

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Plenary presentations



Resisting the Imperative to Forgive: Standing, Agency, and Reintegration in Post-Digital Publics

Garcés-Conejos Blitvich, Pilar

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

This talk addresses a gap in critical discourse studies by developing a technosocial account of forgiveness and reintegration after cancelation. I argue that normative and critical philosophical models, while useful for explaining some of the dynamics of forgiveness, are insufficient for understanding post-digital moral repair. These traditions typically presuppose identifiable victims, offenders, and shared moral systems, while leaving digital architecture outside their conceptualizations. By contrast, cancelation involves diffuse victims, contested wrongdoers, and transient light groups, while platform affordances such as persistence, replicability, scalability, and searchability, along with algorithmically amplified outrage, structurally reward condemnation and inhibit reconciliation. In this context, forgiveness becomes a counter-algorithmic practice.

To tackle this problem, the study turns to first-order perspectives, asking how social actors themselves theorize, negotiate, grant, and withhold forgiveness. Drawing on a corpus-assisted discourse analysis of forgiveness-related commentary following cancelation in *The New York Times* and Reddit, the study codes meta-illocutionary expressions across multiple dimensions. The findings show that counter-forgiveness discourse and stringent conditions dominate, while refusal to forgive is often moralized as justice. Forgiveness, therefore, emerges as a public, ideological, and power-laden practice through which moral authority, victimhood, accountability, punishment, and reintegration are negotiated. More broadly, the analysis shows that the aftermath of cancelation functions as a prolonged site of moral negotiation that produces an unstable moral afterlife, or what I call *framed continuity*: a condition in which wrongdoers may fulfill the expected requirements of forgiveness, acknowledgment, apology, and repair, yet remain indefinitely tethered to scandal through the persistence of the digital record.

The Multimodal Performance of Right-Wing Populism

Hart, Christopher
Lancaster University

Right Wing Populism (RWP) is defined as both an ideology and as a (transgressive) performative style (de Vreese et al. 2018; Moffit & Tormey 2014). As a performative style, RWP is marked for the semiotic appeal it makes to the body, where it is shown that RWP speakers gesture more frequently than mainstream politicians (Cienki and Giansante 2014) and in a way that breaks with the usual habitus of political performance (Hall, Goldstein and Ingram 2016). Research in cognitive linguistics has shown gesture to be an integral part of communication which coordinates with speech in the expression of meaning (Cienki 2022). However, while an extensive multimodality programme exists in Critical Discourse Studies which has attended to embodied modes like gaze and posture in static images (Machin 2013), little attention has been given to the way the body is mobilised alongside speech in verbal expressions of power and ideology. Drawing on gesture research in cognitive linguistics, this talk considers the role of co-speech gesture in the discursive performance of RWP. It focusses on hand movements employed as part of multimodal rhetorical moves in the spoken discourses of two RWP politicians – Nigel Farage and Donald Trump. In analysing the co-speech gestures of Nigel Farage, it is shown how hand movements function in multimodal expressions of quantity, distance and proximity, metaphor and aspect to delegitimate immigration and thus legitimate hostile immigration policies. Analysis of Donald Trump's gestures focusses on two specific gestural forms – pointing and shrugging. It is shown that, through pointing (outward, inward, upward, downward), Trump is able to connect with his audience, direct their attention, entertain them, and position himself alongside them as a man of the people. Shrugs are shown to communicate evaluative meanings (epistemic and affective) while simultaneously performing both ordinariness and extraordinariness.

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Whose Voices Count? Using Corpora to Examine Trans Representation and Quotation Practices in the British Press between 2020 and 2025

Heritage, Frazer

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In May 2026, the UK Equalities and Human Rights Commission issued new guidance on the use of “single-sex spaces”, advocating a narrow and problematic definition of biological sex rather than gender identity. This guidance reflects a broader trend of legislation and institutional practices that increasingly restrict and undermine the rights of transgender people. Across the UK (and, indeed in comparable contexts), the media — and the financial networks supporting anti-trans campaigns — have played a central role in legitimising anti-trans discourse and contributing to the erosion of trans rights. Drawing on research conducted in collaboration with Amnesty International, this paper examines representations of trans people in four major British newspapers (*The Sun*, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, and *The Telegraph*) on a month-by-month basis between January 2020 and April 2025. Building on previous work on trans representation in the British press (e.g. Baker, 2014; Gupta, 2019; Zottola, 2021), this study traces the development and circulation of anti-trans ideologies over time, while also exploring how corpus linguistic research can inform the work of organisations such as Amnesty International.

I demonstrate that reporting on trans people increased substantially across all publications during this period. However, this coverage consistently privileged the voices of politicians and anti-trans campaigners, while marginalising trans people and trans-rights advocacy groups. Corpus linguistic analysis further reveals that only two trans individuals are regularly named in reporting: a murdered teenage trans girl and a convicted felon. Alongside this, I identify growing frequencies of terms such as “gender critical” and “sex matters”, and examine how these labels function discursively to legitimise anti-trans actors and uncritically platform anti-trans hate groups. Ultimately, I identify a pattern whereby anti-trans voices are platformed, while those of trans people are silenced.

The paper situates these findings within the growing field of Trans linguistics (see Zimman, 2020; Zimman and Hayworth, 2020), while asking a broader methodological and ethical question: how can researchers centre trans voices when the data itself systematically excludes them?

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Dichotomies and synthesis in Critical Discourse Studies

Hidalgo-Tenorio, Encarnación¹; Serafis, Dimitris²; Taylor, Charlotte³.

In conversation with Filardo-Llamas, Laura⁴

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Almost forty years after the emergence of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and two decades after the first Critical Approaches to Discourse Analysis Across Disciplines (CADAAD) conference, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) continues to evolve in response to changing social realities, theoretical developments and methodological innovations. This roundtable offers an opportunity to reflect on some of the key tensions, challenges and opportunities that currently shape the field and, in doing so, to consider how CDS can continue to respond to an increasingly complex communicative landscape. At the heart of these reflections lies a series of old dichotomies that continue to inform both research and debate within CDS. One concerns the very nature of the field itself: whether CDS is best understood as a theoretical framework, an analytical approach, a methodology or some combination of these. This question is closely linked to broader discussions about the continuing relevance of established CDA traditions for analysing contemporary forms of communication and the need to move beyond predominantly Western and European perspectives in order to engage more fully with diverse epistemologies and social realities. These conceptual concerns are inseparable from methodological debates surrounding the relationship between qualitative and quantitative approaches. The growing use of corpus-assisted and computational methods has renewed discussions about methodological rigour, interpretation, researcher bias and triangulation, which raises questions about how critical discourse research can balance empirical robustness with contextual sensitivity and critical insight. Underlying both theoretical and methodological discussions is the persistent tension between positionality and objectivity. Questions of researcher responsibility, the study of vulnerable communities, the ethics of analysing harmful discourses and the place of activism within scholarship continue to challenge the field. At stake is not only how power is examined through discourse, but also how critical research may itself reproduce, negotiate or contest existing power relations while remaining reflexive about its own assumptions and limitations. These issues become particularly pressing in light of wider social and academic transformations. The need to engage with audiences beyond academia, the challenges posed by the marketisation and colonisation of higher education, and the opportunities and risks associated with artificial intelligence all open up important debates concerning the future role of CDS. Rather than seeking definitive answers, this roundtable aims to encourage dialogue on how the field can



continue to address emerging forms of inequality, power and social change while remaining responsive to the evolving conditions of contemporary communication.



The semantics and language of war

García Prieto, Mónica & Espinosa Robles, Javier



Paper presentations

‘My life as a stay-at-home girlfriend’: A multimodal feminist discourse analysis of TikTok influencers

Aiston, Jessica

Queen Mary University of London

Mememes and viral trends surrounding girliness have never been bigger on TikTok, from girl dinner to the divine femininity. In this presentation, I focus on one of these trends: ‘day in the life of a stay-at-home girlfriend,’ i.e., daily vlogs by female influencers whose lifestyles are financially supported by their male partners. Based on principles of feminist discourse analysis (Lazar, 2018), I investigate the multimodal semiotic resources used to represent the daily lives and routines of stay-at-home girlfriends (hence, SAHGs) and the extent to which these vlogs reproduce feminist, antifeminist, and postfeminist discourses. The dataset comprises 25 videos, from five popular self-described SAHG influencers.

In contrast with ‘tradwives’ (Tebaldi, 2023), SAHGs do not promote traditional feminine values such as childrearing, modesty, or submissiveness. Rather, my findings suggest that SAHG videos more often reproduce elements of a postfeminist sensibility (Gill, 2007). The SAHG lifestyle is one of aspirational glamour and “entitled femininity” (Lazar, 2009) through continual pampering and consumption of luxury goods. However, these vlogs also raise concerns regarding the obfuscation of labour and the dangers of financial dependence on men.

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Voices and discourses in the YouTube manosphere

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The manosphere has recently shifted towards audio-visual platforms like TikTok and YouTube. On these platforms, antifeminist politics can more easily be monetised (Gerrand et al., 2025), particularly through sharing 'reaction clips' and compilations of women being denigrated by male hosts (Stephens and Peters 2025).

In this talk, we will investigate how intertextuality and interdiscursivity are used in YouTube videos for the purpose of (de)legitimation of standpoints about gender and relationships. The data comprised the three most popular gender-related videos of the past 12 months from the following channels: *Fresh & Fit*, *JustPearlyThings*, and *PsychHacks*. We then analysed video transcripts for linguistic features pertaining to evidentiality, emotional expression, speech representation and intertextuality, as well as interdiscursivity and metaphor. We also conducted a multimodal analysis in order to capture visual elements such as gesture and facial expressions, sound, dress style and spatial orientation.

Preliminary findings show that speech representation and other forms of intertextuality (such as reaction videos) serve to delegitimize feminist standpoints, whereas interdiscursivity and metaphor (particularly relating to science and economy) are used to legitimate anti-feminist ideology. Multimodal elements support these functions, e.g. using sentimental music to discredit a woman's point as overly emotional.

Although the video hosts often claim to be censored, they clearly have a platform on which to spread problematic views and persuade others. We will discuss what audiences are targeted by the channels and how their parasocial nature can have a strong appeal. Consequently we call for media literacy approaches that help raise awareness of the video-based manosphere.

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Domestic Battles, Foreign Proxies: Audience Reception of Political Leaders Across Polarized Publics in Spain and Turkey

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This study examines how domestic political polarization shapes both media representations and audience reception of foreign political leaders, analyzing portrayals of Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez in Turkish media and Turkish President Tayyip Erdoğan in Spanish media (2022-2024). In highly polarized contexts such as Turkey and Spain, foreign leaders become not merely subjects of international news but symbolic resources deployed in ongoing domestic identity conflicts. Audience comments demonstrate how citizens actively construct meaning at the intersection of national partisan divides and international political dynamics, transforming transnational political reporting into a terrain for domestic ideological contestation.

Drawing on a multiplatform corpus comprising national newspapers, television news channels, and their respective Facebook and YouTube accounts, we investigate how ideologically diverse media outlets construct narratives about these leaders. Crucially, we extend our analysis beyond media production to examine audience engagement through reader comments, exploring how citizens interpret, appropriate, and contest representations of foreign leaders through the lens of their own partisan affiliations and polarized worldviews. This approach allows us to trace how audiences mobilize international political figures to articulate, reinforce, or challenge domestic political positions. Employing corpus-assisted discourse analysis, our preliminary findings reveal that audience comments function as discursive arenas where domestic political battles are waged through the proxy of foreign leaders. In line with theories of affective polarization (Iyengar et al., 2019) and partisan motivated reasoning (Druckman, et al., 2013), we observe that citizens do not engage with foreign political figures as neutral external actors but rather assimilate them into pre-existing partisan schemas.

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Conspiracy Narratives and Climate Disinformation about Mediterranean Wildfires

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This paper explores how fake news about climate change are used in post-truth and populist right-wing discourse by examining one concrete case: misleading information and conspiracy narratives about the 2025 Mediterranean wildfires shared on X. It provides a comparative study of engaging posts and threads created and boosted by right-wing political actors and aligned accounts in the United Kingdom, Spain and Italy. The research analyses how rhetorical tactics and language choices help reshape discursive authority around climate expertise, build oppositions between “the people” and “corrupt elites”, and justify denialist or conspiratorial standpoints.

The analysis uses Martin and White’s (2005) Appraisal framework, adopting the revised AFFECT model proposed by Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio (2019), which clearly separates emotion from opinion and groups emotions into goal-seeking, goal-achievement and goal-relation types. Building on Albalat-Mascarell’s (2025) study of climate-change disinformation on X, the article shows how particular patterns of affect and evaluation support recurring fake-news narratives online discourse.

The multilingual corpus is collected through the X API using keywords related to climate, fires and politics, with engagement thresholds, in English, Spanish and Italian. Qualitative close reading is combined with keyword and collocation analysis and Appraisal-based annotation to detect recurring uses of metaphor, hyperbole, scare quotes, evidential markers, and strategies of delegitimation and conspiracy framing. The article demonstrates how these rhetorical and linguistic resources sustain post-truth climate discourse and reshape discursive authority, moving credibility away from scientific expertise towards populist, charged accounts of Mediterranean wildfires online debates.

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Multimodal discourse on the Spanish energy crisis: A critical analysis of news in International and Spanish online media

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The global energy crisis emerging in 2021 has led to a sharp increase in electricity and gas prices and has terribly affected consumers all over the world. This study focuses on the case of Spain, aiming to explore how the multimodal discourse on the energy crisis is constructed in online newspapers and the ideological backdrop behind the discursive choices. Drawing on Social Semiotics (Kress and van Leeuwen 2006; van Leeuwen 2008), with a critical stance (Machin and Mayr 2012), a multimodal discursive analysis of twenty articles, from Spanish and International newspapers, is carried out to critically look at how the energy crisis is constructed in the discourse. The results reveal a significant difference between the two data sets in the way meanings are multimodally assigned to the crisis. From an international perspective, Spain enacts a protagonist role and engages in proactive crisis management and resolution, while the Spanish articles focus on citizens' predicament, constructing crisis as an eventuation and ignoring the human social roles played in it. Both similarly show, however, the power of the interplay of multimodal resources in consolidating meanings and reproducing disparate discursive constructions on the same crisis.

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Constructing Victimhood: Narrative Strategies and Discursive Power in *Chicas nuevas 24 horas* (2015) and *El proxeneta* (2018)

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This study employs a qualitative, interpretive methodology to analyze the representation of sexual exploitation and sex work in two documentaries by Spanish filmmaker Mabel Lozano: *Chicas nuevas 24 horas* (2015) and *El proxeneta: Paso corto, mala leche* (2017). The research adopts a critical discourse analysis framework, examining narrative strategies, visual composition, and voice-over techniques to uncover how abolitionist perspectives are embedded in the films. Testimonial evidence from victims, expert commentary, and the narrative structure are scrutinized to assess how these elements construct meaning and influence audience perception. The analysis also incorporates comparative media study principles, situating Lozano's work within broader feminist debates on sex work and sexual slavery. By dissecting the interplay between imagery, editing choices, and authoritative voices, the methodology reveals how documentary storytelling can blur boundaries between consensual sex work and coercive exploitation, shaping public discourse and policy agendas.

The Narratives of Ecocide in the Low Countries

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Environmental debates have recently centred around the “ecocide” in the Low Countries (Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands). In 2024, “ecocide” was included in the Belgian Penal Code. This decision may be contrasted with governmental discussions around ecocide as a judicial concept, initiated in 2021 in Luxembourg. In the Netherlands, a bill on ecocide was debated in the parliament in 2023 but was heavily contested.

Ecocide refers to “the extensive destruction of a territory [...] to such an extent that enjoyment by the inhabitants has been severely diminished” (Higgins, 2015). The notion comes with political implications that characterise environmental damages as a crime. This research analyses how such implications are at play in political discourse.

This paper proposes to compare the different viewpoints adopted on “ecocide” in the Low Countries. It identifies the narratives associated with the notion, which illustrate national perspectives on environmental issues. Narratives refer to the discursive creation of a “storied world” where characters’ goals are evaluated to define different camps, one of which the public is invited to join (Schubert, 2010).

The study draws on the analysis of 92 parliamentary texts produced in the Low Countries between 2020-2025. The analysis follows procedures for narrative analysis (Schubert, 2010) and corpus-assisted methodology (Gilling, et al., 2023).

Results show that Belgian politicians rely on the notion to compete against other countries’ environmental commitments. In Luxembourg, the debates revolve around environmental responsibility and “offences”. In the Netherlands, politicians discuss the possibility to assign “legal personhood” to the earth.

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The North-South Divide in the Global Greenhouse: Responsibility in climate crisis discourse

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This paper proposes to investigate how responsibilities are attributed in international climate crisis debates. Despite the global impacts of the crisis, Northern countries are accountable for the intensification of the crisis, while Southern countries experience most of its effects (Blicharska, et al., 2017).

One may thus wonder how, in such a context, Global North and Global South representatives discursively acknowledge or question their responsibility and attribute responsibility to others.

This paper draws on Critical Metaphor Analysis (Charteris-Black, 2014). This framework can highlight conceptualisations associated with national identity, environmental perception, and political ideology. Metaphors can also promote international dialogues (Vogel and Naidoo, 2024).

These metaphors will be analysed in a large corpus composed of political and activists' speeches (total: 1,092 texts) produced during international climate summits (from the 1990s to 2025). The analysis follows CMA procedures (1. Identification, 2. Interpretation, 3. Explanation; Charteris-Black, 2014) and compares the discursive strategies that are employed to attribute responsibility and to acknowledge-question one's own responsibility.

Preliminary results show that the metaphors associated with one's own responsibility insist on the global characteristics of the crisis ("greenhouse world") and on the role of scientific innovations ("antidote"). In contrast, the metaphors associated with the attribution of responsibility insist on personal narratives that are grounded in local traditions. These illustrate the uneven socio-economic impacts of the crisis ("resource extraction is extracting our humanity").

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A Study on Energy Policy Discourse in the International Energy Agency

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This paper presents a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis of how the International Energy Agency (IEA) uses language to construct authority and urgency in global energy governance. It asks how IEA flagship reports legitimise particular energy transition pathways and how they position different state and institutional actors in relation to these preferred futures.

The analysis draws on a specialised corpus of IEA policy reports and scenario documents published between 2014 and 2024. Fairclough's three-dimensional model provides the overall analytical frame, and corpus tools are used to identify keywords, collocation patterns and recurrent evaluative and modal choices. Concordance lines are then examined qualitatively in order to explore how actors are represented and how specific transition pathways are justified in the texts and in their wider intertextual circulation in policy and media debates.

Findings indicate that deontic modals such as "must" and "need to", together with clusters around terms such as "net zero", "clean energy transition" and "advanced technologies", present particular policy directions as necessary, urgent and grounded in technical expertise rather than in political preference. Nominalisations and passive constructions frequently background responsibility for decisions while reinforcing the IEA's role as an authoritative expert voice. Intertextual references to national strategies and multilateral agreements further embed these framings, and other actors are often depicted mainly as recipients of finance, technology or capacity building rather than as co-authors of transition pathways. The paper argues that these patterns support technocratic, capital-intensive models of transition and narrow the discursive space for decentralised or community-based alternatives. In doing so, it contributes to work on discourse, power and global governance by showing how corpus-assisted CDA can be used to interrogate the authority of expert energy scenarios.

Scalar Deictic Space: Towards a Dynamic Analytical Approach

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The Scalar Deictic Space (SDS) approach offers a cognitive-discursive framework for analysing how political discourse constructs, stabilises, and reconfigures intentionality, agency, and legitimacy through spatial and temporal positioning. Building on cognitive linguistics, socio-cognitive discourse studies, and CDA, the approach starts from the premise that meaning-making is fundamentally grounded in spatial cognition. Political discourse is particularly rich in its spatial configurations because it requires public consent for social interventions that align with politically motivated priorities. Political actors configure worldviews by positioning social actors, values, and events in a selective frame of reference relative to a deictic centre that organises perception, evaluation, and action in the direction of their goals.

The SDS model conceptualises political discourse as operating dynamically across three scalar zones of attention and awareness - Proximal, Medial, and Distal - anchored to a Deictic Centre that represents the speaker's "here-now-real" point of subjective experience. These zones are not static categories but dynamic cognitive vectors on which discourse entities are (re-)positioned in response to the dynamics of political contexts. Proximal positioning foregrounds shared identity, joint intentionality, and collective agency; Distal positioning signals disengagement from intentionality and action; and Medial positioning is the crucial intermediate space where dependency, enablement, and asymmetric agency relations are discursively evaluated.

We argue that medial positioning plays a particularly significant role in political rhetoric as it allows speakers to incorporate discourse entities selectively into its projected Us group while simultaneously construing it as dependent on the speaker's authority, resources, and capacity for intervention. Through transactions, enablement schemas, and causative constructions, political actors frame medially positioned entities as beneficiaries or receivers of action rather than co-agents. This positioning creates an ontologically persuasive continuity that legitimises intervention while masking underlying power asymmetries. The SDS approach demonstrates that scalar positioning is determined not by power asymmetry per se, but by how relationships of that asymmetry are framed as partnership, dependency, or incapacity.

Modality is integrated into SDS as an evaluative overlay that mediates how spatial and temporal positioning is interpreted, intensified, or problematised. Rather than assuming a deterministic relationship between proximal-distal positioning and epistemic commitment, the model accounts for rhetorically meaningful mismatches—such as claiming certainty in medial positioning or weak commitment in proximal alignment—that function to test alliances, stabilise emerging identities, or legitimise future-oriented worldviews and actions.

Political discourse examples will illustrate diachronic shifts in positioning, showing how actors manoeuvre along scalar zones to reframe relationships, redistribute agency, and justify strategic goals. From a critical perspective, SDS provides an analytic tool for



tracing how political worldviews are (re)configured as seemingly coherent ontologies that guide public reasoning toward preferred futures. By foregrounding the cognitive geometry underlying discourse, the approach advances critical discourse analysis beyond static role assignment toward a dynamic model capable of capturing variation, change, and the directional logic of political persuasion. SDS offers an analytic framework to analyse intentionality, agency and legitimacy as emergent properties of political discourse.

Retracing Zionism and anti-Zionism in British Jewry: Discourses of home(s), belonging(s) and identities, 1919-1930

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The attack of Hamas on October 7th 2023 and the subsequent genocide in Gaza brought about a heated discussion within Jewish communities around the world, including the UK, about the Jewish diaspora and its relationship with Israel. Jews that have taken an anti-genocide or pro-Palestinian stance have been delegitimised as ‘dangerous’ or ‘bad Jews’, and such a stance is seen as a radical one that goes against history. This discussion is not a new phenomenon but actually the continuation of an often-acrimonious discussion about Zionism and anti-Zionism within the Jewish diaspora that has lasted for more than a century (Wendehorst 2012; Omer-Jackaman 2019). In this paper I present the results of the first part of a study into Zionist and anti-Zionist discourses in the British Jewish community. In it, I *analyse the discursive construction of the debate in Jewish community newspapers from 1919 to 1930*. This inter-war period is crucial to understanding the history of modern Israel and Anglo-Jewry, and within this how Zionism and anti-Zionism are constructed and deployed in current intra-community discussions. Using the Discourse Historical Approach (Reisigl & Wodak 2001) and my previous work on mythopoetic legitimation (Author 2025), I analyse what legitimation strategies are used and how Zionist and anti-Zionist actors are discursively constructed via nomination and predication strategies. I claim that history of Jewish opposition to the establishment of Israel has been de-emphasised by mainstream Jewish public sphere actors. I understand this as conscious construction of a myth of British Jewry that silences and elides anti-Zionist positions in order to construct a more monolithic understanding of community identity.

When Labels Fail: Adapting CADS Methodology for Bimodal Analysis of Migrant Identity in Picturebooks

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Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) research on RASIM characters (refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, and migrants) typically departs from corpus-based searches for explicit labels such as 'refugee' or 'migrant' (Baker et al., 2008), which works effectively for media discourse. However, when researching migrant representation in multimodal texts (e.g., picturebooks), these labels are systematically absent. Hence, this paper addresses the methodological challenge of applying CADS for migrant representation constructed bimodally.

Drawing on sociological studies on migration, Marotta's (2019) conceptualisation of the migrant experience as 'strangeness' is adopted in this paper as an analytical framework combined with Systemic-Functional Multimodal Discourse Analysis (O'Halloran, 2008). Marotta argues that the migrant experience results from encounters with the unexpected and unfamiliar, disrupting the prior knowledge about the world. Rather than searching for RASIM labels, our analysis has focused on the bimodal construal of migrant identity through strangeness.

Our corpus comprises 40 migration-themed picturebooks from an inner perspective (Żelachowska, 2025). In order to analyse strangeness across the modes, collocations of 'different' and 'strange' were explored for the verbal mode, whereas for the visual mode, colour patterns and social distance depicted through vectors were significant. Findings reveal that adopting a mixed CADS methodology is productive for the analysis of elusive categories in multimodal discourse, such as migrant identity.

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Same borders, multiple discourses: A multilingual analysis on immigration in UN debates

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Discourse analysis refers to “a variety of different approaches to the study of texts, which have developed from different theoretical traditions and diverse disciplinary locations” (Gill, 2000, p. 172). This work falls under the so-called “corpus-assisted discourse analysis”, that is, “that set of studies into the form and/or function of language as *communicative discourse* which incorporate the use of computerized corpora in their analyses” (Partington et al., 2013, p. 10).

In this work, we will investigate the narratives on immigration in the UNPC: The United Nations Parallel Corpus (<https://www.sketchengine.eu/united-nations-parallelcorpus-unpc/>), focusing on two different terms, “immigration” and “border.” We will examine three different languages, Arabic, English and Spanish. The results show that, although the corpus is a parallel corpus, i.e., a corpus consisting of an original text and translations of it, the ways of conceptualizing immigration differ in each language. In English, both immigration and the transit of persons across the border are often associated with contexts of control; for example, the terms “immigration” and “border” frequently co-occur with terms such as “illegal,” “detention,” “control”, or “guards”. However, in Spanish, only the term “immigration” is related with those kinds of contexts. In Arabic, the term *hiğra* “migration” is related to human capabilities in the sense of brain drain or intellectual migration, as for the term *hudūd* “frontiers”, it is related with geographical borders (of the continental shelf and of national jurisdictions) and the limits of available resources.

The aim of this contrastive analysis in migration discourse is to investigate to what extent the content varies across languages reflecting socio-contextual difference in politically charged discourse production.

Muddying the waters on climate change: conflicting positions articulated in Instagram posts about Greta Thunberg's 2023 arrest

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While the representations of homosexual people in media have been extensively studied in Western contexts (Baker, 2006, 2013; Bartley et al., 2016; Rédai, 2012), how Asian media portrays homosexuals has been relatively understudied. Despite legal breakthroughs in countries or regions like Thailand and Taiwan, homosexuals in areas such as Hong Kong (HK) and Singapore still face institutional stigmatisations in different respects.

Based on the keyness analysis (Gabrielatos, 2018) of news articles from *South China Morning Post* (HK, 1,237,211 words) and the *Strait Times* (Singapore, 1,104,209 words) during the period of 2000 -2024, this study identifies key social actors (van Leeuwen, 2008) in the media discourse of both places. While the key actors in the Singaporean news media are predominately high-ranking government officials, those in the HK media involve different groups such as social activists for gender equality and local LGBTQ+ celebrities. By close reading of concordance lines involving these social actors, this study also scrutinises how they discursively justify their own stances on the legal recognition of homosexual populations in both areas.

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The representation of culture in Swiss EFL lower secondary textbooks

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The cultural dimension of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) textbooks has been a locus of interest for critical researchers since scholars raised concerns around the role of English language teaching as a tool to prescribe Anglo-Saxon linguistic and cultural norms around the world (e.g. Phillipson, 1992, 2009; Holliday, 1994; Pennycook, 1994). Subsequently, several works (e.g. Gray, 2013) started approaching language teaching materials through a critical eye, including, more recently, studies that explored the textbook contents from a multimodal critical discourse analysis perspective (e.g. Smith, 2023; Hadjeris, 2024; Komarawan et al., 2025). This paper contributes to these discussions by focusing on the Swiss context and, most specifically, on EFL textbooks materials produced in Switzerland for the lower-secondary level of education.

This study's starting point is Hofstede et al.'s (2010, pp. 7-10) taxonomy of 'manifestations of culture': values, rituals, heroes and symbols. Through a multimodal critical discourse analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020; Castaldi, 2024, 2025) of one unit from each of the three levels textbooks (that is 1st, 2nd, and 3rd years of the lower secondary school), the study aims to explore how the manifestations of culture are constructed in the textbooks in the linguistic and visual modes. The data is coded using the NVivo software to assign the multimodal constructs to the different 'manifestations of culture'. This is done both through a deductive process based on Hofstede et al.'s taxonomy, and inductively through the analysis of cases which do not neatly fit within the taxonomy and for which new categories are created. The paper discusses the findings from the qualitative and quantitative (descriptive statistics) analysis of the data, and critically evaluates the significance of the findings within the Swiss educational context.

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Critical Discourse Studies and Reproductive Rights: Going Beyond Academic Spaces

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This presentation explores how critical discourse studies (CDS) can extend beyond traditional academic spaces while remaining grounded in its core aims of fostering dialogue between scholars and practitioners and, ultimately, contributing to social change (Catalano & Waugh, 2020). Beginning with a discussion of CDS's main goals and how the field sometimes falls short of these, the presenter introduces academic YouTube (Van Alstyne, 2021) and collaborations with activists as a path to coalition building and better praxis (Burnett, 2025). Incorporating multimodal critical discourse analysis (MCDA, cf. Machin & Mayr, 2023) and feminist CDA (Lazar, 2010), the presenter models this approach via an analysis of dueling ballot initiatives on reproductive rights in Nebraska. Focusing on one promotional material (a video featuring Nebraskan female athletes), she analyses the underlying discourses and strategies used by far-right activists used to win the campaign. The presenter then shares an academic YouTube video regarding MCDA and reproductive rights created from the analysis as well as strategies for coalition building that connect CDS work to real social change. The presentation concludes by dialoguing with audience members about their own work and ways in which CDS can transcend academic arenas.

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‘Trump Derangement Syndrome’: stigmatization and political polarization in pro-Trump online communities

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This study examines the use of the expression “TDS” (*Trump Derangement Syndrome*) as it circulates on social media platforms such as *X* and *patriots.win*, within online pro-Trump discourse, during the last semester of 2025.

It adopts a corpus-based and multimodal approach, analyzing not only textual occurrences of the term in a qualitative perspective but also the visual content accompanying posts, in order to examine the interplay between discourse, image (whether pictures, videos, memes or emojis), and ideology that sustains the Trumpist digital sphere.

Originally coined in conservative media, the term “TDS” evolved into a rhetorical weapon of stigmatization. By drawing on the medical and psychiatric lexicon, it pathologizes opposition to Trump and frames critics as mentally unstable. Over time, “TDS” has expanded beyond its original target to become a catch-all label for the enemies of Trumpism, encompassing mainstream media, liberals, Democrats, climate activists or the LGBTQIA+ community, as in the following examples.

1. *24,000 acres burned. 12 people killed. 7,000 homes and businesses destroyed. \$150 billion in damage. All because of one TDS climate retard.* (<https://patriots.win/p/1ARJYFoKdH/24000-acres-burned-12-people-kil/c>)
2. *The election polls that showed Kamala on her way to winning are the ULTIMATE reminder that the the media is a complete bullshit machine. But they knew that if they showed Trump winning, their hyper-engaged contingent of TDS readers would say "Oh hell no, I don't trust you anymore. Unfollowed!"* (<https://patriots.win/p/19BtPo5m5f/the-election-polls-that-showed-k/c>)

The collocational analysis of “TDS” within the corpora reveals its frequent association with terms from a hypermasculine and derogatory lexicon, such as *soyboy*, *alpha male*, *faggot* or *cuckold*, which are recurrent markers of ideological alignment in far-right online speech.

By combining lexicometric analysis with multimodal discourse analysis, this study aims at showing how the term functions as a marker of polarization and a vehicle of hate speech and online violence. It ultimately highlights the ways in which political labeling operates to sustain radicalization and ideological cohesion.

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Miaowing the Algorithm: Discursive Practices in AI-Generated Cat Audiomemes on TikTok

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The imagery of cats has long been intertwined with internet culture, evolving alongside digital ecologies to become integral to the attention economies of social media platforms (White, 2020). Previous studies have examined various dimensions of this phenomenon, focusing on its social impact and modes of circulation within online environments (Maddox, 2023). However, these studies have yet to situate the growing role of artificial intelligence within this domain, particularly regarding the emergence of AI-generated cat content on social media.

To address this gap, the present study investigates viral AI-generated TikTok videos and slideshows featuring cats, with particular attention to the ones that feature remixed songs incorporating cat sounds, such as Billie Eilish's *What Was I Made For?* and Sia's *Unstoppable*. Drawing on the framework of social media critical discourse studies (KhosraviNik, 2017), this research examines remixing practices as discursive and multimodal acts that reflect the platform logic of TikTok.

Methodologically, the study integrates meme studies adapted to TikTok's sound-centred ecosystem (Abdin & Kaye, 2021) with multimodal discourse analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2012). Using Atlas.ti for the systematic coding and interpretation of multimodal elements, the analysis seeks to uncover the implied meanings and affective resonances embedded within these cat-themed audiomemes. In doing so, it demonstrates how this content can reveal broader cultural dynamics at the intersection of AI, creativity and platform-mediated expression.

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‘You’re Absolutely Right’: Ludic Criticality of Large Language Models on TikTok

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Social media afford various opportunities for users to make fun of how others use language.

In engaging in such linguistic ridicule, the users build solidarity with others, while at the same time marginalising their objects of ridicule and making broader social judgements (Chau, 2025). Recently, the growing use of generative AI tools has also led online users to engage in various forms of ‘ludic criticality’ directed at how Large Language Models (LLMs) ‘communicate’. Such practices reveal not just what these individuals think about the ‘language’ of LLMs, but also serve as tools for users to negotiate their relationships with AI tools, the companies that deploy them, and the people who use them (Jones, 2026). This paper sets out to identify the discursive strategies the online users employ and uncover how they position themselves vis-à-vis the AI systems. From our larger dataset, we sampled 14 videos featuring TikTok’s ‘interacting’ with a fictional ChatGPT character (also portrayed by the same person) through scripted dialogues and their concomitant comments. Based on our analysis through the lens of critical sociolinguistics (Blommaert, 2005), this paper first explores the way TikTok users playfully and collaboratively stylise the way ChatGPT responds to prompts, attributing different indexical meanings to the way it produces language. It then reveals how they use such performances to negotiate their complex and dynamic relationships with AI, express beliefs surrounding its use, and publicly rehearse broader societal anxieties about AI.

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Framing the Worker: Construction Grammar Insights from U.S. Union and Company Statements Discourse Analysis

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We contribute novel findings to a growing body of research on discourses surrounding labor movements and specifically labor strikes, by analyzing press releases and official statements issued by United States companies and labor unions in disputes resulting in worker strikes. Adopting a construction grammar theoretical framework (Croft, 2022) and using Norman Fairclough's framework for Critical Discourse Analysis (1995), we analyze the relationship between four key entities, management, unions, workers, and the public. We explore the choices of a particular thematic role for these entities, and how the choice of worker as either an agent or patient frames the strike narrative and has implications for public sentiment. We have compiled linguistic data from a large corpus of company press releases and statements made by representatives from both unions and companies, including Kroger, Starbucks, and other American employers. Our preliminary findings reveal systematic differences in how worker agency is framed: pro-management discourses often employ causative constructions with unions as agents and workers and the public as affected patients, framing strikes as self-interested and reckless actions by union leadership, whereas pro-union discourses emphasize collective worker agency and solidarity.

Representing Corporate Climate Responsibility: A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis of UK and Chinese Companies

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Climate change is one of the most urgent environmental challenges facing humanity, and companies are under increasing pressure to demonstrate climate responsibility. While previous studies (e.g., Jaworska 2018) have examined corporate climate discourse, they have focused on the energy sector and on developed countries, leaving gaps in how corporations in different socio-economic contexts and sectors discursively construct climate change. This study addresses this gap by analyzing companies in the energy, technology, and finance sectors in China and the UK, two major emitters but with distinct contexts.

Using corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis, this study asks:

- (1) How do UK and Chinese companies represent climate change in sustainability disclosures?
- (2) What similarities and differences characterize their representations?
- (3) What ideologies underpin these patterns?

The corpus comprises climate-related sections from sustainability reports (2022–2024) of five companies per sector per country. Methods include keyword, collocation, and concordance analysis, with concordance analysis focusing on transitivity and modality, social actor representation, and metaphor analysis.

The findings show that both UK and Chinese companies employ obfuscation strategies through vague material processes and journey metaphors that suggest progress while avoiding commitment. Responsibility is displaced through mental processes and deontic modality with backgrounded social actors. However, UK companies emphasize stakeholder partnerships through association of social actors and rely on epistemic modality and aspirational lexis to show intention without promise. Chinese companies foreground governance structures and use positive evaluative lexis to present climate action as accomplished. These patterns reflect market-based versus state-led governance, yet both enable symbolic compliance by framing climate action as compatible with business-as-usual rather than requiring transformative change.

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A corpus-assisted comparative analysis of the discursive strategies by key social actors in the discussion of homosexuality issues in Hong Kong and Singapore English newspapers

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While the representations of homosexual people in media have been extensively studied in Western contexts (Baker, 2006, 2013; Bartley et al., 2016; Rédai, 2012), how Asian media portrays homosexuals has been relatively understudied. Despite legal breakthroughs in countries or regions like Thailand and Taiwan, homosexuals in areas such as Hong Kong (HK) and Singapore still face institutional stigmatisations in different respects.

Based on the keyness analysis (Gabrielatos, 2018) of news articles from *South China Morning Post* (HK, 1,237,211 words) and the *Strait Times* (Singapore, 1,104,209 words) during the period of 2000 -2024, this study identifies key social actors (van Leeuwen, 2008) in the media discourse of both places. While the key actors in the Singaporean news media are predominately high-ranking government officials, those in the HK media involve different groups such as social activists for gender equality and local LGBTQ+ celebrities. By close reading of concordance lines involving these social actors, this study also scrutinises how they discursively justify their own stances on the legal recognition of homosexual populations in both areas.

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Gendering Schoolchildren in New South Wales, Australia: Visual Discourses of School Uniforms vis-à-vis Parental Discourses on the Gendered Nature of School Uniforms

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In 2018, the New South Wales (NSW) state Department of Education issued a directive that all public schools must offer girls the option of shorts and pants. However, the majority of schools still differentiate uniforms along gendered lines, with only the sports uniform being unisex. In addition, private schools are exempt from this policy and some still enforce strictly gender segregated uniforms.

An analysis of NSW school websites (n=55) found that many schools conceal the shorts/pants options for girls and perpetuate images of stereotypical girls and boys. Images of schoolgirls in traditional tartan dresses and tunics and schoolboys in shorts and long pants dominate many schools' webpages about the uniform. Parents navigating schools' websites, especially before their children start school, may receive coded messages about which uniform items are (un)available for which gender and what is considered the 'norm' for each gender.

Conversely, analysing the discourse of parents in NSW from interviews (n=30) has revealed that many are attuned to the gendered nature of their children's school uniforms and are staunchly against it. Parents talked about gendered uniforms using expressions of bewilderment and antipathy while constructing gender neutral uniform options as positive and favourable. Parents of transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming children portrayed gender segregated uniforms as something that compounded their existing struggles. Parents who have children of different genders described the often more complicated and more expensive girls' uniforms in very negative terms.

Findings show that current gendered school uniforms in NSW often do not correspond to what parents desire and envisage for their children in the 21st century. The overall sentiment among parents is that schools require an overhaul of their uniform to a design that prioritises children's emotional and physical health and comfort.

From Antagonism to Agonism: Rearticulating 'the Self' in Taiwanese Presidential Discourse (1949-2023)

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This study intends to examine the shift between antagonism and agonism in Taiwanese presidential discourse across the political transition from an authoritarian state to a democracy (1949–2023) with focus on the discursive construction of the Taiwanese people (or 'the Self'). According to Mouffe (as cited in Carpentier, 2017), transforming

antagonism to agonism, which is the objective of democratic politics, fundamentally requires re-articulation of chains of equivalence and logics of difference. However, this critical framework is criticized because the process of constructing a strong collective identity—crucial for affective identification—inevitably fosters internal intolerance and homogenization, leading to authoritarian structures that silence dissent and escalate political hostility (August, 2022).

This research addresses the theoretical gap in agonism by tracking this necessary change in ‘the Self’, which is treated as an empty signifier contested in the political struggle. Carpentier (2018) proposes an analytical model to investigate antagonism and agonism where homogenization of ‘the Self’ is a nodal point to understand how antagonism is constructed and pluralization of ‘the Self’ as the corresponding nodal point to analyse strategies to re-/ de-articulate the existing chains of equivalence in antagonist structure. Therefore, the discursive strategies used to fixate stable constructions of ‘the Self’ are categorized under the framework of Social Actor Network (van Leeuwen, 2003) to capture the possible ways to present the Taiwanese people collectively in the discourse.

The social actor categories are then conducted an inferential statistical analysis (Generalised Mixed Model) to see how identity constructions, or social imaginaries toward ‘the Self’ by the presidents have changed over the course of democratization, this study offers crucial insights into the relation between democracy and agonism, demonstrating precisely how collective identities are strategically homogenized and/or pluralized in political discourse.

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IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS ARE THE BERLIN WALL: WATER, WAR and WALL metaphors for immigration in *Le Monde diplomatique*

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Studies of journalistic metaphors for immigration in multiple countries (Santa Ana, 1999; Charteris-Black, 2006; Nguyen and McCallum, 2016; Lazović, 2017; Porto, 2022) have found WATER, WAR and WALL/CONTAINER metaphors to be consistently used across political affiliations. The existing literature tends to focus on the centrist and right-wing press, with few studies on left-wing journalism.

This paper combines corpus analysis with close reading of an article from the corpus to explore the metaphors for immigration used in articles in *Le Monde diplomatique* (*LMd*). A corpus was constructed of articles published between 2009 and 2019, in French, on the *LMd* website. This corpus was interrogated for examples of immigration metaphors with the source domains of WATER, WAR and WALLS following the procedure established by Porto (2022) for identifying WATER metaphors. Metaphorical expressions were identified following the MIP (Pragglejaz Group, 2007).

The study found that *LMd* used all three source domains to present immigration, but with some atypical features. A distinctive framing of the CONTAINER metaphor, IMMIGRATION RESTRICTIONS ARE THE BERLIN WALL, was present in the data but has not been attested elsewhere. *LMd* frequently (64.5%) attributed WAR metaphors to other speakers, suggesting a form of authorial distance. *LMd*'s framing of WAR and WALL metaphors was inconsistent with that most often found in previous studies, with the EU presented as attacking immigrants and WALLS framed as dangerous and exclusive.

Although left-wing media tends to have a smaller circulation, this study suggests that it can be a useful object of study. These studies can provide real-world examples of how the dominant discourse is challenged. The alternative metaphors observed could also be used in framing studies.

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Add Oil, But Make It Meme: Digital Humour and the Construction of Hong Kong Identity

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This presentation examines how digital humour, particularly memes and cypypasta, functions as a form of self-expression and identity-making among young Hong Kong netizens. Drawing on theories of indexicality (Silverstein, 2003), enregisterment (Agha, 2007), and digital discourse communities (Tagg & Seargeant, 2014), the study explores how linguistic features in memes including Cantonese–English code-mixing, stylised English, creative romanisation, circulate as semiotic resources for articulating local identity, generational attitudes, and culturally recognisable voices.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the study integrates qualitative critical discourse analysis with quantitative social-media analysis tracking lexical patterns, multimodal features, and repost trajectories. Data are drawn from Hong Kong meme-sharing communities on Instagram, Facebook and Reddit, enabling comparison across platforms with different audiences and discursive norms.

Findings show that memes operate as key spaces for everyday creativity and sociolinguistic play, allowing users to comment on cultural anxieties, negotiate hybrid identities, and express stances and opinions that may not be possible offline. Memes and cypypasta have emerged as strategies for indexing 'Hong Kong-ness' while navigating shifting socio-political realities.

The paper also considers the methodological challenges posed by the situation in Hong Kong, including political sensitivities, shifting norms around acceptable discourse, and the increased need for anonymity, coded language, and self-censorship in digital communication. These pressures shape both the creation and interpretation of memes, making digital humour an important yet tense site of contemporary Hong Kong identity-making.

‘Collectively Individual’: Inuit Influactivism and Cultural Promotion on TikTok

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TikTok is a hybrid digital space where identity, visibility, and power are negotiated through language, aesthetics, and algorithmic logics that redraw the boundaries between the private and the public (Darvin, 2022).

This study focuses on four Inuit influactivists (Murru et al., 2024) to examine how TikTok becomes a platform for cultural promotion, through a process of “collectively individual [...] radical resurgence” (Simpson, 2017: 194), and within a trajectory of Inuit and Indigenous digital storytelling challenging colonial narratives (Rodgers & Scobie, 2015; Mongibello, forthcoming).

Methodologically, this paper adopts a corpus-assisted multimodal approach (Baker, 2006; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2020) that bridges quantitative and qualitative strands of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995). Starting from a sample of TikTok post captions, recurrent discursive patterns are identified using corpus tools, then interpreted through close multimodal analysis of visual aesthetics, sounds, and platform-specific features.

The analysis highlights how the four Inuit creators strategically repurpose algorithmic dynamics to amplify Inuit visibility within a digital environment where cultural expression, political engagement, and platform affordances converge. By combining corpus linguistics, multimodality, and CDA, the study contributes to emerging research on Indigenous influactivism and on the analysis of algorithmically curated social media content.

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Agency negotiations in migration stories in job interviews

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In job interviews, candidates with a migration background are often asked about their migration stories. Recruiters might do this to see if the character of the candidate fits with the company, which is in line with the New Work Order ideology (Campbell and Roberts, 2007). In this presentation, we focus on a specific element in the discursive negotiation of these migration stories, namely agency negotiations. The construction of an agentive identity tends to be important for candidates in job interviews (Reissner-Roubicek, 2017), yet our earlier research has shown that this may be challenging for candidates that are socialized in a different context (Van De Mierop & De Dijn, 2024). Drawing on 10 recorded job interviews with candidates with a migration background as data and using multimodal discourse analysis as a method, we show that recruiters often project agency upon candidates in their framing of questions, although in most cases the latter frame the reasons for migration as beyond their own control. In this way, we aim to uncover the mismatch between recruiters' and candidates' orientations to agency in these job interview migration stories, and discuss the implications of our observations.

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Framing Resilience and Risk in EU Climate Consultations: A Corpus-Assisted Study of Feedback on the Climate Resilience and Risk Management Framework

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In 2025, the European Commission launched an integrated framework to enhance climate resilience and risk management, responding to calls from the European Parliament and Council for stronger action on escalating climate-related risks (European Commission, 2025). The Commission is conducting an online public consultation inviting stakeholders to provide feedback on EU actions and initiatives (Biermann et al., 2019). Research has often examined EU environmental discourse (e.g., Krzyżanowski, 2015), whereas public consultation texts remain underexplored. Drawing on Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (Partington et al., 2013) and Framing Analysis (Entman, 1993), this paper investigates how resilience and risk are framed, and which discursive strategies are employed, in a corpus of feedback compiled from the *Have Your Say* platform. The platform is conceptualised as a digital participatory space in which institutional, business, and civic voices interact within EU climate governance.

Findings shed light on dominant, non-dominant, and contested framings of climate resilience and risk management, and on how these shape constructions of responsibility and priorities for prosperity and competitiveness.

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Understanding metaphors in early adolescence: affordances and dangers

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Children understand simple metaphors from a very early age, and are able to understand metaphorical mappings by 6-7 years (Deckert et al, 2019). However, they often remain focussed on superficial similarities rather than relational mappings, and some people still have difficulties with figurative language into their late teens (Nippold & Taylor, 2002).

It is established that metaphor is a central framing tool in ideological discourse, and adolescents seem particularly vulnerable to suasion through metaphor. A 2023 news story shows how this could have serious consequences. Doctors voiced concern about social media messages simplistically discouraging the contraceptive pill through the metaphor 'Birth control is this generation's cigarettes'. They linked this to a 30% rise in teenagers seeking pregnancy terminations in Scotland over one year (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-66671765>).

We aimed to explore how early adolescents interpret metaphors. We compiled a corpus of 17 focus group interviews, based around prompt texts recommended by their teachers. These were supplemented with tasks on metaphor conducted with 6 school classes (aged 11-13). We analysed participants' metaphor use and their comments. They showed enthusiasm to explore and extend metaphor creatively, but also often misunderstood metaphors or interpreted them literally. The English National Curriculum is currently under review, with one aim being to 'empower young people to engage critically with the messages they encounter through different media channels' (DfE 2025: 40). We argue that training in metaphor interpretation needs to be included.

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Anglophone Filters of Newsworthiness: Constructing Closeness in Transnational Reporting on Contested Election Protests

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Waves of anti-government protests in 2021 raised questions about how they are made visible in transnational reporting and social media sharing. While research has examined frames of domestication and cosmopolitan suffering, less is known about how news values themselves bridge distance across borders. This study examines how news values construct closeness in English-language reporting of contested election protests in the Global South, focusing on underrepresented regions in Africa, Latin America, and the Middle East. Using corpus-assisted Discursive News Values Analysis (DNVA), it explores how local unrest is made meaningful for international audiences through shared news texts.

The analysis shows that closeness emerges through three dimensions. Geopolitical proximity is constructed through Eliteness and Impact, where international actors such as foreign leaders and observers serve as bridges between local unrest and global political stakes. A timeless proximity is constructed through retrospective framing, by embedding protests within historical trajectories of foreign intervention, where temporal continuity collapses distance by binding present events to shared historical memory. Cultural proximity surfaces through appeals to religious authority and democratic ideals, with democracy invoked across political divides as a universalised cultural touchstone that resonates with audiences for whom it functions as a shared value across borders. On the contrary, spatial markers function as anchoring devices for orientation rather than constructing closeness in themselves.

These findings demonstrate that closeness in transnational protest coverage operates as a textually multi-dimensional resource, achieved through discursive translation of local unrest into frames of international geopolitical salience, historical continuity, and shared cultural values. The study extends existing DNVA frameworks by showing how Proximity functions in contexts of distant geographies, where geographical distance is not erased but reworked through discourse. It contributes to debates on how international journalism negotiates distance and shapes the visibility of Global South protests for remote audiences.

From Supremacy to Sunsets: Transformative Discourse Analysis of Italian wine across politics and #WineTok

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This paper proposes Transformative Discourse Analysis (TDA) to capture how meanings reorganize when nationalist political rhetoric travels into platformed cultural and commercial discourse. It offers a comparative study of (1) Italian right-wing political talk that mobilizes food and wine as evidence of national superiority and (2) TikTok wine-expert discourse in #WineTok and similar hashtags, where Italian wine is presented through guidance, place-based storytelling, and sensory experience.

Right-wing narratives of food and culture frame “cibo” as collective essence (in a 2025 speech by Prime Minister Meloni: “quello che siamo e la nostra identità”) and as competitive primacy (“una Nazione straordinaria” that “non ha rivali”). This resonates with CDA’s long-standing concern with discourse as a key site where power and ideology are enacted and reproduced (van Dijk, 2008). By contrast, wine creators typically ground value in multimodal arrangements: vineyard panoramas, street-level trattoria scenes, tasting rituals, price cues, captioned recommendations, and music that sets an affective tone. Here, “Italian-ness” is not argued as an inherent national trait; it is assembled through terroir talk, landscape, conviviality, and trust in the creator’s credibility.

Methodologically, the study integrates CDA, Multimodal CDA, and Social Media Critical Discourse Studies. Political excerpts and TikTok posts are transcribed and coded for evaluative patterns, participant positioning, and multimodal resources, following the premise that discourse “includes... visual images and ‘body language’” (Fairclough, 2013; Balirano, 2017) and that social media discourse operates between mass and interpersonal communication (KhosraviNik, 2017).

TDA maps three recurring transformations: evaluation (exceptionalist boasting versus situated expertise and enjoyment), actorhood (the Nation and a unified “we” versus creators, audiences, and consumer-tourists), and legitimation (heritage as proof versus experience as credibility). The contribution is a transferable analytic lens for tracking how political identity-talk is re-made as a distinct multimodal wine discourse on TikTok.

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Social media, populism and polarisation in Belgian right-wing politics: A study of Georges-Louis Bouchez's rhetoric

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This study examines how right-wing political leader Georges-Louis Bouchez, head of Belgium's *Mouvement Réformateur* (MR), uses populist discourse on the social media platform X (formerly Twitter) to construct his political ethos and polarise public debate. Populism is gaining ground across Europe on both the left and the right. It is characterised by discursive strategies that contrast a virtuous, homogeneous "people" with an allegedly illegitimate, corrupt, or disconnected "elite" (Taggart, 2000; Mudde & Rovira Kaltwasser, 2017). Existing research shows that such rhetoric relies on the continuous creation of antagonism, the valorisation of both the people and the leader claiming to represent them, and a flexible definition of "the people", which may take on social or identity-based meanings depending on political aims (De Cleen, 2019).

We explore the linguistic resources deployed by Bouchez on X to construct his political ethos. To this end, tweets by Bouchez between June 2024 and October 2025 were collected and analysed using a combination of discourse analysis and computer-assisted content analysis (Bennett, 2015). This paper highlights recurrent devices such as deictics, evaluative qualifiers, and various forms of discursive aggression and examines their role in constructing representations of himself and the MR, of his political adversaries and of Belgium as a whole. Results point to discursive mechanisms consistent with right-wing populism.

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Speaking Out in Platformed Spaces: Feminist Influactivism, Online Misogyny, and Digital Governance

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Building on prior qualitative research on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) targeting feminist influactivists in Italy (Author, 2025), this study extends the analysis to Spain, offering a comparative examination of how digital violence shapes feminist online activism across two Southern European contexts. While Italy and Spain share strong feminist traditions and comparable patterns of patriarchal backlash, they differ in media ecologies, platform governance practices, and institutional responses to TFGBV. These differences provide a productive lens for examining how national contexts mediate the forms, intensity, and consequences of TFGBV.

Methodologically, the study is grounded in feminist digital ethnography (Herron, 2023) combined with Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (SM-CDS) (Author, 2018), integrating in-depth qualitative interviews with feminist influactivists and a critical analysis of selected instances of misogynistic and gendered hate to examine how misogynistic violence is discursively constructed, circulated, and normalised on social media platforms, particularly Instagram. Attention is paid not only to overt harassment, but also to subtler discursive strategies such as delegitimisation, sexualised ridicule, algorithmically amplified pile-ons, and intra-feminist conflict. The analysis examines whether patterns observed in Italy, including attacks by manospheric and far-right networks, extend to Spain, and how emerging forms of abuse such as doxxing, deepfake pornography, and AI-assisted harassment are reshaping the risk landscape for feminist activists.

The study also examines platform governance and evolving regulatory frameworks at EU level, with particular attention to how recent instruments such as the Digital Services Act and the AI Act contribute to shaping platform moderation practices, response mechanisms, and transparency obligations in relation to gendered harms. By situating feminist online activism at the intersection of discourse, platform affordances, and regulatory environments, this paper foregrounds how formal governance arrangements interact with the everyday experiences of activists navigating online hostility. The comparative findings contribute to wider debates on digital risk, feminist resistance, and accountability in platform-mediated public spheres.

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How do Chega's party far-right discourses about the Romani community are constructed in its social media? – A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis

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This presentation is based on research aimed at the identifying and exploring hate speech discourses and representations of the Romani/Roma community in Chega's party social media, through the lenses of Critical Discourse Analysis. The Romani population is one of the most significant ethnic minorities in Portugal (Estudo Nacional sobre as Comunidades Ciganas, 2014) and has been constantly marginalized and discriminated against. This social setting makes it the perfect target for Chega's far-right populist discourse. Its purpose is the creation of a public enemy (Mudde, 2007), a process which that relates to another crucial one: *Othering* (Spivak, 1985) - the construction of social distance from "others" who are not like "us", thus posing a threat to our culture and way of life.

A multimodal approach was used throughout the analysis of 22 social media posts published by Chega and its leader, André Ventura, on Twitter and Facebook, that mention the Romani population. Analysis focuses not only on verbal text (Fairclough, 2001), but also on images (Mota-Ribeiro, 2011, based on the visual grammar put forward by Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996, 2006), given their polysemic, multimodal meaning potential. The analytical grid includes the relationship between image and verbal text (van Leeuwen, 2005 inspired by Barthes, 1977 and Halliday, 1985,1994). The aim was to uncover the discourses that the party constructs and disseminates on its digital platforms concerning the Romani ethnicity, by identifying patterns of representation. The multimodal and fine-grain analysis show how Chega's discourses about this community convey hate speeches and represent the Romani as dependent on social aid and self-exclusionary which is related to the "Othering discourse", the "Good Portuguese discourse" and the "Anti-system discourse". Results therefore show Chega's online communication contributes significantly to this group systemic discrimination while placing the Romani as being the margin.

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Que(e)rying the Term 'LGBT' in Indonesian Online News Media

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In Indonesia, the term 'LGBT' started to gain attention from public especially during 'LGBT crisis' in 2016 (Boellstorff, 2020) following the legalisation of same-sex marriage in the United States. Drawing on Discourse Historical Approach (DHA) (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016), particularly nomination and predication strategies, this study examines how the term 'LGBT' is discursively constructed in *detik.com*, an Indonesian mainstream digital news outlet from 2020 to 2024. The findings show that to nominate queer people, 'LGBT' tends to be collectivized (e.g., *group, people, community*). Nevertheless, queer people are predominantly impersonalised through functionalization to denote what they do (e.g., *behaviour, acts, activities, practices*). Further, unlike in English in which the term typically functions as an adjective, 'LGBT' appears to be prevalently nominalized obscuring to what it refers to (Ewing, 2020). This nominalisation arguably enables 'LGBT' to be discursively constructed as an 'ideology' (Korolczuk, 2020) that is 'difficult-to-read' (Boellstorff, 2004) creating public fear of a dangerous Communist resurgence (Thajib, 2022).

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Bridging Scales: Combining Detailed Qualitative and Large-Scale Quantitative Methods in Intersectional and Critical Research on Gender-Based Violence in the Academia

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Gender-based violence (GBV) is a systemic phenomenon rooted in cultural, organizational and individual power relations and dependencies (Bondestam & Lundqvist 2020). As such, it permeates academia as physical and symbolic space. The recent UniSAFE study (2022) documented a continuing high prevalence and low level of reporting of GBV. A key finding was that intersectionality as pivotal factor remains under-researched. Other insights on reasons and consequences of (non-)reporting relate to insecurities in recognizing, interpreting and labeling experiences of GBV. This corroborates prior research and suggests going beyond existing (predominantly quantitative) approaches. To gain a more in-depth understanding of prevalence and un/speakability, we suggest an interdisciplinary, intersectional, and multi-level mixed-methods approach.

We present a research design which enables the analysis of discursive articulations of GBV on the socio-cultural, organizational and individual levels, critically addressing their interrelatedness. United by a social constructivist perspective that considers gender and sexuality as shaped by societal power structures and intersectional positionings (West & Zimmerman 1987; Buchholz & Hall 2004; Cameron 2024), the design is embedded in cultural studies, gender studies and linguistics. This allows relating the lived experiences of the individual to larger systems of power. The overall QUAL-quan framework draws on Multimethod Qualitative Text and Discourse Analysis (Alejandro & Zhao 2024) and Descriptive Statistics (Morse & Cheek 2014).

We particularly discuss how best to combine qualitative and quantitative methods to investigate the lived experiences in their intersectional positionalities on the individual micro-level. Adding to existing approaches, we propose qualitative analysis of (focus-group) interview data (with non-/academic staff) via (Reflexive) Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clark 2022) and Critical Discursive Psychology (Wetherall 1998; Edley 2001) as basis for generating survey questions in addition to standardized items (e.g., Lipinsky et al. 2021). This procedure pays tribute to the multi-facetedness of the phenomenon, while also facilitating its large-scale investigation.

Blocking Empathy on Israeli Social Media During the Gaza War

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Israeli media have consistently avoided reporting on the suffering of Palestinian civilians during Israel's assault on Gaza following the Hamas attacks of October 7, 2023 (Panievsky & Benbaji, 2025). Social media became the main public venue through which images of atrocities were circulated, serving as explicit or implicit summons to empathize with Gazans' predicament. These calls to empathy were often rebuffed by blatant statements attesting to Israelis' blocking of empathy. Building on Head's (2016) claim that "the micro-politics of empathy point to the complex processes through which macro-political structures and ideologies are contested, negotiated, filtered" (p. 180), we interrogate the discursive roles played by explicit empathy-blocking verbal acts in social media users' self-positioning within the wider Israeli debate over the country's actions in Gaza.

Our analysis focuses on uses of the expression "I have no empathy," identifying three central discursive functions it fulfils. First, speakers use this phrase to engage with the liberal moral order and provide justification for their lack of empathy. Second, "I have no empathy" statements are used as warrants for voicing critique (Katriel, 1986), self-positioning speakers as Israeli patriots who are entitled to criticize without being considered unpatriotic. Third, blunt "I have no empathy" statements serve as a form of "vice-signaling" (Taiwo, 2022), defiantly rejecting the liberal moral order and its humanistic drive. We consider the ways in which the affordances of social media facilitate such violent statements and the implications of these discourses vis-à-vis society's moral and political order.

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Salud emocional en la gestión de la emergencia en la erupción del volcán de La Palma (Islas Canarias)

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Esta propuesta ofrece resultados del proyecto "Género y gestión del riesgo de desastres: análisis comparado y recomendaciones de intervención" (GENDER-IN) PID2021-126195NB-I00 que compara resultados de gestión entre los terremotos de Chile, Lorca y la erupción volcánica en la Isla de La Palma. El análisis de 39 entrevistas semiestructuradas a gestores políticos y técnicos, trabajadores/as sociales y líderes asociativos que participaron en la intervención de la emergencia durante los tres meses de erupción del volcán Tajogaite (sept-dic.2021) permite realizar una valoración fundamentada y pertinente sobre la gestión del desastre, localizada específicamente en el relato de la dimensión emocional y considerando como ejes *género* y *cronotopo*, elementos centrales de hipótesis. Proponemos el uso del análisis de discurso para comprobar cómo las emociones narradas —incluyendo miedo, tristeza, ansiedad, frustración y pérdida— se relacionan con las respuestas sociales durante la crisis y fases de recuperación en los agentes claves. Comprender esta percepción emocional narrada es útil para adaptar políticas de apoyo, más allá de las necesidades materiales y considerando el contexto sociocultural. El análisis se estructura en dimensiones individuales (duelo, cambio de circunstancias, emociones) y colectivas (duelo comunitario, cooperación, conflicto, reorganización de redes, reconstrucción). La interacción entre ambas subraya la influencia del contexto sociocultural (normas, creencias y valores) en la expresión emocional. Se revelan la importancia del apoyo socio-comunitario, las referidas dimensiones de género en los roles, respuestas, experiencias, emociones e interpretaciones. Así como el impacto del cronotopo (como distancia espacio-temporal) respecto a la emergencia localizada. Se considera una perspectiva espacio-temporal de corto plazo en la gestión emocional inmediata y otra a medio/largo plazo que evalúa las consecuencias en la salud y las relaciones sociales (separaciones, cambios de vida o territorio, etc.). En el mismo sentido, la relación cercana con el territorio (nativa o externa) atraviesa el escenario emocional de estos agentes clave.

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Framing abuse through graphicons in online grooming discourse

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Online grooming (OG) is a communicative practice where an adult uses language and other semiotic modes to persuade a child to engage in sexual activities online and, sometimes, offline (Lorenzo-Dus, 2023). Groomers employ graphicons to achieve their criminal intentions. However, OG literature has scarcely focused on them (but see Pérez-Sabater & García-Montes, 2024; García-Montes, 2025). This investigation addresses this gap by examining male groomers' graphicon use with boys. The presentation builds upon a previous examination of the use of graphicons with girls and the role of emotions these graphicons convey (Lorenzo-Dus et al., forthcoming). We employ a methodology based on Corpus Pragmatics (Aijmer & Rühleman, 2015) and Appraisal Theory (Benítez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio, 2019) to examine conversations (c. 13,000 words, 163 graphicons) between 10 male groomers (21-27 years old) and 10 boys (10-16 years old). The analysis reveals that the main AFFECT categories aligned to graphicon use were primarily dissatisfaction, followed by satisfaction and attraction. By showing dissatisfaction, groomers exhibit vulnerability and openness, often seeking to guilt-trip boys into compliance.

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Asylum and Migration: Far-Right Discursive Patterns in Greek Parliamentary Discourse

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This presentation examines the parliamentary discourse of Athanasios Plevris during the first six months of his tenure as Greece's Minister of Migration and Asylum (July-December 2025). Plevris, a politician with a documented extreme-right background, has publicly endorsed deterrence-centred border policies and has framed migrant deaths as an inevitable consequence of border protection.

The study adopts a corpus-based Critical Discourse Analysis approach that combines quantitative and qualitative methods (Baker et al., 2008). A corpus consisting of Plevris' parliamentary speeches was compiled and analysed using AntConc, producing a frequency list from which the two most frequent content words – *άσυλο* (asylum) and *μετανάστευση* (migration) – were further analysed. All occurrences of these lexical items were subsequently examined using Halliday's transitivity theory (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004) and van Leeuwen's model of the representation of social actors (2008).

The analysis demonstrates that asylum and migration are overwhelmingly constructed as administrative and securitised objects, subjected to processes of management, restriction, and deterrence. Refugees and migrants themselves are systematically deprived of agency, appearing primarily as objects of policy rather than as social actors. The presentation argues that Plevris' discourse exemplifies the normalisation of far-right logics within institutional parliamentary language, where exclusionary migration policies are legitimised through technocratic framing and the strategic silencing of refugee and migrant perspectives.

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Colonial Legacy or Inclusion Tool? An Analysis of Teachers' Perceptions of English Use in Multilingual Classrooms

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This study contributes to ongoing discussions about the role of English in potentially promoting inclusive learning environments within increasingly diverse classrooms. Based on the assumption that languages not only convey meaning but also serve as means through which power imbalances are created and maintained, the paper investigates how secondary school teachers perceive and discursively represent the use of English when interacting with students from diverse linguistic backgrounds—namely native speakers, ESL and EAL learners (Rutgers et al. 2024). More specifically, the research aims to examine whether, and to what extent, English is still regarded as a colonial language associated with exclusion, dominance, and privilege, or whether it is now conceived as a language that fosters inclusion and intercultural understanding in educational settings.

To this end, a dataset consisting of 15-minute semi-structured online interviews with British secondary school teachers was compiled. Participants' beliefs, experiences, and classroom practices were analyzed using the theoretical framework of Critical Discourse Analysis, with a special focus on Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (cf., among others, Cushing 2019; Kumaravadivelu 1999). The results reveal that teachers often harbor ambivalent feelings about the use of English in multilingual classrooms, with some viewing it as a tool for empowerment and others more aware of its historical connotations and its potential to discriminate against non-native speakers.

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Re-enacting the Summit on Twitter: How Users depict Biden, Trump and Putin Through Multimodal Metaphor and Metonymy

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This work examines how Twitter/X users figuratively (re)stage the Helsinki (2018) Trump–Putin summit and the Geneva (2021) Biden–Putin meeting through visual and multimodal replies to @nytimes posts. Approaching Twitter/X as a multimodal participatory environment, the study investigates how users employ metaphor and metonymy to frame and evaluate presidential agency. Data consist of image-based replies posted in a fifteen-day window around each summit. The analysis combines Multimodal Metaphor Theory (Forceville 2008) with Musolff's scenario-based model (2006) to identify figurative patterns and their communicative functions.

Across both summits, users rely on a handful of scenarios which recur with striking consistency—POWER IS SIZE, ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP, SUBMISSION, and INADEQUACY. Despite differences in age-related framings, both US presidents are depicted as politically weakened through physical frailty. Putin, by contrast, appears with striking stability as dominant partner, puppeteer, or strategic opponent, underscoring his perceived geopolitical advantage regardless of the US administration in office. Several replies operate metaphonymically: a salient detail first identifies a leader and subsequently activates a metaphorical interpretation (Pérez-Sobrino 2017). Intertextual artefacts such as film posters, murals and screenshots condense complex geopolitical evaluations into highly recognisable micro-stories.

By foregrounding relational over individual portrayals, the study shows how publics comprehend high-profile diplomatic events through interpersonal and affective schemas. Multimodal reply discourse thus transforms geopolitical encounters into everyday dramas, revealing how figurativity shapes the social representation of international politics.

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Words That Divide: Digital Narratives and the Sectarian Recasting of Syria's Revolution

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This study examines how digital political discourse reshaped Syria's revolutionary narrative following the collapse of the Assad regime on December 8, 2024. Drawing on over 6,000 social media comments responding to speeches by transitional leader Ahmad al-Shar' (Al-Jawhani), it employs digital ethnography, critical discourse analysis, and stance-taking frameworks to reveal how the original liberation narrative—centered on freedom and democratic governance—has been supplanted by a sectarian counter-narrative.

Commenters' lexical choices, metaphors, and evaluative stances collectively construct a discourse of Sunni supremacy that legitimizes leadership through religious identity rather than governance performance. Terms such as *rawāfiḍ* ("rejectionists"), and *khawārij* ("seceders") serve as in-group and out-group markers, while expressions like *biddna niḥkimkum biḥshihāta* ("we will rule over you by force") signal ideological polarization, undermine democratic ideals and delegitimize political opponents.

At the same time, aspirational notions such as *madaniyya* ("civil society") persist as discursive efforts to advocate inclusive, secular governance, revealing ongoing contestation between revolutionary and sectarian master narratives. This linguistic transformation extends beyond rhetoric: shifts in online discourse correlate with violence against Alawite and Druze communities.

This paper underscores the persuasive power of narrative framing, stance-taking, and metaphor in shaping political legitimacy, demonstrating how digital discourse can transform emancipatory aspirations into mechanisms for exclusion and authority legitimization. The findings contribute to broader understandings of political narrative construction, showing how linguistic and digital practices interact to redefine political identities, polarize societies, and reshape transitional contexts.

The Madonna, the whore, and the “Latina”: A corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis of stereotypical language in British news

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Latinx women face compounded precarities in the UK, including gender-based violence, uncertain migratory status, and discrimination from British peers (Boufkhed et al., 2024; De la Silva et al., 2018; McIlwaine & Bunge, 2016). Previous literature investigating discursive representations of Latinx women in British news is nonexistent. However, some scholarship in this area has been conducted in the American context, finding that representations of Latinx women typically follow a Madonna-Whore binary; simultaneously perceived as hot-tempered and hypersexual, yet maternal and pious (Correa, 2010; Deckard et al., 2020; Rivera, 1994).

Using corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (Baker et al., 2008), this study investigates the use of the word “Latina(s)” in British online news reports. Using a corpus of over 5000 articles published from 2005-2025, this study examines concordances, collocations, and semantic prosody (Louw, 1993), to explore how discursive themes support and refute the stereotypical Madonna-Whore paradox, and how these stereotypes can construct social biases. Following a review of the LexisNexis news database, the term “Latina(s)” was found to be the most commonly used general term associated with Latinx women in British news articles over the past 20 years. This is much more frequent than other identifiers, such as “Latin American women”, “Latin American woman”, and “Latin American girl(s)”. Analysis by political alignment revealed right-leaning sources published 40% more articles containing the term “Latina(s)” when compared to left-leaning sources. Preliminary findings suggest right-wing sources feature the term “Latina(s)” in the context of celebrity discourse more often than left-wing sources, and are more likely to feature commentary on physical appearance, while left-wing sources are more likely to discuss the target term in the context of political issues. This preliminary data reveals an emerging trend of sexualized language towards Latinx women in right wing news, aligning with the personification of the Whore in the Madonna-Whore paradox.

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Government crisis communication: A critical approach

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In this talk, I provide suggestions as to how communication practices of executive government institutions could be conceptualised and operationalised for a critical discourse analytic study. Following the discourse-historical approach to political communication research (Wodak, 2024), I outline the basic functions of language in government. Focusing specifically on communication in the context of various 'crises', I present two example analyses of the United Kingdom government officeholders' strategic language use at the times of uncertainty and public outrage.

I argue that it is essential for critical analysts of political language to distinguish between three disparate conceptualisations of 'crises' and 'crisis communication' in government: (1) 'crisis' as a disaster, characterised by a physical threat to human life (e.g., Aav et al., 2025), (2) 'crisis' as a scandal, revolving around a threat to officeholders' reputation (e.g., Hansson & Page, 2023; Hansson, 2024), and (3) 'crisis' as an authoritarian rhetorical device, a critical perspective calling attention to a threat to democracy (e.g., Krzyżanowski et al., 2023; Wodak, 2024).

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Discourses of legitimization in strategic narratives: The case of Russia's illegal war of aggression against Ukraine

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International security dynamics is increasingly studied within the analytical framework of strategic narratives (Miskimmon & O'Loughlin, 2017; Bradshaw et al., 2024). Building upon insights from critical discourse studies (van Leeuwen, 2007; Hansson & Page, 2023), we offer a methodological contribution towards analysing the discursive mechanisms of legitimization and delegitimation in strategic narratives projected by perpetrators of wars of aggression.

By analysing a specialised dataset of English language social media content published by the Russian government during its attack on Ukraine in 2022, we distinguish between narratives that function to legitimise the aggression and those that delegitimise the critics of the aggression. A further distinction is made between four kinds of identity narratives: those that primarily focus on either (1) the target of aggression, (2) the aggressor, (3) the allies of the target of the aggression, or (4) the allies of the aggressor. We also note how legitimations in strategic narratives fall under three broad analytical categories: authorisations, moralisations, and rationalisations. These distinctions are useful as they help critical analysts to systematically uncover the ways in which aggressors try to persuade particular audiences across the globe to support international crimes against peace and humanity.

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Discourses of AI Art: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Mainstream and Art-Institutional Media

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Over the past five years, the emergence of AI image generation has become a prominent topic across global news media, producing a proliferation of public discourse about the nature, value, and legitimacy of AI art. These debates are often polarised, reflecting broader struggles over technological change, creative labour, authorship, and cultural authority. While mainstream news outlets frequently frame AI art as a site of disruption, art-institutional publications tend to position AI as continuous with long-standing traditions of artistic experimentation. This study examines these contrasting constructions to understand how different media domains conceptualise AI art and how such discursive positionings shape understandings of artists, artistic labour, and the boundaries of art practice.

Drawing on Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 1995, 2010), the study analyses a balanced corpus of 80 recent articles, comprising 40 texts from mainstream news media and 40 from art-institutional media. The analysis focuses on key linguistic resources through which AI art is represented, including metaphor, transitivity, theme–rheme organisation, modality, evaluation, and interdiscursivity, allowing for a systematic comparison of meaning-making across media domains.

The findings reveal a contrast between lay discourses about art, which tend to emphasise threat, loss, and ethical crisis, and institutional art discourses, which more often frame AI as continuous with avant-garde histories, including surrealist and post-conceptual traditions. Technological change thus emerges as a site in which tensions between public, non-expert understandings of art and institutionally sanctioned conceptions are foregrounded, with contemporary anxieties and utopian claims echoing earlier moments of artistic–technological transformation. The study contributes to ongoing discussions of how media discourse shapes public understandings of art, artists, and technological change within the cultural field.

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The voices of activism: Fighting a just cause or blaming the innocent?

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Activism is on the rise pressing for action from policy makers and global corporations to address major challenges to human existence. However, activism is taking new forms where protesters engage physically with corporations they believe to be the culprits in accelerating climate change and planetary degradation, extending their confrontations to the average employee. This has far-reaching consequences for the individual, their sense of integrity and safety, but also for the support of what may otherwise be considered a just cause.

This situation will form the background of my presentation. Taking my starting point in studies on activist identity and discourse (Mannarini et al., 2024) and organizational discourse (Cooren, 2015), I will discuss a recent case of 'door-step' activism where activists entered the headquarters of a large, global corporation to make their voices heard and challenge employees to denounce their engagement with the corporation. In the discussion, I will investigate the possible consequences of activist actions for the perception and construction of their cause with employees and management as well as the consequences this may have for engaging in dialogue, preserving employee trust, and searching for solutions (Stelter, 2023). Thus, the study is explorative seeking to establish an initial understanding of the complex processes that this type of activism involves.

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Language Shield: An Analysis of Person-Marking and Metonymic Strategies in Orbán's Rhetoric

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An increasing trend in politics is the strategic deflection of governmental responsibility and blame avoidance (Hansson, 2017). Grounded in the premise that political action is profoundly shaped by language (Schaffner, 1996), this paper examines responsibility attribution in Hungarian political communication, utilizing pragmatic and cognitive frameworks.

Observations of the Hungarian government's crisis communication – such as the 2024 crisis, where responsibility was deflected onto external actors like the EU, “Brussels,” and opposition parties (Horváth, in press) – motivate this study. It investigates the use of person markers to determine whether the government takes or deflects responsibility, and to whom responsibility is shifted if deflection occurs. Additionally, the study explores the use of metonymies in responsibility attribution, aiming to identify the most prevalent metonymic target concepts in Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's rhetoric. The corpus comprises seventeen annual State of the Nation speeches delivered by the PM from 2010 to 2026, covering the full tenure of the current Fidesz–KDNP coalition, totaling 67,035 words.

The methodology combines quantitative and qualitative approaches. Person markers are analyzed for frequency using a Python code with manual verification. The analysis of metonymies follows the established steps for identifying metonymy (Biernacka, 2013). This study contributes to understanding how pragmatic framing and cognitive mechanisms are strategically deployed in political rhetoric to manage public perceptions of accountability.

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A multifaceted problem: Discursive representations of childhood obesity in Chinese official media

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An increasing number of children in China are now clinically classified as overweight or obese. In response to growing public concern, the Chinese government has been drawing attention to the issue through coverage in official media. This study employs a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis to examine how childhood obesity is represented as a multifaceted problem in Chinese official media. Based on a dataset of 39 articles (approximately 55,000 Chinese characters) published in *People's Daily*, China's major state-run newspaper, between 2020 and 2022, the analysis identifies three dominant discourses that problematize childhood obesity: (1) a health discourse, which portrays obesity as a threat to children's well-being; (2) a parenting discourse, which attributes childhood obesity to irresponsible parenting, particularly by mothers; and (3) a national security discourse, which frames childhood obesity as a risk to the nation's future strength and stability. These findings highlight the intersection of medical, moral, and nationalist narratives in shaping public perceptions of childhood obesity and offer insights for more nuanced and effective public health interventions in China.

Small emojis, yet rich emotions: How emojis interact with language to construct emotions in small stories on losing-weight posts on Weibo

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Losing weight is an emotionally rich experience, often marked by emotional ups and downs. Emojis offer unique insights into these emotional fluctuations, capturing nuanced expressions in individuals' weight-loss journeys. Building on the work of Logi and Zappavigna (2023) and drawing upon Georgakopoulou's (2021) theory of 'small stories,' this study adopts a social semiotic approach to analyze how individuals articulate emotions in Weibo posts through emojis in a corpus of 10,417 Weibo posts related to weight loss (approximately 606,000 Chinese characters). This approach proves effective in uncovering the complex emotional layers embedded in social media narratives, offering further evidence of the value of emojis in exploring small stories on social media. In particular, the study highlights the intersectionality of emotions—such as happiness, anxiety, and guilt—as they co-occur and intertwine in these narratives. The small stories conveyed through emojis reflect the posters' situated identities (e.g., as food lovers, fitness enthusiasts, or weight-loss aspirants) and the contextually shaped subjectivities they choose to emphasize or suppress. These choices, whether explicit or implicit, play a crucial role in shaping the posters' online personas. Finally, the study discusses how emojis can simultaneously convey ideational content and emotional resonance in the construction of small stories on social media.

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Digital Leadership and National Belonging

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This paper examines how UK female political leaders linguistically construct national identity on Instagram, treating the platform as a discursive space where leadership, gender, and collective belonging intersect. Grounded in Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) and feminist poststructuralist discourse analysis (FPDA), the study foregrounds captions, hashtags, narrative framing, and audience interaction as primary sites for enacting political authority and national cohesion (Wodak et al., 2009; Lazar, 2005). While Instagram is inherently multimodal, linguistic strategies—including pronouns, modality, evaluative language, and metaphor—are prioritised to reveal how narratives of resilience, continuity, and national inclusion are produced.

Empirically, the study focuses on posts from prominent UK female politicians, examining discursive patterns that construct a cohesive British “we” (Yuval-Davis, 1997). Comment threads are analysed as interactive spaces where national identity and gendered leadership are negotiated, reinforced, or contested, reflecting recent CDS research on social media (Larsson, 2023). Corpus-assisted discourse analysis identifies recurring lexical, syntactic, and evaluative patterns, while qualitative FPDA provides nuanced interpretation of ideological and affective meaning.

Findings indicate that Instagram enables UK female leaders to perform and stabilise national identity through ideologically structured, personalised language, while simultaneously exposing them to gendered scrutiny and mediated contestation. By combining social media-focused CDS with classical discourse analytic frameworks, the study demonstrates how digital political communication reshapes the discursive boundaries of leadership, nationhood, and gendered belonging in contemporary Britain.

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Negotiating Far-Right Legitimacy: Discursive Strategies in Online Comments on Chile's 2025 Presidential Election

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This study examines the discursive strategies of legitimization employed in user comments responding to social-media posts by two presidential candidates in Chile's 2025 election. Adopting a critical perspective grounded in Critical Discourse Studies, specifically studies of legitimation (van Leeuwen, 2007; Reyes, 2011; Hansson & Page, 2022). This research analyzes how online audiences construct and justify political positions. In the 2025 electoral race, eight candidates contested the presidency, including two widely identified as far-right.

This qualitative study draws on a random sample of TikTok and Instagram comments posted in response to three campaign posts from the far-right candidates José Antonio Kast and Johannes Káiser. Findings indicate that users deploy a range of legitimization strategies to justify their stances on the electoral process and on the political projects represented by the candidates. The most salient strategy in the corpus is moral evaluation, which predominantly manifests as positive assessments of the candidates' personal capacities and as critiques of the perceived decadence of the traditional political class. Authorization also emerges, often referencing public figures considered to have relevant experience. Rationalization appears in comments that challenge or refute opponents' arguments. Finally, mythopoesis is observed in narratives that evoke past political processes, such as expressions of sympathy for Pinochet's dictatorship, as a framework to legitimize present political actions and preferences. Counter-discourses that delegitimize the candidates and their proposals were also identified, revealing a polarized communicative environment.

Constructing Identities through Scent in Fragrance Advertising

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Promotional culture is one of the most pervasive, powerful and persuasive forms of discourse. Advertised products are commonly classified as either utilitarian or hedonic (Crowley et al., 1992). As luxury goods, fragrances clearly fall into the hedonic category. Their advertising often relies on bodily and sensual imagery to evoke pleasure, while simultaneously constructing notions of high social status and particular forms of gender identity (Plakoyiannaki & Zotos, 2009). Although references to smell are often not made explicit in advertisements, they are closely tied to gender and conveyed through both visual and verbal cues. The identities portrayed in these advertisements aim to evoke specific associations with scent in the consumer's mind.

The aim of this study is twofold. First, it explores how the notion of scent is constructed in advertising discourse, focusing on brands' promotional texts and reviews drawn from the iWeb corpus (Davies, 2018). Methodologically, keyword lists for two virtual corpora—feminine scent and masculine scent—were created and analysed, with particular attention to adjectival collocates of the word scent. The key findings show that the adjective masculine appears more frequently than feminine among the collocates of scent, suggesting a prevalence of masculine associations. However, following Baker (2023), the absence of explicit labelling for feminine scents indicates that femininity is treated as the default, highlighting the dominance of feminine identity in fragrance discourse. Further close analysis of the top collocates of scent—fresh, sweet and floral—reveals clear patterns: while fresh describes both masculine and feminine fragrances, sweet and floral are predominantly associated with feminine scents (Lindqvist, 2012). Second, the corpus findings are compared with a selection of fragrance advertisements, examining their scent profile descriptions, visual characteristics and strategies for gender representation. In sum, this approach, grounded in the principle of triangulation (Baker, 2023), integrates quantitative and qualitative perspectives to investigate how gender identities are constructed through verbal and visual means in contemporary fragrance advertising.

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Place, Identity and Ideology in Soviet Popular Songs (1964–1991)

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In the USSR, popular culture was closely intertwined with state ideology, serving as a tool for shaping public consciousness and promoting collective ideals. Music, particularly songs produced by the state-run label *Melodiya*, played a central role in this cultural project. Popular songs were not merely entertainment; they functioned as vehicles for ideological messaging. As MacFadyen (2001) shows, Soviet popular songs served as both instruments of state ideology and expressions of personal and social sentiment. This aligns with Yurchak's (2006) analysis of late Soviet culture, in which citizens simultaneously reproduced and subtly reinterpreted ideological narratives, often infusing them with alternative or ambivalent meanings. From a discourse-analytic perspective, such songs can be viewed as instances of legitimation—discursive practices that sustain political authority and social cohesion (Kolmogorova 2018). Studying the lyrics of Soviet popular songs thus provides invaluable insights into the dynamic relationship between ideology and popular culture during the Soviet period.

The research material consists of a corpus of 6,134 Soviet popular song lyrics released under the state-run label *Melodiya*, comprising approximately 2,422,000 tokens in total. The corpus covers the period from the founding of the recording studio in 1964 up to and including 1991 and was compiled by the authors. The analysis aims to systematise the song texts according to the degree of their ideological engagement. In particular, the study seeks to identify the trends in the use of toponyms and proper names across four chronological periods of the Soviet era: (1) the 1960s, (2) 1970s, and (3) 1980s, and (4) two final years of the Soviet period (1990–1991). The data analysis suggests a gradual fading of ideological clichés by 1991, reflecting broader socio-cultural and political shifts as mirrored in the lyrics. The methodology combines computational analysis of large text datasets—including named entity recognition and GIS visualization—with both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Baker 2023), discourse analysis and elements of cultural analysis. Through this mixed-method approach, the study uncovers how place and proper names in Soviet songs not only reflected, but also helped construct the ideological and cultural frameworks of the period.

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Sailing against the current: Metaphors of cancer in Malaysian women's narratives

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Maritime life has historically shaped the worldview and vocabulary of the Malays, resulting in a rich expressions related to seafaring to articulate complex human experiences (Manguin, 2022; Othman et al., 2024). Metaphor plays a significant role in facilitating communication about serious life-threatening illnesses such as cancer. Despite the growing body of research on cancer metaphors, little is known about how Malaysian Malay cancer patients conceptualise their experience with the illness. This study examines how Sailing metaphors, related to the conventional LIFE IS A JOURNEY conceptual metaphor, are employed by the women to talk about the various aspects of cancer experience. Drawing on narrative accounts of five Malay cancer patients, the study shows that expressions such as “*mengharungi lautan bergelora*” (navigating turbulent seas), “*terumbang-ambing*” (adrift), and “*menongkah arus*” (to go against the current) allow the women to describe uncertainty, resilience, emotional distress and the broader impact of the illness. These Sailing metaphors facilitate the women's meaning making and serve as a strategy for coping. The findings highlight the relevance of Sailing metaphors in Malay discourse, as well as their role in shaping meaningful interpretations of serious illness such as cancer. The study broadens the scope of the conceptualisation of cancer in an underrepresented language, providing insights into how Malay women perceive the illness.

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Jury Deliberations as Genre: Mapping Institutional Discourse in the Age of Digital Evidence

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This paper explores jury deliberations as a linguistic genre, examining how institutional discourse is structured and negotiated in response to user-generated digital evidence. Drawing on transcripts from three mock juries (approx. 21,000 words and 2 hours of video-recorded talk) deliberating a fictional criminal trial involving a real video of an airstrike in Yemen, the study applies Swales' (1990) Structural Move Analysis to identify recurring rhetorical Moves and Steps. The trial, staged with legal professionals and a former ICC judge, formed part of the [TRUE Project](#), which investigates the impact of deepfakes on trust in user-generated evidence amid rising concerns over misinformation.

Using NVivo for qualitative coding, the analysis shows that while some Moves (e.g., stating verdict preferences) are fixed and sequential, others (e.g., evaluating evidence) recur throughout deliberation, challenging linear genre models (e.g., Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993). Jury deliberation emerges as a flexible genre in which guiding principles and evidence are revisited, reflecting the dynamic negotiation of meaning. Interactional and paralinguistic features—such as emphasis and overlap—intensify deliberative activity around evidence-centred Moves, underscoring that genre salience is both textual and interactional.

The study further interrogates binary models of 'verdict-driven' vs. 'evidence-driven' deliberations (Burd and Hans 2018), proposing instead a deductive, top-down reasoning approach where jurors begin with preliminary votes but orient their discussions around broader truths about evidence. By situating jury deliberations within the wider discursive struggle over credibility, legitimacy, and contested truth-making, the paper contributes to Critical Discourse Studies. It highlights how jurors' talk both reproduces and challenges institutional authority, revealing deliberation as a symbolic space where identity, trust, and epistemic authority are discursively constructed in the context of digital media and polarised discourse.

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Reconstructing the cultural identities of ‘returning Chinese students’: a critical discourse analysis of China Daily

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The increasing number of returning Chinese students from abroad invites extensive sociolinguistic inquiry into their reacculturation experience, and thus the reconstruction of identity in different social contexts within their personal narratives (Gill, 2010; Guo & Miao, 2021). Yet since identity reconstruction is a complex interplay between self-positioning and socially available representations (Bucholtz & Hall, 2005), focusing solely on returnees’ self-reported accounts risks ignoring the broader discursive environment that influences and shapes identity construction. Reflecting on 247 news pieces collected from China Daily, spanning 12 years from November 15, 2012, to November 15, 2024, specifically under Xi Jinping’s leadership, this paper examines how returnees’ cultural identities are discursively constructed within a social constructionist framework. Employing transitivity, social actor representation, metaphor, and appraisal theory, the analysis reveals that China Daily embedded the reentry difficulties within the broader narratives of national and global dynamics, constructing returnees as moralised subjects who must adapt through a responsibility-shifting discourse and evaluative judgement. Meanwhile, the news discourse classified returnees through hierarchical and gendered categories, constantly producing stratified ingroup and outgroup identities. Although certain subgroups of returnees are marginalised, the returnees are still collectively constructed as political subjects whose identities are reduced to functional instruments within neoliberal and nationalist discourse.

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CDS research across time: Which forms of social inequality are we studying? Past directions and present developments

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This paper examines the specific dimensions of social inequality most frequently addressed from a Critical Discourse (CDS) perspective with a focus on studies that specifically rely on the analytic tools of Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL). Using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA 2020) guideline and the SALSA (Search, Appraisal, Synthesis, Analysis) framework, alongside TexMilAB software tools, we conducted a semi-automated systematic literature review (SLR) across four databases (Scopus, Wiley Online Library, ProQuest One Academic, and Sage Journals) to compile a curated dataset of 78 peer-reviewed studies, which spans the period between 2001 and 2024. Our findings reveal that the most frequent forms of inequality successfully addressed through SFL in CDS across time are Governance, closely followed by Gender, Education, and Media Ideology. As CDS research is inherently interdisciplinary and applicable to almost every area of society, the situations in which unequal power relations are maintained and perpetuated can occur, and hence be critically analyzed, across several domains simultaneously. Thus, our SLR also shows that CDS practitioners have come to explore two or more dimensions of inequality in their research (e.g., Media Ideology and Governance or Migration and Ethnicity), with a higher number of papers looking at multiple dimensions than those only exploring one.

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Prognostic Interventionism and Discourse Change: (Re)designing CDS Praxis for Social Transformation

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Since its inception, Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) has interrogated discursive and ideological orders at the heart of power abuses and inequality. However, its prognostic dimension (i.e. future-facing work that envisions paths for discursive and societal change, see Reisigl & Wodak, 2016) remains underdeveloped. This paper argues for making prognostic forms of critique a design feature of CDS work.

Building on a principle of *prognostic interventionism* (Julios-Costa, 2025), I propose a multi-stage model that integrates discourse analysis with experimental exploration to enable CDS practitioners to generate, implement, and iteratively refine recommendations for discourse and ideological change. The model includes five stages. At Stage 0 a given social issue is scoped in its discursive, ideological and sociohistorical dimensions. Stage 1 work then sources potentially emancipatory discourses (grassroots and institutional counter-hegemonic practices), and accounts for their linguistic/multimodal instantiations for, developing hypotheses about the possible ideological effects of these representations. Stage 2 tests these hypotheses via, e.g. behavioural tasks, surveys, focus groups, to produce evidence-informed recommendations. At Stage 3 recommendations are implemented (e.g. targeted changes are made to lexicogrammatical patterns, whole texts, communicative guidelines), re-analysing what has changed and what has been preserved. Stage 4 work evaluates the impact of implementing prognostic recommendations.

To illustrate the model's applicability, I report on a proof-of-concept intervention against Islamophobia in the UK. Noting the key role news media play in perpetuating Islamophobic attitudes (e.g. Richardson, 2004), a long-form news text depicting attitudinal changes from non-Muslim actors towards their Muslim neighbours was sourced and analysed for counter-Islamophobic nomination/predication strategies. Its effects on Islamophobic prejudices in non-Muslims were empirically evaluated using implicit attitude measurements (Draine & Greenwald, 1998), and unsatisfactory results prompted a set of prognostic recommendations for change and follow-up testing. I conclude this talk by reflecting on what this application enabled and its limitations, opening the door for other CDS practitioners to engage prognostic interventionism in their own research.

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Critical Discourse Studies Within a Racial Justice Organisation: Using CDS methods for bottom-up resistance to anti- immigration policies and discourses

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This talk offers a first-hand account of our experiences doing Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) research within The Runnymede Trust, a UK racial justice think tank. While the racism that underpins UK immigration policies and discourses is often recognised in academic research, third-sector organisations like Runnymede often face pushback when treating immigration as a racial (in)justice issue. To make this link more explicit in the context of third-sector advocacy, we brought forth corpus-assisted discourse analysis techniques and CDS principles (Baker et al., 2008) to examine how British print news and parliamentary figures discursively constructed (im)migration and (im)migrant communities between 2010 and 2024, before and after the formal announcement of the UK's 'hostile environment'. Working with four corpora totalling 95 million words, we found evidence that (im)migrant communities were repeatedly racialised and criminalised, in ways that both paved the way for hostile environment measures and later worked to legitimise their exclusionary, racialised effects. The project culminated in two published reports (Julios-Costa & Montiel McCann, 2025; Montiel McCann & Julios-Costa, 2025) and public events, and supported Runnymede and other NGOs in their aim of researching and resisting hostile immigration policies as racial (in)justice issues.

Above and beyond methods and results, in this talk we reflect on the methodological, practical and political challenges of doing this collaborative work as CDS scholar-activists with lived and inherited experiences of migration. We show how CDS can function not only as critique of top-down power relations, but also as a practice of solidarity, amplifying voices of resistance from the bottom up. Throughout, we recontextualise this collaboration under a principle of *prognostic interventionism* (Julios-Costa, 2025), situating our work within a model of CDS praxis aimed at enhancing the field's capacity to contribute meaningfully to social change (ibid.) within and beyond academia.

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‘AITA for wanting my son to be bilingual?’- A corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis of multilingual parenting discussions on Reddit

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Reddit is a social media platform with over 57 million daily users. Although it has received academic attention in relation to controversial communities, subreddits (= fora on specific topics) containing less hostile content are still underexplored.

Taking a corpus-assisted critical discourse approach (Baker & McEnery, 2015), this study analyses 13 posts and 3,769 associated comments on multilingual parenting from the AITA (=‘Am I the Asshole?’) subreddit, totalling 252,048 words. AITA is a forum for discussing moral dilemmas.

The dataset was extracted using RedditExtractoR package for R. Quantitative analyses (keywords, collocations) were combined with in-depth qualitative coding and analysis (themes/discourses), using AntConc and NVivo, respectively. A particular focus was on the exploration of the stances users take vis-à-vis language learning and bilingual/multilingual identities, evaluating which (language) ideologies are reproduced and/or challenged.

We identified three prevalent themes: 1. Family/cultural heritage, 2. Cognitive consequences of bi/multilingualism, and 3. Prestige/stigma. Within all themes, users tend to attribute negative evaluations of bi-/multilingualism to others, while themselves adopting a positive stance. For example, users may encourage others to pass on their heritage language(s) to their child(ren) while acknowledging the challenges posed by raciolinguistic ideologies, within which the bilingualism of racialised speakers is viewed negatively (Rosa and Flores, 2017).

Overall, the results of this study contribute to and expand on existing research on social media discourse by providing a novel perspective on language ideologies and stances towards multilingualism in online discussion fora.

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‘The takeaways doctors want to cancel’, ‘miracle foods’, and ‘culinary exotica’ for the ‘fearless eater’ - Representations of Chinese foodways in the UK press ‘post-COVID’

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In May 2023, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared that Covid-19 was no longer a ‘public health emergency of international concern’. However, the repercussions of this global crisis can still be felt. One socio-cultural legacy is the stigmatisation of (East & Southeast) Asians, triggered by the outbreak’s initial association with a ‘wet market’ in China, and exacerbated by media coverage drawing on longstanding stereotypes of (alleged) Chinese foodways. As the 2024-25 UK Home Office report shows, the ‘new normal’ includes over 30,000 hate crimes targeting Asian/Asian British people per year. This study – situated within corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis (Baker & McEnery 2015) – provides an analysis of UK press coverage of Chinese food culture ‘post-COVID’, with a focus on evaluating if/to which degree negative stereotypes of Chinese foodways persist.

The corpus, collected using LexisNexis, contains 1,482 relevant articles (approx. 1.5 million words) from UK newspapers, published in the 12-month-period following the WHO announcement (i.e., May 2023 - April 2024). Quantitative and qualitative analyses are used to provide converging/complimentary evidence (keywords, collocations, using *AntConc*; identification of themes/discourses using *NVivo*; Fairclough 2010).

The results show that while coverage of (British-)Chinese food culture is very multi-faceted - ranging from the popularity (and ‘unhealthiness’) of takeaways to alleged ‘miracle food[s]’ - (‘traditional’/‘authentic’) Chinese food is still often construed as the exotic (and potentially inherently dangerous) other.

Overall, the results provide insights into the representation of Chinese foodways in the British press ‘post-COVID’, including the continuing use and normalisation of problematic stereotypes which may be (re)mobilised in harmful ways (not only) in times of crisis.

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Radical Passivity, Ethical Address, and the Limits of Agency in Critical Discourse Studies: The Case of the Indian Farmers' Protest

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Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) have traditionally foregrounded visibility, agency, and explicit attribution in analyses of power and resistance (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak, 2001). This paper argues that such agency-centred models are limited when analysing contemporary protest movements characterised by endurance, restraint, and strategic non-confrontation. Drawing on Maurice Blanchot's concept of radical passivity and Emmanuel Levinas's ethics of communication, the paper advances an approach that treats absence, silence, and non-attribution as meaningful discourse strategies rather than analytical deficits. The analysis is based on qualitative discourse analysis of protest speeches, banners, media texts, and social media posts produced during the 2020–21 Indian farmers' protest, widely recognised as one of the largest and most sustained mass mobilisations in recent Indian history. Rather than treating the protest as a descriptive case, the paper uses it to interrogate dominant methodological assumptions within CDS, particularly the privileging of active voice, named agency, and overt antagonism. The findings show that passive constructions, implicit agency, and ethical appeals to collective entities such as the state, media, and public function as deliberate communicative choices that foreground vulnerability, distribute responsibility systemically, and enable sustained critique without discursive escalation, echoing forms of ethical resistance identified in other non-confrontational protest contexts (Nosthoff, 2016).

The paper makes three contributions to CDS. First, it conceptualises radical passivity and discursive absence as analytically productive categories for examining power beyond textual presence (Blanchot, 1992, 1995). Second, it extends Levinas's notion of ethical address from interpersonal encounters to institutional and collective actors within protest discourse (Levinas, 1969). Third, it proposes a Constructive Protest Communication Framework that integrates ethical responsibility, discursive restraint, and strategic agency.

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Fabricating Factuality: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Facebook posts of the Patriots for Europe group

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Populist Radical Right (PRR) actors increasingly mobilise potential voters through communication on social media platforms. This study investigates the mobilisation strategies by the parliamentary group of the Patriots for Europe (PfE) on Facebook, focusing on imitations of multimodal communicative templates of traditional news media. The PfE constitutes the third largest fraction within the European Parliament, comprising 85 members from 13 of the 27 European member states, which facilitates a comparison of different European parties and countries.

The dataset comprises 128 posts from official PfE accounts – including parties and politicians – published in June and July 2025 and is analysed with a mixed methods approach. The most frequent lexical categories and their relationships are identified through a Semantic Network Analysis (Segev 2022). Dominant semantic clusters are subsequently incorporated into a three-dimensional Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough 2003), examining their discursive functions and especially processes of recontextualisation.

The study finds that PfE politicians strategically use multimodal elements to emulate news report formats, borrowing visual and linguistic codes. These posts simulate objectivity concurrently discrediting and attacking mainstream media in line with the PRR's anti-elite stance. The PfE thus claims epistemic authority, reinforcing 'us versus them' polarisation in asserting that only PfE politicians serve ordinary citizens in telling the truth (Bos et al. 2020: 18). This antagonism discredits official news channels and naturalises distrust in political institutions, such as the EU, granting PfE actors a higher standing among potential voters as PRR narratives are normalised through the appropriation of terms (Girnth 2002: 66; Wodak 2015). Ultimately, this research shows how PRR's digital discourse strategies enter the mainstream and consequently shape Europe's political landscape.

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Off the Kool-Aid: A critical multimodal analysis of cult leaders' image management in interviews

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Though often viewed as a relic of the 1960s and 70s New Age, cults today are far from extinct. Stories about groups— both those explicitly labelled as cults and those simply exhibiting cult-like characteristics—make regular appearances in the news cycle. However, how their public image is created and curated remains largely understudied. Previous publications have examined how sect leaders use language to manipulate their followers (e.g., Montell, 2021), but these have tended to focus on unidirectional rhetoric aimed at a presumably friendly audience. To fill this research gap, this presentation takes a bidirectional approach to investigate how cult leaders linguistically navigate through the more hostile environment of an interview, responding to various allegations, as well as how their interlocutors manage and co-create meaning. Grounded within Critical Discourse Analysis and combining multimodality (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001) with the concept of face-saving (Anchimbe, 2009), this presentation explores and contextualizes the strategies used by cult leaders in video interviews to protect their public image, finding that while the interviewees deploy similar face-saving tactics, they are met with two distinct journalistic approaches from the interviewers (one more sensationalized, the other—more investigative), which ultimately determine their effectiveness.

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Critical analysis approach towards Alternative Right discourse and the language of exclusion

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The Alternative Right is a fundamentally reactionary movement, at odds with many different groups in Western societies, such as racial minorities, immigrants, LGBTQ+ individuals, feminist and women's rights activists. The movements has remained for years in the spotlight of the political scene, and the recent shifts in the political landscapes of both Europe as well as the USA have made it increasingly more important to be able to analyse and provide valid critiques of the movement, and the power imbalances it creates.

The analysis in this presentation, based on Norman Faircloughs' three-dimensional model, is set to investigate the Alternative Right's mass media discourse, by focusing on the Alt-Right's language within transgender discourse. The research is based on the analysis of articles found on selected Alt-Right websites (Breitbart News Network, The Daily Caller and The Gateway Pundit), which were found on each respected site via the keyword search function of words pertaining to trans discourse. This presentation aims to implement Fairclough's model holistically, by including the analysis of vocabulary, grammar as well as textual structures. This research and its findings can hopefully shed more light on the issues of exclusion being propagated by transphobia and add onto the existing number of works on the topic.

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A diachronic corpus-assisted critical discourse study of ‘niangpao’ in Chinese language newspapers

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The study, using corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis, investigates the changing representations of “niangpao”, a term often associated with pejorative connotations and used to describe individuals perceived as having feminine traits and lacking traditional masculinity, in 24 kinds of official Chinese-language newspapers from 2000 to 2023. The study identifies and analyses shifts in newspapers discourse surrounding “niangpao”. The analysis, aided by the examination of keywords, collocates and concordances, focuses on five phases, each marked by significant changes in societal attitudes and regulatory responses. The findings reveal an initial emergence of “niangpao” through popular media, followed by a period of intense public scrutiny and moral panic, leading to educational and regulatory interventions aimed at curbing its visibility and influence. Particularly, education plays the role as a societal control mechanism in three phases examined, with an emphasis on gender-difference education and the promotion of traditional masculinity in youth. In addition, in recent years, the government’s escalation in control measures, including official crackdowns on “niangpao” in media and entertainment, reflects broader societal anxieties about non-traditional gender expressions in Chinese society.

Multimodal Discourses of Voluntary Childlessness on Chinese Social Media: A Critical Study

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Since the implementation of China's three-child policy in 2021, public debate on fertility intentions has intensified, while studies on how voluntary childlessness is expressed and negotiated in Chinese society remain limited. Therefore, this study, grounded in Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), investigates both the reasons individuals give for voluntary childlessness and the discursive strategies they use to justify these positions.

Empirically, the study uses the search terms “不生孩子 (not having children)”, “丁克 (DINK)”, “不想生 (not wanting to have children)”, and “不婚不育 (no marriage, no child)” to collect Weibo posts from 2021 to 2024 and build a 1.4-million-word corpus using Sketch Engine. The analysis adopts corpus-based approaches, specifically keyword and frequency analyses, followed by concordance analysis informed by legitimization strategies and the appraisal framework in systemic functional linguistics, as well as visual grammar to examine how images and text jointly construct meaning.

The findings show that the cost of raising children is a key reason for voluntary childlessness. Lifestyle-related reasons also appear extensively, such as preserving youth and being unambitious. Time-related expressions framing the present era as enabling autonomy also feature strongly. Yet gendered beauty norms remain, as concerns about body shape and ageing continue to influence decisions.

Different reasons activate different discursive strategies: celebrity references construct role-model authority, economic reasons employ rationalisation strategies, and quality-of-life reasons use mythopoesis to present childlessness as desirable. Pronatalist and counter discourses frequently co-occur and mirror, both drawing on social sanction and moral evaluation. Multimodally, images and text interact in two ways: images amplify emotional meanings in the text and offer lifestyle imaginaries that make childlessness imaginable.

Overall, the study offers new insights into how discourse negotiates and challenges dominant pronatalist ideologies in Chinese social media.

From ‘chick flick’ to ‘dick flick’: A multimodal critical discourse analysis of ‘laodeng’ films in contemporary China

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“Laodeng” (老登), originally a northeastern Chinese dialect term for an older man, has evolved online into a neologism that critiques particular configurations of masculinity, authority and “outdated” ideology, rather than age itself. This meaning crystallized during the 2024 debate around a feminist film *Her Story* (2024). Dismissed by some as a “chick flick”, the film sparked a feminist backlash that popularized “laodeng film” (or “dick flick”) to critique movies with male-centered narratives, hypermasculinity and a persistent male gaze (Song, 2025).

This study investigates the construction of the laodeng archetype of four films frequently cited by users on the Chinese social media platform Weibo as exemplifying the laodeng genre: *Let the Bullets Fly* (2010), *Mr. Six* (2014), *Full River Red* (2023), and *Detective Chinatown 1900* (2025). Using multimodal critical discourse analysis (e.g., Kress & van Leeuwen, 2001), our analysis seeks to explore what linguistic and stylistic features have contributed to the audience’s perception of laodeng personas, and how multimodal elements (visual style, sound, dialogue) prompted netizens’ online identification as laodeng films.

Our ongoing research has revealed a preliminary finding: these films co-construct laodeng personas through a socially-coded, performative laodeng masculinity, a resonance between their self-serious style and regressive gender politics that is heightened by the narrative marginalization or instrumentalization of female characters. To conclude, this ongoing study is significant in validating laodeng, a potent digital vernacular and an effective critical lens for deconstructing and redefining the patriarchal representation in Chinese cinema.

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German nuclear power plant, ‘Russian propaganda’, and 9/11: Negotiation, circulation and (re)distribution of tellability in social media narratives

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Tellability is a central concept in narrative analysis, yet its operation in highly dynamic, metricised social media environments has not been systematically theorised. Drawing on work on tellability and mediated narrative analysis, this study examines how tellability is negotiated and redistributed in social media narratives, conceptualising it as the interplay of story design, mediated interaction, and wider societal narratives. Taking the demolition of a German nuclear power plant as a case, the study constructs a diachronic corpus of approximately 2,500 comments, drawn from six highly visible Instagram Reels posted by global news outlets. Using R and topic modelling in combination with qualitative analysis, it traces how particular retellings in comments gain or lose tellability over time. At the story level, the analysis shows how commenters frame the demolition through competing stances, with two topics becoming particularly tellable: one celebrating or contesting Germany’s energy transition, and another re-plotting the falling towers as alleged evidence in 9/11 conspiracy narratives. At the social media level, the study demonstrates how interface metrics and algorithmic mechanisms generate a ‘tellability loop,’ in which likes, replies and ‘Top comments’ ordering actively redistribute visibility, privileging certain framings and styles while marginalising others, and inviting users to calibrate subsequent retellings to what appears metrically successful. At the society level, these patterned tellability effects are interpreted in relation to wider discourses, illustrating how an energy event becomes a nodal point for conflicting narratives about conspiracy, national security, and global order. Taken together, the study provides further investigation of tellability for social media settings and sheds light on a narrative approach to social media discourse, in which tellability is seen as a critical lens on how online narratives are shaped, valued and circulated.

Building National Identity: Myths, Values and Multiculturalism in the Discourses of the SNP and Plaid Cymru

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While scholars widely recognise that nationalist projects are internally diverse and contested, dominant strands in nationalist theory have long portrayed national identity as anchored in a cultural homogeneity and a shared, singular sense of national belonging (Anderson, 2006). Within this tradition, nationalism was frequently positioned as fundamentally at odds with multiculturalism, the latter associated with the celebration of dialogical recognition of difference and principles of social solidarity to build an inclusive notion of national identity (Parekh, 2006). In the UK, the SNP and Plaid Cymru serve as perfect case studies for examining how progressive variants of nationalism could reconcile these traditions. Surprisingly, comparative studies of how these two parties construe inclusive and pluralist discourses remain scarce.

This paper explores the notion of national identity in the SNP and Plaid Cymru through a CDA approach, focusing on myths and values. National identity involves common beliefs, attitudes and behaviours articulated along a temporal axis that aims to link past, present, and future (Wodak et al., 2009). Myths and values are central to producing symbolic historical continuity and shaping collective identity (Bennett, 2025); myths operate as selective national and historical accounts that legitimize today's political agendas, whereas values are a political normative apparatus based on social arrangements taken as inherently good. Drawing on a collected corpus of 268 discourses – including, parliamentary debates and public speeches – concerning the Brexit negotiations (2016-2020), this paper analyses the recurring values of inclusion, diversity, and tolerance along with the myth “Scotland and Wales as historically open and internationalist nations”. Results will shed light on how both parties portray themselves as historically outward-looking, and which historical aspects are silenced to achieve such a purpose. These findings will have further implications in the parties’ understanding of multiculturalism and civic nationalism.

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Spaces of healing: How Instagram Influencers' discourses of mental health construct recovery in natural environments

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This paper investigates how mental health influencers on Instagram construct multimodal discourse—text-on-image carousels, reels, gestures, and facial affect—to. Democratize knowledge, destigmatize mental illness, and scaffold recovery. Situating our study within multimodal discourse analysis (Bateman et. al, 2017) and Appraisal Theory (Martin and White, 2003), we explore how visuo-linguistic strategies make mental health content accessible and extend into place-based, regenerative wellbeing in nature-based and retreat, travel experiences (Mackenzie, 2025). Data comprise a sample of posts from five credentialed accounts integrating psychotherapy, psychiatry, ayurvedic nutrition, decolonial healing, and nature-based yoga/meditation. Annotation through GRAPEMARS and CATMA captured variables including gaze, shots, gestures, semantics, pronoun use and appraisal subsystems.

Findings indicate that viso-linguistic cues jointly foster trust, authenticity, and engagement: positive Judgement resources destigmatizes illness, encouraging help-seeking; positive Evaluation, paired with Affect, creates a sense of Security and eudaimonic Happiness while modeling emotional regulation. Particularly, Engagement strategies of Evidence, inclusive pronoun use and directive prompts build trust and encourage participation. Open as well as self-soothing gestures and direct gazes enhance parasocial connection through authenticity signaling and vulnerability disclosures, whereas environmental cues anchor practices of wellbeing in nature-based and regenerative retreat contexts, reframing such experiences as an opportunity of inward transformation and ecological care (Taveras-Dalmau, 2024).

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Grounded Discourse Analysis: A new hybrid methodology

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In this presentation, I introduce grounded discourse analysis (GDA) as a new hybrid methodology for the investigation of language use and meaning-making in a range of social contexts (Author, 2026). I aim to demonstrate that grounded theory and discourse analysis can be fruitful methodological companions, with grounded theory offering strategies for research design and theory development that are rooted in social context, and discourse analysis providing an extensive toolkit for close analysis of the relationship between text, action and broader social structures. In charting the parameters of this approach, I outline its foundational principles of inductive design, socially situated theory-building and researcher reflexivity, alongside six flexible phases that guide the research from data construction to micro-level discourse analysis. In order to demonstrate how GDA can work in practice, I draw on three empirical case studies in which grounded theory and discourse analysis are combined in pursuit of rich qualitative insights around the relationship between everyday parenting, gendered and familial structures, and digital media practices. In each of these studies, a grounded discourse analytical approach produces rich, theory-driven analyses that are rooted in deep understanding of the research context and its related social phenomena, participants and practices.

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Amplifying Migrants' Voices in U.S. Engagement Journalism Discourse: A Rhetorical Citizenship Perspective

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U.S. journalism has been redefining itself as a profession in response to an ongoing crisis since the 2010s, which has generated the public's mistrust in the legacy media. To redress this tendency, recently founded independent newsrooms have rearticulated the principles and norms of news-making under the umbrella of "engagement" journalism (Robinson, 2023). The new practices centre on public service, community immersion, radical transparency and grassroots collaboration. They seek to enable members of the public to drive the news agenda, identify solutions and reconfigure power relations and knowledge hierarchies in public discourse.

This study examines discursive strategies and multimodal semiotic choices of amplifying (undocumented) migrants' voices in the news discourse of U.S. engagement journalism. It employs a methodological framework (Mădroane, under review) that integrates analytic tools from critical discourse studies – the quoting and framing of migrants' voices (Bednarek, 2016; Fairclough, 2003) and the news representation of migrants as historical, political and social subjects (Chouliaraki & Zaborowski, 2017; Varma, 2025) – and argumentation in discourse and rhetorical studies – the juxtaposition of migrants' and other news actors' voices, their incorporation into the journalists' own voices and the ensuing (de)legitimation and (de)authorization (Amossy, 2025; Beciu & Lazăr, 2022; Maingueneau, 2022; Mădroane, 2018; Mădroane & Cărlan, 2024; Santos et al., 2024). The engagement journalism news style is further interpreted in relation to the journalists' enactment of a professional ethos that, in the institutional context of specific newsrooms and media dispositives, may contribute to fostering the migrants' rhetorical agency, and thus constitute a civic act of discursive or rhetorical citizenship (Asen, 2004; Kock & Villadsen, 2017). Illustrations from different independent newsrooms in the U.S. – The Scalawag, Wisconsin Watch, Detroit Outlier Media – will be provided against the backdrop of immigration policies during President Donald Trump's past and current administrations.

What they see, what they say: The everyday reality of being a migrant ‘Other’

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This study explores the everyday processes of Othering experienced by Iraqi Kurdish migrants in the UK, highlighting its emotional, spatial, linguistic, and embodied dimensions. Drawing on critical theories of representation and power (Hall, 1992; Said, 1978), the analysis shows how exclusion is imposed externally yet also internalised, resonating with Ahmed’s (2004) concept of emotional “stickiness.” Across institutional environments such as schools and workplaces, dominant norms shape who belongs, creating hypervisibility and intensified scrutiny in ways that echo research on belonging, embodiment, and spatial politics (Holliday, 2013; Puwar, 2004; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Findings reveal that Othering is both vertical – between majority and minority groups – and horizontal, occurring within and across minoritised communities. These dynamics are structured by language proficiency, religion, gender, and perceived cultural authenticity. Linguicism and raciolinguistic profiling contribute further to boundary-making as language becomes racialised and tied to legitimacy and belonging (Dovchin, 2025; Rosa & Flores, 2017). Spatial patterns of exclusion mirror Soja’s (2010) notion of spatial justice, as participants navigate institutional, communal, and everyday spaces that differently accommodate or constrain Kurdish identities. By exposing intra-minority hierarchies and relational tensions, the study challenges simple majority–minority narratives. It also reflects Dervin’s (2016) notion of self-othering, showing how individuals negotiate identity within layered power structures.

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Digital harassment of journalists in Spain: dynamics, actors, and hate speech on X

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The intensification of hatred against journalists constitutes an emerging challenge to democratic quality (Brambila & Hughes, 2019). International scholarship shows that, in contexts where radicalized discourses and populist leaderships proliferate, symbolic aggressions and coordinated campaigns of discrediting and disinformation against information professionals increase significantly, especially on social media platforms (Le Cam et al., 2021; Mazzaro, 2023). Spain is not immune to this trend: the rise in polarization and the strategic use of attacks against the media by certain actors have contributed to a hostile climate manifested in threats, insults, and organized harassment of journalists regardless of their political ideology (Reguero Sanz et al., 2023).

The aim of this research is to understand how this phenomenon is articulated within the Spanish digital ecosystem, what its underlying logics are, and what effects it may have on press freedom. A sample of Spanish journalists from different editorial lines and types of media outlets will be selected, delimiting a significant observation period. With regard to online interactions, the analysis will focus on X and will involve: (1) the identification and classification of the harassment received; (2) a structural analysis of harassment dynamics; and (3) an examination of the discourse of harassers in order to identify rhetorical patterns, motivations, and potential coordination.

This study seeks to provide a rigorous diagnosis of the Spanish case, as well as to contribute to the study of hate speech and to critical reflection on what attacks on journalism entail for its role as a fundamental institution of democracy.

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Promoting Human Rights through the analysis of a sample of picture books on migration and war

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Armed conflict continues to be one of the key factors that force millions of people to abandon their homeland in search of safety and dignity. This study vindicates the importance of defending human rights by examining how war and migration are represented in a selection of contemporary picture books. The study focuses on the visual and linguistic strategies used to portray war as the central cause of displacement and human suffering. Through a multimodal approach, this research explores how the interplay between words and images constructs interpersonal meanings that invite empathy, awareness, and ethical reflection on the importance of human rights in young readers.

The analytical framework draws on the model for reading visual narratives proposed by Painter, Martin, and Unsworth (2013), and on Kress and van Leeuwen's Visual Social Semiotics (2021). Methodologically, the study combines qualitative and quantitative perspectives: a detailed analysis of selected double-page spreads to identify key interpersonal characteristics, together with quantitative data that contextualize those findings within each book.

The results suggest that interpersonal meanings play a decisive role in shaping the reader's engagement with the represented experiences of displacement. Ultimately, the analysis reveals that picture books depicting migration caused by war are powerful didactic tools to promote sensitivity toward human rights violations. By engaging with these narratives, children can develop emotional literacy and a deeper understanding of the universal right to live in peace.

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Online grooming in the news: Media discourses, news values and social meaning

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News media play a central role in constructing social problems and shaping public debate, particularly in relation to crimes involving children. Aligned with the CADAAD theme *News and (Social) Media Analysis*, this paper examines how online grooming (OG) is discursively represented in UK and Spanish press coverage and how such representations shape public understanding and policy orientations. Despite the growing prevalence of OG as a form of child sexual abuse, research on its media portrayal remains limited and largely dominated by quantitative content analysis, with insufficient attention to the linguistic and narrative mechanisms through which newsworthiness, agency and responsibility are constructed.

Addressing this gap, the study adopts a corpus-assisted critical discourse approach to examine how news values are realised in OG reporting. Drawing on Discursive News Values Analysis (Bednarek & Caple 2017), it analyses an ad hoc corpus of UK and Spanish newspaper articles (OG_NEWS), focusing on naming practices, evaluative language and narrative configurations. While earlier studies have identified sensationalism and moral panic in child sexual abuse reporting (Cheit 2003), this paper offers a systematic cross-national account of how news values shape OG discourse across media systems.

Findings reveal recurrent discursive patterns, including the privileging of episodic, offender-centred narratives, the persistence of “stranger danger” framings, and the marginalisation of prevention, institutional responsibility and victim support. These patterns contribute to the individualisation of harm and obscure the structural and gendered dimensions of OG, echoing concerns raised in previous research (Kitzinger & Skidmore 1995; Saewyc et al. 2013; Döring & Walter 2020). By framing OG as a form of gender-based violence, the analysis highlights how news discourse both reflects and reproduces dominant assumptions about risk, responsibility and protection.

The paper demonstrates the value of integrating news values theory into corpus-assisted discourse studies of media representations of violence against children and contributes to critical debates on journalism’s role in shaping social responses to harm.

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Men as victims in contemporary societies? A CDA of A Voice for Men website and The Anti Feminist YouTube channel

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Recent social changes associated with feminist movements in contemporary societies have triggered the emergence of groups which, framing these transformations as a “crisis of masculinity” (Nijjar, 2018), have begun to advocate for men’s rights. The men’s rights movement encompasses a heterogeneous constellation of groups which, united by the belief that men are victims of discrimination due to feminism, have leveraged digital spaces to advance their claims, often through misogynistic and anti-feminist narratives (Dickel & Evolvi, 2023; Han & Yinb, 2023; Jegede, 2025).

This paper aims to explore the discursive strategies through which men’s rights advocates delegitimize feminism and construct male victimization. Through the lens of Critical Discourse Analysis (van Dijk, 1993), this work examines textual contents published on the men’s rights-affiliated website A Voice for Men, in order to reveal linguistic choices, discursive patterns and ideological implications used to present men as a marginalized group and feminism as a harmful or illegitimate social force. In addition, this study analyses the transcripts of two YouTube videos from the channel. The Anti Feminist to illustrate how ideological anti-feminism often translates into direct misogyny.

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Progressive Nationalisms? Abortion, Boundary Drawing and Nationalist Discourse in Northern Ireland

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Feminist analyses of nationalism have shown that nationalist projects tend to position women as reproducers and symbols of the nation rather than as autonomous political agents (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1989). This has produced two enduring assumptions: that nationalist projects are inherently pronatalist for those included within the nation (Peterson 1994; Albanese 2004), and that feminism and nationalism are largely incompatible political projects (Kaplan 1997). While scholars working with cases across Asia and Africa have long demonstrated that feminist and nationalist projects can be mutually constitutive (Jayawardena 1986; McClintock 1995), and more recent European work has highlighted feminist participation within nationalist movements (Ward 1996; Vickers 2018; Enguix Grau 2023), the role of reproductive politics within such configurations remains under-theorised. As a result, pro-choice nationalist projects remain largely unexamined. This paper addresses this gap by analysing how two nationalist parties in Northern Ireland— Sinn Féin and the Progressive Unionist Party— have, at different moments, articulated support for abortion access as part of their competing nationalist agendas, in a context where abortion was almost entirely prohibited until 2019. Using the Discourse-Historical Approach (Reisigl and Wodak 2017), the paper analyses a corpus including party manifestos, policy documents and legislative debates produced between 1985 and 2023, to investigate the discursive strategies each party uses to construct, defend, qualify and, at times, abandon, its pro-choice position. The analysis shows that both parties strategically mobilise support for reproductive rights as part of broader practices of national boundary drawing. Pro-choice commitments are framed as markers of a modern and progressive national ‘us’, contrasted with a morally regressive ‘them’. Building on scholarship that conceptualises socially progressive values as boundary making resources within nationalisms (Puar 2007; Hadj-Abdou 2017), the paper advances debates on contemporary, European nationalist parties by demonstrating how they articulate pro-choice positions as mechanisms of national demarcation.

Positioning professional identity under native-speakerism: Chinese English language teachers' discourse on pronunciation

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Drawing on semi-structured interviews with 15 Chinese English language teachers (CELTs), this study examines how native-speakerist ideologies shape CELTs' professional identity construction, with a particular focus on the extent to which they can disassociate nativeness from teaching expertise and how teacher identity is negotiated within value-laden language norms. Adopting a qualitative discourse-analytic approach informed by positioning theory (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999), the study conceptualizes professional identity as a fluid, interactionally achieved construct, produced through reflexive and interactive positioning. Analytical attention is paid to how CELTs position themselves and others with differential rights, responsibilities, and epistemic authority, and how these positioning practices both reproduce and contest dominant discourses and institutional practices. Findings show that while CELTs can distinguish native-like pronunciation from secondlanguage learning success at an abstract level, they nonetheless strongly associate native pronunciation with teacher expertise. Participants recurrently position native English speaker teachers as more authoritative to teach oracy-related skills, invoking a dominant storyline in which first-language ownership and cultural proximity to English-speaking contexts confer epistemic superiority. These positioning practices align with institutional hiring and evaluation regimes that prioritize native-like pronunciation as an enduring criterion of teaching competence. At the same time, CELTs' discourse reveals a pattern of strategic positioning. While acknowledging the disadvantages of their non-native speaker identity, particularly their perceived lack of authority in teaching speaking and pronunciation, participants engage in agentive repositioning by emphasizing expertise in literacy-related instruction. Drawing on their heightened metalinguistic awareness and shared English learning experiences with Chinese learners, CELTs position themselves as legitimate experts in teaching grammar, reading, and writing. These discursive moves enable CELTs to reclaim professional authority while simultaneously revealing the depth to which native-speakerist ideologies have been naturalized in China's English education.

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'You Swan, He Frog': a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis of Gendered Stancetaking in Chinese Digital Culture

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In August 2024, Ukrainian blogger Kristy posted an emotional farewell with her boyfriend on Xiaohongshu, a popular Chinese social media platform with a predominantly female user base. Portraying herself as a vulnerable girlfriend whose life revolved around her partner, Kristy's post soon attracted a flood of netizen comments. These comments, predominantly written in Chinglish—a hybridized linguistic register that blends Chinese syntax, English lexicon, and playful translations of internet memes, offered comfort while critiquing romance overinvestment. The phrase “you pretty, he ugly, u swan, he frog” was particularly viral.

Kristy's girlfriend-centric content presents a culturally foreign persona whose emotional dependency sharply contradicts the self-sufficient ideal valorized in China's digital feminist discourses. This mismatch inadvertently turned her post into a discursive site for feminist expressions.

Here, netizens employed playful Chinglish expressions to perform solidarity and articulate an alternative femininity surrounding self-worth across dispersed comments. The study, therefore, conceptualizes Xiaohongshu as a site of gendered stancetaking and a window into the constraints and possibilities of China's digital space.

Drawing on Lazar's (2007) framework of feminist critical discourse analysis and its recent applications to gendered hierarchies on social media, this study interrogates the gendered ideologies within netizens' stance acts, critically asking whether solidarity articulated in Chinglish ultimately challenges or inadvertently reinforces patriarchal structures. The analysis identifies three collective stances that reflect a growing awareness of gender inequality and an emphasis on decentering men in romance. While netizens may not have consciously chosen Chinglish to disguise critiques, its perceived subversive “incorrectness” amplified these feminist messages to wider audiences within the controlled digital realm.

Ultimately, these stances illustrate how collective feminist-aligned narratives simultaneously foster solidarity and reinforce neoliberal ideals of autonomy under the guise of care.

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Power asymmetries in urban regeneration discourse: an analytic toolkit for neighborhood narrative assessment

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Urban regeneration is a complex social, economic, and physical phenomenon encompassing multiple disciplines and affecting a wide variety of stakeholders with markedly different interests (Roberts & Sykes, 2000). Its transformative impact can raise issues of sustainability as well as set off processes of gentrification that risk intensifying social disparities in the area (Tan & Altrock, 2016). The successful implementation of regeneration projects is mediated by the multiple discursive constructions (including discourses of resistance) that arise around it (Todolí, 2007). The interplay of conflicting, as well as converging, discourses and interests is rarely played out on a level field: the high-stakes nature of these interventions highlights the power asymmetries inherent in the production and reach of discourse by the different stakeholders involved, whereby powerful actors (that is, public institutions and private developers) control most discourse (Mullenbach, 2021) and determine the inclusion or exclusion of other, less influential, actors from urban narratives (Karsten, 2009). This paper reflects on these dynamics by presenting a pilot study developed in collaboration with Milano&Partners, Milan's destination management organization. A corpus of texts by newspapers, real estate developers, and grassroots associations about a regeneration project involving the Milano Certosa District was collected and processed using SketchEngine to investigate the narratives about the neighborhood from a critical discourse analysis perspective (van Dijk, 1997). The analysis focused on framing, metaphors, agency attribution, and social actors, and aimed to provide the agency's partners with insights about the overall representation of the neighborhood's regeneration project from multiple vantage points, thus laying bare the often-tacit ideological underpinnings, and the potential practical implications, of the project itself. As a final output, the project produced an operational toolkit for developers to assess their discursive practices together with guidelines on how to better align their communication strategies to their organization's values and vision for the city.

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Affective polarization in online discussions about the Jenni Hermoso-Rubiales controversy

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This presentation explores how strategies in online discourse shape the public sphere, particularly as a reaction to controversial events (cf. Bouko 2023). With this aim, we study online affective reactions to the events surrounding the Spanish national team's celebration of winning the FIFA Women's World Cup when the president of the Royal Spanish Federation – Luis Rubiales – kissed one of the players in the team – Jenni Hermoso. This situation led to polarising views and emotions on social media with very clear positions being adopted by users both in Spain and abroad.

Drawing on a corpus including comments on two platforms, Twitter/X and Reddit, and in two languages – English and Spanish – posted between August 20 and September 30, 2023, we specifically seek to identify how emotions permeated social media in relation to this event and to the social actors involved. Following a multidimensional approach to the study of affect (cf. Martin and White 2005; Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio 2019), three research questions will be answered: 1) Which emotions are triggered in different contexts (platforms) when users react to this controversial event? 2) How are emotions evoked in different social media? and 3) How is polarisation constructed in communities around shared emotions.

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Critical Discourse Studies and the Emotional Politics of Genocide

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In this presentation, I argue that researching genocidal discourse reveals how emotion structures both the discourse itself and the critical practices through which we analyse it. Firstly, any study of atrocities is saturated with references to fear, anger, horror, shame and hatred (see e.g. Brudholm & Lang, 2019), and it makes little sense to examine such material without acknowledging the role of emotion in the research process itself. Yet bringing emotion into research often appears anomalous. But, if we, like Milani and Richardson (2021), have always written about what moved us and what mattered, then affect already informs critical inquiry even when it is not recognized. This suggests that discussions of critique and reflexivity in CDS should also account for how researchers are emotionally positioned in relation to the discourse they study if CDS is to fulfil its emancipatory core. To demonstrate why this matters for analysis, I draw on Ahmed's (2004) account of how emotions 'move, stick and slide' in videos produced by Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) soldiers in the first six months after 7 October 2023. Circulated across social media platforms, these first-person recordings document military selfnarration in which emotions such as pride, fear and hostility are articulated and visually staged. Repetition renders these emotions 'sticky', attaching them to the soldier, the 'mission' and the 'enemy', while also orienting viewers affectively toward particular understandings of violence. Across both the data and the research process, emotion shapes what becomes visible and meaningful. In this sense, emotion does not undermine critique – it enables it.

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Sexualized Deepfakes as Discursive Practices: A CDA Approach to Technologically-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence

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Technologically-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) has increased over the last few years, also due to the rise of AI, which has magnified existing forms of digital abuse. Among these, sexualized deepfakes (Fido et al. 2022) represent one of the most harmful manifestations. Deepfakes are AI-generated audiovisual content in which the face, body and voice of a real person is synthetically superimposed onto fabricated contexts in ways that appear authentic (Mongibello 2023). Sexualized deepfakes use deep learning techniques to transform images into explicit sexual content. Data highlight the gendered nature of this phenomenon: 98% of deepfakes circulating online are pornographic, 99% of which target women (Security Hero 2023). Sexualized deepfakes disproportionately target women in positions of power and success, and may function as tools of political delegitimization.

Although scholarly interest is growing, research on sexualized deepfakes remains fragmented (Laffier and Rehman 2023), while analyses grounded in CDA are limited. This paper addresses this gap by conceptualizing sexualized deepfakes as discursive practices that reflect and reiterate pre-existing gendered power hierarchies.

Adopting a feminist CDA framework, the experimental study combines a preliminary multimodal analysis of selected sexualized deepfakes with an examination of the discourses accompanying their circulation on social media platforms such as Reddit. It also proposes an initial critical typology of sexualized deepfakes based on how women bodies and their agency are represented. The paper argues that CDA can offer valuable tools for mapping and understanding emerging forms of TFGBV and the methodological challenges they pose for Critical Discourse Studies

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‘It is the Truth! Just look at the images!’: a visual social semiotic analysis of conspiracy theories’ grammar and discourses

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The aversive feelings that people experience in scenarios of crisis, such as fear, uncertainty, and the feeling of having no control, stimulate adherence to conspiracies and promote their fast propagation. While some conspiracy theories may have no huge impact on people’s lives, others, such as the ones related to medical and public health topics can be particularly dangerous for individuals and a menace to democratic societies. Therefore, research on misinformation, including conspiracy theories, is becoming increasingly relevant.

This presentation is a result of a 3 years research Project titled “A Multimodal Approach for Identifying Conspiracy Theories in Social Media, and focusses particularly on characterising a “visual grammar” of Conspiracy Theories (CT) and uncover discourses related to these theories. Based on Kress and Van Leeuwen’s Grammar of Occidental visual design (2006) and on a multimodal approach (Kress, 2009; 2013, Machin), a methodological tool, consisting of wide range of visual social semiotics parameters (Mota-Ribeiro, 2010) was used to describe how images use resources and affordances to realize specific meanings in conspiracy theories texts. The multimodal corpus (images and verbal texts) consisted of 100 documents of publications / posts in blogs and social media, previously identified as spreaders of CT in Portugal.

The analysis was structured around three pivotal dimensions described in the visual grammar: representational, interactional, and compositional, and organised according to diverse visual structures. Results show that visual patterns can be identified, pointing out to a consistent visual grammar of conspiracy theories. Also, analysis of that several discourses are constructed: Salvation through religious faith, Visuality as authority, Aliens’ interference, Us vs. Them, Othering, the Great substitution, etc. Some of these discourses are particularly consistent within the scope of conspiracy theories: Nothing is what it seems, Everything is connected, There are no coincidences, Nothing happens by chance.

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Gendered Discursive Framing and Conditional Inclusion in Official Saudi Women's Football Reporting on X: A Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis

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Women's football is a relatively new and rapidly developing domain in Saudi Arabia, and its emergence has been accompanied by expanding media coverage and increasing visibility on digital platforms. This study applies Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) to examine how official women's football club accounts on the X platform construct this newly institutionalized sporting space through linguistic and multimodal choices. Drawing on Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA), the study analyses Arabic-language tweets published by official Saudi women's football league and club accounts, including Al-Ittihad and Al-Hilal, with comparative reference to men's football reporting. The analysis focuses on naming practices, lexical choices, tone, English code-switching, and emoji use. The findings reveal that women's football is framed through gendered discursive strategies that highlight elegance, personality, and aesthetic appeal, often referring to players by first names and using affective or lifestyle-oriented language. While these practices contribute to the visibility of women's football, they simultaneously enact conditional inclusion by positioning it as softer, more playful, and less institutionally serious than men's football reporting. By situating these representational strategies within the emerging landscape of women's sport in Saudi Arabia, this study demonstrates how gendered power relations are subtly reproduced in digital media spaces, offering new insights into the discursive construction of women's athletic participation.

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Postcolonial theory revisited: a systematic review of its application to the post-Soviet space

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Postcolonial theory and its application originated from English studies and Comparative Literature following the end of the colonial period in former European/Western empires. Specifically, the development of concepts such as “Orientalism” (Said, 1978) and “Subaltern studies” (e.g., Spivak, 1988) with the focus on national identity and their cultural representation, laid the foundation of postcolonial theory. However, the largest geographical area of the 20th century, the Soviet Union and its predecessor, the Russian Empire remain to be less researched through postcolonial and decolonial lenses. However, the application of postcolonialism to former Soviet countries has steadily increased in the last 20 years with an emphasis on Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asian countries. Even though debates exist about the extent to which the Soviet Union can be referred to as “colonial”, scholars (e.g., Sharipova et al., 2024) have adapted and applied postcolonial and decolonial concepts to understand the current, post-socialist states of these societies. Given this recent phenomenon in the area, this study attempts to review how postcoloniality is manifested in former Soviet countries; specifically, how existing literature utilizes postcolonial theory and decolonial framework to investigate and understand contemporary societies in ex-Soviet countries. The review analyzes research articles and book chapters published in English and Russian languages in the period of 1991 and 2025. Four major scientific databases, EBSCO, Web of Science, Scopus, and SAGE, are assessed using the PRISMA methodology to filter out the relevant studies. In addition, this systematic review sheds light on common research methods, the scope of topics, disciplines, and research gaps in the field. The present study contributes to the ongoing decolonial and postcolonial discourses in former Soviet countries.

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Giving Voice Where Silence Reigns: Trauma-Informed CMDA of Children's Discourses about Grooming Interactions

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Technology-facilitated child sexual abuse (TF-CSA) represents a hidden global pandemic, inflicting profound trauma within digitally mediated spaces. Online grooming exploits social media, algorithmic connectivity, and AI-driven communication to target children, reshaping how relationships are initiated and manipulated. These conditions demand a systemic reconceptualisation of vulnerability, as risks are technologically produced and amplified.

Children harmed by TF-CSA often struggle to disclose abuse and remain overlooked in linguistic research on grooming. This creates a double bind: those most affected are least able to speak and least attended to by methods capable of amplifying their voices. Responding to CADAAD 2026's theme of Beyond Physical and Symbolic Spaces, this paper demonstrates how Computer Mediated Discourse Analysis (CMDA)—combining (im)politeness, facework, and appraisal theory—offers trauma-informed approaches to uncover children's communicative agency without requiring explicit disclosure.

Findings from discourse analysis reveal evidence of agency and its constraints, including affective positioning (shame, self-blame), resistance, negotiation, and sophisticated facework. By studying these dynamics, CMDA enables researchers to “hear” child victim-survivors while reducing re-traumatisation risk. This challenges assumptions about disclosure and victimhood, highlighting communicative agency as a critical concept for safeguarding.

The paper invites scholars to extend Critical Discourse Studies to sensitive datasets, leveraging CMDA's diverse toolkit to explore abuse, vulnerability, and voice in children's lived experiences—offering innovative possibilities for research and practice.

Who tells (post)colonial history and how? A corpus-based analysis of postcolonial debates in European media

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How should we talk about colonisation? Should Belgium apologise or give compensation to the Democratic Republic of Congo? In 2020, at a time when such questions were losing momentum, the Black Lives Matters movement gave rise to a revival of postcolonial debates in Belgium (Verbeke 2020). While the dominant discourse converged on a semi-recognition of colonial abuses (Goddeeris 2015), the Congolese diaspora requested not to be excluded anymore from public discussions on decolonisation and highlighted the intimate connection between how history is told and by whom it is told.

The present study approaches these debates from the perspective of their discursive construction, across a corpus of Belgian press articles published between 2020 and 2025 and commenting an aspect of the (post)colonial relationship between Belgium and the DRC. On the one hand, I will map whose voices (i.e. Afro-descendent or not) are included in these articles, paying particular attention to the space these voices are given, and to the identity features these voices put forward when expressing themselves on (post)coloniality. On the other hand, I will investigate how the syntactic and semantic encoding of Belgium and RDC when describing important historical events impacts the discursive representation of their responsibility regarding (post)colonial events, approaching this encoding from the perspective of agentivity (De Cock & Michaud Maturana 2014). With these measures, this study aims to shed light on possible dominant and alternative representations of postcolonial debates.

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(In)visibility: discursive constructions of women's agency and institutional power in obstetric violence case-law

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Often dismissed as “overgeneralised” (Pickles 2024: 617), obstetric violence ranges from coercion and unconsented procedures to neglect and abuse during childbirth (Chadwick 2021; Pickles 2024). Despite a growing socio-legal recognition, it remains discursively marginal in institutional contexts, where medical authority and procedures often obscure women's agency. This study examines how regional human rights courts construct (or deny) such agency in their judgments.

Drawing on an ad hoc corpus of ECtHR and IACtHR case-law, we adopt a triangulation of methodological approaches, informed by Critical Discourse Analysis and Feminist CDA (Lazar 2007) at the macro-level, corpus-assisted methods at the meso-level and Systemic Functional Linguistics (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014) at the micro-level. Using a purpose-built annotation protocol, we track how women subjected to obstetric violence are grammatically positioned – as Actors, Goals, or backgrounded participants – across institutional narratives. Preliminary analysis shows systematic downgrading of women's experiential agency through passivisation, nominalisation, and relational clauses, while healthcare professionals frequently appear only as implied or absent agents. Autonomy and emotion are marginalised, except when medicalised. Notably, IACtHR judgments more consistently attribute agency to women than ECtHR case-law.

This study foregrounds linguistic constructions of agency and, by doing so, advances a critical methodological framework for analysing gendered institutional harm in medico-legal discourse.

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From Gang Rape to Statutory Rape: Media Representations of Victims and Perpetrators in Malaysia

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This case study examines the discursive shift in media representations of victims and perpetrators in a controversial sexual assault case involving school students in Baling, Kedah, Malaysia, which was initially framed as gang rape and later reclassified as statutory rape. In Malaysia, statutory rape laws become contested when it involves minors, as the law does not differentiate between adolescent and adult perpetrators, raising issues of agency and consent. Drawing on Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) and van Leeuwen's (2008) Social Actor Framework, this study analyses news articles published before and after the reclassification of the case from rape to statutory rape in three major English-language newspapers in Malaysia: New Straits Times, Malay Mail, and Free Malaysia Today. The analysis focuses on how the victim and perpetrators are discursively constructed through strategies of inclusion and exclusion, role allocation, categorisation, and legitimisation. Preliminary findings reveal a shift in the girl's portrayal from that of a passive victim of sexual assault and a recipient of sexual violence with no behavioural agency to a more visible and active agent of sexual behaviour. Meanwhile, the boys, though consistently foregrounded both before and after the reclassification, have their construction as perpetrators mitigated by reframing them as "students," "boyfriend," or "juveniles," with their involvement in sexual crimes visibly reduced and presented as mutual behaviour rather than violence. These findings highlight the issues surrounding statutory rape laws in Malaysia and demonstrate the role of media in shaping public understanding of sexual crimes involving minors, while reinforcing broader gendered ideologies around agency, consent, and victimhood. (255 words)

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‘Your voice (really) matters’: beyond soundbites to opportunities for action for victims/survivors of domestic abuse

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“Your Voice Matters”: a phrase increasingly seeping into public consciousness as opinions are sought in surveys from supermarkets to students’ unions. Similarly, the voices of domestic abuse victims/survivors, a well-documented ‘hard-to-reach’ participant group, are increasingly recognised for their importance in contributing ‘lived experiences’ towards both understanding abuse, and towards improving support services from statutory and private institutions. Most research in this endeavour has so far taken a sociological thematic approach, where researchers cite victim/survivor voices in ‘soundbites’ to highlight gaps between expectation and service delivery. Yet such research often stops short of understanding why these gaps exist, which if not explored potentially perpetuate service failures and obscure routes to improvement. In such research one must ask, to what extent “your voice” is really acknowledged and understood. Whilst institutional discourse is a longestablished focus of CDA research, the effects of such discourse(s) and inherent institutional power on their clients has been under-researched from the client perspective – a gap which my research aims to fulfil. This study aims to foreground these under-acknowledged voices by employing microlinguistic analysis within a CDA framework to uncover, through the deconstruction of semi-structured depth interviews with victims/survivors: 1) the systemic and structural contexts through which (perhaps opposing) client identities are constructed and ascribed, and 2) how victims/survivors accept or resist those identities or create alternatives. In seeking to understand the potential implications of any identity misalignment, I hope this will provide new insights to explain the documented lack-of-fit between institutional and client expectations, repositioning victim/survivor voices as a “basis for action” (Fairclough 2018:13).

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Framing Gendered Victimhood in Image-Based Sexual Abuse: A comparative study of User-generated YouTube Comments on Sextortion

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This study explores the discursive construction of gendered victimhood in YouTube users' comments on two cases of sextortion, defined as one form of image-based sexual abuse (IBSA) in which sexual and/or nude images are created and/or disseminated without the consent of the victim (Powell and Henry, 2017: 120). Although there has been extensive research on sextortion, particularly on its psychological effects, this practice has not been thoroughly studied from a discursive perspective. The present paper intends to fill this gap by drawing on a dataset of 1,400 comments posted to YouTube news channels' videos on two sextortion cases that garnered ample media attention: one female case (Amanda Todd) and one male case (Jordan De May). Following the tenets of Critical Discourse Analysis, this study aims to investigate how linguistic choices represent male and female victims of sextortion and (re)produce gendered victimhood identities. In order to do so, it uses a mixed methods approach. First, it draws on Sketch Engine for a corpusbased analysis of the semantic characterization of the corpus (Baker & McEnery, 2015); next, using a reduced sample, a thematic analysis is carried out to provide a more granular lens of the most relevant themes and topics; finally, a critical textual qualitative analysis of social actors is conducted relying on van Leeuwen's (2008) socio-semantic inventory. The findings reveal conflicting patterns of activation and passivation of social actors, particularly regarding blame allocation and the portrayal of Todd and De May as powerless victims. Of particular interest is the higher use of evaluative lexicon, which emerges as the primary device for shaping public perceptions and for reinforcing and /or challenging gender stereotypes. By situating online discursive constructions within the broader cultural context, this research highlights the role of social networking platforms in shaping public attitudes toward justice and accountability while contributing to or demystifying rape culture premises about image-based sexual abuse.

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Russian Political Talk Show's Legitimation of "Partial Mobilisation" to the War in Ukraine in 2022

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In September 2022, the Russian government announced a "partial mobilisation" which would see 300,000 men from across the country drafted into the military and sent to Ukraine. The announcement was met with protests taking place in many major cities and a reported 200,000 people fleeing the country in the first week of the draft. The state was thus met with a need to justify the mobilisation while maintaining the impression of a mighty Russian army.

State-controlled television, particularly one of the biggest Russian TV channels "Rossiya-1" (Russia-1), can be considered one of the main platforms for the legitimisation of the mobilisation. This study analyses the broadcast of "Evening with Vladimir Solovyov" that aired on the evening of 21 September 2022, the day the "partial mobilisation" was announced, in order to identify legitimisation strategies used by the programme in relation to the event.

The analytical framework used combines and builds upon legitimisation classifications proposed by Van Leeuwen (2007) and Reyes (2011) and encompasses 7 strategies: authority, reasoning, past/future imaginaries, morality, altruism, and blaming and defaming. The full broadcast is coded manually by sentence for these strategies. The analysis is conducted in original Russian, with the data being translated through online software and the translations manually changed/adjusted in order to share results with non-Russian-speaking audiences. The study is part of a larger project investigating legitimisation, on Russian state-affiliated television, at various stages of the war in Ukraine. Results are anticipated to align with those of a previous study investigating an "Evening with Vladimir Solovyov" broadcast from the start of the full-scale invasion where authority and morality were the prominent legitimisation strategies found. That broadcast made Vladimir Putin the central legitimating figure through personal authority and used morality to legitimate Russia and its military while delegitimising Ukraine through references to its leaders' shortcomings.

Between unpredictability and control: Examining discourses of uncertainty around lived menopause experiences

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The notion of uncertainty seems to have become characteristic of public discourse around menopause in the UK. Existing research finds that this emphasis on uncertainty around irregular periods, erratic symptoms and an unpredictable progression of menopause feeds into the image of the enigmatic, unruly menstrual body which should be controlled through self-surveillance and health optimisation (Riley et al., 2025). This PhD study explores how those going through menopause navigate these discourses and make sense of their own experiences of uncertainty. The data was collected using audio diaries and semi-structured interviews. For the diaries, participants recorded short voice notes for two months, capturing a range of experiences, reflections and emotions as they chronicled their day-to-day lives. Currently in the initial stages of analysis, the study will apply Deictic Space Theory (Chilton, 2014) and Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Lazar, 2014) to examine discursive constructions of uncertainty as participants draw together evidence from menopausal 'symptoms' to detect patterns and make future projections as a way of keeping uncertainty at bay. Such responses of self-monitoring, tracking and surveillance can be seen as indicative of how neoliberal, postfeminist sensitivities permeate lived experiences, prompting individuals to make attempts of resisting their own unruly bodies.

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Media representations of human rights violations during the 2019 Chilean social protests

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In October 2019, massive social protests started in Chile, leading to the denunciation of numerous human rights (hereafter HR) violations committed by state agents against protesters and bystanders. This context generated intense public debate around the attribution of responsibility for the HR violations and their representation in the media. Indeed, Chilean mainstream media outlets were accused of misrepresenting the protests, particularly by downplaying or overlooking the state violence.

Whereas discourse analysis on the Chilean case has up to now focused on HR violations in more distant historical contexts (cf. De Cock and Michaud Maturana, 2014), this paper explores the representation of responsibility for HR violations in the media coverage of the 2019 Chilean social protests. This study more specifically examines how agents and patients of HR violations are represented (i.e. which characteristics are assigned to them), since the opposition between agents and patients is a key concept for the analysis of the representation of responsibility. It moreover compares mainstream and alternative newspapers. In order to do so, we rely on Van Leeuwen's (1996) categories for analysing the representation of social actors. Our corpus is made of news articles published between October 2019 and March 2020 by Chilean newspapers, for example *El Mercurio* (mainstream) and *El Mostrador* (alternative). We hypothesize that patients of HR violations will be described more in terms of individualisation and nomination than agents, and that this variation will be more important in mainstream newspapers, where the agents are expected to be described in terms of collectivisation and functionalisation.

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The discursive repositioning of family and gender for far-right politics

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The far-right nationalist party *Schweizerische Volkspartei* (SVP, 'Swiss People's Party'), has been the largest party in the Swiss parliament since 2003, earning over 25% of the votes in every federal election cycle for the past 20 years. Unlike in other European countries, where the rise of far-right parties has been widely framed as a threat to democracy, the SVP is generally seen as a "mainstream" party of the neoliberal right (Maurer 2025). Much of the success of the SVP is attributed to their resemiotization of ideas of the political "center" and middle classness into moral positions, thereby referring to wage earners identifying with the principles of autonomy and individual responsibility (Hildebrand 2017). This strategy has enabled the banalization of the SVP's racist, misogynist, and nativist views, redefining the Swiss political landscape (Jost 2007). In this paper, I examine the role that gender and family played in this discursive repositioning. Drawing on the discourse-historical approach (Reisigl & Wodak 2001), I examine SVP election platforms from 1991-2023, tracing how evolving discussions of gender and sexuality in these documents helped to strengthen the SVP's broader political goals. In this way, I hope to demonstrate how discourses of gender and family help to advance far-right politics and the way in which seemingly feminist messaging (e.g., the right to equality in the workplace) is used to achieve reactionary and discriminatory policies.

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Soft Lighting, Strong Ideology: Tradwife Kitchens and the (Re-) Making of Gender Order in Instagram Reels

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Tradwife influencer Reels are a key site where retraditionalization is re-aestheticized as personal choice, presenting gender hierarchy as commonsensical and aspirational lifestyle (Author & Author, under review). Building on Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (FCDA) (Lazar 2005), we examine how the home, especially the kitchen, functions as a sensory, material and ideological arena in which (hetero)patriarchal roles are reproduced through multimodal design.

We analyze a corpus of 60 Instagram Reels (from 12 accounts), compiled through netnographic observation (Kozinets 2019) and sampling of high-engagement content specifically from kitchens. Combining thematic mapping with FCDA-guided multimodal social semiotic analysis (e.g., Kress 2010), we are guided by the following questions: (1) How do tradwife Reels semiotically produce the kitchen as an ideological space of 'good womanhood'? (2) How do aesthetic regimes naturalize gender hierarchy as desirable domestic lifestyle?

Emerging findings reveal two seemingly opposite, yet mutually reinforcing strategies. On one end, Reels portray a highly polished kitchen: coordinated pastels, dramatized self-fashioning, and highly choreographed foodwork that stylize domestic labour as serene vocation. On the other end, they perform (deliberate) unpolishedness: muted earthy colors, natural materials, and minimal editing invite trust. Across both ends, the kitchen operates as a space where hierarchical roles are presented as non-coercive. Aligning with Zappavigna & Ross' (2025: 3) argument that "...the ordinary, domestic, and trivial can, in fact, be windows into the political, global and ideological", we suggest that tradwife kitchens materialize conservative and patriarchal backlash politics precisely by making them feel mundane: ideology is shared through décor and close-ups of tactile sensory activities, not declared through manifestos.

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Radical Masculinities in the Contemporary (St)Age

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Understanding masculinity as socially constructed (Hearn & Hein, 2015) enables a critical examination of hegemonic models of identity that are proposed as the standard for achieving social acceptance. The contestation of naturalised assumptions about gender (Butler, 1990) opens up new possibilities for performing identities unbound by dominant cultural norms. Indeed, in the contemporary age, intersectional identities problematise normative models, promoting more radical ways of embracing and discovering the self. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to investigate the discursive construction of non-conforming masculinity in Yungblud's music production. Combining the use of verbal and non-verbal cues, the English singer performs a dissident masculinity where contrasts, ambiguities and diverse cultural associations merge to create a new identity model that challenges traditional representations of men. Collected data taken from his popular music performances will be analysed using Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (Kress, 2010), adopting a specific feminist perspective (Lazar, 2007). The analytical strategy designed for this study will allow for a critical reading of the different semiotic modes used for the construction of meaning and identity, whereas the feminist perspective will highlight the emancipatory feature of these anti-hegemonic meaning-making practices. Ultimately, this study will emphasise the political value of alternative representations in the contemporary (st)age, where bodies function as a semiotic battlefield for the resignification of normative categories of being.

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From Presidential Candidate to President-Elect: Gendered Forms of Address and the Representation of Social Actors in Trump's Twitter Discourse (2015–2017)

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This paper investigates the representation of male and female social actors in political discourse, focusing specifically on forms of address in Donald Trump's Twitter communication during the Trump–Clinton presidential race. Drawing on a corpus of tweets produced during the campaign and the immediate post-election period, the study compares how social actors are discursively constructed across gender, time, and political role, contrasting Trump's positioning as a presidential candidate with his subsequent role as President-elect.

The analysis adopts van Leeuwen's Critical Discourse Analysis (1996, 2008) framework for the representation of social actors, complemented by Lazar's Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (2005, 2007) to foreground gendered power relations and ideological positioning. Attention is paid to inclusion and exclusion processes in the forms of address directed at male and female actors. The findings aim to show how gender intersects with political status and temporal context in shaping discursive strategies on social media, and how these strategies contribute to the reproduction or contestation of gendered power relations in contemporary political communication.

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Social Prejudice on Queer Expressions in Public Spaces: Discriminatory Discourses before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights

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This paper falls within the interdisciplinary research project “Rights and Prejudice. Linguistic and Legal Implications of Gendered Discourses in Judicial Spaces” (GenDJus) [P2022FNH9B] (<https://gendjus.it/>). Through a corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis (Baker 2014; Garofalo 2022) of international and national judicial texts in Spanish, English, and Italian (Pontrandolfo et al. 2024) and combining linguistic and legal insights (Pontrandolfo and Danisi 2025), the project explores the specific area where the most subtle forms of discrimination, which can stem from prejudice, stereotypes and bias (PSB), seem to be most persistent, namely sexual, reproductive and parental rights. Based on a subcorpus of judgments delivered in Spanish by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR), this paper explores the public space as a common place of violence and punishment against non-hegemonic sexual orientations and gender identities. The focus is placed on court decisions related to what the IACtHR has been referring to as “prejudice-based violence”, namely cases that have as their common denominator the perception of LGBTIQ+ people as individuals who challenge heteronormativity and constitute social threats (see, among others, *Flor Freire v. Ecuador*, *Azul Rojas Marín et al. v. Peru*, *Olivera Fuentes v. Peru*). Judicial narratives serve as a testing ground for exploring complex issues related to gender identity and sexual justice, studying how judges argue about gender and sexuality issues and how their discourses can impact the enjoyment, restriction or denial of certain human rights (Brems and Timmer, 2017). With a specific focus on masculinities (Baker and Brookes, 2025) and queer expression, the paper scrutinises how the IACtHR challenges and deconstructs PSB in the IACtHR case law and the key role played by hegemonic masculinity in the discursive construction of the legal subject and in the limitation of their rights.

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Voicing Sustainability? Representing Social Actors and Environmental Conditions in Indonesian Extractive Industry Reports

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Major extractive corporations in Indonesia hold substantial economic and political influence; their investment and operational decisions significantly shape environmental conditions, affect community development, and impact both national and global targets related to emissions and sustainability. This study examines how social actors and environmental conditions are discursively represented in the sustainability reports of extractive companies operating in Indonesia. Using Fairclough's three-dimensional model (2013: 133) and van Leeuwen's SAR (2008), supported by corpus-assisted discourse studies, the analysis investigates the recurrent linguistic patterns through keywords, collocation, and concordance analysis within a 5 millionword corpus of sustainability reports of twenty major extractive companies in Indonesia between 2016 and 2024 (the INSUREX Corpus). Transitivity analysis and metaphor scenario mapping are employed to uncover how actions, responsibility, and environmental processes are strategically attributed or obscured within reports. Findings reveal recurrent linguistic patterns in which the corporation is consistently activated and has strong agency, whereas other social actors, e.g., employees and communities, are prominently included but predominantly passivated, collectivised, and positioned as recipients of corporate actions with limited agentive capacity. Environmental conditions are likewise constructed through managerial and technical discourses that refract environmental impact as opportunities rather than challenges (e.g., the use of green metaphor). It further downplays the environmental degradation while foregrounding corporate control and regulatory compliance. Overall, the study demonstrates how linguistic choices in sustainability reporting serve ideologically to shape corporate credibility, distribute responsibility, and construct selective realities of extractive operations in Indonesia.

Transformative Approaches to Museum Spaces: Rethinking Migration Discourse in Virtual Museums

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This paper focuses on transformation as an analytical and ethical stance within the museum, which has undergone a shift in recent years in its relationship with its audiences.

Following Kress (2015) and Ravelli (2024), museums are “multimodal constellations”, which have responsibilities for and with visitors. In keeping with the idea that museums do not simply exhibit artworks but rather construct identities and social roles, this presentation will map the key contours of digital discourse in virtual museums to explore salient discursive strategies employed in the mediated representations of identity. Although a vast body of literature discusses the impact of technology in museums, this study focuses on the discursive strategies of virtual museums regarding persuasion and emotional responses. Digital resources can be investigated in terms of their materiality, which contributes to meaning and identity construction.

Among the various topics, the core values of diversity and heritage can be particularly significant for virtual museums, given their common goal of reaching a wider online audience. Given their specific peculiarities, virtual museums are particularly suitable for conveying the complexity of migration histories and aligning viewers with the position of the represented social actors. The main idea is to offer an analytical framework for examining migration discourse across various multimodal texts provided by virtual museums. The development of Transformative Approaches to Discourse Studies (Balirano, Demata, KhosraviNik, forthcoming) can facilitate a deeper understanding of how museums construct their discursive identities and integrate into broader societal discussions.

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Cultural stereotyping through discursive practices in inclusivity attempts: A qualitative analysis of online narratives

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Although ideological representations can be produced and spread throughout public discourses by those in power, such discourses can also be reproduced through the narratives of those who are seemingly not in power and, in that way, still reinforce dominant ideologies using the voice of the less powerful groups; a phenomenon which can neutralize certain ideologies and make them more acceptable.

In this presentation, I will analyze a number of online-shared narratives from asylum seekers published on the websites of a few Western asylum seeker organizations. Taking a critical and cultural perspective, the analysis uncovers a variety of discursive and rhetorical strategies used in these narratives and how they can become problematic when considered in a wider context by leading to misrepresentation of certain non-western countries.

It will be discussed how certain discourses get reproduced and reinforced in a cycle and how problematic this can be for the sustainable development goals regarding reduction of conflict between countries as well as how the online-distributed discourses can (un)intentionally serve the dominant Western ideologies about non-Western countries by producing discourses which are in line with the already-existing discourse of 'the other uncivilized cultures'. Furthermore, the topic will be discussed in terms of how such narratives are used in constructing and reaffirming the national identity of the target culture without paying attention to the follow-up consequences reinforcing colonized discourses and ideologies in name of humanity. In order to help the audience contextualize the problem, I will put the topic of this presentation in a broader context, based on previous studies as well as my own observations as a Western citizen, a non-Western native, and an academic in discourse and media studies.

At the end, I will link this topic to problematic ways of treating 'context' in Critical Discourse Studies and the consequences it can have in reinforcing dominant ideologies which is contrary to the ideal goal of CDA.

Schooling the Past: The Selective Memories of a Glorious Past and the Rise of Neofascism

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This paper examines how Critical Discourse Analysis, specifically the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), illuminates the connections between collective memory, education, and the resurgence of neofascist ideologies. Focusing on Spain, it explores how state-sanctioned history curricula reproduce master narratives that draw on selective memories of the past, constructing foundational myths that define national identity through binary oppositions of *us* and *them*. These narratives function as symbolic spaces of belonging and exclusion, mobilizing the past as a legitimizing resource for contemporary nationalist and nativist projects.

Four interrelated dynamics structure this process. First, simplification: historical complexities are reduced to linear, didactic tales that privilege coherence over nuance. Second, political context: as history continues to be written by the winners, dominant powers elevate narratives that legitimize their authority while silencing counter-histories. Third, curricular regulation: government guidelines codify these selective versions, reducing history education to factual accuracy and patriotic formation. Fourth, contemporary recontextualization: an idealized past enables far-right politicians to emerge, often through slogans promising to make a country great again.

The result is a set of clear, heroic, and patriotic master narratives that sustain what Bauman (2017) calls *retrotopia*—idealized returns to a mythic past invoked as solutions to present discontent. *Retrotopia* has become central to far-right discourse and forms an ideological foundation of contemporary neofascism.

Drawing on DHA's contextual and political tools (Wodak et al., 2009), this paper outlines strategies to identify the simplifications, ideological motives, and curricular choices that shape collective memory. The Spanish case exemplifies global tensions between critical historiography and state narratives of nationhood, underscoring the ethical responsibility of discourse scholars to expose the symbolic roots of exclusionary ideologies.

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‘What is a Woman?’: a Case Study of Categorisation as a Tool for Epistemic Violence

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The culture wars in the United Kingdom have rendered the category “woman” a contentious matter. The latest sentence from the British Supreme Court, which aimed at providing a legal definition of “woman”, has further destabilised its scope. This event illustrates the relevance of categorisation in the configuration of gender identity (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet, 2003) and the contextual and dynamic nature of categories and their meaning (Stokoe, 2012). In this context, this paper relies on the tools of Membership Categorisation Analysis (Stokoe, 2012) and contemporary proposals within Critical Discourse Studies (Song, 2025; Filardo-Llamas, 2025) to uncover the processes of categorisation which “woman” underwent in the UK between 2023 and 2025. The study dwells into four datasets of legal and mediatic texts, from sources as varied as Supreme Courts, news outlets, and social media. The diachronic analysis of the strategies for the construal of “woman” and their effects allows a deeper understanding of the changing conceptualisations and attitudes unfolding in British society around this category. The results shed light on the necessity of an explicit inclusion of opposition as a mechanism for category construal. Thus, Membership Categorisation Analysis would facilitate the examination of the ideological square (van Dijk, 1998) from a different angle, as seen in the construal of “trans woman” as the negative opposite of “woman” in this case study.

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‘Macron a lâché la folie dans nos rues parisiennes... cet homme est un malade.’ Places of Belonging in Urban Linguistics

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In 2023, the French government passed a pension reform resulting in major protest among the French population. The debates centered around accusations of guilt to major French politicians, interesting processes of creating spatial and societal belonging by constructing (urban) places and in- and outgroup perspectives. This (poster) presentation is centered around insights into the construction of places relying on the concepts of urban linguistics (Busse/Warnke 2015; Kuthan 2025). The project in general builds on both established and recent advances in German and Romance linguistic discourse analysis, including those of Spitzmüller/Warnke (2008/2011), Weiland (2020), and Harjus (2023). It aims to examine the French Pension Reform of 2023 from both a discourse and corpus linguistic, multimedia and multimodal perspective. The analysis consists of a hermeneutic quantitative-qualitative process on a self-compiled corpus comprised of approximately 3,600 *YouTube*-videos and 4.500 newspaper articles from the online version of *Le Monde*, *Le Figaro* and *Les Echos* as well as their respective online comments (approximately 900.000 comments).

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Celebrating Diversity or Reinforcing Hierarchies? Critical Discourse Analysis of LGBTQ+ Visibility and Nation Branding in the Eurovision Song Contest

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The Eurovision Song Contest (ESC), known as the "Gay Olympics" (Baker, 2017), is a prominent platform for analyzing the intersection of sexual and gender identity with national representation. Since its launch in 1956, it has evolved from a pan-European community event to a stage for queer dissidence, particularly from the late 1990s onward.

This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (Wodak & Meyer, 2009) to explore how LGBTQ+ visibility is used strategically for nation branding and to assert geopolitical belonging within Europe. The ESC serves as a crucial site in the geopolitics of LGBTQ+ rights, where narratives of diversity are negotiated, commodified, and employed to shape national identities. The phenomenon of homonationalism (Puar, 2017) explains how some nations utilize LGBTQ+ presence to portray modernity and Western tolerance. For instance, Austria's 2014 victory by Conchita Wurst exemplifies efforts to map a "European map of sexual repression" (Ubricht et al., 2015), contrasting Western acceptance with perceived homophobia in Russia and Eastern Europe. Western media often leverage queer figures to reinforce ideological divides, using tolerance as a tool for exclusionary narratives.

These insights reveal the dual role of the ESC as both a legitimizing and a reproducing ground for political and ideological hierarchies rooted in sexuality.

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Algorithms' Impact on Social Media Discourse: A Case Study of Dementia

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Social media is far from a 'free market' of ideas, particularly with the algorithm choosing which posts will be shown to whom (Twitter, 2023). Some studies suggest the algorithm promotes a 'rich-get-richer' effect, and a preference for sensationalist content (Dujeancourt & Garz, 2023). This provokes the question of whether these platforms systematically perpetuate inequalities through giving voice to some, and not others. This study critically investigates this conundrum by looking at the 'viral' tweets in a bespoke dataset of 18.9 million tweets from 2013-2022 which contain either *dementia* or *alzheimer's*. I develop a novel approach to creating subcorpora dependent on engagement, drawing in part on an existing statistical method called 'TOPSIS' (Muñoz et al., 2022). Fewer than 0.1% of the tweets in this dataset are classified as 'viral' using this method, which suggests a stark contrast between what is SEEN on Twitter against what is ON Twitter as a whole. I look at the types of accounts and discourses which have gone viral in this time period, identifying changes over time such as a decline in news organisations and 'fun facts', in favour of individuals and grief. I argue that the algorithm is a powerful actor, determining what is SEEN and engaged with, and that a consideration of engagement can enable a critical reflection on the wider context when analysing social media discourse.

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Legitimising conflict in institutional digital discourse. A Critical Multimodal Discourse Studies. approach on US sanctions against Francesca Albanese

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Contemporary geopolitical tensions are increasingly articulated and contested in digital environments where institutional actors rely on platform-specific discursive practices to negotiate legitimacy, assign responsibility and blame, and mobilise transnational publics (Wodak 2020). This study takes a Critical Multimodal Discourse Studies (Djonov and Zhao 2014) approach to analyse US institutional discourse in digital environments, highlighting how platform affordances, such as many-to-many communicative practices, heightened visibility, and algorithmic regimentation, contribute to shaping and reconfiguring socio-political reality (Moschini and Sindoni 2022; KhosraviNik 2018).

Within this scenario, this study concerns the international conflict that emerged in July 2025 between the US administration, under the direction of Secretary of State Marco Rubio, and Francesca Albanese, the UN Special Rapporteur on the occupied Palestinian territories. This unprecedented situation attracted substantial international attention with numerous NGOs and leading human rights figures defending Albanese and condemning the US for setting what was widely described as a concerning precedent (Hoffmann 2025).

The aim is to analyse how this conflict is discursively enacted and legitimised in US institutional discourse as it unfolds in digital environments. The analysis draws on a dataset of (i) official statements published on the US Department of State website, and (ii) social media content disseminated through the official accounts of both the US State Department and senator Marco Rubio. Methodologically, the study applies Critical Multimodal Discourse Studies to digitally mediated communication (Jovanovic and van Leeuwen 2018), considering how conflict is presented and legitimised via different digital affordances and platform-specific discursive dynamics. Particular attention is paid to how verbal and visual resources convey evaluative stances to contribute to the construction of conflict narratives, the delegitimisation of the UN mandate, and the broader politics of human rights accountability.

Finally, this study contributes to research on how online institutional discourse can influence collective views on geopolitical conflicts, highlighting the volatile and risk-laden nature of digital environments in the management of conflict communication

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The Discourse of Fashion as Allegories of Commodification and the Soul: Rei Kawakubo via Walter Benjamin

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This is an exploration of fashion label Comme des Garçons discourse as designed by Rei Kawakubo. Kawakubo is a Tokyo born fashion designer based in Paris and Tokyo. Kawakubo has been creating avant-garde representations, often rebellious and provocative, for more than a half century. Using the conceptual approach of Walter Benjamin, I argue the works of Kawakubo function not only as an allegory of commodification but also of soul within our late modern society.

Fashion in general works as a medium and does so within our media system. To analyze fashion as a media discourse, I use Lilie Chouliaraki's tripartite critical discourse analysis approach: the verbal, the visual, and the aesthetic. There is a first verbal analysis of Kawakubo interview texts and advertising copies of Comme des Garçons. Her fashion videos, photos, and clothing designs are next examined. In addition to the aesthetic elements of the verbal and the visual, the third aspect is an examination of materialities involved in the fashions that Kawakubo designed. These include her shocking and rebellious 1980s aesthetics as well an assessment of audience reaction to her design presentations and marketing distribution between Tokyo and Western cities, such as Paris and New York.

I construe the overall positioning of Kawakubo through the allegorical concepts developed by Walter Benjamin. For Benjamin, allegory is not simply a rhetorical device. It arises from our transient sense of the world itself as a mode of experience. Thus, the works of Kawakubo can be best described in terms of her representational transience, mortality, and manifestation of powerful truths as illuminated through Benjamin's pervasive cultural legacy.

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Representation of Immigrants in Pro-Immigration Memes: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Study

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In recent years, immigration has become one of the most prominent topics in contemporary Critical Discourse Studies. However, while research has largely examined anti-immigration “othering” and “scapegoating” strategies (Krzyżanowski, 2020; Wodak, 2022), pro-immigrant representational strategies have received far less scholarly attention. The present study addresses this gap by examining the linguistic and visual representation of immigrants in selected pro-immigration internet memes, drawing on the framework of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (Machin & Mayr, 2023). The methodological paradigm is expanded to include the analysis of meme conventions and multimodal tropes (Forceville 2024) to ensure a fuller understanding of the communicated message. We also consider the verbal and visual argumentation of the memes, to reveal elements of the dialectical situation within which meme creators are operating. This integrated approach allows us to examine how memes shape persuasive and ideological meanings across modes. Preliminary findings indicate that pro-immigration memes construct immigrants as active and valuable contributors through a range of verbal and visual resources, a representation which can be seen as a direct refutation of stereotypes portraying immigrants as a drain on society.

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Constructing a Sceptical Self: Identity, Legitimation, and Resistance in Climate Sceptic Blogs

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This presentation focuses on climate sceptic bloggers' construction of ingroup and outgroup identities and how their representation of the conflict between climate sceptics and mainstream climate science contributes to identity-driven resistance to scientific authority. Such resistance, as Bliuc et al. (2015) suggest, can be viewed as part of a socio-political conflict between opinion-based groups whose beliefs form a key part of their social identity and underpin collective efforts to promote or resist social change. The analysis is grounded in the Discourse-Historical Approach, which integrates discourse analysis with contextual interpretation. Drawing on theories of identity construction and legitimation, I examine how climate sceptics legitimise their own stance – portraying themselves as aligned with core scientific principles such as critical inquiry and scepticism – while delegitimising mainstream climate science as politicised or dogmatic.

I analyse visual and textual representations on the About pages of four popular climate sceptic blogs most frequently linked to in the r/climateskeptics subreddit in a 3-month period, which serve as focal points for bloggers' identity construction (Dennen, 2009). These pages reveal how bloggers represent climate sceptics and scientists, narrate conflict with scientific authority and construct identities as alternative experts or voices for ordinary people's experiences and common sense, reflecting broader populist critiques of science (Mede & Schäfer, 2020). The presentation contributes to understanding how digital media discourses shape identity-driven rejection of climate science.

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Metaphors in anti-vaccination discourse

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Vaccine hesitancy' - 'a delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines despite availability of vaccination services' – was identified by the World Health Organization as one of the top 10 global health threats in 2019. Vaccine hesitancy is known to be linked to views and attitudes that are formed and negotiated in discourse. This talk looks at the role of metaphor in present-day and historical anti-vaccination discourse.

Several typologies exist of anti-vaccination arguments (Fasce et al. 2023), and metaphor is known to be an important tool for communication and thinking, and a potentially effective persuasive device. There is evidence, for example, of the impact of different metaphorical framings for vaccine-related attitudes and vaccinations (Flusberg et al. 2024). However, the use of metaphor to argue against vaccination has received little attention.

In this talk I present some prominent patterns of metaphor use in a corpus of 19th century anti-vaccination material from England and in several present-day sources of data, including a corpus of tweets/X posts on vaccinations, the website of the Children's Health Defence, and online communication by prominent anti-vaxxers. I show how both 19th and 21st century anti-vaccination metaphors present vaccines as: attacks on the body; sources of physical damage; and central elements in a societal battle waged against ordinary citizens by governments, healthcare systems and pharmaceutical companies.

I reflect on the observation that these metaphors work primarily on an emotional level, and often propose for their audiences specific identities within clearcut conspiratorial world views.

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Linguistics and Politics. A corpus-assisted analysis of language ideologies in the discourse of the Polish Language Council

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Language ideologies have been extensively examined by (socio)linguists, who explored their manifestations and use among non-linguists across diverse contexts. However, less attention has been paid to how linguists themselves—through education, policymaking, and advocacy—consciously or unconsciously participate in language-ideological work. This study addresses this gap by examining the discourse of Polish linguists as producers, reproducers, and challengers of language ideologies in relation to the Polish Language Act (PLA), implemented in 1999 as a direct result of linguists' advocacy work. Using corpus-assisted discourse studies approach adopted to study language ideologies (Vessey, 2017), we explore diachronically a corpus of reports published by members of the Polish Language Council (PLC) on the PLA since its implementation until recent times. We analyse the manifestations and trajectories of language ideologies, focusing on a selection of relevant keywords along with their collocations, concordances, and dispersion. Our results point to expected and unexpected findings. While most of the reports consistently emphasise linguistic correctness and communicative efficiency—aligning with illiberal discourse, the discourse of the PLC also reflects liberal and democratic ideas, which are less likely associated with language ideologies. Our diachronic approach shows that these language ideologies are intertwined with political developments in Poland since 1999 but often in surprising ways: expressions of illiberal language ideologies coincided with the development of liberal democracy in Poland, while more liberal language ideologies with the rise of illiberal politics and democratic backsliding. This study illustrates an important role of diachronic corpus-assisted discourse analysis in researching language ideologies, the role of linguists in their production and contestation, as well as their complex political entanglements. We argue that language-ideological discourse functions as a 'barometer' of broader political developments, reflecting and shaping ideological competition in the political field.

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Motivations behind Language Policy Making in South African Historically Afrikaans Universities

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The South African Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) published *The Language Policy Framework for Public Higher Education Institutions* (2020) to emphasise the need to make universities accessible to all citizens, regardless of their linguistic background. It also highlights that these institutions must be the leaders of the linguistic transformation towards a more multilingual society. Despite the attempted promotion of indigenous languages in higher education, the two dominant languages of instruction in South African universities are still Afrikaans and, more specifically, English. Notably, the Constitutional requirement to accommodate and include the possibility of access of every South African to higher education demanded historically Afrikaans universities (HAUs) to shift to English as the main medium of instruction.

A critical discourse analysis approach (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; I. Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; N. Fairclough, 2001) is applied to the language policy documents of two HAUs, namely North-West University and Stellenbosch University. The analysis focuses on the decisions related to language use in their institutions as well as on the implementation strategies to foster indigenous languages as mediums of instruction. The aim, therefore, is to examine the possible motivations behind these choices to explore potential alternatives to the current reality of English as the only language for teaching and learning. The results indicate that Bourdieu's (1991) concept of linguistic capital is still highly relevant to the role of English in South African language policymaking in universities, as this European language is generally perceived as a marker of success and upward mobility, aligning as well with Dube's (2017) analysis on the role of Afrikaans and indigenous languages. Hence, it can be argued that socioeconomic motivations underlying the regulation of language use in public HAUs remain more dominant than the commitments to social and linguistic equity required from the DHET Framework (2020).

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Impartiality and stance: A frame-semantic corpus study of UK parliamentary briefings on immigration

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The UK House of Commons Library presents itself as an impartial provider of evidence for MPs. Given the Commons Library's central role in legal and political decision-making, this paper uses semantic frame analysis (Fillmore, 1982) to examine how (im)partiality is produced in Commons Library briefing reports through patterns of stance-making. The data comprise 235 Commons Library briefings on immigration published between 1999 and 2024. The corpus is automatically annotated with frame-semantic information using LOME (Large Ontology Multilingual Extraction), followed by targeted post-editing to ensure reliability for discourse analysis. Frames and frame elements associated with attribution, evidentiality, modality and explicit evaluations (e.g., STATEMENT, POSSIBILITY, OBVIOUSNESS, DESIRABILITY) are used to trace how different stakeholders are represented, who is granted voice and credibility, and how particular policy options are normalised as reasonable or inevitable.

Quantitative analysis of frame and frame element frequencies provides an overview of systematic foregrounding and backgrounding of social actors, policy stances and evaluative meanings across the corpus. This is integrated with close qualitative reading of concordance lines to examine how the institutional voice manages distance and alignment with political actors, and how tensions between “just the facts” and implicit evaluation are resolved. Diachronic patterns are explored in relation to changes in the governing party to assess the stability or shift of the Library's institutional stance.

The paper contributes empirically to debates about how parliamentary knowledge practices shape immigration discourse and construct boundaries between “objective information” and politics. Methodologically, it reflects on the opportunities and limits of frame-semantic parsing for Critical Discourse Studies, offering a scalable yet critically informed approach to examining stance and legitimation in large institutional corpora.

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‘Pov: everybody is 11/10 #stockholmstyle’ – Negotiating Swedishness through the affordances of TikTok

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This talk concerns the interplay between users and technology in reproducing and negotiating discourses on digital social media, more specifically regarding discourses on Swedishness on TikTok. My ongoing PhD project draws theoretically on social semiotics, multimodality and CDS. The primary data consists of screen recordings (~3 h) collected by means of eleven respondents (16–17 years old) who have been using their personal TikTok accounts to generate “Swedish” content by experimenting with the platform’s search function. The recordings have been annotated and analyzed by combining the concept of ‘canvas’ (Bateman et al. 2017) with van Leeuwen’s (2008) model for analyzing representations of social actors.

The results suggest that the combination of (female) gender and nationality/ethnicity is a prominent social actor category in the respondents’ feeds. A generic, often culturally categorized “Swedish girl” is productive in three main discourses: 1. Swedishness as a lifestyle, 2. Swedish women as objects, and 3. Swedishness under threat. The semiotic realization of these discourses differs regarding e.g. the use of static vs dynamic images, and music vs spoken language on the one hand, and the choice of music genre on the other. In addition, the user’s engagement with the affordances of the platform plays a role in the realization of discourses, especially regarding the time spent watching posts and the choice of opening the comment section of a post. This highlights the need for an affordance-driven critical discourse analysis as stated by Machin (2016).

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Misaligned Alliances: Experiential deixis and Hungary's Geopolitical Positioning in Viktor Orbán's rhetoric

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Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union and NATO reached a consensus on supporting Ukraine and impose sanctions on Russia, with the notable exception of the Hungarian government, which consistently impeded decision-making processes. Explaining and legitimizing this deviation from allied agreement required sustained discursive work, raising the question how Hungary's geopolitical stance is strategically constructed. By examining Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's rhetoric from 2022 to 2025, we examine how he has positioned Hungary in his annual addresses. Utilizing the experiential view of person deixis (Marmaridou, 2000) and corpus linguistic methods (Szabó, 2025), we 1) identify the various first-person plural and third-person plural references constructed in the Prime Minister's speeches through personal pronouns and person-marking, and 2) qualitatively examine these categories. The findings suggest that Prime Minister Orbán has distanced the country from its traditional allies while constructing the image of a "foreign enemy." This research has implications for understanding how politicians can discursively manipulate alliance structures and contribute to democratic backsliding by normalizing narratives of external threats.

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Constructing ‘Our Green Homeland’: Nature, Nation and Ideology on the Hungarian Far-Right

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Recent eco-nationalist discourses within the European far-right emphasize environmental protection as a crucial component of national renewal (Turner & Bailey, 2021). While Western European eco-nationalist parties attribute climate issues to migrants, Eastern European countries display distinct patterns (Turner & Bailey, 2021), highlighting the necessity of examining eco-nationalism across different regions. Hungary’s *Mi Hazánk* (“Our Homeland”) party is a case in point, positioning itself as Europe’s pioneering green national-radical party. Its agenda integrates patriotism with environmental initiatives by associating nature protection with the preservation of ancestral traditions and rural values. Thus, we investigate how eco-nationalism is discursively constructed in *Mi Hazánk*’s mediated and parliamentary discourse. We analyze Facebook posts and parliamentary speeches by *Mi Hazánk* and its Members of Parliament from 20 April 2024, marking the commencement of the EU election campaign, to April 2025. The methodology employs a semi-supervised Metaphor Identification Procedure (Pragglejaz, 2007) augmented by large language models. Metaphor analysis explores how the party makes abstract concepts tangible in environmental action, providing insights into its ideological discourse. The findings reveal a systematic conceptual alignment between ecological and nationalist moral frameworks, through which environmental protection is framed as a form of national duty and renewal. This alignment contributes to the ideological consolidation of eco-nationalism within Hungary’s far-right discourse.

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The aftermath of the Spanish 2024-2025 New Year's Eve countdown programme: Discourses of sexism and sizeism against the TV host Lalachus

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This paper explores the discourses emerging from YouTube comments which contain aggressive verbal acts directed at the Spanish TV presenter Lalachus, by comparison to those directed at her male co-presenter or at both as a group. In a corpus of 107 comments extracted from a YouTube video which features the rebroadcast of the Spanish 2024-2025 New Year's Eve countdown programme, aggressive verbal acts (del Saz-Rubio, 2025; Diabah, 2023) have been located and classified depending on who the intended target of the aggression is and what the thematic focus of the aggression is. This classification into themes, which was quantitatively analysed in terms of frequency percentages, together with its qualitative analysis from a FCDA perspective (Lazar, 2005), facilitated the identification of discourses.

Findings showed that Lalachus was the main recipient of aggressive verbal acts, in stark contrast to Broncano or Both. Results also revealed that, despite the religious nature of the controversy surrounding Lalachus, she was primarily attacked on grounds of physical appearance, rather than morality. She was the exclusive target of attacks on grounds of sexuality and gender ideology. Furthermore, she was more frequently attacked on grounds of intelligence, competence and influence than her male co-host. These attacks pointed to a discourse of sexism, and sometimes of sizeism too. This is in contrast with attacks directed at Broncano, which primarily questioned the morality of his actions and completely disregarded his physical appearance.

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Us, them, and those in-between: representations of gay and bisexual men in Swedish mainstream and queer coverage of the HIV/AIDS epidemic, 1982-1986

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The present project investigates discourses around the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Swedish mainstream and queer media from 1982 to 1986, with a focus on the representation of people with HIV/AIDS and people belonging to the so-called 'risk groups'. The sources employed are the daily newspaper *Dagens Nyheter* and the queer magazine *Revolt – mot sexuella fördomar*. Specifically, this presentation will discuss the discursive construction of gay and bisexual men, namely the group that was most often associated with the disease in the source material.

The analysis combines qualitative and quantitative approaches. A critical discourse analysis of a section of the material laid the ground for a later corpus analysis. This practice places the researcher's intuitions at the core of the investigation and subsequently employs a quantitative approach to confirm or disprove those initial findings.

The results highlight similarities and differences in how the two sources discursively constructed gay and bisexual men. *Dagens Nyheter* turned to strategies of othering that built on deviancy doubling (Potts 2013) and ideological squaring (van Dijk 1998). *Revolt*, instead, employed language to construct a common gay identity as a reaction to discrimination. For both sources, us-versus-them divisions were crucial in communicating the epidemic.

These findings give insights not only into how gay and bisexual identities were constructed, but also into how the image of a norm-following, dominant in-group was created as a consequence.

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Emotional Ambivalence and Discursive Vagueness in Far-Right Responses to the War in Ukraine: Evidence from a Corpus-Assisted Study

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On the first day of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, Poland opened its borders to Ukrainian refugees, creating an exceptional moment of political and moral consensus. This context posed a communicative dilemma for the far-right party *Konfederacja*, whose pre-war discursive repertoire was characterised by anti-Ukrainian and anti-migration evaluations. Any explicit stance therefore risked ideological incoherence or moral delegitimation. This article examines how *Konfederacja* discursively managed this tension in its Facebook communication during the first four months of the war using a corpus-assisted critical discourse analytic approach. Quantitative corpus techniques (keyword analysis, collocation patterns, and semantic prosody) are combined with qualitative CDA to identify recurrent evaluative and affective patterns across time. A comparative analysis of posts published before and after the invasion, as well as across parliamentary parties, demonstrates that *Konfederacja* systematically relied on emotional ambivalence, attenuation, and strategic vagueness to reproduce an implicitly anti-Ukrainian discourse while avoiding overt norm violations. The findings illustrate how affect is discursively regulated under conditions of heightened moral pressure and contribute to CACDA research on far-right communication in crisis contexts.

War on terror, the “White Widow”, and (neo)colonialism: press coverage of the Westgate terrorist attack in the British and American press

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The present paper examines how ideological and cultural factors shape news discourse understood both as a product (textual and multimodal representations) and as a process (journalistic practices of selection, framing, evaluation and legitimisation) on the Global South – Africa – distant yet made to matter because of its geopolitical terrorism-related salience. Focusing on the Westgate attack (Nairobi, 21 September 2013; 67 fatalities), we analyse how British and American newspapers simultaneously draw on and reproduce “war on terror” and securitisation narratives, the gendered personalization of terrorism through the “White Widow” figure, and (neo)colonial imaginaries of Africa in order to make the represented (distant) events relevant and emotionally appealing to Western audiences.

The study adopts the Media Proximity Approach (Kopytowska 2015a, 2015b) to trace how distance is encoded and manipulated in news reporting (spatial, temporal, epistemic, axiological and emotional), and how such distance work functions as an interface between textual choices and broader newsroom routines and cultural repertoires. The following questions are addressed: (1) How do ideological and cultural scripts shape patterns of media proximization in news coverage? (2) How do these patterns differ across British and American contexts? (3) What affective orientations are built through these proximization strategies?

The analysed corpus comprises 609 articles from the British and 252 articles from American newspapers. Combining qualitative analysis with corpus-assisted methods, we identify lexical-grammatical markers of media proximization, showing how proximity is generated to foreground threat, assign blame, and legitimise particular geopolitical and cultural readings of the attack.

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Technosuasion, techno-discursivity and TikTokization of politics: the case of Polish anti-elitist discourse

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The emergence of novel technology-enabled forms of reaching out to the public and amplifying voter engagement in ways not possible in the pre-digital era has taken political persuasion to a new level, enhancing its speed, scale, and impact. TikTok's short-form and vernacular aesthetics facilitating youth-oriented politainment and emotionally driven engagement have been increasingly exploited by populist actors to compress ideological content into highly shareable, affect-saturated narratives whose persuasive force is enhanced by platform-specific distribution and reception patterns (Cervi et al. 2023; Rastrilla et al. 2023). Integrating the Media Proximity Approach (Kopytowska 2022) and the Techno-Discursive Design framework (KhosraviNik 2018, 2022), the present paper links the new technosuasive potential of political discourse to the digitally-transformed distance dynamics going beyond discourse as product-related proximization process. In our analysis of Sławomir Mentzen's (Confederation Liberty and Independence, Poland) social media discourse, we discuss three intertwined media proximization dimensions: (i) epistemic digestibility (simplification/condensation), (ii) axiological tagging (hashtags, symbols and value-laden narratives), and (iii) affective communication, showing how digital affordances not only favour populist styles and echo-chamber dynamics (KhosraviNik 2018) but also shape persuasive repertoires in anti-elitist rhetoric.

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Five years of therapy in one minute: Compressed therapeutic genres and the politics of individualized, fix-driven mental health discourse

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Mental health discourse on TikTok and Instagram is currently saturated with short videos that make the same promise: to compress the ‘gist’ of therapeutic dialogue into ever shorter, to-the-point clips. These clips have emerged as a functionally homogenous and formally pre-structured, self-iterative digital genre (Belcher 2023) that is relatively invariable in content –loosely drawn from popular psychology and self-help literature – and displays striking similarities, frequently reproducing the same messages almost verbatim. Within this genre, variation is largely displaced to processes of metapragmatic calibration (Hübler & Bublitz 2007), operating at the linguistic as well as aesthetic and multimodal levels. It is through this variation that different creator personas are constructed and oriented to different ways of enacting expertise (Carr 2010), while simultaneously implicating different identities and lifeworlds of the imagined audience (Tagg & Seargeant 2014) – those ‘needing to hear this’ –including explicit and implicit linguistic and visual references to class, gender, and age. In this way, these clips provide an ideologically saturated meta-commentary on the sociopolitical context in which mental health is conceptualized and experienced. For instance, while some creators position themselves as ‘class-conscious’ lay experts – authenticating their advice through dialect features, intentionally unpolished aesthetics, and a horizontal camera angle – and frame their reels as helping users “save money”, others mobilize visual indices associated with white middle-class ‘luxury problems’ and therapy settings. This paper draws on a linguistic and multimodal analysis of 30 such reels and their comments sections to examine (1) how creators position themselves and their audiences across clips, (2) how users align with or disavow these identity ascriptions in the comments, and (3) how digital genres normalize ideologically structured ways of understanding mental health. It shows how normality and deviance – and the authority to make claims about them – are discursively negotiated and routinized in digital mental health genres.

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Moral Accountability and Impoliteness in African Political Discourse: A Critical Discursive Perspective

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This paper examines how impoliteness in multilingual political discourse operates as a mechanism of moral accountability and social regulation within the sociopolitical context of Congo-Brazzaville. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis (Fairclough, 2015) and (im)politeness theory (Culpeper, 2011; Haugh & Kádár, 2013), it investigates the evaluative practices displayed in over 900 Facebook comments responding to a French–Lingala political speech delivered by a parliamentary candidate. The analysis explores how these metadiscursive reactions construct and negotiate moral order, legitimacy, and national identity through affective and evaluative language.

Methodologically, the study combines qualitative and quantitative discourse analysis to identify five recurrent categories of (im)politeness—accountability, emotion as evaluation, pointed criticism, insult, and compounded impoliteness. It proposes a scalar model positioning these categories along a continuum of face-threat intensity, ranging from neutral accountability to extreme impoliteness. The findings reveal that while insults and emotionally charged evaluations dominate, they function less as interpersonal aggression than as collective acts of moral policing. Online commentators mobilize moral discourse to defend civic ideals such as unity, responsibility, and national cohesion, thereby transforming impoliteness into a form of ideological resistance.

This study advances critical approaches to discourse by reframing impoliteness as a moral and political practice that transcends individual antagonism. It argues that in postcolonial multilingual societies, impoliteness discourse reflects not only face management but also the ongoing negotiation of authority, legitimacy, and belonging. The analysis contributes to CDA by demonstrating how digital interaction serves as a performative arena where citizens collectively reproduce, contest, and moralize political discourse.

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Gender representation in central Anatolian culture: A critical Discourse Analysis on a Folk Tale

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This study aims to investigate how gender ideology is constructed in the selected Anatolian Folk Tale: *Keçeli Kız(The Girl with the Felt Hat)*. This study adopted Fairclough's three dimensional model to make an analysis at textual, intertextual and social levels regarding this folk tale. At textual level, linguistic items such as nouns/noun phrases, adjectives, verbs, transitivity have been studied to see how gender ideology is encoded in explicit linguistic items. The second step attempted to understand how intertextuality helps to represent gender ideology through folkloric elements. Lastly, social analysis tries to probe into social context and how it affects or is affected by gender ideology. As for methodology, purposeful sampling method has been utilized to select the most relevant and information-rich data serving for the aim of this study. Purposeful sampling has been carried out under the scope of inter-rater reliability. Further, content analysis method has also been used to analyze the folk tale under specific themes. Findings reveal that explicit linguistic manifestations hold implicit gender ideology representations in them, showing that males are of dominance over females. Further, inter-textual references unveil that gender ideology has many folkloric references in it contributing to how gender ideology is constructed through these references. Lastly, social context shows the dialectic nature of folk tales. In this way, findings are parallel with the existing literature in terms of gender ideology and each folk tale complements one another having consistent results.

Understanding sociopolitical keywords as a discursive phenomenon of Persuasion and Depoliticization in political discourse

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This paper discusses the role of “sociopolitical keywords” – terms such as *populism*, *woke*, and *fake news* that have the capacity to “‘encapsulate’ or ‘crystallize’ a whole set of ideas, values, or political issues” (Hambye et al., 2025). In our research, we aim to deepen our understanding of sociopolitical keywords by showing that they play a crucial role in the language of persuasion (Partington, 2017) and, more specifically, in discursive depoliticization, which is characterized by discursive strategies that contribute to “closing [...] debates” (Maesele & Raeijmaekers, 2020).

In this presentation, we will introduce the results of a study comparing several sociopolitical keywords, in order to support the idea that, despite their specificities, they belong to a single category of discursive phenomena.

To this end, we conduct a qualitative and collocational analysis based on a corpus of authentic uses of eight sociopolitical in contemporary political discourse in French-speaking Belgium and France. These eight cases were selected according to several criteria (positive or negative evaluative meaning, political connotation, etc.) in order to provide a diversified and intentionally generalizable overview of different types of keywords. The data are analyzed using an analytical grid inspired by Rondiat (2025) to capture the role played by these keywords in processes of persuasion and discursive depoliticization.

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Beyond the Lungs of the Planet: Ecological Metaphors in Brazil's Environmental Discourse and the Moral Politics of Global Leadership

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This paper examines how Brazil, through President Lula da Silva's speeches in international forums such as the UN, BRICS, MERCOSUL, and the G7, uses environmental metaphors to construct a moral and emotional claim to global leadership. Drawing on Critical Discourse Analysis (Van Dijk, 2006) and metaphor theory (Lakoff, 2010; Stibbe, 2015), the research investigates how metaphors shape Brazil's geopolitical identity and mobilize grievances rooted in climate injustice, colonial history, and economic inequality.

Rather than being mere rhetorical devices, metaphors are understood as cognitive and affective tools that frame abstract issues such as climate change, sovereignty, or security in emotionally resonant terms. Lula frequently portrays Brazil and the Global South as victims of systemic injustice while positioning Brazil as a responsible actor and voice for planetary concerns.

By comparing speeches across different institutional contexts, this analysis explores how Brazil's environmental discourse adapts depending on audience and setting, and how ideological structures, such as environmentalism or nationalism, emerge through metaphorical framing. The paper contributes to current debates on emotional discourse, grievance politics, and the symbolic role of Global South actors in shaping international climate narratives, particularly as Brazil prepares to host COP30 in 2025.

192 words

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Transit through Symbolic Spaces of Christianity, Politics, and Gender: A Frame Analysis of the Hungarian Presidential Pardon Scandal

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The 2024 Hungarian presidential pardon scandal, wherein Katalin Novák issued a presidential pardon to an individual involved in concealing child abuse, highlighted ideological and gender-related tensions between pro-government and non-pro-government media concerning the expected conduct of Christian female politicians. The position of Hungarian Christian female politicians is particularly challenging, as their religious identity serves as a marker that influences their behavior (Brisbane, 2024), which is subject to criticism due to the polarized nature of Hungarian politics (Pető, 2003). Furthermore, women's political participation has historically been restricted, resulting in a lack of political experience (Pető, 2003).

Considering this multifaceted situation, this research examines the ideological frames employed by Hungarian conservative and progressive media to portray Novák post-scandal. This study will focus on various ideological stances, including Christianity, anti-gender, familism, right-wing conservatism, and ethno-populism, to scrutinize the intersection of gender, politics, and religion.

Preliminary findings from an inductive frame analysis (Van Gorp & Vercruysse, 2012) of 347 articles published within 30 days of the scandal reveal contrasting narratives. Right-wing government media predominantly employ the "in the right transgressions lead to consequences, while in the left do not" frame to underscore Christian values, exemplified by Novák's resignation. Whereas progressive outlets utilize the "Fidesz government mistreats women" frame to critique the government's anti-gender stance.

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Towards the Normalization of Genocide: an MCDA Pilot Study of Israel's TikToks on their Ongoing Military Campaign against Palestinians

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In September 2025, the UN released a report confirming that Israel had been committing genocide in Gaza (The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2025). That same month, Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu acknowledged that his government considered social media, specifically TikTok and X, as a 'weapon' to gain public support (Shamala, 2025). Weaponized language refers to the deliberate use of language against a specific group to construct a false reality, incite hostility, and demonize vulnerable groups, which results in shaping public perception and enabling systematic injustice (Abdelzaher & Essam, 2019; Mercieca, 2019; Pascale, 2019). Historically, these linguistic strategies have legitimized military aggression and systemic injustice (De Costa et al., 2019), establishing violence within normalized morality. According to Krzyżanowski et al. (2023), the 'new normal', besides a post-crisis slogan, is an "active hegemonic frame symptomatic of the initiation – and eventual normalization – of either dismantling or at least profound undermining of the core ideas of democratically-funded, inclusive community and liberal democracy" (p. 3). This process is gradual (Krzyżanowski, 2020b): it starts with the "enactment" ('new' discourses or recontextualization), followed by "gradation/perpetuation" (the diffusion of discourse), leading to "normalization" (Krzyżanowski, 2020a). The weaponization of language sustains this process, which ultimately allows authoritarian politics of violence, including genocide, to be understood as both imperative and acceptable (Krzyżanowski et al., 2023). This presentation showcases a pilot study which follows the premises of Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA; Machin & Mayr, 2012) to examine Israel's official TikTok videos in the first month (i.e. October 2023) of their ongoing military campaign against Palestinians. Specifically, against the background of a previous study (Velásquez Vallejo, 2024), we investigate whether and to what extent new discursive strategies (Reisigl & Wodak, 2016) have been multimodally enacted in the process of normalizing the ongoing genocide in Palestine.

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‘Go home @ Zarah Sultana’: Intersectional aggression against women in politics and ‘talking back’ as resistance

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Social media platforms have emerged as spaces of increased opportunities for engagement in matters of political relevance leading to new forms of sociality and democratic participation in the public sphere. At the same time the cybersphere has become a space of online aggression and misogyny particularly against women who are active in public life. Indeed, online abuse targeting women in politics is a phenomenon widely documented in both academic literature and in international organisation reports (Vladimirou and Fernández-Amaya 2024; Esposito and Breeze 2022). However, while intersectional aspects of gender-based violence have recently been acknowledged as contributing to the structural inequalities observed in the online world, this area has yet to receive adequate attention.

Addressing this gap, this paper focuses on the case study of a British MP who has received the most online abuse in the UK, Zara Sultana. The empirical material that informs this study consists of datasets that span across new media platforms, online comments and interviews with the MP.

Drawing upon SM-Critical Discourse Studies and text-oriented online ethnography, we first map out the discursive patterns of aggression anchored in intersectional dimensions; second, we employ the notion of ‘talking back’, defined as ‘speaking as an act of resistance against domination’ (hooks 1989) to explore responses to online aggression as a techno-social phenomenon. Finally, we pay special attention to the enactment of intersectional abuse and ‘talking back’ as phenomena embedded in the online-offline nexus.

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'Can memes and videos change the world?' The role of digital popular culture in Turkish protest

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Research into digital popular culture's (DPC) roles in protests reveals its limits in terms of audience appeal and discourses articulated (boyd 2008; Way 2021). Research also reveals its potential, communicating 'issues of common grievances [that] unite the protest public' (Denisova 2019: 20). DPC is important, especially in repressive regimes like Turkey, where oppositional voices are few and/ or stifled (Denisova 2019; Way 2021).

Turkey is governed by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, an authoritarian populist. On 15 March 2025, five days before being nominated as the opposition's presidential candidate, Ekrem İmamoğlu was arrested and incarcerated on charges including corruption, extortion and supporting terrorism, though many claim this arrest was politically motivated (Aydın 2025). Mass protests ensued with mainstream media ignoring these while opposition outlets were taken off-line and fined for coverage ('Turkey: Media blackout...' 2025). Though incarceration was a real possibility, social media users were active.

In this presentation, we examine a sample of memes and online videos on TikTok and Instagram posted by protesters and their supporters. Using Multimodal Critical Discourse Studies, we critically consider how lexica, images and (musical) sounds articulate protest. Detailed analysis reveals not only how DPC articulates discourses of protest but also discourses of protesters' self-grandeur and importance. Findings inform a discussion on the potential roles of DPC in protest.

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Sexism, populism, and the discursive negotiation of (im)politeness: The case of Japan's right-wing populist party Sanseito

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This paper examines how sexist political discourse produced by a Japanese right-wing populist political party is evaluated and negotiated, focusing on a series of public statements made by Kamitani Sohei, leader of Sanseito. These remarks, which frame childbirth as a countermeasure against population decline that only 'young women' can fulfil, have been widely criticised as sexist; however, responses to them have been sharply divided among the public.

The analysis proceeds in two stages. First, drawing on critical discourse analysis, the paper demonstrates how population decline is constructed as a national crisis and how responsibility for addressing this issue is implicitly assigned to women's reproductive capacities, while men's agency is largely backgrounded. Although these findings are analytically predictable, they establish an important baseline for the subsequent analysis.

The main contribution of the paper lies in the second stage, which adopts a discursive approach to (im)politeness (Eelen 2001; Mills 2003) and engages with recent work on the normalisation of impoliteness in populist political communication (Wodak, Culpeper and Semino 2021). By examining evaluations articulated by female politicians within Sanseito and by members of the general public, the paper shows that judgements of sexism are shaped less by the propositional content of the discourse than by evaluators' interests, affective orientations, and identity alignments.

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Translanguaging and identity construction of Chinese students

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As Chinese universities continue to emphasise internationalization and English education to raise their global profiles and competitiveness, Chinese students increasingly communicate with each other using more than one 'language' in classroom and everyday contexts. They engage in translanguaging practices, drawing on a variety of linguistic and semiotic resources, thus transcending the artificial and ideological boundaries between languages and between language and other semiotic means of meaning making.

This study examines translanguaging practices of Chinese university students in China and the UK when discussing collaborative tasks on WeChat. We collected screenshots and screen recordings of group conversations from 20 students. The analysis is guided by discourse-centred online ethnography (Androutsopoulos, 2008), critical discourse analysis and social semiotics. We engage in systematic observation of the orchestration of diverse meaning making resources, attending to the openness and fluidity of students' mediated discourse practices. We pay particular attention to the spontaneous and momentary actions (Li, 2022) – how multilingual students integrate resources from different named languages and various semiotic systems to communicate meaningfully in creative ways. We also situate the semiotic choices in context, drawing attention to how the characteristics of communicative events systematically influence the intersection of textual and visual artefacts.

We identify that students construct competent multilingual identities by engaging skillfully in translanguaging practices across a range of spontaneous communicative moments, such as discussions about academic concepts, responses and acknowledgement tokens, and expressions of feelings and relationships. We argue that we need to recognise the hegemonic normative norms of any named semiotic resource in order to foster effective communication in everyday intercultural contexts characterised by rapidity, fluidity, and complexity.

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When Colonialism Meets Right-Wing Discourse: Negotiating British National (Overseas) Identity in Post-Brexit Britain

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The British National (Overseas) (BN(O)) visa scheme exemplifies the convergence of revived colonial mobility governance and contemporary right-wing rhetoric in post-Brexit immigration discourse. This study conceptualises the BN(O) nationality—a residual colonial legal status that is nominally British but devoid of citizenship—as ‘ambiguity by design’ (Benson 2023). This structural ambiguity enables the state to extend conditional inclusion while retaining discretionary control over immigration under the guise of humanitarian protection. In political debates and newspapers, the BN(O) group are constructed as partially British, refugees, and middle-class homebuyers, a discursive flexibility that legitimises selective admission while foregrounding post-Brexit economic utility.

Responding to growing interest in bottom-up perspectives in CDS (Bennett 2018), this study employs semi-structured interviews and a discourse-analytical approach. Following Krzyżanowski (2008), the analysis traces thematic links between macro-level elite discourse and individual narrative accounts, examining how participants accept, challenge, or recontextualise imposed identity constructions. This approach foregrounds the interaction between self- and other-constructions across discursive levels.

Preliminary findings from six interviews show that participants largely reject the ‘refugee’ label and articulate belonging through possession of a UK passport, rendering colonial affiliation central to assessments of deservingness. These narratives reproduce distinctions aligned with right-wing rhetoric, particularly the ‘legal/contributing’ versus ‘illegal/benefits-claimant’ binary. Such positioning demonstrates how colonial ambiguity and right-wing logics operate as discursive constraints, facilitating bottom-up participation in bordering discourse through self-positioning. The study argues that the BN(O) scheme discursively functions as a population-management mechanism foregrounding legality, neoliberal rationalities, and an imperial perspective on mobility, enacted through selective inclusion, moralised contribution, and self-disciplining migrant subjectivities.

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The role of gender in the evaluation of politicians in an online debate: Evidence from a natural experiment

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One of the principal means of sustaining the social dominance of men is the separation between the public and private spheres of life, where the former is assumed to be the male prerogative, while the role of women is constrained to the private domain of the household. Those who transgress face the risk of social ostracism; in particular, women who decide to be active in public or political life are held to a different standard than their male colleagues, and suffer systematic discrimination (Krook and Sanín 2020). This study aims at contributing to the body of research into the online discursive othering of women in politics (Lumsden and Harmer 2019). Specifically, it applies wordlist analysis and Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal theory to two corpora of reader comments written in response to two almost identical newspaper articles, which differ only in one respect, namely the source of the information, which was either a female or a male leader of the same political party. Examining the comments on the two texts allows for a relatively clear-cut comparison between the ways a female and a male politician are represented discursively: by eliminating most of the factors which might otherwise also play a role, and controlling for variation in text source, topic, content, and time period, as well as a politician's position and ideology, the study effectively isolates the impact of gender on how political actors are construed and addressed by Internet users. The investigation reveals that the discussants tend to downplay the role of the female leader, even when she is the one providing the rationale behind the political decision reported on, and to rarely address her using, on the one hand, positive, and on the other hand, abusive language. This is in contrast to her male counterpart who is seen as more agentive and receives some praise, but who is also disproportionately targeted for abuse, which might be seen in light of studies showing that politicians who are perceived as more powerful tend to attract more online harassment, regardless of their sex. The findings provide evidence that gender bias against women in politics persists but in potentially unexpected and less conspicuous forms, which might be seen as less harmful, while still marginalising women in the public space and hindering their chances at ascending to and maintaining positions of power.

They also inform studies into perceptions of gender discrimination which might be skewed towards more obvious or extreme types of bias such as stereotyping and verbal abuse, while being less sensitive to its subtler manifestations such as the positioning of female and male actors as more or less central to processes of political decision-making as well as the lack of positive appraisal.

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Framing the Immigration Debate: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Immigration Nation

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This paper applies an integrated social semiotic and Conceptual Metaphor framework (Feng & O'Halloran, 2013) to a multimodal Critical Metaphor Analysis of the Netflix docuseries *Immigration Nation* (Clusiau & Schwarz, 2020), focusing on how “us/them” dichotomy is constructed verbally and visually. Drawing on work on metaphor, framing and dehumanization in immigration discourse (e.g. Catalano, 2019), the analysis reveals a systematic polarization between institutional authority versus (illegal) immigrants to the U.S.A.

The patterns encountered in the institutional perspective are constructed through metaphors of WAR and CRIME, reinforced by recurrent visual strategies such as the partial erasure of faces, shots of handcuffs, and compositions that represent immigrants as criminals. These semiotic choices align with documented dehumanizing patterns in press and social media coverage of migration, in which migrants appear as security risks rather than social actors.

On the other hand, the migrant perspective is depicted through metaphors of family and trauma, realized through close-ups of the protagonists' faces, and scenes that foreground separation, waiting and constrained mobility. These resources construct a counter-discourse of vulnerability that challenges the mainstream negative frames.

By combining Feng & O'Halloran's (2013) multimodal model with critical analyses of metaphors and frames in immigration discourse, the paper shows how *Immigration Nation* both skilfully reproduces and, at the same time, exposes wider strategies that are present in the public debate on migration.

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Exploring Multimodal Corporate Climate Discourse in Chinese Corporate Social Responsibility Report: A Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis

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In the context of intensifying climate crises, corporate communication has become central to the discursive construction of environmental responsibility. Focusing on China, this study adopts a corpus-assisted multimodal critical discourse approach to examine how corporate social responsibility (CSR) reports by carbon-intensive companies construct environmental legitimacy within a state-steered climate governance regime.

The study draws on a corpus compiled from the environmental sections of 186 CSR reports (2020–2023) issued by 100 high-carbon Chinese listed companies. Using corpus-assisted CDA, the study identifies dominant discursive patterns and their intertextual links to national climate discourse (e.g. dual-carbon goals) through keyword, collocation and concordance analysis. Following a corpus-driven ‘keywords–collocations–concordance lines–pages–cases’ logic, these quantitative patterns are then used to locate a stratified sample of report pages. These pages are examined through multimodal CDA (Machin & Mayr, 2023) to explore how visual resources (images, charts, infographics) interact with textual elements to legitimise corporate environmental practices.

The study contributes to critical work on environmental and corporate discourse by foregrounding the role of Chinese CSR reporting in mediating between national climate ideology and corporate self-presentation. Methodologically, it shows how corpus-assisted multimodal CDA can help bridge quantitative and qualitative approaches in critical discourse studies.

Preliminary results indicate a strongly policy-oriented discourse in which corporate environmental goals are framed as responses to national strategies, while global climate discourses and agreements remain backgrounded. These choices portray corporations less as autonomous moral agents than as disciplined implementers of state climate objectives. Multimodal analysis suggests that this state-aligned framing is reinforced visually through recurring policy-linked motifs that rationalise environmental action as technological optimisation and standardised compliance.

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CADAAD 2026

Poster

presentations

Naming the migrant: Identity Construction in Children's Picturebooks about Migration

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This paper examines naming strategies as a form of discursively construing migrant identities in children's literature, drawing on Van Leeuwen's (2008) social actor framework. The rationale is that the social practice of naming positions migrant children's representations within power relations that determine who gets to define the migrant as a social actor.

Using corpus-assisted discourse analysis of 40 migration-themed picturebooks, this paper investigates how migrant characters are named according to their host communities.

The study has examined word-image interactions that construct naming practices by employing a multimodal comprehensive methodology: Halliday's (1978) view of language as social semiotics, visual social semiotics (Kress & Van Leeuwen, 2006) and visual-verbal collustrations (McGlashan, 2016). Findings reveal different patterns of naming practices according to migrants' origin: narratives that present Korean children explicitly mark a linguistic difference (Korean vs English name) emphasising the importance of maintaining their name and thus cultural heritage. Conversely, Chinese narratives avoid ethnic markers and associate names with America instead, implying a desire for assimilation through, partly, name change. In this way, it is concluded that names become the space where home and host cultures meet, and that a seemingly simple act of nomination participates in construing the migrant as a political figure, reaffirming their non-belonging.

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Framing the 2023-2024 Israeli-Palestinian conflict: a comparative corpus-based discourse analysis of the US, Arab and British press

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This study focuses on the systematic analysis of lexical choices and transitivity models in the coverage of the 2023-2024 Israeli-Palestinian conflict across five prominent newspapers in the US (The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal), Arab (Al-Jazeera English) and British (The Guardian and The Times) press. The analysis of 750 articles (150 per newspaper) covers a semester of reporting from October 7th to April 7th, employing a combined methodological approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and quantitative corpus-based methods. The study also incorporates political orientation as a variable to target linguistic biases in media narratives. Findings show substantial similarities in syntactic and semantic patterns among the four Western newspapers, which differ significantly from their Arab counterpart. The integration of CDA and Corpus Linguistics methods offers new insights into the role of media in reproducing unequal power relations through biased narratives. Moreover, results highlight the need for practices of self-reflection in journalism, contributing to broader discussions on the role of newspapers in conflict framing and resolution.

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Integrating Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and corpus-based methods: Advancing interdisciplinary approaches in qualitative Social Sciences research

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The integration of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) and Corpus Linguistics (CL) has increasingly evolved into an interdisciplinary practice, drawing on concepts and techniques from various academic fields. While there have been various attempts to apply CDA methodologies to research in Social Sciences, these efforts remain at an early stage in many domains. As Hodge (2012) puts it: “CDA’s value as a heuristic device is underestimated and under-used”. Such limited integration constrains the potential of corpus-based approaches to bridge gaps, complement findings, and address questions raised by different branches of Social Sciences. This article explores the epistemological benefits and challenges of CDA, focusing on its capacity to advance interdisciplinary research in Social Sciences. This integration presents CDA as an epistemological tool to reach a better understanding of societal issues. Specific examples of successful methodological cooperation are drawn from fields such as sociology, ethnography, discursive and social psychology as well as memory and conflict studies. The main purpose of this study is to encourage scholars from both domains to engage in what has already been proven to be a promising and productive cooperation.

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IN OTHER WORDS: A free and participatory online resource to counter polarizing discourses

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In an increasing polarized physical and digital world, the construction of the Other through discourse operates according to divisive rhetorical strategies that (re)produce discrimination, stigmatization, stereotyping, and minorisation. Scholars and practitioners are thus urged to explore and apply new tools to identify and counter such rhetorical moves. In my presentation, I discuss the free online resource of the dictionary In Other Words (IOW) – A Contextualized Dictionary to Problematize Otherness (www.iowdictionary.org). IOW analyses keywords that, in different contexts and countries, (re)produce different forms of Otherness, moving beyond critical analysis to present counter/alternative discourse using creative examples – e.g., literature, works of art, street art, videos. IOW dictionary engages researchers, students and communities in applying critical and interdisciplinary approaches to discourse analysis through participatory activities (i.e., the discussion/co-construction of entries); it proposes an innovative dialogue between academics, educators, practitioners, and activists; it promotes replicable new methods and practices for developing critical language awareness and critical digital literacy; it proposes new practices for foreign language teaching and learning; it is a free, user-friendly, multidevice resource that combines teaching, research, and dissemination, reaching diverse audiences in different social and educational contexts. In my presentation I provide some examples of entries capable of problematizing and countering polarizing discourses.

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Developing an analytical framework to identify stigmatising language use: A corpus-assisted critical discourse analysis of representations of homelessness in the UK press

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This paper presents an analytical framework for identifying linguistic choices in news media that may contribute to the stigmatisation of homelessness. Numerous studies demonstrate that stigma surrounding homelessness adversely affects people experiencing housing insecurity. According to Link and Phelan (2001), stigma can arise through labelling, stereotyping, and distancing. These components of stigmatisation can be realised in language: more specifically, through *referential* and *predicational strategies* (Reisigl & Wodak, 2001). A source of stigmatisation may be news media, as a primary force producing and disseminating 'standard' values in society, namely discourses (van Dijk, 1988).

Although stigmatisation is enacted through linguistic choices, the concept of stigma has been insufficiently incorporated in Critical Discourse Studies. This paper proposes a framework that combines a socio-psychological theory of stigma and power (Link & Phelan, 2001) and the method of *social actor representations* (van Leeuwen, 2008) to reveal the three components of stigmatisation. Stigmatising labelling may be realised as *Impersonalisation*; stereotyping may occur alongside collective nomination (e.g. *Genericisation*) and its negative collocations; and distancing may be enacted through *Differentiation*. A selection of corpus approaches is employed to detect these linguistic choices (Marchi & Taylor, 2018).

To demonstrate the utility of the framework, it is applied to 19,334 UK newspaper articles concerning homelessness. The findings will be used to explore linguistic choices which could challenge the stigma.

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CADAAD 2026

Thematic panels

THEMATIC PANEL: *Understanding harm to inspire change: Dissecting harmful discourses and assessing counter-responses*

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In recent years, the world has borne witness to numerous events that have caused social, political and institutional unrest. While the occurrence of such events is by no means a new phenomenon, their repercussions can now, more clearly than ever, be seen to transcend local boundaries and affect public perception at a global scale.

Against this backdrop, one could well argue that we live in an era where communication increasingly shapes perceptions and realities (Wodak 2021). This realisation has inevitably led to renewed scholarly interest in the study of the ways in which public discourses are affected by, but also help strengthen particular ideological positionings that underlie the aforementioned public perception, often leading to actions that circumvent social justice (Krzyżanowski et al. 2023).

Building up on this trend, this panel addresses the urgent need to understand and combat the discursive practices that perpetuate social harm and exclusion nowadays. Its talks explore the mechanisms, contexts, and impacts of various pressing forms of harmful discourse, ranging from specific ideological and political rhetoric to everyday aggression. Within this spirit, special attention is also given to the mobilisation of counter-responses; a core, yet often underrepresented, theme in contemporary discourse studies (Bartlett 2017).

Ultimately, as a representation of a much larger forthcoming collective publication effort, this panel seeks to provide a balanced exploration of harm analysis and advocacy, focusing on key conceptual tools that can allow one to move from understanding harm to inspiring change in communication practices and the wider social sphere.

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Malicious speculation and indiscriminate attack on social media: A critical discourse analysis of the infidelity scandal of Chinese celebrity Wu Xiubo

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Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), this article examines one instance of cancel culture surrounding the Wu Xiubo scandal on Weibo, where a case of celebrity infidelity became a public spectacle. Scholars have pointed out that such scandals constitute a useful site for understanding wider patterns in celebrity culture and the negotiation of social norms (Xu et al., 2021; Van den Bulck & Claessens, 2013). Furthermore, there remains a dearth of studies of cancel culture focusing on non-western contexts (Li & Ng, 2025). Drawing on Papacharissi's (2016) concept of affective publics, the research shows how the performance of ostensibly progressive values worked to reinforce group identity, while sidelining communicative rationality and nuanced debate. This study also reveals how affordances of social media, such as algorithms, amplified extreme points and reductive moral narratives. This process highlights the complex intersection of celebrity, cancel culture, moral performance and affect in contemporary Chinese social media environments.

From fake news and misinformation to social unrest: The case of the 2024 UK riots.

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Fake news, or "false or misleading content presented as news and communicated in formats spanning spoken, written, printed, electronic, and digital communication" (Higdon 2020) and its closely-related counterpart, misinformation, currently run rife within the media environment. Social media, in particular, where user-generated contents often lack gatekeeping, has now become a hotbed for false or wrong information, insomuch as the ease of manufacturing, spreading and accessing "fake" or deceiving contents has led to a blurring of the differences between fake and "legitimate" news in terms of both credibility and visual impact (e.g. Farkas & Schou 2023; Dehghan & Glazunova 2021). Such obfuscation generates very serious real-world consequences, with the public sphere being systematically exposed to the influence of manipulated or non-authentic information. As a case study proving the influence of fake news on social processes, this paper will address the riots that spread across the UK in August 2024. It will analyse the fake news originating from Channel3News, an obscure news website which published a report falsely claiming that the murderer of three young girls in

Southport on 29 July 2024 was a Muslim asylum seeker. This report was widely shared across social media and allegedly sparked the riots. The Channel3News article is paradigmatic of the way fake news and misinformation are manufactured and disseminated across the public sphere often with very tangible and devastating consequences. Three levels of analysis will be presented: 1) the narrative make-up of fake news, with its mixture of true and false information; 2) the communicative environment in which fake news is spread, where the sharing of content highlights visibility and leads to legitimisation; and 3) the linguistic micro-level of the fake news itself, in which certain discursive strategies are employed to validate the false claims.

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Football fan rivalry in the stadium: From battle cries to allegations of racism

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In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to hate speech in various sports discourses, where racist, sexist and homophobic abuse appears to be endemic (Kearns et al. 2022). In this setting, communication involving sports fans is inseparably linked to their group identity as well as the broader context of sports (e.g. football) culture, where such communication has often had the stereotypical adversarial nature, ranging from innocent taunts to blatant racist abuse, aggression and hooliganism. In the sports stadiums, fan communication often takes the form of coordinated action, not only through the shouting/singing of slogans and chants that taunt – or verbally abuse – the opposing team but also the display of choreographed behaviour and other artefacts, often of a political nature. In this way, fans perform “culturally understood identities in the company of others who are well-placed to judge these performances” (File & Worlledge 2023). While some recent research has started to explore the forms of group identity construction in sports contexts, relatively little attention has been paid to fan communication in the stadium where allegations of intergroup racism are increasingly being made against teams and their supporters. This presentation documents a case of potential and alleged racist taunt that occurred in a recent European football league match between a Czech and a Turkish team. Adopting the discourse-historical approach

to CDA (Wodak 2001), the analysis focuses on the processes of recontextualization, intertextuality and interdiscursivity, tracing the different meanings assigned to the potentially offending communicative act by the two (sub-)cultures. The data, obtained from Czech news reports, online reader comments and fan-group social sites, indicate that what may appear – on the basis of a shared cultural background – as a playful and metaphorical ritual to one fan subculture may be found as offensive and hateful by another subgroup lacking the nuanced social and intertextual context of deeply cultural allusions. The study contributes to our understanding of how miscommunication may arise in inter-group communication as a result of the discrepancy between the original intent (non-hateful though adversarial) and ultimate effect (hateful and offensive).

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Discourses of antisemitism: A recent debate in Sweden

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This presentation examines contemporary debates on antisemitism by reviewing existing scholarship and methodological approaches, including (critical) discourse analysis, multimodal and visual analysis, narrative inquiry, and quantitative corpus linguistics. We highlight the affordances and limitations of these methods and outline antisemitic tropes, both overt and subtle. Building on this overview, we analyze the controversy surrounding Swedish Left Party MP Lorena Delgado Varas's retweet of Palestinian journalist Bisan Odwa. Odwa shared a screenshot of an Instagram post by Palestinian-American real estate mogul Mohamed Hadid, depicting a dark-skinned hand with an Israeli flag manipulating a U.S.-flagged hand, which in turn controls toy soldiers representing European powers. Beneath the image, the caption reads: "The Zionist Jews control the world...", echoing classic antisemitic tropes found in Nazi propaganda. Odwa's commentary reframed the image: "I think we should reverse the hands? IsraHell is nothing but a colonial tool for the US and its interests in the Middle East," shifting the focus while retaining the puppet-master metaphor. Delgado Varas defended herself by claiming she focused on the image and its critique of U.S. foreign policy, not the accompanying text. Swedish prosecutors declined to pursue a hate crime investigation,

citing lack of intent. The legal distinction between the antisemitic force of the linguistic utterance and the presumed neutrality of the image is particularly interesting here: separating text and image as carriers of hate speech and privileging speaker intention over discursive effects. Drawing on the Multimodal Discourse Historical Approach (Richardson & Wodak, 2024), we argue that this debate illustrates how borderline discourse logic (Krzyżanowski & Ledin, 2017) operates in digital environments, where ambiguity and plausible deniability are embedded in reposting and screenshotting practices. It underscores the need for hate speech analysis to move beyond isolated utterances and trace multimodal trajectories through which exclusionary rhetoric is legitimized, reframed, and normalized.

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Understanding Harmful Discourse Through Online-Offline Nexus: A Critical Discourse Perspective

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In post-digital societies, harmful discourse is no longer confined to a single digital platform, but circulates across media spaces, often leading to offline consequences. This talk proposes understanding harmful discourse as ‘online-offline nexus’ (OON) (Androutsopoulos, forthcoming), the interplay between digitally-mediated and physically co-present action that reciprocally feed into each other, whereby scalar effects occur through configurations of online-offline relationship.

This talk integrates a critical discourse dimension into OON. Concepts in critical discourse studies, including recontextualization and intertextuality, are employed to examine how online stories are reappropriated, circulated, and transformed to memetic harmful content across contexts. Discursive strategies such as nomination and legitimation are mediated by affordances-in-practice (Costa, 2018), through which users mobilize platform features to amplify harmful discourse. This CDS-informed OON is illustrated through two cases of misogynistic discourse in Hong Kong, drawing on data from forum interactions, digital ethnography, and user interviews. The first case analyzes a female influencer undergoing consecutive and memetic OON effects, where unauthorized image sharing triggers sustained misogynistic discourse, with dehumanizing labels persisting across years and recursively intensified through mainstream media coverage. The second case examines triadic cross-platform discourse

trajectories where mainland Chinese migrant women's social media posts undergo discursive recontextualization in mainstream news media, and subsequently become targets of misogyny on a localized forum. These cases illustrate how personal stories and isolated online interactions become objects of public scrutiny with offline consequences.

By integrating CDS into OON, this framework advances understanding of post-digital communication by revealing how particular platform-mediated discourse practices escalate harmful discourse over time and across discursive spaces.

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Organised transphobia and the discursive normalisation of systemic exclusion

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Following a period of increased visibility and legal gains, trans communities are currently facing a renewed and systematic intensification of transphobia. In fact, the latest edition of TGEU's Trans Rights Index and Map marks 2025 as the first year in the history of the initiative when "setbacks in human rights of trans people across Europe and Central Asia [...] clearly outweigh progress" (<https://tgeu.org/trans-rights-index-map-2025/>). To a significant extent, this change can be attributed to the mainstreaming of organised reactionary movements, which have infiltrated contemporary politics (Amery & Mondon, 2024). Inevitably, this surge in political transphobia has marked a critical shift from individual acts of prejudice to state-sanctioned, systemic discrimination against trans people. Adopting the orientation of corpus-assisted discourse studies, this talk investigates how anti-trans bias is being normalised and codified into institutional practice through legislative discourse. Drawing on data from the Trans Legislation Tracker (<https://translegislation.com/>), a specialised corpus of all anti-trans legislation successfully enacted across U.S. states during 2025 was compiled and then analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The analysis of keyness and collocation analyses clearly demonstrated the strategic decoupling of gender identity from legal personhood, while the qualitative examination revealed a consistent presence of protection rhetoric, whereby measures designed for exclusion are discursively masked as acts of safeguarding, typically invoking parental rights, female safety and the prevention of the



mutilation of children. All in all, by exposing the predictable, coordinated discursive mechanisms within these legal texts, this study maps the transition of transphobia from a social prejudice to a systemic framework of state control, providing empirical evidence for understanding modern forms of legal discrimination.

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THEMATIC PANEL: *Transformative Approaches to Discourse Studies (TADS): Re-Thinking Critique in Contemporary Digital Discourse*

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Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) has shown over the years how discourse mediates ideology, identity, and power as a socially constitutive practice (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2001; van Leeuwen, 2008). Building on this, the present panel advances *transformation* as a complementary orientation that captures how digital discourse not only represents social worlds but actively re-makes them via re-semiotisation, affective uptake, and platformed circulation allowing for an analytical and ethical expansion in the field of CDS. In social media, techno-discursive design (TDD), i.e., the coupling of affordances, metrics, and algorithms, conditions visibility and legitimisation by privileging affective salience over rational significance (Balirano & Borba 2021; Balirano & Hughes 2022 & 2024; Demata, Zorzi & Zottola 2022; KhosraviNik, 2017, 2018). Panel contributors will therefore discuss issues that develop Transformative Approaches to Discourse Studies (TADS) across three axes: (i) conflict and crisis trajectories, whereby emergency discourse routinises new practices and subject positions; (ii) (dis)information and meme ecologies, treating misinformation as genre/ecology embedded in platform vernaculars and resemiotisation practices; and (iii) embodied identities and politics, showing how language enacts values and alignments beyond verbal modes alone. By centring transformation as both an analytical and ethical stance, the panel reimagines critique as engaged, future-oriented practice that accounts for how platformed discourse continually redraws the boundaries between critique, creativity, and change.

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Transformative Approaches to Discourse Studies: Towards a Renewed Theory of Critique in Platformed Environments

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This panel proposes a fully theoretical re-conceptualisation of critique within Transformative Approaches to Discourse Studies. We argue that contemporary digital environments have changed the material, epistemic and affective conditions under which discourse circulates, which requires a reconsideration of the frameworks inherited from Critical Discourse Studies. Our intervention develops along three interlocking axes that reflect the expertise of the panel convenors and articulate a coherent theoretical agenda.

Majid KhosraviNik postulates a social media paradigm shift and analyses how techno-discursive design and processes produce new structures of visibility, affective acceleration and user positioning. Specific distribution considerations, algorithmic cues and interface affordances shape discursive flows in ways that complicate established notions of discursive power, rationality and meaning-making. These dynamics call for an expansion of critique that incorporates the infrastructural dimension of digital communication and the material pressures that guide circulation.

Giuseppe Balirano theorises semiotic reframing as a central mechanism through which digital discourse acquires affective salience and ideological traction. Semiotic reframing describes how meanings are re-assembled across modes through repetition, resonance and recirculation. This process creates distinctive affective economies that privilege intensity, emotional priming and ambient alignment. These dynamics indicate that critique must address the affective conditions that shape discourse, not only its linguistic or structural organisation.

Massimiliano Demata shifts the attention to the broader transformations in digital knowledge practices, where interpretative frameworks are often shaped through

participatory, narrative and highly affective forms of meaning making. His contribution considers how platformed communication encourages modes of sense making that blur the boundaries between information, evaluation and identity work. This raises critical questions about how critique should respond to dispersed, nonlinear and collectively produced discursive formations.

Together, these three strands outline a Transformative Approach to Discourse Studies and define critique as an analytical and ethical practice oriented toward future transformation. The panel offers a theoretical space for rethinking how power, ideology, affect and platform infrastructures intersect, and proposes renewed terminology for the analysis of discourse in contemporary digital environments.

“I think you’re acoustic”: A Social Media Critical Discourse Perspective for a Transformative Worldview on Autism Spectrum Disorder

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According to the latest systematic review of the literature on autism spectrum disorder (ASD), 61.8 million individuals lived with autism in 2021 (Santomauro et al., 2024). Although detection can occur at a very young age, proper diagnosis is often not made until later in life (WHO, 2023), with serious consequences including detrimental effects on mental health (Atherton et al., 2022).

ASD encompasses various neurodevelopmental conditions affecting people’s behaviour, communication, and learning (NIMH, 2024). Although medical studies on autism are proliferating (Chen et al., 2025), along with international guidelines promoting health and support for people with autism (PWA; WHO, 2014; UN, 2015), discursive research on the topic remains scarce. Whereas research on ASD adopting a discourse-based perspective has focused on their construction in the (online) press (Baytar & Yazar, 2025; Karaminis et al., 2022), with very few studies employing a multimodal lens to analyse autism representation in the media (Roderick, 2023; Caliendo, 2025), no study has been conducted on hate speech against PWA, unveiling the mental models surrounding autism, especially in relation to disability.

Against this backdrop, this contribution seeks to address this gap by analysing a corpus of comments retrieved using the hashtags #autistic, #autism, #neurodivergence, and #neurodivergent on TikTok and Instagram.

This study, grounded in Corpus Linguistics (Baker, 2008, 2012) and Social Media Critical Discourse Studies (Balirano & Hughes, 2020, 2024; KhosraviNik, 2017, 2023), investigates the linguistic construction of hate speech targeting PWA, examining both its specific features and its points of convergence with harmful discourses directed at people with disabilities more broadly (Raffone, 2022; Nisco & Raffone, 2025). This

research also aims to advance discourse-oriented studies on ASD, promoting public awareness and fostering social transformation through linguistically informed analysis.

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Spicing up discourse studies: transformative approaches to semiotic complexity in a digitally mediated world

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A foundational tenet of critical discourse studies is the idea that researchers can address social wrongs through situated, critical analysis, examining how ideologies and the power relations they legitimise are constructed in texts from an explicitly emancipatory researcher stance (e.g. Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

Contemporary digitally mediated practices on platforms such as TikTok, however, challenge our established understandings of what constitutes a text, whose voices it articulates and evokes, and what social functions it accomplishes. Semiotic practices such as re-enactment (where users mime to existing audio content like film dialogue) and incongruity between semiotic elements (mismatches between spoken text, written captions, visual signifiers, and the stances they each indicate) all complicate explanations of how power is articulated, naturalised, and contested through texts.

We use the example of Spicy BookTok, a community of predominantly female-presenting users who review erotic and romantic novels, to illustrate how digital genres are not merely discursive elements of social practices. The ideological underpinnings of these elements cannot be clearly located and coherently explained, but are instead dynamic sites in which various practices, relationships, and ideologies are recontextualised and aestheticised, potentially contesting but often merely displaying them, with no definite stance becoming apparent. Indeed, practices found on Spicy BookTok call into question the very idea of an identifiable social wrong: users both espouse politically progressive positions (such as intersectional feminism) and celebrate literature that apparently reproduces violent and patriarchal social relations among fictional characters. The aim of this study is to contribute to a framework that enables empirically grounded and nuanced critique of discourse marked by intricate semiotic and ideological stitching.

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#Kirkification as transformative discourse and practice: A social media critical discourse study of political polarisation in ideology-driven comments

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The relentless evolution of the digital landscape is characterised by new ways of expressing feelings, evaluations, and political attitudes. Among these, the so-called 'Kirkification' stands out as a particularly articulated trend, encapsulating a unique blend of AI, meme culture, and political satire. This widespread internet phenomenon – consisting in the face-swapping of the late conservative political pundit Charlie Kirk onto various digital images and videos – has rapidly permeated social media platforms, sparking discussion on digital grief and humour at the intersection of social media and political discourse (Van Dijk 2024).

Based on these premises, this study analyses a corpus of comments posted in response to 10 viral YouTube videos tagged with #kirkification. Focussing on a politically polarising figure like Kirk, the paper examines how users articulate ideological and emotional positions when engaging with AI-generated content through the lens of SM-CDS (KhosraviNik 2018). The analysis draws on appraisal theory (Martin and White 2005; Inwood and Zappavigna 2024) to point out how commenters express positive or negative attitudes toward the phenomenon, and display the transformative effects of ideological polarisation in their discourse (Balirano & Borba 2021).

The study aims to contribute to the growing field of TADS by observing how AI-based content and social media affordances provide the breeding ground for complex transformative political discourse and practices, and how such transformations intensify polarisation and may escalate into early forms of hate speech (Bahador 2023; Balirano & Hughes 2024).

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From representation to transformation: four approaches to social media as transformational techno-discursive ecosystems

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This paper reconsiders the relationship between CDS and social media (SM) by reframing SM as transformative techno-discursive ecosystems. Taking integral aspects of the SM paradigm as a starting point, e.g. the shift from traditional top-down to seemingly democratised content production and information distribution, but conditioned by moderation, algorithmic distortion and affective circulation (KhosraviNik 2023), the paper proposes a four-tiered framework for critical engagement with SM.

First, this paper conceptualises social media as transformational in how discourse is created, circulated, and legitimised. SM function as sites where communicative power is not only redistributed but reconstituted via re-semiotisation, emotional engagement, and circulation shaped by service affordances. Next, the paper argues that CDS has only scratched the surface in this regard. Most critical research still treats SM primarily as data sources rather than as constitutive techno-discursive infrastructures. Thus, I call for a broader critical agenda and propose four complementary approaches well-suited to account for the transformational nature of SM: (1) using SM as repositories of discourse data; (2) contextualising and theorising SM, e.g. exploring SM ecologies' connection to dis/misinformation and memefication, (3) analysing discourse *by* SM providers, including policies and stance on, e.g. the role of SM in connection with global crises, conflict and war (4) analysing discourse *about* SM, tracing public framings and contestations of SM.

By integrating these dimensions, critical research can move beyond representational analysis to account for phenomena such as engagement harvesting and service-dependent circulation practices as forces that actively transform social life. In doing so, CDS is positioned as a forward-facing approach capable of capturing how SM (re)negotiate and reshape issues relating to social change.

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“Let’s get smarter in seconds!” The transformative power of feminist digital activism

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This paper examines how feminist influencers leverage social media discourse as a transformative site (Sugiura, 2021) to challenge gendered ideologies and enact Feminist Digital Activism (Zottola, 2024). Recent studies highlight a decline in young people’s identification with feminism and the growth of online discourses that trivialize or deny gender inequality (Allen et al., 2022; Kuhar & Paternotte, 2025).

Building on the transformative orientation within Critical Discourse Studies (Balirano & Borba, 2021; KhosraviNik, 2018), this study explores how digital discourse actively remakes social worlds through resemiotization, affect, and platform-mediated dissemination. It focuses on three feminist influencers — Gina Martin (UK), Blair Imani (USA), and Carlotta Vagnoli (Italy) — and their Instagram profiles to analyse how they articulate inclusive feminist narratives and use affect and storytelling as activism.

Through qualitative discourse analysis of posts and captions, the paper examines how these influencers negotiate visibility, backlash, and emotional labour in algorithmically mediated environments. It investigates how digital feminist activism, through inclusive narratives, resists gendered disinformation online and potentially shapes young people’s engagement with feminist ideals.

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Transformational Irony and the Affective Politics of Reappropriation: The Case of Luigi Mangione

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This study examines how specific discursive strategies in digital environments operate as transformational resources in the meme-ification of Luigi Mangione, arrested in December 2024 for the killing of UnitedHealthCare's CEO Brian Thompson. Inspired by the insights coming from Transformational Approaches to Discourse Studies (TADS) and the scholarship that treats memes as participatory, re-iterable genres and infrastructures of circulation (Shifman, 2014; Wiggins & Bowers, 2014), the investigation focuses on: (1) how humorous genres re-inscribe a criminal event into folk-hero narratives; (2) how affective stances are staged linguistically and multimodally via Appraisal resources; and (3) how platform affordances and techno-discursive design (KhosraviNik, 2018) mediate claims to legitimacy. The dataset comprises a purposive sample of English-language Instagram posts using Mangione-linked resources across two visibility peaks (i.e., December 2024 and September 2025). Methodologically, the study combines corpus-assisted with an Appraisal-based analysis of posts (Martin & White, 2005), situating the investigation within corpus principles of triangulation (Egbert & Baker, 2020). Findings show that 'outlaw chic' framings emerge via iterative re-semiotisations (e.g., heroic archaisms, Robin Hood metaphors, among others) where humorous formats convert punitive discourse into affective alignment and, at times, tacit legitimization. Crucially, ironic support and explicit endorsement diverge: cues of safe in-group sarcasm co-exist with hostile judgement of institutions, producing ambivalent positions within the publics. The data further indicate a specific queering of Mangione's public figure, where masculinity and aestheticisation (Balirano, 2014) function to decriminalise through humour, in line with recent work on Mangione's meme publics (Asmus, 2025) and socio-economic readings of the case (Chohan, 2025). In this way, the study offers an ethics-attentive template for analysing meme ecologies around criminal cases and theorises transformational irony as enacted through affective uptake and platformed circulation, core to TADS' rethinking of critique.

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THEMATIC PANEL: Unravelling the dichotomy between bottom-up and top-down approaches to migration discourses

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Migration discourses within Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) have predominantly been addressed by scrutinising the narratives of top-down institutional actors e.g. government, politicians, and the media (Bennett, 2018; Richardson, 2007; Zappettini and Krzyzanowski, 2019). More recent research has focused on social actors/institutions involved with migration advocacy (Lampropoulou et al., 2025) as well as on the lived experiences of (i)migrants, refugees and asylum seekers (Grasso, 2023; Taylor et al., 2025). Given the centrality of migration discourses in the political rhetoric of several governments worldwide, where discourses of security, belonging, and crisis are instrumentalized to shape public perception and policy, the need to interrogate how such top-down narratives intersect with, appropriate, or silence migrant voices becomes particularly urgent. This panel seeks to address the above by revisiting the dichotomy between bottom-up and top-down approaches to migration discourses in CDS. Rather than separating between 'bottom-up' and 'top-down' dimensions, we aim to explore the complex discursive interplay between the two by proposing an actor-focused and context-dependent approach to the analysis of migrant voices. Panel contributions will address the nexus between political, mediated and public narratives of migration as well as stories by people with lived experience.

By enabling the emergence of bottom-up perspectives and a meaningful (re)structuration of public narratives around migration requires us to account for exclusion dynamics and power asymmetries that have prevented discursive affordances for migrant voices in the first place. The panel reflects on the challenges of moving *beyond physical and symbolic spaces* in the study of migration discourses by highlighting the role (and limitations) of researching language and discourse in de/re-structuring migration narratives.

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In between bottom-up and top-down discourses: a Critical Realist and 'structuring' approach to the language of migration

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This presentation contributes a theoretical perspective to the panel theme by proposing a framework that captures the dynamic nature of 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' discourses of migration. Rather than dichotomising these two dimensions, this presentation emphasizes the complex discursive interplay between them and suggests an actor-focused and context-dependent approach to the analysis of discourse of migration.

Drawing on a Critical Realist (Bhaskar, 1977) ontology and structuration theory (Giddens, 1994), the presentation emphasizes how discursive/semiotic practices of 'being a migrant' occur at the intersection of top-down and bottom-up dimensions. It highlights how discursive opportunities for migrants' voices are often negotiated within the tension between individual agency and societal structure. Enabling the emergence of bottom-up perspectives and a meaningful (re)structuration of public and institutional narratives around migration requires CDS scholars to account for exclusion dynamics and power asymmetries that have prevented discursive affordances for migrant voices in the first place. Meanwhile any CDS approach driven by an emancipatory agenda should reflexively recognise the potential pitfalls of 'speaking' for migrants and any prescriptivist approach to the language of migration.

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Discourses of migrant discrimination and assimilation in a Greek antiracist corpus

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Racist views against refugees and migrants coming in Europe are not only disseminated via hate speech, which overtly demonizes the newly arrived ‘foreigners’, but also via antiracist discourse, which, albeit designed to fight racism, ends up reproducing inequalities. This ambiguity is captured in the concept of *liquid racism*, a ‘new’ and ambivalent form of racism which may be difficult to trace and/or may yield multiple interpretations (Weaver 2016, Archakis & Tsakona 2024).

In order to explore how racist views infiltrate Greek public antiracist discourse, we have compiled an antiracist corpus comprising of three major sources: organization promoting migrant issues, news media and political discourse. The aim of our presentation is to show how this corpus was created, and to explore how racist views infiltrate antiracist discourse. Drawing on Halliday’s Systemic Functional Grammar (1994) and adopting a critical perspective, in the antiracist corpus we detected two main discourses connected to liquid racism: *discrimination* and *assimilation*. In the first case, antiracist texts seem to create a distance between ‘us’ and ‘them’. In the case of assimilation, antiracist texts seem to promote migrants’ adoption of the Greek dominant norms and practices as a prerequisite for their integration.

We conclude by pointing out that most texts in the antiracist corpus seem to constitute instances of liquid racism, as they promote the image of the weak and distant migrant, acceptable only on the condition of their alignment with majority values and decisions.

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‘They’re eating the dogs’: A top-down/ bottom-up approach to the analysis of migration discourse in Trump 2.0’s America

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Donald Trump’s fear-driven anti-immigrant and xeno-racist narratives such as “they’re eating the dogs...they’re eating the cats” as seen in his 2024 presidential debate helped him regain the presidency (Gallagher, 2025, p. 2986), and support for his administration’s draconian immigration policies. Public support for this and other rhetoric has resulted in policies which have led to inhumane conditions that threaten basic humanitarian and democratic values. Within this context, this presentation takes on the panel’s topic of migration discourses in Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), describing a top-down/bottom-up approach to the analysis of migration discourse in

Trump's 2.0 America. Building on this author's previous work, the author addresses the nexus between Trump's political and mediatised narratives of migration and stories of migrants' journeys. To do this, the presenter critically analyses metaphors in Trump's anti-immigration discourse commonly found in the media and official government documents which refer to immigrants as INVADERS, CRIMINALS, ANIMALS, and DANGEROUS WATER (Pilyarchuk & Onysko, 2018) juxtaposing them with the distinct way in which the same metaphors are used by migrants (gleaned from interviews) to talk about their own experiences. The author concludes with a discussion of how to restructure public narratives that have helped politicians like Trump regain and remain in power leading to horrific consequences for migrants in the US, and the implications of this discourse worldwide.

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Affective Borderwork in the British National News Press: A Critical Discourse Analysis of UK news media coverage of migrant deaths

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In this paper I present a critical discourse analysis of the representations of border deaths in the British national news press. Border deaths are expected outcomes of bordering practices which create conditions unconducive to life. Drawing on affect studies, the recurrence of such deaths is considered here in relation to how representations of border deaths negotiate readers' affective responses to them; curating what is legitimate to think and feel about death and death events. In this *affective economy* (Ahmed, 2014), there are 'good' and 'bad' deaths, deserved and undeserved deaths and valued and devalued lives (Mbembe, 2019). Public knowledge of the deaths of people on the move into and within the UK therefore exist at an intersection of the types of affective-discursive loops (Wetherell, 2012) in which violent deaths and 'illegal migration' find coherence within discursive frames which *spectacularise* the suffering of 'the other' (De Genova, 2013). Focusing on two case studies – the death of Leonard Farruku on the Bibby Stockholm in 2023 and the deaths of 27 people in the English Channel in 2021 – I present findings from an SFL analysis of how these events were mediated by the British news press and how these mediations

negotiated the affectivity of them to their audiences. In doing this I ask, are border death's sites of further dehumanisation of the lives of people on the move, or can they provide instances in which anti-migrant discourse and politics are withered by collective empathies?

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"I am speaking on behalf of my constituents": practical arguments and humanitarian tropes in Labour MPs' stories about migration

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In this paper, we focus on the mobilisation of storytelling in parliamentary debates on the Illegal Migration Bill (IMB) in the UK House of Commons. Against the backdrop of increasingly hostile UK government rhetoric on migration, we trace the narratives employed by Labour MPs back to when the IMB passed into law in July 2023. We focus on MPs' stories about their constituents, that is stories about 'citizens' through which politicians use third person accounts to enhance argument credibility and project empathy. We identify two main story types: narrative accounts and personal experience stories that underscore either the inhumanity and/ or the impracticality of the IMB. Drawing on narrative studies and the analysis of argumentative schemes (van Eemeren & Snoeck Henkemans 2017) we explore the affective positions these stories construct for refugees, narrators and the UK as a nation. We find that narrative accounts offering practical arguments against the IMB often reproduce dominant 'crisification' discourses, depicting refugees as passive actors of this crisis. In contrast, personal experience stories, often presented as counter narratives (Bamberg & Andrews 2004) reframe migration as a humanitarian rather than a practical issue. Yet even these counter narratives can be deeply problematic as they draw on humanitarian tropes that construct refugees as powerless victims and position the MPs - and the UK more broadly - as moral guardians of humanitarian values. We argue that these competing stories expose the contradictions and ideological tensions within Labour's migration rhetoric. Ultimately, we show how narratives simultaneously resist and reproduce dominant, harmful migration discourses.

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A corpus-assisted critical multimodal approach to xenophobic *soft* hate speech in online news: insights from a multi-level annotation scheme

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This talk investigates the normalization of *soft* hate speech as an inherently multimodal phenomenon (Serafis & Wildfeuer, 2025), drawing on three large corpora of online news from Italy, Malta, and Greece published during the perceived peak of the so-called “refugee crisis” (2015-2017).

Employing a corpus-assisted critical multimodal discourse-analytic approach, we identify the main discursive strategies employed to represent social actors and actions in our data; thereby shedding light on key discursive patterns through which migration prevention is justified and hate politics is institutionalized in these Mediterranean contexts.

Implementing van Leeuwen’s (2008) taxonomy within a systematic inter-annotatable model, we offer insights from a multimodal annotation scheme designed to identify main patterns in headlines and press photos that can potentially end up normalizing multimodal constructions of xenophobic hatred.

In doing so, we align with the growing trend towards empirical data and large-scale corpus analysis in multimodal research (Pflaeging et al., 2021), while engaging with Krzyżanowski et al. ’s (2023) call for an interdisciplinary and empirically grounded agenda in (multimodal) critical discourse studies to explore the normalization of anti- and post-democratic discourse during “crises”.

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THEMATIC PANEL: *How to analyse emotions in political discourse online*

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Analysing emotions in social media discourse

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Emotions play a central role in the polarised political discourse that can be found on social media platforms. Various linguistic approaches have sought to address how emotions are made manifest in discourse, including sentiment analysis (for an overview, see Rodríguez-Ibáñez et al., 2023) and corpus linguistic methods (Bednarek, 2008). Yet analysing the form and function of emotions in discourse still presents many challenges. In this panel, the presenters draw on qualitative methods informed by both psychology and linguistics to investigate emotions in the social media comments by supporters and opponents of populist parties across Europe.

After a brief review of previous work on emotions in political discourse, especially online, we will offer a definition of emotion vs affect and then proceed to talk about four methods that are influenced by the following theories: basic and primary emotions, appraisal, rhetoric and argumentation, and stance and positioning.

The talks are based on a joint project in which we start out with four emotions that are shared across different country contexts: anger, disgust, joy, and fear, or their equivalent labels in the different frameworks. The individual case studies distinguish between the form in which emotions are encoded in discourse, i.e., through explicit or implicit reference, and cross-classify these with three main functions: expressing authorial emotions, ascribing emotions to others, and affording emotion to be invoked in the audience. With data taken from platforms such as X, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok, the analyses take account of the multimodal nature of political discourse online.

Basic and primary emotions

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This talk first shows how Ekman's (1992) theory of basic emotions can be operationalised in discourse analysis, drawing on Facebook comments by supporters and opponents of the German *AfD*, Hungarian *Fidesz*, and the Austrian *Freedom Party*. In order to explore four basic emotions – fear, anger, enjoyment, and contempt – the presentation introduces the BEMDI metre. This discourse analytical tool helps explore multiple emotions in short texts and can both detect explicitly stated emotions as well as explore emotions that are not named. The BEMDI metre does so with the help of sets of questions, which were developed on the basis of Ekman's (2024) classification of 48 emotions within seven families of basic emotions.

The presentation then proceeds to illustrate how Plutchik's (1991) model of primary emotions can inform the study of political discourse on Facebook and Instagram. Verbal texts and emojis from comments supporting the right-wing party *Brothers of Italy* are analysed to foreground prevailing emotions and how they co-occur with the main topics of populist polarisation: the party, the nation, the leader, the EU, political adversaries, and foreigners. According to Plutchik (1991), there are eight prototypical emotions, corresponding to overt behavioural patterns: trust, disgust, anger, fear, joy, sadness, surprise, and anticipation. These primary emotions can take varying degrees of intensity, form polar opposites (e.g., joy vs sadness), and combine to form secondary emotions (e.g., optimism as blending joy and anticipation). To provide a satisfactory interpretation grid for text and visuals, the study also includes one such secondary emotion: love as a combination of joy and trust, whose expressions are prominent in social networks.

Positioning and stance

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The final presentation combines positioning theory (Harré and van Langenhove, 1999) with stance analysis (Du Bois, 2007) to investigate emotions in interactions on TikTok accounts affiliated with the *Sweden Democrats* party. This theoretical framework provides tools for analysing discursive strategies for positioning oneself socially in relation to other actors, subjects and groups. Positioning refers to “the assignment of fluid ‘parts’ or ‘roles’ to speakers in the discursive construction of personal stories that make a person's actions intelligible and relatively determinate as social acts” (Harré and Van Langenhove, 1999, p. 17). Du Bois' (2007, p. 139) notion of the stance triangle introduces dialogicality and intersubjectivity into the analysis by showing how different stance acts orient a speaker toward an object of stance while simultaneously expressing alignment with other stance subjects. Affect constitutes an integral part of positioning (Wetherell et al., 2015). In the discourse under investigation, emotions are manifested

both as affective stance, i.e., verbal and visuals expressing authorial emotion, and evaluative stance, which in turn can be motivated by emotion.

In the presentation, the challenges of assigning stances to the often minimal or ironic contributions to the fluid dialogue in the comments of the TikTok-post are discussed. The presentation shows how stance analysis can enrich the study of emotions in contexts such as comment fields, where TikTok users not only position themselves toward the party, the party's TikTok post or each other, but also perform an online identity in which taken positions and displayed emotions form part of a specific discourse practice. The methodology also incorporates digital ethnography (Varis and Hou, 2019), making use of field notes and observation protocols documenting post content, dates, links, affective strategies, hashtags, and types of interaction.

Appraisal

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Martin and White's (2005) appraisal theory, especially affect as part of the attitude subsystem, has been widely used to analyse emotions in discourse. However, the original affect framework is rather rudimentary, making it necessary for researchers to adapt and enhance it inductively (e.g., Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio, 2019; Miglbauer and Koller, 2021). This talk presents different ways of employing appraisal theory for analysing political discourse online. Data are taken from discussion threads on X concerning right- and left-wing populist parties in Slovenia and Ireland as well as posts by supporters and opponents of the Portuguese radical right populist party *Chega*. Following Benítez-Castro and Hidalgo-Tenorio's (2019) distinction between opinion and emotion, the presentation discusses the links between emotion and evaluation, i.e., the affect and judgement frameworks in appraisal theory. Evaluation is seen as a central dimension of emotional discourse. For example, emotions can be implicitly expressed in social media comments by negative evaluation, irony, mockery, and sarcasm; by positive evaluations denoting sympathy, agreement, encouragement, or praise; or by certain evaluative figurative expressions such as WAR metaphors. In addition, multimodal elements (e.g., GIFs) often act as emotional amplifiers, guiding the reader toward specific affective interpretations. Moreover, emotional expressions can themselves perform evaluative work. For instance, anger sometimes functions as an evaluative act of moral correction, positioning the speaker as someone who identifies and exposes wrongdoing, while disgust serves as moral condemnation: expressing it implies a total rejection of political actors' legitimacy.

Another focus is the role of emotion representations in construing or contesting polarisation. The dimensions considered include different emotion categories (e.g., anger, joy) and their form and function in language and visuals. This is supplemented by looking at whether emotions in original posts are reinforced in comments, how they are intensified (e.g., through caps, exclamation marks, repetition, or visual elements), and the ways in which positive and negative emotions are contextualised and used to divide social groups.

Rhetoric and argumentation

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This contribution approaches emotion from a discourse-analytical perspective (Schiewer et al., 2023), examining in particular the rhetorical strategies used to evoke them. In Aristotelian rhetoric, the ability to evoke emotional responses in an audience constitutes one of the three modes of persuasion. In contrast, from the perspective of argumentation theory, appeals to emotion have often been dismissed as fallacious. Walton (1992, 2008), however, argues that emotional appeals can function as useful heuristics, while also emphasising the need for careful assessment, since such appeals are liable to manipulation by exploiting audiences' prejudices and fears (see also Wodak, 2015). Beyond explicit appeals to emotions, speakers can also make strategic use of emotive language to influence their audience (Macagno and Walton, 2014). Emotive words carry an implicit judgment and serve as a basis for deriving certain conclusions. While they are a common feature of rhetoric, they become manipulative when they trigger emotions that are not warranted by the state of affairs, or when they are employed in ways that diverge from their conventional use and meaning. In addition to using emotions as a means of persuasion, Micheli (2010, 2014) and Plantin (2011) also draw attention to instances in which speakers use argumentation to legitimate particular emotions and sentiments. In these cases, text passages that are not overtly argumentative can play a crucial role, as they set the scene and provide the grounds for the audience's emotional response (Herman and Serafis, 2019).

The paper demonstrates how these theories can be applied in a qualitative analysis of online exchanges between populist politicians, their supporters, and opponents of the French *Rassemblement National*. The findings show that the lead candidate foregrounds negative emotions, particularly anger and fear, while simultaneously offering positive visions of change. Followers not only echo negative emotions but also express positive

emotions such as trust, hope, and affection. Overall, the analysis suggests that focusing exclusively on negative emotions provides an incomplete account of the affective dynamics underlying populist discourses.

Conclusion

The convenor (Koller) will summarise the papers presented and point out similarities and differences between the methodologies. The floor will then be opened for questions and comments from the audience.

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THEMATIC PANEL: *New Directions in Analysing Contemporary Public Discourse: Challenges for Critical Discourse Studies*

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Characterised by immense mediatisation, politicisation, ideologization and facets of radicalisation, contemporary public discourse has remained the key carrier of multiple social practices and visions of social order. It has also continued to be the main locus where the diversity of often overlapping social, political and economic crises are constructed on a par with numerous, real and imagined, visions of collective memory/past and of key future trajectories for social change. However, while becoming an ever more complex, as well as ever more elusive object of study, contemporary public discourse has required new theoretical and analytical approaches, including those that closely link in-depth theorisation, conceptualisation and analytical applications of critical discourse in problem-oriented research.

In view of the above, this panel aims to discuss how recent theoretical, conceptual and analytical developments in Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) have been able to respond to the key challenges in exploring multiple types, genres and the wider dynamics of contemporary public discourse. Papers will make theoretical/conceptual and/or analytical contributions to showcase how CDS can remain among the key perspectives in the systematic deconstruction of the complexities of discourse in contemporary public spheres. The panel will bring scholars working with/ in different approaches to, and traditions of, CDS and at their frontiers in order to discuss how the key theoretical notions/ concepts and key analytical categories they have been using can be deployed in the wider CDS-based perspective while strengthening its contribution in the critical exploration and deconstruction of complexities and contradictions in contemporary public discourse.

Doing Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of food packing: developing research questions from the wider scholarly literature

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In this paper, I look at my work over the past few years on food packaging and the marketing of healthy and ethical foods in public discourse. I give a current example using the case of Malaysia, where the arrival of Western style products, as in other regions, leads to massive rises in non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and bowel

problems. These products branded as vegan, organic and sustainable, are found in expensively produced packaging and are ultra processed. I show how we can use multimodal critical discourse analysis to analyse health and ethical branded foods produced in Malaysia and localised for the national market. The aim of the presentation is to show how we carry out multimodal analysis, not using some theory of visual grammar, but through applying relevant tools to ask research questions which are identified through the existing research literature across different academic fields.

Co-authoring critique: A migrant-informed and chronotopically theorized approach to critical analysis of public discourse

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Adding to the work of scholars who critique public discourses on migration (Breazu & McGarry 2024; Krzyżanowska & Krzyżanowski 2018; Vigouroux 2017; Ladegaard 2013), I argue that positioning migrants as co-authors of our discursive critiques can strengthen the ‘problem-oriented’ nature of our work as discourse analysts. I show how such a (re)positioning of migrants as co-authors is facilitated by working with and recognising the expertise of grassroots organisations led by migrants (c.f. Casas-Cortes, Osterweil, and Powell 2008). I also show how the development of this co-author relationship with migrant-led organisations is theoretically facilitated by a chronotopic approach to discourse, which foregrounds context – including its material, imagined and textual dimensions – rather than language itself as the primary source of meaning (Karimzad & Catedral 2022).

Illustrative examples come from six years of conducting ethnographically grounded research projects with grassroots organisations of migrants in and beyond Hong Kong. As an example of a ‘co-authored critique’, I discuss my research team’s critical analysis of the International Labour Organisation’s discourses on domestic work. I show that our analysis both emerges from and contributes to migrant organisations’ struggle to be included in multilateral discussions. I also report on ongoing projects that create chronotopes of collaboration with migrants through the provision of physical space on campus, and the initiation of academic-migrant solidarity initiatives. I argue that a chronotopic approach allows us to understand such context-building activities as a part of our critical discursive work. I further show how the creation of these chronotopic contexts lays the groundwork for discourse analytic projects that can directly respond to and support the critiques that migrant-led organisations are making on public discourses at various scales.

Feeling Politics – Or Why Emotions (Should) Matter in Analysing Contemporary Public Discourse

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In this presentation we seek to contribute to the remit of this panel empirically and theoretically. Theoretically, we draw upon contemporary debates in critical theory (Mussell 2017) and burgeoning discussions in the field of Critical Discourse Studies (CDS) (e.g. Glapka 2019) to argue that new approaches to analysing contemporary public discourse need to take emotions seriously. In contrast to a prevailing philosophical and political-rhetorical tradition, that “To be emotional is to have one’s judgement [negatively] affected” (Ahmed 2004: 2-3), we maintain that in critical writing—that is, works dedicated to identifying and opposing obstacles to human flourishing—the affective and the analytic are not only entangled, they help strengthen each other.

Empirically, we argue for the need to move beyond the texts and genres typically examined in CDS—such as political speeches, policy documents, and media discourse—and to broaden the analytical scope to include artistic forms like poetry and song, which can likewise animate political thought and stimulate public debate. In our presentation, we will focus on a poem “The Destruction of Gaza” (Khurbn Gaza) by Tal Hever-Chybowski, which was initially published in the פֿרווערטס/Forverts/Yiddish Forward on January 26, 2024; and a music album “New Yiddish Songs of Grief, Fury, and Love” by LIDER MIT PALESTINE, which was released on 22 July 2025 to financially support Gaza Birds Singing, a musical, educational and therapeutic project in Gaza. Our analysis orientates to Mussell’s (2017: 7) observation, that “there can be no defeating an absolute and unreasonable state without the passion and drive to do so”, and argue that the political power of these artistic texts is bound, inextricably, with their affective impetus.

Normalization and Recontextualization: Public Discourse, Public Space and the Orchestration/Contestation of Illiberalism

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This paper builds on the ongoing research on the normalisation of illiberalism (Krzyżanowski 2020a) as a social-wide process evident within and outside loci of political action (Krzyżanowski et. al. 2023). Viewed as relying on ‘discursive shifts’ (Krzyżanowski 2018a; 2020a) in public discourse, normalisation has to date been explored mainly in mediated (Krzyżanowski & Ekström 2022, 2024) and political/policy communication (Krzyżanowski 2018a, 2020b). However, there still is a need to connect those analyses to the dynamics of recontextualisation of illiberal thinking in the wider public domain. For this reason, using a multi-step model of ‘recontextualisation’ (Bernstein 1990,

Krzyżanowski 2016) within a Discourse-Ethnographic Analysis (DEA, Krzyżanowski 2017; Krzyżanowska 2023), this paper shows how illiberal discourse is recontextualised across various public spaces and in the non-strictly political action domains. The focus is on pre-election campaign periods in public spaces where illiberal ideas potentially dominate (e.g. city districts with high far-right support) and where they could often be contested. The aim is to show recontextualization and contestation patterns, both as far as the more general, illiberal 'borderline discourse' logic (Krzyżanowski & Ledin 2017), and the specific strategies of illiberal discourse such as, e.g., 'conceptual flapsiding' (Krzyżanowski & Krzyżanowska 2024) or 'proxy discourses' (Ekström, Krzyżanowski & Johnson 2023).

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Memory Dynamics, Public Discourse, and the Multimodality of Space

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This paper highlights how a critical discourse perspective can be mobilised in research on contemporary dynamics of collective/ social memory in general, and how it can inform different strategies and trajectories of multimodal (public) commemoration in particular. Given the multitude of complex processes of not only articulation but also recontextualisation of various visions and imaginaries of individual and collective pasts deployed in contemporary modes of memory and commemoration work (Krzyżanowska 2016), the focus here is on how selected places (e.g. locations of traumatic past events, but also of humanitarian post-traumatic reception) can serve as sources for various traces of memories that can be discursively elicited, enacted, recontextualised and eventually mobilised in diverse commemoration practices. The aim is to show how using a combination of approaches in CDS – including Discourse-Ethnographic Analysis (Krzyżanowska 2023, Krzyżanowski 2017) Multimodal CDS of commemoration spaces (Abousnougga and Machin 2011) and affective approaches to discourse and commemoration (Milani & Richardson 2022) – a specific multimodality of space can be elicited through fieldwork connected with a systematic analysis of intersecting past and contemporary discourses and narratives. The aim is to show that, even if located in specific places, flexible multimodality of space often allows revealing multiple agencies of the traumatised, including multiple voices of their experience. These are all of huge

value as commemoration of many traumatic past events (e.g. the Holocaust) enters the so-called post-witness era.

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Climate-induced Migration from 'Risk' to 'Crisis': A Critical Discursive Investigation of the Climate and Mobility Nexus in News Discourse

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Previous research has examined the politicisation and mediatisation of climate-induced migration (Russo and Wodak, 2017), showing that climate-induced migration in news discourse is frequently accompanied by fear appeals and stereotypical depictions of mobility as a risk and future societal problem (Russo, 2017). Recently, news representations appear to have shifted from risk to crisis frames due to the escalation of the climate emergency. Yet the increasing deployment of crisis frames may reflect the broader normalisation of crisis discourse in mobility reporting (Krzyżanowski, 2014), a development that can lead to overt and/ or borderline discriminatory discursive practices (Krzyżanowski & Ledin, 2017).

Against this backdrop, the present research integrates Corpus Linguistics and Critical Discourse methods to analyse the discursive implications of crisis framing in a purpose-built corpus of news articles on climate-induced migration (2005–2025). The findings will show how news discourse mobilises both established and new interpretative frames to construct climate-induced migration as a problem, contributing to the social knowledge through which this phenomenon is understood. Ultimately, it aims to shed

light on whether the use of crisis frames in climate and mobility discourse contributes to discriminatory forms of discourse.

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Analysing authoritarian populism and its challenges in polarised Turkey

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Globally, populism is on the rise, it recognised as a 'thin-centred ideology' that is articulated with ideologies ranging from authoritarianism to its challenges (Mudde 2004, 548). In this presentation, I examine how two Turkish politicians, at the start of their respective political careers, represented themselves as inclusive and democratic, yet articulated different incarnations of populism: President Erdoğan, an authoritarian populist and Ekrem İmamoğlu, Erdoğan's political opposition. Using Critical Discourse Analysis, I consider both politicians' public utterances as they first took office through the prism of Scoone et al.'s (2021) criteria of authoritarian populism. I consider utterances as recontextualisations of social practices, social actors, issues, concepts and events. Leaning on the seminal work of Bernstein (1990) and van Leeuwen and Wodak (1999), I analyse what has been deleted/ included, rearranged, substituted and added (reactions, purposes, and legitimations). I expand this analysis by leaning on recent CDA work (Krzyżanowski 2018) to consider how 'discursive shifts', 'borderline discourses', 'conceptual flapsiding' and 'imaginaries' are incorporated into these recontextualisations. As such, this analytical strategy offers a close critical reading on how discursive strategies are used by populists to both articulate and challenge authoritarian populism.

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The Algorithmic Public Sphere: CDS Perspectives on Multimodal Racism and the Politics of Online (In)visibility

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This paper explores how Critical Discourse Studies (CDS), and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) in particular, can respond to the challenges of analysing contemporary public discourse that is shaped by digital platforms and automated moderation systems. Using YouTube comments about Roma migrants in the United Kingdom as a case study, the paper investigates why both subtle and explicit forms of anti-Roma racism continue to circulate despite the widespread adoption of AI-driven hate speech detection.

Drawing on MCDA, pragmatics and insights from critical race theory, the paper introduces the concept of the *algorithmic blind spot*. This term refers to the structural limitations of current moderation technologies, which struggle to recognise two forms of invisibility. First, *semiotic invisibility*, where discriminatory meanings are encoded through humour, irony, metaphor, and text-image pairing that require contextual inference. Second, *social invisibility*, where overtly exclusionary statements remain online not because they are subtle but because they are widely normalised and are often framed as moral commentary or civic common sense and therefore fall outside narrow policy definitions of hate.

The paper argues that these patterns reveal a deeper problem within the algorithmic public sphere. It advances an interdisciplinary framework for understanding the (in)visibility of hate and argues that effective online moderation requires treating racism, as well as other form of hate, as both a semiotic and technological problem. CDS provides a powerful framework for understanding this gap because it connects micro-level meaning-making with broader processes of racialisation, normalisation and ideological legitimisation. The paper contributes to new directions in CDS by proposing the algorithmic blind spot as a useful concept for analysing digitally mediated racism and by demonstrating how CDS scholarship can critically inform debates about AI moderation, visibility and the limits of automated interpretation.

THEMATIC PANEL: *Music and Discourse: Critical Perspectives*

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Popular music can be considered one of the most pervasive cultural phenomena in Western societies. The mass distribution of recorded sounds, normally stored in albums and singles, constitutes a powerful discursive means, which can convey – or shape – ideologies, identities and emotions (van Leeuwen 1998; 1999; 2012; Machin 2010; Aleshinskaya 2013; Way and McKerrell 2017). Building on the conceptual and methodological foundations laid out in *Music and Discourse: Theoretical and Empirical Insights* (Tommaso and Maci 2025), the panel aims to advance the discussion by examining the linguistic and semiotic resources that can deepen our understanding of music(al) discourse. Such discourse includes not only the discourses of popular music—contained in lyrics, arrangements and recurrent musical features—but also discourses about popular music, including album reviews, music press reports, business communication of record labels and streaming service providers, media representations of popular music performers, and audience narratives. In analysing these music-related texts and practices, the proposed contributions draw on a wide range of research methods in linguistics. These approaches shed light on how meaning is constructed, negotiated, and disseminated, while also revealing the ways in which power relations, ideologies, identities, and cultural values are embedded and reproduced across various texts and genres. In combining diverse methodological orientations, staunchly centred on (critical) discourse studies, the panel aims to shed new light into the rich and complex discursive environment of popular music, showing how the interaction between different social actors actively shapes, questions and transforms the ideologies contained in this cultural and professional context.

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From Noise to Knowledge: Punk Language, Discourse, and the Rise of Edupunk

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This study examines the linguistic and discursive features of punk culture and their connection to the alternative educational philosophy known as edupunk. By analyzing punk's distinctive language—characterized by directness, rebellion, and DIY expression—the research explores how its discourse challenges norms and constructs countercultural identities. These linguistic practices provide the foundation for edupunk, which adopts punk's anti-authoritarian ethos to promote learner agency, creativity, and resistance to institutional constraints. Through interdisciplinary analysis, the study reveals how punk's rhetoric of disruption informs educational innovation, demonstrating the transformative potential of merging subcultural discourse with participatory, learner-centered pedagogies.

Popular music and mockery: Alienation and stereotypes of immigrants in Murda/ Ezhel's 'Aya'

Way, Lyndon

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Turks are the largest ethnic minority in Germany and third largest in Holland. Despite these numbers, many Turks do not feel integrated into society (Elger, Kneip and Theile 2009), suffering racism and stereotypes (Taras 2012; Nurbanu 2020). Though underground Turkish-European rap musicians have expressed concerns over these issues, I examine how these concerns are articulated in a mainstream rap video by two popular musicians: Turkish rap artist Ezhel and Murda, a Dutch rapper and songwriter born to Turkish immigrants. Their song 'Aya', with lyrics that express love for a woman, has been streamed more than 144 million times on Spotify. Leaning on multimodal critical discourse studies, this presentation reveals how visuals and sounds in the 'Aya' official video criticise European society and highlight alienation and stereotypes of Turks who live there. I consider how such discourses can contribute to an understanding of life as an outsider in Europe.

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The Grammar of Dissent: Green Day's Evolving Critique of American Society

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This research explores the intersection of music, language, and social critique through a linguistic analysis of the American punk rock band Green Day. While music and lyrics are powerful tools for expressing cultural and political ideologies, the punk rock genre is particularly notable for its historically anti-establishment and anti-authoritarian themes. As one of the most commercially successful punk bands, Green Day has brought this tradition of dissent to a mainstream audience, crafting lyrics that capture the anxieties and frustrations of American society. This paper utilises Corpus Linguistics (CL) and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as methodological frameworks to examine the evolution of Green Day's social commentary throughout their discography. By analysing the thematic focus, rhetorical strategies, and linguistic choices in their lyrics—from their early work in the late 20th century to their more recent releases—this study traces how the band's critique of American society has shifted and adapted over time. The analysis aims to reveal how a popular music artist can both reflect and shape broader socio-political discourses, offering insights into the dynamic relationship between popular culture, language, and ideology.

"Poptimist" Discourse in Taylor Swift Album Reviews: A Critical Discourse Analysis

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Since the 1960s, popular music criticism has played a crucial role in shaping discourse about popular music, i.e., the set of linguistic resources aimed to describe the language of popular music (Lindberg 2005). This peculiar kind of discourse can confer intellectual legitimacy to popular music performers and constitutes an entry point into the complex sociocultural relationships between popular music agents. This paper aims to shed light on this subject by analysing the relationship between the American songwriter Taylor

Swift and the music press, using CDA as “dialectical reasoning” (Fairclough 2018: 13). Since 2020, Swift has benefitted from a series of rave reviews in the American and British music press, which allowed her to substantially increase her fame. The discourse analysis will be centred on *Pitchfork’s Folklore* and *Rolling Stone’s Midnights* album reviews, primarily examining evaluative and intertextual devices (Bhatia 2017, Van Leeuwen 2023). These textual features are indissolubly connected to the broader socioeconomic context of the music press, which involves large media conglomerates (*Condé Nast, Penske Media*) and “poptimism” – a movement in the 21st century music press that seeks to legitimise mainstream pop artists intellectually. This study will hopefully determine whether the praise towards Taylor Swift represents an authentic claim of mainstream pop’s intellectual and artistic value, or if it is more tightly connected to economic influence.

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Beyond the Stereotype: Boomer Women’s Narratives of Rock Music Engagement

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Women’s engagement with rock music has often been marginalised in both media and academic discourses on popular music. Drawing on first-hand oral accounts, this study examines how American women of the Boomer generation talk about rock music from the late 1960s and 1970s. Using corpus linguistics and critical discourse analysis, it investigates how knowledge-building and evaluation strategies are realised in their narratives, revealing how participants articulate meaning, negotiate their positioning, and convey evaluative judgments within a historically male-dominated musical culture. By challenging reductive stereotypes—such as the screaming teenage fan or the obsessive memorabilia collector—the participants’ discourse redefines what it meant to be a female fan in the 1960s and 1970s. In doing so, the study offers a more nuanced understanding of music reception, acknowledging gendered diversity in cultural participation.

Voices within the Online Album Review: Direct Quotations as Pathways to a Genre Network

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Online album reviews are a prominent part of web based music discourse owing to the significant role that albums play in pop culture. Despite this, they received scant scholarly attention in linguistics. To address this lacuna, this study aims to identify and classify direct quotations in online album reviews in order to map the genre network that the online album review belongs to. Using QDA Miner qualitative analysis software, direct quotations were coded according to their source genre within a specialized corpus of 100 album reviews published between 2021 and 2023 across three music review platforms (Slant Magazine, NME and Pitchfork). The frequency of quote types was identified and their word coverage (the amount of textual space taken up by quotations) was calculated. Following Bhatia's (2016) model of interdiscursively relevant genre networks, it was established why reviewers recontextualize materials from adjacent genres. The analysis shows recurring quotation types, for example artist quotations from interviews that provide background information or lyric quotations from songs that support readings of the album narrative. The frequent use of lyric quotations underscores the review's dependence on the review object (the album), owing to which reviews are referred to as a parasitic genre (Gullestad, 2011). The study demonstrates that online album reviews rely on other genres (e.g., interviews, press materials, album lyrics) to contextualize artistic intent, position albums within cultural conversations, and anchor the reviewer's evaluative claims. The study offers insights relevant to strengthening review literacy, defined as the capacity to comprehend review discourse and to construct reviews in an informed manner (Jaakkola, 2024).

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THEMATIC PANEL: *Contrarrestar la Manosfera: enfoques discursivos críticos sobre el odio de género, la produsage y las contraculturas digitales*

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Este panel, organizado en el marco del proyecto de I+D *La Manosfera en las Redes Sociales* (PID2022-141877NB-I00), tiene como objetivo explorar la construcción discursiva, la difusión y la contranarrativa de las ideologías misóginas en el denominado ecosistema de la *manosfera*. Este espacio digital —compuesto por foros, influencers y comunidades en redes sociales— se ha consolidado como un productor central de discursos de odio de género, moldeando narrativas sobre la masculinidad, el feminismo y las políticas identitarias.

Desde el enfoque de los *Estudios Críticos del Discurso*, el panel propone analizar cómo la manosfera reconfigura los espacios simbólicos del género, la ciudadanía y la pertenencia a través de nuevos géneros de *produsage* (producción participativa) y cultura digital colaborativa. Del mismo modo, se examinarán los discursos alternativos y las intervenciones feministas que desafían las masculinidades hegemónicas y promueven formas inclusivas de participación digital.

Combinando metodologías cualitativas y cuantitativas —lingüística de corpus, etnografía digital, análisis crítico del discurso y análisis multimodal—, el panel contribuye al eje temático del congreso *Más allá de los espacios físicos y simbólicos*, aportando perspectivas sobre cómo el odio, la polarización y la ideología circulan en entornos digitales transnacionales.

Este panel temático reunirá seis contribuciones de investigadoras e investigadores especializados en análisis del discurso, comunicación, estudios de género y cultura digital, con el propósito de ofrecer una visión integral sobre cómo el discurso moldea, reproduce o transforma la política de género en los espacios digitales contemporáneos.

Justificación del panel dentro de CADAAD 2026:

El panel propuesto se alinea directamente con el tema central de CADAAD 2026 —*Más allá de los espacios físicos y simbólicos*— al abordar cómo las ideologías de género se construyen, disputan y transforman en los entornos digitales. Tiende un puente entre el análisis discursivo cualitativo y cuantitativo, incorpora dimensiones multimodales y afectivas, y contribuye a la reflexión sobre cómo los estudios críticos del discurso pueden intervenir ante los desafíos de la polarización y la violencia simbólica en la red.

A través del estudio de la manosfera, el panel ejemplifica la relevancia del análisis crítico del discurso en los retos sociales contemporáneos, ofreciendo tanto reflexión teórica como metodologías aplicadas para comprender y contrarrestar el odio de género en el espacio digital.

Reapropiaciones contra la manosfera: tácticas de *produsage* y contranarrativa feminista en TikTok y YouTube (España, 2023–2025)

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En los márgenes del ruido digital —allí donde el algoritmo dibuja sus fronteras más inciertas— emergen las voces de creadoras y colectivos feministas que reescriben el relato. Esta comunicación explora cómo esas voces articulan tácticas de contranarrativa frente a la manosfera en plataformas como TikTok y YouTube, entre 2023 y 2025. Se inscribe en el marco de los Estudios Críticos del Discurso, con especial atención a los procesos de *produsage* (Bruns, 2008) y a la multimodalidad de las textualidades digitales (Lazar, 2017), en sintonía con el eje del congreso.

El objetivo es desentrañar tres operaciones discursivas que funcionan como auténticos caballos de Troya en el campo simbólico: (1) la resignificación memética de lemas y estereotipos —“alto valor”, “hipergamia”— que se devuelven a la esfera pública transformados; (2) el reencuadre mediante el humor, el doblaje o el dueto, donde la ironía opera como bisturí y espejo; y (3) las pedagogías afectivas, pequeñas islas discursivas que sustituyen la confrontación por el cuidado y la alfabetización mediática.

La manosfera, descrita por van Valkenburgh (2019) como “una constelación de comunidades masculinistas en redes sociales unificadas por una visión antifeminista”, se revela así como un campo de batalla simbólico, pero también como una oportunidad para observar cómo se reconfiguran la autoridad discursiva y la performatividad del género.

El corpus —600 vídeos— se aborda mediante una metodología híbrida: lingüística de corpus, análisis crítico del discurso multimodal y analítica computacional ligera. Este triángulo permite rastrear patrones de circulación, resonancia y co-ocurrencia, como si se tratara de un mapa en constante reescritura.

Los resultados muestran que las tácticas de *produsage* —la ironía, la inversión de roles, la refutación escalonada— actúan como grietas por donde se filtra la luz: minan la retórica misógina y producen nuevos modos de credibilidad. El ethos y la autoridad emergen aquí no de títulos, sino de experiencias compartidas, de micro-experticias que devuelven protagonismo a quienes han sido silenciadas (Brown & Mondon, 2021).

Esta contribución propone, en definitiva, una metodología replicable para estudiar los espacios simbólicos digitales más allá de los límites disciplinares, y para formar —como quien enciende una antorcha— a las generaciones que aprenderán a leer, producir y transformar discurso en medio del torbellino de la red.

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Contar es resistir: contranarrativas interseccionales para crear otro mundo.

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En un contexto global marcado por la expansión transnacional de la *manosfera* proponemos examinar las formas en que los movimientos sociales y las prácticas artísticas contemporáneas elaboran contranarrativas capaces de disputar el monopolio simbólico del odio. La manosfera no constituye un fenómeno marginal, sino un entramado que enseña a odiar y retroalimenta el odio a través del humor, la ironía y la viralidad algorítmica. Desde memes y *podcasts* hasta comunidades digitales, produce subjetividades masculinas en crisis y naturaliza la violencia de género bajo la apariencia de entretenimiento o sentido común.

Frente a esta pedagogía del odio, emergen relatos y prácticas que reconfiguran el espacio público digital desde la imaginación política y la interdependencia. A partir del marco teórico de los Estudios Críticos del Discurso y de una metodología que combina análisis multimodal y etnografía digital, se abordará cómo colectivos feministas, transfeministas, decoloniales y ecofeministas utilizan el arte, la performance y la acción

colectiva como dispositivos de resignificación afectiva y de reconstrucción del tejido comunitario. Estas prácticas no sólo denuncian las violencias sistémicas, sino que imaginan mundos posibles desde el cuidado, la alegría y la esperanza activa.

Defendemos que contar otros cuentos es una forma de resistencia: frente a los relatos de pérdida y resentimiento de la manosfera, las contranarrativas feministas proponen historias de vínculo, ternura y justicia social. En un tiempo de colapso ecológico y crisis interconectadas, estas narrativas prefiguran formas de vida que colocan la sostenibilidad de lo común en el centro. Así, resistir implica también imaginar: abrir horizontes narrativos donde la política del cuidado, la solidaridad y la creatividad colectiva sean las herramientas para desactivar la lógica del odio y construir futuros habitables.

Música para derrapar: manosfera, petromasculinidad y phonk

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Este estudio se centra en un aspecto poco explorado del análisis de la manosfera: el uso que hacen distintos creadores de las herramientas estéticas, en especial las musicales. A partir de una serie de investigaciones sobre influencers españoles del mundo del motor en TikTok, detectamos un fuerte vínculo entre el empleo del phonk y las manifestaciones más dañinas de la petromasculinidad.

El phonk surge de la mezcla de hip-hop, EDM, metal y dubstep; al ser adoptado por comunidades de carreras de drift, deriva en el “drift phonk”, un subgénero de alta adrenalina con ritmos duros y tempos rápidos, hoy también extendido como música para entrenar (Ward et al., 2024). Aunque es un género accesible y de producción mayoritariamente independiente, las mujeres han sido excluidas de muchos espacios de creación (March, 2024), y sus rasgos sonoros encajan con lo que ciertas investigaciones sobre foros misóginos describen como “música masculina”: exhibición de poder, agresión y fuerza (de Boise, 2020).

Según Daggett (2018), la petromasculinidad es un deseo autoritario por los combustibles fósiles que protege tanto una identidad social (la de hombres blancos y adinerados) como una identidad nacionalista basada en un consumo hipermasculino (Alaimo, 2009). En este marco, el negacionismo climático se entiende como un deseo autoritario que oscila entre la reacción compensatoria ante la pérdida de privilegios y la respuesta dura ante los desastres climáticos, como se observó en la DANA de Valencia (Chulià, 2025). Nuestras conclusiones señalan que el uso reiterado de esta música en vídeos de motor cumple una doble función ideológica. Por un lado, crea una comunidad imitativa cuya

conectividad digital se forja mediante el ritual compartido de imitar y replicar contenidos (Zulli & Zulli, 2022) en torno al automóvil. Por otro, su tempo acelerado encarna una “ideología del ruido”, que parte de la máquina y de la música, para operar a la vez como metáfora del crecimiento capitalista y como delegación en la máquina de la expresión sonora de la afectividad, simulando una acción violenta y autoritaria (Horta, 2024).

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La polémica de Lalachus en RTVE: análisis mixto de las reclamaciones ciudadanas sobre símbolos religiosos en la televisión pública

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La controversia generada por la actuación de la creadora de contenido *Lalachus* en el especial de Nochevieja de RTVE (2025) constituye un caso paradigmático para comprender cómo se articulan las protestas digitales en torno a cuestiones de género, religión y representación simbólica en la esfera pública. A partir de los datos facilitados por la Defensora de la Audiencia, este estudio analiza un corpus de 845 quejas

ciudadanas mediante un enfoque mixto que combina análisis cuantitativo descriptivo y análisis cualitativo asistido por modelos de lenguaje (LLM).

El estudio cuantitativo permitió identificar patrones demográficos, territoriales y discursivos en la reacción ciudadana. Los resultados revelan una clara sobrerrepresentación del público adulto (especialmente entre los 41 y los 60 años) y una concentración geográfica en Madrid. En el plano discursivo, se observa una dualidad entre mensajes breves, de tono emocional, y textos más extensos y argumentativos que apelan a valores religiosos y al papel de RTVE como servicio público. Asimismo, el 21,5% de los mensajes presentaban estructuras replicadas (*copy-paste*), lo que evidencia dinámicas de movilización coordinada y amplificación digital.

El análisis cualitativo, realizado mediante técnicas de procesamiento semántico y análisis de sentimiento con LLM, permitió identificar los principales marcos narrativos y las estrategias retóricas de legitimación del agravio. Se observaron tres ejes discursivos predominantes: la defensa del respeto a los símbolos religiosos, la crítica moral a la televisión pública y la reivindicación de una identidad cultural amenazada.

Este enfoque híbrido entre los estudios críticos del discurso y la lingüística computacional permite comprender cómo se producen y circulan los discursos de ofensa y moralización en la esfera digital contemporánea, así como su impacto en la construcción de la opinión pública en torno al servicio público de comunicación.

THEMATIC PANEL: *Discourses of resilience: Across domains, contexts, and institutions*

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The concept of resilience initially emerged from environmental and ecological studies, most notably through the work of Holling (1973), who defined it as the capacity of ecosystems to absorb disturbances while maintaining their functions. The term has since been adopted by other disciplines in the social sciences – e.g. organisational, policy, urban and security studies (McKeown et al., 2022; Talubo et al., 2022) – where the term has been associated with responding to, or planning for, disaster scenarios such as floods, economic or technology-induced crises, and terrorist attacks. Crucially, in parallel with this academic use and the emergence, inter alia, of resilience institutes and research programmes at universities worldwide (McAslan, 2010) as well as a dedicated academic journal^[1], reference to resilience (and *resilience-building*) has gained much prominence across institutional and public discourses particularly over the last two decades. Like similar concepts (e.g. sustainability), resilience has thus become both a ‘buzzword’ and a ‘fuzzword’ (Cornwall, 2007) prompting several scholars to scrutinize its shifting semantics and widespread use as an ultimate *ideological keyword* (Williams, 2015 [1976]) of neoliberalism (Holborow, 2015). ^[2]

For example, McGreavy (2016) suggests that framing resilience as a response to crises by emphasising human agency/control and the capacity to ‘bounce back’ to a stable ‘normal’ might, in fact, serve as a discourse to resist change, obscuring more creative or transformative responses to environmental and social challenges. Along similar lines, other critical voices in the broader social sciences (Bergström, 2018; McKeown et al., 2022; Meriläinen, 2019; Tierney, 2015; Peyroux, 2015) have pointed out that discourses of resilience often mystify the underlying causes of environmental or societal crises, redirecting attention toward coping mechanisms that ultimately serve to sustain the status quo. According to this body of work, invoking resilience deflects attention from the systemic factors that generate crises (e.g., structural inequality, corporate-driven environmental degradation), reinforcing the notion that individuals and communities must manage challenges rather than confront the forces that create them in the first place—thus functioning, by extension, as a tool of neoliberal governance (Abramovitz, 2012; Jessop, 2003; Binkley, 2011). Chandler (2014) calls this in fact a ‘post-liberal’ form of governance emerging in response to the perceived complexity and unpredictability of perma-crisis scenarios^[3]. According to Chandler & Reid (2016), instead of attempting to manage complexity from the top-down or relying on market-driven, bottom-up solutions, ‘resilience-thinking’ focuses on ‘enabling’ subjects to adapt and respond to shocks and crises by presenting them as natural or inevitable events. Such

depoliticization —reframing crisis not as exceptional, but as an enduring condition to be managed— produces ‘degraded subjects’ (Chandler & Reid, 2016) whose autonomy and agency are fundamentally impoverished.

Against this wealth of work that has critically scrutinised resilience from sociological interdisciplinary perspectives, we note that much less CDS specific scholarship exists on the topic, despite a solid tradition of exposing the colonization of a range of discourses and social fields by neoliberal buzzwords and practices (see, for example, Fairclough, 1993; Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002; Ledin & Machin, 2016; Mautner, 2005; Zappettini & Unerman, 2016; Koller & Davidson, 2008; Montesano Montessori et al., 2019).

Filling this void, this panel sets out to critically examine how resilience has been mobilized by different actors across different discourses and institutional contexts, and to what extent its circulation reproduces what may be considered not only normative logics of *neoliberalism* but also of *postliberalism* (Chandler and Reid, 2016). Taking a Critical Realist approach (Bhaskar, 2008 [1975]) to examine the impact of larger structural and hierarchical mechanisms underlying social practices the papers on this panel focus on a critical discourse analytic perspective to:

1. investigate the mechanisms through which neo/post-liberal ideologies have filtered through policies and practices via the mobilisation of ‘resilience’ buzzwords as well as other related fuzzwords such as sustainability
2. examine the discursive patterns and the semiotic realisations through which resilience is mobilized across different domains, contexts, and institutions to depoliticise and shift the responsibility for dealing with crises
3. explore the potential for critical interventions that address the ideological and material consequences of resilience discourses by asking (how) can critical research help emancipation of the ‘degraded subject’

Methodologically, contributions to this panel adopt a variety of approaches including linguistic/multimodal analyses of argumentation, recontextualization, and framing of resilience discourses. Each contribution thus provides a unique perspective to the plethora of discursive and semiotic strategies that enable the embedding, re-contextualization, and de-politicization of resilience across different contexts and by different actors while they all contribute to explain how specific worldviews and power setups are legitimized and sustained.

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^[1] See Taylor & Francis' *Resilience: International Policies, Practices and Discourses*

^[2] Neoliberalism itself represents a contested concept and it has been used as a buzzword and a fuzzword. For the purpose of our investigation, we treat neoliberalism as a political and economic ideology that emphasizes free markets, deregulation, privatization, and limited government intervention in the economy, promoting individual entrepreneurship and competition as key to prosperity. It became influential in the late 20th century, on the wake of calls advocating for reduced social welfare programs and a shift toward market-driven policies on a global scale (Harvey, 2003).

^[3] We use the term 'permacrisis' to characterise overlapping and ongoing disruptions such as climate change, pandemics, war, and economic instability Turnbull, N. (2022, November 11). *Permacrisis: What it means and why it's Word of the Year for 2022*. The Conversation. <https://theconversation.com/permacrisis-what-it-means-and-why-its-word-of-the-year-for-2022-194306>

Rationalizing resilience-oriented interventions against mediated misinformation: A critical multimodal discourse study

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Much concern has recently been voiced about the need to make (social) media users more resilient to misinformation. For example, during the COVID pandemic, the access to quality information about health-related issues has not been guaranteed and conspiracy theories and fake news that served particular economic and political interests proliferated unchecked (aka infodemic). Their virality was increased with the aid of AI tools and bots that helped generate and distribute inflammatory posts, memes and deepfakes. The calls to boost resilience also tend to be intensified during election times, economic crises or military conflicts.

Communication scholars have been exploring many aspects of mis- and disinformation propagation with some studies prioritizing the questions of how to make (social) media users less susceptible to disinformation. Many resources for fact-checking and literacy interventions have been developed by established media institutes, and the outcomes of their applications are being assessed in the literature (Pusey et al., 2020; Qi & Yang, 2024). This is because certain types of misinformation may ultimately compromise not only public health but also the democratic process, trust in science, financial stability and cohesion of societies.

Yet, the insistence on making the user more resilient to disinformation, rather than developing measures to contain harmful material rapidly, legitimizes neoliberal governance and individualizes responsibility for info-crisis management. Resilience interventions are often justified with reluctance to “censor,” “filter” or “penalize” online communications, even though governments do take measures to eliminate other harmful elements from citizens’ environments. Apparently, it is assumed that in a sufficiently deregulated “marketplace of ideas” the “wrong” information will ultimately recede and is likely to be replaced by valuable information, as long as media users are responsible and resilient enough.

In this study we draw on a collection of practical applications of resilience-oriented interventions, in the context of the project devoted to analyzing the coverage and reception of Russian-Ukrainian conflict in the media (CORECON, 2024-2026). We take stock of the literature on infowars to trace which social and semiotic resources have been recruited to design interventions that build resilience to disinformation, from myth busting to inoculation against fake news (prebunking), from gamified fictional exercises to spotlighting deepfakes, and from practical self-help tips to digital literacy lessons. We collect examples of interventions from websites of non-for-profit organizations, libraries and EU and national projects devoted to media literacy.

We use the toolkit of critical multimodal discourse studies to engage with the following questions: (1) which understandings of “resilience” (and related concepts of critical media literacy or language awareness) are foregrounded through the manner these interventions are described? (2) how do these understandings of resilience frame and legitimize desirable outcomes and characterize the competences of recipients of the interventions? (3) which social and semiotic resources are drawn from to rationalize the interventions. We assume that while resilience may be sometimes explicitly defined in line with top-down neoliberal ideologies, much about the practical (naturalized) understandings of resilience can also be inferred bottom-up from the ways the communicators of resilience-oriented interventions apply linguistic and semiotic resources to justify and promote them.

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Responses to Grey Zone and Hybrid Threats: The narrative functionality of resilience.

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A security discourse that draws upon the concepts of the *grey zone* and *hybrid threats* is currently emerging among international security actors and policy-makers. This article analyzes this discourse and the policy responses that have been proposed, noting that the key organizing concept in responding to hybrid threats is *resilience*. This concept is potentially problematic in that resilience has been critically examined as controversial and political in nature insofar as it promotes programmatic preparedness and social control, demanding that civil society, market actors, and individuals “rally ‘round the flag” and contribute to wide-ranging national security management. What is interesting from a methodological and linguistic point of view is the way in which *resilience* enables narratives about the past, present, and the future. By building or improving resilience we can escape the present chaos and uncertainty and craft a future that is more stable and secure. In that sense, resilience performs a linguistic role that allows the victim to go from inaction and vulnerability to action and readiness and enables a storytelling based on travelling from one stable period to another.

Decolonizing Resilience: A Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis of Indigenous Australian Social Media Activism

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Climate change has historically had a great impact on discussions of the goals and pathways of Australian development (). In particular, Indigenous Australian scholars have called for the need to bring clarity to the concepts used to negotiate these discussions. This is especially the case of terms such as adaptation and resilience. In particular, the use of the term resilience has often extended beyond the discussion of environmental disasters and arguably damaged the possibility of Indigenous self-representation and agency in discussions about climate change (Berkes et al. 2003; Anderies et al. 2006). This involves acknowledging that climate-induced environmental disasters are socially constructed events: the product of the impact of a natural hazard on people whose vulnerability has been created by social, economic and political conditions.

Therefore, this study is primarily concerned with the existing discussion on Indigenous Australian agency in the climate-induced disaster risk reduction and management discourse (in which resilience is a crucial concept). The study draws upon previous

research which argues that the resort to the term resilience disguises the essence of the issue: power relations and the behaviour of different actors with differing levels of power. Moreover, it has also often led to crisis interventions being inadequate or inappropriate, especially through the failure to take account of Indigenous epistemologies in risk-reduction and management.

Nevertheless, in recent years, Indigenous Australian people have connected with other interested social movements and been increasingly involved in political agitation for climate change justice (Carlson 2016, 2018, 2022; Russo 2018). Following this line of thought, the analysis will be carried out by analysing a corpus, specifically compiled to study the representation of Indigenous Australian peoples in climate change news and social media during the Australian bushfire crisis (2019-2020). Its aim is to examine the ways in which social media have been appropriated to connect and increase social connectivity, amplifying the public spheres' attention for the social and political cause, and creating a space for Indigenous self-representation and worldviews in the Australian context. The paper will further explore whether Indigenous Australian social media activism may contribute to reframing climate change resilience in meridian terms by questioning neocolonial ideologies of development and economic progress.

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Preserving or transforming the 'state of the system'? Resilience in the discourses of the Italian press covering PNRR

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In academic discourse the term 'resilience' has been widely used by different disciplines (including psychology, physics, engineering, biology and ecology) to mean the ability of materials and living beings to adapt to changed and adverse conditions (Holling, 1973).

In recent years, the language of ‘resilience’ has been adopted by governments and international institutions (such as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, and the European Central Bank) as a way to manage various crises. From a critical perspective, resilience has been seen as “a pervasive idiom of global governance” (Walker and Cooper, 2011: 144) and “a neoliberal form of governmentality that places emphasis on individual adaptability” (Joseph, 2013) while perpetrating the system status quo.

In the wake of Covid-19, the EU has strongly relied on discourses of resilience, especially in relation to its Next Generation programme aimed at funding member states’ economic transition towards more sustainable economies and societies better prepared to face (health) crises. Italy’s PNRR (National Recovery and Resilience Plan) has received the largest share of the Next Generation funding among the 27 EU countries and its implementation has been widely debated in the Italian public sphere.

Focusing on the role of media in the popularization of scientific and economic discourses by bridging and recontextualising institutional, ‘expert’ and public discourses in a legitimization chain, our study examines if and how the two most read Italian newspapers (*Il Corriere della Sera* and *La Repubblica*) have (re)produced meanings of *resilienza* in news items covering the PNRR.

More specifically we ask: i) to what extent do press discourses analysed (explicitly or implicitly) (de)legitimise institutional conceptualisations and logics of resilience? ii) what semiotic resources have the two outlets drawn upon to (de)legitimise such logics?

To address our questions, we conduct a Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (Machin and Mayr 2012) on a corpus of news items systematically retrieved from *Corriere* and *Repubblica* between 1/1 and 31/12/23.

Preliminary findings suggest that the use of resilience largely reproduce the discourses of crisis and adaptation propagated by the EU primarily through intertextual reference to policy documents and with almost an exclusive focus on economic rather than social themes. We raise a critique of how such reproduction in public discourse has the potential to normalise the acceptance of crisis while ignoring the wider social inequalities that contribute to adversities in the first place.

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‘Resilience’ discourse and urban planning: The case of Johannesburg

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This presentation examines the discursive evolution of Johannesburg’s municipal governance, tracing the transition from an aspirational “world-class city” framing to a more recent emphasis on “resilience” within the City of Johannesburg’s (CoJ) strategic policy discourse. Drawing on a specialised corpus of official CoJ strategic documents, the study combines Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS), the Discourse-Historical Approach (DHA), and Multimodal Critical Discourse Analysis (MCDA) to examine both the linguistic and visual construction of urban governance, with additional attention to the graphics and branding strategies of externally facing and citizen-oriented documents. The analysis demonstrates that earlier policy documents prioritised economic growth as the central argumentative topos, foregrounding competitiveness and global positioning, while nominalisations and metaphors reified socio-economic processes and obscured agency. Later documents, by contrast, foreground adaptation and resilience, displacing overt references to economic growth while embedding complementary logics of sustainability, fiscal restraint, and disaster management. Appraisal analysis of the Vision Statements (concise policy statements outlining the city’s long-term vision and strategic priorities) reveals a strong preference for high epistemic modality, predominantly monoglossic engagement, and increasingly promotional, slogan-like discourse that constructs shared civic identities while masking responsibility for policy outcomes. Situated within broader debates on neoliberal governmentality, the study argues that *resilience* functions as a technology of governance that responsabilises citizens, normalises insecurity, and reframes structural crises as matters of adaptation. More broadly, the findings demonstrate how governance concepts are recontextualised across policy genres and semiotic modes to legitimise particular political-economic agendas and shape public understandings of urban development.

‘Resilience’ in institutional discourse: the case of research funding calls

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In the neoliberal entrepreneurial university (Mautner, 2005; Holborow, 2013), academic research is dependent on competitive research funding. Research agendas are therefore

in part set by research funding calls. In times of seemingly growing insecurity and vulnerability both politically and environmentally, resilience discourses are prolific. However, previous research has shown that the meaning of the cultural keyword “resilience” is far from clear – it has become an empty signifier (Vilar-Lluch *et al.*, 2025). In this article, we will examine its use in the Funders Resilience Corpus (FundRC) (Vilar-Lluch *et al.*, 2025), which comprises 78 research funding calls published by research funding bodies in the UK context. We will analyse research funding calls as part of institutional discourse in the UK higher education and research system. We will examine the genre characteristics of funding calls and their function. The genre analysis will inform the study of the uses of resilience in the corpus. Drawing on social actors and legitimisation strategies analysis (van Leeuwen, 2008), we will consider how the research focus of the call is framed by setting out which research objects or subjects are resilient, and what actors or processes these subjects and objects need to be resilient to. In a second step, we will describe what discourses or narratives of resilience, such as “global competition” or “climate change”, resilience is embedded in. Drawing on the wider literature on resilience discourses (Joseph, 2018), we will discuss how the conceptualisation of resilience in the funding calls shapes the research landscape.

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