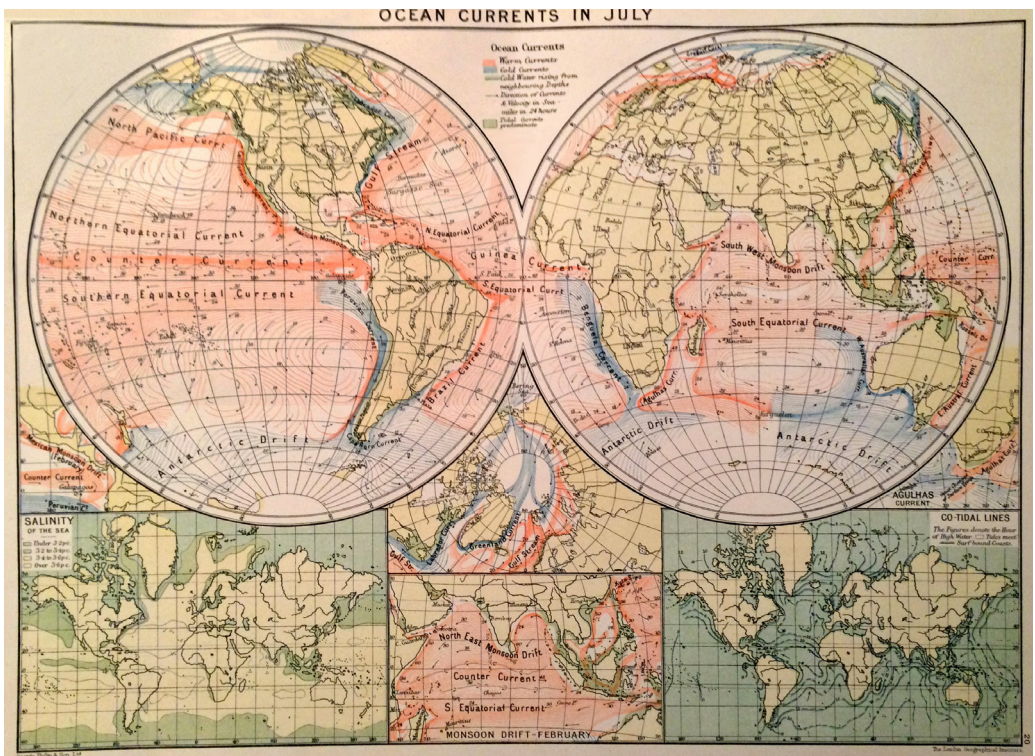# Oltre i Confini

Studi in onore di Giuseppe Burgio

a cura di
Raimondo Cagiano de Azevedo, Claudio Cecchi, Angela Magistro,
Giorgio Milanetti, Giuseppe Sancetta, Donatella Strangio

Collana Convegni 27

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A:
Giuseppe Burgio,
che ha vissuto scavalcando
molti confini

Indice

8. The construction of identity in European settings and the role of English as an institutional *lingua franca*

Rita Salvi, Janet Bowker*

Abstract. This contribution presents part of the results derived from the research the authors have carried out over the past years, concerning the construal of identity through language. Particularly, the focus is on the use of English within European institutions and the cultural consequences implied in the use of English at the same time matching the claim for multilingualism. Following recent studies on the construction of identity through language, the paper shows how specific language features, such as the selection, frequency and collocations of words, semantico-grammatical choices and rhetorical devices, contribute to deliver the speaker's/writer's image, stance and position, so influencing public opinion and shaping identity.

Keywords. Identity through language, Linguistic indexicality, European identity, English in European institutions, EU institutional ideology.

Introduction

The first issue at stake is a reflection on the position of English within the EU. Given our support to multilingualism and multiculturalism for granted, the starting point of this contribution is a recent document of the European Commission (2012) in which the *LINEE* (Languages in a Network of European Excellence) project is presented (particularly on pages 19-20 and 102-103). The project directly covers

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*   Although the authors have collaborated closely throughout the study, Rita Salvi is personally responsible for sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and Janet Bowker for section 5.

the areas of education and language policy and has produced a wide range of findings. The document states: "English does not threaten linguistic diversity. English has emerged from the *LINEE* case studies as a neutral common language with only a marginal national connotation. It is also perceived as a facilitator for further language learning, intercultural understanding and contact, and as an asset on the job market. For example, Erasmus students who were interviewed and observed by researchers use English to gain access to a multilingual environment at schools in Hungary or the Czech Republic, where they also learn some Hungarian or Czech and other languages from their peers. Because English gives them access to environments which would be otherwise more difficult to enter, it facilitates cultural exchange and increases the motivation for language learning. In situations where English is being used as a *lingua franca*, it is not the native speakers of English who are necessarily seen as the most successful, but those people who are multi-competent and have a wide linguistic repertoire to bring into communicative situations". In this perspective, the present paper discusses some pivotal points in the relationship between language and the construction or maintaining of identity, through a close-up analysis of the use of English by outstanding non-native English speakers active in European institutions.

8.1. Identity through language

Identity, meant as a cognitive and socialized factor of human action, becomes explicit largely through language. As Spolsky implies (1999:181), language is not only a means for us to present our own notion of "who we are," but it is also a way for others to project onto us their own suppositions of the way "we must be." Neither identity nor language use is a fixed notion; both are dynamic, depending upon time and place (Norton, 1995). Therefore, the construction of identity through language has been a central topic in the social sciences in recent years (Fairclough, 2003; Bucholtz and Hall, 2005; Edwards, 2006; Salvi et al., 2007; Salvi, 2012; Salvi, 2013a, 2013b, 2014), dealt with from several interdisciplinary approaches. Increasingly, the 'private' aspect of cognition and experience (the inner self, according to Benwell and Stokoe, 2010) has been matched and integrated with an 'outer' self, revealed in the domain of public discourse, in which

identity is shown consistently with local conditions of the interactional context. 'Personal identity' and 'social identity' have been studied (Social Identity Theory, SIT, Tajfel and Turner, 1986) to define the individual's stance within a group. This is the case of experts operating in different institutions, in social, political, academic or corporate settings: the use of the language adopted to transfer information in these interactions will become the means to display identity and the shared knowledge in the discourse community.

A number of discourse scholars have demonstrated that communication priorities have been re-enforced and refocused in recent times, resulting in a proliferation of channels, resources and practices (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2009; Bowker, 2012, 2013a). This means that effective institutional practice relies on efficient knowledge management, both in internal and external dealings. The creation and distribution of knowledge, then, is a key issue which implies multi-participation outside physical, geographical and temporal boundaries. Nowadays, in most professional encounters – either face-to-face or on-line – English is adopted as the vehicular professional language. Therefore, the focus is on the use of English as a medium of expressing "discourse identity", as the bridge between self and society on a ground where identity is shown and negotiated in communicative contexts, involving macro-social categories and supra-national environments.

8.2. Institutional identity

"Institutions are the humanly devised constraints that structure political, economic and social interactions. […] Throughout history, institutions have been devised by human beings to create order and reduce uncertainty in exchange. […] They evolve incrementally, connecting the past with the present and the future" (North, 1991:97).

Nowadays institutions cannot be any longer associated only with physical places or organizational settings, as most of them are active at a supra-national level. Consequently, institutional discourse encompasses political, economic and social issues which have world-wide effects. The institutional circumstances of the discursive event

are to be regarded as a social practice, an interaction between people involving processes of producing and interpreting texts and types of discourse (Fairclough, 1992:10). In the light of this, some definitions of an "institution" underline the role of participants in the construal of identity through language. For instance, Agar defines an "institution" as "a socially legitimated expertise together with those persons authorized to implement it" (1985:164). Stubbs maintains that "social institutions are abstract structures [...] the professionals in such institutions are people with the communicative competence to utter the appropriate speech acts in the conventional way in the required speech events" (2010:38).

The EU corresponds to all these definitions, together with its representatives who have in turn the task of guaranteeing the realization of specific objectives in their institutional field. The meaning of their speeches, lectures or documents depends on their official status within the institution, which has an international, global influence with only some references to territorial localization. In fact, each institutional identity requires stable communicative practices at both a macro-structural level (which is the economic-social context) and at a micro-structural level, which mainly consists of incidental situations that still include an interaction between past, present and future.

Institutional discourse often stems from the description of localised events. Yet, a representative of the institution has the duty to give an interpretation of the "event", that is putting it into systematic and systemic relation with similar/different events, developed in time and space. This type of interpretation requires the application of structural categories of discourse, such as analogy, complementarity, inclusion and contradiction. These categories generate "orders of discourse", that is sets of conventions associated with institutions, and are necessary for the construal of reality. In social/economic institutional discourse, reality is often described with numbers, quantitative data and comparative percentages. This type of data, however, is never neutral as "numbers" and "quantities" are, for example, deliberately introduced by speakers to support his/her exposition and their descriptions vary substantially according to their communicative contexts of use (Bowker, 2011, Bowker, 2013b). This involves two important aspects in discourse analysis: the identity of the discourse communities, as we mentioned above, and the ideology

which supports the discourse. The importance of understanding ideologies concerning language use has been highlighted by the work of several linguistic anthropologists. Irvine (1989:5) defines language ideology as "the cultural system of ideas about social and linguistic relationships, together with their loading of moral and political interests", and Kroskrity (2000:8) emphasizes that it is "constructed in the interest of a specific social or cultural group".

The construction of the EU identity is fundamentally related to communication and information strategies. The speeches analysed here – although delivered by outstanding speakers – do not express power explicitly, but exercise authority through a process of persuasion and a sense of complicity which are necessary to obtain consensus and cooperation, the main aims of European policy. We are therefore investigating a complex interaction which reflects the objectives pursued by the EU. Each speech is in no way a monologue, because it elicits agreement and a co-construction of strategies for the future to achieve greater social cohesion and cultural inclusion. Language use as an aspect of social identity is here described in terms of culturally specific vocabulary, context-sensitive topics and shared attitudes. European citizens are, in fact, still learning how to join the group's identity and, as Selznick argues, "values do have a central place in the theory of institutions" (1996:271).

8.3. Materials and methodology

The examples given in this paper are taken from the speeches and documents produced by non-native speakers, addressing a qualified audience with the intent to shape people's opinion. For previous studies, the documents have been organised and retrieved in small corpora and processed by text analysers (Greaves 2005; Rayson 2007) to detect occurrences, frequencies and collocations. Specifically, we deal with the following material, covering a period spanning from 2007 and 2011:

	Tokens	Unique words
Barroso	*16.112*	*2.371*
Draghi	*16.425*	*2.802*
Orban	*12.664*	*2.118*
Schäuble	*17.216*	*1.915*

In analysing these types of documents, it is necessary to focus on indexicality, which allows us to elicit the features of the language in relation to the specific content and context, tracing the relationship between the selection of words (*keyness*) and the topic discussed (*aboutness*). As a matter of fact, indexical expression such as personal pronouns and temporal/spatial deictics can be associated with different meanings or referents on different occasions. Although institutional discourse requires stable communicative practices, institutional identity cannot be considered a 'fixed' entity, as it is contingent on local conditions and different interactional contexts. The analysis of language is, then, based on Sinclair's notion of "extended units of meaning" which, together with lexical choices, takes into account the semantic prosody of utterances, that is "the functional choice which links meaning to purpose" (1996:88). Indeed, communicative purposes necessarily involve a discussion of ideological positions. Moreover, the selection of lexicon helps also to understand the way in which institutional isomorphism works. Following Di Maggio and Powell, isomorphism is "a constraining process that forces one unit […] to resemble other units that face the same set of environmental conditions" (1983:149). Institutional isomorphism is influenced by three types of mechanisms: normative issues, responses to uncertainty and the problem of legitimacy. We will see below how, for example, "financial" in Schäuble very often expresses normative issues; "stability", particularly in Draghi, is the response to uncertainty; "Commission" in Barroso is a key word to legitimacy.

8.4. Findings: lexical choice, key words and phraseology

Although dealing with small corpora, they seem to be reliable and representative, as they are comparable for size and type of audience. The documents analysed can illuminate the strength of English in the construal of European institutional discourse. They belong to a mixed genre, as they were often delivered orally according to a written draft, then divulged on websites designed for the purpose. The websites constitute the source of the present research (see Appendix). The language analysis aims to detect similarities and differences within the macro-category of institutional discourse, where the sender's identity and position affect the structure and organization of speech

within specific purposes and arguments (Benwell and Stokoe 2010). In the present study, quantitative analysis is used to verify the assumption that political, banking, educational and economic languages strictly belong to the institutional roles of the speakers; on the other hand, discourse analysis helps to highlight the extensive use of evaluative language (Hunston/ Thompson 2000) and the speakers' position in specific contexts, in both a local and a global perspective.

8.4.1. Keywords

Lexis connects the topic discussed and the construction of the relevant discourse, as "lexical choice is a significant way through which speakers evoke and orient to the institutional context of their talk" (Drew and Heritage, 1992:29). Although the texts investigated here are technical in nature, they are produced within an institution which is strongly ideology-laden and express their role by balancing consensus and conflict. In this section the most frequent content words (not grammar and function words) in each sub-corpus are reported and some are illustrated, considering the position and role of each speaker within the EU at the time of his intervention. In 2011 Josè Manuel Barroso was the President of the European Commission; Wolfgang Schäuble was (and still is) the German Federal Minister of Finance; Mario Draghi was a candidate to the presidency of the European Central Bank (now in charge). In the period between 2007 and 2010 Leonard Orban (at present Romanian Minister of European Affairs) was the Commissioner for Multilingualism in the European Commission.

In Figure 1 the most frequent words in each corpus are listed[1]; they deserve attention as they place the texts in a specific domain (Williams 1976) and relate to other frequently co-occurring words and their phraseology, as we will see later.

The figure shows how each speaker constructs his identity by careful choice of appropriate words that convey the information which identifies him as part of a well- defined speech community. Draghi and Schäuble are directly involved in banking and economics, therefore it is not surprising the high frequency of the words "bank(s)" and the adjectives "financial" and "fiscal" respectively.

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[1]   For convenience all Figures are grouped together at the end of the paper.

Both share an interest in "growth" and "monetary" issues with reference to their domains (banking and economics), which are not prevalent in the other two domains (politics and culture). The uneven distribution of *growth* in the sub-corpora (60 occurrences in Draghi, 37 in Barroso, 59 in Schäuble, 13 in Orban) confirms the connection between language and discourse community, and suggests different degrees of comparison. The authors all move from a positive basic principle, which is to stimulate and promote growth. Barroso and Schäuble have the same number of occurrences and also share the European attitude. Obviously Barroso focuses on European growth appealing to the citizens' immediate interests and concerns, referring to "growth and jobs across the EU/across our Union", "growth and job creation" and "growth and employment". Schäuble insists on "sustainable growth" (repeated several times) and "socially sustainable / socially compatible growth", showing a particular interest in a durable perspective ("long-term growth prospects", "growth in the long run"). However, Schäuble shares with Draghi a more technical language, when he uses phrases such as "credit-fuelled growth", "high growth rates", "level of growth via monetary policy", "short-term volatile growth". Draghi deals mainly with "economic growth", "the growth rate", "GDP growth", "means of promoting growth and ensuring peace and policy promoting strong, sustainable and balanced growth". In Orban "economic growth" serves the purposes of cultural perspectives: "the implications of multilingualism for economic growth and jobs"; "the potential of languages for contributing to growth and jobs".

Draghi shows his background identity in the wide use of "Italian" and "Italy". "Multilingualism" is present only in Orban, together with words such as "language(s)" and "learning". He also uses the word "skills" far more than the other speakers, always referring to "language", as in the following sentence: "There are huge gains to be made by *capitalizing on language skills* to meet demand within Europe and in the new globalised economy".

It is clear, then, the relationship between content (*aboutness*) and use of language (*keywords*). Words precisely define and express the speaker's territory on the one hand, on the other they shape the discourse community with which the audience identifies. This point is also made evident with words which are not at

the top of the frequency lists, for example "responsibility" and "solidarity" which are considered pivots of the EU identity. "Responsibility" accounts for 20 occurrences in Barroso, 3 in Draghi, 6 in both Orban and Schäuble; for "solidarity" we find 14 occurrences in Barroso, 3 in Draghi, 9 in Orban and 6 in Schäuble. The application of these terms is amply diversified. With reference to the context, underlying a "feeling of solidarity", Orban speaks about the "responsibility for multilingualism" and explicitly says "languages are a shared responsibility". "Solidarity" and "responsibility" are a binomial in Barroso: "If our action is guided by *solidarity* and *responsibility* — then we can ensure that it is also a strength. The European Commission is determined to provide this kind of leadership with *solidarity* and *responsibility*", so adhering to the European attitude. They are also a binomial in Draghi ("*Solidarity* among the member countries in the Union must be matched by *a sense of responsibility and compliance with the rules*") provided that regulations are respected. The same is more or less true in Schäuble: "Regulation must restore the link between risk and liability, reward and *responsibility* of financial market participants and institutions"; but: "*such solidarity has its limits*, it can only accompany a country's reform efforts", thus emphasizing a dualism between the rich and the poor that seems a contradiction in the construction of a common shared future. These examples show that even not highly frequent words can contribute to the construction of an institutional identity.

8.4.2. An insight into collocations

8.4.2.1. *Crisis*

Politics, economics and banking are deeply concerned with "crisis", whereas no occurrence of the word "crisis" can be found in Orban's speeches. The three sub-corpora, therefore, give a narrative of the crisis, and also an explanation of it. In Barroso's speeches "crisis" is very often "the crisis", "this crisis", "the crisis we are in", "the lessons of the crisis", that is the particular situation in the period analysed: "a crisis of the euro", "the crisis in Greece", "the beginning of the crisis", "the worst economic crisis in the post-war period", "the evolving crisis". Then, we find a group of collocations used to approach possible solutions: "crisis management", "systemic response to the crisis", "to bring this crisis to an immediate close", "we will be able to leave the

crisis behind us". Only a few sentences show a more technical use of the word, such as: "A *public debt crisis* in one Member States can affect taxpayers in another Member State".

Schäuble mainly refers to the present crisis, using "the crisis", "this crisis", "Greece's debt crisis", "the crisis in Ireland", in a way very similar to Barroso's. Differently from Barroso however (who has to maintain his *super partes* stance, according to his institutional role), Schäuble - affirming his role and identity as Federal Minister of Finance in a European state - can afford to point the finger at some Member States which particularly gave origin to *the crisis*, "a few spendthrift countries in the Euro area" whose *debt crisis* is "becoming a *crisis* threatening the Eurozone as a whole, and with it the Euro". Furthermore: "I presume that most of us never imagined that a *sovereign debt crisis* in a relatively small country could affect the entire Eurozone. Yet the fact is that *the Greek crisis*, just like *the crisis in Ireland*, weakened confidence in the Eurozone as a whole". Criticism is not hidden, and it is often expressed by the contrast singular/plural: "The first point I want to make is that, at the heart of the matter, we are not experiencing a *crisis* of the Euro, but various *crises* in individual countries that belong to the Euro area. These *crises* were caused by the individual countries' erroneous economic and fiscal policies, as in the case of Greece, or were caused by a banking system going off the rails, as in Ireland".

More technical language is used to suggest solutions: "the impact of excess global liquidity as *a key cause of the crisis*". As a Minister of Finance in a Member State, Schäuble reaffirms his defence of a common currency: "The first point I want to make is that, at the heart of the matter, *we are not experiencing a crisis of the Euro* […] Let me repeat that: We are faced with *sovereign debt crises* in individual countries, and *not with a currency crisis*. […] I am convinced that, if we stick with our policy of fiscal and structural reforms, we will put the economies of the Eurozone on a sustainable footing and prevent the *debt crisis* of some countries from becoming a crisis threatening the Eurozone as a whole and in turn the world economy".

The only reference with the past is the mention of the 2008 crisis, on several occasions, such as: "There appears to be a consensus that the *financial crisis which erupted in 2008* was caused by a combination of cheap money, deregulation and a race for profits among many executives and investment bankers who because of insufficient incentives did not show sufficient regard for potential risks".

In Draghi's speeches the use of the word "crisis" appears in different technical scenarios, so that it is accompanied by some specific adjectives: financial, global, banking, international; "sovereign debt crisis" is very often present in the texts. When Draghi refers to the crisis of the period, he uses "the present crisis" or he gives specific points for reference: "Let me state that none of the recent events, including *the global crisis*, call this fact [EMU's success] into question". Historical references in Draghi's speeches, such as "Mexican crisis" and "Asian financial crisis", require a solid economic background in order to be properly understood. Historical references are also indicated by time expressions, before/after/during the crisis. In this perspective, Draghi completely corresponds to the point of view expressed by North (1991) about institutions which evolve and develop incrementally over time, as quoted earlier.

8.4.2.2. Economic

Another interesting item is "economic" which, probably unexpectedly, is present also in Orban. Barroso, Draghi and Schäuble use the adjective in several technical phrases, such as "economic polices/ imbalances". More specifically, expressing the values and beliefs of the Commission, Barroso adopts expressions such as "economic governance package" with reference to the "economic and political challenges facing Europe". Draghi concretely refers to "the conduct of economic agents". Draghi and Schäuble tellingly underline the achievement of concurrent factors (Draghi: "economic, monetary and banking matters"; "economic and monetary integration"; Schäuble: "economic and fiscal governance in the Eurozone"); they both adopt the adjective in positive perspectives (Draghi: "economic reconstruction/recovery"; Schäuble: "economic prosperity/recovery"; "economic welfare"). In Orban's speeches the adjective is embedded in the context and in the discourse construction about multilingualism which represents one of "Europe's social and economic opportunities". Indeed, according to his position, Orbam speaks about "the economic value of multilingualism" and "an increasing awareness of the economic importance of multilingualism"; he describes the "implications of multilingualism for economic growth and jobs" and shows how "multilingualism […] contributes to our economic competitiveness".

The examples signal the coherence of indexical words with reference to the topic and context.

8.4.2.3. The *EU* lexicon

We can now move to the words related to the EU (Europe/European/ euro): although they appear in the four sub-corpora, their distribution is different.

From Figure 2 we can see that "Euro-area" is frequent only in Draghi and "eurozone" only in Schäuble. As these compound words are generally considered equivalent, we can assume that their use depends exclusively on personal choice.

Banking and economic discourse in a globalized era involves a space wider than Europe, which justifies the low frequency of this word in both Draghi's and Schäuble's speeches. Yet, they both put "Europe" at the crossroads of their interests. Draghi: "I believe that EMU, with the *euro* at its centre, has been a great success, a success that should be preserved for the sake of all the citizens of *Europe*"; Schäuble: "Events in *Europe* demonstrated again that modern financial markets can increase volatility".

"Europe", as we can see from Figure 2, scores higher in Barroso and Orban. In Barroso we read: "At the G20 summit in Cannes on 3-4 November, *Europe* will actively drive forward coordinated global action to cope with common economic challenges and bring the world economy back to sustainable growth". And in Orban: "*Europe*'s linguistic and cultural diversity is a source of richness which also needs to be nurtured and promoted". We can also note that "Europe" is much more frequent than "EU".

As far as the adjective "European" is concerned, we can observe how in Barroso most collocations are connected with "European institutions", "European Union" and its relevant bodies (Commission, Parliament, Council and Central Bank). He also uses phrases such as "European society", "a European approach" and "the ethics of European responsibility" which mark his identity and positioning.

Although Draghi makes reference to the European bodies and supports "the solidity of European institutions", the topic leads him to use the adjective in a specific context: within the field of "European economy", the "European Central Bank" and the "European Monetary Union" are mentioned several times; "European banks/intermediaries" is a frequent occurrence too; other specific phrases are "European surveillance of national budgetary policies", "European Systemic Risk Board", "European Banking Authority", "European Regional Development Fund".

In Orban's speeches the adjective is used as a collocation with "project" ("European Project of Unity in Diversity"), "solidarity", "institutions", "citizens". It is also used in phrases such as "European Social Fund" (education); "European strategy for multilingualism"; "European political dialogue" (several times); "deeply European and citizen-oriented portfolio"; "European integration" and "European identity"; "Building a sense of solidarity, of European kinship, is still a guiding principle for Europe".

Schäuble mainly deals with "European Monetary Union", "European Financial Transaction Tax" and "European bond market", comparing "European and international financial markets"; he uses phrases such as "European currency" and "European monetary policy". But also: institutions/democracies, countries/governments/ politicians, "European integration" (several times) and "European prosperity".

We can then underline that the adjective "European" covers different linguistic functions related to the construction of discourse, both in terms of epistemic argumentation (what is or is not the case, e.g. "European integration" in Orban), and in terms of normative argumentation (what should – or should not – happen, e.g. "European surveillance" in Draghi).

8.5. Findings: grammatical choice, institutional stance and personal positioning

8.5.1. Identity and pronominal usage

It is widely recognized (Drew and Heritage 1992; Stubbs 2001; Schiffrin 2009; Salvi 2012, 2014) that personal pronouns – and other markers of person indexicality - are seen to play a crucial role in the construction of discursive identities, as they establish the point of view of discourse and the positioning of the writer/speaker with reference to the audience. Particularly, Benwell and Stokoe (2010:94) maintain that "participants may display their orientation to their acting as incumbents of an institutional role […] by using a personal pronoun which indexes their institutional identity rather than their personal identity".

In the four sub-corpora treated in our analysis, there is a wide divergence in the distribution and use of pronouns by the four protagonists, as Figure 3 shows.

The use of "we" clearly acts as a means of enacting institutional identity, going beyond any inclusive referencing of the immediate participants in the speech event. This "institutional we" indexes both the institutions themselves and their spokespeople, together with the scientific communities of economists and financial experts, as well as the wider interested audiences of the socio-political communities of European and world-wide nations. In Draghi (55 occurrences) "we" means the experts and bankers attending his speeches: "*we* have not yet moved to a multi-polar monetary system"; "a more solid and efficient financial sector than *we* had in the past". Orban's referencing (86 occurrences) is multiple in this example: "*we* have managed to show that an organisation of great political and operational complexity can rise to the challenge of multiple languages", the "organization" ranging from the Commission, the comprehensive bodies of the EU itself, and also their proponents. In Schäuble (121 occurrences) the inclusive "we" either refers to the audience, or to the discourse community, the economists: "To stabilize the international financial system *we* need to overcome such parochial behaviour". In Barroso, "we" indexes the Commission: "*we* have taken far-reaching measures"; "*we* now need rapid and effective implementation". However, the 295 occurrences identified in the Barroso corpus, as opposed to the much lower incidence in the other three, would suggest that Barroso is intent on using an interaction strategy which, by referencing the Commission directly in his exposition, bringing it into the spotlight, consequently calls on the audience to legitimize and give credence to the Commission's objectives, programmes, actions and results in an explicit fashion.

There is also a marked difference in the distribution of "I" and "you" over the sub-corpora, with Barroso and Schäuble drawing much more on this pair of pronouns than the other two speakers, as Figure 3 shows. An examination of the use of "I" by itself shows some stylistic differences over the four speakers, but generally "I" serves the same fundamental pragmatic function, namely the construction of argumentative and expository discourse, marking discourse structure and stages through meta-discursive devices; delineating topics and guiding their development; and attributing the discursive value to be attached to the information being transmitted. In the performance of these functions, "I" is a fundamental indicator in the management of knowledge and information, drawing on a

common phraseological set comprising three main categories of verbal functional types, some exponents of which are summarized in Figure 4.

The use of "I" and "you" could well be viewed together in functional terms (also including "you" and "me" and "me" and "you"). They forge an explicit relationship between the speaker and the audience, either directly present in the communicative event or intended for the wider, unseen receivers of the address, in other places and at other times, often via internet-relayed channels: Barroso, "Let *me* inform *you*", "Let *me* appeal to *you*"; Draghi, "*I* trust *you* have read my CV", "*I* opened my address to *you*"; Orban, "*I* cannot tell *you* how much it means to *me*", "*I* would like to assure *you*"; Schäuble "*I* can tell *you*", "*I* would like to share with *you*".

The indexing of "I" and "you" constitutes a proximal engagement strategy, narrowing the institutional distance through personalized interaction. At the same time, a rhetorical dialogue can be created which addresses the salient features of imagined polar positions and gives the opportunity for the speakers to air contrasting opinions, playing the devil's advocate, so to speak: Barroso, "On borders, I don't ever want to see *you* stuck in a border queue […] so even on an issue like freedom of movement, *you* have a stake, and I count on *you* to support *us*"; Orban, "Sometimes *you* may get the feeling that *you* would understand each other better if *we* used just one language: a common language […] but *I* believe multilingualism has to be embedded in the daily life and management of the European institutions".

Pronominal use, then, is pragmatically very significant, a powerful inter-relational persuasive device: in institutional discourse it is used in a bid to create approval, consensus and credibility, while deflating potential divergences of opinion and addressing criticism. The data show that Barroso and Orban make far greater use of this pronominal pair, reflecting a desire to create this direct kind of relationship and a high level of participant interaction. Arguably, as with the use of "we", this is in line with the felt need on the part of the Commission in general for transparency, accountability and a commitment to involve European citizens in the decision-making process, possibly in contrast with other parallel institutional communities.

8.5.2. The faces of modality: what is possible, probable, desirable and necessary

Modal meaning systems are some of the most powerful elements in the English language, with great semantico-grammatical potential for the expression of speaker stance, positioning and attitudes to issues, events and phenomena. They are also crucial to the construction of argumentation, in the marking of topics, their elaboration, and provide fundamental discourse indicators as to how information is exchanged and how it should be interpreted by receivers. They are, therefore, very useful indices in this investigation of the similarities and contrasts in the varying EU contexts of institutional discourse treated here.

Modal meanings are usually divided by linguists into two main categories: *epistemic* modality, treating degrees of probability, likelihood, and possibility in the realms of knowledge and information creation, transfer and sharing; and secondly, *deontic* modality, expressing degrees of obligation, necessity, and willingness in personal behaviour and action, with "can", occupying a sort of middle ground (Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004, provide a comprehensive grammatical description of these systems). In both cases, these two grammatical modal categories cover a series of clines, from absolutes to graduated intermediary positions. Speakers also mark issues with salience, relevance, actuality (in the sense of how real or possible something is), and evidentiality (in the sense of how obvious something is) through the use of so-called modal adjuncts. These include discourse markers such as evaluative adverbs: "It *must* be *fully* clear that" (Draghi), "Fiscal tightening in the medium-term *might possibly* have worked in the past" (Schäuble), together with adjectival descriptive choices: "This *will* be a *crucial* step forward for strengthening surveillance" (Barroso), "Decision makers *need to* have a *perfect* understanding" (Orban). Modifiers of this kind further personalize information, either boosting and emphasising the significance of their communications, or on the contrary, tempering and mitigating the force of their assertions, claims and arguments.

Figure 5 shows the modal verbs selected for electronic retrieval and analysis in the four sub-corpora (together with the semi-modal verb "need"). In these relatively small corpora, a degree of consistency of occurrence is displayed, to some extent, but, given the multi-functional

nature of each modal verb, and the power of each one to construct multi-layered patterns of meanings, both in local text and extended units of co-text, a close-up analysis of the four speakers is rewarding. In extension to the findings in the previous paragraphs, where detailed collocational work is described, modal verbs provide a window into the construction of complex semantic and pragmatic sequencies over larger stretches of text.

As a point of departure, an investigation of "can" delineates the varied topics and priorities established by the four representatives in their respective fields of discourse and intended recipients of information: Barroso is concerned "to create a sustainable and strong Europe [...] a Europe we *can* be proud of [...] The Presidency will do everything it *can* to shape the debate in these rational, constructive terms"; Draghi identifies his central interests in detailed fiscal and monetary arrangements "The existence of one major reserve currency *can* make exchange rate fluctuations more abrupt [...] more currency flexibility *can* support the rebalancing of demand"; Orban's promotion of interculturalism is centre stage: [...] the European project of Unity in Diversity. I *cannot* tell you how much that means to me [...] communities live in isolation, which *can* lead to xenophobia"; Schäuble balances EU and member state financial policy requirements and capabilities: "We need to limit excessive volatility. Only the state *can* do that"; "Governments need the markets. Markets *can* force governments to do the right thing"; "How *can* we stabilize European monetary union on a lasting basis?".

A second finding lies in the use of "must" and "should" in Draghi and Orban, in inverse proportion of occurrences. Draghi makes extensive use of "must" to express strong obligation and necessity in the face of urgent issues: "The respective roles and responsibilities *must* remain clearly distinct"; "Monetary policy *must* keep its focus on preserving price stability"; "The ECB *can* and I believe *must* continue to offer objective and independent advice". On the other hand, Orban's orientations to the state of cultural affairs in the EU take more the form of a series of recommendations for desirable action and guidelines for longer-term and more generic change: "At the same time we *should* value the languages that migrants bring to our communities"; "The Commission proposes that 2009 *should* be dedicated to creativity and innovation".

Finally, in terms of overall frequency of occurrence, Barroso uses a large range of the very varied uses of "will", characterizing his discourse with promises, assertions and reassurances for future action, investment in change, and generally establishing a strong commitment on the part of the Commission to fulfilling its multiple role as both an executive and a supervisory, intermediary body, as well as being the watch-dog of EU institutions, functions and practices: "The autumn that lies ahead *will* require further intense work [...] in the coming month we *will* put forward additional proposals"; "Europe *will* actively drive forward coordinated global action [...] the Commission *will* always be mindful of the overall EU interest"; "Once again, with this, Europe *will* be the first mover".

As we said before, modal verbs are powerful linguistic resources for the creation of complex patterns of semantico-grammatical meanings. They are often the pivots for multiple embeddings in discourse, achieved through repetition, contrast and re-enforcement. These final examples from Orban show how these semantic sequences work in local and extended co-texts: "Now I trust we *can* continue on that road and I *would* like to share with you my thoughts on the objectives towards which we *should* be working and how we *could* write the next chapter of multilingualism together. One of my fundamental beliefs is that the multilingual dimension of the EU *must* be mainstreamed in all relevant EU policies and programmes and not be seen as a separate, isolated policy."

The juxtaposition of various modal verbs is an essential part of the pragmatic force of this statement, as is, on the contrary, the repetition of one single verb, in this next example: "We *will* structure it around the two principal themes I have identified: the contribution of multilingualism to prosperity and to citizenship. In this way, the many themes and actors *will* have their rightful place. We *will* emphasise lifelong language learning as the main tool to reach language competence: not only through school but also through informal learning."

Space does not permit any more explicit exemplification, but adjectival structure, such a the comparative and superlatives of adjectives, as shown in Figure 6, also serves to intensify propositions and constitutes a part of the argumentation structure afforded by modal verbs: in the following example, "more and more + adjective" accompanies, highlights and justifies the pragmatic force of the semi-modal

"need". "Our countries themselves are becoming *more and more* multicultural, *more and more* multilingual as European integration progresses, and Europe's social and economic opportunities attract *more and more* people from elsewhere. The fact that we need to attract people from other continents is undeniable".

This section has shown how grammatical resources such as pronominal usage and modal verbs are indexical of institutional identity through their particular role in the creation of discourse. The denomination of agents (institutions and their spokespeople), and their audiences, or, on the other hand, its relative absence, allows speakers to move along an interpersonal cline, adjusting levels of formality, balancing interactional and interpretative space, and incorporating different degrees of rhetorical dialogue alongside the presentation of abstract, impersonal, more technical and academic exposition. Secondly, the use of modality meaning-making systems again permits the protagonists to vary their stances and positionings to events, working along continua of certainty and probability, necessity and desirability, possibility and likelihood in the presentation of information. At the same time, they are enabled to express varying levels of personal commitment to the "knowledge" they are creating and sharing in the form of constituted assertions, claims, hypotheses, deductions, predictions and promises, to name some of the main functions of modality.

Concluding remarks

In this paper we have been able to trace the degrees of similarity and difference in the public discourse delivered over a specified period of time by four seminal figureheads of European institutions. We have also been able to see how language features work in the construal of identity, the latter being seen as a multi-faceted phenomenon, reflecting both public and personal domains, and incorporating macro and micro-social and cultural categories. We have seen that what matters is not the fleeting event, but the meaning which endures, not the immediate circumstances, but the properties which can potentially influence the future of the institution leaving a trace of legitimacy. What emerges is that European institutional discourse and identity is far from monolithic: it is a hybrid phenomenon, characterized by extensive inter-textuality and inter-discursivity, reflecting the various

domains of use concentrated in the various institutional bodies — political, economic, financial, cultural and educational. At a micro-textual level, the instruments of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis have enabled us to identify and track the distribution and behaviour of key linguistic features, lexical patterns, grammatical systems, together with their pragmatic value, with a degree of precision and rigour. This linguistic indexicality is the key to uncovering the processes of identity maintenance, adjustment and modification, displayed through real-time interactions involving complex changes in stance and speaker positioning. In this way we have been able to describe the respective institutional profiles of the four speakers, their main interests, and their orientations to the matters which are most central to their communicative efforts in engaging with their varying audiences.

As we said at the outset, institutional identity and language cannot be divorced from ideological processes, and the study has revealed a very powerful "European Communications Agenda", in which all the representatives demonstrate a central concern with creating an image of European institutions characterized by competence, credibility, authority, transparency and trustworthiness. This is also indicative of a significant need to address what is undoubtedly a public confidence deficit factor in EU dealings with its citizens, involving a concerted effort on the part of institutions to bridge a widely-perceived communication gap and disconnect between the two public domains.

Our analysis has revealed the immense communicative investment extended by these highly influential and authoritative helmsmen of Europe. Yet, despite this uniformity of purpose, it has also thrown up, inadvertently, a significant degree of "tending one's own garden" across the various institutional bodies under review, reflecting a possible "disconnect" also among themselves. Time will only tell how successfully these dialogues have been borne out by events and circumstances, but it is to be hoped that the future of the EU is able to transcend rhetorical defensiveness and translate promises into permanent realities for the entire range of its protagonists.

Appendix

Source texts

Josè Manuel Barroso

Statement by President Barroso following the adoption of the 2011 Country specific recommendations Press conference Strasbourg, 7 June 2011; Remarks by President Barroso on the recent political developments in Greece, 17 June 2011; Statement by President Barroso following the confidence vote in the Parliament on the new Greek Government, 22 June 2011; European Council, press conference following the European Council 23-24 June 2011; Speech by President Barroso at the XIX Conference of EPP group leaders of National Parliaments European Parliament, 27 June 2011; Remarks by President Barroso on the Commission's proposals for the 2014-2020 Multi-Annual Financial Framework, press conference Brussels, 29 June 2011; Joint statement by President Barroso and President Van Rompuy following the vote in the Greek Parliament on the revised economic programme, 29 June 2011; Joint statement by President Barroso and President Van Rompuy following the vote in the Greek Parliament on the implementing measures for the revised economic programme, 30 June 2011; Barroso President of the European Commission, Debate on the closing of the Hungarian Presidency European Parliament Strasbourg, 5 July 2011; Anchoring Europe's Future, speech at Château de Westerlo, Belgium, 6 July 2011; Statement by President Barroso following the European Parliament debate on the start of the Polish Presidency, joint press conference with Jerzy Buzek, President of the European Parliament, and Donald Tusk, Prime Minister of Poland, Strasbourg, 6 July 2011; Speech by President Barroso at the European Parliament debate on the start of the Polish Presidency, EP Plenary debate Strasbourg, 6 July 2011; Statement by President Barroso following the European Parliament debate on the start of the Polish Presidency, 6 July 2011; Statement by President Barroso ahead of the meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the Euro area, press statement Brussels, 20 July 2011; Statement by President Barroso following the meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the Euro area, press conference Brussels, 21 July 2011; Euro Area Summit, statement following the summit, 21 July 2011; Increasing co financing rates for EU funds - boosting European economic recovery, press release, Brussels, 1 August 2011;

Statement by President Barroso on the euro area sovereign bond markets, 3 August 2011; Letter from President Barroso to the Heads of State or Government of the Euro area, 3 August 2011; Statement by President Barroso and Commissioner Rehn on today's proposals by President Sarkozy and Chancelor Merkel, 16 August 2011; Statement by President Barroso following his meeting with the Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk Press point Brussels, 30 August 2011; Transcript of President Barroso's video message on the priorities for the autumn Brussels, 31 August 2011. (<www.ec.europa.eu/commission _2010-2014/president/ news/speeches-statements/index_en.htm>).

Mario Draghi
"The euro – from the past to the future", Address by Mr Mario Draghi, Governor of the Bank of Italy and Chairman of the Financial Stability Board, at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart (Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore), Milan, 21 March 2011; "Overview of economic and financial developments in Italy", Concluding remarks by Mr Mario Draghi, Governor of the Bank of Italy and Chairman of the Financial Stability Board, at the Ordinary Meeting of Shareholders 2010, Bank of Italy Rome, 31 May 2011; "Opening statement to the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of the European Parliament", Opening statement by Mr Mario Draghi, Governor of the Bank of Italy and Chairman of the Financial Stability Board, and Candidate for President of the European Central Bank, to the Economic and Monetary Affairs Committee of the European Parliament, Brussels, 14 June 2011; "Tensions and New Alliances: the Currency Wars" Introduction to Les rencontres èconomiques d'Aix-en-Provence, 8 July 2011; "The crisis and the euro", Address by the Governor of the Bank of Italy, Italian Banking Association Annual Meeting, 13 July 2011. (<www.bis.org/ list/cbspeeches> Central Bankers' Speeches 2011).

Leonard Orban
Introductory statement – European Parliament Hearing, Brussels, 27.11.2006; *Enlargement and Diversity in the European Union*, Oxford, 3.3.2008; *Translating the European future*, Brussels, 14.3.2008; *Speech to the Culture and Education Committee of the European Parliament*, Brussels, 31.3.2008; *Making the most of Europe's linguistic diversity*, Brussels, 15.4.2008; *Towards a comprehensive strategy for multilingualism*, Athens, Hellenic Parliament, 17.4.2008. (ec.europa.eu).

Wolfgang Schäuble
"A Comprehensive Strategy for the Stabilization of the Economic and Monetary Union", Speech by the German Federal Minister of Finance Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble, Brussels Economic Forum 2011, 18 May 2011; "From Financial to Debt Crisis – Financial Markets, Fiscal policy and Public Debt in Europe's Monetary Union", Speech by the German Federal Minister of Finance Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble, 4th Lindau Meeting in Economics, St Gallen, 27 August 2011; "The Euro Area Crisis and Future Global Implications", Speech by the German Federal Minister of Finance Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble on the "Peterson Institute for International Economics, Bruegel, 27 September 2011; "Achieving Sustainable Growth: Fiscal Consolidation and Financial Market Regulation" Lecture delivered in London by Dr. Wolfgang Schäuble, 17 October 2011. (http://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/)

Tables

TOPIC SPECIFIC WORDS	BARROSO	DRAGHI	ORBAN	SCHÄU-BLE
bank	6	39	0	0
banks	5	52	0	9
budget	50	18	0	2
capital	2	36	0	5
cent	0	90	0	0
citizens	11	6	36	25
Commission	60	7	32	5
countries	8	81	14	68
crisis	36	62	0	40
crises	0	5	0	25
debt	9	41	0	40
dialogue	3	3	37	0
diversity	0	1	35	0
economic	47	44	18	51
education	10	4	39	3
EU	32	5	28	2
euro	43	44	0	32
euro-area	2	22	0	0
Europe	99	15	64	22
European	153	60	115	69

eurozone	1	3	0	38
financial	52	75	1	105
fiscal	10	14	0	76
governments	6	13	4	46
growth	37	60	12	59
international	6	40	4	7
Italian	0	37	1	1
Italy	2	47	0	3
language	0	0	153	1
languages	0	0	134	0
learning	0	0	45	3
market	23	19	19	30
markets	20	26	4	83
member	73	14	23	35
monetary	2	65	0	50
multilingualism	0	0	87	0
national	49	24	8	11
policy	28	47	25	40
skills	1	4	48	0
stability	19	45	0	18
states	63	11	23	33

Tab. 1. Number of occurrences of topic-specific words

TOPIC SPECIFIC WORDS	BARROSO	DRAGHI	ORBAN	SCHÄU-BLE
EU	32	5	28	2
euro	43	44	0	32
euro-area	2	22	0	0
Europe	99	15	64	22
European	153	60	115	69
eurozone	1	3	0	38

Tab. 2. Number of occurrences of EU words

PERSONAL PRONOUNS	BARRO-SO	DRAGHI	ORBAN	SCHÄUBLE
we	295	55	86	121
I	141	36	167	64
you	51	2	58	10

Tab. 3. Personal pronouns as indices of institutional identity.

MARKING COG-NITION	MARKING VOLITION, PERCEPTION, AF-FECT	MARKING EXPOSI-TION PROCESS
I believe I know I think	I am / confident / glad / pleased to I assure you I caution I count on I expect I feel I hope I look forward to I look to I trust I urge I want to I welcome I would like to	I called for / on I discussed I have made the case I made clear I insist I make this point I said I suggest I want to emphasize I want to point out I will cover I would argue

Tab. 4. Indexicality of "I" in the creation and management of argumentative discourse

MODAL VERBS	BARROSO	DRAGHI	ORBAN	SCHÄU-BLE
Can	49	26	39	51
May	4	12	4	4
Might	0	0	6	5
Must	26	49	16	14
Should	19	11	29	12
Will	172	43	89	82
Would	33	30	32	41
Need	29	16	28	46

Tab. 5. Number of occurrences of modal verbs

COMPARATIVE /SUPERLATIVE FORMS	BARROSO	DRAGHI	ORBAN	SCHÄU-BLE
More	55	69	68	41
Most	26	17	12	9

Tab. 6. Number of occurrences of comparative/superlative forms

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