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Chief Editors: Giuditta Caliendo & Maria Cristina Nisco

SPECIAL ISSUE

The Discursive Representation of Globalised Organised Crime

Crossing Borders of Languages and Cultures

Giuseppe Balirano, Giuditta Caliendo, Paul Sambre (Eds)

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The Discursive Representation of Globalised Organised Crime: Crossing Borders of Languages and Cultures

Editorial

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Launching a new academic journal has proved to be an extremely challenging experience. Why would anyone want to embark on such a thorny path?

Our main intention is to attempt to share new ideas and knowledge in a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary perspective. It is about keeping a record in one place of scholarly activities from different areas and fostering critical research questions with the scope of gaining a wider understanding of the issues examined within the academic community.

While existing journals can more than aptly absorb the various contributions in our areas of interest within the field of language and linguistics, we thought it would be useful to set up a forum and a platform for the ongoing, original, research of scholars from neighbouring disciplines whose investigation is specifically devoted to the topics of identity, language, and diversity.

The international peer-reviewed *I-LanD Journal* reflects, thus, a commitment to publishing, on a bi-annual basis, original and high-quality research papers addressing the complex dynamics existing among Identity, Language and Diversity (forming the very acronym of the Journal's name, *I-LanD*), from a variety of theoretical and analytical perspectives. As fuzzy, and 'buzzy', as the three terms can be, it seems to us undeniable that from the concepts of identity, language and diversity a wide array of unexplored meanings and connections can be unravelled. Above all, indeed, by trying to provide a suitable home for original investigations, the Journal strives to activate a critical network of interventions to create a space of debate where scholars from different disciplines may cross each other's paths and share their works with each other. If Italian and Western academic disciplines seem to have entrenched themselves in a peculiar arrangement which obsessively focuses on strict disciplinary boundaries, the Journal adopts, instead, a theoretical modality that has long ago started an interrogation of those very same distinctions, opting for an interdisciplinary approach, one developed within the wider neighbourhood of social sciences and humanities.

The *I-LanD Journal* was created under the aegis of the *I-LanD Research Centre*, an independent centre with a specific focus on the concepts of diversity and identity, based at the University of Naples "L'Orientale", Italy. It was founded at the end of 2015 by a group of

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scholars from Italian and foreign universities sharing common research interests, whose main aim was to encourage cross-disciplinarity while also implementing inter-university networks and cooperation.

However, it must be said that neither the *I-LanD Journal* nor the *I-LanD Research Centre* would exist without the huge amount of research, critical thinking and reflective practice that launched, back in 2013, the first *Languaging Diversity International Conference*, which marked a series of fortunate, itinerant conferences currently moving towards the 4th edition. It all started in the form of conversations, over far too many coffees, with Giuseppe Balirano (Associate Professor at the University of Naples "L'Orientale"), the true mind and soul of the project. Then, most of our like-minded group of scholars gravitating around the different Italian universities were also involved in the exploration of the tangled issues of language and diversity, and the multifaceted discourses emerging as bearers of the values of alterity. If language enables, as it does, the deployment of multiple identities that offer specific representations, it is *in* language that diversity is itself articulated through discursive practices that conceptualise what they name (Halliday 1994). Thus, language can be viewed as a space fostering the articulation and differentiation of identity values.

Following the amazingly unexpected number of abstracts submitted, the first *Languaging Diversity Conference* brought together a truly wide variety of theoretical, empirical, and methodological approaches. The two volumes that were published in the aftermath of the conference – *Languaging Diversity: Identities, Genres, Discourses* (Balirano/Nisco 2015) and *Languaging Diversity: Variationist Approaches and Identities* (Guzzo/Britain 2016) – deliberately reflect that variety and seek to respond to an ongoing debate from different linguistic and critical perspectives and by means of a number of methodologies. They specifically engage with thought-provoking observations on the modes in which diversity is linguistically articulated *by* and *in* discourse. The wide national and international interest attracted by both the conference and the collections reveals and confirms, we feel, the need to devote constant attention to how identities can be linguistically, as well as semiotically, articulated and recontextualised in the various discourses produced by different societies.

Taking up this legacy, the Journal is ready to also venture off the general debates on identity, language and diversity, directing analytical attention to less investigated aspects of the varying articulations of diversity through language, such as the relation between language and ethnic/cultural identity, language and sexual identity/gender, as well as to forms of language variation derived from the emergence of new social practices or from instances of contamination/hybridisation of different genres, discursive practices and text types. If nothing else, it can show that the study of such topics remains an intellectual battleground, offering a venue for conveying original and rigorous scholarship to a broad readership.

To conclude, special mention is due to all the prestigious members of our Advisory Board. We are extremely thankful to the scholars who enthusiastically joined it and agreed to give us their warm support,

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despite our project being new and rather 'ambitious'. We will surely all benefit from the variety of their experiences and backgrounds, their ideas and precious insights.

We are now very pleased to welcome the inaugural issue of the *I-LanD Journal*, which will be co-edited by Giuseppe Balirano (University of Naples "L'Orientale"), Giuditta Caliendo (Université of Lille) and Paul Sambre (University of Leuven), and centred on "The Discursive Representation of Globalised Organised Crime: Crossing Borders of Languages and Cultures". The issue, thoroughly described in the guest editors' introduction, intends to contribute to the recent literature on discourse and crime by exploring the way(s) in which crime and criminal entities are represented and recontextualised on a global scale through multiple forms of semiosis. This special issue draws from the work and the results of a thematic panel that the guest editors organised and hosted on the topic of the discursive representation of globalised organised crime in August 2016, within the framework of the International ESSE (European Society for the Study of English) Conference, held at the National University of Ireland (NUI) in Galway.

We are still in the process of discovering what it takes to get a new journal up and running in a 'sustainable' way. What we are already well aware of, however, is the fact that an academic journal requires an ongoing and lasting commitment, something we are fully ready to devote ourselves to with all our energy and enthusiasm.

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Introduction: Multimodal Discourse about Crime in a Globalised World

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In this special issue, the guest editors bring together a selection of papers, which offer new insight into academic research on the representation of organised crime in different media outlets. This volume touches upon different criminal organisations and activities, taking into account genres and media where criminal actors and their public antagonists are discursively displayed. The guest editors' original idea was to take explicitly into account, on the one hand, the multifaceted and evolving nature of crime groups and, on the other, the meaning-making processes that represent them through the media. Contrary to the discourse surrounding the subculture of criminals, the focus here is on the global public debate about organised crime syndicates and the social response to their wide array of criminal activities.

Crime is a concept created and defined by society, where many people depend on second-hand information provided by the media. The media both shape our understanding of crime (Tabbert 2012: 142) and selectively put on stage criminal actors and processes, often in a dramatic, sometimes fictional, way (Jewkes 2015: 24–28; Anello 2013). Research about the discourse of crime generally deals with its different dimensions, such as its relation with public policy, the legal economy and criminal law, police work and criminology (Fijnaut/Paoli 2004: 31–36). It generally focuses less on the reality of social events, activities and participants involved in violent behaviour, where the interplay between crime, civil society and the media is at stake. This issue zooms in on the latter, looking at the constructivist and ideological nature of crime as a collective and mediatised window on the world. The focus here is not on the discourse of criminals or inmates themselves, but rather on public discourse about organised crime. Media discourse both constitutes and is constituted by public attitudes and contradictory feelings of fear, anger and fascination (Fairclough 1992). Media discourse has a strong impact on public attitude towards crime: it contributes to a better understanding of the risks involved and a rise in acceptance of measures of prevention, effective punishment and reintegration of offenders, and may act as a trigger

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for necessary national and international legal reforms. Media discourse does entail both a representational and imaginary aspect: it deals not only with the way crime is (sometimes fatalistically) problematised, but also with how crime and the (successful) battle against it should or could be positively portrayed (Bednarek/Caple 2017: 60–61, 85–88; van Erp 2017).

The six papers in this special issue analyse different representations of crime presented in media formats on a more global scale and map out (i) the conceptualisation of criminal organisations and their members; (ii) the social actors displayed, both in the criminal and public sphere; (iii) the different textual formats of crime reporting. Firstly, the media reflect and reshape public belief and attitude about organised crime. Secondly, they represent the network of social actors surrounding crime: not only crime syndicates and perpetrators, but also crime victims (and their associations) and crime fighters. Thirdly, they build concepts and global narratives in press coverage about crime. On a meta-level, media discourse about crime expresses power relations between both public institutions, criminal syndicates and the media, as these forces try to occupy, control or take stance within the public space, sometimes by open intimidation and battles, often through more subtle forms of information exchange, repression, influence or search for dominance.

The different contributions in this volume are tributary to the epistemological program of Critical Discourse Analysis, a framework for reflection about the dialectical mediation between semiotic structure and social action (Chouliaraki/Fairclough 1999; Weiss/Wodak 2003: 6–9). Mediation concerns both text producers, such as journalists making the news, and text consumers, i.e. media audiences (Fairclough 2006: 25). Different genres use different strategies to attract readership. Crime coverage in the press has an ambivalent status of infotainment: it offers both a factual reconstruction of criminal events, but typically reenacts, and fictionalises the different characters involved in those episodes in dramatic settings (Fairclough 1995: 161–162). Conversely, crime fiction often acts as a time machine for social and political critique, as it represents and takes part in the transformation of the crime concept against the dysfunctions of a given spatio-temporal setting (Pezzotti 2014: 9). For this reason, the guest editors have included papers dealing with different media and crime fiction formats.

Criminal syndicates and the media which represent them are now part of a process of globalisation and transnationalisation, as they expand their activities across borders and export criminal models and procedures to other countries (Allum 2013; Longo 2010). Taking advantage of existing loopholes in national legislations and international police cooperation, crime groups opportunistically exploit the incentives of today's globalised market and technological progress while maintaining a sub-national and local dimension (Massari 2003: 59; Wall/Chistyakova 2016: 112). Globalisation and migration are a fertile ground for new forms of criminalisation, not only due to criminals crossing borders, but also in global resistance against it in a networked society (Aas Franko 2013: 25). On a discursive

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level, then, glocal (organised) crime discourse is the locus of discourse and social change, which displays the legitimation of social action and social order, and displays causal relations between different spheres of the transnational public domain: the domains of politics, law enforcement and the penitentiary system, the psychological, cultural and educational fields, to name a few (Fairclough 1992, 2003: 95). All of these domains may contribute, interdiscursively, to rescaling the communicative goal of defining and explaining what organised crime is (Fairclough 2007b: 34).

Global crime entails crossing national and cultural boundaries, therefore it also implies recontextualisation and translation as crucial interlinguistic and interdiscursive dimensions in meaning-making about crime (Fairclough 2007a; Wodak *et al*. 2009). Generally speaking, little attention has thus far been devoted to the way national crime syndicates are discursively represented and recontextualised on a global scale (Allum *et al*. 2010; Caliendo *et al.* 2016). Such recontextualisation or rescaling of discourse about organised crime occurs not only in accounts of the border-crossing of criminal activities themselves (e.g. in international drug or human trafficking, financial fraud and money laundering), but also in international media being interested in the nexus between the regional/national history of crime syndicates and their modernity on the international scene (Gratteri/ Nicaso 2006). Those media bring unknown criminal phenomena to their (international) audiences wishing to understand the emergence of new organisations, as well as their impact on a broader international scale.

Messages and media formats undergo intersemiotic and interlinguistic adaptation, as crime reports are brought from one regional context or medium to another (Allum 2013; Di Ronco/ Lavorgna 2016). The questions remain: how does translation operate in the growing internationalisation of news coverage and crime fiction production, by means of omissions, additions and permutations/ transformations? How are local definitions and conceptualisations of organised crime proper bound to a given source culture transposed to other semiotic codes and cultural settings (Valdeón 2005: 107)? As for media and crime fiction translation, which aspects of global organised crime are highlighted and how does the interpretation of formal and rhetorical genre conventions occur in the target culture (Seago 2014: 4)? Translation may lead, for instance, to the juxtaposition or contrast between the same criminal phenomenon in different source and target social settings, and therefore may have an impact on different transnational views about crime (Venuti 1995: 161–162). An interesting paradox strikes in crime fiction: whereas social and literary theory have insisted on the deconstruction of a clear-cut collective identity both on the level of politics and gender, crime fiction tends to re-establish an interest for local stereotypes and (macho) gender stereotypes (Erdmann 2007). In this context, research questions arise about the expression of such regional and sexual stereotypes in texts, as well as about the cross-cultural differences affecting audience expectations in universal crime fiction formats (Maher 2014).

On a linguistic level, translation and crime call for a deeper insight

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in foreignisation or domestication translation strategies (Whithorn 2014: 169). In any case, the internationalisation of (discourse about) organised crime and the impact of translation in this process require a fundamental breakdown of methodological nationalism in criminology, which traditionally considered the nation-state as a central line of reflection, and univocally defined criminal concepts in terms of such national perspective (Franko 2016: 356–357).

This volume also intends to bridge a gap in the study of discourse on transnational organised crime for three main reasons. First, we embrace Machin and Mayr's (2013: 356) belief that "While there has been extensive research on media representations of crime in Media and Cultural Studies and in Criminology this has been a neglected area in Critical Discourse Analysis". Second, the limited studies in the field of (critical) discourse analysis and corpus linguistics have primarily analysed crime phenomena in an often monolingual, or single national perspective (Di Piazza 2010; Mayr/Machin 2012; Gregoriou 2012; Machin/Mayr 2013a, 2013b; Ras 2015; Tabbert 2015, 2016), therefore overlooking translation and recontextualisation issues. Third, existing analyses of the mediated discourse of crime mainly focus on the verbal nature of discursive representations in newspaper talk. This volume deliberately brings in a more fine-grained analysis of discourse on crime, and combines the idea of transnational recontextualisation with a methodological focus on multimodal aspects, giving special attention to the social actors (Roderick 2016: 73) taking part in the representation(s) of crime. In modern media, ranging from online print newspaper portals, to TV documentaries and feature movies, crime is not only verbally, but also visually represented, when embedded journalists take us to crime scenes, where they directly interview crime fighters, or combine news coverage with police footage or enacted fiction appears in their press coverage. From a theoretical and methodological perspective, the different papers in this volume can be subsumed under the heading of systemic-functional multimodal discourse analysis (SF-MDA), which takes Halliday's metafunctional analysis of texts in terms of ideational, interpersonal and textual organisation to the level of visual representation and to the different semiotic resources activated in meaning creation in multimodal texts and processes (Jewitt/Bezemer 2016: 30–85). In analysing the nexus between written and spoken text versus images, interesting questions arise as to the multimodal organisation of ideational aboutness in terms of narrative, thematic and conceptual structure at any point in a multimodal product, be it a static text or a shot in a dynamic genre (Jewitt/Oyama 2001), and their status in a cross-cultural (e.g. UK versus USA) or multilingual corpus. Furthermore, the representation of individual (or categories of) social actor(s), and the specific interpersonal relations represented in discourse may inform us about their specific status in a product, extending traditional grammatical categories as agency, transitivity and process types to the visual (O'Halloran 2008: 457; Baldry/Thibault 2006: 122). Identification or rebuttal of represented social actors may occur along different types of social identity, which, for instance, bring in sexual connotations in the representation of perpetrator groups or emotions

of anger and fear. Finally, the textual organisation, in which ideational content and interpersonal relations are integrated in a narrative potentially making them evolve throughout a text or movie, provides access to the multimodal genre formats and constituent structure at a macro-level, allowing for comparison between the textual canvas of multimodal artefacts within a specific genre (Baldry/Thibault 2006: 48–51; Tseng 2013), such as crime reportages or episodes in TV series. The interplay between different types of interdiscursive information calls for a reflection about the mix of factual and fictional data in multimodal genres in news coverage and crime fiction.

The structure and content of this special issue is strongly influenced by a panel that the guest editors organised on the topic of the discursive representation of globalised organised crime in August 2016, within the framework of the International ESSE (European Society for the Study of English) Conference, held at the National University of Ireland (NUI) in Galway. We thank the panel participants and all the contributors to this special issue, as well as the anonymous reviewers, for their valuable insights and feedback.

The papers in this issue share a critical and linguistic approach to discourse about organised crime, and can be grouped into three thematic clusters based on their object of investigation.

The two papers in the first cluster focus on video documentaries about Italian mafias. Giuditta Caliendo's contribution "Representing the *Camorra* as a Global Criminal Entity: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis" investigates the media representation of one of the most powerful Italian crime syndicates today, the Neapolitan *Camorra*, drawing upon a corpus of international video documentaries. The main research hypothesis of this study is that the *Camorra* is constructed as a criminal entity via multiple modes of meaning-making in the genre of expository documentaries. More specifically, discourse and visual semiotics are believed to play a constitutive role in that they shape the way this 'lesser-known' mafia is perceived and understood beyond Italy's borders. The investigation focuses on the constructive strategies enacted to establish this crime group's identity, and on the sociosemantic categories used to multimodally present criminal social actors and their victims/public antagonists to a mass public. Paul Sambre's paper, entitled "The Multimodal Representation of Italian Anti-Mafia Discourse: Foregrounding Civil Resistance and Interlocution in Two Global English Video Reportages", describes the multimodal display of performances of resistance to two Italian mafias, *Cosa Nostra* and the '*Ndrangheta*. Sambre focuses on the different actors foregrounded and backgrounded in the economic, socio-educational, legal and media spheres. The analysis describes different intersubjective relations between actor groups, as well as the multimodal techniques and strategies used by journalists to create cohesion on the macro-textual level, thus showing more or less involvement in local activism.

The third and fourth papers take multimodal analysis and AVT of video data into the sphere of Italian TV series *Gomorrah*. Giuseppe Balirano's contribution, "De-Queering Proxemics in the Screen Adaptation of *Camorra* Male Dyads: A Multimodal Prosody Analysis",

focuses on the dyadic non-verbal interactions occurring between televised *Camorra* mobsters. The author maintains that the English screen adaptation of the TV drama *Gomorrah – The Series* seems to have spread a somewhat incorrect interpretation of *camorristi*'s masculinity as 'queer'. In particular, the article analyses a complex but often under-investigated culture-bound factor in AVT: the cross-cultural interpretation of personal space. Balirano employs an experimental paradigm to measure the perception of the dyadic personal space displayed in the TV series by two groups of English and Irish informants. In order to disambiguate the resulting queer interpretation of *camorristi*'s proxemics and haptics, perceived only outside the boundaries of Italy, the study introduces 'multimodal prosody' analysis as a useful framework, which audiovisual translators may adopt to favour the understanding of personal space cross-culturally. The paper by Antonio Fruttaldo, "The (Re)Presentation of Organised Crime in *Gomorrah – The Series*: A Corpus-Based Approach to Cross-Cultural Identity Construction", focuses on the identity representation of the characters from the Italian TV drama *Gomorrah – The Series* using a corpus-based approach. Fruttaldo analyses how dialogue lines, which "are explicitly designed to reveal characters" (Kozloff 2000: 44), are cross-culturally translated into another language and/or reshaped in new formats, thus highlighting given identity traits that TV producers intend to underline. This is particularly interesting in the case of *Gomorrah*, since the identities created for the TV series, intrinsically imbued with the local setting of the crime group represented in the series, the Neapolitan *Camorra*, are recontextualised and recreated beyond local borders, for a globalised community of TV viewers.

The third cluster, which appropriately ends this special issue of the *I-LanD* Journal, presents Girolamo Tessuto's and Massimiliano Demata's works, respectively dealing with the media representation of crime and cybercrime in print media. In his essay "'Woman Robbed and Punched on London Street': Linguistic and Discursive Representations of Crime in Press News Headlines", Girolamo Tessuto investigates the complex relation between the media and crime, looking at media coverage of crime in mainstream UK and US news headlines. Through combined approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis and the socio-semantic analytical model proposed in van Leeuwen's (2008) framework, Tessuto shows how linguistic role allocation of perpetrators and victims, in terms of agentive role allocation and patterns for inclusion or exclusion, overlaps traditional social categorisation in terms of sexual identity and power relations. Drawing upon a corpus of UK articles on cybercrime, Massimiliano Demata's contribution "The Language of Fear: Cybercrime and 'the Borderless Realm of Cyberspace' in British News" explores the political and ideological implications of the representations of cybercrime as a source of social danger and fear. In both their verbal and visual language, media responses to cybercrime emphasise the alterity and mystery connected to this phenomenon, communicating a sense of anxiety for an unknown, invisible enemy to the audience. This paper also considers media narratives on cybercrime as strategic

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configurations of nationalist discourse: by constantly associating certain countries to cybercrime and by prioritising 'national' security in opposition to a ubiquitously and dangerous 'other', representations of cybercrime ultimately tend to reinforce the sense of identity within the institutional and cultural borders of a nation.

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Representing the *Camorra* as a Global Criminal Entity: A Multimodal Discourse Analysis*

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Abstract

This paper investigates the discursive construction of organised crime from a critical perspective, highlighting the semiotic resources employed in the media representation of one of the most powerful Italian crime syndicates today, the Neapolitan Camorra. *The analysis draws on a corpus of international video documentaries describing the* Camorra's *criminal activities released after 2007, when a series of crucial events started to give this crime syndicate an unprecedented international visibility. The main research hypothesis of this study is that the process of construction of the* Camorra *as a criminal entity with a global reach is performed via multiple modes of meaning-making in the audiovisual genre of expository documentaries. More specifically, discourse and visual semiotics in the video reportages under scrutiny are believed to play a constitutive role in that they shape the way this 'lesser-known' Italian mafia is perceived, understood and categorised beyond Italy's borders. The investigation focuses on the constructive strategies enacted to establish a certain identity for this crime group, and on the sociosemantic categories used to represent the social actors inhabiting the* Camorra *universe by looking at how criminals and their victims/public antagonists are linguistically and visually presented to a mass public*.

Keywords

media discourse, critical discourse analysis, multimodal discourse analysis, social actors, globalised organised crime, the Neapolitan Camorra

1. Introduction

This study is inspired by the changing reality of Italian mafia associations, which have been increasingly adding a transnational economic dimension to their original territorial (and ethnic) matrix over the last decades (Allum 2006: 49). The objective is to investigate, from a critical perspective, the way in which globalised organised crime is represented through audio-visual media aimed at an international audience, highlighting the constitutive role of discourse and visual semiotics in constructing the identity of one of the most powerful Italian crime syndicates, the Neapolitan *Camorra*. In line with Carrapiço (2010: 43), this study seeks to approach "the concept of organised crime as a social construction enabled through the power of discourse".

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The analysis of the discursive representation of this mafia group is based on a corpus of international video documentaries describing its criminal activities and released after 2007, when a series of key events marked a 'media outbreak' for the *Camorra*, giving it unprecedented international visibility. The year 2007 constitutes a crucial starting point as it coincides with the translation into English of the Italian non-fiction novel "Gomorra" by Roberto Saviano (2006). This best-selling exposé introduced the *Camorra*'s complex structure and abominable deeds to millions of readers for the first time. The same novel also inspired Matteo Garrone's homonymous and internationally acclaimed feature film (*Grand Prix* at Cannes Film Festival, 2008) and the TV drama series *Gomorrah* (season one and two, respectively premiered in 2014 and 2015). This generated unprecedented international interest in the *Camorra*, especially following the Naples' rubbish crisis that peaked in 2008, putting this crime group under the international spotlight. Until then, this secretive and impenetrable organisation had always been underrepresented in national and international media and highly underestimated outside of Italy's border, where mafia syndicates were still perceived as a national or even local phenomenon (Caliendo 2012: 192). As argued by Yardley (2014): "If Europe once thought of organised crime families as largely an Italian problem – and if many Italians thought the problem was mostly confined to the south – the breadth of mob assets across Europe is forcing a reappraisal".

The study focuses on the interplay between verbal and visual semiosis in order to investigate to what extent different modes contribute to the discursive representation of the *Camorra* to an international audience. Particular attention is devoted to the analysis of the discursive strategies of construction enacted to establish a certain identity for the *Camorra* (by foregrounding, for instance, some of its idiosyncratic traits) and to the multimodal representation of social actors gravitating around this specific crime group.

This contribution also aims to address the paucity of literature on the representation of crime in discourse, as underlined by Machin and Mayr (2012) and Tabbert (2015), especially in the area of Critical Discourse Analysis. In pite of the most recent studies on the relation between crime and discourse (Di Piazza 2010; Mayr/Machin 2012; Gregoriou 2012; Machin/Mayr 2012, 2013; Ras 2015; Tabbert 2015, 2016), little attention has thus far been devoted to the way national crime syndicates are discursively represented and recontextualised on a global scale (Allum *et al.* 2010; Caliendo *et al.* 2016) and it is the purpose of this study to remedy this gap. As maintained by Machin and Mayr (2013: 356): "While there has been extensive research on media representations of crime in Media and Cultural Studies and in Criminology this has been a neglected area in Critical Discourse Analysis".

2. '*Il Sistema*': a brief overview

The *Camorra*, also locally known as '*il Sistema*' (the 'System'), is a crime group widespread in Naples and in the whole Campania Region. Dating

back to the end of the 18th century (Behan 1996: 9), it is one of the oldest and largest criminal organisations in Italy. It is documented by Saviano (2007: 120) as Italy's deadliest crime syndicate:

> Since I was born [1979], 3,600 deaths. The *Camorra* has killed more than the Sicilian Mafia, more than the *'Ndrangheta*, more than the Russian Mafia, more than the Albanian families, more than the total number of deaths by the ETA in Spain and the IRA in Ireland, more than the Red Brigades, the NAR, and all the massacres committed by the government in Italy [...] But there's no little flame, no sign of a conflict. This is the heart of Europe.

Unlike the Sicilian mafia, the *Camorra* originally had a distinct urban nature: "The Sicilian Mafia was born as a rural phenomenon, while the *Camorra*'s origins lay in the city of Naples, its prison community and poor population" (Allum 2006: 5; also cf. Marmo 1988, 1990, 1992). In addition, this crime group is characterised by a 'patchy' and non-hierarchical structure as it lacks the pyramidal organisation of the Sicilian *Cosa Nostra*. The *Camorra* is "a horizontal cluster of Clans and Families" (Europol 2013: 12), with no real 'boss of bosses'. Consequently, individual clans can act independently of each other, and are thus more prone to feuding among themselves (Paoli 2003: 230). This makes this crime group particularly vulnerable, though all the more unpredictable.

Apart from being involved in extortion, cocaine trafficking, money laundering, racketeering, loan-sharking, infiltration of public institutions to access public tenders and funds, the *Camorra* has also earned billions by illegally disposing of industrial and toxic waste on the Campania Region for over twenty years (Paoli 2003: 286). This is the deciding factor in why cancer levels in Campania have skyrocketed amongst the local population in recent years (Saviano 2007; Renga 2013).

Over the last few decades, the *Camorra*, like other Italian mafia groups, has been undergoing a process of "transnationalisation" (Longo 2010: 16) or "delocalisation" (Balsamo 2016), mainly triggered by two main social changes: at domestic level, the emergence of strong pressures in the form of new and tougher law enforcement actions and, in the international sphere, the expansion of criminal opportunities made available to the *Camorra* which eventually transformed it into a transnational enterprise (Allum/Sands 2004: 142), present and active in many European countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Spain, Germany, Greece, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Portugal) as well as in the rest of the world. As a result, today the *Camorra* fully exploits the incentives of the globalised market and technological progress while maintaining a sub-national and local dimension (Armao 2003: 29). In order to fully grasp the current extent of the *Camorra*'s international and pervasive reach, it is worth underlining that in a 2011 Executive Order, former US President Obama officially recognised it as a significant Transnational Criminal Organisation. More specifically, the 'US Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime', presented on 25 July 2011, identified the *Camorra* as one of the four most threatening organised criminal groups from a US perspective (Europol 2013: 12).

3. Research questions and theoretical framework

The main research hypothesis of this preliminary study on the media representation of the *Camorra* is that its process of construction as a global criminal entity is performed via multiple modes of meaning-making in the audiovisual genre of expository documentaries. More specifically, discourse and visual semiotics in the international documentaries under scrutiny are believed to play a constitutive role in that they shape the way this 'lesser-known' Italian mafia is perceived, understood and categorised beyond Italy's borders. With this in mind, the multimodal investigation of the corpus is guided by the following research questions:

◆ What are the constructive strategies enacted in representing the *Camorra* and its distinctive traits?
◆ Who are the social actors foregrounded in the documentaries and what kind of visual representation do they take?
◆ Is the *Camorra* overall portrayed as a global organisation or as a local criminal phenomenon?

Since the analysis incorporates multiple forms of semiosis into critical-analytic explorations, it exploits the potential of bringing together different theoretical approaches, mainly Critical Discourse Analysis, CDA (Fairclough 1992; Wodak/Meyer 2001; Wodak *et al.* 2009; Fairclough 2010), Multimodal studies (Kress/van Leeuwen 1996, 2001; O'Halloran 2004; Ventola *et al.* 2004; Bateman 2008; Kress 2010; O'Halloran/Smith 2011; Wildfeuer 2014) and Documentary Genre Studies (Nichols 1991, 2001; Ward 2005) for the analysis of the visual and linguistic properties of media discourses.

In investigating the discursive strategies used in the video documentaries under scrutiny to define and represent the *Camorra* as a criminal entity, the first analytical part of the study (section 5) is indebted to the work carried out by Wodak *et al*. (2009: 30–48) on the discursive construction of identity. This theoretical perspective is related to the conscious intentionality of certain discursive choices to create, dismantle or transform a given identity construct. The underlying assumption is that discursive acts are socially constitutive in that it is through discourse that social actors build identities and interpersonal relations (Wodak *et al.* 2009: 8). At the macro-level, Wodak *et al*. (2009: 33–35) distinguish between different types of macro-strategies employed in the formation of identity: constructive strategies (which attempt to construct identities by promoting unification and identification); strategies of perpetuation (which attempt to preserve the components of a given identity); strategies of transformation (which attempt to transform the components of a given identity into another); and dismantling or destructive strategies (used to dismantle parts of an existing identity construct). Different strategies are associated to different schemes of argumentation as they serve to obtain a specific effect. The scope of this study is narrowed down to the discursive strategies of construction (Wodak *et al.* 2009: 33–35), which are enacted to establish a certain identity for the *Camorra* by promoting common traits (elements such as unifying

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codes of conduct or practices) or by dismantling old stereotypes and conceptual models (e.g. those traditionally associated to the Sicilian mafia). According to Wodak *et al*. (2009: 36–42), these constructive macro-strategies are in turn served by a series of refined micro-strategies. For the purpose of this study, the analysis will focus on the following:

◆ strategies of singularisation (based on the presupposition of uniqueness), which present a given entity as something specific, idiosyncratic and different from others;
◆ strategies of assimilation (based on the presupposition of sameness), which construct identity through associations and analogies with other entities;
◆ strategies of discontinuation, based on the emphasis placed on the temporal difference between a given identity as it was 'then' and how it is 'now'.

Although the above taxonomy was originally developed to explore verbal semiosis, the first part of the study partly expands its dimension to the level of visual representation by also looking at some visual stills associated to verbal definitions of the *Camorra*.

The second analytical part of the study (section 6) focuses on social actor analysis – a central topic in CDA – to explore the way social participants are portrayed by means of van Leeuwen's (1995, 1996) representational strategies, i.e. semiotic choices through which certain aspects of social actors' identity can be highlighted or backgrounded. Van Leeuwen addresses the role social actors can play in discourse, their representation as groups (assimilation) or as individuals (individualisation), the ways in which actors can be categorised (e.g. functionalisation, categorisation) and the abstractions that can conceal human agency behind institutions (institutionalisation) or behind means of action (instrumentalisation). This study applies van Leeuwen's categories multimodally by looking at how narration and images signify discourses that shape the way social participants orbiting the *Camorra* can be categorised and perceived, also drawing upon Mayr and Machin (2012) who apply the same sociosemantic inventory to the language of crime and deviance. The investigation also hints at the way social participants are represented as acting/not acting, in line with the principles of transitivity analysis based on Halliday's (1985) categories of verb processes.

Given the multimodal nature of the corpus, the study also draws on the analytical tools of Multimodal Discourse Analysis (Jewitt 2014; Bednarek/Martin 2010; O'Halloran 2011) to produce a comprehensive investigation of the interdependencies of written, oral and visual forms of semiosis in video documentaries representing the *Camorra* as a global criminal entity. This study places the emphasis on how communication moves away from monomodality to multimodality and on the way linguistic concepts can be applied and adapted to the visual communication (Jewitt 2014; O'Halloran 2011). Although the visual mode is not composed of the same elements as language, there is a useful place for a social semiotic approach to nonlinguistic communication (Lemke 1998; Iedema 2001; Ventola *et al.* 2004;

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Baldry/Thibault 2006; Bateman 2008), especially in the sense that visual design as a semiotic mode is believed to fulfill and represent the three Hallidayan metafunctions (Jewitt 2006, 2014).

4. Corpus and method

The study is based on a corpus of video documentaries on the *Camorra* intended for an international audience and released in the time span 2007–2012 by a number of Italian and Anglophone producers (Table 4.1 below). The corpus comprises all the documentaries on this crime syndicate publicly available in English (as original language or via audiovisual translation, AVT) and produced in the interval under scrutiny, three in Italy and three in Anglophone countries. Their relatively small number demonstrates that the international media representation of this lesser-known criminal organisation is rather sparse.

Table 4.1. Corpus of video documentaries on the *Camorra*

Title (Abbreviation)	Production (Director)	Country	Original language (AVT)	Year (duration)
Biùtiful Cauntri (BC)	Lumière & Co. (E. Calabria/A. D'Ambrosio)	Italy	IT (EN subtitles)	2007 (83')
Toxic: Napoli (TN)	VICE Media (S. Stelley)	Canada/US	EN (EN subtitles for verbal soundtrack in IT)	2009 (54')
Campania In-Felix (CIF)	Corsale (I. Corsale)	Italy	EN (EN subtitles for verbal soundtrack in IT)	2011 (44')
Camorra: Italy's Bloodiest Mafia (IBM)	BBC (R. Corke)	UK	EN (EN voice-over for verbal soundtrack in IT)	2011 (58')
Scampia 24 (S24)	Il Mattino (M. Piscitelli)	Italy	IT (EN subtitles)	2012 (28')
Italian Mafia in Naples (IMN)	Press TV (M. Civili)	UK	EN (EN voice-over for verbal soundtrack in IT)	2012 (27')
Total number of tokens: 148,247				

The audiovisual genre of the expository documentary proved particularly useful as a means of scrutinising how the *Camorra* is internationally represented as a criminal entity since this genre is not merely referential and informative, but can be constitutive of new forms of identity inhabiting the (criminal) world: "[a] documentary is not a reproduction of reality, it is a *representation* of the world we already occupy. It stands for a particular view of the world, *one we may never have encountered before* […]" (Nichols 2001: 20; emphasis added). Documentaries thus possess the capacity to intervene by shaping how we regard the historical world (Nichols 2001: 39) as they

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may give form, name and visibility to entities that were never represented before. In his description of this multimodal genre, Sambre (in this volume) also claims that documentaries are a relatively understudied phenomenon in critical discourse analysis and therefore deserve further investigation.

As a first step of the analysis, the entire verbal content of the corpus under scrutiny was manually transcribed. Short video segments from the documentaries were then captured and interpreted using ELAN 4.9.4 (Sloetjes/Wittenburg 2008), a software for the transcription and annotation of video resources. The use of this software also enabled a number of visual stills (Finch 2013) to be selected according to a specific criterion motivated by the nature of our exploration (Bezemer/ Mavers 2011), which is focused on the strategies used to represent the *Camorra* and the social actors involved in and/or affected by its criminal activities. In order to pursue these analytical purposes, each still selected for transcription specifically referred to those larger video segments of the documentary that overlapped with the verbal parts of the corpus in which the *Camorra* and its social actors are represented. The multimodal transcription (Thibault 2000; Baldry/ Thibault 2006; Balirano 2007) of the scenes under scrutiny is provided in the analytical parts of the study (section 5 and 6), considering the different semiotic resources co-occurring in the multimodal texts. The visual elements are framed in numbered screenshots, with reference to their source (Documentary), verbal transcription (Transcript) and Time in Seconds (TS). The transcriptions are circumscribed to the verbal soundtrack in English and to the English voice-over and subtitles for the Italian narration. Due to space restrictions, soundscapes and music were excluded from the analysis. The Image and Camera Movement (ICM) column was used to annotate information on camera position and movement during the interviews (e.g. on-screen, static interview, etc.). All relevant abbreviations are listed in the Appendix.

5. Constructive strategies

As anticipated in section 3, the first part of the analysis draws upon the discursive macro-strategies of construction theorised by Wodak *et al.* (2009: 37–39), which are in turn served by a series of refined micro-strategies, including strategies of singularisation, assimilation and discontinuation.

Singularisation (Wodak *et al.* 2009: 38) as a discursive strategy is used in the video documentaries under scrutiny to represent the *Camorra* as a singular, unique entity that is unparalleled for its undisputed record of criminal supremacy, as examples (1)–(4) below show. More specifically, the *Camorra* is 'singularised' for being: one of the most powerful, deadly and pervasive criminal organisations in Italy; extremely efficient ("far more efficient than the State"); highly entrepreneurial and business-oriented.

The *Camorra*'s undisputed record as one of the most violent mafia groups is made grammatically explicit through the use of gradable adjectives in comparative and superlative forms or their periphrastic

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equivalents with *more* and *most*. Comparative and superlative items are also employed with a determinative function modifying plural nouns.

(1) Hear nothing, see nothing, say nothing, those three things will keep you alive. That is the code of *Italy's most violent mafia*, the *Camorra*. And *this is where its group is strongest*, Naples, a city in the heart of Europe. Its brutality is notorious. *It's killed more people than the IRA*[1]. (IBM 00:00:22)

(2) According to the Italian justice department, by 1981 *the new* Camorra *had become one of the most powerful criminal organisations in Italy*, providing a living for at least 200,000 people in the poor suburbs of Naples. (IMN 00:06:25)

(3) The *Camorra* is one of the least studied mafias at international level. Within Italy, *it is the organisation with the highest number of associations and it has generated the highest number of deaths*. (TN 00:05:01)

(4) I'm off to see the epicentre of the drugs trade, the housing estate of northern *Naples, where investigators believe more drugs are sold at street level than anywhere else in Europe*. And the *Camorra* is behind every deal. (IBM 00:12:38)

[1] Emphasis is added in examples (1)–(30).

[2] Emphasis is added in all transcripts.

The strategy of singularisation is particularly prolific in the textual structure of non-Italian documentaries, generally when the *Camorra* is introduced for the first time by the narrator who provides an

Figure 5.1. Definitions of the *Camorra* and relevant visual stills[2]

Shot	Visual frame	Documentary	Transcript	TS
1		IBM	Voice-over narration: That is the code of *Italy's most violent mafia*, the *Camorra*. And *this is where its group is strongest*, Naples, a city in the heart of Europe.	00:00:24
2		TN	Voice-over narration: Behind this all there is *the largest criminal organisation in Italy, the Neapolitan* Camorra.	00:03:30
3		IMN	Voice-over narration: *The* Camorra *is one of the oldest and largest criminal organisations in Italy*, dating back to the 18th century.	00:02:06

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explanatory formulation, the *definiens*, that might anticipate or follow a *definiendum*. From a visual perspective, a clichéd postcard view of Naples is displayed in the background (frames [1]–[3]), conflicting with the unsettling definition provided by the voice-over narration to cognitively introduce the city's crime syndicate to an international audience. As a result, the elements in Figure 5.1 above that verbally singularise the *Camorra* as Italy's most violent mafia group strongly clash against what Naples is traditionally singularised for from a visual perspective: its world-renowned beauty and appeal.

As previously mentioned, the uniqueness of the *Camorra* is also described as its ability to be a better alternative to the Italian State, especially in terms of efficiency and opportunities. The use of *never* serving an emphatic function in the hyperbolic statement in (5), and the comparative locutions *far more* and *all the more* in (6), express a comparison with the Italian State, as well as the *Camorra*'s dominance and upper hand over it, so much so that it is now the Italian politicians who need the *Camorristi*, not the other way around, as hinted at in (7).

(5) *The* Camorra *gives the people what the Italian state has never been able to give: jobs and support*. Today a high-ranking *Camorrista*, let's say a cocaine pusher, can earn up to 6,000 euros a month. (IMN 00:06:43)

(6) *The* Camorra *is perceived to be far more efficient than the State*. The *Camorra* does not put itself into open conflict with the State. It's more like a woodworm which eats into the body politic. It takes the place of the State and *is all the more credible* because it's able to offer the same services as the State, in direct competition. In my field, for instance, the law, everyone knows that you can get justice from the *Camorra*. State justice is slow and its outcome uncertain. Camorra *justice is immediate, you can't appeal against it and it's very certain*. (IBM 00:54:03).

(7) It is used to be that the *Camorristas* would knock on Politicians' door for favours. *Today, in this city it is the politician who needs the* Camorristas. (IBM 01:06)

In (8)–(10) below, the *Camorra* is singularised through elements of comparison and opposition that emphasise its distinguishing traits in relation to the better-known Sicilian mafia, here standing as a benchmark against which the magnitude of the *Camorra* phenomenon can be measured. The *Camorra* does not only stand out as unrivalled in terms of number of affiliated members and victims, but also because of its fragmented structure that makes it more flexible and unpredictable when compared to other crime groups.

(8) *The* Camorra *has more blood on its hands than Sicily's infamous mafia*. What will it take to stop it? (IBM 00:01:15)

(9) According to crime experts, *the* Camorra *has five times as many members as the Sicilian mafia*. It is structured like a network: it has no boss of bosses, which makes it all the more flexible and unpredictable. If the mafia is a state within the state, the *Camorra* is a state against the state. (IMN 00:03:11)

(10) Compared to the Sicilian *Cosa Nostra*, *the* Camorra *has more of a*

horizontal than vertical structure. As a result, individual *Camorra* clans act independently of each other, and are more prone to feuding among themselves. (IMN 00:13:33)

The identity of the *Camorra* is also constructed through the strategy of assimilation which, according to Wodak *et al*. (2009: 33), linguistically aims "to create a temporal, interpersonal or spatial (territorial) similarity and homogeneity" between two entities. "*Il Sistema*" is portrayed by means of attributes ascribed to it: it is an "entrepreneurial" type of criminal organisation (11) as it is completely money-driven, with affairs in all the fields of the economy ((12) and (13) below). Judging by its *modus operandi*, it is by all means assimilated to a business entity: The *Camorra* Incorporated (14).

(11) For someone who has never heard of the *Camorra*, *it's an organisation that is both entrepreneurial and criminal.* I outline the word entrepreneurial because the perception of criminal organisations in Italy and elsewhere is that they are these folkloric rogue bandits. In actual facts, they are criminal cartels which have affairs in all fields of the economy, especially the legal ones: cement, industrial waste, textile, transportation tourism. And then cocaine, heroin, usury, extortion (TN 00:04:29).

(12) *The* Camorra *is interested in anything that makes money*. It has the Midas touch, able to transform anything into money, legal or illegal. (IBM 00:04:28)

(13) Bread, wine, plastic bags, paper bags, meat, everything. *Where there is business there is the* Camorra. (IBM 00:39:40)

(14) *There are now entire sectors of business that are controlled by the* Camorra. In the area where I work, for instance, which has a very strong textile industry, the *Camorra* has gone into the textile business. It damages the free market because a *Camorra* business has no cash flow problems and can sell at a cut price. And so it completely destroys competition. *It is* Camorra *Inc.* (IBM 00:38:28)

Interestingly enough, when reference is made to the entrepreneurial profile of the *Camorra*, none of the documentaries mention the tremendously pervasive reach that this crime syndicate has at European and global level. The fact that the *Camorra*'s transnational dimension is omitted in the narrative is also confirmed by the negligible occurrence of lexical units such as 'Europe' or 'the European Union'/'the EU' in the corpus under scrutiny. As the examples below illustrate, the European dimension is evoked solely to highlight the Region's EU-leading record in drug trafficking and illegal dumping of toxic waste (examples (15) and (16) below), or to refer to EU measures aimed at curbing 'eco-mafia' activities on the Italian territory (17).

(15) I'm off to see the epicentre of the drugs trade, the housing estate of northern Naples, where investigators believe *more drugs are sold at street level than anywhere else in Europe*. (IBM 00:12:38)

(16) The trash business is estimated to generate a yearly six hundred million euros revenue to the *Camorra* at the expense of the health of the people who live near the legal ground where the

garbage is stocked. For years, *several municipalities in the Caserta area and in the neighbouring areas have become the biggest illegal landfill sites in Europe*. (IMN 00:27:45)

(17) In April 2007 *the EU condemned Italy* for having tolerated the presence of 4,866 illegal waste dumps on its territory. (BC 01:18:27)

Strategies of assimilation are used to describe not only what the *Camorra is* but also what it *does* to Naples and its surroundings. The *Camorra*-ridden Campania Region is assimilated to other negatively-connoted places, like Chernobyl (18) or some developing country (19).

(18) And they are violent because in the end they kill more people, causing them to die a slow death, than any other kind of crime which we have known so far. *That's why I compare what is happening in Campania to the Italian version of Chernobyl*, a Chernobyl that through this illegal waste-trafficking, these waste-dumps, this combustion of waste, is directly affecting everything that lives over here, human beings, animals, every species of living beings that we have over here. And it does affect the genes of these living beings. The number of animals in this region that are born with birth defects is steadily growing, because of the exact fact that they get born in *a region that is more heavily polluted than any other region of every other civilised country*. (BC 00:59:52).

(19) The main reason why I chose to be a Public prosecutor is to understand properly why our land is sick with this cancer, the *Camorra*. *It suffocates this region and makes it resemble a third world country*. (IBM 00:02:42)

While the *Camorra* makes the Campania Region look like a third world country, it also puts an end to its times of abundance and splendour. Another mechanism used to represent what the *Camorra* does to the region is the strategy of discontinuation (Wodak *et al.* 2009: 38), which places emphasis on the temporal contrast between what a given identity once used to be and what it is now. This specific strategy is profusely used to describe the contemptible environmental crisis caused by the *Camorra*'s illegal dumping of industrial and toxic waste throughout the Campania Region. In the examples below, a sense of temporal discontinuation is verbally expressed by the adverb *once* in (20) and (21), which underline the irreversibility of such 'paradise loss'. In examples (22) and (23) a textual pattern can be identified. The use of the duration adverb *since* stresses the Campania Region's long-lasting Edenic status. The adversative *but* then follows to underline a contrast with the current condition of *locus terribilis*, with its negatively connoted attributions and derogatory denotations.

(20) This is the story of Campania Felix, *once a fertile land*. Paradoxically, we are living in a big chemical experiment. (CIF 00:32:12)

(21) This very fertile area, *once one of the most fertile lands in the world*, has been polluted for 20 years by the ecomafia, the *Camorra*. (BC 00:08:27)

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(22) The land of the Naples' region, *Campania, has been famous for its fertility since Roman times. But* the *Camorra* has made billions by illegally dumping toxic waste on this land. Some farms have had to be abandoned altogether. (IBM 00:42:50)

(23) *We find ourselves in a region that, since antiquity, has been considered one of the most beautiful places in the world. But* today the Campania is a manifestation of the problems that arose from the development model promoted by globalisation. (TN 00:16:42)

The contrast between the *topoi* of *locus amoenus* and *locus horridus* already emerges from the title of two documentaries in the corpus under scrutiny: *Campania In-Felix* and *Biùtiful Cauntri*. The former exploits a bitter play-on-words, which accentuates the opposition between what the Campania is today (an "unhappy land", as suggested by the subtitle) and the sublime and 'Arcadian' status that this land had in ancient times, when the Romans used to call it "*Campania felix*" (fertile countryside). The distorted title of the documentary *Biùtiful Cauntri*, spelled as it would be pronounced in Italian, seems to suggest the current degraded condition of a country where beauty no longer lives. A dystopian tinge can be traced also visually in the documentary's cover photo (Figure 5.2b), which displays foregrounded images of rubbish indexing the environmental hell (*locus horribilis*). The strategy of discontinuation (Wodak *et al.* 2009: 38) is also multimodally reinforced in the cover photo of the *Campania In-Felix* video reportage (Figure 5.2a). There the clash between a utopian past and the apocalyptic present is visually constructed by the represented participants positioned on the left as 'Given' and on the right as 'New' (Kress/van Leeuwen 1996: 57): respectively, the herdsman standing on the abandoned countryside where he once used to graze livestock and the recently built incinerator that relentlessly contaminates it.

Figure 5.2. Covers of the documentaries *Campania In-Felix* (2011) and *Biùtiful Cauntri* (2007)

6. Social actors in the *Camorra* universe

As anticipated in the introductory section, the second analytical part of the study delves into the representation of social actors inhabiting the *Camorra* universe by looking at the way criminal actors and their victims/public antagonists are verbally and visually presented in the corpus. The analysis draws upon the framework theorised by van Leeuwen (1996: 62–63) which enables a wide categorisation of all actors in a text, whether they are included or excluded (differentiating between "suppression" and "backgrounding"), presented by means of personal or impersonal forms, as individuals (or members of a group) or as a collective entity, presented by name (i.e. who they permanently are) or in terms of the function they (more or less permanently) perform.

The corpus of documentaries under scrutiny displays a great variety of represented participants, who can be functionally grouped into two main macro-categories of social actors: '*Camorra* fighters', people who in their professional and social capacity take tangible action against this criminal group (such as political and environmental activists, court and police officers, academic experts, journalists, health professionals and toxicologists); and '*Camorra* victims', who passively endure the consequences of this organisation's deeds (extortion victims, relatives of *Camorra* victims, farmers and sheep herders in areas contaminated by the illegal dumping of toxic waste). Perpetrators are never visually represented in the video documentaries, apart from one single instance concerning archive footage of the infamous *camorrista* Tommaso Prestieri, whose son – interviewed in the BBC reportage – rejected his destiny as a mobster and publicly denounced the crime syndicate. The very few scenes when individual *camorristi* are interviewed involve former criminals who have turned their back on the *Camorra*. This means that, apart from a small minority of former criminals, all actors portrayed in the video documentaries are non-criminal voices.

Although *camorristi* are not visually portrayed, they are present in the documentaries under scrutiny through the verbal narrative of *Camorra* fighters and victims. The technique used to represent them is known as "assimilation" (van Leeuwen 1996: 48) as it emphasises social actors' membership to a group, underlining the aspects of conformity and collectivisation. Assimilation may be realised through nouns used to refer to social actors not as identifiable individuals but rather as a collective group (van Leeuwen 2008: 37), such as "the *Camorra*" or "the System", as illustrated in (24)–(27).

(24) *From the moment I reported the* Camorra, all my friends started avoiding me. They were scared even of being in the same car with me. You start feeling like you're a leper. (Pietro Russo, extortion victim. IBM 00:36:18)

(25) Here *the* Camorra *installed CCTV cameras* to check the entrance. This is the system dealers use to hide drugs in elevators. Look at this. (Michele Spina, police chief. S24 00:17:46)

(26) At night *they come, the* Camorra, to dump their waste. They do

it because of the money. (Mario Cannavaccioulo, sheep herder. BC 00:18:35)

(27) *The 'System' isn't one organisation with a single Godfather* like Sicilian *Cosa Nostra*. (Mark Franchetti, journalist. IBM 00:06:07)

Another mechanism employed to represent criminal participants as equal and anonymous members of classes or groups of people is the "genericisation strategy" (van Leeuwen 1996: 46): no proper name is ever used and specific references to identifiable individuals are suppressed in favour of the generic and impersonal pronoun "they", or the more derogatory "these people" and "these gentlemen" (as exemplified in (28)–(30) below). Opting for generic reference produces a radically different representational effect as it backgrounds the possibility that the audience may support or identify with individual members.

(28) Even from prison, *they say* who their preferred political candidate is. (Simona di Monte, anti-*Camorra* prosecutor. IBM 00:52:70)

(29) We are the victims of this situation, *these people have completely destroyed us*. And *if they managed* to kill a flock of 2,500 sheep, what will happen to us, then? We will all end up like the sheep. (Mario Cannavaccioulo, sheep herder. BC 00:24:15)

(30) *These gentlemen have dumped* all this rubbish, industrial waste and radioactive waste from nuclear plants in our wells. *They would dump it* everywhere. Sometimes with the consent of the owner, sometimes without. (Giuseppe Esposito, farmer. CIF 00:19:27)

On a visual level, criminal actors are indirectly represented through what they are doing to the Campania Region and to the local people more than through their names and faces. Drug trafficking, killings, decay, environmental crisis and mutated livestock occupy the centre of the visual narrative, though *camorristi* are never individually depicted. Visually, the *Camorra* is in itself a ghostly presence, which is everywhere but nowhere to be seen, possibly associated to an unsettling idea of 'pervasive invisibility'. From a systemic functional perspective, the visual stills can be analysed in relation to the transitivity system (Halliday 1985), "which construes the world of experience into a manageable set of process types" (Halliday/ Matthiessen 2004: 170): material, mental, behavioral, verbal, relational and existential. In the documentaries under scrutiny the *Camorra* is represented through a high incidence of processes of the 'material' type, i.e. processes of doing and happening. However, the visuals never explicitly represent the *Camorra* as the Actor performing the action, but rather focus on the Goals, that is the material result/consequence of processes of doing in which the *Camorra* is involved: this crime group's activities, traffics as well as the consequences that its abominable deeds have on the local population and the environment. In other words, the *Camorra* is visually represented in terms of what it *has done* rather than what it actually *is*.

Figure 5.3. Selected stills representing Goals in material processes[3]

Figure 5.4. Representation of (former) criminal actors[4]

[3] The photo sequence includes: a) trash piles in Naples (CIF, 00.03.52); b) deformed sheep born after dioxin was illegally dumped on pasture land (TN, 00:08:55); c) toxic barrels abandoned in unauthorised landfills in farmland (CIF, 00:12:13); d) sheep herder mourning the death of his brother, poisoned by illegally dumped toxic waste (CIF, 00:35:23).

[4] Visual stills from the documentary *Italy's Bloodiest Mafia* (BBC). TS: 00:13:55; 00:14:02; 00:33:32.

As previously mentioned, the very few scenes when individual *camorristi* are interviewed in the documentaries involve former mobsters who have cut themselves loose of the *Camorra*. These are anonymised and unspecified through the strategy of "indetermination" (van Leeuwen 1996: 51). In the images below, we see them filmed only from behind and through the eyes of the interviewer (Figure 5.4a), who substitutes for the public as a whole. They are also metonymically introduced through a *pars pro toto* representation, with an extreme close-up on physical details, such as their hand (Figures 5.4b and 5.4c).

While (former) perpetrators are collectivised and anonymised, the strategies of "individualisation" and "nomination" (van Leeuwen 1996: 48; 52) are always used to represent all the other non-criminal actors. They are introduced in terms of their unique identity as specific individuals and described in the detail of their given name and surname ("semi-formal nomination", van Leeuwen 1996: 53), profession and personal struggle against the *Camorra*. The enactment of this specific strategy produces a representational effect of emotional intimacy with

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the actors, making the audience more inclined to emotionally identify with them and inhabit their world.

The visual frames in the scene below (Figure 5.5) show Simona di Monte, a top anti-*Camorra* prosecutor, who lives under 24-hour armed police protection. The judge is depicted in the midst of her daily family setting ([4]–[5]) and on her way to work, when she waves goodbye to her son and husband before being escorted to an official car by police officers [6]. The scene combines observational footage (OF) recording Simona in her private domestic setting with a static (SI), on-screen (OnSI) interview. In this scene the interview is anticipated by domestic images commented by the voice over ([4]–[6]), stressing the vulnerability of the interviewee's life as well as the *Camorra*'s unpredictable nature ("The police fear that her enemies could strike at any time" [5]). Unsurprisingly, this social actor is also "functionalized" (van Leeuwen 1996: 54), i.e. referred to in terms of what she does and what her occupation is: a top anti-*Camorra* Prosecutor who has helped bring some top *Camorristi* to their knees. The *Camorra* is only indirectly mentioned through a generic reference to Simona's "enemies" [5] and through the apparently unrelated comment of the voice-over narrator ("This is Naples in 2011, not Colombia" [6]) which pragmatically

Figure 5.5. Simona di Monte, Anti-*Camorra* Prosecutor (IBM)

Shot	Visual frame	TS	Transcript	ICM
4		00:01:33	Voice-over narration: 4-year-old Francesco is too young to know it, but his mother leads no ordinary life.	OF
5		00:01:43	Voice-over narration: Simona di Monte is a Prosecutor. The police fear that her enemies could strike at any time.	OF
6		00:02:01	Voice-over narration: This is Naples in 2011, not Colombia, but Simona leaves under 24-hour armed police protection.	OF
7		00:02:23	Simona di Monte: Protection is granted to prosecutors who are seen to be at the forefront of fighting against organised crime.	OnSI SI

Figure 5.6. Alessandra Clemente, daughter of a famous *Camorra* victim, Silvia Ruotolo (IBM)

Shot	Visual frame	TS	Transcript	ICM
8		00:07:41	Voice-over narration: Her mother was shot dead in 1997, caught in the cross-fire of a clan shoot-out.	OF
9		00:08:18	Voice-over narration: Alessandra still lives in Naples, with her brother, now 19, and their father.	OF
10		00:08:30	Voice-over narration: She is studying law and her ambition is to become a Prosecutor, taking on *Camorra* cases.	OF
11		00:08:38	Alessandra Clemente: My mother tragically died because she was in the wrong place at the wrong time. The decision I have made to study law helped me understand that there shouldn't be such a thing as being in the wrong place at the wrong time. We have the right to live in a better city than this. Why should I accept the way in which my mother died?	OnSI SI

suggests the social abnormality caused by this crime group: in a European city like Naples a prosecutor who just does her job must be placed under constant police escort, as if she lived in a third world country.

Another case of nomination strategy is the scene introducing Alessandra Clemente (Figure 5.6 above), the daughter of a famous *Camorra* victim, Silvia Ruotolo, who died in the cross-fire of a *Camorra* shoot-out when Alessandra was only ten [8]. The observational footage displays Alessandra in her domestic setting ([9] and [10]), where she lives with her father and brother while studying hard in the hope of becoming a public prosecutor. In the last still Alessandra is portrayed in a static and 'confessional' interview during which she explains the reason behind her decision to embark on law studies and her will to bring about a change to the city that took her mother ("We have the right to live in a better city than this. Why should I accept the way in

which my mother died?" [11]). A hint to her resilience and courage can be found in [9] through the use of the time adverb *still* ("Alessandra still lives in Naples"), which seems to suggest that her choice to keep living in such a problematic setting is not an obvious one. Alessandra does not directly mention the *Camorra* as the cause of her mother's death, but she describes the event using the euphemistic construction "being in the wrong place at the wrong time" ("My mother tragically died *because she was in the wrong place at the wrong time*" [11]). The exact same formulation, which could be easily replaced by the lexical unit "the *Camorra*" in the sentence, is used when Alessandra explains how studying law has helped her gain a better understanding of the events ("The decision I have made to study law helped me understand that there shouldn't be such a thing as *being in the wrong place at the wrong time*" [11]).

Figure 5.7 below is a visual synopsis of the story of another *Camorra* victim, Alessandro Cannavacciuolo, member of a family with a long

Figure 5.7. Alessandro Cannavacciuolo, member of a family of sheepherders (CIF)

Shot	Visual frame	TS	Transcript	ICM
12		00:04:30	Alessandro Cannavacciuolo: I am 22 and I am from Acerra. I come from a family of sheepherders. My dad has followed the sheep herding tradition as his ancestors did. Unfortunately, through no fault of our own, this family tradition ends with me.	OnSI SI
13		00:04:57	Alessandro Cannavacciuolo: In 2007, my uncle had cancer. He died in 40 days. Here it was in the 1980s, right dad?	OF SI
14		00:05:10	Alessandro Cannavacciuolo: Here the sheep were in great health, as you can see. The vegetation here is rich. In this place, right here, now there's an incinerator. Here you see my uncle, sheep grazing as it used to be done in the past through generations. Nothing had changed.	OffSI SI
15		00:06:24	Voice-over narration: According to the World Health Organisation, the dioxin level among adults should be about 10 picograms. Alessandro Cannavacciuolo: He had 255 picograms of dioxin in his body, without counting heavy metals. Aluminum 140, vanadium 30, chrome 125, arsenic 20. These metals shouldn't even exist in one person.	OnSI W&TI

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sheep-grazing tradition [12]. The Cannavacciuolos used to herd sheep on the once fertile land of Acerra, near Naples, until something sinister began to happen. Day after day they noticed that the animals' heads were deformed and that an increasing number of livestock were starting to die. The authorities sequestered everything and slaughtered the sheep, as they had been poisoned by illegally dumped deadly dioxin. In an alternating sequence of static, on-/off-screen (OnSI/OffSI) and walk-and-talk interviews (W&T), young Alessandro also recounts the tragedy of his uncle Vincenzo, a sheep herder who was eaten up by cancer within forty days ([13]–[14]). In his blood sample the dioxin level was more than 200 times higher than the threshold level [15]. Alessandro's first-person narration does not directly mention the *Camorra*, but it does hint at the abnormal situation caused by this criminal organisation's unlawful acts ("These metals shouldn't even exist in one person" [15]) and to the ensuing feeling of powerlessness that the *Camorra* engenders amongst its victims ("Unfortunately, *through no fault of our own*, this family tradition ends with me" [12]).

Besides the scenes in Figures 5.5-5.7 above, the information structure in the documentaries is also guided by visuals that anaphorically refer back to the *Camorra* without directly representing it, for instance through images portraying toxic barrels abandoned in unauthorised landfills in Acerra's farmland (allegedly 56,000 units), or the grave of sheepherder Vincenzo Cannavacciuolo (respectively Figure 5.3c and 5.3d above). Once again, no direct reference is made to the *Camorra* as a 'doer' in material processes. Visual deictics rather refer to the 'done-tos' that are at the receiving end of the action (Machin/Mayr 2012: 105), and to the consequences that this group's criminal activities have on the surrounding environment and on the social actors' daily life.

7. Conclusion

The intention behind this preliminary investigation was to observe instances of international media representation of the *Camorra*, a criminal organisation still largely unknown outside of Italy, by looking at video reportages produced for a mass audience between 2007 (when this crime group started to receive international media visibility) and 2012. The underlying belief is that the media play a constitutive role in the process of defining and representing the *Camorra* as a criminal entity and have a considerable impact on the public understanding of the criminal phenomenon.

The first part of the analysis, largely focused on the verbal mode, has outlined the array of constructive strategies enacted in the documentaries under scrutiny to establish a certain identity for this crime group, specifically looking at the discursive techniques of singularisation, assimilation and discontinuation theorised by Wodak *et al.* (2009). The results that emerge from our data are evidence that 'the System' is portrayed as a unique crime syndicate characterised by a number of idiosyncratic traits, such as organisational flexibility and

business-orientedness. Its identity is also defined by contrast with that of other entities: the Italian State and the Sicilian *Cosa Nostra* are used as a basis of comparison against which the *Camorra* emerges as unrivalled, respectively in terms of its 'attributes' (higher efficiency and reliability) and 'achievements' (higher number of affiliates and victims). From an overall discursive perspective, the *Camorra* as a criminal entity is mainly represented in relational processes of being and having, where an attribute is ascribed to the carrier, especially by means of the *definientia* provided in the opening sequences of the documentaries. Such definitions can be categorised as stipulative in that they mainly aim to cognitively introduce the *Camorra* for the first time as a new social construct.

The second analytical part of the study has investigated the sociosemantic categories used to represent the social actors (van Leeuwen 1996) inhabiting the *Camorra* universe by looking at how they are linguistically and visually displayed to highlight/background certain identity traits. The results of the investigation have shown that the narrative angle in the corpus under scrutiny tends to coincide with the perspective of *Camorra* victims and fighters, who are invariably individualised and nominated, thus favouring identification and proximity with the viewer. Predictably so, the few former perpetrators represented in the corpus are unspecified and anonymised through the strategy of indetermination, creating an interactional distance between the represented participant(s) and the audience. In the documentaries under scrutiny *Camorra* fighters and victims do not directly refer to the *Camorra* in their narrations; nor is this crime group given explicit visual representation. The *Camorra* seems to be visually presented only in terms of what it *has done*, through images that testify to the harm inflicted on the local environment and the local people.

The 'local' tone is rather accentuated in the video reportages, to the point that they fail to go beyond the description of regional events and give appropriate voice to the *Camorra*'s transnational dimension. Although this criminal organisation more than actively participates in international markets and globalised drug cartels, the 'narrative boundary' set by these documentaries seems to overlook this organisation's global reach, while its local and ethnic matrix is emphasised. As exemplified in section 5 (examples (15)–(17)), none of the lexical references to 'Europe'/'the European Union' in the corpus are really connected to the *Camorra*'s activities outside of Italy's borders. This prevents the audience from fully grasping the international grip of the *Camorra*, which has been officially declared as one of the four most threatening and pervasive mafia groups in the world (Europol 2013: 12).

This preliminary study on the representation of the *Camorra* is circumscribed to the very first documentaries on this crime group addressing an international audience. It would certainly benefit from a further contrastive analysis involving more recent media productions, as well as from the comparison with other text types, so as to detect whether any longitudinal changes may occur in the way(s) the *Camorra* gains narrative representation as a criminal entity over the years and across genres.

Acknowledgements

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Appendix

Abbreviations

ICM	Image and Camera Movement
OF	Observational footage
OffSI	Off-screen interview
OnSI	On-screen interview
SI	Static interview
TS	Time in Seconds
W&TI	Walk-and-talk interview

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The Multimodal Representation of Italian Anti-Mafia Discourse: Foregrounding Civil Resistance and Interlocution in Two Global English Video Reportages

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Abstract

*This paper examines the multimodal representation of civil resistance against Italian mafia (*Cosa Nostra *and* 'Ndrangheta*) in two English video reportages. More specifically, the analysis describes interlocutive relations between social actors displayed not only in the criminal, but also in the civil and media spheres, and allows for a multimodal description of cohesion on the macro level in these media formats. The theoretical focus is on the combination of the interpersonal metafunction in systemic-functional (multimodal) grammar and the cognitive notion of (intersubjective) viewpoint in cognitive grammar. The analysis of the video formats shows which activists are put onstage in different socio-economic settings (agriculture and education), and reveals the different extra- or intradiegetic perspectives taken by journalists in relation to civil and legal anti-mafia actors. The analysis discusses different (verbal and/ or visual) techniques for relating individual viewpoints and inter-actor relations, as well as the active role of journalists in setting up cohesion between video sequences. As media discourse foregrounds anti-mafia activism and as it displays the embedded role of journalists in multimodal meaning-making, the conventional discursive representation of mafia is transformed: heroic images of* mafiosi *are (verbally and/or visually) backgrounded and the discursive emphasis is now on the transformation of civil society, where activists simultaneously tell and perform their breaking the law of silence. On a meta-level the paper opens up the theoretical project of (multimodal) Critical Discourse Analysis, bringing in an altered, Foucauldian concept of non-hegemonic power: the representation of mafia victims and social workers, no longer as undergoers of totalitarian criminal violence, but as active players peacefully and successfully opposing the mafia, is in line with the moral and empowering project of Foucault's hermeneutics of the subject.*

Keywords

anti-mafia, video reportage, multimodality, critical discourse analysis, systemic-functional and cognitive grammar, performance of resistance, social actors

1. Introduction: anti-mafia reportages

Crime reports and video documentaries about Italian mafias such as *Cosa Nostra, Camorra* and *'Ndrangheta* have focused extensively on the representation of powerful and invisible mafia bosses, on the powerless victims and on the historic struggle with infiltrated institutions and often killed crime fighters such as civil servants, police

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officers, judges or collaborators with justice struggling alone against the powerful crime syndicates (Caliendo/Lanslots/Sambre 2016). Traditional media accounts of mafia wars copy the cinematographic, romanticised image of untouchable men of honour and the vulnerability of their innocent victims (Jewkes 2015). In this contribution, we zoom in on recent English-speaking video reportages about Italian anti-mafia, intended for an international audience, which explain resistance against the mafia phenomenon following symbolic moments, that touched the Italian and European public audience. Think of tragic moments such as the death of judges Falcone and Borsellino, killed in the 1992 bombings in Capaci and Palermo (Sicily), followed by the arrest by presumed *Cosa Nostra* bosses Riina and Provenzano who had been on the run for many years, or the 2007 Duisburg massacre, a vendetta in an Italian restaurant, which appeared to be a hiding place for members of the *'Ndrangheta*, the Calabrian mafia. In these moments television coverage tried to move beyond sensational press reporting about violent mobsters in order to grasp what mafia crime syndicates implied for institutions and people in their national contexts. On the one hand, in countries like Germany, institutions got interested in the best practices for policymakers and police forces in the institutional battle for crime fighting against an enemy sometimes considered invincible. Newsmakers consequently concentrated on this first dimension: traditional legal anti-mafia, i.e. the institutional battle against the most visible, military aspects of the mob. In Italy, the strong repression of Sicilian *Cosa Nostra* after 1992 saw increasing numbers of arrests and so-called *pentiti*, mafia members who under Italian regulation 416-bis decided to participate in a protection program and to collaborate with justice against their former organisations and bosses (Sambre forthcoming a). International media coverage of legal anti-mafia focused on important Italian crime-fighters, as well as on leading *pentiti*. The second dimension of anti-mafia is a sociological one: the persistent presence of Italian mafias in certain regions of Southern Italy, as an inevitable socio-economic alternative in the context of weak legal and social institutions in times of difficult economic conditions, called for new educational and social attitudes against the law of silence (*omertà*). After the 1992 killings, Italian civil society refused to accept the ongoing and senseless killings and spoke up against *Cosa Nostra*, in defence of magistrates like Falcone and Borsellino, which had been abandoned by the state. Massive protest and outrage against corrupt political authorities gave rise to civil anti-mafia movements, which bring together activists and the general public, which discuss and set up alternatives for subjection to the mafia. Civil anti-mafia refers to the principles and strategic choices for every free citizen to participate in an open fight against the mafia (Dalla Chiesa 2014). Many open questions remain as to the discursive representation and strategies used in media coverage about the mafia, and more specifically about the discursive relations between the two forms of anti-mafia, namely the legal and civil level. This paper zooms in on the discursive display of legal servants and citizens as they oppose the mafia, breaking away from romantic images of dominant heroic bosses, silent masses and the glorification of violence.

2. Multimodal objectives: Actors of resistance in anti-mafia video reportages

This paper explores the discursive display of resistance to Italian mafias in some anti-mafia videoreportages. Our descriptive objectives are twofold. We show which actors are shown to resist the mafia, in particular how media orchestrate the opposition with criminal actors and, possibly, other anti-mafia players. On the other hand, we describe the interlocutive relations between the main actors in this process, i.e. who is shown to interact with whom. Resistance is a fundamental communicative act, where an individual (or movement) actively brings about a social change, and requires explicit performative language for speaking up against the mafia. The representation of social transformation in discourse is a key question in critical discourse analysis: discourse both represents acts of transformation and participants in uttering such resistance, providing a voice to the anti-mafia movement. The notion of *omertà* is fundamental in this respect. Mafias typically rely on their intimidating force to silence possible opponents, or eventually to their physical elimination. If silence implies indifference, self-protection or straightforward complicity, speaking up against the mafia is in itself a discursive act of defiance, reaching much further than an informal denial of the mafia phenomenon. At first sight, powerless individuals publicly speak up against the mafia, but the personal expression of their own free will may be part of or lead to the creation of larger social movements. Acts of resistance therefore set up discursive relations or interactions with other social actors both in the criminal, social and/or legal and political sphere, provided the fact that the organisation of anti-mafia regulations and public forces largely derives from a democratic decision-making process.

Our descriptive approach has an important theoretical consequence. This paper is inscribed in a critical Foucauldian line of research about the discourse of resistance common in Critical Discourse Analysis. Traditional CDA tends to describe subjects as mere undergoers of one-directional hegemonic power pressure (in this case, by both the powerful mafia and the inertia of public institutions); seen under this hegemonic power perspective, the mafia may be defined and deconstructed as "a particular form of organized crime that is capable of infiltrating the legal economy and politics, of gaining social acceptance and some measure of tolerance on the part of the authorities" (Sciarrone/Storti 2014: 38). We radically change the analytic and theoretical position held in CDA about mafia victims in terms of a constructive, hermeneutic approach: our theoretical goal is therefore not to unveil such hegemonic mafia power relations (Wilson/Stapleton 2007), but to show how mafia power itself calls for social struggle, potential anti-mafia reversals and transformations. Since media discourse represents such struggle, there are symmetrical relations between media actors and ad hoc or institutionalised social movements (Van Gorp 2014). In other words, we study the deconstruction of a hegemonic mafia image, and the evaporation of public *omertà* accompanying the crime syndicate, in media discourse. The idea that power always entails opposition and counter-discourses

of resistance was well formulated by the early Foucault (1976: 92–93) himself, and becomes even more dominant in his late work about the hermeneutics of the subject seldom quoted by scholars in CDA (Sambre/Van den Bogaert 2016, Sambre forthcoming b). An important aspect of discursive resistance is not only the transition between the private and public spheres of ineffability and nameability of previously unknown phenomena (Butler/Athanasiou 2016: 132–134), but also its performativity, i.e. the way people gather or physically connect as a locus for interactive speech acts (Butler 2015: 174, Roderick 2016a) and its uptake in the media. An intriguing question then is which theory of discourse may best present both physical and verbal aspects of anti-mafia media communication. The answer to that question requires a critical and multimodal theory of language, which requires the integration of linguistic, visual and embodied layers of communication on the theoretical side, and (mediated) non-logocentric representations of resistance on the empirical side (Iedema 2003).

On an empirical level, this paper examines the social actors portrayed in acts of resistance in video reportages as a genre. More crucially, we are interested in the interactive relations connecting these actors, journalists and, possibly, the viewer (Kortti 2016). We concentrate on the verbal (interlocutive) and visual (interactive) depiction of such social actors and relations and their integration or mixing in an overall narrative structure across modes and sequences (Iedema 2001; O'Halloran 2004, 2008). We represent these relations in terms of conventional sequential analyses containing mainly explicit, sometimes implicit (i.e. partial visuals, non-agentive constructions, impersonal pronouns and the like) reference to participants in the visual and/or verbal mode (Tseng 2013: 60). Our main analytical focus is on the macro-cohesion between visual stills (Finch 2013), which provide a visual panorama of the video. Our transcriptions are therefore limited basic linguistic transliteration for English speech accompanying (numbered) screenshots excluding paralinguistic marks common in conversation analysis (Norris 2004), excluding both issues of translation in English voice-overs or English subtitles for spoken Italian as well as soundscapes and music from our analysis, because of space restrictions. A central theoretical notion for the analysis is the multimodal representation of inter-actor relations and their perspectivisation from the point of view of the documentary maker narrating the story.

We integrate a functional and cognitive tradition in multimodal research: van Leeuwen's (1995, 1996, 2005) social actor analysis, on the one hand, and the cognitive linguistic work on multimodal and intersubjective viewpoints across semiotic modes (Hart 2014; Dancygier/Lu/Verhagen 2016), on the other. Work in the systemic-functional tradition has focused on the discursive strategies for including or excluding/suppressing actors from discursive representations, as well as on discursive strategies for individualising or generalising names for social actors (Machin/Mayr 2012: 80, 101). These actors can furthermore be represented in terms of passive undergoers at the end of a reception of action processes or as active participants (van Leeuwen 1996); the distributions of agency among

participants is frequently an object of analysis (Machin/Mayr 2013, Roderick 2016b: 73–78). Social activism, as its name suggests, insists on this collective active role of civil society, no longer willing to undergo feelings of impotence, social isolation and violent intimidation (Pickering-Iazzi 2010: 33). In contrast, cognitive linguistics theorises the relation between linguistic structures (including discourse) and conceptualisation, and adds a dimension to the interpersonal metafunction of systemic-functional grammar. Whereas this metafunction has focused on the multimodal representation of speech participants, cognitive linguistics brings in two additional layers. First, it allows for description of perspectivisation and intersubjective relations in multimodal grammatical structures, i.e. the second-order inclusion of other speakers' first-order perspective (Verhagen 2005). Constructions of intersubjectivity represent speaker-hearer relations in the verbal pole of conceptualisations. In line with Hart's (2014: ch. 3) work on visual aspects of print media images, we will extend this relation to the level of interactions between represented actors in an interaction (Sambre/Feyaerts 2017) as well as with respect to the camera viewpoint representing the film maker's perspective on a scene (on viewpoint, cf. Hart 2016). Second, we take further Langacker's (2001, 2008: ch. 13, 2016) call for extending ideas about intersubjective meaning dynamics in cognitive semantics into the qualitative and social sphere of discourse (Langacker 2016), and in other than strictly verbal semiotic modes, such as the visual (Sambre *et al.* 2016).

Our dataset is composed of two videos about Italian mafia: (1) *Sicily mafia threats to farmers on reclaimed land* (2016a), Al Jazeera English [02:04]; (2) *The children of Italy's 'Ndrangheta mafia* (2015), France24 English version [12:08]. Both videos are available on YouTube. Video reportages are interesting genres: they are factual descriptions of reality, but not strictly realistic ones; they are multimodal social constructs which represent and fictionalise real situations (Bateman 2008: 189), as they imagine a format for narrating and exposing a topic (Nichols 1991, Iedema 2001) and therefore contribute to alternative framings and interpretations of existing realities, participating as such in semiotic practices it describes (Friedman/Epstein/Wood 2012, Jewitt/Oyama 2001). Video reportages as a multimodal genre are a relatively understudied phenomenon in Critical Discourse Analysis, since most analyses have focused on print and digital media or feature films (Ventola/Charles/Kaltenbacher 2004, Machin/van Leeuwen 2007, Wildfeuer/Bateman 2017). From an Italian perspective, while anti-mafia grassroots studies have largely ignored the role of media (Jamieson 1999), media studies on mafia representations have zoomed in basically on other genres like print media, fiction movies or video games (D'Amato 2013), and the role of Italian social anti-mafia networks "have been largely overlooked in mafia and media studies" (Pickering-Iazzi 2017: 28). The relevance of anti-mafia (video) news production is otherwise not limited to territories under mafia reign, but has relevance for other areas as well. In the case of YouTube videos and digital broadcasting, media production and distribution leads to building a virtual community of empowerment. This is particularly striking in the mission statement

of Al Jazeera (English). The channel is not limited to news coverage about the Middle-East but has itself an activist mission: it does not only want to provide "accurate and impartial news with a global, international perspective" about "different points of view from around the world" (Tischler 2006), but explicitly wants to give a voice to the voiceless (Aljazeera 2017). France24 shares this view on diversity and the spirit of debate, and explicitly puts such view in line with the Republican values of freedom and equality, both channels reaching millions of households throughout the world (France24 2013). The videos analysed are part of their global news coverage and background investigative journalism.

3. Media by-stander providing cohesion between agricultural cooperatives and activist networks

The first video zooms in on an agricultural cooperative in the Sicilian countryside. After an opening in which we see farmers at work in their fields, at some distance [1] (reference to examples refer to stills and their transcription in square brackets), a responsible [2] of the cooperative explains how this cooperative was born. After some explanations on mafia confiscations [3], with a voice-over by the journalist, an individual sequence puts journalist Kane onstage [4]: Kane explains that there are not only isolated initiatives, but also networks throughout the island. A second individual, Emanuele Feltri, testifies about a negative experience, the death threats by the mafia he received [5], we get a scene where farmers meet around the table [6], punctuated by Emanuele's positive assessment of the group's creation [7] and its meaning for the whole of the island [8].

Table 3.1. Multimodal perspectives in video 1 (Al Jazeera 2016)

1	Voice-over: Workers on the Beppe Montana farm tend the land. Here they grow olives, oranges and other crops. It's a typical Sicilian summer's day. But the farm itself is not typical. For until a few years ago, this was owned by the mafia, now it's run legally by a cooperative overseen by Alfio Curcio.	
2	Curcio: Initially people were suspicious of working with us on this confiscated land, and they were afraid of what could happen to them and their families. Then finally they realized we're a reality and the community has been mobilized.	
3	Voice-over: The law that allows this farm to operate was passed nearly 20 years ago. Since then thousands of properties have been seized and reallocated for lawful use.	

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4	Journalist: Cooperatives like the Beppe Montana here in Bel Passo, are about reclaiming individual farms from the mafia but there are other people on this island who want to reclaim the whole of Sicily from its influence. Young people like Emanuele Feltri. He owns a farm in the Valle del Simeto. In June of last year, the local mafia asked him for protection money. He refused. Their response was violent.	
5	Emanuele Feltri: I found my sheep shot dead and one of them had been decapitated and his head put in front of my house. That is a clear sign of mafia intimidation.	
6	Voice-over: But Emanuele was not intimidated, instead he and his friends formed a network of young farmers determined to resist the mafia.	
7	Emanuele Feltri: From this very bad thing happened to me there has been a very good outcome, there have been many arrests and where I was once alone we are a network of 20 farmers whose name is Terre Forti, strong land.	
8	Voice-over: Emanuele hopes the rest of the island will follow his defiant example.	

The relations between civil and mafia actors are relatively simple in this factual news item: the mafia is not represented visually, but verbally, and shows up only indirectly in the image of the seized property and the narration about the symbolic killing of sheep as a sign of intimidation [5].

The journalist provides a general narrative format, by means of off-screen comments [3–6–8] and on-screen frontal interaction with the viewer [4]. These interactions use one single diagonal perspective for decontextualised interviewees. Not all workers are recognisable, as in [1], where they are filmed at a distance, from the back, or referred to generically in the verbal comment as "other people" [4]. Not always are their names provided, through screen captions [2–5]. Interestingly we get to see how these activists interact on a daily basis [6–8]; these images show that informal networks by local workers spontaneously arise [5–8] as an alternative to more institutionalised cooperatives set up under Italian anti-mafia legislation, shown at the beginning of the video [1–3]. Emanuele Feltri stands out as individual, the area he

works in as a farmer is explicitly mentioned ("the Valle del Simeto"): he explicitly mentions mafia intimidation [5] and his collective action, denouncing threats [7]. Note the distinction between the active mobilising role of the cooperation responsible and passive people and workers in the area, afraid of collaborating at first sight ([1–2] image and verbal part [2]). Reference to specific laws are generic [3]: the passive constructions in "seized and reallocated" suppress legal anti-mafia, i.e. the law enforcement and legal actors for the reattribution of mafia property.

Finally, note the differences in reference to the mafia: whereas Curcio is presented as a manager running a team of workers ([1] "overseen by"), Feltri is presented as a young farm owner [4]. In both agricultural contexts, the past or future positive outcome of transformation is worded: "the community was mobilized" [2], "there has been a very good outcome" [7], "Emanuele hopes […] will follow his defiant example" [8]. Interestingly, Curcio and Feltri's words are dubbed in English with a strong Italian accent, what adds local flavour to their story. The journalist is mostly off-stage. His short appearance in [4] is physically contextualised within the first cooperative and provides the overarching textual cohesion with the second story elsewhere, without him, as a by-stander, participating actively in interaction with interviewed nor in the farms' activities. There is an interesting visual interlocutive contrast between the frontal camera perspective for the journalist addressing the viewer in [4] and the interviewees' coronal body position and gaze direction (note the contrast with the transversal body position and gaze direction, left-to-right in [2] and right-to-left in [5] and [7] respectively, as they interact with the off-screen interviewer on their side, while no access is provided to the verbal nor the visual cues provided by the journalist in that interaction. The camera viewpoint, generally speaking, is external and static, allowing for a distant, extradiegetic and neutral point of view with respect to scenes, interviewees and reflecting the role of the journalist as an objective by-stander, independent of the visual story-telling. The reportage ends with hopes for the future, in the indirect speech of the journalist's voiceover repeating Feltri's words, as an open ending we will rediscover in the second reportage.

4. Embedded journalist and intradiegetic camera in school and legal (re-education) system

The second video is much more complicated. It combines different narrative lines in another sphere, about educational anti-mafia initiatives, and explicitly shows the public impact of these initiatives, on a verbal and visual level. We are in Calabria, a stronghold of the *'Ndrangheta*. This organisation has a quite different organisation than Sicilian *Cosa Nostra*, since it heavily relies on family relations (Paoli 2014). This reportage thematically zooms in on how socio-educational movements develop anti-mafia attitudes in youngsters, particularly in

schools with *'Ndrangheta* children traditionally predestined for a life in crime. There are four macro-sequences: a first one in an anti-mafia school in Calabrian Rosarno [1–10], a second one with magistrates in regional capital Reggio Calabria [11–19], a third one in two social initiatives in the Gioiosa oriental part of the region [20–36], and a fourth one back in the streets of Rosarno, on the west coast, during public protest by school kids [37–45].

Apart from the complex narrative, and fourfold plotline, the most striking difference is the embedded character of the journalist and the camera viewpoint. This camera is no longer static, nor exclusively extradiegetic, as in the first reportage, but follows interviewees as they move around in their towns and professional settings. The combination of voice-overs and such non-frontal camera angles provide us with rich visual contextualisation of the urban settings in which this reportage is situated, in contrast with the naturalistic backgrounds of the Sicilian countryside in previous news coverage.

Whereas the farmers' story only showed the mafia in activists voices, and not in the visuals, apart from seized property (Di Maggio 2011), at different places we get direct access to mafia images: the fuzzy police surveillance camera images of a shop where a shoot-out between rivalling clans took place, by two hitmen with helmets, on a motorbike, in the streets of Calabria [3]; in the police arrest mugshots of *'Ndranghetisti* distributed during a law enforcement press conference [14]; finally, during a sneak visit to a confiscated mafia property and its underground hide-out [23–28].

Notably, the nocturnal drive-by shooting scene by two scooter drivers [3] creates visual cohesion with the central topic of the reportage, the children of the *'Ndrangheta* region, who in [4] appear on a scooter and without helmets, in full daylight and in a much higher resolution and realistic modality (Kress/van Leeuwen 1996: 166) than the nocturne police footage. Short sequences of urban settings provide us with contextual information about the *'Ndrangheta*, as in town image [2] and [11], a shot of capital Reggio Calabria seen from the sea, or the houses surrounding a playground [33].

The journalist takes us on a tour in the different school educational settings, along with representative and individualised social actors: the headmistress of a secondary school, Maria Rosaria Russo in the first [1] and last sequence [37]; president of the juvenile court of Reggio Calabria Roberto de Bella [19]; and Francesco Rigitano, a former *'Ndrangheta* convict, now director of a Catholic social centre [28]. As in the previous documentary, apart from the judge, the social workers testify about their past personal transformation, in the present-day settings of the school, former mafia villa and social institution. Importantly, they do not only tell, but also enact the turning points in their acts of resistance.
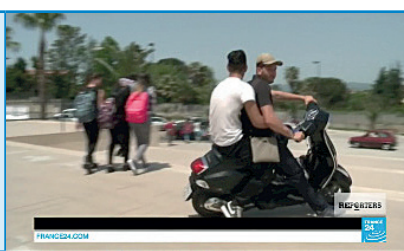
Russo narrates threats received by her and her school [5], showing the places she cleaned up and rebuilt, both in the verbal and visual modi, by deictic adverb *here* and pointing, and enacting the way she at that point addressed her pupils in direct speech: *tomorrow you'll catch up the lost time*. These enactments contrast with the indirect storytelling by anti-mafia farmers.

We then move into the classrooms, where unconventional teaching methods [6] are demonstrated by teacher Grace D'Agata [6–8] to adolescents, actively engaging in debate about anti-mafia attitudes and civil values. Using *specific examples* [6, sagittal camera perspective with respect to the teacher], she pushes students, some of whom she reports, in an interview explicitly mentioning her name, to come from mafia families [8], to think about normality and fairness [7, frontal coronal camera position from the teacher's desk]. In other words, the direct interaction between the teacher and her students is discursively displayed in speech and camera position. In [9–10], we move to an impressive individual young actor, Carmello (sic) Cacciola, a son of a mafia family who decided to step out and choose an alternative life in medicine [9]. Carmelo's words are quite general and his first-person utterances do not mention the mafia nor his family; the meaning of his words is rephrased in the voice-over showing his uncovered face. Importantly, we get to see the change caused by the teachers' educational initiatives in the explicit declaration of the young boy as an individualised and specific mafia actor. As an act of public recognition, headmistress Russo congratulates him, shaking hands and embracing him in the presence of the other kids in his class. As in the last sequence, we see here the public recognition verbally and visually enacted, within the concrete and authentic class setting where initiatives were born and developed. As far as the teacher is concerned, the journalist, although visually offstage, uses different verbal techniques (voice-over and interview) for rendering the viewpoint of the mistress [10], reflecting both the teacher's active engagement in the (transitive verbal) scene as well as the (visual) intradiegetic cardinal view from her desk (Hart 2014: 89, 102).

Table 4.1. Multimodal perspectives in video 2, first sequence (France24 2015)

1	Headmistress Russo: I would define Calabria as a beautiful but cursed region with so many extraordinary resources, yet at the same time subjugated to the suffocating authorities of the mafia.	
2	Voice-over: The *'Ndrangheta* the Calabrian mafia is omnipresent here in Calabria, in the South of Italy. Reigning over the mountain villages. From here they organized the biggest cocaine traffic in Europe.	
3	Voice-over: Because in Calabria the mafia benefits from an easily accessible labor force, adolescents they can use for their dirty work. Extortion, transporting drugs, assassinations. From an early age some even become hitmen.	

4	Voice-over: Maria Rosaria has decided to say no to organized crime in her school and to lead the fight from within. […] We are in the high school in Rosarno, one of the *'Ndrangheta* strongholds, among the 500 students the sons and grandsons of major mafia families of the south of Calabria. When Maria Rosaria arrived at school years ago, she immediately decided to make it a mafia-free zone.	
5	Headmistress Russo: A letter bomb, we found it here. Look. As I approached the bomb disposal expert said "Don't do that"! But I said "No, the kids must understand". I closed all the school doors and said them: "Tomorrow you'll catch up the lost time. That will be four hours of detention". Since then I haven't had any further intimidation.	
6	Voice-over: To distance the kids from the mafia's influence, Maria Rosaria offers unconventional classes to the students. Teacher: Good morning! Today we discuss the culture of lawfulness […] using specific examples. A few days ago, a village guard informed the authorities about an assassination organized by the mafia, who promptly put a price on his head. "Don't you think it's odd that someone who gave information on a crime should be obliged to leave his village […], hide forever because of threats to his life?".	
7	Student: No, it's unfair.	
8	Teacher D'Agata: Children from mafia families come to these classes. I have to accept their urges and be able to say, my name is that I come from that family, but I am different to my family and my destiny is not my family.	
9	Voice-over: Young Carmelo Cacciola is the son of a white collar worker in the mafia. Beyond these walls his name arouses a sense of fear. At 17 Carmelo decided to break away from the criminal heritage of his family. He wants to make his own way. Carmelo: "I want to study medicine. I'm studying really hard for my exams. It's not going to be easy but I'll persevere and push myself to succeed".	
10	Voice-over: In a few days Carmelo will pass his scientific school exams, in the hope of one day becoming a doctor. A victory for Maria Rosaria. Russo: I want to congratulate Carmelo, bravo! You're a wonderful example.	

The second sequence brings us explicitly in contact with two legal anti-mafia representatives: chief prosecutor Nicola Grateri [16–18], and juvenile judge Di Bella [19]. The opening image with threatening
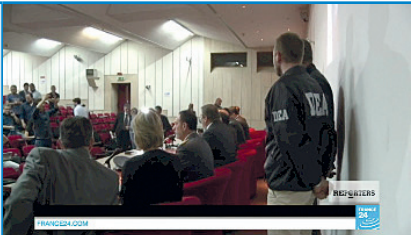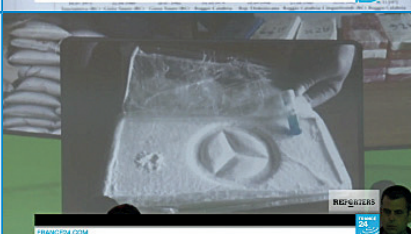
music [11] sets the scene for the final press conference in regional capital Reggio Calabria after a massive international police operation against drug traffic. The *'Ndrangheta* and the Calabrian port of Gioia Tauro, constitute an access platform for Colombian cocaine in Europe. Police footage in a PowerPoint presentation is used to show both (silent and static) perpetrators [14] and illegal substances [15]. Note the different camera perspectives for Grateri during and after the press conference. In [12]–[13]–[16], respectively, we see him as he looks into the press room, in a engaged cardinal view surrounded by magistrates and police officers (similar to Russo's in [10]), both with voice-over, and in a more conventional individual shot with name tag and direct speech Italian declarations (dubbed in English): here the *'Ndrangheta* actions are agentive and central to the verbal discursive representation. After the conference, we see him chatting with colleagues [17], providing explanations about the traditional family ties between mafia members. Apart from [16], we see Grateri well embedded in his interactions with other social actors in the legal and media sphere of the press room. The international France24 journalist, in such a way, is not directly onstage in the visual, but is aggregated with the other press people, showing media interest for an apparently important and transnational organisation. This is very different from the first video, where journalist Dominic Cane operated in isolation and without connection with the legal anti-mafia.

The transition from Grateri [18] to Di Bella [19] marks the transition between legal and civil anti-mafia: Di Bella set up a re-education program when he saw new generations of *'Ndranghetisti* take up criminal habits from their parents. In other words, both sequences show individual actors in the educational (headmistress and teacher) and legal sphere (prosecutor and judge), and we get to see the complementary between the two. Both systems are not on a par, at least not in the narrative, nor in the length of sequences: the legal *intermezzo* in this reportage clearly is a short, subordinate explanatory part in the overall educational format of the video. Furthermore, in contrast with Russo, judge Di Bella does not explicitly phrase his personal turning point in the legal system, an explanation only provided by the journalist's voice-over [19].

As part one [1–10], part three [20–36] now shows the effects of the re-education program set up by Di Bella, in both anonymous groups and representative examples of perpetrators, who got their life back on the track.

Table 4.2. Multimodal perspectives in video 2, second sequence (France24 2015)

11	(threatening music) Voice-over: Today...	

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12	Voice-over: ... the authorities have disclosed a result from one of the most important investigations of recent years into the Calabrian mafia.	
13	Voice-over: An international network in 19 countries has been dismantled...	
14	Voice-over: ... with 34 people arrested...	
15	Voice-over: ... and 400 tons of cocaine seized.	
16	Nicola Grateri (in English voice-over): In order to purchase the cocaine at low price, at around 11 hundred or 12 hundred euros per kilo, the *'Ndrangheta* families made alliances among themselves, allowing them to purchase large amounts of five to eight thousand kilos.	
17	Voice-over: Prosecutor Nicola Grateri heads the Italian side of the inquiry. He's been pursuing the *'Ndrangheta* for over 20 years. For him there is only one reason for the power and longevity of this mafia and that is family.	
18	Grateri (in English voice-over): The 'Ndranghetistis are related to each other. Two or three patriarchs of families head up a local organization. Made out of 500 to 1,000 people. Disloyalty is difficult and this is one of the guarantees for the South American cartels. Families makes the *'Ndrangheta* almost impenetrable like a grinded block.	
19	De Bella: Today in 2015 I find myself sentencing sons or younger brothers of both – of the 1990s and this bitterly confirms that one is born into the *'Ndrangheta*. Families ensure the transfer of power of every territory for a generational continuity. Voice-over: His court put in place a pioneering program last year. The aim is to distance and re-educate the minors in danger of being recruited by the mafia.	

The third sequence contains two subsequences about social (re) education in other than school contexts: we are taken by car to the *'Ndrangheta* observatory and museum in a mansion [23] confiscated from the mafia where group visits take place [20–29], and to the Don Milani centre for sports and social activities [30–36]. Strikingly, we see representatives of civil anti-mafia movements who directly interact with young adolescents in a re-education program [21, 24, 25–27] as they participate in a guided tour in an underground *'Ndrangheta* hide-out and presentations, and talking to even younger kids as they are doing sports [32–34] and parlour games and puzzles [35–36]. The activities displayed and discursive techniques used are obviously quite different. Image [20] is confusing: at first sight, this looks like a drive-by police observation in rainy weather but appears to be a luxurious BMW confiscated from the *'Ndrangheta* and used as a means of transportation in the social organisation [22] for Gianluca and his friends, sitting anonymously in the back of the car. The reportage about social activism is dramatised, as in the drive-by shooting police footage [3] in the first sequence.

The verbal part of [24] and [25] stresses the active role of the boys in discovering about the boss's orders and prayers (shown on a wall [24]), a life of contradiction between extravagant richness, religious devotion, cruelty and social exclusion. Francesco Rigitano then publicly testifies about the destiny of his friends, dead by *vendetta* or in prison [28]. The boys are shown anonymously, with blurred faces, as they silently attend the presentation [27]. Image [29] shows the effect: after the talk, Gianluca (no face shown, with his *Paestum* T-shirt for some *couleur locale*) reflects upon the importance of refusing criminal 'Ndrangheta offers. He speaks up for the whole group: *it's up to us to have the strength to distance ourselves to say 'no' when approached by the mafia*. These words are in clear contrast with the inescapable presence of the mafia in [22], an actor verbally excluded, as he was on his way to the meeting: *you can't fight against that kind of power* (the second person 'you' in the voice-over translation echoes impersonal *si indefinito* in the Italian words heard in the background: *non si può)*.
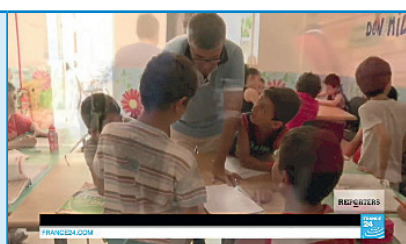
The transition, in an intimate close-up of social worker Francesco Rigitano as he drives from one activity to another [30], between the two subsequences, is marked by Francesco's personal reconversion: he used to be one of these boys [30]. The journalist repeats the visual technique previously used in [10] and [12], for Russo and Grateri: she visually follows his steps, into the playground [31], where young kids are playing football [32–33], as a physical preparation to a morally healthy future life [34]. These kids' faces are not hidden, but note the difference in camera viewpoint [32–33]: inside the playground, they are safe [32], but outside the fence [33], the situation may be more dangerous. In other words, the camera mirrors the double perspective of social activism seen from the inside and the outside. Francesco's reconversion and engagement are not shown in an abstract way, nor from a distance. In the last two stills, we literally see him step in the rooms doing homework and playing games with kids together with their female educator. Needless to say that contrary to Carmelo Cacciola [9–10] and less fortunate Gianluca [29], we cannot yet see the results of the social action, for it is a *long drawn out process* [35].

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Table 4.3. Multimodal perspectives in video 2, third sequence (France24 2015)

20	Voice-over: Twenty of them are here today.	
21	Social worker: What's up, mate? Everything ok? Voice-over: Some of them are only 16 and yet they are all on police files for crimes such as the sales or distribution of drugs, extortion or armed robbery. A perfect profile for becoming *'Ndrangheta* soldiers.	
22	Voice-over: More than 400 minors have been entrusted to the Calabrian social justice. Using a car previously seized from an ex-boss, they are going off for an afternoon of re-education. Gianluca still has two years of probation. Gianluca: "It's difficult to stand up to the mafia, because they are everywhere but yet invisible at the same time. Impossible to be, you can't fight against that kind of power".	
23	Voice-over: A few kilometers further south, we arrive at a villa confiscated from a local drug baron that has been transformed into a museum about the *'Ndrangheta*. [...]	
24	Voice-over: Two meters below ground, the kids discover exactly what life is like for a majority of the bosses. Sought by the authorities, they end up hiding out in these dug outs for years on and a few belongings enough to survive in little more than 10 square meters. On the wall a message: "God protect me in this bunker". The objective is to demystify the mafia idea of luxury living.	
25	Mercurio: It's very contradictory, he condemned ten people to death but at the end at the same time he prayed for protection of the Virgin Mary.	
26	Voice-over: Upstairs they meet the first-hand witness. Francesco Rigitano knew the mafia well. As an adolescent in the 90s, he was recruited by the *'Ndrangheta*.	
27	Voice-over: Today he gives talks so that these young delinquents will not follow the same path.	

28	Rigitano: My friends from that time that joined the mafia, are today either in prison or dead. There is no other way out.	
29	Voice-over: In the garden of the house, Gianluca seemed to have understood the message. Gianluca: "Joining the mafia means condemning yourself to a horrible destiny. It's up to us to have the strength to distance ourselves to say "no" when approached by the mafia".	
30	Voice-over: At 21, Francesco was sentenced to two years of prison for collusion with the mafia. An experience that opened his eyes. Today he runs a support center for youth in difficulty.	
31	Voice-over: Here in Gioiosa, in the south-east of Calabria nearly 300 kids come five days a week…	
32	Voice-over: … in order to do sports and do their homework.	
33	Voice-over: The aim is to save them from the criminal context that surrounds them.	
34	Rigitano: We'd like them to realize they can choose their future and that through sports they will grow whilst developing healthy attitudes.	
35	Saving the new generation and encouraging the kids for greatness is a long drawn out process for Francesco.	

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36	Rigitano: A screwdriver, no, we are looking for a compound word – corkscrew!	

5. Reaching conclusions for civil anti-mafia and video discourse

In the previous part, the reportage shows different efforts of prevention and re-education in the Don Milani organisation and in Russo's school. Sequence four [37–45] takes us one step further: we see how schoolchildren set up a public manifestation in their town Rosarno, a brave and rather uncommon act against ruling law of silence. Teachers are shown pushing their pupils to lead the protest [37]: this intergenerational 'we-them' verbal antagonism is driven by a change in mindset: young and older social actors jointly perform and explain social change: Russo, her teachers, Rosarno politicians and older citizen [38, 41] march together [43] with young people [39, 40] interviewed as they take part in the manifestation. The camera's viewpoint is embedded, it is inside of the manifestation, moving as an intradiegetic instance with activist participants [38–40–41] as they demonstrate. Toward the end, the camera turns ahead, taking a metaphorical visual stance with respect to the student's future lying ahead [42, 45], while the voice-over, taking an internal narrative viewpoint, in line with Emanuele Feltri in the first reportage.

Table 5.1. Multimodal perspectives in video 2, fourth sequence (France24 2015)

37	The battle to win over youth minds has begun. Back in Rosarno, Maria Rosario and her students are marching. Russo: Come on kids, hold the tap. You're the one leading the protest.	
38	Russo: We have to change their mindset and their culture. We have to get rid of the idea of easy money without effort.	
39	Boy: It's a start, it's a sign of change.	

40	Other boy: Even the kids from the mafia families are beginning to join these marches. It shows everyone that one can be free from the mafia.	
41	Man: We are the owners of the land, not them. This is an eviction notice.	
42	Voice-over: Without these young people, the *'Ndrangheta* has no new soldiers, no future.	
43	Maria Rosario is absolutely convinced but her battle is far from won.	
44	Girls shouting: Fuori la mafia dallo Stato. [our translation: the mafia out of the State]	
45	Girls shouting: Fuori la mafia dallo Stato. [our translation: the mafia out of the State]	

Feltri's hope for the future renders Russo's implicit thoughts about the non-imminent end of civil *'Ndrangheta* battles. In both video reportages global English mafia news coverage no longer reflects the stereotypical discursive representation of a secret and sovereign mafia cancer slowly but inevitably invading European and global society in the absence of a strong Italian State or transnational police cooperation. Our first descriptive objective was to illustrate which social actors are displayed. Both documentaries bring onstage citizens who speak out against, resist and in doing so offer an alternative, hopeful view on fighting global organised crime, both from below and from within Italy and its institutions (Fiandaca 2007). We have described, by means of a

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multimodal analysis, two very different spheres of civil anti-mafia: activism in agriculture and education. The two documentaries have a different ideational focus and multimodal format for social actors 'doing' anti-mafia. Whereas the first one tells about and shows workers, internally, in a formal cooperative and informal activist setting, with a mere observational and distant camera perspective and external narrative viewpoint, where inter-activist exchange takes place with a very implicit connection to more traditional legal antimafia, the second documentary takes a much more engaged, public stance as to social actors, shown as they set up activism and interact in the public sphere. Here, the focus is less on economic activities free from mafia extortion, than on school systems and social (re)education, in connection with legal repression and re-education. Despite its focus on moral reframing of the organised crime temptations, the latter documentary shows a more complex, less activist and more institutional perspective, with an explicit verbal and visual representation of its public goals and human actors undergoing the work of prevention. In both documentaries the discursive analysis has shown intricate techniques for relating individual viewpoints (anonymisation, generalisation, individualisation), sequential aspects of cohesion (such as contextualising, voice-over comments), as well as inter-actor relations.

Our second goal was to show the interactive relations between social actors. Where the powerless speak out against the powerful, news discourse both enacts and reveals social change. Importantly, we have analysed how individuals overcome their resilience, speak up, and tell their personal story of resistance, engaging others in their community (and particularly the younger) in their battle against mafia *omertà*. The two documentaries differ in this respect. Whereas the first one displays and narrates the constitution of groups (such as Feltri and his fellow farmers) as an example for other people in the future (voice-over [8]), the school documentary shows the leading role of educational and social workers engaged in stable institutional settings in their direct interaction with youngsters. These relations (both the indirect, extradiegetic and the direct, intradiegetic ones) are discursively represented in speech and/or image. Furthermore, we have insisted on the position of the journalist, more specifically for the journalist's eye and camera with respect to anti-mafia activism, more objectively and distant (in the first reportage), or more embedded, and therefore visually stronger committed (in the second). We hope to have shown how a multimodal study of anti-mafia documentaries extends our understanding of the relation between activism and engaged media.

Negatively speaking, the two documentaries may not show to which extent anti-mafia prevention affects a transregional (within the Italian national) or transnational (European) level (Fairclough 2006, 2009), as the documentaries under study are mainly focusing on (Southern) Italy itself. A critical note about this gap could be that media producers need to bring in that delocalised, transregional and transnational perspective more explicitly, in order to make us understand how Italian crime syndicates may affect life inside and, more specifically, outside of Italy. More positively, an interesting

discursive by-product of this activist Italian transformation in European antimafia news is the backgrounding of the unconverted and sometimes idealised *mafioso*. Not only are the criminal actors discursively backgrounded (through qualitative multimodal strategies of exclusion or suppression and, quantitively, by limited screen time), but they may be slowly affected by social movements' positive actions, e.g. on the positive choices made by their own children. *Mafiosi* representation as passive, hiding, less and sometimes unmentioned or invisible actors, makes them look less glamorous and more vulnerable. The real actors displayed both in images, actions and words about social change, are the social workers involved in anti-mafia struggles. This active representation of potential mafia victims and their multiple subjectivities in our descriptive work, as they are embedded in the very local context where they normally undergo totalitarian violence (Siebert/Namer 1996: 31), changes the theoretic status of non-criminal social actors as mere undergoers, in favour of an antagonist and moral force of resistance, closer to Foucault's dynamic idea of resistance as inherent to hegemonic power relations. In future work, we will try to explore other media video formats and news production, in which both traditional reportage makers and social movements themselves are actively publicising and mobilising against organised crime in Italy and elsewhere. In doing so, we hope to do justice to many invisible anti-mafia workers and, on a personal level, to modestly participate, with the analytical eye of academic research, in reclaiming mafia territories as part of a global critical, civil and moral project.

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De-Queering Proxemics in the Screen Adaptation of *Camorra* Male Dyads: A Multimodal Prosody Analysis

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Abstract

The recent TV screening of the Neapolitan camorra[1] *seems to be spreading a somewhat incorrect interpretation of 'queer masculinity' in dyadic non-verbal interactions occurring between televised* camorra *mobsters. Such faux constructions of* camorristi *might result from the fact that cross-cultural differences in non-verbal forms of communication, realised in subtitled texts, are a major constraint for audio-visual translators in their task of adapting a complex multimodal product into other cultures/languages. Despite the significant attention scholars have recently devoted to the effect of TV coverage on viewers, very little attention has been paid to the ways in which male social actors involved in the Neapolitan crime syndicate have been discursively re-semiotised in English-speaking contexts. When non-verbal communication crosses national, cultural and linguistic boundaries via subtitling, some context-bound references and differences on non-verbal behavioural dimensions may prevent the full appreciation of the source text. In particular, the manner in which personal space is interpreted cross-culturally, remains an unreadable culture-bound factor for the target audiences. This study seeks to confirm previous anthropological and linguistic research on personal space, an interesting academic field that has remained somewhat silent for a long period, and incorporates some of its insights into the analysis of audiovisual translation.*

With this in mind, this paper provides a multimodal integrated investigation of the perception of the TV drama series Gomorrah *(produced in Italy and subtitled in English) outside the boundaries of Italy, looking at data from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives. The study, which is a theoretical contribution to cross-cultural adaptation, employs "multimodal prosody" analysis in order to disambiguate the interpretation of* camorristi *proxemics and haptics as a queer representation.*

Keywords

multimodal prosody, Gomorrah, *queer representation, proxemics, audiovisual translation, queer masculinity, queer* camorrista

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[1] Throughout this paper, I reject the use of upper case letters when referring to horrid crime syndicates, such as *camorra* or mafia, as a form of respect for the thousand victims offended by organised criminal practices.

1. Introduction

The media have often acted as an ideal vehicle to spread knowledge and cultural tropes, in that they are the manufacturers of a large amount of information that circulates in our societies. It is particularly through visual media that people may gain instant access to

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information, since they are the community's first contact with the outside world (van Dijk 1991). Public knowledge of crime, in particular, is largely derived from the visual media that play a key role in the discursive construction of criminality and the criminal justice system (Beale 2006; see also Tessuto in this volume). Millions of viewers consume criminal stories in their true or fictional portrayals worldwide so that, as Dowler *et al.* (2006: 837) have aptly pointed out, "crime as entertainment has cemented a place in popular culture". Recently, globalised organised crime has become a very trendy topic in news stories and a popular sub-genre in infotainment, entertainment and general television programming. The proliferation of the prime-time serial on television, enhanced by the introduction of time-shifting technologies of consumption together with an immediate international coverage, also due to audiovisual translations (henceforth AVT), has allowed for more extended narratives of organised crime. These relatively new stories are more and more popular worldwide since they deal, primarily, with a sense of universally unresolved social problems and an unsuccessful institutional response. The recurring representations of globalised organised crime on TV screens may shape the understanding of such intricate phenomena as several criminological perspectives, such as labelling theory and cultural criminology, have frequently posited. Such approaches share a belief in the power of media on the societal perceptions of people, groups and events (Becker 1973; Hall *et al.* 1978; Ferrell *et al.* 2008). In particular, since most people have very little direct experience regarding organised crime, TV programmes may provide a 'window on the world' and exert influence to shape public opinion (Barrat 1986). Although significant academic studies have recently contributed to the linguistic and visual investigation of the representation of crime and criminal actors in TV series and films (Machin *et al.* 2013), no specific attention has been devoted to the linguistic and semiotic constructions of organised crime syndicates across the world.

Against this backdrop, this study aims at investigating the foreign perception of the significant screening of male *camorra* criminals, the Neapolitan crime syndicate mobsters, which has recently and universally proliferated through the audiovisual adaptation of films, TV series and programmes. In particular, due to space constraints, the analysis will concentrate on a small multimodal corpus, *Gomorrah – The Series* (aired in Italy in 2014 and 2015), which represents one of the latest instances of the way visual media representations may contribute to shaping audience's knowledge and interpretation. *Gomorrah* stages the 'unwritten rules' of the Naples crime syndicate, otherwise known as the *camorra*, which differs enormously from the typical mafia practices represented in previous US productions. By destabilising the classic Hollywood gangster-film formula, the series tears down the archetypal mythology of the *mafioso* type, enduring from *The Godfather* (1972) through to *The Sopranos* (1999–2007). The programme makers sold the series to more than 30 countries, including the US, yet when migrating to foreign contexts via English subtitles, such a highly culture-bound multimodal product can be seen to betray, or simply lose, some important entities of meaning, or culture-specific

references (CSRs). *Camorra* CSRs do not travel conveniently in translation since they contain extremely problematic constraints for audiovisual translators who have to bear the highly multimodal product across borders of languages and cultures, both visually and verbally (see Chiaro 2009: 156). In particular, although the TV drama focuses on individual and hegemonic male power declined on a corrupt social structure, its English subtitled version seems to have contributed to the spread of an incorrect interpretation of *camorristi's* practices of hegemonic masculinity. Following a longstanding pattern of criminal narratives and including prevailingly male heroes meeting goals through typical hypermasculine force of will and resort to violence, foreign viewers, with no experience of the source cultural context[2], seem to have misperceived some culture-bound forms of hegemonic male representations displayed in the series; as data derived from a statistical questionnaire will show in section 4. In particular, close proxemics and haptic behaviours, fundamental meaning-making cultural resources typical of interactions between *camorra* mobsters, do not successfully travel cross-culturally and are in no way aided by the published English subtitles of the series.

After briefly referring to the vast and consolidated literature on cross-cultural differences in proxemics and haptic behaviour and their basis for cross-cultural misperceptions, this paper will present a few tentative suggestions for creative solutions to the problem of contextual disambiguation in AVT, while also providing a theoretical contribution to cross-cultural adaptation. Moreover, the novel concept of "multimodal prosody" (Balirano 2017), applied to the analysis of specific culture-bound sequences, will be employed in the multimodal analysis to disambiguate a skewed perception of *camorra* men's dyadic relationships. This type of semiotic reading may be an aid to the construction of a more precise inter-subjectivity of the meaning while avoiding unintended 'semiotic tension', typical of AVT, through the help of the practical application of overtly contextualised subtitles.

The following section will introduce some distinctive cultural mispremising which may occur when analysing the *camorra's* context of situation from outside the represented culture.

2. Queering the mobster

In his essay "Italian Masculinity as Queer"(2014: 1), John Champagne provocatively maintains that,

> masculinity as it is articulated in a good deal of Italian art is queer, deconstructing binaries of masculine and feminine, homosexual and heterosexual, adult and child, active and passive, seeing and being seen.

[2] Both narrow and wide (and not just of the *camorra* context, but even of wider Mediterranean, Southern Italian or popular Naples cultural contexts).

Inspired by Foucault's concept of 'queer' investigating the adult-child binary relationship – which de-constructively links queerness to questions around masculinity and male sexuality – Champagne adds Garrone's feature film, *Gomorra* (2008), to his long list of "queer representations of Italian masculinity" (2014: 13). The author, specifically,

applies his queer reading to a central and dramatically violent scene in the popular film, in which two young and would-be *camorra* criminals, Marco and Ciro, are on the beach, practising with their new weapons stolen from another gang. He labels the scene as a highly homosocial/ homoerotic passage climaxing in (Champagne 2014: 11):

> [a] kind of simultaneous orgasm, the two of them shouting and cheering as the camera moves back and forth several times between them. In a homosocial reversal of the face-off, rather than a public confrontation in which one man challenges the virility of another in order to assert his own masculinity, the two young men proudly and lovingly display their virility to one another.

Although one could, arguably, appreciate a sort of romanticising value of such a description, the scene can hardly be perceived as an intentional account of 'orgasm' on behalf of the film-maker who is, on the contrary, rather staging a criminal *Bildungsroman* in a complex one-and-a-half-minute scene. The whole context of situation, despite a seemingly homosocial setting, does not directly or indirectly hint at sexuality. According to the American anthropologist Edward T. Hall (1976), cultures differ in the degree and depth of their use of context and information to create meaning. In what Hall defines "high context cultures" – as the Neapolitan one can undoubtedly be seen to be (Vincent Marrelli 1989; Vincent 1994, 2006), context is a vital element to detect and fully understand the meaning-making potential of any act of communication among its members. Meaning in such cultures resides even more in the implicit and shared context than in the explicit message, with respect to low-context cultures. Similar to other scholars like Bateson (1979), Hall claims, albeit in general, that there is no meaning without a combination of explicitly given information and context. Context represents a privileged point of observation, i.e. "a transparent vantage point around which individuals orient meaning" (Harrington/Rogers 1988: 7). To a Neapolitan viewer, all the elements employed by Champagne (2014: 11) in order to *queer* the scene, such as the "bikini briefs and tennis shoes" worn by the boys and the "glimpses of their genitals and buttocks", are simply the 'vantage points' through which it is possible to orient the inner meaning potential of the scene. With his talented narrating skills, Champagne construes an irrelevant homoerotic scene, which is totally outside the tragic filmic recount of the two young lads' realistic and sad rite of passage. Although nakedness, for instance, is most often performed during, with or alongside practices of sexuality, in some high context cultures it may connote otherwise. In Naples, young boys from the poorer social classes are used to playing half-naked in the street; whether because temperatures, especially in the summer, may easily reach 35° C, or just because for young *scugnizzi* – who are 'educated' and raised in the streets – being half-naked is not perceived as an obscenity, but as a common occurrence. The experience of being half-naked is, in fact, rather directly connected to the low level of privacy afforded within some Neapolitan – private, but overcrowded – lower-class households, in the streets or at the beach. Naples, as already noted, belongs to a high context culture (Vincent Marrelli 1989), that

is, in Hall's words (1976: 39), a "culture in which people are deeply involved with others and where subtle messages with deep meaning flow freely". An illegitimate sexual reading of the boys' nakedness, presenting the embodied self in a mode of eroticisation, represents a de-contextualised breakdown of the implied meaning also of several other portrayals of *Gomorra*'s non-sexual nakedness. Marco's and Ciro's nudity is, first and foremost, legitimated by their roles as young *camorra* boys during their final rite of passage, and thus openly defuses any possible reading of homoeroticism. Furthermore, Champagne's effort to queer *Gomorra*, opening with a long description of what he deems non-hegemonic elements of masculinity, works to *queer* the context. He begins his description with a reference to the 'tanning booth' in the first sequence of Garrone's film, and the 'manicure' some mobsters are receiving while wearing "heavy gold chains around their necks and bikini briefs". He then moves on to the description of the way the male criminals "smooth their skin with lotion in the moments before they are killed. Wearing stud earrings, bracelets, rings, a silver necklace and a pendant," to finally underline the way "the young Totò plucks his eyebrows in front of a mirror" (Champagne 2014: 13). From a Neapolitan point of observation, that is within the producing culture, all the elements Champagne forces into a queer discourse, seem to collocate, rather perfectly, within the appropriate Neapolitan sub-class and lower-class context of situation, being deeply rooted in, and hence representative of, a certain *camorra*-related subculture. Therefore, such visual elements, never perceived as symbols of queerness to a Neapolitan viewer, refer to the symbolic universe of a certain social class and mentality, and fit into the realistic and coherently meaningful *camorristi's* portrait created by Garrone.

The alleged queer masculinity construed by Champagne is only one of the several askew attempts at tinging Southern Italians, and in this case Neapolitan organised criminals, with unconvincing queer tones. The idea of using queerness as a tool to differentiate the social actors in the representation from the spectators is also brought forward by Messina (2015: 181) who, in his articulated riposte to Champagne, states:

> The depiction of the characters of Gomorra as queer is intended precisely to create a distance between the character and the audience, which in turn serves to isolate and stigmatize the behaviour of the camorristi, to prevent the possibility of identification with the characters. The queerness of the characters is only one of the features that serves to pinpoint them as Others within Italian society: several other characteristics, all ascribable to common representations of Southern Italy, are used to this purpose.

In Messina's terms, queerness is used as a distancing lens to portray the young Neapolitan mobsters as the negative 'others' or as deviant to a non-Neapolitan, heterosexual, audience (Messina 2015). However, such a limited reading of 'queerness' as a mere and weak synonym for 'otherness' – a deconstructive definition which asserts that anything outside of any norm, sexual or not, is 'queer' – can only strongly contradict the whole history of Italian crime and criminal justice, where the dual compounding aspect of violence and masculinity are without

any doubt of great significance. Moreover, the repeated anti-normative positioning of queerness is progressively itself becoming the norm (see Milani forthcoming). Champagne, thus, conjures up a somewhat misapplied logic of queerness when describing the young *camorristi's* coming-of-age scene with the apparent consequence of reinforcing the typical, political and historical binarism between Italians and Southern Italians, where the latter are always seen as the deviant, criminal and consequently queer 'other'. Since queer masculinity pre-designates a complete set of negative values, this promptly applies to the social construction of *camorristi* men, and inevitably moves on to the characterisation of all Southern Italians as queer. By constituting a break with typical male power, the implied homosexual behaviour of Neapolitan *camorristi*, would thus be politically labouring to undermine dominant tropes on masculinity and their connection to *camorra* power and violence. A queer theory grounded in Marxism, however, can easily and critically assess the contradictions of such a concept, in the manner that queer theory, according to Floyd (2009: 8):

> […] has consistently maintained that any representation of sexuality in isolation from […] other dimensions of the social, […] as always already localized, particularized, or privatized, is a misrepresentation of the social as well as the sexual.

Therefore, we could simply rehash Floyd's words in order to posit that queer representations of the social without a specific sexual dimension, which is exactly what is taking place in Garrone's scene, could certainly lead to a misinterpretation of both categories when spawned from a completely wrong understanding of the cultural context in question. Additionally, the relocation of such an indeterminate space of queerness within the visual representation of Southern-Italian criminals works to reinforce particular heteronormative agendas. An obsessive reading of the Southern mobsters as 'queer monsters' on the small screen softens the pathological anxiety of the non-normative by fabricating a completely negative queer imagery that can no longer challenge the language of normative authority.

Such misinterpretations, often enflamed by the prolific representation of culture-bound images (Figure 2.1) which do not seem to travel well across distant cultures, may easily lead to faux perceptions about *camorra* men's masculinity.

Figure 2.1. *Camorristi's* kissing

In Figure 2.1, the stereotype of Southern Italian men, described as extremely manly and strong, seems to be challenged by the typical kiss on the lips of *camorra* men. While in the Sicilian mafia, the mobsters' kiss may index the death penalty, in the *camorra* it seals a vow of silence, so no information will be revealed to the police or judges. The *camorristi's* typical kiss on the lips, indeed, a common practice among members of the Naples criminal syndicate, describable on the haptic dimension, indexes, as said, an unmistakable pledge of silence. Consequently, it has nothing to do with a queer or homoerotic representation.

The Independent (Day 2011) clarified to its British readers the significance of the *camorra's* male kissing in order to fully disambiguate the meaning potential of the images (in Figure 2.1), which were travelling internationally some years ago. The English newspaper perceived that such images might lead people from outside the specific cultural context to an immediate misinterpretation. Day (2011) reported that *La Repubblica* was not that surprised at the scene depicting two *camorristi* engaging in what, to a non-expert eye, might seem a passionate French kiss. According to the Italian newspaper, "similar things happen with the *camorra* in the eastern parts of the city, that is Barra, Ponticelli, San Giovanni a Teduccio", since, "a kiss on the lips between men is a real tradition" (Day 2011). A full kiss on the lips between *camorra* mobsters is a powerful haptic sign, which, when made public, signals that the bonds of the crime syndicate would remain strong and the arrested man would respect the code of silence (aka *omertà*).

Another important cultural reference which saturates the whole TV series, and which might also have nurtured erroneous queer readings of *camorra* masculinity, involves the representation of nonverbal forms of communication conveyed by means of culture-bound material objects. Body-decoration artefacts like clothing, jewellery, tattoos, etc. are very often connected with the typical Neapolitan 'neomelodic' musical culture which, in Naples and most other Southern Italian towns, is very often bred in *camorra* corrupted/influenced environments. Neomelodic music, according to McDonnell (The *Guardian*, 14/04/2009), is:

> [...] performed by thousands of singers, mostly from working-class neighbourhoods in Naples and the surrounding towns in Campania. Although there are, of course, singers who have nothing to do with any kind of criminal behaviour, many are ex-criminals, have Camorra managers or perform for mafia bosses. It's not unusual for neomelodic artists to pay homage to criminals in their songs, which are almost always performed in the Neapolitan dialect.

The so-called '*neomelodici*' sing their stories of love and the crime that surrounds them, the dreams of success and escape, and their running away from the law. Their melodramatic songs tend to be vulgar, but very melodious at the same time, resonating with their specific audience much more than any other musical genre. Neomelodic singers are worshipped as authentic superstars and their particular look (see in Figure 2.2 their typical shaved chests, plucked eyebrows, orange tans, golden necklace, skin-tight shirts, and hair gel) implies the non-

universal hegemonic representation of masculinity which might have led Champagne towards his misconstrual. The Neomelodic look epitomises a real symbolic universe, a popular fashion followed by some working-class Neapolitans and, in particular, by *camorra* kinsmen, regardless of their sexual orientation. As Argyle (1988) has accurately maintained, body artefacts are important elements in non-verbal communication; they are, indeed, fundamental signals to understand social behaviour. Fashion is one of the distinct and visible parts of a culture and although there are cultural variations in bodily decoration, the same principles apply to all. Clothes, along with facial expression, gaze, gestures, posture, bodily contact, spatial behaviour, non-verbal vocalisations and smell, are all examples of non-verbal signals (Argyle 1988: 1). Similarly, Davis (1992: 13) has claimed that clothes are important cultural symbols, which work to communicate "the totality of our symbolic universe" in the same way music, food, furniture and health beliefs do in order to express specific cultural meanings.

Figure 2.1. Neomelodic singers

Neomelodic male fashion also perfectly fits into what Hofstede (1991), following Hall (1976), describes as a high-context means of communication, since in neomelodic lyrics, for instance, the emphasis is not placed on that which is explicitly stated, but often on that which is only alluded to. Their songs are a privileged vehicle to communicate secret information to the criminal world. Not incidentally, the author of one of the most popular neomelodic song, "Chill va pazz pe' te", is Luigi Giuliano, the boss of the so-called 'new family' group, an alliance of clans feuding Cutolo's *camorra* syndicate. This vision contrasts with low-context cultures and their explicit ways of communication, since such cultures prefer to exchange explicit messages: what people say is what they mean. Moreover, the Neapolitan and Southern Italian (and generally Mediterranean) symbolic male universe, represented by men's closer proxemics, simply belongs to what are well-known in the cultural anthropological literature as more haptic high-contact cultures, as well as high-context ones (as opposed to the low-context and low-contact ones inhabited by Northern Europeans). Samovar *et al.* (2015) and Hofstede *et al.* (2011) have, in fact, included Italy among the countries with the highest hegemonic masculinity index scores. Southern Italian men, in particular, who otherwise tend to be more relaxed than their Northern fellow nationals, also adhere to the masculine culture which perceives competition, assertiveness, equity, and performance as

important, as opposed to a feminine culture where values such as equality, solidarity, nurturance, and compassion are most important.

The *camorra's* system of cultural representation, when signaling important sociocultural identity and culture-bound markers of identity, inevitably clashes with the personal experience of the English viewers (Caliendo 2012: 207). When non-verbal communication crosses national, cultural and linguistic boundaries via filmic products, whether accompanied by dubbing or subtitling, some cultural misinterpretations may, in fact, prevent the full appreciation of the source text, since the way in which 'personal space', or touch, for instance, are used and interpreted across cultures is always a culture-bound factor (see Hall 1959, 1969; Kendon 1977: 200, 1990; Scollon/Scollon 1995: 145–146, 189–191). Therefore, queering the Neapolitan mobster based on an unknown and unintelligible context of culture can only produce a wrong perception of the criminal phenomenon. Against this backdrop, since *Gomorrah – The Series* is strongly rooted within Neapolitan culture, this study seeks to answer, at the macro-level of text interpretation, the following general research questions: how much of the non-verbal meaning-making mechanisms engrained in the TV series images can be properly perceived in English-speaking contexts? Which meanings carry over successfully and which do not (even with AVT)? In order to answer these questions, I will specify the empirical material and research methodological tenets employed for analysis before embarking on the discussion of the preliminary findings.

3. Corpus and methodological tenets

The focus on language as a social practice has produced increasing awareness of the multimodal nature of communication suggesting that "spoken language as it is actually used cannot be adequately understood without taking non-verbal communication into account" (van Leeuwen 2014: 281). Academic interest in the use of Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (1978) for multimodal analysis has progressively fostered the development of semiotic tools for the interpretation of the nonverbal channels of communication (see also Baldry/Thibault 2006; Bateman 2008; Iedema 2001, 2003; Lemke 1998, 2002; Martin 2002; Martinec 2005; O'Halloran 2004, 2005; Royce 1998; van Leeuwen 1999, 2005; Ventola *et al.* 2004). The re-semiotisation of Halliday's theory has been extensively applied to linguistic research on films and TV programmes since filmic narratives best integrate all the linguistic, visual, and auditory modalities participating in the meaning-making process of multi-semiotic texts. Indeed, audiovisual products, as Pedersen (2015: 162–163) argues, employ several channels of communication, which participate together in the meaning-making process:

> In an audiovisual text (e.g. a film or a TV programme), there is not only the verbal channels of discourse, i.e. spoken language (the verbal audio channel) and written language (the verbal visual channel, e.g. in the form of captions and headlines), but there are also two non-verbal channels: one audio (e.g. music and/or sound effects), and

perhaps more strikingly a non-verbal visual channel, which includes everything you see on screen.

Unlike iso-semiotic translation which only tackles one channel of discourse (i.e. the written word), the translation (or rather adaptation) of such complex multimodal products, needs to take into consideration four different types of communication channels (Gottlieb 1997: 143) which complicates the process of translation from the original source text to the translated target one. Specifically, visual channels of communication involve the exact underlying values and cultural systems producing them. They vary according to the different cultural contexts in and through which people represent their personal space and other people in their proximity. Over the last fifty years, the study of personal space, otherwise known as proxemics[3], has long insisted on the similarities and differences among diverse cultures; yet, non-verbal forms of communication are still a major constraint for audiovisual translators when adapting filmic productions into other languages (Chiaro *et al.* 2008).

Notably, very little attention has been paid to the way the Neapolitan crime syndicate has been discursively re-semiotised, and therefore perceived, in English-speaking contexts, through AVT. Therefore, the need to disambiguate personal space cross-culturally calls for a necessary investigation, which goes beyond the analysis of the mere linguistic dimension in order to fully understand those modes of communication pointing to specific territorial proxemic behaviours (Hall 1963, 1968). Body signals and gestures, the proxemic and haptic behaviour of *camorristi's* body signals or gestures on the screen, work to convey important messages, including the mediation of personal micro-space as a form of male power.

The multimodal corpus under scrutiny comprises seasons one (2014) and two (2015) of the Italian TV drama series *Gomorrah*. The series comprehends 12 episodes, with a total of 650 minutes of running time from the first season, and 12 episodes – 672 minutes total – from season two, for a total running time of 1,322 minutes. The corpus is a parallel multimodal one since both images and verbal texts have been considered for analysis together with the transcription of the original soundtrack in Italian (or rather, Neapolitan) and its corresponding English subtitles, as broadcast in the US, the Republic of Ireland and the UK. The parallel and comparable corpus incorporates the original Italian series and its subtitled English translations. The Italian series, Sollima's television adaptation of Roberto Saviano's 2006-bestselling fictional reportage, just as the film-director's earlier productions[4], has met with a fair amount of controversy encouraging several negative advertising campaigns. Yet, *Gomorrah* is currently the most watched Italian TV series, in Italy and abroad (Renga 2016). Such a massive popularity partly derives from the series' various transmedial offshoots – such as blog sites, fan fiction, and spoofs – which have spawned several paratexts such as apps, Facebook pages, official websites and fan pages. This colossal parallel media production has fostered the highest interest of the series' target audience: (mainly young) Neapolitan viewers.

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[3] The term "proxemics" was first coined by Edward T. Hall (1963: 1003) who defined it as "the study of how man unconsciously structures microspace – the distance between men in the conduct of daily transactions, the organization of space in his houses, buildings and ultimately a layout of his towns". Hall (1969: 117-125) identified four zones of proxemic distances: *Intimate zone* (6-18in, 15-45cm), *Personal zone* (1.5-4ft, 45cm-1.2m), *Social zone* (4-12ft, 1.2-3.6m) and the *Public zone* (above 12ft or 3.6m).

[4] The Italian film director Stefano Sollima was best known, before *Gomorrah*, for his crime-drama works such as *Romanzo criminale – La serie* (2006–2008), *ACAB – All Cops Are Bastards* (2012), and *Suburra* (2015).

From a procedural viewpoint, each episode in the two seasons was uploaded in the software ATLAS.ti 7.0, and then appropriately segmented into meaningful micro-level units for the analysis of the represented *camorristi's* proximity. In order to follow the natural flow of each scene in the corpus, a rhythmic alternation between the selected micro-level units was created by segmenting them into a number of specific segments or "proxemic meaning making" phases (van Leeuwen 1985: 220–221).

My main research hypothesis is that the process of masculinity construction of *camorra* men in the corpus is achieved by means of a complex combination of linguistic and multimodal meaning-making mechanisms requiring several adjustments between image processing and text processing in order for the subtitled product to be cognitively effective (see Perego *et al.* 2010). In particular, since perception of the levels of intimacy of space is culturally determined (Hall 1963, 1969), the study seeks to establish whether and to what extent Anglophone viewers perceive differently the territorial and proxemics behaviours semiotised in the series under scrutiny; and whether a different perception of space may create discontinuation in the viewers' cognitive process.

Hall (1963) stressed that differing cultural frameworks for defining and organising space, which are internalised in all people unconsciously, can lead to serious failures of communication and understanding in cross-cultural settings. With that in mind, the research questions encouraging the present multimodal study are mainly four, all addressing the kinds of criminal identities and their performances of masculinity observable at the micro-level of the audiovisual text:

1. What significant male identities are construed in the corpus, both semiotically and linguistically?
2. What is the function of proxemics in the TV series under scrutiny? What do the represented participants' gestures index?
3. How can the analysis of "multimodal prosody" favour the translator's re-semiotisation of *camorristi's* non-verbal behaviours?
4. How does "multimodal prosody" work to disambiguate the perception of *camorristi's* alleged 'queerness' and the construction of the inter-subjectivity of the meaning in a foreign and/or non-Neapolitan audience?

The methodology employed for the analysis of the corpus explicitly draws upon Kress and van Leeuwen's (2001) adaptation of SFL – as introduced by Halliday (1978) – and its later applications to visual media and film analysis (Wildfeuer 2016; Liu/O'Halloran 2009; Tseng 2009; O'Halloran 2004). In particular, the concept of 'multimodal prosody' will be introduced in section 5 with the aim of developing some methodological tools to implement the investigation of proxemics and haptics in audiovisual texts.

4. The perception of *camorristi's* proxemics through AVT

In order to determine whether and to what extent the English subtitled version of *Gomorrah – The Series* were suitable in helping

foreign audiences (specifically, Anglophone viewers) to fully appreciate and understand the types of male relationships staged in the series, it was necessary to generate an experimental paradigm. A questionnaire measuring the foreign viewers' understanding of the male *camorristi's* dyadic relationships in the corpus can be a useful quantitative tool to demonstrate that processing a subtitled product is not always a cognitively effective practice. Subtitles may, in fact, lead to poor perception of the product content, especially when the culture represented is significantly distant from the viewer's own.

The questionnaire comprises twelve equivalent scenes from the corpus, representing different male dyadic relationships. The selected male pairs of *camorristi* are unambiguously related via their role as partners in *camorra* crime, and, at least from a privileged – within-the-culture – point of observation, they all perfectly fit into the characterisation of hegemonic heterosexual men.

Data were collected in keeping with a two-fold procedure: 1. through a direct survey of English university students' perceptions undertaken in February 2015, at the University of Exeter, UK. Specifically, the students were the ones attending my seminars on AVT; 2. through the same questionnaire administered to a small group of students from University College Dublin (UCD) in March 2017. Students attending the UCD Library were randomly asked to participate in the experimental paradigm. The data set contains 132 respondents: 72% women, 28% men. The age of the respondents ranges from 22 to 31 years (mean age = 26,5).

The respondents had to watch (Italian audio/English subtitles) the selected scenes and then answer 15 questions, including three on informative core dimensions: the respondents' age and gender; degree of respondents' knowledge of *Gomorrah – The Series*; self-esteemed degree of awareness of the *camorra* crime syndicate in Naples. The students were requested to look at the selected phases from the corpus (some are reported in Figure 4.1), and then to express their opinions on the types of dyadic relationships they deemed most appropriate while watching the scenes.

Figure 4.1. Selected stills from *Gomorrah – The Series* questionnaire

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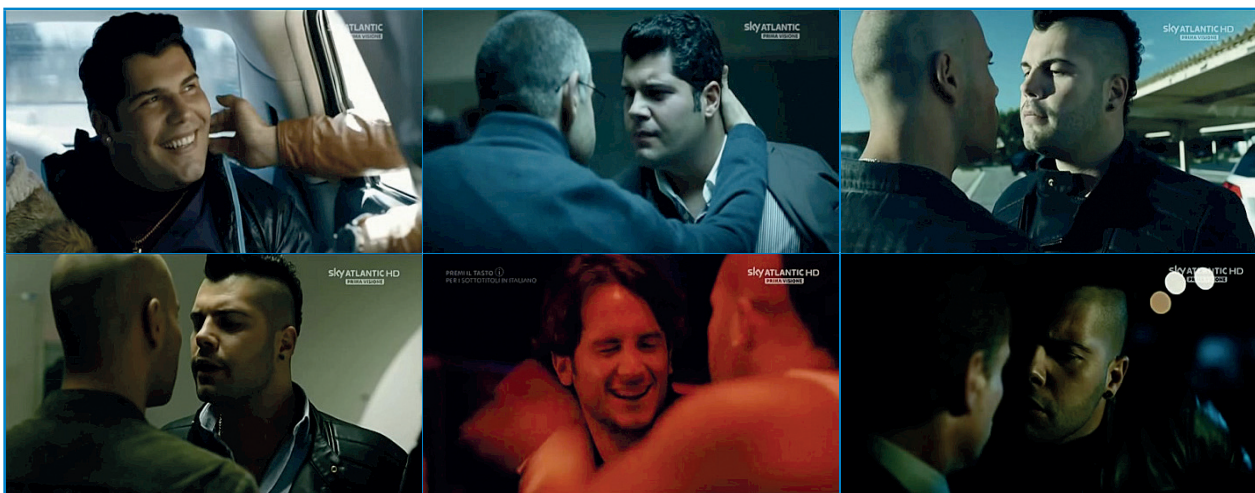
The level of intimacy between the male dyadic representations in the corpus (see Figure 4.1 above) is mainly entrenched within the TV drama's portrayal of domination patterns among the represented mobsters indexing power and territorial control. It is easy to grasp the meaning of the represented proxemic and haptic behaviour 'from within' the producing culture: the actors' management of space characterises, in fact, an overt and immediate reading of the *camorra* syndicate hierarchical relationships in each scene. Hegemonic male gender roles are strengthened, in the series, by male dyads exchanging affiliative close interactions, while encompassing the absolute absence of non-hegemonic masculinity representations in dyadic roles of power. It is important to note again that, as with other types of body language, proximity range varies with culture, thus it does not necessarily and universally signal a personal space "into which intruders may not come" (Sommer 1969: 26). Hall (1968: 88), indeed, suggested that "physical contact between two people […] can be perfectly correct in one culture, and absolutely taboo in another". According to Hall, "people from different cultures inhabit different sensory worlds. They not only structure spaces differently, but experience it differently because the sensorium is differently 'programmed'" (1968: 87). As is well known, in Naples people may engage in very close physical contact regardless of how close they are, and they may also greet one another by kissing on the cheeks. British people, on the other hand, prefer to shake hands, but while they have made some physical contact, they still maintain a certain amount of physical distance from the other person. According to Hall (1968: 87): "it [is] quite obvious that […] apparently inconsequential differences in spatial behaviour resulted in significant misunderstandings and intensified cultural shock". People of different cultures have different beliefs regarding which spatial zones are appropriate in a given situation. Being aware of such differences is critical to successful cross-cultural communication, whether it be interpersonal or mediated through mass communication products, such as film or TV.

Most of the time close distance may include (voluntary or involuntary) touching. In all the selected scenes, dyadic interactions come about in such a close space that the actors almost touch or actually kiss each other. Haptics, physical contact and touching, in particular, a basic element of human communication that begins at birth, becomes a rather complicated topic when it comes to cross-cultural communication. Excluding openly hostile behaviours, such as slapping or hitting, the psychologist Richard Heslin (1974) outlines five separate haptic categories: 1) Functional/Professional; 2) Social/Polite; 3) Friendship/Warmth; 4) Love/Intimacy and 5) Sexual/Arousal. Since moving from one haptic category to another can become blurred by culture, these five categories were chosen as the major items in the questionnaire; the respondents had, in fact, to select the category they deemed as the best representative of the haptic behaviour presented in the dyadic relations in the scenes.

In relation to all the questions in the survey, the respondents tend to express average levels of appreciation of the scenes. Respondents generally indicate that they have no difficulties when watching the

subtitled phases to decode the 'linguistic' meaning of each scene. However, as we can infer from the following graph (Figure 4.2) resulting from the questionnaire's data, *camorristi* proxemics does not seem to travel well across cultures. Almost 50% of the respondents misperceives *Gomorrah* men's dyadic interactions, considering them as part of a sexual encounter. 21% of the respondents perceives the scenes as representing a strong physical attraction between the dyads, while 10% recognise a sort of close and warm friendship between the represented pairs. Only 8% deems the represented relationships as belonging to a specific social and/or formal situation, while 10% of the respondents show awareness of the sort of power relation existing among the male dyads who are engaged in a sort of 'professional' relationship, being partners in crime.

The scenes selected from the corpus all easily fit within the category of "Friendship" which, according to Heslin and Alper (1983) expresses an idiosyncratic relationship, and into the "Social/Polite" category expressing ritual interactions between *camorra* mobsters. Touching, within a *camorra*-related context, serves to communicate specific social ritual interactions among the members of the same groups and their idiosyncratic relationships.

Figure 4.2. A graph representation of *Gomorrah's* dyadic relationships as perceived by the respondents
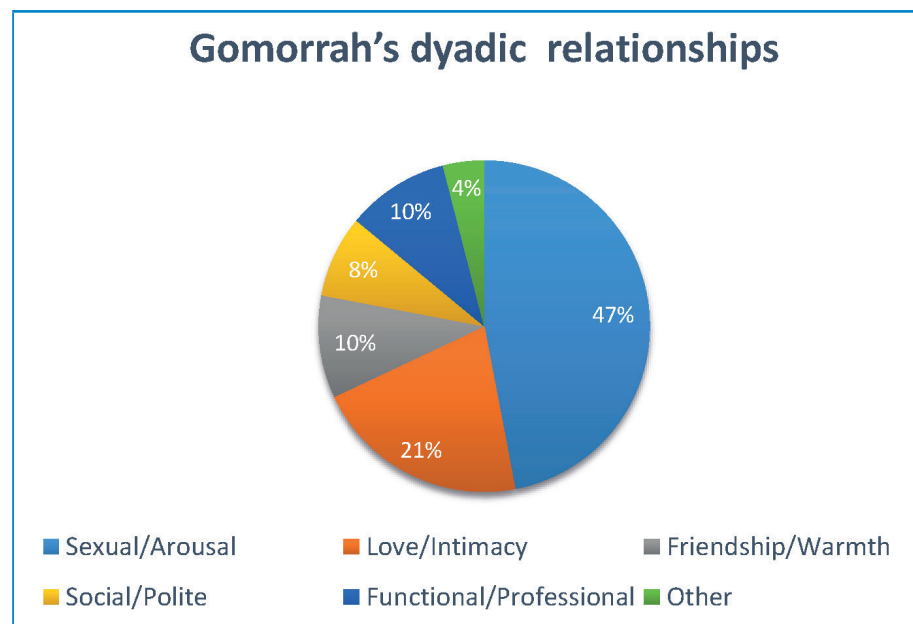
The type of misunderstanding perceived by the low-contact Anglophone respondents may have stemmed from the fact that within their also low-context culture, dyadic male interactions generally take place within a wider space range (4 to 10 feet; see Hall 1969). In the Neapolitan high-contact (and high-context) culture represented in the corpus, social proximity occurs at an intimate distance (0 to 18 inches). At this close range, in fact, vision is distorted and any vocalisation is a whisper or a grunt, inducing the Anglophone respondents to perceive such a confidential distance as the one involving sexual intercourse or

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very strong physical attraction. Within the original cultural context, the haptics and proxemics in the corpus index, rather, a strong logic of possession, dominance, hierarchy, power, and territorial control rather than the representation of what would be queer sexual relationships.

As a means to debunk the misperceived 'queerness' in the corpus, the following section therefore introduces and proposes the concept of "multimodal prosody" aimed at providing a few tentative suggestions for resourceful solutions to the problem of context disambiguation in the subtitling process of a highly culture-bound multimodal product.

5. Multimodal prosody in AVT: de-queering the mobster

The multimodal analysis proposed below of the semiotic resources (sound, gestures, verbal soundtrack, etc.) employed in the construction of the *camorra* dyadic relationships, is carried out with the implementation of some useful corpus linguistic tools resulting from the re-elaboration of the concept of "semiotic prosody" as presented in Hoey (2005). Corpus linguistics investigates several kinds of linguistic aspects bringing new insights about language behaviour. Semantic prosody, in particular, is an interesting aspect that corpus linguists define as the typical behaviour of distinctive lexical items occurring as *nodes* or *KWICs* (key words in context) in concordance lines (Sinclair 1991, 2004; Louw 1993; Stubbs 1996; Partington 1998, 2004; Tognini-Bonelli 2001; Hunston 2007). Louw (1993: 157) describes semantic prosody as "a consistent aura of meaning with which a form is imbued by its collocates with the consequent transfer of meaning to a given word from its habitual co-text". Accordingly, the meaning-making process can be drawn from a unit that goes beyond the individual word expected to have semantic prosody if characteristically co-occurring with other words belonging to a particular semantic set (Hunston/Francis 2000: 137).

By situating collocation within a psycholinguistic domain, since it is "a psychological association between words", Hoey (2005: 5) revises the theory of priming in order to introduce his concept of "semantic priming" when discussing the way a word may trigger other 'target' words. In Hoey's terms (2005), a collocational pattern exists only if one recognises that every word is psychologically primed within its context for collocational use. He argues that words are primed to occur in relationship with particular semantic associations and particular semantic functions; when primings are in agreement with each other, they can enact what Hoey terms "priming prosody". When readers, for instance, encounter the word *MAFIA* in a written passage, they will identify the word *MOBSTER*, appearing at a later stage, more quickly than if they had previously come across an unrelated word, such as *KISS*. In this sense, *MAFIA* is said to semantically prime the readers for *MOBSTER*. The word *MAFIA* establishes a strong word association with *MOBSTER*, which the word *KISS* cannot immediately trigger. In Hoey's discussion, semantic priming is a property of the word and what is primed enhances meaning to the priming item rather than *vice*

versa. Therefore, while semantic prosody refers to the meaning resulting from the choices made in a sentence, priming prosody involves "the processes of utterance construction" (Hoey 2005: 166). In psychology, priming can be analysed in different stimulus repetitions involving perceptual, semantic, and conceptual stimuli. The psychologists Kolb and Whishaw (2009: 453–454, 457) claim that when people see an incomplete familiar image, they are unable to immediately identify it. However, when they are shown more of the same picture, they are able to recognise it, and in a future circumstance, they will identify the same image at an earlier stage. Similarly, Balirano (2017: 158–161) introduces the notion of "multimodal prosody" to discuss the way priming semiotic resources, such as a word, an image, a gesture or a sound, may recall other semiotic resources, also occurring between different modes. An image, or any other resource, primes the way an audience recognises its meaning within the context and co-text in which the semiotic resource co-occurs most frequently. Therefore, according to Balirano (2017: 161), the meaning-making of an individual semiotic resource can be said to co-occur with other semiotic resources in previously primed semiotic contexts, when cohesion is achieved within a given multimodal text:

> Multimodal prosody is observable when semiotic cohesion is created within a text in a given context. The coherent integration of an item with its surroundings discloses how the rest of the image can be interpreted functionally. Such functional changes will probably also alter the way we perceive the original image priming new possible scenarios.

A functional interpretation of images and other semiotic resources cohesively integrated within a multimodal product may help the viewers from different cultural contexts to understand cross-cultural messages. The analysis of multimodal prosody, the repetition of a coherent integration of images and other semiotic resources working together to prime the context of situation, may also be of aid to audiovisual translators when rendering a context-bound product in other words. In the corpus under scrutiny, the representation of the *camorristi's* relationships is construed, in fact, through a series of co-occurrences of images, sounds and words. Such a recurring co-deployment of close personal space, behaviour, gestures, gaze and verbal exchanges, will prime the audience for subsequent similar stimuli relating to the perceptions of the represented context. The functional co-deployment of meaning with which a filmic scene is imbued through its semiotic collocates will help transfer the meaning to a scene from its habitual and recurring co-text. The meaning-making process can be drawn from resources to be found beyond the individual scene, which is assumed to have a specific multimodal prosody if typically co-occurring with other resources belonging to a particular semiotic set. The implementation of a contextualised multimodal prosody analysis may help disambiguate some visual CSRs, including proxemic and haptic elements, providing that also the translator involved in the process of re-semiotisation take on or assume a visible agency in the process of translation (see also Caliendo 2012: 193).

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The following multimodal grids (Tables I, II and III), based on some useful and significant achievements in the multimodal transcription introduced by Paul Thibault (2000) and later implemented by Baldry and Thibault (2006) and Balirano (2007), can be a useful tool for audiovisual translators when analysing multimodal prosody as an aid for translation/adaptation. Thibault developed his multimodal analysis offering an inclusive synoptic perspective with the purpose of framing all the relevant elements of video-supported material. Multimodal transcription procedures are useful to show the semiotic basis of text meaning, considering all the different semiotic resources which co-occur in the meaning-making process. Since not all the categories listed and arranged by Thibault are instrumental to our kind of study, a wide range of adaptations and integrations have necessarily been introduced in order to be consistent with the type of filmic texts taken into consideration and with their linguistic adaptation.

The multimodal analysis of *Gomorrah*'s dyadic relationships is designed as follows: 1) the visual elements are framed in screenshots by means of the software ATLAS.ti 7.0 which can capture still images the same size as the original DVD frames, thanks to the interpolation technology. The images, selected from specific segments representing proxemic meaning-making phases, are then reduced to fit in a table. 2) The minimum unit of the captured screenshots is set either by the occurrence in the scene of a visual haptic behaviour or by any relevant verbal utterance. The visual frames (reported in the analysis in square brackets) have been trimmed to fit into a table, thus they do not represent the actual action from the TV shots, but only the pictures needed to unfold ambiguous interpretation of queerness, either semiotically (images or sound) or verbally expressed. 3) A narrative description on significant aspects of the kinetic action, annotated in the Scene column, includes a general account on the characters, their proxemics and gestural movements in the scene. Further, this column may also annotate elements, which provide important visual information such as camera movements and the distance between the represented dyads. According to Kress and van Leeuwen (1996: 130), in fact, in visual semiosis, close or long shot perspective can represent interpersonal closeness or distance between viewers and actors or among the agents in the text. 4) The original verbal soundtrack, transcribed in standard Italian (rather than in the original code-mixed/code-switched Italian-Neapolitan version), can be found in the Source Text column, together with some comments on the relevant illocutionary and perlocutionary elements of the text; while the Target Text column displays the English subtitles. 5) The last column includes a schematic representation of *camorristi* multimodal prosody catering for dyadic proxemics, gestures, general haptic behaviours and their corresponding meaning-making mechanisms within the scene.

The following three synoptic tables represent a mere instantiation of the way translators/adaptors of audiovisual products may try to integrate the verbal soundtrack of a visual product with the relevant semiotic and/or nonverbal communicative acts in a contextualised

Table 5.1. The multimodal grid for the analysis of contextualised subtitles (1)

I	FRAME	SCENE	SOURCE TEXT	TARGET TEXT	MULTIMODAL PROSODY
1		Outside, dark. Genny is trying to persuade Ciro that he can now be seen as a mature *camorra* mobster. [1.1: seq. 12. T. 12.55]	G.: *La prossima volta che fai il barbecue a casa di Conte, mi devi chiamare, hai capito?* [A directive illocutionary act claiming for acceptance and inclusion]	G.: *Next time there's a barbecue at Conte's house, call me!* [Simplifies the illocutionary force of the original request]	Close Proxemics = power relation. Proximity: Friendly/ Familiar bond.
2		As above. [1.1: seq. 12. T. 12.59]	C: *Stai tranquillo, non mancherà occasione.* [Fake commissive act of reassurance]	C: *Relax. I'll let you know.* [same as in ST]	Close Proxemics = power relation. Haptics: self-referential.
3		As above. [1.1: seq. 12. T. 12.55]	G.: *Ciao.* [Verbal informal salutation vs haptic salutation]	G.: *Bye.* [same as in ST]	Haptics: Friendship/Warmth

rendering, which may verbally explicitate important semiotic resources co-deployed within the original source text.

The analysis of multimodal prosody may help the translator disambiguate the high-context culture embedded in the dyadic proxemic and haptic behaviours by favouring a 'contextualised' rendering of the source verbal text. Following Pedersen's (2005: 3) intuition, "instead of 'translate', the verb 'render' will henceforth be used about the different strategies involved in transferring ECRs from a Source Text (ST) to a Target Text (TT), as not all of the strategies actually involve translation".

In [I.1], the Italian utterance [*La prossima volta che fai il barbecue a casa di Conte, mi devi chiamare, hai capito?*][5] which is rendered into the official English subtitle [Next time there's a barbecue at Conte's house, call me!], does not clearly illustrate the idiosyncratic power relation that Genny, the son of the *camorra* boss, means to affirm with his father's right-hand man, Ciro. The apparent familiar bond between the two participants, indexed by the dyadic close proxemics, may be misleading when read from outside the context culture. The English subtitle fails to refer clearly to Genny's power over Ciro, as it is multimodally co-deployed by the close proxemics in the image and reinforced by the Italian original verbal text. The subtitle should provide some cues about the represented visual/social context in

[5] [Next time you plan a BBQ at Conte's, you must call me. Got it?] (My translation).

order to guide viewers from other cultures to better appreciate the type of dyadic relationship between the participants. The translator could have rendered full illocutionary power to Genny's utterance by translating it with a veiled threat act: "Next BBQ at Conte's, you've got to call me! OK?". This would underline the hierarchically superior role of the speaker, the underlying menace should the addressee not do so, with the invariant tag 'OK?' making it evident that the addressee's discursive rights are contextually severely constricted. Dyadic power relation is, in fact, re-established through the use of a direct question introduced by the invariant tag [OK?], and further enhanced through the deontic modality expressed by the modal verb 'have to', which is surprisingly left untranslated in the official subtitle. Such a contextualised adaptation may also help the foreign viewers catch the meaning of the dyad's haptic intimate gesture, their final long kiss, which repeated several times in the series, primes the viewers with a connotative meaning, which disambiguates any possible queer reading. The dyadic haptic enhancement (Ciro is kissing Genny) refers to the informal but strong represented power-relationship between the participants. In [I.3], although Genny is on a superior level of power – owing to his father's position in the *camorra* hierarchical scale – he is explicitly allowing Ciro to enter his personal sphere. Genny is friendly exercising his power since, although he needs to learn how to become the boss from Ciro, he firmly reminds his father's *consigliere* of each other's social/functional roles in the gang.

In [I.3], the subtitler chooses to translate literally Genny's closing salutation phrase [*Ciao*], with the English equivalent [Bye]. Such an equivalent translation cannot provide the viewers with the specific cultural cue needed to grasp the haptic dimension of the visual scene, in which the young would-be boss, Genny Savastano, exerts his power through a haptic gesture of supremacy. He leans towards the other participant, in the typical *camorra* boss' style, to receive his kissing ritual. Rendering the Italian [*Ciao*], instead, with a more explicit utterance such as [Now you can go!], would explicitate the dyad's hierarchical haptic dynamics and make it clear, on a linguistic level also, that rather than receiving a friendly salutation, Ciro is effectively being dismissed.

A contextualised translation of the scene might help the foreign viewer understand the context of situation and prime it for future similar occurrences within its habitual, recurring co-texts. Semiotic priming, as the property of the image, works here to enhance meaning to the priming item, that is the power relation enacted through the dyad's close proxemics and apparently friendly haptics, namely, the dyad's kissing custom. The resulting priming prosody will suggest the way in which the process of *camorrista's* identity construction is achieved within the multimodal product. This proxemic meaning-making phase, integrating images, sounds and texts, can disambiguate the representation of personal space by contextualising, for the benefit of a low-context/low-contact audience, the dyads' territorial proxemic behaviour.

Table 5.2. The multimodal grid for the analysis of contextualised subtitles (2)

II	**FRAME**	**SCENE**	**SOURCE TEXT**	**TARGET TEXT**	**MULTIMODAL PROSODY**
1		Outside, dark. Don Pietro is trying to persuade Ciro that the killing of Attilio (Ciro's best friend) was a necessary deed. [1.1: seq. 23. T. 45.40]	DP: *Mi dispiace per Attilio.* [Fake expressive act of apology]	DP: *I am sorry about Attilio.* [same as in ST]	Haptics: strong act of possession indexing power and territorial control. DP owns Ciro.
2		As above. [1.1: seq. 23. T. 45.45]	DP: *Lo sai pure tu che si doveva fare 'sta cosa, no?* [assertive statement disguised in the form of an indirect request through tag question]	DP: *But it had to be done, right?* [Impersonal declaration, followed by an invariant tag question]	H: hierarchy and power.
3		As above. [1.1: seq. 23. T. 46.03]	DP: *Bravo, immortale.* [praising the other as an act of superiority]	DP: *Good job, immortal.*	H: conferring trust by showing superiority

In Table II, haptics is employed to signal Don Pietro's, the chief *camorra* boss in the series, power over his trusted advisor Ciro. He has recently killed Ciro's best friend, Attilio, and in this sequence, he is briefly dismissing his cruel deeds deeming the murder of Attilio as a necessary act, without having to provide any other linguistic explanation. His haptic behaviour – he keeps touching Ciro on the face – is self-explanatory in Neapolitan *camorra*-related contexts; as if the *camorrista* were saying: "doesn't matter what I did, you still belong to me and do what I please". In [II.2], the subtitler adapts the Italian utterance [*Lo sai pure tu che si doveva fare 'sta cosa, no?*][6] with an English impersonal declaration, followed by a tag [But it had to be done, right?]. Foreign viewers may perceive the short invariant tag pronounced by Don Pietro [right?], as a signal of power asymmetry between the interlocutors. Lakoff (1973, 1975) maintains that speakers in a position of 'low power' tend to be more likely to use tag questions. Although such a claim has since been challenged with empirical research presenting a wider likeliness in the use of tags (see Cameron *et al.* 1989), the English subtitle could have made the context of situation a bit more explicit by explaining Don Pietro's haptic behaviour, which reverses any possible form of 'low power' representation in his utterance. His initial utterance in the original text begins with [*Lo sai*] (EN.: you know) which hinges on the dyad's knowledge about the shared background assumptions. Ciro, who on

[6] [You know it had to be done, don't you?] (My translation).

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the other hand does not approve the murder of Attilio, is thus linguistically forced to interpret Don Pietro's utterance against such a powerful and binding presupposition. Given this interpretation, it is obvious that the use of the invariant tag [*no*?], which usually awaits confirmation on behalf of the hearer, cannot be described as a means of seeking verification/confirmation/corroboration in the ordinary sense; rather, it is a means of coercively getting the hearer, Ciro, to pretend to agree. From a haptic dimension, the *camorra* boss is touching Ciro's neck while speaking, a semiotic act that implies hierarchical order and superiority and that is not automatically readable from outside the context of culture. The subtitle might have helped foreign viewers understand the hidden dimension of Don Pietro's non-verbal communication by explicitly saying: "As you know, it had to be done!". Phase [II.2] is a semiotic factual statement that employs both verbal ("it had to be done") and non-verbal communication (Don Pietro's gesture) to express power and control in the interaction.

Table III presents another interesting semiotic act incorporating and summarising the multimodal prosody conveyed by the *camorristi* frequent kissing in the series (there are 34 occurrences of similar meaning-making phases, in the whole corpus). At this point, specifically at the end of the first series, differently from the situation of the students/respondents to my empirical paradigm (see section

Table 5.3. The multimodal grid for the analysis of contextualised subtitles (3)

III	FRAME	SCENE	SOURCE TEXT	TARGET TEXT	MULTIMODAL PROSODY
1		Outside, dark. Genny and Ciro see each other after a long separation. Genny is now the new boss and Ciro owes him respect. [1.8: seq. 35. T. 0217]	C: *Sono contento di vederti.* [Declarative. Fake statement of fact]	C: *I'm glad to see you* [same as in ST]	H: Friendly/ Familiar attitude. Idiosyncratic relationship.
2		As above. [1.8: seq. 35. T. 02.22]	C: *Sei tornato da tre giorni, e ti fai vedere solo ora?*	C: *You've been back three days, but show up now?*	H: Detachment/Forced Distance. Lack of intersubjectivity.
3		As above. [1.8: seq. 35. T. 02.33]	G: *E' un problema?* [face-threatening implicature] C: *Nessun problema!* [perlocutionary effect]	G: *It's a problem?* C: *No problem!*	MP: Declarative multimodal act of 'excommunicating' the other from one's personal sphere. Total lack of dyadic inter-subjectivity.

4), who only had access to a limited representation of male dyadic relationships, the viewers have all the elements to fully understand the meaning-making of the multimodal representation. Semiotically primed by close dyadic haptics since the first scenes of the series, the spectators will have realised by now that *camorra* male dyads' use of proxemic and haptic dimensions is different from their low-contact proxemics. Multimodal prosody, frequently occurring in the whole series, will grant the viewers awareness about the dyadic relationships shaped in the filmic narrative. Despite the long kiss in [III.1], and Ciro's warm affirmation [I'm glad to see you], it is immediately evident from the subsequent phases that the typical idiosyncratic relationship between the dyad has changed from [I.3]. The first symptom of such a change comes from the perceivably, at least from an in-group privileged point of observation, wider distance in the dyad. The participants are still framed in a very close proximity, but the space is visibly wider than in previous similar images. In phase [III.2], Ciro is touching Genny with both of his hands as if to beg him to listen, while Genny's unperceivable gaze turns elsewhere, avoiding to establish a close contact with his partner. In [III.3], there is no haptic behaviour, the two look at each other in the eyes and the resulting material process suggests a blatant disregard. All semiotic resources concur to signal a sense of detachment and indifference signifying the total lack of intersubjectivity in the dyadic relationship. The English subtitles again fail to help the Anglophone viewers to grasp the context of situation, which apart from the tones of the voices and the slight distance in proximity, it is quite impossible to grasp by relying only on the verbal soundtrack of the scene. Genny's final short utterance [G: *È un problema?*][7] is a clear face-threatening implicature. He is warning Ciro that he is the new boss, so he is the one who rules. From a dyadic interactional perspective, Ciro's performative answer [*Nessun problema*], through which he intends to avoid a conflict (semantically enacted by the noun 'problema') with Genny, brings about a perlocutionary effect fully recognising Genny's role as the boss. Consequently, forcing the original text into the disambiguating utterance [I'm the boss now!] followed by Ciro's total acceptance with [I know!] or [Yes, you are!] could help the Anglophone spectator access, more effectively, the haptic source text and its related linguistic implicature.

6. Conclusion

I would like to conclude with a simple disclaimer: this paper is not a way of evaluating audiovisual translation practices, since the author is personally well aware of the so many variables interfering with the difficult task of AVT. Indeed, there are several factors challenging the audiovisual rendering of a multimodal work, or any other form of translation. Zabalbeascoa (1999: 175), in his attentive analysis of the priorities and restrictions in translation, has pertinently clarified that: "it is unfair to evaluate a translation without considering all of the intervening factors, including translators' motivations, goals,

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[7] [G: Any problem with that?] (My translation).

constraints, and the sociohistorical circumstances". This paper is rather an attempt to highlight the importance of embedding the analysis of proxemic and haptic dimensions in the thorny cultural process of subtitling a high-context multimodal product. Reading correctly or deeply understanding a given culture is a fundamental process every audiovisual translator should go through in order to fully render the semiotic representation in the target context beyond any pre-assumed stereotypical interpretation.

The analysis has taken into account the well-known and much debated Italian TV production *Gomorrah – The Series* that portrays hegemonic male identities of *camorra* characters, construing them both semiotically and linguistically. The *camorristi* construction of social identities and their social and personal relationships, in the filmic representation, are inevitably carried out on the small screen through the use of culture-bound signs which can be verbal, but also – and above all – nonverbal. Translating cultures means above all being able to interpret reality and organise experience (Katan 1999: 17) through the different ways of perceiving the intentions, values and beliefs of the source culture. The televised representation of the criminals' micro-space, their non-verbal intentions and non-explicit beliefs cannot be perceived by foreign viewers without clear and explicit linguistic cues which may be added to subtitles. As a questionnaire administered to English-speaking viewers has revealed, single scenes from the series, with English subtitles, cannot fully disambiguate what Hall (1969) calls the hidden dimension of culture. Therefore, the difficult process of rendering the Neapolitan organised criminal culture, as represented in *Gomorrah – The Series* in English-speaking cultural contexts via AVT, needs to be reconsidered. AVT can in fact supply a more intelligible meaning-making of the *camorra* haptic and proxemic meanings through a clear linguistic explicitation of the context, as observed and elaborated in this paper. Moreover, a tentative analysis of multimodal prosody has suggested that the translator's re-semiotisation of *camorristi's* non-verbal behaviours needs to be, where possible, contextualised in the verbal texts. This might obviously provide the translator with a certain visible agency in the process of rendering, at least some important parts of, the Neapolitan and *camorra* influenced high-context culture represented in *Gomorrah – The Series*.

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The (Re)Presentation of Organised Crime in *Gomorrah – The Series*: A Corpus-Based Approach to Cross-Cultural Identity Construction

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Abstract

The following contribution focuses on the identity characterisation of specific 'voices' in TV series using a corpus-based approach (Bednarek 2010, 2011) applied to the analysis of the characters of the Italian TV drama Gomorrah – The Series *(Season 1). If "dialogue lines are explicitly designed to reveal characters" (Kozloff 2000: 44), analysing how they are cross-culturally translated into another language and reshaped in new formats can highlight given identity traits that producers want to underline about specific characters. In the case of* Gomorrah*, this is particularly interesting since the identities created for the TV series are intrinsically imbued with its local criminal organisation setting, and the processes of bringing the series across its local borders can reshape and enrich the way characters are presented in a new setting.*

Based on a previous pilot study (Fruttaldo 2015), the following contribution adopts a corpus-based approach (Baker 2006, 2014; McEnery et al. *2006; McEnery/Hardie 2012) to analyse the voices of the clan Savastano in the TV series. This allowed for highlighting specific differences in the way Don Pietro, Donna Imma and Gennaro Savastano use their linguistic resources to build, convey and construe the identity of a* Camorra *boss. The lexicogrammatical status of each character, underlined carrying out a keyword analysis of the original subtitles of the TV series and compared to the keyword analysis of the English subtitles, helped trace the linguistic profile of these dominant personas, unveiling some peculiar characteristics of these characters, which seem to be enhanced in the translation process, highlighting some of their concerns or personality traits (Culpeper 2014), or reshaping their entire identity.*

Keywords

identity construction, TV series, TV dialogue, Gomorrah, *corpus-based discourse analysis*

1. Introduction

In recent years, one of the ways through which cultural-specific phenomena cross borders and find a new life in a different environment is represented by forms of hybridization (Bhatia 2004), which may be seen as vehicles that can help popularise specific genres. The hybridization of broadcast news, for instance, has produced forms of docu-fictions, which can be placed in the blurred generic area of storytelling and news reporting, mixing facts and fictions (Baym 2009). As vessels, these hybrid narrative forms also bring with them cultural-specific elements, which are difficult to re-enact in a new context. This is the case, for instance, of

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the TV series *Gomorrah*, which is based on the Italian novel *Gomorra* written in 2006 by the Neapolitan author Roberto Saviano.

Indeed, *Gomorrah – The Series* seems to blur the line between storytelling and news reporting, touching upon "[…] several contemporary aspects of the camorra, for example the growing visibility of women in the mob hierarchy, the booming drug trade, and the pentito phenomenon" (Renga 2016: 289). However, as Saviano has repeatedly underlined (Caliendo 2012), most of the news stories linked to the Neapolitan Mafia, known as *Camorra*, stay local and remain largely unknown to most Italians. Saviano's exposé and its popularised adaptations have therefore shed light on the criminal activities of the *Camorra* and, while some elements of fiction are undeniably present in both the book and its adaptations, they succeeded in raising awareness on the problems linked to the Neapolitan context – which journalism has failed to highlight from a national and an international point of view.

In order to achieve this objective and popularise given local phenomena, the TV series premiered in Italy with Italian subtitles, since the language of *Gomorrah – The Series* is a mix of both Italian and Neapolitan dialogues[1]. While representing a third step in the translation of the original script, the UK subtitles of the TV series, on the other hand, have helped draw attention to the criminal activities plaguing Naples' hinterland from an international point of view.

Since translation is central to the process of identity formation (Gentzler 2008), the aim of this contribution is to focus on the transcultural reception of *Gomorrah – The Series* (Season 1)[2]. More specifically, based on the concept of translation repercussion (Chesterman 2007), the proposed analysis will focus on a particular aspect of the TV series, that is, how the main characters linguistically construct themselves in the context of the Italian and English subtitles of the TV show.

As TV series are increasingly becoming a global phenomenon thanks to the development of communications systems and multi-platform instruments of marketization, the analysis of how given identities are (re)presented in other cultures can help us understand "TV writers' internalized beliefs which are transmitted through the created dialogue into a globalized community of TV viewers across the world" (Bednarek 2010: 63). As Page remarks (1973, in Kozloff 2000: 43), "[i]t is probably no exaggeration to say that the speech of any individual is as unique […] as his fingerprints". In the same way, TV series characters portray themselves in certain ways through their dialogues, giving voice to specific feelings, concerns, and interests.

The decision to focus specifically on the subtitles of the TV show was motivated by the fact that, in the English adaptation, *Gomorrah – The Series* was not dubbed. In order to make the comparison between the original and its international adaptation more productive, we have thus not taken into consideration the original script of the TV series, which would have insulated given differences that were not strictly linked to the translation process but due to the different media. The analysis was carried out using corpus linguistic methods (Baker 2006, 2014; McEnery *et al.* 2006; McEnery/Hardie 2012), which enabled us to concentrate on how the "individual linguistic thumbprint" (Culpeper 2014: 166) of each character in the source text was construed in the

[1] The centrality of subtitles in viewers' reception of the TV series has been underlined in a contrastive study on a corpus of Italian and English tweets of viewers of the TV show. See Fruttaldo (2016).

[2] Notice that, for practical reasons, this contribution will only focus on Season 1. At the time of writing (January 16, 2017), the corpus of *Gomorrah – The Series* (Season 2) is still being collected. This is particularly due to a delayed release of the Italian DVD version of the TV series, which was not available on *Amazon Italia* (https://www.amazon.it/) up until November 17, 2016.

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target text. As we will see, some features of specific characters seem to be stereotyped in the target text, while others appear to highlight certain peculiarities in the target text that were not particularly underlined in the source text, thus, offering the audience new personas in the translation process.

After using the Manhattan Distance (Baker 2014) in order to statistically measure the lexicogrammatical status of each character and revealing which of the many voices in *Gomorrah – The Series* were the most peculiar, we underlined in the original subtitles of the TV series the linguistic profile of these dominant personas and compared it to the English subtitles by carrying out a keyword analysis. This procedure has unveiled some peculiar features of the characters presented in the TV series. More specifically, while at times some of their concerns or personality traits (Culpeper 2014) have been enhanced in translation, at other times we can witness the reshaping of the character's entire identity.

2. Discourse identity construction

As Fairclough (2000) argues, every social practice intrinsically involves the construction of given identities, and language as being one of the most important instruments through which social practices are discursively enacted becomes a key tool in shaping and representing these identities (Bhatia 2017). Indeed, Bauman (2000: 1) maintains:

> […] identity is an emergent construction, the situated outcome of a rhetorical and interpretive process in which interactants make situationally motivated selections from socially constituted repertoires of identificational and affiliational resources and craft these semiotic resources into identity claims for presentation to others.

In his seminal work on identity construction, Zimmermann (1998) distinguishes among situational, transportable and discourse identity, where the latter refers to the locally constructed identity "[…] in every single stretch of talk or text that a person produces" (van de Mieroop 2005: 108). This type of identity construction is particularly linked to the "[…] feature[s] of the sequential organization of talk-in-interaction, orienting participants to the type of activity underway and their respective roles within it" (Zimmerman 1998: 92). As such, discourse identities can be analysed from different perspectives and by using different methodologies, to highlight, for instance, participants' use of particular linguistic or discursive devices in constructing their identity.

In line with the previous observations, the methodology used to carry out our investigation combines different tools and approaches. In particular, as for the analysis of the way given characters in *Gomorrah – The Series* (from now on referred to as GTS) are specifically constructed, we will adopt a more quantitative approach. We therefore use corpus linguistic methods (Baker 2006, 2014; McEnery *et al.* 2006; McEnery/Hardie 2012) in order to highlight the linguistic peculiarities of specific characters in both the Italian and English subtitles, and thus to highlight how given identities discursively emerge in the GTS

universe. This shall enable us to focus on the construction of fictional TV characters' identities (Bednarek 2010) by combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. That is, we will be able to highlight the individual linguistic thumbprint (Culpeper 2014) of each character in their construction of a given identity.

3. The GTS corpora

In order to analyse the identity construction process of the main characters of GTS, a corpus has been collected of the Italian (i.e., GTS_it) and English (i.e., GTS_en) subtitles of the TV series. Table 3.1 below offers an overview of the data collected in the two corpora:

Table 3.1. The GTS_it and GTS_en corpora

	Number of tokens	Number of speakers	Number of sentences	Number of tokens (gender)		Number of speakers (gender)	Number of utterances (gender)
GTS_it	42,071	233	3,154	Male	35,453	190	2,621
				Female	6,429	47	520
				Indistinct	189	*	13
GTS_en	35,380	222	2,850	Male	29,652	182	2,361
				Female	5,632	44	484
				Indistinct	96	*	16

In order to extract the information in Table 3.1, the two corpora were semi-automatically annotated by following the standards used by the OPUS (OpenSubtitles) project[3]. Additional information (utterance boundaries, speaker's identity, gender of the speaker, etc.) was gathered through XML encoding (Hardie 2014), by using the following tags:

- ◆ <tuvxml:lang="en-us">: (Translation Unit Variant) specifies the language of a given text;
- ◆ <seg>: the text in a given segment;
- ◆ <u>: utterance boundaries;
- ◆ <who>: identity of the speaker;
- ◆ <sex="M"> or <sex="F">: gender of the speaker.

The corpora thus annotated allowed us to analyse the different 'voices' in the TV series and, therefore, identify given linguistic traits that were peculiar to them in the comparison to the other characters in GTS. At this stage of the analysis, amongst the various 'voices' represented in GTS_it and GTS_en, we will only focus on the main characters of the clan Savastano for reasons that will become clear in the next sections.

4. Lexical prototypicality in GTS_it and GTS_en

Amongst the various voices represented in GTS_it and GTS_en, we might be tempted to analyse only the most frequently occurring on the

[3] Further information on the OPUS (OpenSubtitles) project and the corpora created by this initiative can be found online at http://opus.lingfil.uu.se/OpenSubtitles.php.

scene, because their contributions might be seen as more significant given their constant presence. Additionally, when approaching the analysis of how given identities are linguistically and discursively constructed, researchers analysing TV series might be tempted to focus only on those characters that they feel are more relevant to the storyline, thus, relying on subjective standards in the data selection. Conversely, however, researchers may use given statistical measures that can help them retrieve the discursive peculiarities of specific characters to overcome personal biases and see which voices are statistically more peculiar when compared to the other characters.

In this contribution, we have thus decided to adopt Baker's (2014) Manhattan Distance (MD), in order to statistically identify the characters in GTS that show the highest lexical prototypicality. The MD was introduced as a statistical measure to analyse the fastest way on a grid to get from one point to another. It is thus generally associated with geographical distances, but it can also be used to calculate the lexical distance from one individual to the others. In this sense, the higher the MD, the more peculiar the character idiolect will be, since their linguistic choices can be seen as more 'distant' to the linguistic choices made by the other characters. The MD was computed based on the comparison of the 'personal' corpus of each character in GTS_it and GTS_en with a reference corpus made of all the utterances of the other characters. We have thus statistically proven that the main characters do show the highest degree of lexical prototypicality both in GTS_it and in GTS_en, as can be seen in the following figures (Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2):

Figure 4.1. The MD of the main characters in GTS_it
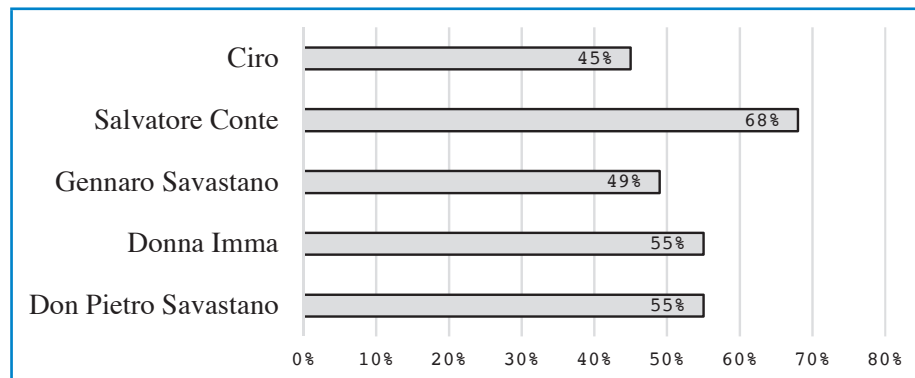
Figure 4.2. The MD of the main characters in GTS_en
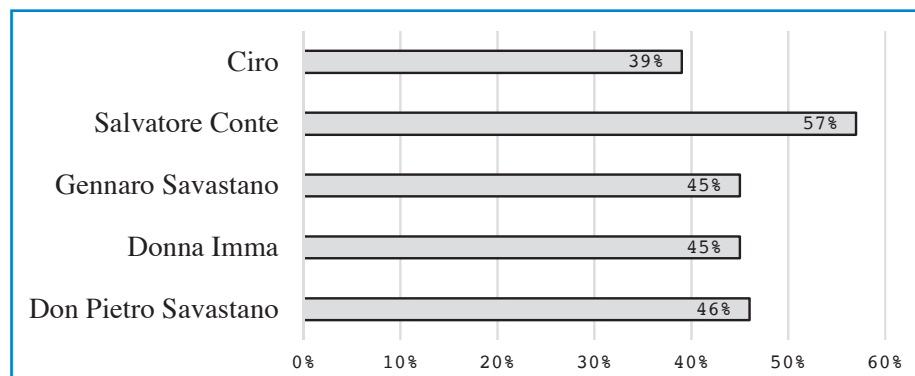
The MD in GTS_en for the main characters is quite similar to the one calculated for GTS_it. Amongst the main characters, however, a pivotal role seems to be played both in GTS_it and in GTS_en by the character of Salvatore Conte, who shows the highest MD, followed by Don Pietro, Donna Imma and Gennaro Savastano. While the specific discourse identity construction of the character of Salvatore Conte has been analysed in a previous study (Fruttaldo 2015), in the following sections we are going to focus mainly on the discursive construction of the Savastano clan, so as to gain a better understanding of their specific idiolects[4].

5. The Savastano clan: Constructing the identity of the *Camorra* boss

GTS can be mainly seen as the presentation of different identities, who fight against each other to assume the control of given territories or drug cartels. In this constant struggle to dominate others, representing oneself as the boss of a given clan becomes a priority felt by all the characters in the TV series. As Lombardi (2016: 295) argues:

> What might appear an innocent frame composition acquires greater significance in light of later events: presented since its very inception as a drama about generational struggle (Don Pietro ordered an attack against a younger boss, Salvatore Conte, because he felt threatened by his rival's growing power), *Gomorra: la serie* unfolds following the classic structural elements of a narrative centred on dynastic succession.

In this way, the dynastic succession to the role of the criminal boss of a given territory becomes a constant confrontation between a younger boss (Salvatore Conte), who needs to fight his way against an older boss (Don Pietro) in order to assume the control of the drug cartel in the Neapolitan hinterland. On the other hand, the stereotypical female head of the households (Donna Imma) needs to take over her husband in the maintenance of the predominance of the Savastano clan. Finally, the older boss's son (Gennaro Savastano) needs to reaffirm his control in the dynastic succession. All these elements highlight the importance felt by the characters to assume control and impose their power over others, in a process that may be defined as 'becoming the clan boss'.

This identity construction, however, can be seen as set in a constant 'battle of wills' between characters who want to affirm their control and present themselves as people in charge. In this context, we therefore move on to investigate how given characters and, more specifically, the characters belonging to the Savastano clan (where the struggle for the dynastic succession is concentrated) discursively construct their identity in the representation of what a proper clan boss is supposed to be.

5.1. In the name of the father...

In order to focus on the character of Don Pietro Savastano, a keyword analysis of the GTS_it and GTS_en was performed by using a corpus of all his utterances and a reference corpus of the utterances of all the

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[4] We would like to further highlight the importance of introducing the MD to our investigation. Indeed, the character of Salvatore Conte, for instance, might have been overlooked since his linguistic contributions (total number of tokens in GTS_it: 1,666; total number of tokens in GTS_en: 1,400) are lower when compared to those of other characters. However, this statistical measure revealed that his contributions are indicative of a specific idiolect.

other characters. WordSmith Tools (Scott 2015) was used to perform this analysis, which allowed us to come up with some interesting generalisations on the 'linguistic thumbprint' (Culpeper 2014) left behind by this character. Among the keywords calculated using this methodology, only the ones displaying the highest degree of keyness have been taken into consideration.

Table 5.1.1. Keywords extracted in the comparison between
the character of Don Pietro and all other characters in GTS_it

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_it
Don Pietro vs. all other characters	pasqualino, comandante, bolletta, scimmie, figlio, parisi, adesso, cazzo, dobbiamo, antonio, tempo, stronzate, malamò, nunziata, roma, mio, raccontato, racconta, filtro, trent'anni, microspie, pisciata, immacolata, risolvere, vogliono, ragazze, allargarci, arzano, bocchinara, caivano, lazio, incazzo, l'immortale, africano, leonessa, leoni, gallina, cesso

In order to interpret the keywords extracted from the comparison between Don Pietro's corpus and the reference corpus containing all the utterances of the other characters, we can qualitatively classify them as generally responding to specific semantic domains (Rayson 2008) and given linguistic patterns (see Table 5.1.2). The semantic domains have been assigned by performing a collocation analysis of the keywords extracted using the methodology previously described.

Table 5.1.2. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified
in the analysis of Don Pietro's keyword list in GTS_it

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_it
Don Pietro vs. all other characters	Use of personal names (or nicknames); Use of metaphors linked to the animal world (coding messages); Use of his own set of swear-words; Chronophobia; Strong obligations or necessities (deontic modality) [creating a sense of community]; Linguistically creating the idea of a clan ('us'); People reporting to him; Extreme sense of property; Local drug cartel.

The data in GTS_it suggest that Don Pietro typically uses names and nicknames to refer to others; he tends to resort to metaphors linked to the animal world (sometimes used to code messages when he is in prison); he has his very own set of swear-words; and, finally, he is obsessed with the absence of time, which is almost pathologised into some sort of chronophobia.

Among the various linguistic peculiarities, however, particular attention will be drawn to the ways in which Don Pietro linguistically creates the idea of a clan, which can be seen as one of the strategies used to assert his control and power over the members of the Savastano clan. This strategy is mainly achieved by Don Pietro via recourse to the first-person plural pronoun 'we', which generally occurs in combination with modal verbs conveying obligations, as shown in example (1):

(1)   Dobbiamo continuare ad allargarci, ragazzi. A Melito, a Caivano, ad Arzano devono capire che adesso ci siamo noi. Dobbiamo arrivare fino al basso Lazio, fino a Roma.

The combination of the inclusive pronoun 'we' with expressions conveying deontic modality is discursively used to create a sense of community: the members of the Savastano clan act together just like a pack.

The GTS_en keyword analysis of Don Pietro does not show distinct differences from the Italian subtitles (see Table 5.1.3):

Table 5.1.3. Keywords extracted in the comparison between the character of Don Pietro and all other characters in the GTS_en corpus

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_en
Don Pietro vs. all other characters	pasqualino, warden, bookie, resolve, monkeys, (have) to / (tell someone) to, son, parisi, asshole, time, problems, tipped, immortal, forget, rome, animals, shithole, shit, job, antonio, had, does, malamò, balls, nunziata, tell, keep, change, happens, obey, motherfucker, pregnancy, thirty, wilder, shove, fuck, asses, arzano, caivano, breakin, bugs, lazio, learned, lack, magnificence, lions, lioness, guess, girlfriends, hen, gennarino, fucking, owe, could

Table 5.1.4. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified in the analysis of Don Pietro's keyword list in GTS_en

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_it
Don Pietro vs. all other characters	Use of personal names (or nicknames); Use of metaphors linked to the animal world (coding messages); Use of his own set of swear-words; Chronophobia; Strong obligations or necessities (deontic modality); Chronic distrust; Extreme sense of property; Local drug cartel.

Table 5.1.3 and Table 5.1.4 show however that the inclusive use of the first-person plural pronoun 'we' does not feature in the GTS_en keyword analysis and, thus, its prominence is lost in the translation process. This is substituted by a significant recourse (as compared to the other characters) to modal verbs indicating obligations or necessity (i.e., 'have to'). Thus, in a certain way, the sense of community previously highlighted in GTS_it appears to be statistically less peculiar of Don Pietro's idiolect in GTS_en. One reason for this may be that the impersonal '*si*' construction used by the other characters is rendered in English by using a personal construction with the pronoun 'we'. A sense of inclusiveness and community construction is thus subtly insulated in the English version, while it appeared to be a peculiar aspect of the boss identity construction of Don Pietro Savastano in GTS_it.

Another aspect peculiar to Don Pietro's identity construction in both GTS_it and GTS_en is represented by the way the invasion of Don Pietro's private spaces is conveyed through the use of city names and,

thus, the use of specific geographical spaces. In other words, Don Pietro's identity as the clan boss is strictly linked to the territory under his control, and people entering it are a menace to his own persona and his power. In this way, attacks to his territory are metonymically represented as attacks to his own persona. Therefore, Don Pietro's identity is strictly linked to the spaces it occupies, and this is linguistically enhanced in his way of linking his power to the territory he controls[5].

5.2. In the name of the mother...

In GTS_it (Table 5.2.1 and Table 5.2.2), Donna Imma shows a particular tendency towards the use of appellatives and forms of address, re-purposed in order to manipulate people (especially to mock the social position of a specific person and, by doing so, asserting her power); she is quite concerned about her family and the household fittings; she uses her husband as an invisible entity to increase her power; she is frequently asserting her power as a woman; Ciro is one of her primary interlocutors or one of her main concerns; and, finally, she is always trying to solve given problems through peaceful negotiations.

Table 5.2.1. Keywords extracted in the comparison between
the character of Donna Imma and all other characters in GTS_it

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_it
Donna Imma vs. all other characters	dottore, te, galera, divano, devi, solamente, (mio) marito, sentimi, uccidono, ciro, avvocato, bel(*), riunione, colloquio, tuo padre, allora, deve, né, genny, mh, perdonare, calmi, preoccupare, occuparti, occupare, preoccupazioni, piacerà, piaciuti, trattare, dovevano, rischio, dovevi, giusta, proposta, compra, nuova, pace, mille e una notte

Table 5.2.2. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified
in the analysis of Donna Imma's keyword list in GTS_it

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_it
Donna Imma vs. all other characters	Appellatives used to manipulate people in (social) positions of power; Family concerns and household fittings; Reliance on her husband; Women vs. men; Strong obligations or necessities (deontic modality) [no sense of community]; Ciro as one of her main interlocutors / topic (neg -); Negotiating strategies; New beginning; Caution as one of her main values; Literary metaphors (coding messages); Argumentative reliance on positive evaluations.

One of the key features we can highlight from Table 5.2.1 and Table 5.2.2 is the use of obligations and necessities discursively conveyed in the construction of Donna Imma's character if compared to the way Don Pietro resorts to these linguistic strategies. Indeed, in the specific

[5] For a comparison between Don Pietro's and Salvatore Conte's ways of constructing linguistically the invasion of their territories, see Fruttaldo (2015).

case of Donna Imma, she seems to use strong obligations but without creating a sense of community, as shown in example (2):

(2) Però tu devi fare quello che ti dico io. Devi chiamare Conte e devi dirgli che vuoi allearti con lui e che tutti i vecchi del clan sono disposti a seguirti, che vi dovete incontrare perché dovete decidere come fare fuori Genny e tutti i suoi compagnucci.

If analysed in isolation, this seems one of the many strategies used by the speaker in order to convey her authority. However, this particular strategy employed by Donna Imma becomes particularly relevant in the comparison between her use of the second-person singular pronoun 'you' (combined with deontic modal verbs) and the use of the first-person plural pronoun 'we' by Don Pietro. This opposition highlights two different ways of becoming and being the clan boss: while in the case of Don Pietro, obligations and orders were conveyed in a way so as to create a sense of community and fellowship, in the case of Donna Imma, leadership becomes a major factor in the way she constructs her identity as a clan boss. Indeed, her way of directly imposing her authority becomes a clear statement of where power resides in the relationships she establishes.

As for the keyword analysis of the character of Donna Imma in GTS_en, while given linguistic cues indicative of her identity in the source text are again particularly significant in the target text, some interesting new entries can be noticed particularly linked to expressions of fear (see Table 5.2.3 and Table 5.2.4):

Table 5.2.3. Keywords extracted in the comparison between
the character of Donna Imma and all other characters in GTS_en

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_en
Donna Imma vs. all other characters	meeting, lawyer, ciro, do, husband, dealing, couch, new, tricks, relative, less, buildings, buddy, baptize, you, to, spot, must, have, son, risk, fine, 've, strongest, saw, puts, nights, exactly, peace, thousand, news, afraid

Table 5.2.4. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified in the
analysis of Donna Imma's keyword list in GTS_en

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_en
Donna Imma vs. all other characters	Negotiating strategies; Reliance on her husband; Appellatives used to manipulate people in (social) positions of power; Ciro as one of her main interlocutors / topic (neg -); Local drug cartel; Strong obligation or necessity (deontic modality) [no sense of community]; Family concerns and household fittings; Planning future strategies; Argumentative reliance on positive evaluations; New beginning; Literary metaphors (coding messages); Fear.

In the TV series, fear is judged as something that a person in command should not display. Thus, Donna Imma will be ready to take her

husband's place when she proclaims herself as a fearless persona. While this particular linguistic trait was lost in the source text, it is still present in the target text. If we now move on to investigate how Donna Imma overcomes fear by only focusing on the characters of Donna Imma and Don Pietro, in the comparison with a reference corpus of Don Pietro's utterances, the MD displayed by Donna Imma in the entire GTS_it and GTS_en is quite high (61% in the GTS_it and 49% in the GTS_en). This means that she seems to be quite independent in the vocabulary she uses if compared to Don Pietro's. However, if we make a comparison per episode between Donna Imma's utterances and Don Pietro's reference corpus, we can bring to the fore some especially interesting facts about her idiolect:

Figure 5.2.1. MD comparison per episode between Donna Imma's utterances and a reference corpus of Don Pietro's utterances in GTS_it and GTS_en
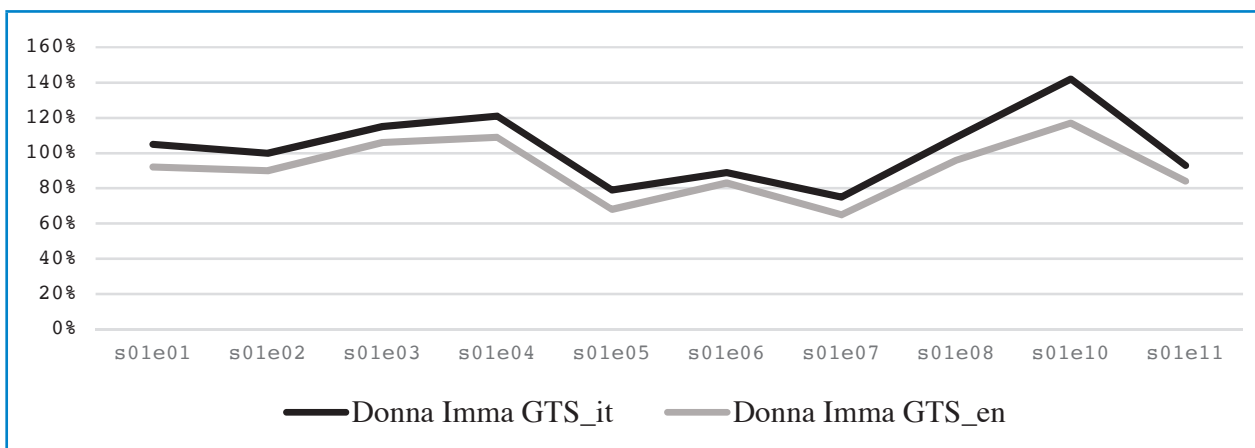
As can be seen from Figure 5.2.1, when Donna Imma is in a position of power (Episodes 5–7; in these episodes, she becomes the head of the Savastano clan), she resorts to the vocabulary used by Don Pietro to assert her authority, and this explains the sudden drop in the MD. That is, when she eventually embraces the role that she has to play as the head of the Savastano clan, she becomes a fearless persona by adopting the vocabulary of her husband (see, however, the previous observation on her use of the second-person singular pronoun). Becoming a boss in the TV series also entails adopting a specific vocabulary, which is representative of the fact that language is always an act of identity performance.

5.3. And in the name of the son of the Savastano clan

As for the analysis of the specific ways in which Gennaro Savastano linguistically constructs his identity, we must promptly highlight that we can distinguish two moments in his storyline, also underlined in the way in which the character linguistically develops his identity. In a first part of the TV series (Episodes 1–7), Gennaro is represented as a spoiled child, who is (unsuccessfully) forced to take over the family business after his father's imprisonment.

Table 5.3.1. Keywords extracted in the comparison between the character of Gennaro Savastano and all other characters in GTS_it (s01e01–07)

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_it
Gennaro Savastano (s01e01–07) vs. all other characters	carcere, mamma, ciruzzo, papà, ciao, questi, eh, ragazza, tutto, voglio, ciro, lo, ancora, devo, va, ma, poi, posto, sempre, posso, soldi, dai, a, io, questa, fare, hai, come, là, che, mi, perché, tu, quando, ma, ho, sì, detto, me, dobbiamo

Table 5.3.2. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified in the analysis of Gennaro Savastano's keyword list in GTS_it (s01e01–07)

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_it
Gennaro Savastano (s01e01–07) vs. all other characters	Concern about Don Pietro's imprisonment; family ties; strong egotistical desires; Ciro as one of his main interlocutors/topic (pos +); Strong obligation or necessity (deontic modality) [creating a sense of community].

Gennaro Savastano, in GTS_it, Episodes 1–7 (Table 5.3.1 and Table 5.3.2), displays a strong tie with specific characters, who become his main interlocutors or sources of directions. In particular, the analysis shows a linguistic concern about his relationship with his family. They represent the people whom he looks up to most frequently for given directions, which confirms that the linguistic cues highlight his immaturity in the leadership process: he sticks to the orders of, or reports to, other people, without displaying a sense of authority.

The keyword list additionally points out a powerful yearning to care only about his personal desires and concerns, expressed through modal verbs conveying strong volition on behalf of the speaker. The first-person singular pronoun '*io*' features predominantly in his idiolect, thus, confirming his sole interest in his own persona. However, we must also highlight the use of the pronoun 'we', which is generally used in combination with a modal verb conveying obligations, in line with the way Don Pietro constructs the community identity of the Savastano clan. In this way, Gennaro seems to 'pick up' some of the linguistic strategies used by his father.

Table 5.3.3. Keywords extracted in the comparison between the character of Gennaro Savastano and all other characters in GTS_it (s01e07–12)

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_it
Gennaro Savastano (s01e07–12) vs. all other characters	finire, insieme, veramente, gente, siamo, dovete, noi, andiamo, salvatore, nostra, quella, però, merda, ragazzi, era, voglio, chi, più, me, io, tutti, solo, mi, tutto, conte, posto, perché, capito, devo, dove, ora, mi, se, qui, niente, parlare, cosa, andare, allora, dobbiamo, ha, tu, hai

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Table 5.3.4. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified
in the analysis of Gennaro Savastano's keyword list in GTS_it
(s01e07–12)

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_it
Gennaro Savastano (s01e07–12) vs. all other characters	Community leadership through strong obligation or necessity (deontic modality); Linguistically creating the idea of a clan ('us'); Salvatore Conte as one of his main concerns (neg -); Use of his own set of swear-words; Egotistical desires and concerns; Use of superlativeness; Extreme sense of property [erratic behaviour].

In the second part of the TV series (Episodes 7–12), Gennaro comes back from Honduras, rids himself of Ciro's influence and becomes a new leading anti-hero (Brembilla 2016). These changes in the way the character constructs himself are also mirrored by the keyword analysis, where new sets of linguistic patterns and semantic domains emerge.

In particular, we can notice that together with some expressions still conveying a concern towards the satisfaction of egotistical desires and concerns, some linguistic patterns reveal certain similarities to the ways in which Don Pietro Savastano constructs his identity as a clan leader. We can notice this, for example, in the way strong obligations or necessities are conveyed in combination with the use of the pronoun 'we'. However, the keyword analysis also reveals that, to convey his authority, Gennaro additionally uses direct commands, highlighted in the second-person singular pronoun '*tu*', very much like Donna Imma's strategies to impose her sense of leadership on the members of the Savastano clan. Therefore, in a certain way, Gennaro seems to linguistically embody a hybrid clan boss figure, which combines both the elements of the way Don Pietro and Donna Imma assert their authority.

Another aspect that can be seen as similar to the way Don Pietro constructs his identity can be found in the way Gennaro linguistically marks his territory: his power is linked to specific places which, however, are not as clearly specified as in the case of Don Pietro. Indeed, Gennaro seems to link his power to an erratic sense of property, which does not have specific geographical boundaries but, conversely, wonders with his own persona (entailed, for instance, in the use of verbs of movement).

As for the keyword analysis of GTS_en, in the case of Gennaro, we can again highlight a difference between the two parts of the storyline.

Table 5.3.5. Keywords extracted in the comparison between the character of Gennaro Savastano (s01e01–07) and all other characters in GTS_en

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_en
Gennaro Savastano (s01e01–07) vs. all other characters	dad, mom, girl, can, bye, then, understand, okay, that, yeah, ciro, but, say, back, what, I, be, me

Table 5.3.6. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified
in the analysis of Gennaro Savastano's keyword list in GTS_en (s01e01–07)

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_en
Gennaro Savastano (s01e01–07) *vs.* *all other characters*	Family ties; strong egotistical desires; Ciro as one of his main interlocutors/topic (pos +); Strong obligation or necessity (deontic modality) [creating a sense of community]; Not sentence initiator [responds to others].

Just like the keyword analysis of GTS_it in the first part of Gennaro's storyline, the keyword analysis of GTS_en confirms the cross-cultural representation of Gennaro Savastano as displaying a strong tie with specific characters, who become his main interlocutors or sources of directions. In particular, we can again notice a linguistic concern with his relationship with his family. The data also confirm his powerful yearning to only care about his personal desires and concerns, expressed in this case via recourse to the first-person singular pronoun 'I'.

Table 5.3.7. Keywords extracted in the comparison between the character
of Gennaro Savastano (s01e07–12) and all other characters in GTS_en

Character comparison	Keywords in GTS_en
Gennaro Savastano (s01e07–12) *vs.* *all other characters*	old, guys, friends, salvatore, wait, everything, had, because, dad, coming, first, who, even, man, should, talk, gotta, but, when, from, we, find, or, my, not, conte, right, all, his, were, if, said, we

Table 5.3.8. Semantic domains and linguistic patterns identified
in the analysis of Gennaro Savastano's keyword list in GTS_en (s01e07–12)

Character comparison	Semantic domains and linguistic patterns in GTS_en
Gennaro Savastano (s01e07–12) *vs.* *all other characters*	Generational struggle; Reliance on generic or placeholder names; Community leadership through strong obligation or necessity (deontic modality); Use of superlativeness; Linguistically creating the idea of a clan ('us'); Salvatore Conte as one of his main concerns (neg -); Egotistical desires and concerns.

As for the second part of Gennaro's storyline, while the keyword analysis of GTS_en confirms some of the linguistic patterns already analysed in GTS_it, some interesting entries seem to highlight given specificities in the cross-cultural representation of this character when compared to the others. In particular, the very first keyword ('old') seems to underline a key feature in the development of Gennaro's character in this new evolution of his persona. Indeed, the analysis of the occurrences of this keyword highlights the strong concern that Gennaro feels about the 'older' members of the Savastano clan. Gennaro, thus, seems to embody the generational struggle that the

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series portrays between his father's men and his younger 'friends', who will try to gain their power in the Savastano clan.

Another interesting entry that is present in GTS_en but has no counterpart in GTS_it is the noun 'man':

(3) Mom... you don't have to worry about anything anymore, I've grown, now I know what I'm doing. I'll take care of everything. Besides, you heard Dad, I'm the man here now!

A closer look at the occurrences of this word has underlined that Gennaro usually feels the need to impose his new identity as that of a mature man, highlighting a contrast with his previous spoiled behaviour. This also entails a certain degree of masculinity being constructed in the identity affirmation of this character.

6. Conclusion

The analysis of participants' use of particular linguistic or discourse devices can reveal given linguistic patterns in the process of their identity construction. In this contribution, the keyword analysis of the English and Italian subtitles of GTS enabled a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods to the analysis of how given personas are cross-culturally constructed. More specifically, this contribution focused on the characters belonging to the Savastano clan in order to highlight how each of them uses specific linguistic patterns and discursive devices in their (re)presentation of what it means to be a clan boss.

The investigation revealed how Don Pietro seems to construct an identity that both imposes his authority and creates a sense of community, achieved through the use of the first-person plural pronoun 'we'. This strategy did not feature however in the keyword analysis in GTS_en and, thus, its prominence seems to be lost in the translation process.

The keyword analysis highlighted another aspect peculiar to Don Pietro's identity construction in both GTS_it and GTS_en, represented by the way Don Pietro's identity as the clan boss is strictly linked to the territory under his control, and people entering it are a menace to his own persona and his power. In this way, attacks to his territory are metonymically represented as attacks to his own persona.

As for the keyword analysis of the character of Donna Imma, leadership seems to become a major factor in the way she constructs her identity as a clan boss. Indeed, in the comparison between her use of the second-person singular pronoun 'you' and Don Pietro's use of the first-person plural pronoun 'we', an opposition was highlighted in the two different ways of becoming and being the clan boss. This was indicative of her way of directly imposing her authority, which becomes a clear statement of where power resides in the relationships she establishes.

In GTS_en, however, some interesting entries could be noticed particularly linked to expressions of fear. As previously highlighted, Donna Imma will be ready to take her husband's place when she proclaims herself as a fearless persona. The linguistic analysis revealed that she eventually embraces the role that she has to play as the head of the Savastano clan by adopting the vocabulary of her husband.

The keyword list of the character of Gennaro Savastano revealed a powerful yearning to care only about his personal desires and concerns, expressed through modal verbs conveying strong volition on behalf of the speaker and the prominence of the first-person singular pronoun 'I' in his idiolect. However, the keyword analysis also revealed that, to convey his authority, Gennaro uses linguistic strategies that are predominantly used by Don Pietro and Donna Imma. Therefore, in a certain way, Gennaro seems to linguistically embody a hybrid clan boss figure, which combines both the elements of the way Don Pietro and Donna Imma assert their authority.

Another aspect similar to the way Don Pietro constructs his identity was found in the way Gennaro linguistically marks his territory: his power is linked to specific places which, however, are not as clearly specified as in the case of Don Pietro. Indeed, Gennaro seems to link his power to an erratic sense of property, which does not have specific geographical boundaries but, conversely, wonders with his own persona.

To conclude, the comparison between the keyword lists of the main characters of the Savastano clan proved to be a useful tool to underline their linguistic construction and, more importantly, it demonstrated how some linguistic characteristics that were not highlighted in the Italian language were stereotyped or enhanced in their English version. The methodology used to highlight this can thus be a useful tool in translation studies so as to better define the idiolect of specific characters and, more importantly, go behind the scene of the translation process to underline given peculiarities.

Discussion

The analysis of participants' use of particular linguistic or discourse devices in TV series by using mixed methodologies can reveal given linguistic patterns in the process of their identity construction. However, these patterns can only highlight how producers want their characters to be developed and translated in other cultures. Therefore, this approach does not allow researchers to test if the audience perceives characters in line with their linguistic construction. The increasing use of social media platforms to encourage audience interaction and, at the same time, audience promotion of the media product may be seen as a possible way to see if the character identity construction in a social network environment is in line with the linguistic thumbprint (Culpeper 2014) left behind by their dialogues and, more importantly, to see how the TV series is perceived by its audience. Studying the way the social media community responds transculturally to these constructed personas can thus overcome one of the major limitations of the present study.

The investigation on the linguistic construction of the main characters of GTS offered in the previous paragraphs also does not take into consideration a multimodal analysis of how characters further shape their identity[6]. While not being the focus of this investigation, it cannot go unacknowledged the importance that multimodal cues play in constructing given personas.

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[6] See Balirano (in this volume) for a multimodal analysis of GTS.

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'*Woman Robbed and Punched on London Street*': Linguistic and Discursive Representation of Offender and Victim Social Actors in Crime News Headlines

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Abstract

As the media is the primary public source of information on a large variety of topics, so the patterns of media discourse play an outstanding role in shaping public opinion and strengthening society. Drawing from combined approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis and, in particular, the socio-semantic analytical model proposed in van Leeuwen's (2008) framework, I utilise a randomised corpus of English-language crime news headlines to investigate the linguistic features relevant for the media representation of offenders and victims as social actors within the discursive construction of the social reality of crime alongside the impact the media has in the construction of public belief and attitude to crime and criminality. It is argued that social actors, their identities and relations are (re)shaped by the ideology the media supports in the specific discourse situation and legitimised social practices, with the media coverage of crime news sensitising and influencing the general public's thought on the social and cultural phenomenon of criminality.

Keywords

media discourse, critical discourse analysis, social actors, social actions, gender, identity

1. Introduction

As today's media, both in the mainstream and across alternative sources, serve as a means to distribute news and convey information regarding a large variety of topics, including crime and criminal justice (Beale 2006), so they play an outstanding role in creating and shaping public opinion and strengthening society. Notable for this media role in contemporary culture has been the complex relationship between the media and crime/justice, opening the way for several social science research studies to focus on the degree to which portrayals of crime across media genres may differentially bear upon those who intersect with them (Eschholz 2003; Kellner 2003; Ditton *et al.* 2004; Weitzer/Kubrin 2004; Wardle 2006), or to serve as an inspiring agent to public policy in matters of criminal justice (Cavender 2004; Mawby 2010). Moreover, other lines of inquiry within the broad field of social sciences (including criminology) have addressed the conceptual context of organised crime (Allum *et al.* 2010) and its connection with the media (Beare/Ronderos 2001; van Duyne 2004), offering insights into the levels of organised

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crime as a social problem (Hobbs 2004), its empirical manifestations (Hornsby/Hobbs 2007) and countermeasures (Segell 2007).

Aside from these scholarly inquiries, however, depictions of crime effects in the media also significantly result from an inherent bias or ideology in play within media discourse and communication studies in general. Seen as the expression of a group's "material interests" (Hawkes 2003: 114) and as a "self-serving and a function of the material and symbolic interests of the group" (van Dijk 1998a: 8), ideology in news production processes is often guided by the overriding institutional routines that make it possible for journalists to cover a topic through bureaucratic decisions (Chermak 1997) and to process the social impact of a topic as "news value" (Palmer 2000; Burton 2015). The biased perspectives that journalists employ also draw attention to other overlapping attributes of the objects of news coverage, such as those of "agenda setting" (Perse 2001), directing the public's attention to certain issues, "framing" (Entman 1993), selecting salient aspects of a perceived reality to promote a particular problem definition, and the organisational exigencies of the media 'to listen to' economic and marketing pressures for news production (Hallin 2000). By emphasising the sideways that such perspectives can produce, these ideological internal maps are relevant to inform the selection and construction of specific stories by news producers "who reveal their own stance towards what is reported" (Caldas-Coulthard 2003: 274) and define the media's ability to capture the discourses which appeal to society through a "naturalisation" process of media power (Couldry 2003), or "discursive power" (Street 2011). This, then, has implications for the interests, beliefs, values and worldviews that are ideologically produced, reproduced and transformed in media discourse (Fairclough 1995; van Dijk 1998a, 1998b; Allan 1999; Fowler 1999; Wodak 2007; Richardson 2007), and provides the framework in which to understand the relationship between linguistic and material practices across media genres.

Relevant to this relationship in media genres is the fact that crime reporting continues to be a staple for newspapers (e.g. 'quality' and 'popular' journalism in print sources and online news sites) in the mediation of everyday life (Conboy 2006), and the news we read there about crime and justice is shaped by a complex interaction of ideologies such as those of the media owners who have strict political leanings, or those of the reporters themselves who decide what information about crime or justice they will cover or leave out, and the way they perceive that information and thus to share their personal and professional ideology. Whichever ideology is in control, the effect is that the kind of news coverage on crime and justice is not only determined by the organisational and professional imperatives behind the practice of journalism but also makes itself a conduit of the important "power" (Fairclough 2001) that is exerted through the discourse of the public media. In other words, controlling the news content delivered through the newspaper medium and how it is presented to shape public opinion. Moreover, since headlines forerunning newspaper articles are taken "to express or convey ideological content" (van Dijk 1995: 22)[1] in line with a biased process

[1] Similarly, Bell (1991: 188) argues for ideologically-loaded headlines when agents are positioned in active and passive verbs.

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of selected news, the production of crime news within newspapers is also generated and filtered through the "news value" (Jewkes 2004) of story items – those which focus on "drama and action, immediacy, violence, and celebrities" (Greer 2007: 26) as needed to develop salient content and shape public opinion in meaning-making functions.

Against this short background, I embarked upon a linguistic (Critical Discourse Analysis) investigation of crime news headlines that, to the best of my knowledge, are largely missing from the linguistic research landscape. Although invaluable work has been devoted to the linguistic and visual analyses of the representation of crime in television coverage (Machin/Mayr 2013), multimodal analyses of globalised criminal syndicates (Caliendo *et al.* 2016), and Prosecutor Tabbert's (2015) analysis of press news articles on crime from a combined linguistics, criminology and media studies perspective, CDA-oriented research output in this topical site of media discourse has remained pretty much underdeveloped. In an attempt to bridge this gap, I describe and interpret how English-language online newspaper headlines as sites of information, text and discourse present a specific version of the social reality of crime in the media public source and how they ideologically shape the content and effects of media images of crime for the widest audiences. To this end, the paper is guided by three interrelated research questions:

> RQ1: How is crime covered by newspaper headlines from online media outlets?

> RQ2: What are the situated uses of linguistic and discursive resources that index social identities, role and (power) relationships between offenders and victims as social actors alongside the systems of knowledge signified and the ideological work done by news media outlets in this form of public discourse?

> RQ3: How do linguistic features in the news ideologically affect audience beliefs and understandings of crime and its relation to wider social change?

To answer these questions, I should first indicate the empirical material and research method used before I undertake the analysis and discussion of the findings for those questions and draw some preliminary conclusions.

2. Material and method

2.1. Data collection

The analytical data for this study came from a synchronic corpus of 100 large type front page headlines appearing in two regularly printed English-language broadsheets, the British *Guardian* and the American *New York Post*, and retrieved from online websites over a three-month period – from July through to September 2016[2]. Texts were randomly selected from the sites' Crime Section and compiled into a set of equal number of samples (n=50) from each broadsheet so as to gain a balanced and representative picture of the topic and type of discourse

[2] Regardless of the piece of writing (e.g. articles, columns) that goes within the national newspaper, *The Guardian* is known for its left-leaning, liberal approach to daily news, while the *New York Post* allows its news coverage to be conservative in view. In publishing slanted news across the political spectrum, both papers tend to publish factual information that favours the country's national causes and results in the choice of news being epitomised by wide circulation, reputation and location.

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featured in both 'quality' newspaper outlets. Text-file collection yielded a whole corpus of 960 tokens as necessary to meet stringent space requirements in the content and production of crime news and provide an understanding of how media 'insiders' (text/discourse producers) viewed their reporting practices.

Empirical materials were consistent with the three main functions headlines serve as suggested by Conboy (2006): "[f]irst they provide a brief summary of the main news, they attract attention, and, third, they often provide an initial indicator, in their content and style, of the news values of the newspaper and are an important part in the way in which the newspaper appeals to its audience" (Conboy 2006: 13).

2.2. Research design

To analyse the data collected in qualitative and quantitative terms, sociolinguistic-based approaches to Critical Discourse Analysis (Chuliaraki/Fairclough 1999; Iedema/Wodak 1999; Knox 1999; van Leeuwen/Wodak 1999; Fairclough 1995, 2001, 2003; Caldas-Coulthard 2003; Wodak/Meyer 2003; van Leeuwen 2008; Richardson 2007; Kwon *et al.* 2009) were taken to the forerunning texts with a view to describing and interpreting linguistic, social determinants and effects of language incorporated in the headlines. Alongside these theoretical frameworks, a traditional content analysis of media texts (Neuman 1997; Surette 1998) was used to identify the major themes or subject areas which were pursued in the news and to presuppose that the meanings conveyed by such themes in qualitative and quantitative criteria of media content may have effects on contexts of production as well as reception across news reporting.

Central to the linguistic inquiry was van Leeuwen's (2008: 23–54) inventory of socio-semantic categories and modes of the representation of social actors drawn upon from the view that "all discourses recontextualize social practices" (van Leeuwen 2008: vii), and that "recontextualizing principles […] are therefore linked to key elements of social practices: actors and their roles and identities, actions and their performance styles, settings, and timings" (van Leeuwen 2008: vii). However, as one type of discourse (i.e. crime) does not include all the categories of representation in this inventory, only distinct sets of modes were found to be of relevance to this observer in analysing social actors across the sampled texts, namely deletion (*inclusion/exclusion*), role allocation (*activation* and *passivation* further consisting of *participation*, *circumstantialization*, and *subjection*), and substitution (*functionalization*, *classification*, *relational identification*, *formalization*, *semiformalization*, and *objectivation*). These discursive categories recognised the (SFL) transitivity system (Bloor/Bloor 2004; Halliday 2004) which construes "the world of experience into a manageable set of process types" (Halliday 2004: 170) that are relevant to codify the social actions performed by the social actors. Together these analytical frames of reference served to map out how the *text* (Fairclough 1995: 57) realises the representations of the social actors and social actions embedded in social practices, and consequently forms the social reality of crime. Looking at newspaper headlines beyond *text* and as

the outcome of *discourse practice* and *sociocultural practice* (Fairclough 1995: 57–59), the study examined how the text/discourse producers ideologically (re)shape the public's perception of crime-related events inherent in the practices of media text production and consumption, and how they relocate this into the wider social context relevant for ideologically-based representations of the roles, identities, and (power) relations between the social actors in question. Mapping the three separate strands of analysis onto one another (text, discourse and sociocultural practice) served as evidence for arguments about the social basis of the ideological assumptions that were underpinning text and discourse under investigation.

3. Results and discussion

To answer the questions posed, we first have to take a closer look at how crime is covered by the news media.

3.1. Identifying the nature of crime coverage by category

In keeping to the division of crime into legally recognised categories – 'Offences against the person' and 'Offences against property' (Tessuto 2001) –, as shown in Table 3.1.1, a content analysis of the national news headlines covered within the two broadsheet newspapers reveals a wide range of criminal offences committed against individuals or property, with the number of offences against the person (84 times) featuring more frequently than those against property (16 times).

Table 3.1.1. The nature of crime events in the national newspaper coverage: occurrence frequency

Nature of crime	*The Guardian*: No of headlines	*New York Post*: No of headlines	Total No
'*Offences against the person*'			
(attempted) murder (22) – sexual assault (18) – manslaughter (16) – hate/bias offences (11) – wounding (9) – domestic violence (3) – drug-related offences (2) – harassment (2) – prostitution (1)	39	45	84
'*Offences against property*'			
burglary (6) – theft (4) – robbery (3) – larceny (2) – cybercrime (1)	9	7	16
Total number of headlines			100

More specifically, the breakdown of exact figures for each crime event in the Table refers to wrongful acts committed by UK or US offenders coming together with victims or their property in a specific time and space, and occasionally included wrongdoings by law enforcement authorities.

In terms of individual crime events occurring within the most frequent category ('Offences against the person'), Table 3.1.1 shows

that (attempted) murder was by far the most frequent offence projected across the inventoried samples. This means that acts of (attempted) murder, manslaughter, and wounding caused by weapons (including guns, stabbing, and blunt objects) were brought to the fore alongside sexual assault, including rape and child sex abuse, as well as hate crimes originating from bias against membership of the victim in a particular social group, typically on account of ethnicity or gender identity. Viewed within the structural elements of 'news-making', the different degree of media coverage given to each crime event in this category immediately suggests something of the responsibility falling upon the journalists (text producers) regardless of their personal (political) leanings: domestic violence (reported 3 times) was not likely to get as much readers' attention as the murder or attempted murder (reported 22 times) of, for example, a teenage girl, or even the sexual assault (reported 18 times) of, for example, a young woman in her home by a black man who broke in, although stories about sexually assaulted children also automatically became more newsworthy on the simple reasoning that children are not as likely as young adults to be victimised. Yet, as shown in Table 3.1.1, making headline news did not stop the reporters from covering other events in the less frequent category ('Offences against property'), such as those with the subject of burglary or larceny in public focus, where wrongful acts were also done by national offenders against another's property or goods – those in the possession of victims.

In all such instances of under/overrepresentation of crime topics within the corpus texts, headlining individual crime stories situated the media's initial interpretation of the topic in question according to a professional sense of news value and what this value was meant to engender among readers, thus allowing the source of newsworthy content to be characterised by an ethic of political neutrality and professional objectivity. At the same time, however, headlining crime stories served as a platform for understanding the media's discursive representations of social actors behind their means of actions, providing the context in which to understand the broad beliefs and values of the journalists, personal and professional.

3.2. Representing social actors and social actions within text and discourse-level linguistic systems

Consistent with these representations in content analysis of message attributes, what follows is a critical linguistic analysis and discussion of micro and macro-level features of text and discourse relevant for an understanding of the ideological import of the roles, identities, and (power) relations between the social actors concerned.

3.2.1. *Role allocation (activation/passivation pattern)*

Qualitative analysis of the discursive representations of social actors in the sampled texts reveals the types of role allocation the media chose to build up in order to shape their intended discourse. In line with van Leeuwen (2008: 32), who argues that "representations can

reallocate roles or rearrange the social relations between the participants", social actor representation can be either in active or passive roles, meaning that "[*a*]*ctivation* occurs when social actors are represented as the active, dynamic forces in an activity, [and] *passivation* when they are represented as 'undergoing' the activity, or as being 'at the receiving end of it'" (van Leeuwen 2008: 33). More specifically, when the social actor is described as activated, it is assigned the role of the grammatical "agent" ("actor") who is responsible for producing the social practice in the text (van Leeuwen 2008: 32). On the other hand, when the social actor is passivated through *subjection*, it is given the grammatical role of "patient" ("goal") of the social practice in the text (van Leeuwen 2008: 32).

Based on this, Table 3.2.1.1 shows the results of the overall frequencies of role allocation to the social actors in question under activation and passivation as two discursive features performed across the sampled texts.

Table 3.2.1.1. Role allocation of social actors within the corpus: occurrence frequency

	Offender	**Victim**	**Total**
Activation	31	–	31
Passivation	47	22	69

A first glance at Table 3.2.1.1 shows that the frequency of passivation through *subjection* was more than twice as much (69) as the category of activation (31), and reveals that, among the most commonly represented social actors, offenders were actually more passivated than victims in crime news coverage.

Starting out from the activation pattern, the following set of headlines, constructed with a subject and finite verb phrase, illustrate qualitatively the use of this pattern within the examined corpus:

    (1)   Man in red dress holds up Liverpool sex shop at gunpoint (*Guardian*)

    (2)   Thieves beat up deli clerk after taking off with bouquets (*Guardian*)

    (3)   Robbers make getaway in stolen car with 88-year-old woman in back (*Guardian*)

    (4)   London attacker grabs woman's hijab on Oxford street (*Guardian*)

    (5)   Thief fractures man's skull during attack outside home (*New York Post*)

    (6)   Son allegedly beats parents to death at family home (*New York Post*)

    (7)   Naked man rapes woman on Brooklyn street (*New York Post*)

    (8)   Lawyer allegedly robbed a bank but doesn't remember doing it (*New York Post*)

As evident, all of the headlines are clear in foregrounding the most straightforward and easy-to-recognise active role of several different offenders who are activated with regard to criminal activities against victims (2, 5, 6, 7), their property (1, 3, 8), or a combination thereof (4). In (1) and (7), for instance, we can discern offenders as agents who acted out the process (<u>Man</u> in red dress, Naked <u>man</u>), the material action process (holds up, rapes) and the goals, i.e. the person/victim (woman) or thing/property (sex <u>shop</u>) that were being acted upon. Put differently, text producers wished to capture an actor as well as someone/ something (goal) affected by the action through *participation* and *inclusion* (van Leeuwen 2008: 28–32), and sorted out the *transactive* processes by which some action was done to some other individual through *interactive* transaction, or to some other thing owned by them through *instrumental* transaction (van Leeuwen 2008: 60).

In contrast to this regular offender-victim/property arrangement, offenders were only occasionally talked about in an active manner using different processes. This can be seen in the (S-V-O) clause type headline below:

> (9)   Greater Manchester Police fail to record 38,000 reported crimes (*Guardian*)

With no victim being acted upon, the text producer activates the *Police* (actor) in relation to their material process action (*fail to record*), foregrounding police misconduct in terms of liability by virtue of their role and position. Consequently, the headline is congruent with a *non-transactive* process (van Leeuwen 2008: 60).

As already seen, the rationale of the inventoried headlines revolves around the linguistic tool of transitivity (Halliday 2004) as used to represent recurrent processes of doings (physical and tangible actions) and describes offenders in material process verbs (e.g. *beating*, *holding up*, *killing*). This way of emphasising the two essential participants within the grammar of the clause not only shows how the text producers made sense of the transactive processes affecting those participants but also how they offered a representation of the activated and passivated social actors involved in those materialised social actions and processes. As a semantically and communicatively relevant tool for discourse producers to encode "social practices" as "socially regulated ways of doing things" (van Leeuwen 2008: 6) within the ongoing texts, transactive material actions thus enabled the media to start in on building a picture of the reality of crime for their audiences.

In this framework, the active role of offenders is also realised by the discourse feature of *circumstantialization* (van Leeuwen 2008: 33) which narrows down their activities to a context of situation. Found in almost all of the cases where activation was used, circumstantialization was typically realised by *prepositional circumstantials* (van Leeuwen 2008), or what Richardson (2007: 206) labels as *prepositional phrases* that are used to provide context for *dominant clauses*. Again, this can be seen in (1–8), where circumstantial elements served to add information about place (where) and manner (how) of the dramatic crime events (e.g. *at gunpoint*, *on Brooklyn street*), or to indicate a contingent fact associated with the main situation of crime commission

(*but doesn't remember doing it*). More than that, circumstantials were added to pre-modifying (*Naked man*) and post-modifying head nouns (*Man in red dress*) alongside nominalisation (*Greater Manchester Police*) as necessary to represent agency and action within the representational context of newsworthy items about crime events.

Above and beyond such linguistic realisations, placing social actors 'in the driving seat' of their material action processes in the headline texts gives one more way to perceive the contours of a major component and manifestation of *personal identity* (or *personality*), which provides the basis for agentive interventions in the *social identity* (Fairclough 2003: 160–161). Interesting as it is, this conceptualisation draws from the notion that texts have a significant role in constructing people's identity (Luke 1996; Fairclough 1995, 2003), and ties in with the view of material and mental processes "represent[ing] the outer manifestations of inner workings, the acting out of processes of consciousness [...]" (Halliday 2004: 171)[3]. Not least, the conceptualisation aligns with the view that "language acts [...] *construct* meaning" (Bloor/Bloor 2004: 2), or similarly that the "[s]ocial action can be interpreted [...] as *semiotic*, [...] as 'meaning'", in addition to being interpreted as "*material* [...], as 'doing'" (van Leeuwen 2008: 59). Returning to the examples in (1–8), it is far too clear that we are presented with offender concrete activities as involving the use of force and violence to bring about a material (unlawful) result or consequence, whether or not fatal, as much as bringing into operation an essentially dramatic image of malicious, dangerous and harmful offenders relegated to a position of no self-control at a particular point in time and space. Where the qualitative meaning of materialised force and violence and the stigmatising position it semioticises in socially interactive and instrumental transactions intertwine with the agents' attributes and behaviours, then the objectification of a personality and social identity category of the offenders will also come into play within the processes of news representation. Reliance on these processes means that unrepentant criminals come across as seeing victims or their property as tools for their goals regardless of the injury suffered by the victims or their material resources (property) taken. Thus, robbing at gunpoint in (1), using force or the threat of force to compel someone to submit to sexual intercourse in (7), or more dreadfully, killing a partner and pushing her body away on wheels in the headline *Man kills girlfriend, wheels body away in shopping cart: source* not only emphasise how motivated the offenders were in acting the ways they did (i.e. material ways of 'doing') and achieve desired goals (i.e. 'bringing about' consequences) in transactive processes, but also authentically construct their personal and social identities-as-criminal in the most immediate, situated contexts of offending behaviour. So, making these kinds of identity explicit in the texts through the content of the material activity as well as behaviour reconfigures activated social actors who eventually 'do' violence on the outside because they 'are' violent on the inside, and similarly accounts for the 'unconventional' violent typification of offenders for whom motivation was the outcome of a behaviouralised choice to seek out and exploit who/what the damaged goal was in culturally and nationally defined representations of crime.

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[3] Similarly, Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) refer to the representations of "inner" and "outer" experiences.

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With these identity meanings and materialised/semioticised processes being incorporated in the (offender's) "capacity for agentive action, for making things happen, [and] for controlling others" (Fairclough 2003: 150), the significance of activation becomes open and shut within the current texts dealing with social practice and the social conditions of discourse production (Fairclough 1995, 2001; Chuliaraki/Fairclough 1999), and inevitably supports interpersonal social harms that are bolstered by *unequal* power relations in hierarchical sites of *domination* and *subordination* (Fairclough 2001)[4]. The fact that such relations and resulting harms are visible there is because of the offences against persons or their property being largely 'private' in nature, so the discourse of 'violence-as-powerful' set up in the transactive syntax becomes an expression of inequality between competing social actors (offenders and victims) or their resources, and brings out differentiated opportunities for criminal conduct to be properly identified here. Again, this is illustrated by the crime of sexual assault in (7), where the powerful agent is in a position to exert a constraining influence over another person's life (hence exerting it within the domain of 'doing') in order to pursue hedonistic opportunities that increase pleasurable feelings by their own will, or rather similarly by the crime of robbery in (1), where the agent is in a position to exert influence (i.e. taking property from others by threat or force) by will but to pursue material opportunities. Recognising this colliding and exploitative context of linguistic practices within the ongoing texts naturally means that active (victimising) agents subordinate their personal interests and values to those of others (passive/victimised agents) in the existing different power relations as well as actions they carry out, so that the social action becomes inherently restrained and dishomogenised within relational boundaries. In this vein, then, the discourse of violence-as-powerful and the ways it maintains the agents' personal and social identity not only become a function of both behaviouralised choice and goal in situations deemed appropriate for their own identity, as noted, but also enact and reproduce explicit kinds of domination over others by influencing patterns of "victimisation" (Chermak 1995) at varies degrees of freedom, bringing out "perceptions of risk" (Jackson 2004) of offenders, and ultimately working against the building of "social cohesion" (Forrest/Kearns 2011). Considering that recontextualisation is a process which "depends on the interests, goals and values of the context into which the practice is recontextualised" (van Leeuwen/Wodak 1999: 96)[5], the discourse of identity and violence-as-powerful thus provides the framework in which exploitative and dominating social events brought to bear on those in the frame are recontextualised within the media texts and represented "via social practices or elements thereof" (van Leeuwen 2008: 5).

Quite apart from power differentials and disarrangement in ideological bias and recontextualising practices, it is not difficult to see how the discoursal nature of the headline texts above brackets other social relations in a circular argument, and aligns with the notion of discourse which constructs and defines individuals' social behaviour and practices (as well as role/identity) according to ideological "rules of formation

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[4] Also van Dijk (2008) on *power abuse*, *dominance* and *inequality*.

[5] Along similar lines, Fairclough (1995) and van Leeuwen (2008: 4–69).

[that] are conditions of existence" (Foucault 2004: 42), or according to the moral behaviour which is imbued with the expectation of doing what is right or wrong (Turner/Stets 2005). In line with this, and the fact that crime news headlines are informed by the ideology and interest of the media which produce them (van Dijk 1995; Knox 1999; Caldas-Coulthard 2003), foregrounding active agents in their action profiles was a useful strategy for the media to describe socially and morally reprehensible conducts taken off the beaten path by those agents, who distanced themselves from 'others' in the reputable world and conventionalised (non-violent) identities and behaviour, and to stand back from such a description in order to let the reader decide on those conducts.

Yet, positioning social actors and their actions took a change in direction across the sampled texts where different linguistic or rhetorical realisations were meant to achieve specific representational effects. This can be seen in the examples below where the syntactic structure of the headlines relies on the style features of "block" language or "headlinese" (Quirk *et al.* 1991; Crystal 2003) and characterises passive constructions made up of non-finite predicates without the auxiliary verb:

(10) Former police officer jailed for 18 years for raping two women (*Guardian*)

(11) Man arrested over assault on pregnant woman who lost baby (*Guardian*)

(12) Chris Halliwell found guilty of Becky Godden murder (*Guardian*)

(13) Grandmother and mother jailed over pitbull that killed baby (*Guardian*)

(14) Woman accused of killing husband in hospital bed (*New York Post*)

(15) Stepdad arrested for dumping baby in a trash bin (*New York Post*)

(16) Brooklyn man charged in attempted rape near Prospect Park (*New York Post*)

(17) Suspect arrested for swiping $3M in jewelry from Drake's tour bus (*New York Post*)

With this elliptical style at work, all of the headlines above realise the discursive feature of *subjection* through passive constructions where offenders, as the most commonly passivated social actors in the data, are talked about as being "affected by the material actions of others" (Fairclough 2003: 150) – those of the criminal justice authorities implicitly signified by the normal passive direction. The emphasis on this preferred pattern of passivated social actors who are now being subjected to those processes and actions makes it absolutely clear that they are blameworthy of their (censurable) misbehaviours, as a result of their personally righteous and social identity enacted out of the ordinary in the discourse of violence-as powerful, as seen before. Thus, we read about several different offenders being described through typical transitivity (material process) verbs to denote the kinds of

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actions to which they were subdued (*jailed*, *arrested*, *guilty*) for the crime they were held responsible for. Of course, presenting subjected social actors goes hand in hand with several abusive (material process) actions perpetrated against victimised actors as necessary to articulate offender blame (e.g. *for raping two women*) and combine as yet with circumstantials. Based on the way aspects of clauses are foregrounded in terms of *dominant clauses* (Richardson 2007), or *thematic/non-thematic prominence* (Halliday 2014: 89), highlighting the most important information (passivated/subjected social actors) shows the need for the text producers not to minimise or remove the blame from the offending actor altogether; in other words, authenticating this blame by driving the reader's attention to some participants (offenders) instead of others (victims) in the discourse elements. So, like victims who became the goals of activated offenders in the corresponding pattern seen above, offenders now become the goals of criminal justice actions in the grammatical criterion of passivation. There comes a point when such a grammatical (passivation) criterion served as a useful purpose for the media to recast both key social actors' roles in terms of the linguistic operations done in the texts, and to report important information to the public by laying out substantiated facts around the news-making value of the justice process.

The fact that the salient theme in this rubric of headlines was about ruthless offenders passively 'taking their punishment' by the criminal justice institutions (police and judiciary) in their watchdog function is not without the media seeking to present those institutions in as favourable a light as possible and to feed on the audiences' perception and reaction to the world of crime as a potentially protected place. By helping audiences to make meaning out of this content (investing in offender punishment), the media was thus able to develop its own discourse about the legal power that is now maintaining the contextual structures through disciplinary social control of the offenders, who must repair previously inflicted harms but inevitably adapt their criminal, autonomous capacity for manipulation and abuse to the new environment that has been created around them. With this institutional power and control dominating the texts, the social meaning of crime as a problem not only becomes altered in behaviouralised patterns and cultural values and norms, but also significantly allows the media discourse to have constructive effects upon recontextualising as well as representational processes of social change, which is about "how the new order is explained and justified" (Fairclough 2003: 88) by new forms of social actions and relationships (between institutions and offenders) that the transformational mechanisms of punitiveness tap into the texts and the discursive context and practice. That such a change restores social order by the social practice it recontextualises and focuses in text and discourse can also however be gleaned from the wider (social) principles of accountability, democracy, human rights, and social justice. Though remaining opaque to the lay reader, these principles allow the media's generally punitive stance to offenders to grapple with the question of how to encourage public reliance on the social control of crime via socially responsible institutions now coming to public notice, and how to normalise or reconstitute civil society at

the level of social relationships and community. Where the media engagement with the discourse of punitiveness is seen as part of their goals for "news value" (Burton 2015), "agenda setting" (Perse 2001) as well as "framing" (Entman 1993), the effect is that these goals are also brought in tandem with the interests and purposes of justice, and consequently enter into the wider "crux of organizational power" (Iedema/Wodak 1999: 3; Kwon *et al.* 2009) that is played out between several different institutional actors and made relevant for recontextualised social meanings, practices and discourses associated with crime and violence in the news.

We have seen from Table 3.2.1.1 that the media tended to overplay passivated offenders 'deserving blame' and 'being punished' in the examined data, and to some extent opted to underplay the realisation of passivated victims. Despite this, passivating victims was still useful to speak out, directly or indirectly, against offenders who invariably chose to use violence as a means to an end. Thus, we read:

> (18) Polish man attacked and beaten by gang of up to 20 teenagers in Leeds (*Guardian*)
>
> (19) Man found dying in Hyde Park was murdered, police believe (*Guardian*)
>
> (20) Two south-east London teenagers killed in knife attacks in same week (*Guardian*)
>
> (21) Man, 31, stabbed to death outside tube station in east London (*Guardian*)
>
> (22) Teen fatally shot near Upper Manhattan playground (*New York Post*)
>
> (23) NYPD detective slashed in face by madman on 'road to recovery' (*New York Post*)
>
> (24) Man critically injured in lower Manhattan stabbing (*New York Post*)
>
> (25) Teenage soccer star reportedly stabbed to death by rival fans (*New York Post*)

As we see, passivated victims are portrayed by *inclusion* in several different profiles as gloomy, hapless individuals who submit to the violence endured against them, with circumstantials however still playing their own part in the specification of the violent processes. Except for the three instances in (18, 23, 25), where mention is made of the actor doing the criminal action (e.g. *by gang of up to 20 teenagers*) through *agentialization* (van Leeuwen 2008: 66–68) and *inclusion*, the remainder of the headlines above exemplify the most common realisations of *de-agentialization* of actions (van Leeuwen 2008: 66–68) found in this rubric of texts. In the latter realisations, in fact, the actors (offenders) have been removed from the linguistic surface of the texts, but their scornfully perpetrated actions are still being presented there. Reliance on this linguistic realisation thus means that de-agentialising the offenders' actions in passive sentences turns into the discourse function of *exclusion* (van Leeuwen 2008: 28–32), with the act of excluding in itself being a case of *suppression* of the social actors (van Leeuwen 2008: 29).

Whenever offenders were agentialised or de-agentialised in the syntactic structure of these headlines, their representation had to do with the legitimate interest and purpose of the discourse producers to foreground, or give *thematic prominence* (Halliday 2014: 89) to the victims who remained the goals of the persisting hazard violent offenders posed in the circumstances, and to background other less important information about these offenders. The fine consequence of these representations is that agentialised or de-agentialised offenders were not really important, but their negative, violent action profiles running smoothly in the salient portion of text were of ultimate importance to cast the reader's eye on victims, showing the ideological influence the media sought to have on their readers in framing the news items around the objective news value of the dramatised crime story of victims.

With victims now coming to public notice within the practice and representation of crime reporting, there was, the reasoning goes, a justifiable attempt by the media to provide a social recognition for, and sensitive treatment to, victims in contemporary news crime coverage nationwide, and to similarly hold water under the long-standing, but still complex and varied, problem of "victimization" as an "issue of national concern" (Chermak 1995: 10). Of course, any human interest stories about victimisation revolve around violence, which is always a behaviouralised choice that deactivated (i.e. agentialised/de-agentialised) offenders make. No matter whether such stories were sensationalised in the cultural make-up of the UK or US community and society we are dealing with here, this choice inexorably turns to representations of vulnerable or intimidated victims and survivors of violent crime carrying in the weight of what happened to them, and captures again interpersonal conflicts and social distances between two opposites – the active specimen (victimiser) and the passive specimen (victims) embedded in hierarchical power relations. With this behaviouralised choice and social power relations being constantly in operation across the texts examined, the media focus here ends up being on the textual personae of victims who are 'critically' brought into a particular discourse which enacts and reproduces victimhood as founded on loss or destruction of livelihoods and discursively inscribed in socially and culturally uncohesive areas and communities. So, more like passivated victims in the offender activation pattern seen before, these victims have not been granted justice in the grammar and presentation of the headlines as to effect a sufficient change in society, and therefore may be considered as the unlucky ones still awaiting judicial restitution.

3.2.2. *Substitution*

In addition to role allocation, there are several other discursive features through which the social actors were represented in terms of *inclusion* and given public awareness along the criteria of newsworthiness. Table 3.2.2.1 shows the results of the overall frequencies of personalisation and impersonalisation of the social actors under the major category of substitution which allows transformation of the social practice to take place by semiotic elements (van Leeuwen 2008: 17, 35–47).

Table 3.2.2.1. Substitution (personalisation/impersonalisation)
of social actors within the corpus: occurrence frequency

Substitution					
			Offender	Victim	Total
Personalisation					213
Functionalisation	Occupation/role		14	30	44
Classification	Age		7	8	15
	Gender Tot: 54	Male	29	–	29
		Female	11	12	23
		Male and female	2	–	2
	Provenance		5	3	8
	Race		–	5	5
	Religion		9	–	9
	Sexual orientation		2	7	9
Relational identification	Kinship/personal relations		15	21	36
Formalisation	Surname only		–	2	2
Semiformalisation	Name and surname		8	5	13
Impersonalisation					18
Objectivation/somatisation			–	18	

A first glance at this Table shows that both offenders and victims were most exclusively personalised in the texts (213), albeit to various degrees, allowing the discourse producers to add new meanings with semiotic elements and communicate specific knowledge about those actors. More specifically, Table 3.2.2.1 shows that personalisation was mostly realised by *classification* (100) followed by *functionalisation* (44), *relational identification* (36) down to *semiformalisation* (13) and *formalisation* features (2), giving the reader a hint of the various degrees to which producers chose to represent both social actors as 'human beings'. Besides, Table 3.2.2.1 shows that impersonalisation (18) of victims alone took place by the objective form of *somatisation*, allowing them to be represented by reference to a part of their body (*head*) as with *Man fatally shot in the head in broad daylight*.

Space constraints here do not allow for a detailed analysis to be made of all those personalising features, but a glance at the Table above may at least provide a flavour of the types of substitution (semiotic) elements that took place within the texts. This brings us directly to the most common personalisation features used in the texts where the sites of inequality and domination amply discussed above are still relevant to instil and reinforce opportunities and potentialities, in terms of gender role and other aspects of social functioning affecting the social actors within the media discourse. For the current reader to be signposted in the current discussion, reference is made to the data in Table 3.2.2.1, where a unique identity of offenders and victims is mostly established by gender (*classification*), occupation or role (*functionalisation*), and personal or kinship relation to each other (*relational identification*).

The fact that the reference to a male offending role (exclusively by

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the singular noun 'man') was exalted more than other classification discursive features within the data (29 times) is a clear indication of the media wishing the social impact of crime to be assessed by a more dominant male 'gendering' of criminals who engaged in sexual or other types of offences nationwide, and to be understood in relation to everyday experiences and values held in prevailing Western discourse on gender and crime. By reinforcing certain forms of social control that are grounded in the demographic characteristic of offenders, the male activity equates with the material effects and representations of the media ideology in maintaining the reader sense of male offenders "acting socially" (Fairclough 2003: 9), and therefore becomes an aspect of the recontextualising principle at work within the sampled texts. The reference to a dominating male perpetrator of crime (rapist) in the headline *Naked man rapes woman on Brooklyn street* illustrates just one of those instances in which the feminine body of the rape victim comes across as the most naturally vulnerable, isolated and indeed powerless entity, as a result of the maintenance of male supremacy and power in the textual frame. Not only this, but the media imagery of sexual offending here is one which also rationalises a specific and unusual aspect of the perpetrator's personality and identity as well as experience, as noted before. Although the use of language in this headline may look like 'tabloid-style' journalism by becoming associated with the 'sex sells' theme that filters through many areas of society, the male activity in the non-sexual crime headline *Man arrested for stabbing woman with screwdriver* is not without the more straightforward, yet indeed visually shocking, expression of a feminine body coming across as the most easily harmed entity by the male dominance, and trending toward a violent power type of offence based on physical (non-intimate) abuse sustained by women.

With such headlines constructing the public issue of violence as a private problem of women, normalising a dominant male style approach to the victim naturally brings into focus several distinct gender definitions and discourses. Male dominating style can therefore be seen as part of a state of gender power relations (Walklate 2003: 128–129) that make violence against women visible as a gendered social issue nationwide, or can be a constituent part of the construction of the biological sex through the linguistic expressions of feminine/female and masculine/male that frame gender (Butler 2007: 35–36) in culturally established norms and systems of society (Thomsson 2003), or can even form an ingredient of the patriarchal traditions (Hamel *et al.* 2007) that claim biological males to have control over female bodies, thus fostering gender inequality in contemporary culture. Yet, this is by no means the end of the story. Going beyond this conceptual division between the assumedly stable categorisations of the gender identities, constructing in particular the 'man' of crime and the victimisation of 'woman' (female sexual body) in the headline above clearly brings into effect the notion of "hegemonic masculinity", as "the configuration of gender practice […]" and "legitimacy of patriarchy, which guarantees […] the dominant position of men and the subordination of women" (Connell 1995: 77), in much the same way as this construction provides the label for a "hegemonic, chauvinist, and totally heteronormative

masculinity" (Balirano 2015: 20) in gendered-status harm. By naturalising the dominance of men over women in the patterns of offences (sexual and violent crimes), hegemonic masculinity then gives a legitimating status to the media recontextualised discursive practices and representations of crime for their readers, marking the social position of male offenders in a complex dynamic of gender order and identity, and remaining the principal instrument and effect of gendered power relations and practices that are culturally and experientially relevant for the '(male)offender-(female)victim' dichotomy.

Despite the fact that readers were mostly drawn into sex or other types of crimes focusing on men as offenders, an awareness of females as offenders was also raised in the reader. The headline *Woman accused of killing husband in hospital bed*, for instance, clarifies the full nature and status of gendered harm perpetrated by a female offender against the victimised male, who is thus depicted as being an isolated, submissive and indeed powerless recipient within the transactive grammar of the text. Even though female perpetrated crimes were less popular in the ongoing data (11 times) than male-only crimes, the headline provides a compelling and empirically useful context in which unequal discourses and relations of power operate as a circular phenomenon that extends to a gendered approach to female offending in the ideology and representation of media discourse. With the apparent realisation of the opposite sex now being harmed by women, it stands to reason that unequal discourses and relations of power in the headline align with the "gender hierarchies [that] are also impacted by new configurations of women's identity and practice" (Connell/Messerschmidt 2005: 848). This not only shows that sex and gender have now been effaced from hegemonic masculinity by straying, as it were, toward a discourse of 'gender neutrality' in offending, but also provides adequate ground for an ideological and moral retreat from 'motherhood'.

Where gender is still focused upon in the offending patterns and victimisation of media representational practices, the reference to other related aspects of lifestyle and domination is equally sustained by sexuality, or rather, discourses about sexual identity. In this context, identifying victims by sexual orientation comes up in relatively few instances within the data (7 times) for audiences to think about. The headline *Gay man stabbed on subway in apparent hate crime* exemplifies the overt expression of a prejudice-motivated crime perpetrated against a gay man who was selected for assault on the simple basis of his group sexual identity, so that violence was inflicted to exercise power over him and destroy or degrade the autonomy of his same-sex orientation and identity within the "negative discourses surrounding homosexuality" (Baker 2005: 90). More important still, the representational and recontextualising (ideological) effect of the headline is one in which a continuous struggle concerning perhaps 'unconventional' (or 'diverse') sexuality and legitimised victimhood are played out within the official societal discourses of heterosexuality and masculinism, and therefore brought into public view. Compared to headlines with the clear subject of gay man in public focus, references to a male offending role in the '(male)offender-(male)victim' sameness were few and far between (2 times). The headline *Man jailed for drugging and raping men he met on*

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Instagram clarifies how a 'man', who is still lexically being identified by the masculine gender, engages in certain kinds of criminal behaviours (drugging and sexually assaulting) that overtly deny the socially and culturally grounded sexual victimisation of the opposite sex seen before. In other words, it clarifies how tricky talking about gender can be in this rubric of personalising features. By dismissing a bodily female victim as part of socially and culturally expected roles and patriarchal grand ideology, the gender reference to 'man' in the male-to-male perpetrated crime becomes significant in actualising the dominance of a potentially homosexual man (as defined here through the gender of his sexual choice that works for him in order to seek out the criminal goals in mind and achieve hedonistic opportunistic) whose violence was inflicted to destroy the autonomy of others in the same gender order. Although this kind of male-to-male offending and victimisation steers away from the highest level of hegemonic masculinity in the headline news (as does female offending to some extent) and waters down the notion of a "heteronormative" society in cultural (Lancaster 2003) and interpersonal practices (Blasius 2000), it clearly provides a framework in which the media sought to sway audience understanding of 'this and that' behavioural style and genderised issue affecting the complex and dynamic nature of crime and victimisation.

So, we are straight back to the nature of the social practices that are being ideologically represented and recontextualised by the media alongside the *social effects of texts* (Fairclough 2003: 8–9) that bring out the "dialectical relationship between language and other elements of the social" (Fairclough 2003: 126). With 'gendering' being all around us to make the core aspect of self a multifaceted issue, there was an attempt by the media not to separate out violence against men from violence against women (the well-known gender binary system) in the treatment of crime news, but rather to recognise, and raise the public's awareness of violence and harm as part of a broad variation in identities, expressions and behaviours of the social actors in everyday reality of the crime. In other words, going beyond the oppositional binaries of male/man vs. female/woman to improve over a range of gendered harms and identities constructed through society and entrenched in the dominant Western discourse on crime.

In addition to male/female offending from within (gender) identity, sexuality and power stereotyping, the qualitative data set also shows that crime victims and victimisation mostly wedged together with the complexity and heterogeneity of cultural and societal aspects associated with criminality. Thus, we read about the individual's (victim) ability to perform across their occupational and social functioning roles (*NYPD detective slashed in face by madman on 'road to recovery' / Divorce mediator busted for husband kidnapping plot*), their parenting roles or other family relationships (*Son allegedly beat parents to death at family home / Stepdad arrested for dumping baby in a trash bin*), the dissolution or disruption of their intimate relationships (*Man kills girlfriend, wheels body away in shopping cart: sources / Woman accused of killing husband in hospital bed*), or their gender status that made women suitable targets for male violence, as discussed above. Once again, these key identifiers of victims highlight

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the ways of objectifying and mobilising the contemporary discourses of criminal victimisation in several different abusive and submissive situations, as defined by the media in socially and ideologically constructed knowledge and recontextualised social practices, and most significantly expound the mechanisms by which they adversely affect the quality of life for victims in Western societies.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, I have attempted to identify how elements of a news story about crime are covered in mainstream newspaper headlines from British and American media websites, and how they impact upon the institutional routines and journalistic professional requirements that draw public attention to the newsworthy items and agenda setting of crime topics and events. Through combined approaches to critical discourse analysis, I have demonstrated how this operates within a range of text and discourse-level linguistic (socio-semantic) categories for inclusion/exclusion, role allocation and substitution, which provide knowledge of the media representations of social actors and social actions in their recontextualised discursive practices alongside the social identities, role and (power) relations conveyed by the ideological bias of media discourse.

Analysis of role allocation has shown that activated offenders come to headline news from a visibly powerful position which shapes their behaviouralised choice to seek out and take advantage of their goals in the more immediate, situated sense of a personal and social violent identity enacted by material processes and circumstantial elements of criminal activities. Activating the negative role of offenders in meaningful practices of both volition and goal within the text provides the necessary condition for departing from the most reputable 'others' and generalised, ordinary identities and instantiating the mechanisms of moral disengagement at a societal level, and has the upper hand over interactions with other social actors in the texts (crime victims and their property). Hence, a set of structured relations of unequal status and power arise out of the linguistic pattern for active vs. passive roles sustained by the social actors, who come across as inherently polar opposites and provide the discursive framework in which the media recontextualises and transforms the nature of social practices in ideologically-based representations of crime and violence. As a result of 'illegitimate' power taking place at the expense of others, the media does create audience sensitivities to socially and morally deviant images and identities of offenders who compromise the safety of victims and their property, and at the same time chooses the factual news value of the story to vilify violent, threatening offenders and to raise victims (awaiting vindication of their rights) to a higher individual, moral stance.

Yet, drawing the public attention to the news value of passivated offenders in higher frequencies of data was more about the optimistic effects of the 'legitimate' (authoritative) power wielded by criminal justice institutions in clearing up crime than it was about the evil, unjust ('illegitimate') effects of power held by activated offenders, who

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nonetheless 'got into the press' without the long arm of the law tapping on their shoulders. With passivated offenders being governed by such institutions, the media's recontextualising as well as representational issue of crime is reified into a social justice, remedial framework as necessary to secure the offender moral engagement at a societal level. At the same time, though, we are aware of the journalists' position as society informers, so it is more likely than not that these journalists will also hold punitive views and attitudes toward the issue of crime. In this vein, empowering the justice system to control the public discourse on crime and victimisation as social problems goes some way towards allowing victims of interpersonal harms to vindicate their rights whilst labouring for the repair of damage done to desirable aspects of social cohesion. In other words, facilitating social change at the individual and collective levels in the media representations.

Through processes of recontextualisation and representation, the media also effectively establishes a springboard from which substitution elements of social practice can authenticate and colour public understanding and response to the knowledge of the offenders and victims. With personalising features holding the lion's share under this rubric, data have shown that classification provides the major component of the web of semiotic transformations and mostly generates questions of individual identity related to gender of the social actors whose differences are still so blatant and unilateral as to account for ideology-based notions of hierarchy and power relations. Through a stereotyped male gendering, male offenders are still in positions of power over victims and are more frequently given a voice in the media than female offenders, showing that male perpetrated crimes are contingent upon different meanings of gender identity and inscribed upon the rationality of a hegemonic masculinity that maintains social roles over women and other gender identities in today's society. Despite this, the media is still committed to highly progressive gender expressions and lifestyles and continues to portray today's sexuality as a variable in gender identities of the social actors who behave in ways that extend the culturally and socially constructed binary system, therefore sensitising gender inclusivity in the discourse of crime. At the same time, however, the media allows other interacting social functioning features of crime and victimisation to be brought to the fore of everyday life and experiences. In all these representational instances, where the relationships between the media, public attitudes, and crime are inevitably intricate, analyses of press coverage of crime rates and language point to identical levels of negativity within the context of British and American cultures and societies at present. In these socio-cultural contexts, offenders, victims and property are not only anchored around easily available exemplars of crime, but also add to the emotional dimension of news coverage on crime and the way the salience of this emotional information inflates the public's perception (and media discourse) of the risks posed by criminality within those contexts.

As has become increasingly clear throughout this study, offender/victim identities that are pulled together in unequal relationships of power and built upon discourses as cultural resources increase the reader's understanding of the trajectories of media representation of

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crime-related consequences for individuals and society as a whole, and help to inform the reader about the legal power taking action in this form of public discourse. Yet, insisting on threat imagery of crime as a socially and legally constructed problem in the UK and US contexts is not so distant from the threat image of organised crime, whether nationally or globally. Terms such as 'criminal syndicate', 'organised crime', or 'organised crime group' abound in the research landscape, with 'organised criminals' being involved in their modes of organisation, conspirational activities and power structures that subordinate individuals and collectivities (Hobbs 2004; Hornsby/Hobbs 2007). Despite these diverse empirical phenomena going under different labels, both implicitly share certain features in that organised criminals cause harm to others in sites of inequalities of power just as individual (unorganised) offenders examined here do, and countermeasures against them both are put into place. As a result of social harm, unequal power and countermeasures being apportioned between the two styles of offending, both categories of crime however effect an illegal enterprise model which opens up the way for insidious forms of criminal dispositions and threat imageries to be socially and legally controlled within and across national boundaries.

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The Language of Fear: Cybercrime and 'the Borderless Realm of Cyberspace' in British News

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Abstract

This paper explores the media representations of cybercrime as a source of social danger and fear. Against the backdrop of Beck's concept of "risk society" and Cohen's "moral panic", it focuses on a dataset of articles on cybercrime from 2011 to 2016 published by two major British tabloids, the Daily Mirror *and* The Sun, *following a Critical Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis approach to journalism. It shows that the process of 'othering' in the representations of cybercrime follows, in the corpus identified, certain discourse strategies which are very similar to those employed in the representations of such 'outgroups' as immigrants or terrorists. The paper also considers the media narratives on cybercrime analysed as strategic configurations of nationalist discourse: by constantly associating certain countries with cybercrime and by prioritising 'national' security in opposition to a ubiquitously dangerous 'other', these representations of cybercrime ultimately seem to reinforce the sense of identity and belonging within the institutional and cultural borders of a nation.*

Keywords

cybercrime, moral panic, fear society, nationalism, discourse

1. Introduction

When media and politicians speak of criminality, they often associate criminal organisations to specific nations or ethnicities. The Mafia has been ritually associated with Italy, and specifically Sicily, and later used in association with organisations based in other countries (e.g. Russian and Chinese Mafias); 'drug cartels' evoke images of traffickers from Colombia or other Latin-American countries: indeed, gangs rampaging through American cities are often identified with Latino immigrants. It is evident that, in general terms, criminal organisations are seen as outgroups who disturb the social order and are often localised within discourse in terms of their national identity. Criminal organisations do cross national borders and have in most cases an international stature, as their activities are never limited within the boundaries of one single nation, but media still tend to 'contain' their representation in national terms.

On the surface, cybercrime does not fulfil most of the key assumptions related to 'standard' crime. It includes a variety of crimes sharing the

single feature of taking place not in a specific geographical space but on the Internet, and very often *because of* the internet. For this reason, cybercrime has always been portrayed as an international, or transnational, phenomenon: according to the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime), it is "an emerging form of transnational crime" which "takes place in the borderless realm of cyberspace" (UNODC 2017), thus making standard measures of crime repression or prevention obsolete. In highlighting its dangers to both individuals and society, media and politics continually stress its transnational and borderless elements, to the point that these have become part and parcel of the public's own perception of the issue.

This paper will discuss the paradoxical nature of the representations of cybercrime in British media which, in the face of its borderless and transnational nature, constantly locates cybercriminals and their victims as two poles of a dichotomous relationship, one end identifying with certain specific nations and the other always coinciding with Britain or the USA. In the first part of this paper, two key concepts, namely, those of risk society and moral panic, will be employed to locate the discourse on cybercrime in its sociological dimension. Cybercrime will also be considered in the context of a growing literature in criminology, and specifically with reference to the work of Majid Yar and Yvonne Jewkes, who have addressed the public perception of cybercrime and the reasons why it has become so prominent in the collective imaginary. The second part of the paper will place the media conceptualisation of cybercrime along similar interpretative frameworks and discourse strategies to those employed in the representation of traditional crimes. Finally, the third part will be devoted to the representation of cybercrime by British media, and specifically by two tabloids, *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*. The apparent identification of criminal gangs or groups with their country or area of origin seems to serve the purpose of projecting these groups as alien from the reader's homeland. The borderless and transnational nature of cybercrime serves the purpose of creating an 'other', viewed as a menace to 'our' identity and safety.

2. Cybercrime, risk society and moral panic

During the last three decades, cybercrime has progressively become a major focus of attention for journalists, politicians and criminologists. Wall argues that cybercrime "broadly describes the crimes that take place within [cyberspace] and the term has come to symbolize insecurity and risk online… cybercrimes […] are criminal or harmful activities that involve the acquisition or manipulation of information for gain" (Wall 2007: 10). Similarly, according to Yar, cybercrime is "a range of illicit activities whose 'common denominator' is the central role played by networks of ICT in their commission" (Yar 2013: 8). There is indeed a huge variety of cybercrimes, and great differences between credit card fraud and cyberbullying, or between state-sponsored cyberattacks on targets connected to national security (e.g. governments, banks, hospitals) and Nigerian scams, just to mention a

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few examples. Jewkes argues that cybercrime is "a word that encompasses both 'computer assisted' and 'computer oriented' crimes" (Jewkes 2015: 256). "Computer assisted" crimes are traditional crimes done through the internet, such as selling counterfeit goods, sharing copyright content, bullying, and harassing, while "computer oriented" crimes are native to (and the result of) the internet, such as computer viruses, such as malware and Trojan horses. However, the boundaries between the two sets of crimes are not always clear-cut.

While it is difficult to provide single definitions of cybercrime and to discuss it as a wholly coherent phenomenon, it is certainly true that the representations of these criminal activities by the media are gaining increasing attention among the public. Moreover, the media often exaggerate the dangers posed by cybercrime – which Wall even calls "largely an invention of the media" (Wall 2005: 10) – by portraying it as a threat which can strike anybody, and consequently raising widespread panic and fear. As research has shown, "public perceptions of risk are largely out of proportion to the actual chances of being a victim of any given form of criminal predation" (Yar 2010: 107): the sensationalised media coverage of cybercrime makes it appear as if it were an issue of public safety, and not a rare occurrence affecting very few individuals. This phenomenon is very close to Garland's notion of "crime complex", whereby the anxiety about the threat of crime has become so engrained in society that crime is expected to take place regardless of whether or not it actually does (Garland 2001). Typical examples of media scaremongering are the reports of cybercrimes allegedly coming from China, which is often indicated as the main source of cyber-terror and cyberwarfare, and by terrorist groups who, it is claimed, use the Internet for the organisation and planning of both cyber- and terrestrial attacks. While public perception of the dangers of cybercrime is thus disproportionate compared to the actual occurrence of online criminal events, the result is still "a subjective experience of the world as uncertain and threatening" (Yar 2010: 107). Indeed, new developments in media have always been perceived as a threat to the established social order and have been accompanied by generalised alarm and fear about their supposedly catastrophic effects. This is also due to the concern over unknown and unpredictable technological change, a fear which is not entirely new as noted by Yar, who mentions Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as the quintessential work illustrating the anxiety felt by many toward scientific discoveries (Yar 2010: 107).

The shocking terms with which cybercrime is discussed by the media follow certain discourse practices which, to a great extent, belong to the traditional media representations of crime (Carrabine 2008: 9): in particular, the portrayal of the dangers coming from a new wave of crime often leads to the formation of what Stanley Cohen called moral panics. Cohen's work, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*, was published in 1972 and analysed the media outrage caused by the clashes between Mods and Rockers in 1964. The violent confrontations between the two youth groups were represented in such terms that the whole nation seemed to be on the verge of social chaos, and this induced Cohen to draw some general principles concerning the

relationship between the media and the public. Cohen used the concept of moral panic mainly to describe the public reactions to minority or marginalised groups (the "folk devils"), who seemed to threaten social order and stability. It is the so-called deviancy amplification spiral, whereby a group of people commits crimes, then the story is picked up, exaggerated and distorted by the media through relating it to specific groups, who are therefore portrayed as outsiders; the public then asks for tough measures against these outgroups, and politicians duly comply (Cohen 2002 [1972]: 9, 226–227).

While nowadays moral panic is a concept largely discredited in sociology due to being deterministic and partial, it still has some leverage in criminology and can certainly be applied for an interpretation of the media and public reaction to some crimes, including, as suggested by Mayr and Machin, internet paedophilia, a type of crime against which popular mobilisation is very easy to achieve (Mayr/Machin 2012: 22). Indeed, certain crimes or disturbances become the subject of moral panic when they are perceived as being close to people's lives. This is certainly the case with cybercrime: computers, mobile phones and other networked instruments are very familiar objects in our homes, and many of our social and business activities take place over the internet. Thus, it is not surprising to see that news on cybercrime gives rise to serious personal concerns: scams, hacking, pornography or other crimes taking place on the internet are perceived as influencing everybody's experience, and for this reason can be easily turned into the subject of moral panics.

Moral panics are usually caused by the emergence of new social groups or other events represented as a threat to society and can be explained in the context of Ulrich Beck's concept of "risk society". A risk society is a society in which the threat of potential danger to individuals and groups overshadows matters regarding everyday lives. According to Beck's classic definition, a "risk society" is a socially constructed phenomenon, "a systematic way of dealing with hazards and insecurities induced and introduced by modernisation itself"(Beck 1986: 21). Giddens describes it as "a society increasingly preoccupied with the future (and also with safety), which generates the notion of risk" (Giddens/Pierson 1998: 209). The feelings of fear and risk are generated by the apparent destabilisation of traditional cultural and social norms caused by progress and the uncertainty of an unknown future. Specifically, the concept of "risk society" is something that comes together with technological innovations in modern society, or in "late modernity", as Beck (1986: 22) calls it. In this context, today's society is seen as intrinsically ambivalent because it is experienced as a mixture of strength and vulnerability, whereby the modernity of what surrounds us, including technology, provides opportunities for advancement and growth for everyone but is also rife with risks and dangers (Berman 1983: 1). Today's highly technological globalised media have also contributed to spreading the awareness of unprecedented cultural, ethnic and social diversity, with the effect of creating a generalised sense of insecurity, as old traditions and values are seemingly threatened by the menacing presence of 'others'. For this reason, the concept of "risk society" can be seen as strictly relevant

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to the media representation of cybercrime. Beck wrote his work just after the Chernobyl disaster, and he argued that the social fears revealed by that event are part of our own social and psychological fabric: the risks coming from the environment, finance, technology and terrorism are connected to the very idea of modernisation. Following this perspective, cybercrime, or the *fear* of cybercrime, can also be seen as an unwelcome effect of modernisation: technology has provided us with many opportunities as well as dangers; the internet, and specifically the development of Web 2.0 and social media, with their user-generated content, has created new social opportunities as well as new avenues for organised crime.

The online environment, and especially the extensive use of social media, as argued by Yar, has reshaped patterns of crime and victimisation and has also opened up "new forms of vulnerability to predation" in the context of what he calls "E-Crime 2.0" (Yar 2012: 207). This form of vulnerability comes from the nature itself of the new internet, and specifically of social media, where our private selves are publicly on display and are therefore potentially exposed to crime. The private sphere has become a source of anxiety, as domestic space and cyberspace have become intertwined (Jewkes 2015: 270), and news stories of frauds, hacking, cyberbullying and infringement of privacy caused by the use of personal data on the Internet have become routine news.

The media clamour associated with cybercrime is partly caused by the difficulty to pin down the environment of cybercrime or to turn it into actual physical locations. Cyberspace is a borderless environment and, in this sense, is also "anti-spatial" and a "de-territorialized phenomenon" (Yar 2013: 16), whereby offenders, victims and targets may be situated in different countries and continents, and criminal offences pose many problems to police agencies, both in legal and in practical terms. This is quite unlike the traditional criminological perspective, which sees crimes taking place within certain locations with distinctive social, cultural and material characteristics. However, responses to cybercrime follow certain discourse strategies which locate sources of danger in quite traditional terms.

3. The discourse of crime and cybercrime

The wealth of news on cybercrime and the fear it causes among the public raise the issue of how discourses of crime are created by the media and how they shape people's perception of the phenomenon. According to Critical Discourse Analysis, discourses are shaped by, as well as actively shaping, the social reality in which they are produced (Fairclough 1992, 2001; Wodak/Meyer 2001). The media are sites of social struggle: relations of power, hegemony and subordination are encoded in texts, whereby participants, processes and circumstances are represented and judged depending on the lexico-grammatical choices associated with them. Indeed, outgroups such as women, gays or religious minorities are described in a certain light because of the hegemony played by the establishment through the media (Richardson

2007: 35–37). These critical arguments can be applied not just to discourse analysis in terms of verbal language, but to visual materials as well: the ideological orientation of media also surfaces through the choices made in terms of videos, photos and other types of visual texts. Images undergo the same (ideological) process of choice, interpretation and modification as verbal language (Kress/van Leeuwen 2006: 14).

Discourses on crime have been analysed in terms of Critical Discourse Analysis and of the constitutive relationship between discourse structures and social structures. Indeed, the narratives and the language used to represent crime are key elements of the conceptualisation of society within discourse. Media highlight some kinds of crime and marginalise or totally neglect others and, when they choose to represent crimes, certain aspects are emphasised at the expense of others. Furthermore, certain crimes are associated with specific groups, which are constructed discursively as evil 'others' and as groups whose actions and moral values lie outside the accepted norms of society. As noticed by Fowler, the press has categorised disturbances of various kinds (football hooliganism, urban riots, industrial actions) under the same blanket perspective of "law and order", indexing all actors supposedly responsible for violence in lexically negative terms (Fowler 1991: 134–145). In their analysis of the presence of drugs and drug-related crime in the media, Mayr and Machin (2012) looked at the lexico-grammatical choices made in the representations of social actors and noticed that these choices were partial and ideologically biased, as journalists preferred to focus on the more violent and dangerous aspects of the phenomenon rather than analyse its social causes. The discourse on crime is therefore often determined by an agenda of social inclusion and exclusion.

The process of othering typical of the media representation of crime takes on an even stronger resonance when governments, crime agencies and media deal with foreign criminal organisations. The association of crime with some specific foreign nationality is very frequent: crime has often been represented by highlighting the 'otherness' of criminal organisations – e.g. the Italian Mafia, the Chinese Triads – thus associating these groups and their activities to a national identity other than 'ours'. In recent times, the anxiety generated by the rise of globalisation has been accompanied by the rise of transnational organised crime, whereby "transnational" is a notion which "refers to a new operational dimension of the 'traditional' organised crime or, more clearly, of the new and old organized crime which, acting in the new pathways of the globalized market, structure a network of alliances and interdependencies" (Longo 2010: 22). Globalisation has provided organised crime with new opportunities and has also generated a renewed sense of fear among the public, as crime is increasingly represented in discourse according to its transnational dimension, that is, both crossing national borders and threatening the domestic sphere. Indeed, the popular perception of the new media, such as the internet, which is the communicative foundation of the globalised world, has given fresh impetus to the feeling of living in a 'risk society', where fear of crime coincides with fear of other people.

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4. Analysis

The representation of cybercrime will here be analysed by looking at the articles published on the websites of two major British tabloid newspapers, *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror*. The dataset includes 73 articles on cybercrime from *The Sun*, published in the period between April and December 2016, and a smaller group of 28 articles published by the *Daily Mirror* in 2015 and 2016. *The Sun* publishes more articles on cybercrime than the *Daily Mirror* mainly because it is more interested in celebrities, who are often subjected to internet scams or exposed to hacking. The articles included in the dataset discuss the wide range of crimes traditionally associated with cybercrime (hacking, online frauds, access to personal data, cyberterrorism), targeting both private individuals and institutions such as banks, state departments or governments.

4.1. Lexical analysis: social actors

The analysis of the lexical strategies used to represent cybercriminals in the dataset reveals very important clues on the discourse strategies employed in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* in their representation of cybercrime. A "lexical map" (Fowler 1991) can be drawn on the basis of the choices made in the articles selected, a map which is determined by specific ideological purposes: cybercriminals are social actors who, in about 50% of the articles analysed here (52 out of 101), are lexically identified on the basis of their place of origin, which constitutes an important element in their representation as a threat to British institutions and citizens. About one-third of the articles published by both *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* (respectively 11 and 24) describe cybercrimes by highlighting their transnational nature or foreign origins – whether carried out by foreign individuals, criminal organisations or governments (see Table 4.1.1). In the rest of the dataset, only fourteen articles identify a hacker of British origins, and in the remaining fifty-two, cybercrime is represented as a generic threat whose origins are not specified or are left vague.

Table 4.1.1 Identification of cybercriminals by place
of origin in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun*

Daily Mirror		The Sun	
ISIS	5	International (undefined)	7
Eastern Europe	2	Russia	7
International (undefined)	1	ISIS	5
Russia	1	China	1
Russia/North Korea/China	1	Saudi Arabia	1
Ukraine/Russia/China	1	Russia/Eastern Europe	1
		Russia/ISIS	1
		Russia/North Korea/China	1
(Total International)	(11)	(Total International)	(24)
UK	9	UK	5
Total *Daily Mirror*	20	Total *The Sun*	29

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As can be noticed from Table 4.1.1, the most frequent identity in the articles analysed is associated with ISIS and Islamic terrorists. A *Daily Mirror* article entitled "ISIS 'hacks government databases and posts personal details of Foreign Office staff on Twitter'" (12 August 2015) discusses information theft by a group called "Islamic State Hacking Division", while a "Muslim hacker" is blamed for hacking porn sites containing the private details of many British viewers, thus highlighting the possible infringement of their privacy (*The Sun*, "SLING YER HOOK", 27 June 2016). In other articles, a number of different terms are used to discuss the perpetrators of the crimes. For example, in "ISIS RANDOM KILL LIST" (*The Sun*, 23 June 2016), British private citizens are threatened by "Terror cyber criminals", "Pro-Isis hackers", "Jihadi Hacking group" and "Isis hacking group" (*The Sun*, "ISIS RANDOM KILL LIST", 23 June 2016). The use of several similar lexical items to define cyberterrorists is an example of overwording, that is, the abundance of near-synonyms to define the same person or concept. Overwording, or overlexicalization (Fowler 1991: 85; Machin/Mayr 2012: 37), "shows preoccupation with some aspect of reality – which may indicate it is a focus of ideological struggle" (Fairclough 2001: 96). This is certainly the case with ISIS, whose hacking activities in cyberspace are presented in terms of a war scenario parallel to one on a field of war.

Other frequent places of origin of cybercriminals include Russia, China and North Korea. In all such cases, hacking activities are often attributed to "a state-sponsored actor" (*The Sun*, "Hack Attack", 23 September 2016), and the connection with hacking activities officially supported by state institutions is made explicit:

> *Russia* has been linked to several recent US hacks. *North Korea* are also understood to have a *large state-sponsored hacking unit* ("HAVE YOU BEEN HIT?" *The Sun*, 23 September 2016)[1].

> Spies and copycat outfits in *Russia, North Korea and China* ("UNION HACK", *The Sun*, 4 September 2016).

The national branding of hackers is made in one specific headline:

> RUSSIA'S HACKERS HIT BRITAIN

and in the article itself, the authors of cyberattacks on government websites and the BBC are identified as "Putin's cyber warriors the Fancy Bears"(*The Sun*, 25 September 2016). Russia's hostility to Britain repeatedly emerges in the articles on cybercrime: "Russian hackers" are held responsible for criminal actions several times ("CYBER-WAR FEARS", *The Sun*, 13 July 2016; "TESTING TIMES", *The Sun*, 19 September 2016; "LIFE AND DEATH HACKS", *The Sun*, 11 November 2016), and the FBI is after "alleged Russian cybercriminal Evgeniy Bogachev" ("$3m bounty for hacking boss", *Daily Mirror*, 25 February 2015). It is simply "Russians" who are held responsible for having stolen medical data of several famous sportswomen ("GOLDEN GIRLS HACKED", *The Sun*, 13 September 2016), while Russia is often mentioned as the home of criminal organisations, as in "Russia's criminal underworld" ("Cyber security alert", *The Sun*, 4 May 2016).

[1] Emphasis in all quotations is mine.

The national identity of cybercriminals is often stated through quotations from experts in crime repression agencies. Quotations from experts or elite sources are a typical strategy of news discourse, as their evaluation of the facts lends credibility to the media claim about the origin and nature of the criminal events reported (van Dijk 1988: 87).

> WADA [World Anti-Doping Agency] said the hackers were a "Russian cyber espionage group" called Fancy Bears ("GOLDEN GIRLS HACKED", *The Sun*, 13 September 2016).

> [Joseph] Demarest (head of the FBI's cyber crime division) said the FBI learned within a month of Sony Pictures' first report of a large-scale cyberattack that *North Korea was behind it* ("$3m bounty for hacking boss", *Daily Mirror*, 25 February 2015).

On other occasions, the nationality of the actors involved is left vague or uncertain, as their shifting and ubiquitous presence makes it impossible to pinpoint their identity. Attacks on British infrastructure can come from "Shadowy groups of state-sponsored cyber-soldiers" ("CYBER-WAR FEARS", *The Sun*, 13 July 2016), while certain computer scams have been carried out by unspecific "foreign criminals" ("DOT CONNED", *The Sun*, 22 July 2016). According to an article dedicated to tax scam hackers,

> [*The criminals*] could be from Eastern Europe, but *they* could live next door to you. *These sort of criminals are based everywhere* ("Cruel tax scam hackers", *Daily Mirror*, 19 January 2015).

while the writer of an article on cyberbullying warns that

> What we're possibly looking at is *some international element*, of [cyberbullying victim] Ronan [Hughes] having been targeted from abroad purely to extort and blackmail him for money ("Ronan Hughes", *Daily Mirror*, 9 June 2015).

In the descriptions of cybercrime, the emphasis is very often placed on the transnational and foreign nature of cybercriminals. Overwording is again frequent, with the result that the morally deviant nature of cybercriminals is highlighted and associated with their foreign identity, as when they are identified as "Crooks and weirdos around the world" ("THE SPY IN YOUR POCKET" *The Sun*, 22 September 2016). In a *Sun* article called "UNION HACK", in which Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's proposals on cybersecurity are attacked, the dangers to the UK are said to come from "Foreign spooks", "Cyber-criminals and foreign intelligence agencies" and "spies and copycat outfits in Russia, North Korea and China" (*The Sun*, 4 September 2016).

All the cases discussed above emphasise the unpredictable nature of cybercriminals, who can strike anyone, anywhere, anytime. Cybercriminals, whether they have a vague or undetermined foreign identity or a well-defined nationality, are described as those who can pose dangers to individuals and institutions alike. Most cybercriminals come from ISIS, Russia, China, North Korea, that is, organisations or nations which have a hostile relationship with Great Britain, while others come from international, and often undetermined, locations. The

representation of cybercrime is therefore located in a discourse context which is mainly related to foreign politics as well as to the popular perception of the nation's enemies, developing an 'us vs. them' dichotomy which distances cybercriminals from the safety of 'home' values.

4.2. Lexical analysis: actions

The lexis used to describe the actions of cybercriminals derives from two main lexical fields: theft and war. Computer hacking is characterised with terms usually associated with theft, thus describing virtual data of any kind as if they were concrete objects and private property stolen by thieves:

> Jeremy Corbyn's digital democracy manifesto would let foreign spooks *rob* the UK, it was claimed last night. [Security expert Neil Doyle] said it would also be easier for hackers to inspect software and hardware to identify vulnerabilities and *steal* sensitive data. ("UNION HACK", *The Sun*, 4 September 2016).

> A company spokesman said: "A recent investigation by Yahoo has confirmed that a copy of certain user account information *was stolen* from the company's network in late 2014 by what it believes is a state-sponsored actor". ("HAVE YOU BEEN HIT?" *The Sun*, 23 September 2016).

> HACKERS *have stolen* information including un-encrypted security questions from about 500 million users from Yahoo. The breach, which occurred in late 2014, was confirmed by the company, which revealed huge amounts of personal information had been *stolen* in the "state-sponsored attack". The statement said: "*Online intrusions* and *thefts* by state-sponsored actors have become increasingly common across the technology industry". ("HACK ATTACK", *The Sun*, 22 September 2016).

> Venus Williams and Simone Biles have medical data *nicked* by Russians in *attack* on doping agency *targeting* US women ("GOLDEN GIRLS HACKED", *The Sun*, 13 September 2016).

> Over 160 million *stolen passwords* were from 2012 and were put on sale to the general public just last month. ("FACEBOOK FACEPALM", *The Sun*, 6 June 2016).

> A hacker group that claims it *steals* information on behalf of ISIS "*Islamic State Hacking Division*". ("ISIS 'hacks government databases'", *Daily Mirror*, 12 August 2015).

Beside terms belonging to the field of real-life theft, hacking is often also associated with terms which mimic real war. Several headlines are quite in this sense, often referring to the activities of nations on the web as actions of war:

> CYBER COLD WAR (*The Sun*, 25 October 2016).

> CYBER STRIKE HAVOC (*The Sun*, 20 October 2016).

> CYBER-WAR FEARS (*The Sun*, 13 July 2016).

> HACK ATTACK (*The Sun*, 22 and 23 September 2016).

> US PREPARES CYBER WEAPONS (*The Sun*, 5 November 2016).

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In their description of the hostile activities on the web carried out by hostile nation-states or groups, the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* make use of a lexical map made of nouns and verbs directly connected to war, such as "target", "attack", "defence", "strike", "hit", "warfare":

> *The attacks*, which have been taking place since 2013, are STILL ongoing. The Carbanak criminal gang – believed to be an international group spanning Ukraine, Russia and China – uses a range of *digital weapons* to execute *the attacks* involving the theft of up to $10 million at a time ("Cyber bank robbers steal $1 BILLION over two years", *Daily Mirror*, 16 February 2015).

> Russian hackers *attack* power firm using *digital weapons* which could CRIPPLE Western economies. [...] Russian hackers are *probing Western defences* and *have already attacked* one power company, security researchers have warned. A team from SentinelOne said "state sponsored hackers" have *targeted* a European firm using *sophisticated digital warfare techniques* ("CYBER-WAR FEARS", *The Sun*, 13 July 2016).

> Mr Gummer added: "Our new strategy, underpinned by £1.9 billion of support over five years and excellent partnerships with industry and academia, will allow us to take even greater steps to *defend* ourselves in cyberspace and to *strike back* when we are *attacked*" ("HEALTHCARE HACK THREAT", *The Sun*, 1 November 2016).

Large-scale hacking against institutions or individuals is often described with the language of warfare, in which victims are "targeted" ("Testing Times", *The Sun*, 19 September 2016):

> Most *attacks* against European citizens and organisations originate from outside the EU, explains the report. As more and more people around the world come online, Europe will only be *subjected to more attacks* from previously under connected areas of the world ("Cybercrime becoming the easy option for traditional gangs", *Daily Mirror*, 29 September 2014).

> COMPUTER hackers *are targeting* life-saving medical equipment in NHS hospitals in a bid to extract huge ransoms, experts warn ("LIFE AND DEATH HACKS", *The Sun*, 11 November 2016)

The reports on cybercrime dedicated to the involvement of ISIS in digital warfare are also presented in terms which resonate with actual "real life" situations, whereby cyberterrorists "attacked" sex websites as part of their "religiously-inspired war against digital vice" ("SLING YER HOOK", *The Sun*, 27 June 2016). Again, lexical elements connected to war are used to represent the activities of ISIS on the web:

> [...] Britain is now embroiled in digital guerrilla warfare. (Insider source): "*ISIS uses digital guerrilla warfare tactics online which cannot be fought* in the normal manner," he said. ("ISIS Encyclopedia of Terror", *Daily Mirror*, 27 April 2015)

In an article called "'We need to be one step ahead of ISIS in the digital arms race'", it is argued that:

> Cybercrime and online terrorism is a real and growing threat to the UK. [Terrorist groups like ISIS] *use the internet to plan and carry out*

their attacks by communicating anonymously and securely with their agents around the world (*Daily Mirror*, 18 November 2015).

The use of lexis generally related to real war bestows a sense of physical, material realism to crimes committed in the digital, non-material environment of cyberspace. The vocabulary of warfare and defence, according to which cybercriminals have to be fought and defeated in a war, is typical of the media discourses on (real life) crime and contributes to the process of social othering (Garland 2001). This process of othering deriving from the identification of cybercrime with war is emphasised by the identification of cybercriminals with foreign elements, which links up two discourses. Thus, the articles on cybercrime follow the linguistic standards traditionally used in tabloid papers: the actions of cybercriminals and the 'otherness' projected by their national identity are cast in a language that "emphasises the extremes of human experience" (Conboy 2006: 16) and fits the tabloids' Manichean news values and worldview.

4.3. Visual representations of cybercriminals

The articles on cybercrime published by the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* are always supplemented by photos, sometimes portraying the victims of cybercrime, especially when they are celebrities, but often depicting the cybercriminals themselves. However, most articles do not show photos of actual cybercriminals, but stock pictures taken from image banks. These photos do not represent real people but are abstract images, which are used very often when news events involving cybercrime are discussed. There is a relatively limited number of such stock pictures, and they are published over and over again in articles on cybercrime. Three of the images which appear most frequently are "Blue Computer Hacker", by Bill Hinton (Figure 4.3.1), "Cybercrime hacker silhouette", by Bill Hinton (Figure 4.3.2), and "A computer hacker", by Patrick Strattner (Figure 4.3.3). These images are taken from Getty Images, the world's most important image bank, and portray faceless, menacing hoodies busy typing on a laptop. The three photos appear several times in the dataset used in this paper, with different captions. "Blue Computer Hacker" is featured in ten articles, with ten different captions, mostly emphasising generically the dangers coming from hackers or viruses of various kinds, as in the following:

> Apple has stepped in to make sure users' phones are protected from the malware ("APPLE EMERGENCY", *The Sun*, 26 August 2016).

> A[rtificial] I[ntelligence] is also being used to tackle cyber crime and foil terrorists' online recruitment drives ("MINORITY CRIME REPORTS", *The Sun*, 12 September 2016).

> Hackers are always looking for new ways to scam innocent people ("APPLE SCAM ALERT", *The Sun*, 24 August 2016).

> Hackers are having a field day with these easy passwords, and you could be one of the internet users putting yourself at risk ("HACKERS DELIGHT", *The Sun*, 5 November 2016).

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"A computer hacker" appears in five articles from the data set with the following captions:

> OAP targets: Cyber conmen are now targeting thousands of pensioners ("Cyber conmen target pensioners after TalkTalk hacking scandal", *Daily Mirror*, 1 November 2015).

> Cybercrime: Online security is a growing threat ("'We need to be one step ahead'", *Daily Mirror*, 18 November 2015).

> Shrouded with guilt: The unhappy hacker wants his victims' forgiveness ("Hacker APOLOGISES", *Daily Mirror*, 3 June 2015).

> Customers lost £113million in the UK's biggest tech con ("MPS' FRAUD PLEA", *The Sun*, 22 September 2016).

> Hackers could soon be causing car crashes ("SUPERHIGHWAY TO HELL", *The Sun*, 24 October 2016).

"Cybercrime hacker silhouette" has captions in five of the six articles in which it appears:

> Back in 2013, a teenage hacker took down the Home Office website from his bedroom ("'It was surprisingly easy'", *Daily Mirror*, 13 November 2015).

Figure 4.3.1. Bill Hinton,
"Blue Computer Hacker"

Figure 4.3.2. Bill Hinton,
"Cybercrime hacker silhouette"

Figure 4.3.3. Patrick Strattner,
"A computer hacker"

Cyber-crime and fraud was revealed as almost six million offences ("DOT CONNED", *The Sun*, 22 July 2016).

As one in five Brits falls victim to cyber attacks, here's how to stay safe online ("KEEP SAFE ONLINE", *The Sun*, 10 October 2016).

Hackers were able to take advantage of a series of Chinese electronics ("CYBER-POCALYPSE", *The Sun*, 24 October 2016).

Experts warn that retailers will be targeted by online criminals in the run-up to Christmas ("AVOID GETTING CONNED", *The Sun*, 17 November 2016).

These images have no direct link with the protagonists and the events of the stories told in the articles other than being related to a generic idea of cybercrime. They are generic and display an artificial background, with no detail or indication of the person's identity. Their presence suggests a rituality in reporting news on cybercrime: in them, participants are presented as "typical examples" (Kress/van Leeuwen 2006: 161), that is, generic participants shown without any detail of space or time and only endowed with their essential and supposedly archetypal qualities (the cybercriminal is apparently a young male and uses a computer, his identity and location unknown as his face is hidden by a mask, and stands against a dark background). Such photographs as those taken from an image bank do not record reality or a specific moment or person but are the expression of a symbolic system. Abstract, decontextualised images of cybercriminals are a form of branding, that is, they work as a symbolic system offering the meanings and values associated with a product, in this case the cybercriminal, rather than the product itself (Machin 2004: 319). The photos of cybercriminals leased from Getty Images simplify an otherwise complex reality and play up to the anxiety felt by the public at large as part of a 'culture of fear'. In so doing, they also play an important ideological role, as they represent a reality offered as ready-made by a media agency rather than reality itself.

The Getty images of cybercriminals published in *The Sun* and the *Daily Mirror* are accompanied by captions, forming a cross-modal thematic relation, whereby an integrated, joint verbal-visual thematic pattern occurs across two semiotic systems. The relationship between the images and the verbal captions can be conceived in terms of what Liu and O'Halloran call "intersemiotic additive relations" (Liu/O'Halloran 2009: 379–380): cohesion between verbal and visual codes occurs because one semiotic component adds related but new information to the other. These ready-made images are so limited in number that meaning across different articles is standardised: in each article, a meaning-making trajectory is largely predefined by one semantic unit (the visual image), which is anchored to the story by the other unit (the written caption). In so doing, different news items tend to be interpreted according to certain constant, pre-set models provided by the image. Thus, these images constrain interpretation, pointing the reader-viewer to a pre-established image of the 'cybercriminal'. This is evidence of the formation and communication of discourse whereby, according to Machin, social realities are represented by using certain 'scripts', which are elaborated by processes of deletion, addition, substitution and evaluation, and these scripts can be communicated through different semiotic resources (Machin 2013: 352–353). Specifically, the Getty images of cybercriminals act as substitutes of the real criminals, simplifying, in the scripts of the discourse elaborated by the two tabloids, a more complex set of concrete individuals and events, which the written captions only hint at. The evaluation of the cybercriminal is done according to visual strategies which resonate with elements which are external to cybercrime itself: the image of a cybercriminal is linked to the image of the hoodie, a familiar, menacing presence of the youth underworld. The discourse of cybercrime, therefore, includes visual topics which clearly recall different discourses. This (multimodal)

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intertextual and interdiscursive strategy is constitutive of the discourse of cybercrime, as the lexical features used to represent cybercrime also evoke the discourses of traditional crime and terrorism.

5. Conclusions: cybercrime, media and the nation

The analysis of the lexical and visual choices in the representation of cybercrime in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* reveals that cybercrime is portrayed with the exaggerated tones typical of those crimes causing moral panic in a risk society. There are no overall noticeable differences between the two tabloids in their representation of cybercrime, even if they represent two opposite political standpoints – *The Sun*, the largest British tabloid in terms of diffusion, usually has a populist, conservative stance, while the *Daily Mirror* has traditionally supported Labour. Both tabloids exaggerate the real dangers of cybercrime, creating a "fear of crime" which amplifies the sense of vulnerability among the public and, as a consequence, generates public demands for tougher policies against those people who threaten the social order (Yar 2010). In this sense, as a source of risk, cybercrime is represented through a process of 'othering': as happens for other kinds of criminals, cybercriminals are represented as an 'other' who is threatening our domestic and social space. In all representations of individuals or groups, the source of impure and transgressive behaviour is identified in "an Other who is positioned as posing a threat (and thus a risk) to the integrity of self" (Lupton 1999: 40). In the representation of cybercrime, this process is amplified by the fact that cybercrime is represented mainly as arising from abroad, and specifically from nations considered hostile to Britain's national interests or cultural and moral standards: Russia, China, North Korea and Isis are definitely not among the most reassuring nations (or organisations, in the case of Isis) to Britain in terms of both foreign policy and public opinion. The continuous emphasis on the fact that cybercriminals almost always come from these countries is, to paraphrase von Clausewitz's aphorism, the continuation of war by other means.

The representation of cybercrime in the *Daily Mirror* and *The Sun* as a danger coming from abroad reflects the typical ideology of tabloids which, more than any other media, are the standard-bearers of national pride and inclusion (Mayr/Machin 2012: 3–4). The fact that in the dataset analysed in this paper only a very small number of British cybercriminals are identified only emphasises this sense of distance between, on the one hand, the national community, its cohesion and supposedly stable values, and on the other, the 'outsiders' threatening them. Tabloids have always been instrumental in building up this dichotomy, and they do so by providing their readers with a 'normative' language which aims at reinforcing their sense of (national) community (Conboy 2006: 94–95). The emphasis on the transnational nature of cybercrime and the threats generating from foreign individuals and nations is largely patterned along the same discourse strategies which are traditionally used by news media, and especially tabloids, in their leading narrative: the narrative of the nation. Media have always addressed their audience by constructing

a (supposedly) shared sense of national identity and by producing news narratives according to a nation's political and cultural norms and interests. News is therefore largely based on the framing of a national point of view, whereby "the overall dominant framework of the nation provides a template for the ways in which insiders and outsiders to this master narrative are depicted" (Conboy 2007: 151). Within this narrative, the identification of the 'other' from the nation plays a key role: cybercrime is perceived as a threat to national interests and society as a whole on the basis of a sense of distance and difference between one's own country and the 'other'.

Representations of cybercrime are drawing new borders in an environment where borders do not exist: cybercriminals and their victims are constructed as two sets of identities built on two opposite sides of a faultline separating 'us' from 'them'. It is along these 'imagined' borders, in the sense given by Benedict Anderson (1991), that the sense of national identity is constructed in terms of difference from the 'others', and where, as a consequence, otherness is constructed (Lamont/Molnár 2002). In discussing cybercrime, media discourses employ discourse strategies which are not very different from those used in the exclusionary narratives of populism and nationalism, which are also based on fear (Wodak 2015: 2–7). Media representations of cybercrime address the dangers of borderless, transnational crimes by constructing narratives of fear and anxiety. The process of the alienisation of cybercriminals both mirrors and intensifies the fears produced by a globalised, borderless world, as nations manage processes of identity and otherness by raising fears and dangers and identifying 'enemies'.

The set of narratives constructed around cybercrime provides the national community with an instrument to distance itself from the 'alien', with the result that the sense of inner solidarity within the national community itself is strengthened. In this sense, the discourse of cybercrime, which acts in a 'borderless realm', evokes the differences between nations and, in so doing, raises the collective consciousness of the existence of borders. Narratives of foreign cybercriminals seem to have the function of 'imagining' the borders of national communities and of experiencing them in very tangible terms, as obscure foreign cybercriminals threaten the domestic and social spheres. Indeed, no one is more 'other' than foreigners themselves, and the identity of cybercriminals as foreigners raises imaginative as well as institutional borders, contributing to the narratives of exclusion of the 'other'. In the face of perceived threats to the nation and uncertainty in terms of identity, as argued by Bauman (1995), society responds by erecting boundaries and by expelling foreigners – physically, figuratively, or both.

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