis of partial veg*nism in Youtube comments

Whether it be animal rights, health, or environmental motivations, people’s tastes are becoming increasingly plant-based. However, some people only partially adopt these lifestyles with varying degrees of flexibility, as opposed to the more rigid positions like vegetarianism and veganism (henceforth veg*nism), which entail the complete exclusion of animal meat. This has led to the emergence of neologisms that classify veg*nism based on the type of meat included (e.g., lacto-ovo vegetarian) or the degree of adherence to the diet (e.g., semi-vegetarian) and sometimes the time of the day/year when veg*nism is practised (e.g. Vegan before 6:00pm), whose definitions are still in the process of being standardised in most dictionaries.

Along with the issue of clarity, the proliferation of such habits has also had ethical implications within the broader veg*n community. Indeed, despite veg*ns being “evaluated equivalently to immigrants, asexuals, and atheists, and significantly more negatively than Blacks” (MacInnis & Hodson, 2017, 6) by omnivores, veg*ns themselves discriminate against individuals who gradually or partially give up eating animal flesh without fully subscribing to the veg*n ideals for contaminating the “ingroup’s purity and morality” (Bagci et al., 2022, 1240).

Based on these premises and considering Social Media's contribution to the construction of collective identities (KhosraviNik, 2015), this paper investigates: i) the identification strategies of ‘partial’ veg*ns ii) and the concomitant disidentification strategies ‘strict’ veg*ns exercise to foster a sense of separateness (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001) in the online YouTube community through the lens of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

To this end, an initial list of 63 terms – 28 practitioners and 35 diets – based on TermCoord’s terminology list was considered. After cleaning the list in order to have neither explicit references to veg*nism nor to animal flesh, 8 terms remained: ‘demitarian’, ‘flexitarian’, ‘lessetarian’, ‘reducetarian’, ‘demitarianism’, ‘flexitarianism’, ‘lessetarianism’, and ‘reducetarianism’. These were used as queries for the search in titles and descriptions ordered by month from January 2, 2005 to November 27, 2022 in Mozdeh. The search in the corpus provided no results for ‘demitarian’, ‘demitarianism’, ‘lessetarian’, and ‘lessetarianism’; consequently, only comments on videos containing the term ‘flexitarian’, ‘flexitarianism’, ‘reducetarian’, or ‘reducetarianism’ in either the title or the description were considered in the corpus. Finally, distinct subprojects were created to exclusively contain comments featuring the same keywords used to build the corpus. At the end of the stage the corpus totalled 1,914 comments.

The methodology followed the 6 steps of reflexive Thematic Analysis as devised by Braun & Clarke (2021). Themes were elicited from the data through inductive analysis, requiring the presence of multiple instances that demonstrated a particular

pattern to be considered as a theme. At this point, a subset of themes along with accompanying excerpts from the corpus are provided to offer evidence of the identification and disidentification strategies employed by commenters from the three groups.

REDUCETARIAN(ISM): ‘gradual change and sustainability’, ‘dietary inclusiveness’ and ‘realism and pragmatism’. The reductetarian diet places a strong emphasis on gradual change and sustainability, aligning with the idea that small, manageable steps can lead to “[...] lasting behavioural change”. They also create a space where people can explore reducing meat consumption without feeling judged to conform to strict dietary labels for “transitioning phases help alleviate some of that pressure”. Also, they prioritise pragmatic choices that acknowledge the real-world challenges people face in making dietary changes. Rather than striving for perfection, they aim for achievable and meaningful progress in the belief that “communicating a way of making an impact without having to be perfect is good for the planet, ourselves and the animals”.

FLEXITARIAN(ISM): ‘feeling comfortable in any situation’, ‘plant-meat balance personalisation’, and ‘indulgence and ethical commitment’. Commenters emphasise the freedom of flexitarians to adjust their dietary choices based on their unique needs, preferences, and circumstances. This flexibility empowers them to navigate social situations, travel, or special occasions without feeling restricted by a rigid dietary framework and getting stressed for “[...] research[ing] specific ingredients to see if something is vegan”. Balance is another fundamental concept within the flexitarian diet, emphasising the importance of a well-rounded and diverse approach to eating. “Everyone is allowed to have a different balance” in combining plant-based foods with occasional, moderate consumption of animal products. Different degrees of ethical commitment and indulgence are also allowed. Some flexitarians may opt for sustainably sourced and ethically raised animal products; others, instead, may focus on specific health goals, or decide to eat meat on a whim because “it’s not bad to indulge every once [in a] while”.

*VEG*N(ISM)*: ‘Veg*n is the moral standard’ and ‘labels are misleading and dangerous’. Several commenters assert that veganism is the only morally-consistent stance when it comes to animal rights. In a few comments, for example, veg*nism is compared to other moral principles, such as anti-racism, where it is argued that just as there is a moral imperative to reject racism completely, the same applies to speciesism. In this respect, a commenter sarcastically refers to himself as someone who is trying to be as anti-racist as possible and sarcastically defines himself as a ‘reduceracist’. The linguistic and terminological concern is also brought to the fore; strict veg*ns argue that while “some labels are absolute, and they should remain that way”, some others like ‘flexitarian’ and ‘reductetarian’ dilute the vegan message.

In conclusion, the comments provide valuable insights into the disidentification strategies of strict veg*ns, the distinguishing traits and the subtle differences between flexitarians and reductetarians. Flexitarians are flexible in their occasional consumption of animal products, while reductetarians are more intentional and systematic in their efforts to reduce their overall consumption. Strict veg*ns, instead, support a rigid interpretation of veganism, emphasising the complete avoidance of all animal products. Expanding the corpus to include comments from diverse platforms could offer further or alternative insights into the identities of strict and partial veg*ns. Additionally, future research could explore the intersections between various (dietary) lifestyles and individuals’ identities, encompassing factors such as gender, age, race and socio-economic status. It is also essential to emphasise the importance of tracking linguistic innovations and standardisation to enhance

public awareness regarding emerging dietary trends and beliefs, thereby contributing to informed policymaking.

Keywords: identification and disidentification; thematic analysis; flexitarianism; reducetarianism; veg*nism.

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LANGUAGING DIVERGENT IDENTITIES IN SEPARATE JUDICIAL OPINIONS OF THE EUROPEAN COURT OF HUMAN RIGHTS A dialogical negation perspective

Supranational courts, such as the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), are frequently portrayed as having a distinct institutional identity, rhetoric or voice, quintessentially represented through judgments. And yet, judicial discourse at the ECtHR is hardly monolithic, especially at the level of the Grand Chamber of the ECtHR, composed of seventeen judges. Their judgments are a product of complex negotiation among the members of the panel, aimed at reconciling differences and

suppressing the personal identities of individual judges. These identities re-emerge in separate judicial opinions appended to judgments.

Separate opinions at the ECtHR have been part of its discursive practices since the earliest days, as they embody the right of judges to feel represented by the judgment (Art. 45.2 ECHR). When this representation does not occur, “Not bound by the straightjacket of the majority judgement and its legal validity, separatists feel free to speak their mind and follow their heart and soul” (Bruinsma 2006, 360). In other words, separate judicial opinions pursue the communicative goal of placing some distance between the majority – and the institutional voice of the Court – and the individual judge, reflecting competing linguistic, legal and cultural perspectives.

While separate judicial opinions have received fair recognition in the *legal* literature, from a *legal linguistics* standpoint, they remain largely under-researched, with few notable exceptions dedicated to this genre mainly in the US context. To the best of my knowledge, there are no linguistic studies exploring separate opinions at the ECtHR, and this study contributes towards filling in the existing gap by focusing in particular on the way in which separate opinions negotiate individual vs institutional voices in the complex (as well as legally and culturally stratified) domain of human rights jurisprudence.

The study is carried out on an ad hoc corpus of 236 separate opinions attached to the Grand Chamber judgments of the ECtHR over the period between 2013 and 2023.

To pursue the above-mentioned aim, the study relies on a theoretical-methodological toolkit encompassing multiple complementary perspectives. Central to this composite approach are the Bakhtinian concepts of heteroglossia and dialogism (Bakhtin 1981), i.e., the coexistence and interaction of multiple voices, perspectives and discourses within a single text. These concepts are employed to trace how individual judges emphasize their own voices and engage in dialogic interactions with the majority. More specifically, I conceptualize separate opinions as dialogically framed responses to the judgment, potentially anticipating future responses in case-law. A further macro-framework relied on in the analysis is that of Critical Discourse Analysis, which is used in the study to outline how single judges reclaim their power by discursively rebutting the majority’s conclusions or reasoning in their separate opinions. This approach explores the intricate interplay between the institutional identity, the individual identities of judges, and the dynamic interactions that shape the discourse of human rights jurisprudence. Finally, the qualitative analysis is supplemented by quantitative research applying the method of Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis. The #LancsBox software package is employed for lexical search and statistical data analysis aimed at exploring specific discourse features contributing to the positioning of the authors of dissenting opinions vis-à-vis the institutional voice of the Court.

To this end, the corpus-assisted discourse-analytical part of the study focusses on the dialogic uses of negation (Garzone 2016) as a linguistic tool that extends beyond mere grammatical function. Negation has been widely studied in a multitude of contexts and perspectives (see, e.g., Horn 2010). In separate opinions it serves as a marker of dissent and a vehicle for conveying alternative perspectives. By using negation “polemically” (Garzone 2016, 8) in separate opinions, dissenting judges reject the majority’s reasoning and assert opposing viewpoint. Thus, the study delves into how negation functions as a strategic linguistic device employed by judges to assert their unique identities within the collective decision-making process. Additionally – although to a limited extent – the study looks into interactional stance-taking patterns (Szczyrbak 2014). This framework helps elucidate how judges’ use adverbs and adjectives along with negation to convey their stance on the majority’s

conclusions, further enriching our understanding of the nuanced linguistic strategies employed in these opinions.

The findings reveal that syntactic patterns of negation (through such markers as “not”, “not ...but”, “no”, “any”, etc.) and lexical means of contrast (such markers as “fail*”, along with negative prefixes in evaluative adjectives and adverbs, markers of contrast, etc.) are systematically used by dissenting judges across different types of separate opinions to articulate their disagreement and divergence from the majority, as well as to highlight their personal perspectives. Interestingly, opinions marked as concurring display a comparable number of negative constructions. These patterns shed light on the intricate and multifaceted nature of identities within the ECtHR, ultimately enriching our understanding of how diverse perspectives contribute to the development of human rights jurisprudence on a global scale. The prospective dimension of negation emerges as an integral aspect of this discourse, offering a fresh perspective on the articulation of separate views within the court. Finally, the study challenges the dichotomy between institutional identity and the divergent identities of individual judges that, nonetheless, constitute the modern discourse of human rights, indirectly reflecting on how some courts still prohibit the creation of separate opinions, insisting on an artificial monolithic majority opinion.

Keywords: separate opinions; judicial discourse; European Court of Human Rights; dialogism; negation.

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TRANSLANGUAGING AS CREATIVE PRACTICE

What can we learn from our students about educational equity?

Higher education policies and practices around language do not always reflect the needs of an increasingly mobile and international student body. In the UK context this can mean that universities are unduly influenced by profit over situated practice(s) and that the English language and Eurocentric pedagogies can dominate minoritized people, their languages, cultures and ways of knowing. This can mean that reified pedagogies and practices are often based on Anglocentric curricula and policies. It is often assumed that English only is best for equitable and inclusive learning for all. Partially in opposition to a market driven educational context, there have been significant efforts to decolonize the university curriculum (Bhambra, Gebrial & Nişancioğlu 2018), as well as a desire for greater educational equity in relation to decentring the language curriculum within HE context.

Yet the role of named languages and translanguaging practices is often missing from discourses of equality, diversity and decolonising Higher Education. The specific context for this presentation is a creative arts university. This presentation reports on a linguistic ethnography study concerned with understanding the complexity of teaching and communication and draws on findings from the *Reimagining Conversations* research project (Odeniyi 2022) which investigated awarding gaps and the creative potential of internationalized students. This specific presentation aims to make visible the role of translanguaging in creative practice by paying attention to how multilingual students make use of multiple scripts and multiple languages.

Translanguaging continues to be defined and redefined in diverse ways: as a phenomenon which highlights normative everyday language practices among multilingual speakers of any language; as a description of practices including the multimodal and semiotic resources; and as an ideological tool with the potential for disrupting language hierarchies as well as monolingual and monomodal understandings of language in order to create spaces for multilingual identities to be recognised. Specifically, for this presentation translanguaging is framed as creative practice as it forms an essential part of the knowledge and skill that practitioners learn and the processes they engage in when making artefacts in addition to the use of language resources which transcend named language practices (cf. Wei 2017). Translanguaging is multimodal, multisensory and multisemiotic.

The study methodology is underpinned by research methods from applied linguistics and anthropology and combines a finely-grained analysis of classroom interaction associated with linguistic ethnography. Project fieldwork comprised observations in art and design spaces, in-depth interviews conducted with tutors and students and an institutional document analysis (Odeniyi 2022). Influenced by the work of critical sociolinguists Van de Aa and Blommaert (2017), the principles of Hymesian ethnographic monitoring shaped the approach to the institutional research

project and included longer-term engagement in the field and with social actors at different project phases: consultation, observations, dissemination of findings and finally evaluation and impact.

The presentation foregrounds translanguaging as creative practice highlighting students' complex multilingual identities which, according to Block (2006), are the assumed and/or attributed relationship between an individual's sense of who they are and the means of communication, known as language. In addition to the linguistic data and visual data constructed and analysed as part the *Reimagining Conversations* project the presentation highlights students' creative practices and artefacts which make visible multiple languages and semiotic resources. This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, as they highlight that class interaction has a monolingual bias in contrast to students' multilingual identities. Secondly, the institutional and pedagogic dispositions recorded contrast with the multilingual resources deployed by students during collaborative tasks. Thus, the students observed drew on their multilingual resources enacting a more decentred approach to the role of language in knowledge construction and creative practices.

Translanguaging as creative practice may not provide immediate solutions to longstanding power asymmetries within university classrooms and beyond. Nonetheless, creating opportunities for increasing visibility and status of language per se so that translanguaging is not viewed as linguistic deficiency but as an essential part of creative practice - and learning- is an essential shift within the university context. Thus, translanguaging can be viewed as a set of multimodal and multisemiotic practices for creating meaningful spaces in which to challenge a fixed monolingual mindset in changing times and for identities to be acknowledged and recognised. Without considering translanguaging as a dynamic and evolving phenomenon, new kinds of language and social hierarchies which position people as inferior will emerge and dominate university classrooms. Thus, translanguaging from the bottom up is a valued practice tied to educational equity.

Keywords: translanguaging; multilingual; identity; creative practice; equity; arts.

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RESILIENT WOMEN, THE ‘SHE-CESSION’ AND THE GENDER EQUALITY DISCOURSE IN THE EU

The post-pandemic era has highlighted sensitive areas in European societies that demand serious attention for the expected recovery phase to be effective and long-lasting. These areas, crucial to the EU’s social functioning, include the fight against domestic violence (a phenomenon that gained prominence in the news media during lockdown), the protection of mental health, the achievement of work-life balance, and the understanding of the complexities of flexible, technology-driven labour settings.

After years of gender blindness, it is now acknowledged that the gender dimension intersects with all these issues. The shock of the pandemic and its associated economic crisis have disproportionately affected women, resulting in an exacerbation of pre-existing gender inequalities and forms of abuse. The recession, which has been termed the ‘she-cession’ due to its impact on the gender gap in paid workforce (Bluedorn *et al.* 2023), has put women in a significantly more vulnerable position, hindering their advancement. This deterioration of working conditions does not appear to have been offset by the growth of remote and flexible work arrangements (Vyas 2023).

As the analysis of labour market data indicates, there exists “a high degree of heterogeneity in she-cession experiences, across both advanced and emerging market economies” (Bluedorn *et al.* 2023: 3). This explains why the impact has been especially felt in those Member States that did not prioritise gender mainstreaming in the years before the pandemic or did not adequately take into account the gendered effects of economic policies.

In this context, the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) – the EU’s biggest financial instrument for supporting recovery – offers a unique opportunity to allocate exceptional resources towards corrective measures that will primarily benefit women. The measures aim to address economic abuse, expand economic opportunities, and promote employment and financial empowerment (Debusscher 2023).

Since she assumed office in December 2019, Ursula von der Leyen has demonstrated her commitment to prioritising gender equality in her agenda, building upon the efforts of the European Parliament. Under her leadership, significant progress has been made in this regard, including the introduction of the Gender Equality Strategy (2020–2025) and the appointment of Helena Dalli as Commissioner for Equality. It is worth noting that this Strategy aims to enhance gender mainstreaming in all policy areas, meaning the inclusion of a gender perspective in all stages of policy development within EU policy domains. “The new Strategy proposes measures meant to close gender gaps in the labour market, achieving equal participation across different sectors of the economy, addressing the gender pay and pension gap and closing the gender care gap” (Debusscher 2023: 96).

However, the incorporation of gender equality into the 2021 RRF Regulation was not an immediate process. It required subsequent steps and robust parliamentary advocacy. Furthermore, consensus on gender equality policy has not been

unanimous, with dissenting opinions claiming that “equality is only welcomed when it does not challenge dominant economic priorities” (Elomäki and Kantola 2021). If this were to be the case, the effectiveness of the RRF efforts could be significantly diminished.

Given this political backdrop and the perceived decline in female employment in the labor market, this paper examines the language used in a set of recent and interconnected EU policy documents that address gender-sensitive recovery measures. The most relevant strategies described in the selected texts are first illustrated and then discussed with the aid of a discourse-analytic approach and scholarship on gender and the EU (Elomäki 2015), while reflecting on the values they prioritise and the long-term solutions they suggest to counteract structural disparities. For instance, if addressing the immediate need to protect victims of gender-based domestic violence is crucial, it is also imperative to develop pathways for women’s empowerment through education and financial literacy.

The linguistically-informed critical perspective on how gender mainstreaming is framed within the EU’s legal and institutional discourse intends to contribute to the ongoing debate on more inclusive forms of societal participation that will hopefully emerge after much resilience.

Keywords: policy discourse; gender mainstreaming; gender gap; Resilience and Recovery Facility; women’s labour.

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“MY GENDER FINDS THE CRACKS AND SPILLS OUT”

Metaphorical framing of non-binary experience

In recent years, the use of metaphors in the gender domain and, in particular, in the queer and non-binary domains has raised increasing interest among researchers. Examples of this are – amongst others – Cordoba (2022), whose work defines non-binary gender identities as a “becoming”, a view that surpasses social constructionism by presenting gender as a shifting process, or Lederer (2015), who has discussed spatially based representations of gender transitioning. Nevertheless, the evolving nature of non-binarism necessitates further inquiry into the cognitive conceptualizations that underpin the non-binary experience. Among these conceptualizations, those driven or conveyed by metaphors may be expected to play a particularly important role. The concept of non-binarism (generally indicating gender identities that do not fall into the “female” or “male” categories) continually evolves, challenging conventional notions of gender identity, and metaphors serve as indispensable tools to grasp the shifting landscape of how non-binary individuals perceive and define themselves. In this context, metaphors can be considered a valuable tool not only for the self-representation of non-binary experience, but also for the presentation of vivid images and feelings to the “spectators” of a gender performance (Lawley & Tompkins 2000) who may not be familiar with the feeling of being non-binary.

Studies exploring the conceptualization of gender identities have often neglected to consider the experiences of transgender individuals, especially when these experiences do not conform to a binary understanding of gender identity (Galupo et al. 2017). Moreover, research focused on the conceptualization of non-binary and queer experiences frequently relies on elicited responses, such as surveys and questionnaires, which do not generally allow for much spontaneous verbal representation of such concepts. In order to address this gap, the present study examines the use of metaphors as part of the identity definition and gender experience of non-binary individuals, and in particular of spatial and clothing metaphors, two sets of metaphors that appear to be especially salient. The final aim is to explore how these two domains (space, and clothing/apparel) intertwine with the concept of non-binary gender identity, and with each other. An in-depth analysis of both spatial metaphors and metaphors related to clothing is expected to lead to comprehensive insights into how these linguistic devices contribute to the multifaceted nature of non-binary self-expression and representation in the digital sphere.

To capture spontaneous metaphoric conceptualizations of non-binary gender identity and their manifestation in self-representation, data was collected from social media platforms and from already published (and public) posts; comments to the posts are also collected and analyzed with a view to assessing the potential impact of

the metaphors identified on audience awareness by virtue of their ability to ultimately conjure up vivid mental images and emotions. The materials selected for analysis were drawn from social-media materials produced by three Instagram influencers, identified through their verified accounts and substantial follower count (50,000 followers min.), as well as three YouTube creators' channels (30,000 subscribers min.).

The analytical compass for this paper relies on two seminal theoretical frameworks: framing, as articulated by Entman (1993), and Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980). These theoretical paradigms provide a methodological scaffold for a rigorous and comprehensive examination of the manner in which spatial and clothing metaphors influence the conceptualization of non-binarism and the lived experiences of non-binary individuals. Within this theoretical framework, the study also attempts to investigate the cognitive foundations of spatial and clothing-related metaphors thanks to an in-depth qualitative analysis of their use-in-discourse.

Preliminary findings of this study reveal a prevalence of the above-mentioned metaphoric expressions. These first insights indicate a complex dual dynamic. On the one hand, there appears to be a pervasive sense of ambiguity regarding the placement of non-binary gender within the established gender spectrum, presumably the reference point for this evaluation. On the other hand, a recurring motif emerges wherein non-binary individuals employ metaphors related to clothing and footwear, depicting sensations of confinement and discomfort, often associated with ill-fitting attire. The prominence of spatial metaphors warrants particular scrutiny, as it becomes evident that non-binary individuals employ them in an extremely versatile manner. At times, they describe themselves as occupying a liminal space, a "grey area" or an "in-between" state. This portrayal aligns with the notion that non-binary identity challenges conventional gender categorizations, occupying a unique and uncharted territory within the spectrum. Conversely, at other junctures, these individuals characterize non-binarism as a condition situated entirely "outside" the confines of the gender spectrum, suggesting a distinct realm of existence that transcends traditional binaries. In employing these vivid and imaginative metaphors, non-binary individuals do not only offer a tangible and relatable picture of their lived experiences for their audience but also, notably, for themselves. The act of constructing and sharing these metaphors serves as a profound means of self-exploration and self-definition. It allows them to conceptualize and externalize their experiences, providing a framework through which they can articulate the intricate nuances of non-binary identity. In doing so, these metaphors become not merely linguistic devices but integral components of their cognitive and emotional engagement with their own identities.

An initial analysis underscores the richness and complexity of metaphorical language in the context of non-binary self-expression. As the study progresses, further investigation will delve into the nuances of these metaphors, exploring the implications they carry within the broader discourse of gender identity.

By delving deeper into the multifaceted world of metaphors within the non-binary narrative it is possible to gain new insights into the way in which language, cognition and identity intersect within this social landscape. Furthermore, by providing an analysis of the way in which spatial and clothing metaphors are pervasively used by non-binary individuals to frame their identities and experiences, and how these conceptual metaphors often interrelate, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of non-binarism as a non-conforming and hardly definable gender experience.

Keywords: non-binary; gender; self-representation; queer; metaphor.

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THE DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF NATIONAL IDENTITY IN MARJANE SATRAPI'S *PERSEPOLIS* A discourse historical analysis and multimodality

In the past few years, there has been an increasing scholarship regarding the creative and subversive qualities of comics that engage with political or autobiographical content. Among the comics examined in these studies, Marjane Satrapi's *Persepolis*, an autobiographical graphic novel that blends the genres of memoir and comic and narrates the story of her childhood up to her early adult years in Iran during and after the Islamic Revolution holds a significant position. Satrapi's memoir can be situated in the wider group of graphic novels that engage with history through graphic narratives, whose visual dimension contributes to the question of how history can be told (Basu 2017, 28).

While *Persepolis* has inspired research from various fields, regarding both its content and its form, there has been a significant void in the literature from a linguistic perspective. Therefore, my study is situated in the field of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), applying a combination of the frameworks of Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) (Wodak 2001) and Visual Grammar (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006) to analyze how national identity is constructed linguistically and visually in extracts from the novel. At the same time, I aim to examine how social phenomena, such as religion and gender, are related to the construction of national identity.

As mentioned above, DHA is embedded in the wider field of CDA, which is committed to approaching complex social phenomena and uncovering the unequal power relations within a society as expressed in language (Wodak 2001). As it follows, DHA can be applied to investigate how actions and assertions are legitimized or delegitimized in the process of discourse. Taking into account the function of different modalities and their interrelation, the model of Visual Grammar analysis (Kress & van Leeuwen 2006) adopted in this study serves as a set of tools to systematically describe the visual features in images.

Through the analysis of the scenes, certain findings can emerge. As far as the construction of national identity is concerned, the dynamic nature of nationality is taken into account, considering it as the product of the narrated stories people tell in order to relate to a context of national culture. Thus, national identity is the product of discourse (Wodak 2009, 22). The collective national identity is (re)presented as being related to collective manners of behavior incorporated in social practices, while instances of historical memory are evoked in discursive events that are salient in the collective memory of a group of people.

Marjane is depicted constructing a complex personal national identity, when she acknowledges Iran as her country of origin, but at the same time, she reinterprets this identity to get integrated into a space where she can identify herself as an artist. Later on she finds this space in France when she decides to study at the School of Decorative Arts in Strasbourg.

In *Persepolis*, the concept of national identity is intertwined with that of religion and, more specifically, with Shiite Islam as the official religion of Iran. Shiite ideology is depicted to have shaped Iranians to the point that they define themselves as victimized and oppressed, while at the same time, they idealize the impeccability of the charismatic leader (Gholizadeh & Hook 2012, 178). Thus, under Khomeini's oppressive regime, this overarching discourse is evoked so that the continuation of the war against Iraq is justified. Therefore, Iranians are presented as the righteous minority that need the guidance of a charismatic leader who will help them reclaim the power they deserve.

Concerning gender, what is of interest in this study is how the gendered discourses, especially the representation of femininity, are embodied in the cultural and political context of Iran. In *Persepolis*, both Marjane (the main character of the story) and Satrapi (the creator of the illustrations) become symbols of emancipation by defying social restrictions. In the scenes analyzed, two opposite narratives around national identity emerge: one that Marjane constructs around mythological symbols and empowering female representations who are able to define historical memory and another that the official state constructs around religious symbols that function as oppressing factors.

Overall, the findings of this paper cannot lead to overgeneralizations about graphic novels, by focusing only on *Persepolis* and on certain examples from the text. However, certain conclusions can be drawn. In the scenes in question, the concepts of national identity are constructed through the emergence of contradictory narratives. More specifically, the official regime in Iran constructs the national identity around religious symbols, creating an overarching discourse around nationalism. On the opposite side, Marjane, her parents, or other people, depicted in their everyday lives, instantiate social practices of resistance towards imposed restrictions and challenge stereotypes about Iran.

Regarding Marjane's individual national identity, it is constructed as a multifaceted one, which is uncovered through the evaluation of the past events in her life. She thus undergoes various stages until she finally recovers and redefines her identity as a bi-cultural one, after accepting her transnational experience.

Furthermore, it is inferred that religion co-constructs national identity since the former is depicted as a set of discursive practices not only reproduced by the official state but also internalized by several Iranians as a core ideological component that defines their actions. National identity is also intertwined with the performance of gender since women's actions are restricted by the social laws imposed by the regime. However, actions of defiance of these restrictions serve as subversive discourses that challenge the stereotypical representation of Iranian women as silenced victims.

Ultimately, in *Persepolis*, all these contradictory discourses coexist and are conveyed in a multiplicity of modes. The interplay between the written and the visual positions the reader in a constant active role of synthesizing these two modes and offers the ideal space in which the counter-narratives of history can emerge.

Keywords: Persepolis; national identity; gender; religion; critical discourse analysis.

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CHANGING IDENTITIES IN TRANSLATION The case of Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones. The Edge of Reason*

Bridget Jones's Diary is a novel written by Helen Fielding in 1996 and is considered one of the best-known examples of the chick-lit genre. *Bridget Jones. The Edge of Reason* is its sequel, published in 1999. Chick-lit is a genre which comprises novels

mainly written by women, about women, for women, which can easily be inferred by the name of the genre itself: *chick* is an American slang term for a young woman, and *lit* is the abbreviation of literature. Chick-lit novels are usually set in a contemporary world. The main characters are single women in their twenties or thirties, who mostly work in the publishing or the advertising sectors, and whose careers are definitely important for them. Moreover, they are embedded in pop culture, they are obsessed with their appearance and have an utter fixation with their weight. Chick-lit has sometimes been considered as a subcategory of the romance novel genre, because it very often includes romantic elements. However, the sentimental relationships of the protagonists are not the only important issue in the development of the plot of the novels which belong to this genre. In fact, their circle of close friends – who are either female or gay – play an extremely important role in their lives. Moreover, chick-lit differs from the romance genre also on a stylistic level, as it is characterized by a very personal and confidential tone and by the constant presence of humour. The language is usually informal and colloquial, with the characters using quite a lot of slang and occasionally obscene terms (see Ferriss and Young 2006; Harzewski 2011; Montoro 2012).

Both *Bridget Jones's Diary* and *Bridget Jones. The Edge of Reason* are written in the form of a personal diary and narrate the life of the protagonist throughout a whole year (with the latter starting from the point when the former ended, in spite of the fact that it was published three years later). Bridget is a single woman in her early thirties who lives in London. She is obsessed with her love life and is constantly looking for a stable relationship. Her diaries are filled with notes on her weight, on her daily intake of calories, on the quantity of alcohol consumed and on the number of cigarettes smoked. The tone of the books is very humorous and light-hearted, and it often relies on the use of colloquial, slangy, and also taboo words and expressions. Finally, both novels abound in references to contemporary popular culture, especially British, as Bridget often mentions names of brands and shops, but also broadcasters, TV characters and TV shows, as well as politicians, academics, writers, journalists, documentarists, literary characters, novels and artists.

Even though the Italian translations of the novels have been performed by two different translators (Olivia Crosio and Maura Maioli), they display a similar approach towards the target text. In fact, they both very often apply a series of strategies which seem to aim at domesticating the text (see Venuti 1995). Indeed, in their attempt to “move the text towards the reader”, many of the abovementioned references have not been transposed, as they have either been omitted, or generalized, or substituted with other references, which are presumably more familiar to the Italian reader. Even though it ought to be noted that some of the references have been maintained, it is a fact that this approach, which may be successful in avoiding a potential disruption of the suspension of disbelief in the reader, does indeed have some consequences on Bridget's characterisation. Her identity, in fact, undergoes some subtle, but radical changes.

A first general effect of this domesticating approach is that the Italian Bridget Jones turns out to be less typically British. Indeed, by omitting the references to the various British culture-specific items (see Aixela 1997), the character appears to lose her Britishness, at least to some extent, becoming a more general citizen of the world.

A second effect which is due to the abovementioned domesticating strategies is the fact that the translated Bridget becomes a simpler and less cultured person than her English counterpart. In fact, even though the character is represented as a person who is mainly interested in frivolous matters, such as her weight and her love life, it is a fact that she is a person with a certain level of education, whose interests include literature, art, politics and journalism. By domesticating part of these references

through their omission, generalization or substitution, Bridget 's identity has undergone a rather radical change in translation in this respect.

From a purely linguistic perspective, moreover, it ought to be noted that Bridget's typical colloquial and informal style is partly achieved through the use of abbreviations, interjections and onomatopoeic words, which are often standardized in translation. Therefore, also in this case, it is possible to state that the Italian translation has an impact on the characterization of Bridget's identity.

In short, it is interesting to note that, even though the translation of the two books have been performed by two different translators, their strategies seem to be rather similar. This contributes to achieving a very similar effect on the identity of the main character, which, as already stressed, undergoes a substantial change in translation.

Keywords: translation; identity; domestication; chick-lit; characterization.

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AN ANALYSIS OF MASTER'S DEGREE WEB PAGES IN ITALY AND THE UK Promotional values and shifting academic identities

The identity-making process in the academic world is multidimensional, shaped by individual, disciplinary, professional, institutional and national dynamics, but in the current higher education landscape, dominated by academic capitalism and the knowledge economy, universities are often identified in terms of their prestige, which usually refers to research funding, students' satisfaction and position in the World University Rankings (for example, the one sponsored by Times Higher education (<https://www.timeshighereducation.com/world-university-rankings/2023/world-ranking>)). Considering the ever-evolving marketization of higher education

knowledge and skills accentuated by the neoliberal economy (Fairclough 1993), one of the most significant aspects of university identity seems to be the one related to "branding", namely how higher education institutions construct their educational and research programmes to attract students and the kind of self-image they want to project (Chapleo 2005).

University home pages have been extensively analysed both as the favourite sources of information for prospective students and as a manifesto encapsulating the very essence of a given university (Saichaie and Morphey 2014), while far less attention has been devoted to the curricular aspects and the educational objectives characterizing the degree programmes on offer. Yet, just as disciplines call for different epistemological frameworks and shape knowledge according to different text conventions, so degree programmes shape the advancement of learning according to different agendas and prioritize the skills and competences that are the most relevant for their graduates entering the world of work. Thus, it seems worthwhile to study their discursive constructions because a) they can contribute to define the academic, professional and social identities of a university in relation to its students and staff and b) they can give valuable clues as to the declared and hidden values endorsed by degree programmes (e.g. employability vs. knowledge acquisition). In particular, in an increasingly globalised world, where everything is shared, local and national policies cause worldwide repercussions and cultural differences may appear to be fading away, degree programmes in International Relations convey the general public's acute interest in current sociopolitical and economic trends and they also represent valuable tools to make sense of the complexities of our contemporary world.

Taking the cue from a study on the academic identity of master's degree programmes across Italy, France and Germany (Pennarola and Bandini 2020), this paper is aimed at analysing the discursive construction and branding strategies used in the web pages of the master's degree programmes in International Relations offered by Italian and British universities. The Italian masters selected for this study are entirely taught in English and amount to 20 approximately, a small number when compared to the more than one hundred masters taught in British Universities. A possible reason for this striking imbalance in the number of master's degree programmes in International Relations across Italy and the UK (besides the use of English as a medium of instruction) is the high level of specialization provided by British universities, with degrees focused on different aspects of international studies: e.g., diplomacy, NGOs and humanitarian interventions, security; conflict resolution and peace-making; international development, international political communication, transnational queer feminist politics, etc. By contrast, the Italian masters present a more general profile, especially as far as their names are concerned, which in fact largely include the phrase "international relations" with few variations (for example, International Relations and Trade at the University of Palermo and World Politics and International Relations at the University of Pavia).

Through a combined quantitative and qualitative approach, I am going to explore the structure of the web pages and their content, focusing on the essential information for potential students, from the number of credits to learning outcomes and job prospects. The quantitative analysis will be carried out through Sketch Engine, an online tool widely used in corpus linguistics and lexicography with practical applications for the analysis and learning of languages. Particular attention will be paid to top-frequency words and how they relate to the keywords of the Bologna Process, which has shaped the educational reform in Europe, as well as to other significant educational publications, such as the Teaching Excellence Framework in the UK. Another feature worth investigating is the transitivity