The Language of Discovery, Exploration and Settlement

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Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

NICHOLAS BROWNLEES

This volume has its origins in a conference that took place in Florence, Italy in February 2018. The conference was entitled "The Language of Discovery, Exploration and Settlement" and provided a forum for research relating to forms of discourse employed in the historical narration and reporting of geographical discovery, exploration and settlement.[1] These three features of human existence lie at the very centre of society's evolution and development and it was considered fitting that their narration in historically contemporaneous documents should be examined from a linguistic and rhetorical point of view. Discovery, exploration and settlement have been examined in innumerable geographical, cartographical, anthropological, historical, literary and sociocultural venues and publications but for the conference organisers and participants the Florence conference offered the first occasion for the private and public discourse of these topics to be examined in full over a two-day period.[2]

The conference was successful, attracting a wide number of international scholars ready to present and discuss their research on the language and discourse employed in historical accounts of discovery, exploration and settlement stretching from the 16th-19th centuries and covering areas as far afield as the Americas, Africa, India, Australasia and

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[2] Published works span an enormous field, ranging from the very detailed and carefully edited primary sources, such as those published by the Hakluyt Society, to academic historical overviews and compendiums (Speake 2003; Das and Youngs 2019) up to more popular, accessible narratives and anthologies (Brotton 2012; Hanbury-Tenison 2005).

the Arctic. On the back of the event it was decided to look into the possibility of publishing a volume which would provide a coherent, well-defined account of some of the key topics introduced but not fully developed at the conference. A call for papers was published, contributions arrived at the editor's inMail, and a final selection was made on the basis of how they fitted into and corresponded with the editorial aims of the publication. This volume is, therefore, the end result of such a process, and in helping bring it into the public domain, I would like to thank both those authors who participated in the conference, and responded to the invitation to develop their presentation for the volume, as well as those who although not attending the event were nevertheless inspired by the theme of the volume to submit their own research.

There is no doubt that interest in the theme of the book has been partly motivated by the very rich primary sources that have recently become available in electronic format. These sources not only include the more traditional genres such as historical travel books, dictionaries, newspapers and pamphlets but also ego documents such as private correspondence, diaries and journals. These documents relating to former times, peoples, and geographical spaces, which may once have required visits to distant libraries and archives, can now be accessed and studied from home at one's own leisure and time. The result of such studies has often been very rewarding. What scholars have found, and what we have attempted to bring to the reader's attention in the present volume, is either a more nuanced understanding of previous knowledge and beliefs or, rather, a very different insight into what actually occurred in different stages of discovery, exploration and settlement.

These new assessments and understandings have in part resulted from the linguistic methodologies adopted. In the examination of the discourse (and accompanying paratextual features when present), the contributors make use of qualitative and quantitative analysis with the aim of identifying the manner in which the knowledge disseminators of the time adapted, created and exploited the language of the genre in which they were informing and/or persuading contemporary readers. The quantitative methodology follows broad lexico-grammatical methodologies designed to tease out significant meanings from the texts, with particular attention given to pragmatic and sociolinguistic issues influencing the communicative context and chosen linguistic features.

The chapters focus on six genres: print news, manuscript correspondence, dictionaries, popular literature, travel books, and geography schoolbooks. Knowledge dissemination is mediated through these six different genres but in each case the genre in question conveys

three common aspects of knowledge dissemination: the factual, the personal and the ideological. The focus is on how domain-specific knowledge is mediated in specialised and popularising discourse to address different stakeholders.

It is believed that the wide-spanning historical focus, coupled with the variety of places, communicative environments and genres of knowledge dissemination examined, will interest and guide not just linguists but all scholars working in the fields of discovery, exploration and settlement towards an understanding of the kinds of language employed in the reporting of these themes. The aim of the contributors has been to contextualise the use of language found in the public and private discourses and investigate it in such a way that it is readily accessible not only to linguists but all scholars who, though not necessarily professional linguists, are nevertheless interested in and sensitive to the use of style and rhetoric in knowledge dissemination.

The volume begins with analyses of the reporting in English and Spanish pamphlets of the exploration and first settlements in America in the early modern period. In the first chapter Elisabetta Cecconi examines a selection of English pamphlets between 1584 and 1624 regarding the English presence and attempted settlement of Virginia during those years. Making use of a corpus-based lexical analysis methodology, Cecconi identifies lexemes in the eleven texts (comprising 115,000 words) which orient the reader towards an 'optimistic' understanding of the emerging settlement and its surrounding physical and geographical context. The five principal features of an ideologically-constructed discourse regard a) emotionality, with a semantics designed to arouse feelings of wonder and amazement in the readership; b) a detailed description of commodities in order to underline the real and potential wealth of Virginia; c) evidentiality, where the credibility of the reports is reinforced by specific references to eye-witnesses who had participated in the events; d) a broad religious framework with frequent appeals to God, thereby justifying the settlement of lands occupied by the "uncivil"; e) the strategic use of the pronouns *we* and *they* in reference respectively to the English settlers and readers on the one hand and the native Americans on the other.

Carmen Espejo-Cala also examines the reporting of America in the seventeenth century though in her chapter what attracts the author's attention is not so much what, and how something is reported about the Americas, but rather what is not said. What emerges from the author's research is the surprising absence of news in Spanish pamphlets about the country and its inhabitants between 1618 and 1635. As Espejo-Cola writes, this dirth of news about the region is especially curious given the

enormous impact the settlement and exploitation of the area had on the Spanish economy, society and culture. To explain why there should have been so little news, the author suggests it could have been both the direct and indirect result of censorship. Whereas in Cecconi's chapter, the author identified an attempt to positively describe the newly-settled lands, in Espejo-Cola's study the authorities of the time instead attempted to limit if not completely prevent all information seeping out regarding the territories. This censorship not only meant little news reached Spain directly from the Americas but also indirectly since the European news hubs (for example, Rome, Antwerp, Brussels, and Vienna), which supplied the Spanish pamphlets with much of the foreign news, also had no access to American news.

Studies on American exploration and settlement also attract the attention of Marina Dossena and Bruno Cartosio. Dossena examines the representation and evaluation of events and people in Lewis and Clark's renowned exploration of the North American interior between 1804 and 1806, while Cartosio analyses the term 'Manifest Destiny', and how it was understood and appropriated by settlers and proponents of the American government's exploration, settlement and colonisation of Western territories after the American Civil War.

In her discourse-historical approach, Dossena focuses her attention both on the digital edition of the journals compiled during the exploration and the information that specific lexical choices found in the journals can tell us about the ideological stance of the members making up the expedition. The study is designed to draw attention not only to how the expedition was understood by its participants but the extent to which the near-mythical quality that it has assumed in American history can be justified on the basis of what was written in the journals themselves.

Cartosio's analysis of 'Manifest Destiny' is likewise concerned with the language of discovery and exploration though in the case of the American Federal Government's *Great Surveys*, and the expansion into the Great West, the language used to report the events and tell the story does not only include the scientific languages of the reports and the narrative accounts of the protagonists. It also includes the visual language supplied by photographers of the physical landscapes and human realities of the West.

The language of visual representation is also discussed in Martin Conboy's "Popular Pictures of Imperialism: The *Illustrated London News* in 1842". In the chapter Conboy assesses the manner in which the weekly English newspaper made innovative use of engravings regarding far-flung territories in the British Empire to both delight and instruct its

predominantly middle class readership. Much of the newspaper's huge commercial success was based on the successful combination of riveting, pictorial accuracy with accessible textual reporting and narration.

Popularisation, and its linguistic representation, are also examined by Nicholas Brownlees in his study of the reporting of David Livingstone's exploration of central Africa in the *Daily Telegraph* between 1869 and 1870. Making use of a corpus that he compiled from texts in the *British Newspapers Archive* online collection of the newspaper containing the key word 'Livingstone', he assesses the extent to which the *Daily Telegraph*, which "represented the new era of journalism" (Conboy 2010: 91) contributed through its language to the popularisation of Livingstone's specific expedition and exploration generally.

The next two chapters also regard Africa, and in both of them the topic under discussion is the correspondence sent back to her family in England by Lucie, Lady Duff Gordon, whose accounts of her time in Africa achieved great popularity and acclaim in Britain in the 1860s. In Gabriella Del Lungo Camiciotti's chapter, the author makes a study of Lady Duff Gordon's correspondence during her sojourn in the Cape area, South Africa, in 1861. Employing text-based discourse analysis, combining both quantitative information and qualitative interpretation, Del Lungo Camiciotti assesses how the English settler's information about the Cape was conveyed in the correspondence and the manner in which such impressions and convictions were formed.

Francesca Ditifeci, instead, examines Lady Duff Gordon's correspondence to family and friends in England once she had moved to Egypt from the Cape in 1862. Adopting a methodology broadly based on Susan Hunston's studies on evaluation, Ditifeci examines the attitude Lady Duff Gordon had towards the new land and the peoples she met and associated with during her stay there.

Likewise, Christina Samson also looks at women's travel writings though in her case she examines those regarding India and how the country, and British women's lives there, were reported and explained in their travel journals between 1835 and 1900. Employing a corpus-driven methodology, Samson investigates the recurring patterns of words and structures in women's journals and how such patterns contributed to the construction of meaning. These meanings then feed back into the perception British-based readers have of India and indeed other overseas countries in which the British had settled.

A woman's role in the construction of exploration discourses, and more particularly Arctic exploration, is analysed by Nicoletta Brazzelli in her chapter entitled "In Search of John Franklin: The 'Arctic Adventures'

of Lady Franklin". In her examination of Lady Franklin's correspondence to British politicians and Lords of the Admiralty regarding her husbands ill-fated voyage in search of the North West passage, Brazzelli assesses the rhetorical strategies the British explorer's wife adopted to achieve her goals and, in so doing, transform public appreciation of the Arctic and Arctic exploration.

Raymond Hickey, with a chapter entitled "Vernacular reports from the colonies: Letters back home by Irish emigrants" examines the correspondence of Irish emigrants who settled in British colonies, in particular, Canada and Australia. The nineteenth-century vernacular correspondence is interesting on two counts: first, as linguistic testimony to a form of text production that is little influenced by the prescriptive influence of more standard forms of English; secondly, for what it tells us about why the emigrants went to the colonies and what aspects of their new lives they wished to recount when writing home.

In relation to Australia, and the contact between British explorers and local indigenous populations, Polina Shvanyukova focuses on the key linguistic features characterising the accounts narrated in Matthew Flinders's fair journals of the first circumnavigation of Australia (1801-1803). Adopting a corpus linguistic methodology, Shvanyukova examines referents and modifiers to assess the manner in which the British navigator viewed and described the indigenous peoples that were encountered.

Australia is also the object of Giulia Rovelli's chapter although in her study the focus is on how at the end of the eighteenth century the continent, and its initial exploration and settlement by the British, were represented in geography schoolbooks of the time. Rovelli analyses a corpus of contemporaneous schoolbooks to identify through language structures such as comparison, explanation and exemplification the level and form of ideological input underpinning the narration and representation of the newly discovered lands.

The volume concludes with two chapters on the role of eighteenth-century British dictionaries in disseminating information about life, trade and travel in places both in and outside Britain. In the first contribution Linda C. Mitchell examines the information provided by dictionaries in relation to a) what they indicate about how readers were connected to an expanding global world b) how such dictionaries fostered an interactive relationship between the reader and the dictionary contents, and c) what emerges from the travel discourse information regarding how readers see themselves and others in the social and cultural constructs of the time.

The other contribution to discuss the lexicalisation of foreign lands and settlements in eighteenth–century dictionaries is Elisabetta Lonati's "The

mercantile discovery of the world: 'Geographical Commodities' in 18th-century dictionaries of trade and commerce." Lonati analyses how regions and continents are lexicalised, textualised and discursively represented in relation to their commodities in two highly representative mid-eighteenth century dictionaries: Rolt's *A New Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (1756) and Postlethwayt's *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (2nd 1757).

As editor of the present volume, I will not follow Postlethwayt who unashamedly referred to his own work as "the best and most succinct account that ever was published" (1757: General Contents) but I nevertheless hope that the essays in *The Language of Discovery, Exploration and Settlement* will be appreciated and enjoyed, as well as further stimulate interest in the places, peoples and events described.

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BRITISH COLONIAL IDEOLOGY
IN THE LANGUAGE OF PAMPHLETS
ON VIRGINIA (1584-1624)

ELISABETTA CECCONI

Abstract

This paper takes as its focus the language of exploration and settlement in a group of pamphlets recounting the English expeditions to Virginia in the period from 1584 to 1624. By adopting principles of corpus-assisted discourse analysis, I examine the way in which an emerging British colonial ideology takes shape in discourse through optimistic and deliberately distorted accounts of the discovered land. My database comprises 11 texts (about 115,000 words) taken from the *Virtual Jamestown Digital Archive*. Results show a predominance of positive lexical semantics, where the objective classification of commodities merges with the godly interpretation of the events and with the emotional encoding of the wonder experienced by the newcomers.

1. Introduction

In March 1584 Elizabeth I issued a charter allowing Sir Walter Raleigh "to discover, search, find out and view such remote heathen and barbarous lands, Countries and Territories […] to have, hold, occupy and enjoy". The patent marked the beginning of the English exploration and settlement in North America and the West Indies and set the premises for the future development of the British Empire. In the period under examination, from 1584 to 1624, England took an active part in the European colonial expansion. Though the early attempts to colonize the New World failed miserably—as a result of natural calamities, shortage of supplies and hostility from local tribes—England succeeded in founding the first permanent colony of Jamestown in Virginia in 1607 under the direction of the Virginia Company. Despite adversities, the colony managed to survive and became a model for all the future British colonies to follow.

The colonization of the new territories required people who were willing to leave their home country, face a dangerous journey and settle in an unknown land. The task of persuading private individuals to put their life at risk in order to fulfil the expansionist designs of the motherland was assigned to the propaganda power of printed paper. From the early expeditions in the 1580s, pamphleteers and voyagers were prompted to fuel people's imagination with detailed accounts of the profitable commodities to be found in the new territories, the favourable weather conditions and the prosperous trade with the Indians. The colony was represented as a virtual El Dorado and people of the lower social classes were easily lured into the prospect of easy profit. Many motives were provided in order to encourage colonial settlement including economic competition with other European countries, the financial benefits to be obtained from the customs duties imposed on goods, the discovery of the North West passage to East Asia, and the conversion of the Indians to Christianity. In particular, the theologically-based missionary motivation represented one of the most authoritative justifications for the conquest and was professed in pamphlets and sermons sponsored by the Virginia Company, the major investor in the enterprise.

In the context of the emergence of a British colonial ideology, my study takes as its focus the propaganda language of exploration and settlement in a group of pamphlets recounting the English expeditions to Virginia and its colonization in the period from 1584 to 1624. In particular, I shall examine the way in which ideology takes shape in discourse through optimistic and deliberately distorted accounts of the discovered land. My database comprises 11 texts (112,243 words) taken from the *Jamestown Resources* archive, which contains first-hand accounts and letters written by both travellers and promoters. The results of the corpus-based discourse analysis show a predominance of positive lexical semantics, where the detailed description and classification of commodities merge with the godly interpretation of the events and with the emotional encoding of the wonder. Attention will be also drawn to the hybrid character of the pamphlets, where the language of amazement combines with the scientific and religious discourse, thus revealing the dynamism of text types within the genre.

2. Corpus and Methodology

In the present study, I apply the broad principles of Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (CADS) as described, among others, by Stubbs (1996, 2001) and Partington (2004, 2009). The methodology combines the usual

qualitative approach to the analysis of text with the quantitative analysis provided by Corpus Linguistics in the attempt to discover previously unnoticed regular patterns and link them to specific societal discourse practices (Lombardo 2009). Given the historical dimension of my corpus, the concept of context will be enlarged to include not just the text in which the word is found but also contextual matters such as the power of the printed word for propaganda purposes (Peacey 2004), Early Modern reading practices (Zaret 2000) and the economic and political factors which prompted the government to promote colonial expansion in the 16th and 17th centuries (Williams 1992, Armitage 2000). My database of 11 texts was queried with the aid of the Sketch Engine Program. In order to identify the major discourse patterns adopted in pamphlets, I worked out a wordlist, from which I selected the first 100 hundred entries and grouped them into adjectives, nouns and pronouns. For each word-class, I elaborated a word-sketch of the four most frequent words and I examined their collocational and colligational patterns in concordances.[1] Once the major discourse patterns were identified, it was possible to relate them to the author's propaganda aims, the ideological values of colonial discourse and to the identity construction of the English settlers and the Indians.

3. Analysis

3.1 Evaluative adjectives

The four most frequent adjectives are *good* (408), *great* (372)*, divers* (88) and *true* (64)*.* Each adjective conveys a particular ideological value which enhances the profitability of the overseas enterprise: *good*—including its comparative and superlative forms—advertises the high quality of the commodities available in the land; *great* boosts their quantity; *divers,* combined with *other,* highlights the variety of species of flora, fauna and minerals; *true* is meant to reassure the reader of the authenticity of the account.

The most frequent adjective is *good*, which is either premodified by the amplifiers *very* (23) and *so* (10) or collocates with other positive evaluative adjectives to maximise the high quality value of the goods: "excellent good iron", "excellent good fish", "good and wholesome meat". In order of frequency, the nouns which are modified by *good* belong to the

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[1] Word sketch is a corpus tool of Sketch Engine which allows researchers to see how a keyword collocates and behaves grammatically, i.e. it examines the keyword's collocations and categorizes them according to their grammatical relations.

semantic field of food (meat, bread, fish), minerals (iron, amber) and fleet (ship, harbour). The ideological message is that food is excellent and abundant, so as to guarantee the survival of people and the foundation of a prosperous colony, and the journey is not as dangerous as assumed, thanks to the high quality of the fleet and the secure harbours of the Caribbean Islands:

> When wee come to the coast there is continuall depth enough, with *good* Bottome for Anchor hold, and the Land is faire to fall with all, full of *excellent good Harbours*.
> (*Nova Britannia*, 1609)

> There hath been likewise found some *good* quantity of Amber Greece and that of *the best sort.*
> (*A Discovery of the Barmudas*, 1610)

Given that meat was not staple food among the English lower class, authors insisted on its quantity and quality, as guarantee of a better life in Virginia:

> Another sea fowle there is that lyeth in little holes in the ground and are in great numbers, *exceeding good meate*, very fat and sweete [...] and the Tortose it selfe is *very good meate*, and yeeldeth great store of oyle which is as sweet as any butter; and one of them will suffice fifty men a meale, at the least.
> (*A Discovery*, 1610)

The adjective *good* is also found in the comparative and superlative form: *better* (98), *the best* (78). The former is frequently used to familiarize commodities and species which have never been seen before, whereas the latter fits the rhetoric of exaggeration which pervades the account.

> Wickonzówr, called by us Peaze, [...] although in forme they little differ but in goodnesse of taste much, and are far *better* then our peaze. Both the beanes and peaze are ripe in tenne weekes after they are set.
> (*A Briefe and True Report,*1588)

> Besides this Island there are many, as I have sayd, some of two or three, or foure, or five miles, some more, some lesse, most beautifull and pleasant to behold, replenished with Deere, Conies, Hares and divers beasts, and about them *the goodliest and best fish in the world*, and in great abundance.
> (*The first voyage made to the coasts of America,* 1584)

The second adjective in order of frequency is *great* (372)*, which is often found in the clusters *great store of* (35), *great quantity/ie of* (12)*, great abundance of* (9)*, great(est) number of* (7), *great plenty/ie of* (5) + commodities and food*. In all the clusters, *great* acts as a booster and is part of a language of abundance which is meant to elicit wonder and amazement in the reader:

> [...] yet he tolde me that the sayd King *had great store of* Pearle that were white, great and round.
> (*An account of the particularities of the imployments of the English men*, 1585)

> [...] worms I never saw any, nor any venomous thing, as toad, or snake, or any creeping beast hurtful; only some spiders, which as many affirm, are signs of *great store of gold.*
> (*A True Reportory of the Wreck and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates,* 1610)

> The Countrie affordeth *great abundance of* Hogges, as that there hath been taken by Sir George Sommers. [...] There are also *great plentie of* Whales which I conceive are very easie to be killed.
> (*A Discovery of the Barmudas,* 1610)

Great also has a collocational preference for nouns denoting economic gains and it is pervasively used to foreground the prospect of profit that the reader, as potential traveller or investor, can make from the commodities found in the new land.

> Here of if it [silkworm] be planted and ordered as in Persia, it cannot in reason be otherwise, but that there will rise in shorte time *great profite* to the dealers therein; seeing there is so great use and vent thereof as well in our countrey as els where.
> (*A Briefe and True Report of the New-found Land of Virginia,* 1588)

Divers (87) enhances the variety of species belonging to the plant and animal kingdom. The most common pattern is *divers kind/sort of* (22). The cluster commonly collocates with hypernyms such as "minerals", "shell-fish", "fruits" and the more generic "things".

> He sent us divers kindes of fruites, Melons, Walnuts, Cucumbers, Gourdes, Pease and divers roots and fruites very excellent good.
> (*The first voyage,*1584)

Also divers sorts of shell-fish as Scallops, Muscles, Cockles, Lobsters, Crabs, Oisters and Wilks exceeding good and very great.
(*A Briefe and True Relation of the Discoverie of the North Part of Virginia*, 1602)

It is overgrown with wood and rubbish viz. Oakes, ashes, beech, walnut, witch-hazel, sassafras and cedar with divers others of unknown name.
(*The Relations of Captain Gosnold's Voyage to the North part of Virginia,* 1602)

The hypernym is generally followed by a list of hyponyms, except for cases in which the words "kinds", "things" and "others" remain unspecified as a result of the difficulties in naming new species which are unknown to Europeans.

The timber of the country consist of three sorts: the one is the Cedar very fine timber to work upon, of color red and very sweet; the other sorts we have no name for, for there is none in the company hath seen the like in other countries before we came.
(*A Plaine Description of the Barmudas,* 1613)

The thirteenth we sounded in seventy fathoms and observed great beds of weeds and divers things floating by us.
(*The Relations of Captain Gosnold's Voyage,* 1602)

The examples above show that the language of amazement is interwoven with insertions of scientific discourse, where by means of comparisons and loan words, the author attempts to provide an accurate survey of the botanic, zoological and mineral resources available in Virginia and in the West Indies. In the following example, the author lists items by hypernyms. Each hypernym is followed by a sub-list of hyponyms with a meticulous description of their form and function.

Of Beastes.

Deare, in some places there are great store: neere unto the sea coast they are of the ordinarie bignes as ours in England, & some lesse: but further up into the countrey where there is better seed they are greater: they differ from ours onely in this, their tailes are longer and the snags of their hornes looke backward.

Conies, Those that we have seen & al that we can heare of are of a grey colour like unto hares: in some places there are such plentie that all the people of some townes make them mantles of the furre or flue of the skinnes of those they usually take.

Saquenúckot & Maquówoc; two kindes of small beastes greater then conies which are very good meat. We never tooke any of them our selves, but sometime eate of such as the inhabitants had taken and brought unto us.
(A Briefe and True Report, 1588)

The fourth most frequent adjective *true* mostly occurs in predicative position after the verbs be and *prove.* Its frequent use is meant to stress the authenticity of the reports which are first-person, eye-witness accounts. The claim for authenticity is a topoi of the pamphlet genre and appears in many news pamphlet categories from crime stories to narratives of sensational events. The text is coloured with clusters which enhance the veridicity of the reportage, despite the increasingly frequent disclaimers coming from settlers who returned to England with terrible accounts, spreading fear and scepticism.

Now to certify you the truth of the state of the country I am loath to write that with I have seen by reason you would condemn my writing (as I fear) and think it to be false reports from us to draw more company hither, for I perceive the world is give too much to such surmises. But why should I fear to write that which I know *to be true*, when as all the ships company will or may approve it but cannot reprove it.
(*A Plaine Description,*1613)

When occurring in attributive position *true* premodifies nouns such as *relation, report, information* and *historie*.

Honourable Sir, being earnestly requested by a deare friend, to put down in writing some *true relation* of our late performed voyage to the North parts of Virginia; at length I resolved to satisfy this request who also imboldened me to direct the same to your honourable consideration to whom indeed it perteinth. (*A Briefe and True Relation*, 1602)

Factuality, detailed descriptions and authenticity in the form of eye–witness reports are considered persuasive content features of modern journalism (van Dijk 1988). The evidence from pamphlets suggests that these news values were already encoded in Early Modern news discourse as bearers of ideological consensus. The combination of the language of wonder, which involves and arouses strong emotions, with the fact-centered character of the scientific reportage represents an effective argumentative strategy which allows authorities and financers to draw readers into the colonial adventure, steering their opinions towards the desired response.

3.2 Personal pronouns and possessive determiners

Personal pronouns and possessive determiners play an important role as identity markers in discourse (van Dijk 1995). Not only do they reveal the interpersonal aspect of several pamphlets written in the epistolary style or presented as eye-witness accounts (*I/you*), but they also contribute to the construction of the socio-cultural relationship between colonists and natives (*we/they*). The most frequent pronouns and possessive determiners in the corpus are *we* (1110), *our* (1095) referring to the English settlers, followed by *they* (985), *their* (813), which can refer to the Indians, the Spanish colonists or animals. For the purpose of the analysis, I examined the occurrences of *they/their* in context so as to identify and select references to the Indians only. The analysis of *we/they* helps our understanding of how English settlers construe their own identity and the identity of the Indians in discourse to legitimize their colonizing attempts.

OUR(E)	THEIR
men (61)	bodies (12)
governor (51)	hand (9)
people (37)	house (9)
selves (32)	corn (9)
company (29)	fish (7)
nation (23)	tongue (7)
ship/boat (19)	boat/ship (7)
colony (17)	head (7)
fort (15)	soule (5)
king (12)	condition (5)

Table 1.1. The most frequent collocates of *our* and *their*.

The right-hand collocates of *our* express the settlers' strong sense of identity as a community of English Protestant explorers and colonizers, proud of their nation and willing to establish their model of civilization in the occupied land even by force of arms (e.g. *fort*). The nouns referring to people reveal the political hierarchy established in the colony as a marker of civilization: from the labouring men who work in the plantations to governors who administer the colony, up to the king as the real owner of the possession.

> Which reports have not done a little wrong to many that otherwise would
> also favoured and adventured in the action, to the honour and benefite of

our nation, besides the particular profit and credit which would redound to themselves.
(*An account of the particularities*, 1585)

when the colony is thoroughly increased, and the Indians brought to *our Civilitie* [...] it will cause a mighty vent of English clothes, a great benefit to *our Nation*, and raising againe of that ancient trade of clothing so much decayed in England.
(*Nova Britannia*, 1609)

The noun phrase *our nation* commonly co-occurs with nouns denoting the commercial aspect of the enterprise: *profit, credit, benefit* and the *honour* resulting from successful settlement. This suggests that despite the claims for the religious significance of the adventure, the primary objective of the colonists remained basically economical.

The feeling of enthusiasm which pervades the narratives on the early phase of exploration gives way to disillusionment in the next stage of colonization, as shown by the negative semantic prosody of *our men*. The noun phrase co-occurs with words such as *ill-disposed*, *famine, sickness, discouragement, fear, murdered, weary, killed, tired* and *disabled.* Some lexemes refer to the men's condition on the ship during storms, others refer to the famine they encountered after months in the new land and some others to the bloody massacre of Englishmen on the part of the Powhatans in 1622.

Cast up this reckoning together: want of government, store of idlenesse, their expectations frustrated by the Traitors, their market spoyled by the Mariners, our nets broken, the deere chased, our boats lost, our hogs killed, our trade with the Indians forbidden, some of *our men* fled, some murthered, and most by drinking the brackish water of James fort weakened, and indaungered, famyne and sicknesse by all these meanes increased, here at home the monies came in so slowly.
(*A True Declaration of the estate of the Colonie in Virginia*, 1610)

The storme that seperated the admirall from the fleete prooving the first, the famine amongst our men importing the second, the sicknesse of our men arguing the third. All which discouragements doe astonish *our men* with feare, as though our expences were unprofitable, when our ends are impossible.
(*A True Declaration,* 1610)

The negative semantics of *our men* enhances a sense of solidarity between the English men in the colonies and people at home, which is meant to solicit aid and supplies from the motherland. This was the period

in which the Virginia Company of London launched a campaign to recruit settlers from all over England to obtain manual labour and supplies.

Since it was important for the author to sensitise society at home, without disclaiming previous accounts on the richness of the land, the negative semantic prosody of *our men* was often included in adversative or concessive constructions, which were meant to confute negative assumptions about the barrenness and hostility of the land.

> we might have better husbanded our peas and oatmeal, notwithstanding the great store we now saw daily in our river. But let the blame of this lie where it is, both upon our nets and the unskillfulness of *our men* to lay them [...] there is great store of fish in the river, especially of sturgeon, but *our men* provided no more of them than for present necessity.
> (*A True Reportory,* 1610)

By an interesting twist of logic, the author identifies men, due to their incompetence and idleness, as the main cause of the bad harvest, while the land continues to be represented as generous and profitable. This propaganda manoeuvre—theorized by van Dijk as "local semantic move" (1995: 279)—was fundamental to reassure people about the richness of the land and to maintain consensus around the necessity of building colonies for the economic prosperity of England and for its political power in international affairs.

The possessive determiner *their*, when referring to the Indians, features recurrent collocates, which represent them as deprived of self-awareness as a community of people living in a certain territory. As a matter of fact, *their* mostly co-occurs with words indicating body (parts), objects and commodities (Table 1). The precise objective description of the Indians' appearance and living style, with minimum or no reference to aspects of their civilization, reveals the author's aim to debase them to objects of anthropological study and downgrades their threatening potential as conscious and self-confident people.

> They head some *their arrows* herewith much like our broad arrow heads very workmanly made. *Their chains* are many hollow pieces cemented together each piece of the bigness of one of our reeds a finger in length, ten or twelve of them together on a string, which they wear about *their necks*:
> (*A Briefe and True Relation*, 1602)

> although we saw many Indians which are tall big boned men, all naked, saving they cover *their privy parts* with a black sewed skin, much like a Black apron tied upon *their middle* and between *their legs* behind, they gave us *their fish* ready boiled whereof we did eat and judged them to be

fresh water fish: they gave also of *their Tobacco* which they drink green
but dried into powder, very strong and pleasant, and much better than any I
have ever tasted in England.
(*A Briefe and True Relation*, 1602)

The words *soule* and *condition* stand out as the only abstract nouns
referring to the Indians. The words are evaluated negatively by the English
colonizers, as the Indians' soul ignores the existence of God and their
living condition is depicted as primitive and demeaning. The negative
connotation of the two words is instrumental in legitimizing the English
settlers' colonization as a means to improve the Indians' miserable life
through the 'beneficial effect' of civilization.

> *Wee* purpose to proclaime and make it knowne to them all, by some
> publike interpretation that *our comming* thither is to plant *our selves* in
> *their countrie*: yet not to supplant and roote them out, but to bring them
> from *their base condition* to a farre better.
> (*Nova Britannia,*1609)

> So I wish and intreat all well affected subjects [...] to adventure, and
> joyntly take in hand this high and acceptable worke, tending to advance
> and spread the kingdom of God, and the knowledge of the truth, among so
> many millions of men and women, Savage and blind, that never yet saw
> the true light shine before their eyes, to enlighten their minds and comfort
> *their soules.*
> (*Nova Britannia*, 1609)

The next binary opposition is *we* vs *they*. Besides the primary verbs *be*
and *have, we* usually collocates with verbs of movement (*went, came,
departed, arrived, passed*), verbs of perception (*found, saw, espied,
discovered*) and verbs of communication (*called*), which document the
phases of the discovery, settlement and possession of the land. The
pronoun *they* mostly collocates with primary verbs, followed by verbs of
action (*make*) and communication (*say, speak, call*). Regarding *they +
have*, the 'word sketch' corpus tool shows two major discourse patterns,
which are indicative of the English settlers' perception of the natives both
in terms of their resources—which make them stronger than the
newcomers—and their shortages, which make them vulnerable and easy to
subdue. The natives' advantages are related to their familiarity with the
products of the land, whereas their alleged inferiority is attributed to their
lack of religion and culture.

They have + commodities:
- They have also great store of copper some very red and some of a paler colour.
- yet I was desirous to understand where they had such store of this metal
- they have large drinking cups, made like seulles and other thin plates of copper.

They have + no + elements of civilization:
- they have no law but nature;
- they have no art nor science;
- they have no tongues from Heaven;

As other European colonizers before them, the English settlers represented the Indians as "beyond the pale of civil law to promote the idea that they were there for the taking" (Borch 2004:194). Pamphlet discourse on exploration and settlement construes a sort of presupposed equation between indigenous land and uninhabited land, on which premises the settlers establish their legal and Christian right to occupy the territories.

3.3 Nouns

The most frequent nouns in my database are *man/men* (503), *God(s)* (279), *time* (233) and *England* (156), the four concepts representing the protagonists of the colonization process. *Man/men* is mostly premodified by the adjective *English,* which defines the group according to the country of origin and implicitly claims the English dominion over the occupied regions. In the context of the expansionist campaign carried out all over Europe, the reiteration of the nationality of the newcomers—as opposed to the Spanish competitors in the West Indies and part of Central and North America—shows that the successful outcome of colonization was as important as a military victory on the battlefield.

> Now then let the Christian world rejoyce to see, that God is worshipped in the Devills Ilands, and that *English men* live safelie and sweetly there where never any lived before them. It is almost foure yeares agoe since our valorous Commanders Sir Thomas Gates, and Sir George Sommers, with a hundred and fiftie Persons more, were in a terrible tempest cast away upon these Ilands, and so found it, when they sought it not;
> (*A Plaine Description*, 1613)

> Indeed wee must acknowledge it, with praise to God, that when some of theirs [Spanish] had cast an evill eye upon our possessions, it was our

happiness to prevent their longing, and to send them emptie home [...] and
seeing when time did offer it, our nation lost the first opportunity of having
all, yet now to make good that common speech, that *English men* are best
at imitation, and doe soone excell their [Spanish] teachers.
(*The New Life of Virginea*, 1612)

God/s is the second most frequent word and documents the pervasive
presence of religious discourse in the pamphlets on Virginia. Long
sermonizing insertions mostly occur at the beginning of the narrative and
add an interpretative framework to the description of the adventure. The
pamphleteer strategically appeals to God as the highest authority to
persuade people of the righteousness of the enterprise. The Early Modern
reading public was willing to accept and support whatever was grounded
on God's word, as a result references to divine providence became the
major consensus-gaining device in 17th century propaganda discourse
(Walsham 1999).

God that raised up her Majestie, our late Soveraigne, and put into her heart,
by wholesome lawes to wipe away that mist of popish dimnes from our
eyes, whereby we saw the light more cleare, did likewise move her
Princely mind to proffer that light to this blind and miserable people, in
giving the first incouragement by our English Colonies to make plantation
there, and according to her selfe, and the condition of her sexe, she named
the Countrey Virginea
(*The New Life*, 1612)

By presenting colonization as a religious mission, authors intended to
persuade people to invest money and human resources on the enterprise
both to please God and be rewarded. The divine approval of the journey
and settlement is expressed by means of recurrent clusters, such as *it
pleased God* (15), usually followed by positive semantics:

it pleased God that we have recovered from the wreck and was to serve our
general necessity and use.
(*A True Reportory,* 1610)

it pleased God to give us opportunity to perform all the other offices and
rites of our Christian profession on the island.
(*A True Reportory,* 1610)

When *it pleased God* out of his most gracious and merciful providence so
to direct and guide our ship.
(*A Discovery*, 1610)

Another ideologically-marked cluster is *if God had not* whereby the author highlights God's help and assistance during the hard times in the English colony. The quotations are taken from *A True Declaration,* 1610.

For *if God had not* sent Sir Thomas Gates from the Bermudas within four days, they had all been famished.

If God had not directed the heart of that worthy Knight to save the Fort from fire at their shipping, they had been destitute of the present harbour, and succor.

The principle of God guiding human action and determining its successful outcome also appears in the recurrent collocation NP + *of* + *God*, including words such as *goodness, providence, hand, worke, assistance, word, counsel, will, presence* and *blessing.*

This was not Ariadnes threed, but the direct line of *Gods providence.* If it had not beene so neere land, their companie or provision had perished by water: if they had not found Hogs, and foule, and fish, they had perished by famine.
(*A True Declaration,* 1610)

till they arrived upon the desperate shore of the Ilande of Bermudus, where betweene two rockes the ship split in peeces, and yet by the miraculous *hand of God* and industrie of the Captaines, all the people escaped safe to land and not a man perished.
(*The New Life*, 1612)

The third lexeme in order of frequency is *time,* suggesting the persuasive force of the temporal category to advertise colonization as a relatively easy task to be accomplished. The most frequent cluster is *in short time*, which is meant to highlight the speed with which resources grow and can be harvested. The reiteration of the pattern is consistent with the optimistic propaganda character of the narrative and creates the impression that all the major purposes of the enterprise can be achieved quickly and easily, from the harvest of the products to the civilization of the Indians.

Whereby may bee hoped if meanes of good government bee used, that they may *in short time* be brought to civilitie, and the imbracing of true religion.
(*A Briefe and True Report*, 1585)

that there are innumerable White Mulberry trees, which in so warme a climate may cherish and feede millions of silkewormes, and returne us *in*

every short time, as great a plenty of silke as is vented into the whole world
from al the parts of Italy.
(*A True Declaration*, 1610)

England is the fourth most frequent noun in the list. It mostly occurs as
a prepositional phrase in the pattern *in England* in comparative
constructions of equality or majority. It is used whenever the author wants
to familiarize people with unknown and profitable products which grow in
North America by comparing them with similar products or conditions in
England. The prepositional phrase often collocates with adjectives
referring to the large size and high quality of the commodities and to the
favourable living conditions, which are described as similar to or even
much better than those in the motherland.

The prepositional phrase fits in the advertising campaign of the author,
who strategically appeals to people's curiosity and desire for prosperity.

This lake is full of small Tortoise and exceedingly frequented with all sorts
of fowls before rehearsed, which breed, some low on the banks, and others
on low trees about this lake in great abundance, whose young ones of all
sorts we took and ate at our pleasure: but all these fowls are much *bigger
than ours* in England.
(*A Briefe and True Relation*, 1602)

we found the soyle to bee fatter; the trees greater and to growe thinner; the
grounde more firme and deeper mould; more and larger champions; finer
grasse and as good as ever we saw *in England*
(*A Briefe and True Report*, 1585)

Your aire *in England* are far more subject to diseases than these islands
are.
(*APlaine Description,* 1613)

4. Conclusion

The potential of the press as a propaganda tool was understood from the
early 16th century, when monarchs, ministers and grandees decided to
engage with the masses through the medium of print in order to influence
their opinions (Peacey 2004: 32). Pamphlets represented one of the most
effective means of communication for the publication of news, religious
and political polemic and—as is the case at issue—ideological campaigns
in favour of overseas expeditions and settlement in the New World.
Establishing an interpersonal relationship with the public through the press
was possible thanks to people's general ability to read (Zaret 2000: 174),

which suggests that first-hand accounts on Virginia could reach a heterogeneous cross-section of society, from potential money investors and financers to the labouring poor or unemployed in search of a profitable future far from home. The Virginia Company of London was aware of the persuasive power of print and pulpit at the turn of the century and financed several writers and preachers to support and justify their commercial enterprise as a Christian mission advocated by God (Williams: 1992). The corpus-based lexical analysis uncovers the corporate interests of grandees and institutions in providing a particular ideologically-marked representation of life in the colony and reveals how lexis is used in order to orient people's opinions and gain public consensus. Authors adopt five major features of propaganda discourse to influence people's opinion (van Dijk 1988, 1995; Partington and Taylor 2018: 1) emotionality, by means of a lexicon of abundance and wealth which is used to arouse feelings of wonder and amazement in the readership, so as to encourage them to set off on a difficult but extremely rewarding journey; 2) detailed description of commodities, by means of a meticulous, almost scientific classification of the animal, plant and mineral species, so as to highlight the richness and profitability of the new territories; 3) evidentiality, by means of the topoi of the eye-witness account through which the author provides direct evidence for his claims and beliefs; 4) appeal to authority by means of pervasive references to God and the intrusion of sermonizing discourse, which functions as premise and justification for the occupation of a land inhabited by the "uncivil"; 5) comparison and contrast between the inclusive *we* and *they,* whereby the author presupposes the cultural superiority of the English people—implying both the settlers and the readers in England—as opposed to the Indians, who are represented as having no religion and culture and thus as being *naturally* bound to submit to the socio-cultural and political authority of the newcomers.

To assess the extent to which these persuasive features influenced the potential reader is not an easy task. What is possible to claim is that the variety of discourse types available in pamphlets—from the language of wonder and scientific discourse to the authority of religious references—contributed to a multi-vocal reading which had the potential to appeal to the taste and preferences of various layers of society.

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