

Emotions in specialised genres: Power, manipulation and persuasion from the *Affect Spectrum Theory*

Las emociones en los géneros textuales especializados: Poder, manipulación y persuasión desde la AST, o *Teoría del Espectro Afectivo*

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The emotional life is not simply a part or aspect of human life. It is not, as we so often think, subordinate or subsidiary to the mind. It is the core and essence of human life. The intellect arises out of it, is rooted in it, draws its nourishment and sustenance from it, and it is the subordinate partner in the human economy.

(John Macmurray 1962/1992:42-43)

Abstract

This paper seeks to examine professional genres from a novel perspective linking social constructivism and basic emotion theory, making the assumption that emotions are intrinsically social, and that social phenomena (such as professional communities) have an emotional nature (TenHouten, 2021). Thus, we aim to consider the constructive role of emotions in the creation and development of specialised texts (occasionally focusing specifically on the legal field), and, in turn, on the professional commu-

Resumen

Este trabajo pretende examinar los géneros profesionales desde una perspectiva novedosa que vincula el constructivismo social y la teoría básica de la emoción, partiendo del supuesto de que las emociones son intrínsecamente de carácter social, y de que los fenómenos sociales (como son las comunidades profesionales) tienen una naturaleza emocional (TenHouten, 2021). Así, pretendemos considerar el papel constructivo de las emociones en la creación y el desarrollo de los textos especializados (en algunos casos, centrándonos específicamente en el ámbito ju-

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nities from which these texts emerge. Our work builds on the socio-evolutionary theory of emotions, or *affect-spectrum theory* (AST), which is developed in dissonance with other Cartesian and rational-choice models that set reason and emotion in opposition and assert that society only progresses to the extent that the former can control, suppress and triumph over the latter. Specifically, it is our underlying hypothesis that specialised and professional communication is articulated around emotions –and power, manipulation and persuasion, among other negative or positive emotional expressions. Thus, textual mechanisms or genres, as communicative instruments of specialised communities reveal the tensions that occur centripetally or centrifugally, i.e., inwards or outwards, from that community. They do so from an agonistic relational model, in a centripetal tension that promotes agency through coercion and/or manipulation, or from a hedonistic relational model, in a centrifugal tension where interpersonal relationships of persuasion and dissemination are established in order to engage in communal relationships.

KEYWORDS: AST, professional genres, persuasion, manipulation, power, specialised communities

rídico) y, a su vez, en las comunidades profesionales de las que surgen estos textos. Nuestro trabajo se basa en la teoría socio-evolutiva de las emociones, o teoría del espectro afectivo (en inglés, AST o *affect-spectrum theory*), que se desarrolla en disonancia con otros modelos cartesianos y de elección racional que contraponen razón y emoción y afirman que la sociedad sólo progresa en la medida en que la primera puede controlar, suprimir y triunfar sobre la segunda. En concreto, nuestra hipótesis de fondo es que la comunicación especializada y profesional se articula en torno a las emociones -y al poder, la manipulación y la persuasión, entre otras expresiones emocionales negativas o positivas-. Así, los mecanismos o géneros textuales, como instrumentos comunicativos de las comunidades especializadas, revelan las tensiones que se producen de forma centrípeta o centrífuga, es decir, hacia dentro o hacia fuera de esa comunidad. Para ello, lo hacen desde un modelo relacional agonista, desplegando la autonomía en una dinámica centrípeta a través de la coerción y/o la manipulación), o desde un modelo relacional hedonista, empleando la interpersonalidad en una dinámica centrífuga que les permita entablar relaciones comunitarias a través de la persuasión y la divulgación.

PALABRAS CLAVE: AST, géneros profesionales, persuasión, manipulación, poder, comunidades especializadas.

1. INTRODUCTION

This research addresses professional genre studies from a novel perspective that links social constructivism and basic emotion theory and assumes that emotions are intrinsically social, and that social phenomena (such as professional communities) have an emotional nature (TenHouten 2021). Our aim will therefore be to analyse the constructive role of emotions in the creation and development of specialised texts (occasionally focusing specifically on the legal field), and, in turn, on the professional communities from which these texts emerge. Our work builds on the socio-evolutionary theory of emotions, or *affect-spectrum theory* (AST), which is developed in dissonance with other Cartesian and rational-choice models that set reason and emotion in opposition and assert that society only progresses to the extent that the former can control, suppress and triumph over the latter. Sociologists, anthropologists and neuroscientists have, however, in recent decades argued, to the contrary, that emotions are not opposed to reason, since they actually play a key role in formulating logical goals, rational decision-making and the pursuit of human

achievements (Damasio 1994, 2001 and 2018; Barbalet 1998, for example). In fact, both reason and emotion are foundations of social relations, processes and institutions. Damasio in particular (1994, 2020) talks about how emotions (such as anger, anticipation, surprise, fear or disappointment) can contribute to making decisions swiftly and effectively, especially when it comes to situations of risk or uncertainty where the cognitive part of the brain would need to spend a lot of time and energy to make a rational decision. In these cases, it is ‘somatic markers’ or ‘gut-feelings’ (Damasio *et al.* 1991) –a mixture of experiences (the memory of other emotions and feelings) and swift cognitive processes– which trigger these rapid responses. Thus, our study deviates from the reductionist utilitarianism of rational choice theory (Persky 1995), according to which we make decisions solely on the basis of reasoning and cost-benefit calculations (Barbalet 1998), our tenet being that reasoning, motivation and emotions interact in the context of social relations (TenHouten 2014: 2). In the Humanities and the Social Sciences, interest in language and emotion is part of the so-called ‘emotional turn’, similar to the ‘linguistic turn’ that took place in the 1970s. If the linguistic turn claims that language helps to constitute reality, the emotional, or affective, turn implies that emotions play an equally crucial role in human experience (Lemmings and Brooks, 2014). In linguistics, emotions and language have been addressed, for example, by cognitive linguistics (Schwarz-Friesel 2015; Foolen 2012 and 2016), semiotics (Lüdtke, 2012), and applied linguistics (Benítez-Castro & Hidalgo-Tenorio 2019 and 2021; Alba-Juez 2018; Alba-Juez & Mackenzie 2019), mainly within the area of appraisal theory¹. This article sets out to explore the theory of specialised genres from a different, but complementary, perspective, that of AST and human evolution.

Our underlying premise is that specialised and professional communication – i.e., the communicative activity that professional communities pursue in their role as “discursive communities” (Swales, 1990)– builds upon emotions, being power, manipulation and persuasion expressions of such emotions. This is because emotions are intrinsically social, and their main adaptive function takes place through interpersonal communication (Miller *et al.* 2004), which can only occur through language. The transmission of meanings, ideological frameworks and constructs of social and professional institutions is based upon the use of language as the main means of communication and is “intrinsically related to human cognitive processes” (Salmi-Tolonen 2011: 1). As such, the genres of a specialised community are powerful tools which organize the internal communication among its members and make it possible –and effective– for them to engage with other specialised communities (Bawarshi & Reiff 2010); additionally, professional genres contain the knowledge intrinsic to a given discipline, reflecting its ideologies, power structures and social patterns (Gunnarsson, Linell & Nordberg 1997: 3). But again, emotions are central to organise the individual’s experience of reality, sense of self and competitive and cooperative orientations towards others, and, hence, in the creation of human cultural enterprises (TenHouten 2014; Damasio 2018), which is why they play a crucial role in the way in which disciplinary communities interact.

¹ Appraisal theory constitutes the reformulation of Halliday’s systemic functional grammar by the so-called Sydney School (White 2003; Martin & White 2005; Martin & Rose 2007), and is concerned with the linguistic resources for by which a texts/speakers come to express, negotiate and naturalize particular inter-subjective (attitudinal) and ultimately ideological positions.

2. AFFECT SPECTRUM THEORY (AST)

Emotions have a deep evolutionary history. Plutchik (1979, 1980) was the first to develop Darwin's theory (1872) and identified eight primary emotions, corresponding to the four existential problems all humans face, and their consequent adaptive reaction. *Identity* has to do with who we are and is associated with the emotions of acceptance and rejection; hierarchy deals with the way in which we organize ourselves and is associated with the emotions of anger and fear; *territoriality* establishes our physical boundaries (our property and that of others) and is associated with the emotions of anticipation and surprise. Finally, *temporality*, the fact that we are born, we reproduce ourselves and we die, is associated with joy/happiness and sadness. Later, MacLean (1990) improved this taxonomy, adding a sociological dimension that had hitherto been absent, since Plutchik considered emotions as merely adaptive stimuli in the face of the four vital problems. To this end, MacLean first established the concept of the 'triune brain', according to which the human brain is a compendium of three brains in one, the result of evolutionary processes whereby three neural systems have been created that regulate behavioural and physiological adaptation. Of these three evolutionary parts, the 'reptilian brain' is the most primitive form, and is responsible for maintaining the functions necessary for immediate survival; the 'limbic', or mammalian, brain is the system that enables mammals to achieve higher levels of motivation, emotional response and social engagement; and, the 'neocortex' is the centre of rationality in our nervous system, allowing for systematic and logical thinking, which exists independently of the emotions and behaviour programmed by our genetics. In addition, MacLean provided Plutchik's fourfold model with a communicative dimension, based on four neurobiological reactions. In MacLean's theory, identity was called 'signature' and was attributed a social dimension. 'Social identity'—key to the study of communication in professional communities—is the dimension of individuals that arises from their membership of, and identification with, the social categories and groups to which they belong. What Plutchik had called 'hierarchy' was replaced by MacLean's 'aggression/submission', which is very pertinent to the present study in terms of explaining the monogloss orientation of certain genres; that is, the exercise of power through language. Underlying hierarchy is the desire for dominance, an impossible-to-eradicate aspect of social relations, deeply rooted in the reptilian and ancestral human mind—in contrast to social identity, which belongs to the later-developing limbic brain. Finally, 'temporality' (the 'courtship' dimension for MacLean) and 'territoriality' refer, respectively, to the human lifespan, the need for the perpetuation of the species, family and groups, and to natural behaviour oriented towards the control, possession, use and defence of space which is necessary for survival.

All these neurobiological, sociological and anthropological findings were subsequently developed in Alan Fiske's theory of the four relational models (1991). Fiske claimed that humans have addressed the four existential problems discussed by Plutchik and MacLean with four fundamental adaptive relationships that have developed through gradual processes of evolution: 'communal-sharing', 'authority-ranking', 'equality-matching' and 'market-pricing'. Each model expresses a great plurality of social actions, beliefs or judgements in different cultures which are not the consequence of the experience of an individual; rather, they are universally-shared mental models (Pinker 2002). Prior to Fiske, but in the same vein, ethologist Chance (1988, in TenHouten 2014: 42), had distinguished between two forms of social interaction, or modes of thought, in his studies on primate and human

behaviour: formal or ‘agonic’ society, which is characterised by threat, power and anxiety, and informal or ‘hedonic’ society, which is categorised as hosting egalitarian and community-shared forms of relationships. Agonic society relates to Fiske’s authority-ranking and market-pricing relations; the former is reptilian and primitive, where high-status individuals exercise leadership over social prerogatives, choices and preferences and can exercise coercive power through force, threat or ideological persuasion. In contrast, market-pricing relationships are not instinctive, but result from a later stage of brain development. In this same line, rational choice (Tversky & Kahneman 1981, for example) and related theories postulate that in market-based exchange relationships individuals strive to maximise their material interest when participating in the social world. On the other hand, hedonic society is based on equality-matching relationships (reciprocity and balanced social relations) and community-based ones (equivalence, unity, collective identification without differentiation).

Individuals and social groups thus experience a double tension: community versus market, hierarchy versus equality, as opposing tendencies either towards egocentricity –which TenHouten (2014: 38) calls ‘agency’, or self-protection and material self-interest–altruism, or non-contractual cooperation. The aim of this study is to find out how these tensions influence the interactions within and between different discourse communities and how they are expressed and constructed through the different genres.

3. EMOTION AND SPECIALISED GENRES

The most recent trends in the study of emotion and genre give both concepts a constructivist perspective, as artifacts that generate social change. On the one hand, Barbalet (1998) writes about the double dimension of emotion: both the experiential and contextual elements of emotion are necessary to conceptualise it as a principal factor for social change. In the same vein as Barbalet, Foucault (1989), Laclau (2004) and Koschut (2018, 2020) all argue that it is through language that emotions contribute significantly to the discursive construction of social identities and power relations. Without disregarding their more physical and individual aspect, emotions are constructed at the social level and can change it, thus shaping power and status relations. Accordingly, certain discourses can manifest themselves as dominant (those of the ‘self’ or ‘sameness’) or marginal (those of ‘others’ or ‘otherness’) depending on whether they are identified with members of the established group or refer to those outside it (Koschut 2018: 510). By recognising the central role of emotions in the completion of basic cognitive processes such as learning and decision-making (Zlatev 2012: 3), we acknowledge that the natural function of language is the conceptualisation and expression of emotion (Foolen 2012: 350). Likewise, language is inextricably linked to institutions as discursive communities: it is the fibre from which such communities are made (Fairclough & Wodack 1997), and is deployed to create and impose their own discourses (Simpson & Mayr 2010) or their own genres as an expression of those discourses. In contrast to earlier and ‘flatter’ approaches to genre theory, rhetorical linguistics (Bawarshi & Reiff 2010) and Critical Genre Analysis (Bhatia, 2004, 2008, 2012), view genres as powerful, ideologically active and historically changing elements that shape texts, meanings and social actions. The multidimensional and complex understanding of genre as a dynamic concept, marked by stability and change–functioning as a form of specialised cognition, linked to ideology, power and social actions and relations, and recurrently contributing to community creation

and development—is, in my view, entirely complementary to Fiske’s and Chance’s relational models in the previous section. In line with this AST socio-evolutionary perspective, opposing human tendencies coexist in professional discourse communities: the impetus to obtain a dominant social position and interpersonal distance, creating unequal and hierarchical social relations—reflected through communicative opacity and epistemological asymmetries—versus the desire of professional groups to achieve the acceptance of others in the exercise of ideological persuasion and knowledge dissemination (Engberg, Luttermann, Cacchiani & Preite, 2018). In other words, corporativism as self-identity in professions— which requires the ability to successfully negotiate the social world— and the need to establish interpersonal relations with the rest of society, coexist side by side in institutions and occupational groups. It is both a centripetal and a centrifugal force which reflects the reality of social interactions: maintaining one’s social status and socio-economic resources and creating and sustaining positive social connections. In fact, both critical linguistics (Fowler, Hodge, Kress & Trew 1979; Kress & Hodge 1979) and critical discourse analysis (Fairclough 1989, 2014; van Dijk 2008), understand expert communities as constituting a dominant bloc that treats social hierarchies as natural and produces, maintains, and replicates underlying asymmetrical power relations (Fox & Fox 2004: 17) to achieve domination and subordinate individuals (Mumby & Clair 1997; van Dijk 1993). Opacity, distance and other rhetorical devices are, then, deployed by communities in order to impose their unquestioned authority and exercise manipulation and negative persuasion. But, at the same time, institutions are dialogical social realities where meanings must be negotiated between issuers and receivers (Fairclough & Wodack 1997; Mumby & Clair 1997); hence, specialised communities need, additionally, to work towards consensus, which is achieved through positive persuasion and the dissemination of their epistemology through genres that reveal the expert knowledge and inner workings of professional communities.

Finally, in this paper we will focus equally upon both agonistic and hedonic communication channels—authority, negative persuasion and manipulation—as well as positive persuasion and dissemination. This tension between the need to impose the discursive supremacy of professional communities and the need to establish interpersonal relations is what we will discuss below as, respectively, monogloss or heterogloss discourse (Bakhtin 1981) as expressions of agonistic and hedonic modes of relationship, respectively.

4. AGONIC SOCIETY: THE MONOGLOSS DISCOURSE OF AUTHORITY AND MANIPULATION

The difference between monogloss and heterogloss discourse—related to Foucault’s (1994) intertextuality and recent studies on interpersonality in systemic-functional linguistics, especially the notion of ‘engagement’ in appraisal theory (White 2003; Martin & White 2005; Martin & Rose 2007)— is the result of Bakhtin’s (1981) translinguistic theory, which gives speakers the possibility of creating multiple ways of inserting themselves into discourse and constructing different perspectives on it. While taking for granted that all discourse involves dialogism (since there is no discourse that is isolated from the multiplicity of past or future texts), Bakhtin differentiates between the position of the distant speaker who ignores the points of view of the other speakers (‘monoglossia’) and those utterances which give participation to other voices (‘heteroglossia’). From our perspective, ‘monogloss discourse’ is proto-

typical of agonistic modes of relationship whereby, in order to maintain their social dominance and status in the hierarchy, specialised communities control rhetorical resources in a monopolistic manner. Partington and Taylor indeed affirm (2018: 50) that persuasion through the acceptance of authority is the most common form of persuasion. Thus, disciplines make use of the Aristotelian *logos*, the supremacy of reason and logic, to assert themselves. For example, Weber's 'formal rationality' (1921/1978: 75-76, in TenHouten 2014: 101), in line with rational choice theories, postulates that calculability and impersonality are geared towards the achievement of social success. Law (Orts 2015, 2016), but also other disciplines such as medicine (Carter-Thomas and Rowley-Jollivet 2017; Garzone 2017) or hard sciences (Llácer & Ballesteros 2012) make use of impersonal, opaque texts that exhibit inequality or asymmetric relationships between issuers and receivers of texts. Asymmetries may be ideological (the alienation of others), material (greater government resources or wealth) or geopolitical. But in discursive communities, asymmetry entails epistemic asymmetry: a monopoly over what Engberg *et al.* call domain-internal knowledge (2018: xi). Epistemic asymmetry occurs in highly specialised, expert-to-expert texts, favouring discursive distance between issuer and receiver in order to maintain gnoseological dominance (Orts 2015, 2016). Thus, dominant groups work to remain dominant by disseminating the beliefs, practices and genres of the discipline (their expertise) through language. Furthermore, and paradoxically, as TenHouten argues (1999: 266), force, threat or ideological persuasion may also be directed "pastorally", to make lower-ranking individuals perceive that those in power are responsible for providing protection, help and support. In this section of the paper we make a series of considerations about the two mechanisms of monoglossia in professions, authority and manipulation, as negative persuasion involving the violation of epistemic trust.

4.1. Monogloss discourse resources: authority in legal texts

We have chosen legal discourse to illustrate the presence of authority and power in specialised genres. According to the literature, legal discourse is quite impersonal, features of interpersonality hardly being present at all (e.g. Bhatia, 1982; Hiltunen, 1990; Tiersma 1999, in Breeze *et al.*, 2014, 13). According to Salmi-Tolonen (2014, 64); legal discourse has, in fact, three main characteristics: it is always normative in nature; always functional and/or admonitory (linked to some part of the legal order); and always professional or institutional (a specific kind of discourse). In an analysis of international legal texts in English (Orts, 2016), I used genre theory to show that the lexical-discursive complexity of some legal texts is inextricably linked to the desire of domination. But it is the concept of power distance (hereafter, PD) from social anthropology (Hofstede, 1983, 1985, in Orts, 2016, 4) which might be most helpful in studying symmetry differences between participants in legal discourse, and uncovering the ways in which power and imposition are concealed in these genres. The concept of PD is very much in line with the Hallidayan definition of 'tenor' as the role of relations between participants in terms of status, affect and contact, and constitutes a decisive factor in the formality of texts. Tenor influences interpersonal choices in the language system and, therefore, affects the structures and strategies chosen to activate verbal formality and complexity. Similarly, the PD index can be used to establish the presence or absence of a hierarchical distance between issuers and recipients of legal texts. As Table 1 shows, in order to isolate patterns of pragmatic-linguistic realisation of directives and commissives in international normative and contractual

texts, I adapted the concept of PD to Trosborg's taxonomy (1995, in Orts 2016: 5-7), on a scale ranging from speech acts of obligation, prohibition and permission, to commissive speech acts, such as those constituting contractual promises.

| STRATEGY | MEANING | FULFILMENT |
|---|--|--|
| OBLIGATION | HIGHEST POWER DISTANCE (MAXIMUM IMPOSITION, BALD ON RECORD) | MUST/SHALL+VERB BE+TO, HAVE TO <i>LEXICAL VERBS:</i> OBLIGATE, OBLIGED, ORDER, DEMAND |
| PROHIBITION | HIGHEST POWER DISTANCE (MAXIMUM IMPOSITION, BALD ON RECORD) | MUST/SHALL+NEGATIVE (NOT, NOTHING, NO) |
| OBLIGATION WITH REDRESS | MEDIUM POWER DISTANCE (FACE REDRESS, OFF RECORD) | SHALL/MUST +PASSIVE BE+TO, HAVE TO+PASSIVE SHOULD |
| PROHIBITION WITH REDRESS | MEDIUM POWER DISTANCE (FACE REDRESS, OFF RECORD) | SHALL+NEGATIVE+PASSIVE CAN/MAY/WILL+NEGATIVE (NOT, NOTHING, NO) |
| ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS, PERMISSION | LOW POWER DISTANCE (ASSIGNMENT OF RIGHTS) | CAN, MAY <i>LEXICAL VERBS:</i> GRANT, GIVE, ALLOW |
| PROMISES, VOLITION | NEUTRAL POWER DISTANCE (SYMMETRICAL RELATIONSHIP) | WILL <i>LEXICAL VERBS:</i> AGREE, UNDERTAKE, ACCEPT, WARRANT, PROMISE, ACKNOWLEDGE |

Table 1. Power distance strategies in directives and commissives (Orts, 2016).

Directives –those appearing in laws or regulations– are face-threatening acts (FTAs) with maximum illocutionary force (Leech 1983, in Orts 2016: 4). Such imposition can be conveyed ‘bald-on-record’, i.e. directly, clearly, unequivocally and concisely, or can be conveyed ‘off-record’, i.e. minimising imposition (Brown & Levinson, 1987, in Orts 2016: 4), thus reinforcing or softening the existing asymmetry between legislature and citizens. In this study I was able to observe that there is a scalarity between maximum prescription and greater PD on the one hand, and the granting of rights and less PD on the other, depending on the function of the text and the tenor between the participants: the issuers of the norm, and the users or receivers of normative texts (i.e., citizens), or as contracting parties in a commercial agreement. However, there are ‘hybrid’, reciprocal, normative texts, such as the rules of international arbitration courts, where users have the discretion to adhere to them or not in order to solve their disputes. Additionally, and paradoxically, there are also commissive texts, coming from very powerful institutions such as the Lloyd's Institute of Underwriters, which impose onerous, authoritative contractual clauses on their users. All of this is an illustration of the fact that the language of imposition appears irregularly in some legal genres, often constituting, however, a powerful mechanism of negative persuasion.

4.2. Manipulation as a monogloss resource in media genres

Manipulation is here regarded as monogloss discourse insofar as it arbitrarily directs the opinion and action of receivers. Manipulation, as Cialdini points out (2001: 73), is the

ability to produce a specific type of automatic and thoughtless compliance on the part of individuals; the willingness to say “yes” without thinking first. In my view, this is an implicit, not explicit, exercise of power that deploys emotions in a mercenary and advantageous way. In Aristotelian terms, the kind of reaction that the expert community should provoke is the confidence that something is morally irreproachable and clearly trustworthy (*ethos*), that it is based on logic (*logos*) and that it can even be a source of satisfaction (*pathos*). Manipulation, then, becomes an implicit violation of these three principles; it turns into an exercise of power that deploys emotions in a mercenary and advantageous way, based upon the distortion of truth and the violation of trust, as one of the somatic markers or gut-feelings that aid decision-making (Damasio *et al.* 1991; Damasio 1994, 2018).

Alba-Juez and Mackenzie (2019) consider lying and manipulation as a type of unreliable persuasion elicited by a series of emotions that call into question reliability itself. In their study of fake news they discuss relevant concepts such as ‘bullshit’ (Frankfurt 2005, in Alba-Juez & Mackenzie 1999: 20), ‘post-truth’ (Harari 2018, in Alba-Juez & Mackenzie 1999: 20), ‘flashbulb memories’ (highly salient and extremely emotional memories, subjectively permanent in time and highly manipulable, according to Brown & Kulik 1977, in Alba-Juez & Mackenzie 1999: 29), ‘misinformation’ (the dissemination of false information) and ‘disinformation’, or fabrications (false information within real contexts, according to Stahl 2010, in Alba-Juez & Mackenzie 1999: 25). The concept of post-truth is particularly interesting as it underlies the consensus generated by hierarchies of power to establish certain ideas as true with the validation of the media (Sztanjnsrajber 2017 in Murolo 2019). The use of manipulation is carried out through external and internal textual devices: interdiscursive appropriation of other discourses and voices known to be truthful is a very important intertextual device, often exploited to establish the credibility of news and journalistic reports. Bhatia and Bhatia (2017), for example, study sensationalism in the news broadcast in the wake of the Panama Papers leaks as a type of infotainment, i.e., a hybrid genre where reliable information is mixed with the gimmickry intended for entertainment and spectacle with the ultimate aim of discrediting certain public figures (Bhatia and Bhatia 2017: 33). On the other hand, they also identify a series of internal textual resources such as the use of modals, pronouns or extraposition –which are used to modulate epistemic statements and generate an air of consensus– as well as questions with persuasive or coercive force. In questions, it is the sender who controls the information, often answering on behalf of the reader, and they become textual cues to drive discourse in the direction intended by the sender. In writing, they often reveal the author’s power over the textual material and over the reader, evidencing a clear asymmetry between discourse participants and potentially constituting image-threatening acts, especially when they are hostile (Carter-Thomas & Rowley-Jollivet 2017; Partington & Taylor 2018).

Verbal manipulation may also be regarded as “persuasion by appeal to emotions” (Partington & Taylor 2018: 40), often resulting from subtle lexical choices. Whyte (2003 in Partington & Taylor 2018: 29) coined the term ‘hooray word’ –for those words with a socially positive connotation which almost automatically arouse a feeling of approval in the audience–, and the term ‘boo word’ (for those which have a negative connotation and automatically arouse a feeling of disapproval in the listener) to illustrate such choices. Bocanegra-Valle (2017), for example, studies the annual speeches of the Secretary-General of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), and has identified four main topics that

recur in his argumentation: ‘globalisation’, ‘leadership’, ‘hegemony’ and ‘legitimation’. Globalisation emerges as a generative topic that enhances the institution’s interests and makes its leadership evident in the eyes of multiple audiences. The IMO deploys it to boost its public image as an accountable actor on the world stage.

Likewise, there are manipulative exercises, such as *ad hominem* criticism (discrediting by attacking the person, rather than their arguments or ideology), ‘euphemism’ (the neutralisation of negative concepts in order to normalise them), ‘dysphemism’ (exaggerated negative criticism) and ‘binarism’ or ‘false dichotomy’ (used for argumentative polarisation) (Partington & Taylor 2018: 81-83). Hidalgo-Tenorio and Sánchez-García (2017) carry out an interesting study on a series of discursive strategies in political language, including the above, and other conversational fallacies, such as *ad nauseam* (basing the truth of an argument on its repetition) or *ad ignorantiam* (defending a position by arguing that there are no arguments to the contrary), among others. All these studies are also included in the second type of negative persuasion, i.e. manipulation as a corruption of epistemic trust.

5. HEDONIC SOCIETY: PERSUASION, EMOTION, DISCLOSURE

The centrifugal force involved in establishing a dialogue between sender and receiver, which we have called ‘heteroglossia’, requires us to return to the beginning of our work and talk about AST. As already noted, while hierarchy and territorial dominance are agonistic instincts of our reptilian heritage, Chance’s hedonic mode of thought involves the later evolution of our limbic brain to regulate emotions (1988, in TenHouten 1999: 259-262). At this point, it is essential to talk about the concept of ‘homeostasis’ (Damasio 1994, in Grijalba-Uche & Echarte 2015: 89; Damasio 2018). Homeostasis is the eternal quest of human beings to achieve balance, adaptive response and well-being to ensure social survival. Professional communities, such as human social organisations, seek this balance in the continuous tension between their own interests (their internal hierarchies, and their competitiveness with other communities), and –contrarily– the need for solidarity and reciprocity with such communities. In order to positively relate to the rest of society, and to achieve homeostasis, discursive communities have to legitimise their discourses and their genres, which implies, on the one hand, the deployment of strategies of positive verbal persuasion by the issuers of these genres and discourses, and on the other, their dissemination. And in this transition towards their social immersion, the credibility of experts on the part of non-experts is necessary. Trust (the *tharsos* of Nicomachean rhetoric) is a ‘meta-emotion’ (Belli & Broncano 2017), a complex set of somatic markers that mix primary emotions such as joy and fear with conscious rational processes. Of these processes, the main one is the voluntary suspension of disbelief, which can only be obtained through the image of a coherent discursive community and the will of communicative cooperation of the lay members of society. Here we will briefly discuss trust in the context of popularising texts, where the layperson puts himself or herself in the hands of the expert to gain access to specialised knowledge (Engberg *et al.* 2018; Engberg 2020).

5.1. Persuasion and dissemination in specialised discourse

As was mentioned above, persuasion (which we have branded as ‘positive’, in order to distinguish it from negative persuasion, or manipulation), as well as dissemination, are the

main means for professional communities to create synergy and gain credibility in the social context. Studies on persuasive language follow two fundamental approaches in applied linguistics: metadiscourse² and evaluation³, consciously leaving metaphor aside, which would require a study of its own. Thus, on the one hand, metadiscourse, the construction of *ethos* or textual *personas*, has been extensively studied mainly in relation to journalistic and academic texts (Hyland & Tse 2004; Abdollahzadeh, 2007; Bednarek 2010; Dafouz & Nuñez 2010; González-Rodríguez 2011, in Orts 2015, among others), in fields such as tourism (Suau 2006; Suau & Labarta 2006, in Gallego-Hernández 2017: 224) and economics (Orts 2016; Gallego-Hernández 2017). Textual and interpersonal markers of metadiscourse are the set of strategies that reveal the existence of a dialogical framework between writers and readers of texts (Vande Kopple 1985; Crismore, Markkanen & Steffensen, 1993; Dahl 2004; Hyland 2005; Dafouz 2008, in Orts, 2015). It is the means by which the propositional content of utterances is made coherent, intelligible and persuasive to the receivers of texts (Hyland 2005: 39, in Orts 2015). The paradigm has been habitually neglected in fields such as law, due to the monogloss character of the texts in this field, which are allegedly written to be interpreted, rather than read and understood. However, the presence of ideational markers (those that indicate semantic and syntactic relations between sections of discourse) is essential in trying to discern patterns of difficulty or clarity in such texts or, rather, the ways in which legislators wish to organise information in a coherent and convincing way for the audience (Orts 2016, 2017).

On the other hand, persuasion is intrinsically related to evaluation (Partington & Taylor (2018: 18): we persuade by trying to convince our recipients of the goodness of our opinions over others. Evaluative language allows the author to express an attitude on an issue from both an objective and a subjective stance, where the choice of language is tactical. In fact, appraisal theory (White 2003; Martin & White 2005; Martin & Rose 2007) is one of the most powerful ways to analyse emotional language. It connects directly to the notion of heteroglossia, studying utterances that convey a positive or negative evaluation, or that can be interpreted as an invitation for the reader to provide his or her own assessment. The theory divides evaluative resources into three broad semantic domains: attitude, engagement, and gradation. Engagement places more emphasis than metadiscourse on heteroglossia by positioning the voice of the sender in a dialogue with the multiple voices that are inevitably inserted into his or her utterances, accepting them, refuting them, taking them up or distancing himself or herself from them. Despite this, and despite the fact that there are interesting studies on the heterogloss character of engagement, for example, in the legal field (Garofalo 2017, 2020), it is the domain of attitude (subdivided into affect –feelings and emotional reactions–, judgement –moral and ethical assessment– and appreciation –evaluation of objects, constructs, texts, products) which is the most connected to the realm of emotion. However, Alba-Juez (2018: 228) argues that the appraisal framework is an incomplete paradigm with which to assess emotion in discourse as there are features such as contextualisation and e-implicatures that are much more subtle than net words and their potential emotional semanticity (Alba-

2 Metadiscourse deals with the writer's/speaker's ability to make statements about the external, experiential world coherent, intelligible and persuasive to a particular audience. The most influential strand is that developed by Hyland (2018), which emphasises the interactive character of communication where writers formulate a connected discourse or express their attitude towards either what or who is addressed.

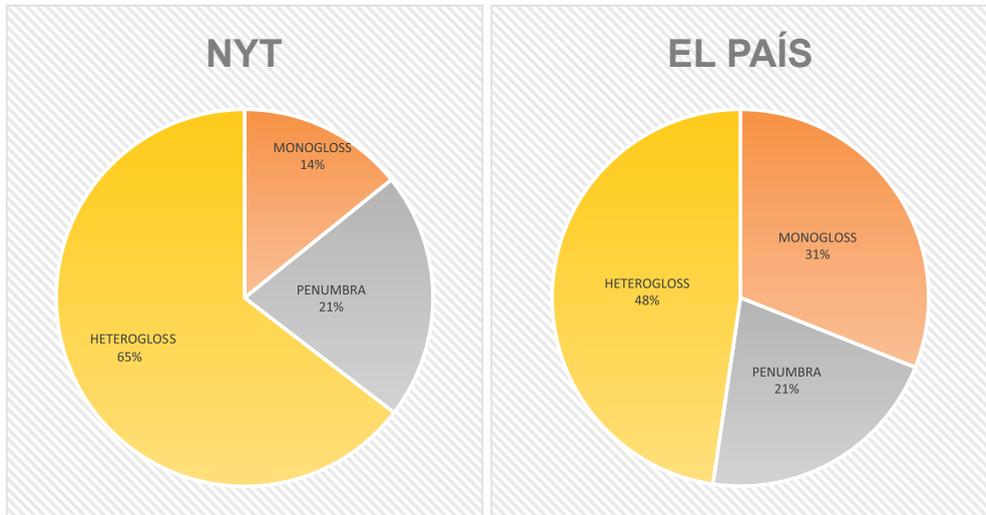
3 Evaluation (Thompson & Alba-Juez 2014) is a strand of study which is related to the expression of a speaker's attitudes and feelings about their own propositions.

Juez 2018: 247). In my view, appraisal theory is not a paradigm that always offers explicit solutions, since discerning implicit patterns is complex when trying to locate the presence of emotion and attitude indicators. However, even with all its provisos, it remains a valid –if arduous– taxonomy for measuring the expression of emotion in texts.

5.2. Persuasion and dissemination in legal texts

To test how evaluation is carried out in the legal field, I undertook a series of contrastive works within the framework of appraisal theory between two languages, English and Spanish, (Orts, 2018a and 2018b) on a corpus of 40 legal opinion columns, extracted from two newspapers of national and international quality and prestige, *El País* and *The New York Times*. The legal opinion columns (in this specific case, taken from the *Tribuna* section of *El País* and from *Law and Legislation* in the *NYT*) are written by specialists and combine journalistic opinion on the one hand, and current legal issues, on the other. They constitute a special case of dissemination of expert knowledge, where there is what Engberg (2020: 181) calls a “recontextualization” of specialised content; that is, its adaptation to non-expert contexts– and where two epistemic polarities exist: core knowledge (i.e. domain-internal) and peripheral knowledge. Engberg points out that, divested from its hard technical content, peripheral knowledge is central to arousing the interest of the lay public (2020: 185). Specifically, my studies attempted to trace impersonal (monogloss) and interpersonal (heterogloss) structures in legal opinion discourse, where patterns of emotion might occur irregularly, depending on the legal culture: that of the American common-law system –where the opposing parties in the courtroom act as adversaries who compete to convince the jury and the judge that their version of the facts is more convincing– and the Spanish continental law system –where the criminal procedure (called accusatory-formal) retains vestiges of the non-adversarial regime: a centralised and hierarchical structure where the judge is in charge of managing the entire judicial process. However, in the course of the analysis, a third area emerged, which I called ‘penumbra’, belonging to neither monogloss or heterogloss discourse, which eventually demonstrated that genres of legal opinion can be persuasive only insofar as they are hybrid products, the result of ‘genre colonisation’. Penumbra is expressed linguistically through two different patterns: a) ostensibly impersonal structures, such as nominalisations, which, in fact, convey some ideological message to the reader, and b) structures that appraisal theory considers trigger implicit attitudes, such as deontic and epistemic expressions, emphatic expressions and rhetorical questions.

The findings of the study, shown in Figures 1 and 2, are in line with our previous hypothesis: the degree of persuasiveness in specialised texts is related to the type of genre and its ‘purity’ or hybridity (that is, whether it is oriented inwards towards or outwards away from the discourse community), as well as to the socio-cultural context in which it emerges. The conclusion reached was that Spanish opinion columns, faithful to the system from which they originate, are more alien to the reader, more monolithic and institutional in the expression of attitude. The American ones, on the other hand, show a bias towards debate and argumentation, in accordance with the polyhedral reality that surrounds the common law adversarial system. Both corpora, in general, confirm that there is still a strong element of interaction linking the legal opinion writer to his/her audience, probably more evident in this type of legal genre than in any other where monoglossia is dominant, such as in enacted laws, ordinances or regulations.



Figures 1 and 2. Lexicogrammar in *The New York Times* and *El País* (Orts, 2018b).

Finally, and as we have discussed throughout this paper, dissemination is the second centrifugal force necessary for professional communities to exhibit their value to society. Specifically, Engberg *et al.* (2018) claim that popularisation occurs in three phases: the detection of an asymmetry of knowledge in the lay-expert relationship; the displacement of legal knowledge outside the institutional contexts in which it is normally applied (recontextualisation); the presentation of expert knowledge to the layperson (dissemination); and greater accessibility in presentation than in expert-expert communication, or popularisation (2018: XIII). Popularisation is understood as the transmission of knowledge in contexts where laypeople are communicatively dominant, and do not act as mere participants. This transmission of power is very significant, in my opinion, since it establishes a sphere of parity and communicative exchange between both parties: the expert, who has to contribute his or her specialisation in a relevant and clear way, and the layperson, who receives that communication in a context that he or she knows and dominates. As stated earlier in this paper, the necessary epistemic trust –a prerequisite for a successful dissemination process (Engberg *et al.* 2018: XVI)– can only be obtained if the expert community provides evidence that its knowledge is understandable and apprehensible, thus generating the trust and willingness of non-expert members to cooperate communicatively.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper has sought to consider the role professional genre communication from a novel, interdisciplinary perspective which accounts for the multifarious character of the references presented. In the plural paradigm we have constructed to regard the multidimensional character of the phenomenon of genre we have tried to reconcile a constructivist view of specialised discourse –professions and their genres as social phenomena– with a bio-social perspective which considers emotions to be at the root of social manifestations resulting

from the “interface between brain, mind and society” (TenHouten 2021: 16). Our ultimate aim was to consider professional genres as products of the emotional evolution of human beings in the context of the occupational groups, or discursive communities, that constitute part of the social fabric. In the context of professional communities, as in the life of the individual, the agonising tensions that come from our most primitive, reptilian brain, such as the desire for primacy and the drive to compete jostle with the need of our limbic system, of later development, to establish positive and hedonic social relations—to exercise empathy for others, creating bonds of social connection. These tensions coexist, as we have said, simultaneously, and are materialised in the production of genres, as gnoseological resources articulated within the community—with the egotistical drive to maintain hierarchical relationships and to orchestrate knowledge asymmetries within the group— and outside it—with the aim of legitimising the community through the dissemination of those genres, in order to ultimately favour understanding and social value. Power, manipulation and persuasion in the discourse of professions are the manifestations of the contradictory tensions in occupational groups to either impose and deceive, or to genuinely convince and engage with society at large. At a time in history when social networks and the consumption of instant, unverified knowledge blur the need for rigour, and encourage half-truths and manipulation, rigorous research and in-depth study about the communicative behaviour of disciplinary and occupational groups is more necessary than ever, just as dissemination is necessary to foster trust and faith in experts and to combat the ghosts of post-truth. After all, Damasio’s homeostasis as the search for the quintessential positive emotion (2018)—happiness—constitutes the most adaptive response for expert communities to achieve a balance between their own uniqueness and internal organisation, together with their integration into society, which inevitably encompasses the acceptance of these professions by the lay public, and the latter’s worthwhile and transparent access to specialised knowledge.

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