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## **Abstract**

This study analyses the language of “art blogs”, i.e. blogs dealing with art, through a specialised corpus of fifty-four blogs published during 2013. Both posts and comments are included in the present investigation into the linguistic character of art blogs. The methodological choices reflect the need for a multifaceted analysis which covers different aspects, from text typology to linguistic creativity and popularisation. It might be thought that this splitting of the analysis is a weakness, but in fact the combination of analyses contributes to presenting art blogs from different points of view, in the attempt to draw as a complete description as possible of their linguistic features.

A review of the relevant literature on blogs brings to light the need for a specific characterisation of art blogs, since they tend to have a blended style, which cannot be ascribed to the traditional categories of personal and thematic blogging. The distinctive features of posts and comments are then investigated through a multidimensional analysis which reveals that posts and comments are two different text types. Successively, the corpus is compared to a specialised corpus of art announcements, within the field of popularised and specialised discourse. Finally, several examples of linguistic creativity are explored and presented, thus showing that traditional descriptive paradigms are unsuited to analyse the outcomes of art bloggers.

## Chapter 1

### The Art Blog Corpus (ABC)

#### 1.1 Introduction

In Section 1.2 of this introductory chapter, a general definition of a corpus is provided, before the detailed description of the specialised corpus built for the current investigation, the Art Blog Corpus (ABC), in Section 1.3. Sections 1.4.1 and 1.4.2 lay out some rudiments of Corpus Linguistics, the methodology adopted in the present study, together with the main functions of corpus analysis tools, while Section 1.5.1 and 1.5.2 introduce some methodological issues concerning words occurring only once in the corpus and the varieties of English present in the ABC. Section 1.6.1 takes a closer look at posts and comments, while Section 1.6.2 presents the case of a blog of the ABC run by an art critic in the online version of *The Guardian*, which has attracted such a large amount of comments, to justify reflecting on the changing nature of the digital medium (see also Section 1.7). The last section briefly summarises the findings.

#### 1.2 Definition of a corpus

In linguistics a corpus is a collection of texts (Stubbs 2001: 25), or parts of texts, that is assumed to be representative of a language or of a variety, and is compiled in order to obtain a complete description of the sample of language chosen. Nowadays, a corpus is always machine-readable and is usually constituted by textual files collected in a directory. In the case of the present analysis, the corpus can be considered as a “specialised corpus” (Hunston 2002:14), comprising texts of a specific type (blog), dealing with a defined topic (art), collected in a pre-determined period of time.



### 1.3 The ABC: corpus description

The corpus collected for the present analysis consists of 3,726,823 tokens and 75,915 types<sup>1</sup> gathered in 894 .txt files. The Art Blog Corpus, or ABC, comprises both the posts and the comments of fifty-four art blogs published during 2013. The blogs taken into consideration differ significantly from each other, although all of them belong either to the field of art critique, or to the field of the “arts”, i.e. drawing, painting, sculpting, archaeology, architecture and framing. Due to the vagueness of the term art itself (Harris 2003), a categorisation of the blogs is needed.

The ABC includes both individual and institutional blogs. The former, also known as “personal blogs” (Krishnamurthy 2002) encompass journalists, professional or self-taught art historians and contemporary artists; the latter, also referred to as “corporate blogs” (Puschmann 2010) or “external corporate blogs” (Garzone 2012), include museums, art galleries and historic mansions. The journalists, mainly British art critics, are: Charlotte Higgins and Jonathan Jones from *The Guardian*; Alastair Sooke, Harry Mount, Stephen Hough, and Allan Massie from the *Daily Telegraph*; Michael Glover from the *Independent*. Barbara Pezzini is the editor of the *Burlington Index Blog*, related to the longest-running art journal in English, the *Burlington Magazine*, while Michael Daley, Alexander Adams, and Gareth Hawker are the names behind *Artwatch*, a niche journal which “campaigns to protect the integrity of works of art and architecture from injurious physical treatments<sup>2</sup>”. University art historians include, from the United States, Monica Bowen, Art History Professor at Seattle University, and from Europe, Martin Kemp, Emeritus Professor of the History of Art at Trinity College in Oxford. Amid the young researchers and self-taught art historians, the Australian Hasan Nyiazi with his *Three Pipe Problem* blog is the most frequently quoted in the ABC, also because his sudden death on October 28th 2013 spurred many bloggers to write posts dedicated to him and to his commitment to Raphael. Three blogs are officially run by museums and art galleries: the British

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<sup>1</sup> I’m referring to calculations provided by the concordancer WordSmith Tools, version 6.1.

<sup>2</sup> <http://artwatchuk.wordpress.com/about/> last accessed on April, 17th, 2014.

Museum in London; the Tate, with its branches in London (Tate Modern and Tate Britain) and Liverpool (Tate Liverpool); the Met (Metropolitan Museum of Art) in New York. Additionally, the blogs of two historical English mansions, the Treasure Hunt Collection and Attingham Park Mansion, are included. Initially, a short list was compiled with art blogs published not only on traditional blog hosting sites, like Wordpress and Blogspot, but also on dedicated sections on websites, like the Tate Uk<sup>3</sup> and the MET<sup>4</sup>, and on personal webpages, like Amy Martin’s blog Caravaggista<sup>5</sup> and Mary Ann Adair’s blog<sup>6</sup>. The list was later extended because many blogs have blog-rolls or links to other similar weblogs, sometimes highlighting the name of the popular bloggers, who are considered as part of the same art community, or blogosphere, to the extent that the names of some bloggers recur in the comments of several blogs and cross-references can be detected in many of their posts. A complete list of the blogs of the ABC follows in Table 1.1. Each blog is preceded by the initials of the main lexical words: two capital letters which were used to name the files and will be used in the present study. A capital C is added after the name of the file with the comments. JJ2013004, for example, indicates the file of a post by Jonathan Jones, while JJC2013004 refers to the comments on this post.

Blogs	Initials	Name of the blog	URL
1.	AC	Art in Cambridge, UK	<a href="http://artincambridge.blogspot.it">http://artincambridge.blogspot.it</a>
2.	AF	Insider Guide to East End UK	<a href="http://blog.artfeellers.com">http://blog.artfeellers.com</a>
3.	AM	This Write Life by Mary Jo Gibson USA	<a href="http://thiswritelife.wordpress.com/">http://thiswritelife.wordpress.com/</a>
4.	AN	Artist Network USA	<a href="http://www.artistsnetwork.com/category/art-blogs/">http://www.artistsnetwork.com/category/art-blogs/</a>
5.	AP	Attingham Park Mansion UK	<a href="http://attinghamparkmansion.wordpress.com/">http://attinghamparkmansion.wordpress.com/</a>
6.	AS	Alastair Sooke UK	<a href="http://www.bloglovin.com/blog/4013513/alastair-sooke">http://www.bloglovin.com/blog/4013513/alastair-sooke</a>
7.	AT	Art travel, Canadian living in Florence	<a href="http://www.arttrav.com/art-history-tools/">http://www.arttrav.com/art-history-tools/</a>

<sup>3</sup> [www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs](http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs)

<sup>4</sup> [www.metmuseum.org/blogs](http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs)

<sup>5</sup> <http://caravaggista.com>

<sup>6</sup> <http://maryannadair.com/>

8.	AW	Alberti's Window, USA	<a href="http://www.albertis-window.com/">http://www.albertis-window.com/</a>
9.	BA	The best artists UNSTATED ORIGIN	<a href="http://100swallows.wordpress.com">http://100swallows.wordpress.com</a>
10.	BG	Bendon Grosvenor's Blog Art History news Uk	<a href="http://www.arthistorynews.com/">http://www.arthistorynews.com/</a>
11.	BH	Birmingham Museum, UK	<a href="http://bmagblog.org/">http://bmagblog.org/</a>
12.	BM	British Museum, UK	<a href="http://blog.britishmuseum.org">http://blog.britishmuseum.org</a>
13.	BP	Burlington Magazine Index Blog by Barbara Pezzini USA	<a href="http://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com">http://burlingtonindex.wordpress.com</a>
14.	CA	Catherine Allen on Nottingham arts UK	<a href="http://nottinghamartsblog.co.uk/">http://nottinghamartsblog.co.uk/</a>
15.	CB	Championing art in Cardiff UK	<a href="http://creativeboom.co.uk/">http://creativeboom.co.uk/</a>
16.	CH	Charlotte Higgins at the Guardian, UK	<a href="http://www.theguardian.com/culture/charlottehigginsblog">http://www.theguardian.com/culture/charlottehigginsblog</a>
17.	CL	Cathy Lomax on art UK	<a href="http://cathylomax.blogspot.it/">http://cathylomax.blogspot.it/</a>
18.	CN	Chloé Nelkin Consulting on London art, UK	<a href="http://chloenelkin.wordpress.com/">http://chloenelkin.wordpress.com/</a>
19.	CR	Caravaggista by Amy Martin USA	<a href="http://caravaggista.com">http://caravaggista.com</a>
20.	DA	Christine Day Dream Tourist USA	<a href="http://daydreamtourist.com/">http://daydreamtourist.com/</a>
21.	DD	my Daily Art Display by Jonathan Conwy, UK	<a href="http://mydailyartdisplay.wordpress.com">http://mydailyartdisplay.wordpress.com</a>
22.	DT	Art Blog at the Daily Telegraph, UK	<a href="http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/culture/category/art/">http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/culture/category/art/</a>
23.	EX	Silver and Exact by Alvaro, Argentina	<a href="http://silverandexact.wordpress.com">http://silverandexact.wordpress.com</a>
24.	FB	The frame Blog UK	<a href="http://theframeblog.wordpress.com/">http://theframeblog.wordpress.com/</a>
25.	FL	Art Lovers in London UK	<a href="http://www.fineartslondon.com/">http://www.fineartslondon.com/</a>
26.	FY	Katherine Woodfine UK	<a href="http://followtheyellow.co.uk/">http://followtheyellow.co.uk/</a>
27.	GG	Gandalf's Gallery UK	<a href="http://gandalfsgallery.blogspot.co.uk/">http://gandalfsgallery.blogspot.co.uk/</a>
28.	GH	Grumpy Art Historian by Michael Savage UK	<a href="http://grumpyarthistorian.blogspot.co.uk/">http://grumpyarthistorian.blogspot.co.uk/</a>
29.	GT	Giorgione Tempesta, USA	<a href="http://giorgionetempesta.blogspot.co.uk/">http://giorgionetempesta.blogspot.co.uk/</a>
30.	GW	Great Works by Michael Glover, The Independent UK	<a href="http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/great-works/">http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/art/great-works/</a>
31.	HE	Historien errant, Vienna	<a href="http://historienerrant.wordpress.com/">http://historienerrant.wordpress.com/</a>
32.	HN	Three pipe net, Australia	<a href="http://www.3pipe.net/">http://www.3pipe.net/</a>

33.	HT	Art History Today by David Packwood UK	<a href="http://artintheblood.typepad.com/">http://artintheblood.typepad.com/</a>
34.	JC	JJ Charlesworth UK	<a href="http://blog.jjcharlesworth.com/">http://blog.jjcharlesworth.com/</a>
35.	JJ	Jonathan Jones at the Guardian, UK, comments UK and USA	<a href="http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog">http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog</a>
36.	KT	Making a mark UK	<a href="http://makingamark.blogspot.it/">http://makingamark.blogspot.it/</a>
37.	MET (MB, MD, MN, MT, MW)	Metropolitan Art Museum USA	<a href="http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs">http://www.metmuseum.org/blogs</a>
38.	MJ	Martin Jenner's blog a kick up the arts UK	<a href="http://akickupthearts.wordpress.com/">http://akickupthearts.wordpress.com/</a>
39.	MK	Martin Kemp's blog This and that UK	<a href="http://martinkempsthisandthat.blogspot.co.uk/">http://martinkempsthisandthat.blogspot.co.uk/</a>
40.	MM	Maryanne Dair Australia	<a href="http://maryannadair.com/">http://maryannadair.com/</a>
41.	MS	Mark Sheerin on contemporary art UK	<a href="http://www.criticismism.com/">http://www.criticismism.com/</a>
42.	NC	Neill Clements' blog Fundamental painting UK	<a href="http://fundamentalphainting.blogspot.it/">http://fundamentalphainting.blogspot.it/</a>
43.	PH	Simon Abraham's blog every Painter paints himself (American born in England)	<a href="http://everypainterpaintshimself.com/blog">http://everypainterpaintshimself.com/blog</a>
44.	PR	Famous Paintings reviewed USA	<a href="http://www.themasterpiececards.com/famous-paintings-reviewed">http://www.themasterpiececards.com/famous-paintings-reviewed</a>
45.	PS	PlainSpeaking art UK	<a href="http://plainspeakingart.wordpress.com/">http://plainspeakingart.wordpress.com/</a>
46.	RR	Rembrandt's Room by Maaïke Dirkx woman, Amsterdam	<a href="http://arthistorieroom.wordpress.com/">http://arthistorieroom.wordpress.com/</a>
47.	SA	Street art UK	<a href="http://www.ukstreetart.co.uk/">http://www.ukstreetart.co.uk/</a>
48.	SC	Sedef's Corner, USA	<a href="http://www.sedefscorner.com/">http://www.sedefscorner.com/</a>
49.	SE	I've got some art stuck in my eye USA	<a href="http://artstuckinmyeye.wordpress.com">http://artstuckinmyeye.wordpress.com</a>
50.	TG	Tate UK	<a href="http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs">http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs</a>
51.	TH	Treasure Hunt Collection, UK	<a href="http://nttreasurehunt.wordpress.com/">http://nttreasurehunt.wordpress.com/</a>
52.	TW	Artwatch, Journal UK	<a href="http://artwatchuk.wordpress.com/">http://artwatchuk.wordpress.com/</a>
53.	VC	Vatican blog by David Packwood UK	<a href="http://yourmovechessarthist.blogspot.co.uk/">http://yourmovechessarthist.blogspot.co.uk/</a>
54.	VD	Vivante Drawing by Lucy Vivante USA	<a href="http://lucyvivante.net/">http://lucyvivante.net/</a>

Table 1.1. *The complete list of blogs included in the ABC*

#### 1.4.1 The methodology of corpus linguistics

As its name implies, corpus linguistics (CL) is the branch of linguistics that deals with corpus analysis, allowing for both an extensive and intensive study of data. The interrogation of corpora has contributed to redesigning several fields, from lexicography to second language acquisition (SLA) and has paved the way for new lexico-grammar models such as ‘pattern grammar’ (Hunston and Francis 2000), which sees patterns as distinctive elements of a lexical item. However, some notes of caution need to be mentioned, particularly the issue of data selection. Chapman, for example, wonders how we can claim that the data collected will be representative and what they will exactly represent (Chapman 2011:21). Corpus Linguistics is a methodology, cannot be conceived as a separate paradigm and needs to be understood in this perspective. While corpus-based studies verify the scholar’s hypothesis on an annotated corpus, corpus-driven studies move from a ‘raw’ corpus to the formulation of a rule. In the first case we proceed deductively from the rule to its verification, in the second case the inductive analysis takes us from observations to generalisations. The present study opts for a corpus-based approach in the chapter on popularisation and a corpus-driven approach in the chapter on creativity, but, in a sense, the two approaches complement each other.

#### 1.4.2 The main functions of corpus analysis tools

Among the most used corpus analysis software packages, often referred to as concordancers, are *Antconc* (Anthony 2012) and *Wordsmith Tools* (Scott 2012). The latter will be used in the present work in most of the analyses, although in Chapter 6 the analysis will be carried out by the *Sketch Engine* (Kilgarriff et al. 2014), an online concordancer. All these tools allow for an investigation of the corpus in terms of three main functions, that are: word frequency lists, concordances and collocations. The calculation of frequency is a linguist’s preliminary activity: frequency lists are the starting point in the analysis of a corpus, since they let you conduct a comparative analysis among corpora, through keyword lists. In Chapter 2 a *Wordlist* is used to see

who the most quoted artists are; in Chapter 3 different *Wordlists* are used to compare the linguistic features of posts and comments. The study of concordances takes the context into account, while showing the *key word* or *node* as it appears in each line accompanied by other words, some on the left, some on the right. Chapter 4 on creativity deals with concordances to investigate creative formations. Firth's famous statement that "you shall know a word by the company it keeps" (Firth 1957:11) introduces the ideas of collocation as the co-occurrence between words and of collocates as words that tend to occur together in a regular way. As pointed out by Sinclair (1991: 11-12), it is essentially a lexical relation with no claim about syntax. Collocation patterns are identified throughout the whole thesis.

### 1.5.1 Methodological issues: *hapaxes*

The ABC has a significant amount of *hapaxes*, i.e. words occurring only once, including typos and misspellings: 30,126. As pointed out by Renouf, such words which have traditionally had little relevance in lexical inventories, can be of great linguistic value, for several reasons (Renouf 2012). As Chapter 5 will extensively show, some of the typos in ABC, for example, result in instances of creativity, such as in the following extract on the misspelling of "time" as "tome":

Example 1. "take all the tome you need. Tome=time It was an autotypo. Or maybe it is in the book of time."<sup>7</sup> (AMC2013)

### 1.5.2 English varieties in the ABC

As mentioned in Section 1.3, the corpus comprises both blogs and comments. Although the bloggers are mainly British art historians, it is worth considering the bloggers' different geographical and employment backgrounds in order to make some considerations on the corpus components. Table 1.2 illustrates the geographical

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<sup>7</sup> Orthography, grammar and punctuation in the examples are presented as they appear in the blogs. Information inside the brackets at the end of each example refers to where the example comes from, whether a post or a comment.

distribution of posts and comments. The UK accounts for most of the blogs (83.7%), followed by the USA (11.5%), while Australia, Argentina, Austria, the Netherlands and Italy, under the label “other countries”, represent a small minority of the total (4.8%). The different nationalities of bloggers and commenters, presented in Table 1.2, have been identified on the basis of the blog they belong to. As a consequence, the commenters from *The Guardian* have been considered as part of the United Kingdom, although many of them are from the States, as explicitly affirmed in the following passage from a comment on Richard III:

Example 2. “I sit here in the middle of the United States surrounded by boring or threatening present-day life, reading books about the Plantagenets, watching movies about the Plantagenets, enjoying the mystery of Richard III...” (JJC2013167).

One of the main difficulties in identifying each commenter’s nationality is the lack of personal information provided, unless explicitly stated. Some bloggers and commenters like to keep their identities secret, as the following extract shows:

Example 3. “Oh. some people know me, in an art context and non art one. But as i only have my Guardian username here you have no idea who i am.” (JJC2013170)

	Posts	Comments
USA (11.5%)	375,053	52,659
UK (83.7%)	1,620,839	1,496,665
Other Countries (4.8%)	145,196	36,411

Table 1.2. *Distribution of posts and comments among the countries*

### 1.6.1 Posts and comments in the ABC

As mentioned in Section 1.3, the blogs of the ABC are diversified. Accordingly, they have been divided into personal, institutional and journalists’ blogs. As a matter of fact, “as with other practices that were initially the domain of private individuals, blogging is gradually being integrated into professional and institutional contexts”

(Puschmann 2010: 14). As shown in Table 1.3, the majority of posts come from personal blogs, while comments mostly come from online newspapers, in particular from Jonathan Jones’s blog at *The Guardian*.

	Number of tokens in Posts	Number of tokens in Comments
Institutions	280,754 (7.5%)	101,035 (2.7%)
Journalists	211,649 (5.7%)	1,325,165 (35.6%)
Personal	1,648,685 (44.2%)	159,535 (4.3%)

Table 1.3. *Distribution of posts and comments among categories (raw figures)*

A problematic issue is the distinction between posts, and comments: it has not always been possible to separate them, as in the case of Bendon Grosvenor’s blog *Art History News*, where the comments were included in the posts (my italics):

Example 4. “The site currently has a regular readership of about two thousand readers a day. *AHN* welcomes contributions and opinions. *We don’t have a comments section like most blogs, as all reader feedback is incorporated into the main site, and not ignored in an area where nobody ever goes. So, if you have a news story, or simply want to agree or disagree with what AHN or someone else has said, then please get in touch.*”<sup>8</sup>

The ABC comprises a higher number of tokens in posts than in comments: 57.4% (2,141,088) versus 42.6% (1,585,735). However, the proportion of posts/comments for Jones’s blog at *The Guardian* is overturned, since there are less than a thousand tokens in the post sub-corpus (88,688) and over a million in the comment sub-corpus (1,247,802). Figure 1.1 visualises this phenomenon and Section 1.6.2 will analyse it in depth.

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<sup>8</sup> <http://www.arthistorynews.com/about.php> last accessed on 5th June, 2014



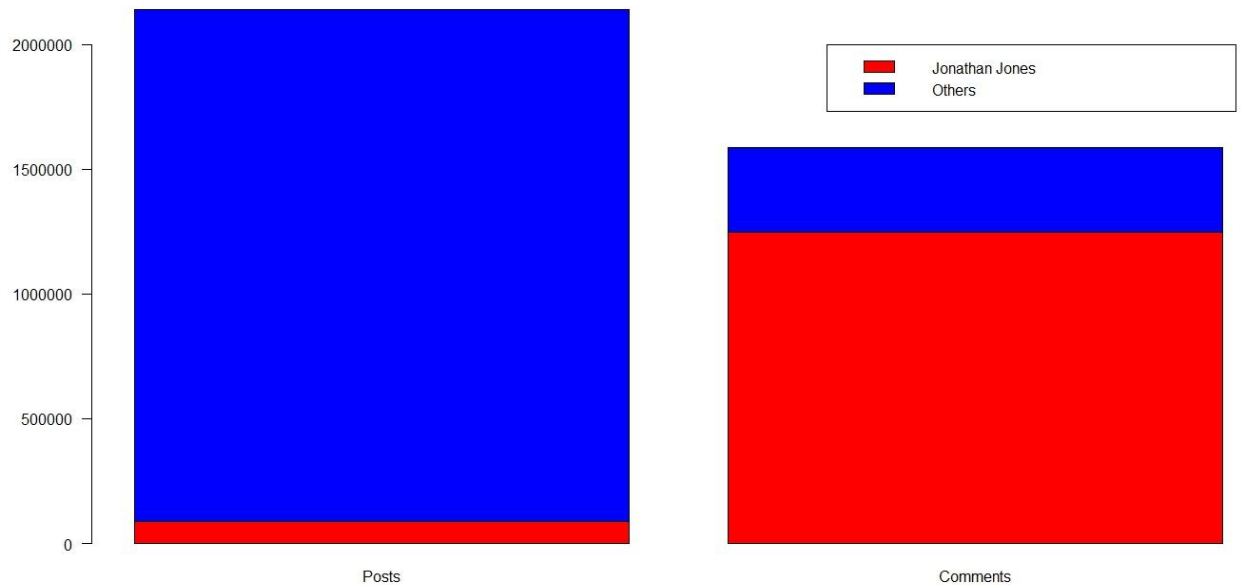


Figure 1.1. *Distribution of Posts and Comments in Jonathan Jones's blog and in the other blogs*

### 1.6.2 The proliferation of comments in Jonathan Jones's blog at *The Guardian*

Nowadays most newspapers allow readers to add comments to their on-line articles. *The Guardian* and *The Daily Telegraph* are two of the five newspapers that have been accepting comments on news articles since November 2006, together with the *Daily Mail*, *Times*, *Scotsman* and *London Evening Standard* (Hermida and Thurman, 2008). Blogs and other social media are changing the ways traditional journalism works (Rettberg 2014: 92). In their study on the comments related to articles from the online version of *The Guardian* between 2007-2010 inclusive, Kehoe and Gee have found out that just a thousand readers are responsible for 33% of all the comments, i.e. a very high proportion, considering that *The Guardian* website gets 90.5 million unique visitors per month (Kehoe and Gee 2012; forthcoming). Thus, according to their findings, on the one hand *The Guardian* attracts active readers more than other websites, and on the other hand, only a few commenters are responsible for a considerable amount of comments. Both these trends have also been observed in the ABC in art critic Jonathan Jones's blog at *The Guardian* (see also Figure 1.1). Although the corpus was not collected with the specific purpose of looking into commenters, some names have a high frequency in the Wordlist:

MrMikeludo, or Mikeludo, for example, one of the most prolific commenters, is quoted 161 times inside the comments in Mr. Jones’s blog. This recent trend contrasts with previous findings by scholars such as Herring and Bolander: the former, for example, considers imbalanced participation as a social characteristic common to all blogs, in as much as the blogger writes most of the text compared to the readers who can only comment (Herring 2007); the latter, using a corpus of eight personal/diary blogs representative for April 2007, observes that “interactions going beyond two (blogger post + reader comment) or three turns (blogger post + reader comment +blogger response to reader comment) are the exceptions.” (Bolander 2013:2). Also Hoffmann (2012) noted that reader-reader interaction occurred rarely.

Jonathan Jones’s blog 2007-2010 (collected through WebCorp) was compared against his blog in 2013 (manually collected); what Table 1.4 shows is the considerable increase of comments within a time span of three years (2010-2013). The number of comments in 2013 almost equals with that of the previous *quadriennium*, a phenomenon which will be explored in the following section.

	2007-2010 (4 years)	2013 (1 year)
Tokens	1,556,338	1,336,490
Posts	214,667	88,688
Comments	1,341,671	1,247,802

Table 1.4. *Comparison of Jonathan Jones’s blog in 2007-2010 and in 2013*

### 1.7 The changing nature of a blog

Blogs, like forums and e-mails, are usually considered as asynchronous media because conversations can take place at different times, allowing for a certain time span between the moment when a post is published and the one when it is read. In fact, what emerges from the previous section is that discussions can evolve very quickly even on these media. The speed of online communication together with the possibility of being always connected are reducing the “waiting-time”, so much so that some commenters, such as Mr Mikeludo for Jonathan Jones’ section, are

transforming the blogs on *The Guardian* website into online-chats, where as soon as an article is published, they are ready to post a comment, no matter what the topic is. However, the presence of archives of blogs posts means that asynchronous communication is also possible, since “conversations don’t have to take place instantaneously” (Rettberg 2014: 74).

## 1.8 Summary

This chapter has provided a description of the the Art Blog Corpus (ABC), a specialised corpus of fifty-four art blogs, which will be analysed extensively and intensively from different points of view throughout the thesis. It has also presented the notions of corpus and corpus linguistics, together with a brief summary of the main functions of the tools used, in order to set the scenario of the current analysis. Web-based corpora have become popular, chiefly due to the ease with which they can be compiled. Nonetheless, the web still remains a vast area of investigation for linguistic purposes.

The chapter also examined some methodological aspects, such as the high number of *hapaxes* (30,126) and the presence of American English and other varieties of English in the corpus. It was pointed out that it is not always possible to identify the nationality of a single blogger or commenter. Both posts and comments are included in the corpus, although it has not always been possible to separate them. The comment section of the blog written by the art critic Jonathan Jones is explored in detail in Section 1.6.2 and supports the study by Kehoe and Gee on the trends of the comments related to articles from the online version of *The Guardian* (Kehoe and Gee, forthcoming). Most significantly, research on blogging comprises several aspects, such as the rapid change of online conversations. Blogs on websites maintained by newspapers, such as *The Guardian*, have become similar to on-line chats, if we consider the speed at which a new comment is added to a post, as shown in Section 1.7. The specificity of art blogs within the field of blogging will be explored in the following chapter.



## Chapter 2

### Blogging

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter deals with the practice of blogging, its history and its development. The first section reviews the relevant literature on the topic, questioning the nature of blogging and its notion as a ‘macro-genre’ (Garzone 2012: 236). Definitions of blogs are explored in Section 2.3, while Section 2.4 situates art blogs under the existing categories of thematic and personal blogging (Krishnamurthy 2002; Herring 2005, Grieve et al. 2011), or ego blogging and topic blogging (Puschmann 2010), by providing examples from the ABC. What emerges is that art blogs are difficult to categorise, because personal and thematic features can coexist in the same post. Finally, blog trends and networks are the topic of Sections 2.5 and 2.6, while some conclusive remarks are found in Section 2.7.

#### 2.2 I blog, therefore I am

An object of recent debate is the issue of whether blogs are still a permanent feature of digital life (Mauranen 2013), or more rapid forms of communication like Twitter, the new social networks - Facebook, My Space -, and social tagging sites, such as Delicious and Flickr are going to replace them soon. It is very difficult to answer this question, since the Internet is continuously being transformed: user-generated content (UGC) media, like Amazon and Tripadvisor, are re-shaping the way we communicate, live and interact. Technorati, one of the most famous real time search-engines dedicated to the blogosphere, has now become a platform of advertising technology specialists building tools that enhance publishers’ revenues, while BlogPulse Live, a search engine and analytic system for blogs, is no longer available on the net. However, despite all the changes and innovations, blogging still prospers and new forms, like micro-blogging (Twitter) and “vlogging” - video blogging - (Frobenius 2014) have become even more popular.

Blogs are of interest to linguists, not only because of the great amounts of data they provide, which allow an extensive exploration of the digital medium, but also because of the role they play in the popularisation of culture, as part of digital publishing. Chapter 5 will investigate the topic of specialisation and popularisation in depth.

The title of this sub-section, also rendered in its Latinate form *Blogito ergo sum*, is a statement first used by a commenter and then by blogger Hasan Nyazi, which offers an interesting view on the issue of blogging as an ontological activity. The questions underlying this section concern the aspects of blogging that have already been studied and the type of research that is lacking.

Blogs have been thoroughly studied in terms of content (Rodzvilla & Blood 2002; Krishnamurthy 2002; Herring et al. 2005; Herring & Paolillo 2006), ethnography (Nardi et al. 2004), power (Bolander 2013) and discourse features (Myers 2010, Hoffmann 2012), while a multimodal discourse analysis has shown important register variation (Grieve et al. 2011). Scholars from different domains pinpoint different aspects. Bolander, for example, within the field of discourse analysis, investigates the language of power in two ways: through models of interaction and through discourse moves of agreement and disagreement. The eight personal blogs analysed in her study are all taken from the same month of the same year, April 2007, they illustrate the discursive practices of single bloggers and their readers and the extent to which power is exercised on the floor. Despite the philosophical basis of the study, most of her findings are of interest to linguists, in particular Computer Mediated Communication (CMC) scholars. One such finding is the fact that commenters tend to respond to bloggers, rather than to other active readers, or that in the comment section the readers tend to maintain the topic raised by the bloggers in their posts and the shift to a new topic is associated with modes of disagreement. Agreements and disagreements can be mostly found in the comments sections and are therefore considered part of expected social practices, with a preference for the former, while disagreement moves can reliably identify dynamics of power. As Puschmann (2010)

points out, the variety of approaches to blogging reflects both the perspectives of a number of disciplines and the multi-faceted hermeneutics of the blogging practice. Other studies are devoted to the history of blogging (see Rodvzilla & Blood 2002; Herring et al. 2004; Crystal 2001/2006) and corporate blogging (Puschmann 2010). Extreme variability characterises whole blogs and single posts and accounts for the absence of exhaustive definitions. The debate is still open on the topic of genre: the ancestors of posts are to be found in the journal and in the diary, those of comments in the commentary text (Miller and Shepherd 2004). Garzone (2012: 236) sees the blog as a ‘macrogenre’, in the sense proposed by Bhatia for letters (2005: 34-37), thus admitting a variety of possible realisations (public affairs blog, corporate blog, political blog), while Mauranen wonders whether we could still talk of only “one type of discourse, or genre,” since “blogs have diversified” (Mauranen 2013:10). When talking about research blogs, she envisages an explosion of blogs on the web, although this steadfast rapid growth is slightly checked by the outbreak of new media services.

Even the identities of bloggers have been studied on a large scale, thanks to the reports of the Pew Research center and of Technorati (Lenhart and Fox 2006; White and Winn 2009). Technorati used to publish an annual ‘State of the Blogosphere’, which was replaced in 2013 by the ‘Digital Influence Report’. The survey carried out in 2011 reported that bloggers updated their blogs more frequently than before and spent more time blogging. As far as the bloggers’ identity is concerned, almost three-fifths were male and a majority were in the 25-44 range. However, it is difficult to retrieve precise statistics, since many blogs are abandoned after a short period of time.

While food blogs (Frigerio 2013; Gerhardt et al. 2014) and fashion blogs (Sedeke and Arora 2013) are well-established genres with their own specific features, art blogs, on the contrary, have never been carefully investigated, notwithstanding the universal importance of art. This study fills this gap, by situating art blogs in the context of traditional blogging practices.

### 2.3 A dynamic definition

The term blog is a clipping of the term ‘weblog’, which was used for the first time in 1997 by John Barger, as reported by the Oxford English Dictionary (henceforth: OED):

“A frequently updated web site consisting of personal observations, excerpts from other sources, etc., typically run by a single person, and usually with hyperlinks to other sites; an online journal or diary.

1997 J. Barger Lively New Webpage in alt.culture.www (Usenet newsgroup) 23 Dec., I decided to start my own webpage logging the best stuff I find as I surf, on a daily basis:..www.mcs.net/~jorn/html/weblog.html. This will cover any and everything that interests me, from net culture to politics to literature etc.”<sup>9</sup>

The use of the clipping ‘blog’ grew to such a degree around 1999 that it entered everyday language and has now totally replaced the term ‘weblog’.

1999 www.bradlands.com (Weblog) 23 May (O.E.D. Archive), Cam points out lemonyellow.com and PeterMe decides the proper way to say ‘weblog’ is ‘wee'-blog’ (Tee-hee!). (Entry “blog” from the OED)<sup>10</sup>

After reviewing the existing literature on blogs and the corresponding definitions, Hoffmann (2012: 18,19) writes his own entry:

“A blog is a frequently updated website consisting of dated entries arranged in reverse chronological order. It can comprise various semiotic modes (audioblogs, vlogs, textblogs, etc.), and is usually constructed by an individual (seldom by a group of collaborative writers). Blogs are accessible and readable by Internet users whose access and level of participation can be constrained by the blog author. Blogs are based on the organisational format of hypertexts which encourage selective readings of blog contents. While some properties of the blog (e.g. entry arrangement, hyperlinks, HTML/XML code) are stable, others come in great variety, such as quality, theme, content, purpose and ambition.”

This apparently exhaustive definition covers different aspects of the *definiendum*, from the points of view of content, mode, author, and property, but it only alludes to comments produced by Internet users. Surprisingly enough, in most definitions of a blog, there is no reference to the comments: blogs are often simply defined as an “archive” of posts (see for example Grieve et al. 2011), while comments are

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/256743#eid11173923>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/256732?rskey=CN4sMN&result=1&isAdvanced=false#eid>



considered as a “recurrent peripheral feature” (Garzone 2012:220). Since blog postings can be very different from comment threads, Chapter 3 adopts multidimensional analysis in order to investigate their textual features.

Blogs have undergone such a radical metamorphosis that in some cases comments have become part of the concept of the blog itself, particularly blogs hosted by newspapers, such as *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Guardian* (see 1.5). According to Garzone (2012: 230), it is in comments that the original spirit of the weblog is still preserved and the interpersonal component emerges. New coinages witness this rapid transformation; the term “commenter”, for example, is now used to designate a reader who intervenes actively leaving his or her own opinions on a blog post. It was documented in Kehoe and Gee’s *Guardian* corpus in the singular form in May 2005 and in the plural in October 2005 for the first time.

Blogs disseminate knowledge to varied, wide, heterogeneous and innumerable audiences, who comment, expose their opinions, but also insult (Kehoe and Gee, forthcoming), apologise (Lutzky and Kehoe, forthcoming), make suggestions, criticise, evaluate, persuade, take up a stance (Myers 2010). On a syntagmatic level, the relationship between blogger and commenter is usually asymmetrical, but can become symmetrical when the reader is himself a blogger (Puschmann 2010:35).

This also happens in the ABC, as we can read in the following extract, from a comment on *Three Pipe Net* (3PP), Hasan Nyazi’s blog, which hosted a post by another blogger, Monica Bowen, historian and Art Professor:

“Thank you for the kind comments, everyone! It was a pleasure to write this post, especially since it gave me an opportunity to reflect upon how my own attitudes and approaches toward art have changed over time. I think one of the exciting things about art is that one's perception different [sic] pieces (or attitude toward art in general) can change over time. And, as I implied in this post, attitudes and perceptions can change when one sees/experiences a work of art in person, as opposed to seeing a reproduction online or in a textbook.

I really enjoyed participating in 3PP's "Why art history?" series; I look forward to more posts on this topic!

Monica” (Alberti's Window) (HNC2013002)

## 2.4 Art Blogs between Thematic and Personal Blogging: In Search of a Re-Definition

Web-based genres are constructed in contextualised discourse, not in a pre-existing community: “it is the context that seems to create genres, and communities emerge around them” (Mauranen, 2013:30). As Hunston pointed out in her plenary talk at Icame 35 on interdisciplinary research discourse, the relationship between context and text is bi-directional: the context determines the text (top-down perspective), but the text, too, constructs the context (bottom-up perspective).

The most common way to define blogs is to distinguish between thematic and personal blogs (Krishnamurthy 2002; Herring 2005, Grieve et al. 2011). Art blogs occasionally bring this common distinction into question, because some of them can be considered as both thematic and personal, so that the categories in this case seem to overlap. A post from the blog *Art History Today*, by David Packwood, on the sudden death of a young art blogger, may help explicate the point:

Extract 1. “Last night I was shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden death of Hasan Niyazi, via colleagues on Facebook. We’d lost touch, but I heard from him twice in the summer when he left a comment on my review of the Barocci exhibition in London praising my unorthodox approach. The very last communication was an email asking me to answer questions about digital art history and blogging, his current project. He was absolutely committed to opening up art history to the general public via the blogosphere. When I first created AHT there wasn’t hardly anything; now, it’s much healthier with many blogs, resources and a growing art history presence. A lot of that is down to him since he was one of the first to ask why art historians don’t blog, that founding question that has led to projects and conversations about art history and the Internet. 3 Pipe Problem<sup>11</sup> was a real innovation and one of the most beautiful art history blogs out there; his ability to combine web technology with accessible art history expertise, with a strong aesthetic sense, was one of his real strengths. He tirelessly campaigned to bring art history within the grasp of everybody, and for that there can be no greater praise. His last post is all about that, but I never imagined the discussion would occur under these circumstances. I was hoping to re-join it with greater fervour than I’ve shown of late. Though he’s gone, the discussion will continue to evolve which I’m sure he would want. As Monica Bowen says in her moving and eloquent tribute to him, Hasan was “passionate about Raphael”. He created, sadly unfinished, an online database of Raphael’s paintings and even attended Raphael conferences as an independent scholar. I’ve no idea which was his favourite Raphael- so I’ve chosen one for him: the Self-

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<sup>11</sup> The reference here is to the Australian blog Three pipe net: <http://www.3pipe.net/>

Portrait with a Friend in the Louvre. Art and Friendship in the on-line blogging community.” (HT2013010)

In this post, the thematic and the personal aspect are intertwined and cannot be really separated. The focus in Extract 1 is on the blogger’s thoughts, emotions and experiences (*I was shocked and saddened to hear that...*), rather than on the external world, the world of art. The audience is generic (other art lovers), but the tone is familiar and laudatory (*He tirelessly campaigned to bring art history within the grasp of everybody, and for that there can be no greater praise*).

On the same topic, Puschmann (2010) pinpoints two different approaches to blog-writing: ego-blogging and topic-blogging and recaps in a table - presented in a simplified form here, limited to the first four features - the different aspects of each of the two blog types. While the ego blogger has a narrow well-known audience, i.e. the family and his friends, the topic blogger usually addresses a wider generic audience. They also have different functions, in that “the former relates to the blogger’s personal life, his experiences and reflections, while the latter is centered on a topic external to the blogger” (Puschmann 2010:41).

Facet	Ego Blogging	Topic Blogging
Text/Content	Focus on the internal world	Focus on the external world
Conceptualised audience	Familiar and specific (self, family, friends)	Unfamiliar and generic
Audience Scope	Narrow	Wide
Functions	Internal, e.g.: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Record and reflect one’s life</li> <li>2. Stabilize self</li> <li>3. Control and record own thought process</li> <li>4. Maintain and reinforce existing relationships</li> <li>5. Establish structure, causality, order and safety</li> </ol>	External, e.g.: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Inform others</li> <li>2. Indicate a stance to others</li> <li>3. Influence others</li> <li>4. Gain recognition</li> <li>5. Acquire expert status</li> </ol>

Table 2.1. *Ego Blogging and Topic Blogging*

These approaches “are not mutually exclusive, but represent the ends of a scale between which bloggers switch from one post to the next and even inside a single post” (Puschmann 2010: 69). As a matter of fact, a clear-cut distinction is impossible

for some posts of art blogs, such as the post in Example 1 from *Art History Today*, which covers functions of both ego and topic blogging.

A post from Monica Bowen's blog, *Alberti Windows*, on the same topic as the first example, is even more explicative of this blended style, where the personal and the thematic levels coexist:

Extract 2. "This afternoon I have had a line related to Vasari's *Lives of the Artists* go through my head repeatedly. This line comes from part of the biography on the Renaissance artist Raphael, in conjunction with Raphael's painting (sic) *The Transfiguration of Christ* painting (see above): "For Giulio Cardinal de' Medici he painted the *Transfiguration of Christ*, and brought it to the greatest perfection, working at it continually with his own hand, and it seemed as if he put forth all his strength to show the power of art in the face of Christ; and having finished it, as the last thing he had to do, he laid aside his pencil, death overtaking him." Despite what one may believe in relation to divine callings or destiny, I think we can all agree that Raphael's early death, at the age of thirty-seven, was premature in relation to his talent and potential. The same should be said of my amazing friend, Hasan Niyazi of *Three Pipe Problem*, who just passed away unexpectedly. Hasan was passionate about Raphael, and committed himself to creating an open-access database, *Open Raphael Online*. This project was an enormous undertaking, and Hasan "work[ed] at it continually with his own hand," much like how Raphael labored with his painting. Raphael did not live to see the completion of *The Transfiguration of Christ*, similar to how Hasan passed away before his own project was finished. Hasan died when he was barely thirty-eight years old; Raphael died when he was thirty-seven. I think that theme (sic) of this painting is fitting as a tribute for Hasan in many ways, given that "transfigure" means to transform into something that is more beautiful and elevated. In this painting, Christ is transfigured into a beautiful, shining, divine figure, right in front of his apostles. Compositionally, the *Transfiguration* scene appears above an additional scene in the lower foreground, in which the apostles try to cast devils out of a boy (who medical experts have identified as one coming out of an epileptic seizure). In line with the themes of this painting, Hasan strove to elevate his own body and mind into something continually more refined and perfected. He was passionate about learning and had an excellent mind. Hasan was also committed to exercise and running, his work in the health profession, and his stalwart dedication in the art history online community. Although he was not formally trained in art history, Hasan applied his medical and scientific knowledge to learn about and analyze paintings from a technical perspective. He loved beautiful things, and continually sought to fill his mind and eyes with beautiful art, poetry, music, and ideas. He was very intelligent and talented in so many ways. I am particularly grateful that Hasan sought to connect with art history individuals on a personal level. In many respects, he helped to hold the online art history community together. When I last wrote Hasan an email, I was sitting in an airport, waiting to board an international flight. I had just finished reading a passage on Raphael in Balzac's *The Unknown Masterpiece*, and I wanted to share it with Hasan right away. I quickly typed it into my phone before boarding my plane: "[Raphael's] great superiority is due to the instinctive sense which, in him, seems to desire to shatter form. Form is, in

his figures, what it is in ourselves, an interpreter for the communication of ideas and sensations, an exhaustless source of poetic inspiration. Every figure is a world in itself, a portrait of which the original appeared in a sublime vision, in a flood of light, pointed to by an inward voice, laid bare by a divine finger which showed what the sources of expression had been in the whole past life of the subject.” Like Raphael, Hasan was also a source of inspiration and beautiful ideas. In a way, I think his dedication to digital humanities and accessible information across the globe has parallels with Raphael’s “desire to shatter form.” Hasan’s sincerity, kindness and thoughtfulness were quite unmatched. Unsurprisingly, he made friends all over the world. I feel very lucky to have known him. His death is truly a great loss to all of us.”

This post displays all the functions of topic blogging, since:

- a) it informs (*“transfigure” means to transform into something that is more beautiful and elevated*),
- b) it indicates a stance (*despite what one may believe in relation to divine callings or destiny, I think we can all agree that Raphael’s early death, at the age of thirty-seven, was premature in relation to his talent and potential*),
- c) it influences (*this project was an enormous undertaking, and Hasan “work[ed] at it continually with his own hand,” much like how Raphael labored with his painting*),
- d) it acquires expert status (*this line comes from part of the biography on the Renaissance artist Raphael, in conjunction with Raphael’s painting*).

It also acknowledges the main functions of ego blogging, in so far as:

- a) it reflects the blogger’s life (*When I last wrote Hasan an email, I was sitting in an airport, waiting to board an international flight*),
- b) it stabilises self (*I feel very lucky to have known him*),
- c) it maintains and reinforces relationships (*His death is truly a great loss to all of us*) and
- d) it establishes order and safety (*I am particularly grateful that Hasan sought to connect with art history individuals on a personal level. In many respects, he helped to hold the online art history community together*).

## 2.5 Blog Trends

The Google Trend Chart allows Internet users to explore the history and geography of a topic as it evolves in time; for example, the term “blog” increased progressively in popularity until 2009 and then began to slightly decrease<sup>12</sup>. Indeed, blogging is merging with newer forms of CMC. Another tool can be useful is the Google N-Gram Viewer (Michel et al. 2011) which displays on a graph how words have occurred in a chosen corpus of books over a selected period. As can be seen in Figure 2.1, the term “blog” in this case increases constantly over the years in a corpus of English books, although it is only possible to visualise the results until 2008. Both Google Trend Chart and Google N-Gram Viewer help research within the field of *Culturomics*, that is the application of data and their analysis to the study of human culture<sup>13</sup>. These tools, integrated with discourse analysis and close reading, can help historians and corpus linguists explore their texts. In this perspective, the ABC can be seen as a source of cultural information and artistic trends.

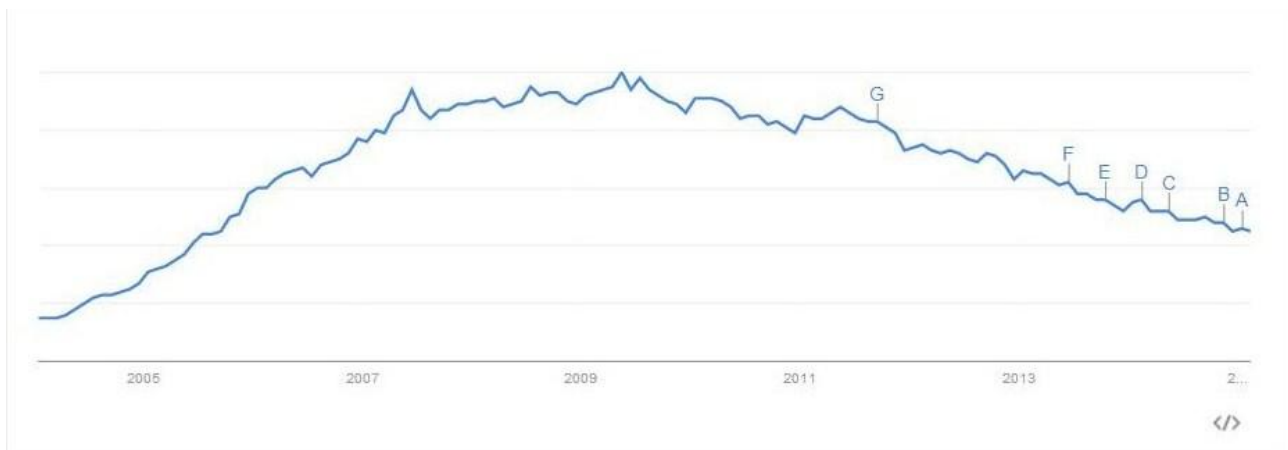


Figure 2.1 *The Google Trend Chart showing searches for 'Blog' from 2005 until 2014.*

<sup>12</sup> When performing a search on Google Trends, you have the option to set a variable or a parameter for all the four groups, otherwise the default search is the first listed: Web Search (Image search, News Search, Product Search, YouTube Search); Worldwide (Option to choose a specific Country); 2004-Present (Past 7 Days, 30 Days, 90 Days, 12 Months, Choose a Year); All Categories (Arts & Entertainment, Autos & Vehicles, Beauty & fitness, Books & literature, Business & industrial, Computers & electronics, Finance, Food & drink, Games). The search of the term blog used the default terms.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.culturomics.org/>

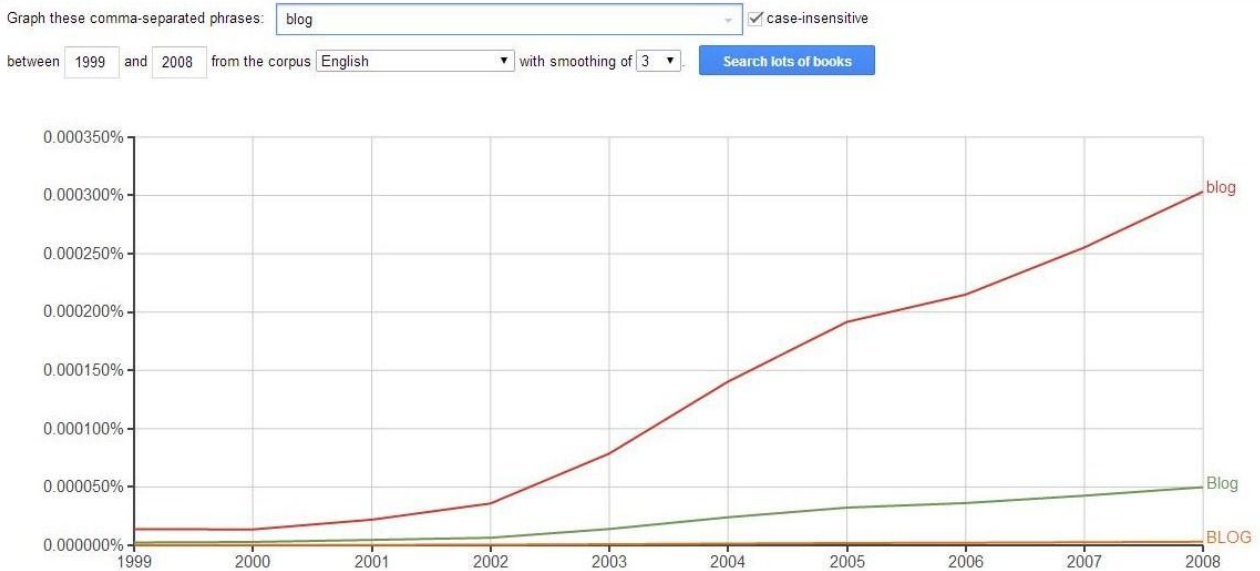


Figure 2.2 The Google N-Gram Viewer showing the word “blog” from 1999 until 2008.

## 2.6 Networks

Blogs are intrinsically social, in that bloggers write for a readership, as Rettberg points out (2014: 62). Patterns and connections between different blogs can be traced through links, blogrolls (lists of other blogs) and commenters. As Chapter 1 has shown, the original list of blogs inserted in the ABC was later extended because of these cross-references: many blogs have blog-rolls or links to other similar weblogs, sometimes highlighting the name of their favourite bloggers, considered as part of the same art community, or “blogosphere,” to such an extent that the names of some bloggers can be recurrently found in the comments of several blogs, as in the following exchange in the comment section of *Three Pipe Net*, where Hasan Nyazi replies to a comment by the blogger Sedef, while Monica Bowen, another blogger, leaves a comment, as well:

“Lovely post, Sedef! I wish that I had known about the Church of St. Polyeuktos when I was at the Istanbul Archaeological Museum last summer. Nonetheless, I'm glad that I was able to revisit Turkey through your trips.

I know that the peacock was a symbol of immortality and resurrection for the early Christians, since it was thought that the flesh of the bird was incapable of decay. I assume that similar symbolism pertains to the peacock imagery in the apse of this church? Monica” (HNC2013008)

Blogs are organised as *distributed* networks, where each blog links to other individual blogs (Rettberg 2014: 69). Since there is no uniform distribution in these networks, one blog can have far more links than another. If we take each blog as a node, we can imagine a number of nodes with several different connections, each node in the network being unique. Sometimes bloggers post their opinions on other bloggers, such as in the following extract by Michael Savage, author of *The Grumpy Art Historian*, who praises some art blogs – most of which have been included in the ABC - with all due reservations.

Extract 3. “A reader asks which blogs I read, so here are some recommendations. Art History News always picks out the key stories with pithy and insightful commentary (helps that I almost always agree, too!). I love Alberti’s Window, 3 pipe Problem died in October (as Raphael’s fan - what’s not to like?) and *The Frame Blog*- all of these are refreshingly upbeat and a great contrast to my brand of miserablism. These blogs are deservedly famous and much-visited; I can’t fail to include them on my list, but they scarcely need my endorsement. *The Idle Woman* is updated very regularly with substantive reviews of films, books and exhibitions. Well-written, thoughtful and always a good source for interesting things I haven’t otherwise come across. *Rembrandt’s Room* is recently launched, and it’s tremendous. Fascinating detailed posts, including a wonderful discussion of Sweerts, an obscure artist particularly liked by the GAH. David Packwood’s blog is updated less often, but it’s always interesting and his posts stand the test of time. Well worth dipping into his back catalogue. He’s also launched some excellent subsidiary blogs related to his teaching. *Artwatch* is simply the most important group in the artworld, calling attention to the depredations of art through bad restoration practices, the risks of damage as art travels around an endless cycle of blockbuster shows, and much else. Posts are thorough, substantive and damning. In theory I think it’s important to read blogs with a different perspective, but it’s too easy to get stuck reading things you like. I recommend *Museum 2.0*. I disagree with almost every word of it; all of its prejudices are contrary to mine. But it’s well-written and thoughtful, so have a look and Know Your Enemy. Outside art, I rely on ...”

Michal Savage, *The Grumpy Art Historian*,  
([http://grumpyarthistorian.blogspot.it/2013/09/great-blogs\\_25.html](http://grumpyarthistorian.blogspot.it/2013/09/great-blogs_25.html))

A well known computer-mediated communication scholar, danah boyd (who purposely does not capitalise her name) refers to the public display of one’s social network, with the term *publicly articulated relationships* (boyd 2004). In a later work, she identifies four distinctive characteristics of online social spaces – which are: persistence, searchability, replicability and invisible audiences (boyd 2007: 126). Blogs are *persistent*, in that their entries are recorded and kept in archives which can



be investigated; they are *searchable*, in that they can be found online with a simple click; they are *replicable*, because their content can be copied and pasted elsewhere: the ABC or any other web-based corpus is an example; they have invisible audiences, in that anyone with an Internet connection can read a blog.

## 2.7 Conclusions

Blogging still prospers on the net, despite the fact that new social media offer both more interactional synchronous possibilities to web surfers and new services, such as status updates on Facebook, Friendster (boyd 2006), or short concise messages via Twitter (boyd, Golder, and Lotan 2010; Honeycutt and Herring 2009; Java et al. 2007). What emerges from the posts reported and analysed is that art blogs represent a particular micro-genre, in that they are not easily included in any given categorisation and therefore need a holistic blended approach. In a sense, they have to be studied *per se*, since the traditional distinction between personal and thematic blogging does not hold for art blogs, which show features of both types. Regarding trends, they contain a cross-section of artistic tendencies, thus offering an interesting sociological perspective. Moreover, many art bloggers are intertwined in a network of relationships and actively respond with comments to other bloggers' posts. The difference between posts and comments will be thoroughly investigated in the next chapter.



## Chapter 3

### Posts and Comments: two different text types?

#### 3.1 Introduction

It would seem that fine art blogs have not been the attention of much scientific research, unlike art-historical research articles (Tucker 2003), exhibition press announcements (Lazzeretti & Bondi 2012; Lazzeretti 2014) or exhibition reviews (Tucker 2013), despite the increasing spread and versatility of the medium (Mauranen 2013). The present chapter investigates the text typology of posts and comments in a sample of the ABC, making use of three different analyses. Section 3.4 presents the analysis carried out using a Multidimensional Analysis Tagger (MAT), developed in order to replicate the tagger that Biber (1989) used to develop his theory of text typology and recently made available online (Nini 2014). The software processed all the files of the sample of the ABC (Section 3.3.1) and, following Biber's categorisation into eight text typologies, assigned each file a text type. The analysis showed that posts are mainly narrative, since most of them belong to text type 6, labelled General narrative exposition, and comments are mainly argumentative, in the majority of cases showing features of text type 8, Involved Persuasion. Previous research on personal blogging (Hoffmann 2012) is also reported in a comparative view. As Mauranen noted during her Plenary Talk at Clavier (2013), there can be a significant variation in terms of register and style between posts and comments, since comments share features with the mixed oral/written modality characterising CMC (Crystal 2001/2006). Having established the difference between posts and comments, Sections 3.5 and 3.6 narrow the scope and provide two other analyses which examine this difference in detail. The first analysis, a keyword comparison, reveals that posts have a preference for nouns and comments for functional words; the second, a semantic comparison, confirms and extends the findings of the first. As reported in Section 3.7, all the analyses seem to indicate that, despite sharing the same topic of art, bloggers and commenters adopt different resources.

### 3.2.1 Biber's Multi-Dimensional Analysis and text typology

In this sub-section, Multi-Dimensional-Analysis helps investigate the extent to which posts and comments resemble or differ from each other in terms of their linguistic features. The first analysis, carried out on a sample of the ABC, made use of MAT<sup>14</sup>, a Multidimensional Analysis Tagger developed by Nini (2014), which replicates Biber's tagger for the Multidimensional functional analysis of texts reported in *Variation Across Speech and Writing* (1988). The program plotted the sub-*corpora* of posts and comments in a sample of the ABC and determined the closest text type, following the methodology proposed in Biber (1989). In this article, Biber classifies individual texts according to five sets of syntactic and lexical features, or "Dimensions" of variation:

1. Involved vs. Informational Orientation
2. Narrative vs. Non-narrative Concerns
3. Explicit vs. Situation-dependent Reference
4. Overt Expression of Persuasion
5. Abstract vs. Non-abstract Style

### 3.2.2 Summary of Biber's text types

The Dimensions are identified empirically by multivariate quantitative methods and eight text types are distinguished according to the co-occurrence of their predominant linguistic characteristics. Only the first five Dimensions are used by Biber (1989) to identify the text types.

Text type 1. Intimate Interpersonal Interaction (immediate interaction is the linguistic characterisation of the texts, mainly spoken, grouped under this label)

Text type 2. Informational Interaction (with a relevant informational focus)

Text type 3. 'Scientific' Exposition (informational, elaborated, technical and abstract)

Text type 4. Learned Exposition (less abstract and less technical than text type 3)

Text type 5. Imaginative Narrative (primarily narrative, relatively involved)

Text type 6. General Narrative Exposition (the most general narrative text type)

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<sup>14</sup> MAT, which was presented at ICAME 35, only runs on Windows and can be freely downloaded from the Internet at <https://sites.google.com/site/multidimensionaltagger>.

Text type 7. Situated Reportage (for on-going events)

Text type 8. Involved Persuasion (with a primary persuasive and a secondary involved focus).

### 3.3.1 Technical procedure: the blogs included in the sample

From a technical point of view, since MAT uses the Stanford Tagger which requires the UTF-8 encoding, the text files of the ABC encoded in UNICODE had to be manually converted to the UTF-8 format. Thus, a sample of 15 blogs from the ABC (called the ABC for MAT, henceforth ABM) was converted to the encoding required and processed to identify the closest text type for each file corresponding either to a single post or to an entire comment thread. The blogs selected for inclusion in ABM are listed in Table 3.1.

From the UK:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Art in Cambridge</li><li>2. Alastair Sooke's blog</li><li>3. British Museum</li><li>4. Catherine Allen on Nottingham arts</li><li>5. Charlotte Higgins at the Guardian</li><li>6. Chloé Nelkin Consulting on London art</li><li>7. Art Blog at the Daily Telegraph</li></ol>
From the US:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>8. Alberti's Window</li><li>9. Caravaggista</li><li>10. Christine Day Dream Tourist</li><li>11. Giorgione Tempesta</li><li>12. This Write Life</li></ol>
Others:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>13. Art travel, Canadian living in Florence</li><li>14. Jonathan Jones at the Guardian, UK, comments UK and USA</li><li>15. Maryanne Dair Australia</li></ol>

Table 3.1. *Blogs included in the ABM*

The ABM is a sample which claims to provide a representative snapshot of the ABC. The total number of tokens in comments is higher than the one in posts, as happens in the ABC. The composition of the corpus can be seen in Table 3.2.

Name of the corpus	ABM
Total number of tokens	1,767,495
Tokens in Posts	378,088 (709 files)
Tokens in Comments	1,389,407 (429 files)

Table 3.2. *Description of the ABM*

### 3.3.2 Tagging

The corpus was automatically tagged by MAT with the Stanford tagger<sup>15</sup>. MAT generates a grammatically annotated version of the corpus selected as well as the statistics needed to perform a text-type analysis. First, a copy of the Stanford Tagger is run automatically to produce a preliminary grammatical analysis, then the Stanford Tagger tag set is expanded by identifying the linguistic features used in Biber (1988). Extract 1 illustrates a tagged sentence from the ABM. An extensive description of the tagger can be found in the online manual.

Extract 1.

If\_IN Leonardo\_NNP da\_NNP Vinci\_NNP 's\_VBZ uncannily\_RB accurate\_JJ studies\_NNS of\_IN the\_DT human\_JJ body\_NN had\_VBD been\_VBN published\_VBN in\_IN his\_PRP\$ lifetime\_NN ,\_, they\_PRP would\_MD have\_VB changed\_VBN the\_DT course\_NN of\_IN science\_NN ,\_, says\_VBZ Alastair\_NNP Sooke\_NNP .\_.  
 One\_CD day\_NN ,\_, probably\_RB during\_IN the\_DT winter\_NN of\_IN 1507-08\_CD ,\_, Leonardo\_NNP da\_NNP Vinci\_NNP found\_VBD himself\_PRP chatting\_VBG with\_IN an\_DT old\_JJ man\_NN in\_IN the\_DT hospital\_NN of\_IN Santa\_NNP Maria\_NNP Nuova\_NNP in\_IN Florence\_NNP .\_. (AS2013014)

Each word is followed by underscore \_ after it and the tag. Some words are not tagged exactly (e.g. the Italian preposition *da* is interpreted as a noun, not as a preposition), but the software proved mostly successful in replicating Biber's (1988) analysis (Nini 2014).

<sup>15</sup> <http://nlp.stanford.edu/software/tagger.shtml>.

### 3.4 The text-type analysis

The results of the analysis carried out on MAT indicate that the closest text type for art blog posts is General narrative exposition, text type 6, whereas for comments it is Involved persuasion, text type 8, thus signalling an important difference between the two. Figures 3.1 and 3.2 are graphs plotted by MAT, which can visualise the location of the analysed corpus in relation to Biber's (1989) eight text types. The closest text type appears next to the title of the graph.

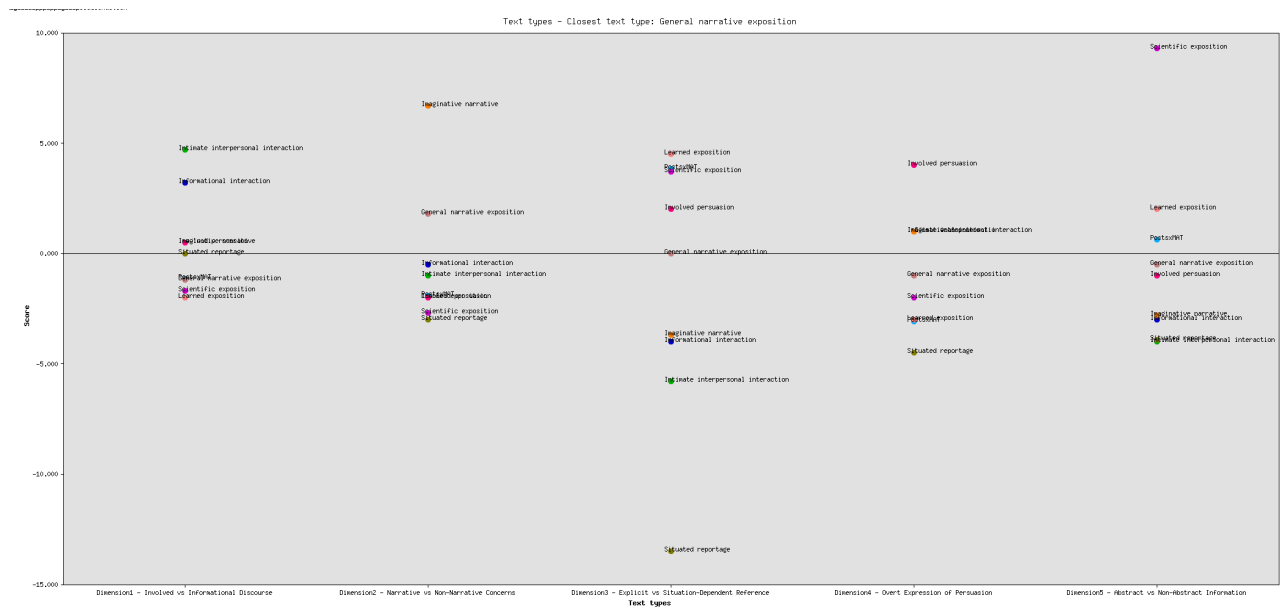


Figure 3.1. Plot of Posts of the ABM

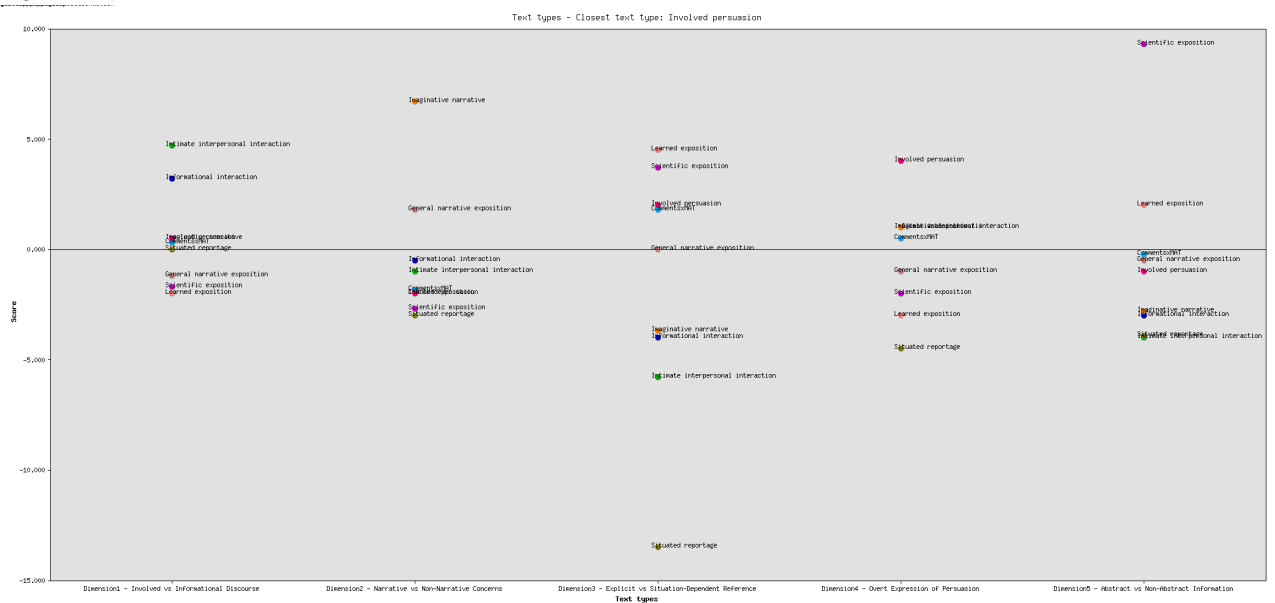


Figure 3.2. Plot of Comments of the ABM

It is worth analysing the composition of the ABM in terms of Biber's text types, as shown in Table 3.3. The same text types appear in the two lists, except for the first one, intimate interpersonal interaction, present only in the comments, although with a very low percentage. Text types 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 are generally under-represented, which means that only three text types show a significant presence: learned exposition, general narrative exposition and involved persuasion. The most striking difference between posts and comments is text type 8, involved persuasion, which accounts for more than half of the comments but represents only a little percentage of the posts. As pointed out by Hoffmann (2012: 149), blog comments are characterised by a hybridity of texts, which are only partly narrative. Considering the limited presence of text types 1 and 2, there is little interaction within blog posts and comments, a conclusion in line with Hoffmann's study (2012), which demonstrates that also interaction between blog entries and comments is limited. Finally, the data presented here reveal that entries and comments differ in terms of text-types: blog entries are predominantly narrative, while comment sections argumentative.

Text Type	Posts	Percentage	Threads of comments	Percentage
1. Intimate interpersonal interaction	0	0%	4	0.9%
2. Informational interaction	1	0.1%	26	6.1%
3. Scientific exposition	58	8.2%	8	1.9%
4. Learned exposition	272	38.4%	20	4.7%
5. Imaginative narrative	2	0.3%	12	2.8%
6. General narrative exposition	315	<b>44.5%</b>	72	16.8%
7. Situated reportage	2	0.3%	6	1.3%
8. Involved persuasion	58	8.2%	281	<b>65.5%</b>

Table 3.3. *Posts and Comments of the ABM*



### 3.5 Keyword lists

Another way to investigate textual differences is by analysing lists of words, called keyword lists, compared against a reference corpus. This process was carried out for the posts and the comments of the ABC, using the Keyword function in *Wordsmith Tools*, and the whole ABC as a reference corpus. Key words are not the most frequent words, but the words which are most unusually frequent in the corpus, compared to another corpus. They usually contribute to showing what the text is about.

Key-ness refers to the quality a word has of being “key” in its context. A word with positive keyness occurs more often than would be expected by chance in comparison with the reference corpus (Scott 2012). The list is ordered in terms of “key-ness” and the first forty words are thoroughly compared.

Many observations can be made on the words listed. Posts seem to privilege content words, such as common nouns from the field of arts (*museum, gallery, pastel, collection, oil, director, frame, design, project, canvas, portrait*), two capital cities with museums and art galleries: *London* and *Paris*, prepositions (*by, from, on, at, of*), the positive adjectives *new* and *creative*, and the shortened form *cm* for centimetres, evidently connected to the size of a work of art. Comments, on the other hand, abound with function words, like personal pronouns (*I, you, they, me*), auxiliaries (*don’t, do, did*), adverbs (*actually, just*) and conjunctions (*because, so, but*). Frequently used verbs (*think, say, know*) and *be*-constructions (*is, it’s, that’s*) are also found, while the only two nouns are *people* and *Jonathan*, clearly referring to Jonathan Jones.

	Posts	Keyness	Comments	Keyness
1	#	14,622	I	2,842
2	S	7,226	YOU	2,583
3	THE	2,543	THAT	1,516
4	IN	1,709	NOT	920
5	MUSEUM	1,243	BECAUSE	813
6	CM	1,077	IS	764
7	BY	1,055	DON’T	754
8	NEW	898	WHAT	750

9	FROM	897	IT	727
10	GALLERY	880	ACTUALLY	670
11	HER	862	BUT	619
12	PASTEL	778	SO	610
13	COLLECTION	753	DO	594
14	LONDON	732	THINK	514
15	OIL	722	YOUR	475
16	X	672	NO	468
17	DIRECTOR	657	IT'S	459
18	ON	635	IF	453
19	FRAME	610	THEY	449
20	AT	570	PEOPLE	445.89
21	OF	529	JUST	445.07
22	YEAR	509	SAY	444
23	DESIGN	506	ME	424
24	PROJECT	486	OR	422
25	CREATIVE	474	DID	404
26	CANVAS	469	KNOW	397
27	PORTRAIT	452	LIKE	393
28	PARIS	432	ALL	386
29	CITY	430	THAT'S	384
30	YORK	417	POINT	374

Table 3.4 *Keyword lists of posts and comments in the ABC*

### 3.6 WMatrix semantic comparisons

WMatrix, developed by Rayson (Rayson 2009), is a tool which provides a semantic comparison between a text and a reference corpus. An analysis was carried out on two randomised samples of posts (260,141 tokens) collected in a single file, and comments (342,873 tokens), also pasted into a single file, to see their key semantic domains. The results expanded what had already been observed through the keyword analysis (see previous section). Posts versus comments are found in the first

column, comments versus posts in the second one. The first 40 elements, sorted on Log-Likelihood<sup>16</sup> (LL), are taken into consideration.

In Table 3.5, the classifying tags are compared to facilitate a contrastive analysis between blogs entries and comments. Both geographical and proper names, on the top of the post list, and pronouns, which come first in the comments, confirm the findings of the keyword analysis. By looking at the posts, references to time - “period”, “new and young”, “momentary”, “future” and “beginning” - and to the media - “TV, radio and cinema”, and books- are numerous. Numbers rank second, probably because of the abundance of time tags. Entertainment and the arts - “drama, the theatre and show business” - are also present, together with various social activities: “belonging to a group”, “helping”, “education in general”, “participating”, “social actions, states and processes”. Business is named twice, both “generally”, and “selling”, as substances and materials, in both their “solid” and “liquid” form.

Comments have a very different profile, since pronouns and function words play the main role. It should be noted that whenever a writer expresses his opinions, he encodes his point of view towards it (Stubbs 1996). In that respect, evaluative language - “authentic”, “true”, “inaccurate”, “bad” – is frequently used and many words convey a feeling of negation: “negative”, “unimportant”, “uninterested/ bored/ unenergetic”, “unethical”, “inability/ unintelligence”, “dislike”. Comparative tags – “similar”, “different”- alternate with degrees – “boosters”, “diminishers”, “minimizers”, “compromisers”.

Ranking	Posts versus Comments	Comments versus Posts
1.	Geographical names	Pronouns
2.	Numbers	Negative
3.	Time: period	Existing
4.	Other proper names	Discourse bin

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<sup>16</sup> Log-Likelihood is a function of the parameters of a statistical model and it is automatically calculated by WMatrix.

5.	Personal names	Likely
6.	Places	Evaluation: authentic
7.	Grammatical bin	Exclusivizers/ particularizers
8.	Information technology and computing	Thought, belief
9.	Business: generally	If
10.	Open; finding; showing	Evaluation: true
11.	Clothes and personal belonging	Speech: communicative
12.	Entertainment generally	Comparing: different
13.	Substances and materials: solid	Strong obligation or necessity
14.	In power	Degree: boosters
15.	Drama, the theatre and show business	Foolish
16.	Inclusion	Comparing: similar
17.	Plants	Understanding
18.	Time: New and young	Language, speech, and grammar
19.	Business. Selling	Evaluation: inaccurate
20.	Time: momentary	Entire; maximum
21.	<u>The Media: TV, radio and cinema</u>	Degree: diminishers
22.	Unmatched	Speech acts
23.	Substances and materials: liquid	Like
24.	Belonging to a group	Cause and Effect
25.	Helping	Degree: minimizers
26.	Time: future	Psychological
27.	Industry	Evaluation: bad
28.	Education in general	People
29.	Geographical terms	Comparing: similar
30.	Measurement: Distance	Degree: compromisers
31.	Moving, coming and going	Unimportant
32.	<u>The Media</u>	Politics
33.	Warfare, defence and the army, weapons	Mathematics
34.	<u>The Media: books</u>	Uninterested/bored/unenergetic
35.	Giving	Unethical
36.	Sailing, swimming, etc.	Sensory: sight
37.	Participating	Selfish
38.	Social Actions, states, and processes	General ethics
39.	Time: beginning	Inability/unintelligence
40.	General appearance and physical properties	Dislike

Table 3.5 Comparison of classifying tags of posts and comments

### 3.7 Conclusions

A multidimensional analysis on a sample of the ABC has shown that posts and comments have different textual features. According to Biber's (1988) categorisation, most of the posts can be included under the general narrative text type, text-type 6,

while the comments are mostly characterised by text-type 8, labelled involved persuasion. The analysis has made use of MAT (Multidimensional Analysis Tagger), a free software which replicates Biber's methodology (Nini 2014) and, as a side issue, MAT has been tested for the first time on a blog corpus.

The keyword list comparison on the posts and the comments of the ABC resulted in a clear separation between content words (posts) and function words (comments), while the semantic comparison of WMatrix helped investigate the most meaningful clusters of words. From these results we may come to the conclusion that posts and comments in art blogs are almost two different genres. The following chapter will deal with linguistic creativity in a sample of posts and comments and will assess the presence in the ABC of creative interactive outputs.



## Chapter 4

### A Contrastive Study of Popularisation in two Specialised Art Corpora: the ABC and the E-flux

#### 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the degree to which art blogs are specialised or popularised, by comparing two art corpora: the ABC with the E-flux. Section 4.2. examines the literature surrounding the concept of popularisation, i.e. the discourse of a discipline written for the general public. The present study tries to answer the questions of whether this concept, already used to describe the general practice of blogging (Mauranen 2013), can be extended to art blogging and to what extent the different practices of popularisation, as identified by Calsamiglia and Van Dijk (2004) are present in the two art corpora.

Section 4.3 presents the E-flux, a corpus of 6,238,592 tokens of art news digests available on the SketchEngine (Kilgarriff et al. 2014), chosen because - at the time of writing - it has not yet been investigated and it is one of the few existing art corpora. In the present analysis, the lexis of the ABC is compared against that of the E-flux. The main topic of Section 4.4 is the language of E-flux, described as IAE, or International Art English, in an online article (Rule and Levine 2012) which states that the digital press release makes use of a very specialised language - now adopted by people actively involved in art from all over the world – with its own features. Sections 4.5 to 4.7 analyse the language of art in a traditional text-type (art exhibition announcements) and in a new text-type (blogging), by identifying common practices of denomination or designation, definition, reformulation or paraphrase, analogy or association, generalisation, exemplification and explication. Only some expressions related to the practices of popularisation are automatically identified and a specific test, the chi-square test (see Section 4.6), is run to assess their significance through R, a statistical programme. A qualitative study based on the same practices is carried out in Section 4.8, while Section 4.9 summarises the findings.

## 4.2 The literature on popularisation

Technological and scientific knowledge is popularised and disseminated among the public at large in different ways (Gregory and Miller 1998; Koskela 2002; Irwin and Michael 2003), but the concept of popularisation has also been used to describe the practice of blogging (Puschmann 2010). As pointed out by Mauranen, research blogs are a way of “building new bridges between the interested layman and the professional expert” (2013:32), while Henriksen and Frøyland (2000: 393) make a list of the possible arguments responsible for this process: the practical, the democratic (civic), the cultural and the economic argument. The spread of the daily or weekly press, and the advent of online journalism have introduced new discursive practices of communication. In this regard, new perspectives have been opened up for scholars of computer-mediated communication (CMC), who study topics that range from blogging to twittering. Considering the speed with which the web is evolving, the investigation of linguistic variation among different digital text-types has become a key issue.

Linguistic variation has been given importance in the functionalist-oriented area of linguistics, including the neo-Firthian school (Hunston and Francis 2000; Partington 1998; Sinclair 1991), and has become central in sociolinguistics. Different degrees or dimensions of variation can be identified and some descriptive models have been proposed. Clôitre and Shinn (1985), for example, outline a flexible model which makes use of four levels to describe written specialised communication: intra-specialistic, inter-specialistic, didactic and popular. Gotti (1991:10) identifies three different situations in which a specialist may address the topic relating to his/her profession: from specialist to specialist (peer to peer), from specialist to non-specialist and from specialist to lay public. Art blogs swing between an intra-specialistic level where communication is from specialist to specialist within the same disciplinary field (examples being blogs such as *The Frame Blog*, *Artwatch*), and a popular level, where communication is from specialist to layman, e.g. from scholars, experts (See Example 1), or journalists to the general public (as in Alastair



Sooke's and Jonathan Jones' blogs). Example 1 reports the presentation page of one of the art blogs of the ABC, *I've got some art stuck in my eyes*,<sup>17</sup> where the readers are invited to leave their opinions behind and go on a virtual artistic journey: the blogger explicitly aims at making art accessible and comprehensible to anybody, showing its human side.

1. "Welcome! I heard someone say today, as she was reading a quote out loud, "This is an art historian, and you can never understand them." And I thought, yes, that reputation, though not true across the board, is in general well deserved. Which is why my goals here are about making art accessible, whether it's current art or art history; to show people that you can talk about more than pretty colors (which is fine, of course!) without pretension or snobbiness; that art is not about being right or wrong, but about being moved, or challenged, or about learning something. It's about revelation and epiphanies, connecting with the past, and living in your present. So grab your coffee or tea and hang out with me virtually, and feel free to comment –I'd like to hear what you have to say!"

An example of an intra-specialised level of art communication is provided by art announcements written by curators of exhibitions, such as the E-flux, a corpus of art news digests, which will be illustrated in the following section. A short extract from that corpus, provided in Example 2, shows the level of complexity that an intra-specialised artistic communication can reach:

2. "This Biennial is an attempt to allow the local reality become a space of flux and connection between cultures — and global is the cultural perspective in which this exhibition places the local dimension. The spatial-temporal compression of global online communications has brought a multitude of artists to the natural temporal dimension of ceramics: the lengthy drying and firing times mark a slowing down of time, almost tantamount to a suspension of time." (E-flux 2001, 07)

The aim of the present research is to compare the ABC with the E-flux, to see the extent to which they differ, in order to investigate the degree of popularisation present in art blogs. The main difference between popularising discourse and specialised communication regards the participants' paradigm: in popularised texts participants are specialised journalists on the one hand and non-specialised readers on

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<sup>17</sup> <http://artstuckinmyeye.wordpress.com/about/>

the other; in specialised interactions all the participants have a shared specialised knowledge (Goffmann 1981; Garzone 2006/2012). A process of re-contextualisation of knowledge takes place in the digital medium, considering the gap of connoisseurship between bloggers and readers. Some of the characteristics of popularised discourse are: a lower use of “technical words” and a higher frequency of colloquial terms; shorter sentence length and lower clause-complexity; simplified syntax and extended use of metaphors. Several strategies aimed at clarifying complex notions can be identified and categorised under the general heading of “explanation”: denomination, definition, reformulation, analogy, generalisation, exemplification and explication (Calsamiglia and Van Dijk 2004). These practices are illustrated, identified and commented in Sections 4.5 to 4.8, applying both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis to the ABC and to the E-flux.

#### 4.3 The E-flux corpus

E-flux is a publishing online platform and archive that sends out approximately three announcements per day about contemporary-art events worldwide. The E-flux corpus consists of 9538 art announcements (6,238,592 tokens) released from March 1998 to May 2012 on the platform with the same name. The corpus was collected by David Levine, an artist based in Brooklyn and Berlin, and Alexander Provan, editor of the digital journal *Triple Canopy*. The E-flux was thoroughly investigated and the findings released in the research article ‘International Art English’ (Rule and Levine 2012)<sup>18</sup>, presented online in 2012 and later discussed in *The Guardian* newspaper.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> [http://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/international\\_art\\_english](http://www.canopycanopycanopy.com/contents/international_art_english) is the link to the article by Rule and Levine. As you read on the front page: “‘International Art English’ was produced by *Triple Canopy* as part of its Research Work project area, supported in part by the Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council.

<sup>19</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english>: this page on *The Guardian* website has now been removed. The reason stated is the following: “This could be because it launched early, our rights have expired, there was a legal issue, or for another reason”.

A follow-up debate can still be viewed at: <http://canopycanopycanopy.com/podcasts/54-critical-language-a-forum-on-international-art-english>.

<http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english>: this page on *The Guardian* website has now been removed. The reason stated is the following: “This could be because it launched early, our rights have expired, there was a legal issue, or for another reason”.

The corpus was made available in 2013 on Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al. 2014)<sup>20</sup>, a corpus query system that provides more than 200 corpora in several different languages and which also works as a concordance programme.

#### 4.4 International Art English

In 2012, a provocative article<sup>21</sup> on International Art English (IAE), published in the digital journal *Triple Canopy*, stated that the digital press release makes use of a specialised language that is now adopted by people actively involved in art from all over the world (Rule and Levine 2012). This article explores some of the main features of specialised communication present in IAE, such as nominalisation, premodification and the passive form. As pointed out by the authors, frequent significant words in IAE are: *aporia*, *radically*, *proposition*, *bio-political*, *tension*, *transversal*, *autonomy*. Some general characteristics are highlighted: nouns are usually enriched with affixes; the suffix *-ity* (experience becomes *experientiability*, visual *visuality* and potential *potentiality*) and prefixes like *para-* (*parafictional*), *proto-* (*Proto Anime Cut*), *post-* (*post-modernism*) and *hyper-* (*hyper-realistic*) are commonly used. *Space* is a key polysemous term in IAE, used in very different contexts with dissimilar meanings, such as in the sentence reported by the authors “confusion between the space of retail and the space of subjective construction”, where *space* means field. Many common words, such as *reality* and *the real* take on other meanings and are more frequently used in the E-flux than in the BNC. There is a tendency towards “germanisation”, in that German words are often used instead of the English equivalents. Regarding paradigmatic relations, simple adverbial phrases such as “radically questioned” and double adverbs such as “playfully and subversively” are often found. Since subordinate and embedded clauses are a

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A follow-up debate can still be viewed at: <http://canopycanopycanopy.com/podcasts/54-critical-language-a-forum-on-international-art-english>.

<sup>20</sup> Sketch Engine has several unique features, such as word sketches, i.e. one-page, automatic, corpus-driven summaries of a word's grammatical and collocational behaviour as you can read at: <http://www.sketchengine.co.uk/?page=Website/LandingPage>

<sup>21</sup> I use the word “article” here simply to refer to the linguistic output by Rule and Levine, which resembles more a long post in a blog than a scientific research paper. The number of pages is not provided, for example.

distinctive feature of art-related writing and consequently of IAE, Rule and Levine describe it as a language that “sounds like inexpertly translated French” and talk of its “contortions” (Rule and Levine 2012). They trace its origin back to the journal *October*, founded in 1976 and devoted to art criticism, where many French post-structuralist texts were translated into English. This helps explain why many lexical choices come from French: the suffixes *-ion*, *-ity*, *-ality*, and *-isation*; the proliferation of adjectives preceded by the definite article (*the political*, *the space*, *the repulsive*, *the void*); the “collocations” *while also* and *always already*. According to Rule and Levine, *October* was greatly influenced also by *The Frankfurt School*, a communist school of inter-disciplinary social theory. As a consequence, German is responsible for the high frequency of terms such as: *production*, *negation*, *totality* and *dialectics*. From a stylistic point of view, chiasmus is a recurrent figure of speech, although it’s hard to trace the reason for this tendency, as Rule and Levine point out. In their words, IAE has “evolved by continually incorporating new sources and tactics of sounding foreign” and has gradually become the language of the art world (Rule and Levine 2012).

#### 4.5 The E-flux versus the ABC: a quantitative study

Using a corpus-driven methodology, a comparison between the two corpora – the E-flux and the ABC – was carried out, in order to assess the degree of popularisation of the art blogs in the ABC. R<sup>22</sup>, a free software for statistical computing, was used to run the chi-squared test, as illustrated in the following section, and to calculate the effect size, i.e. a quantitative measure of the strength of a result. Each expression which can be automatically retrieved in a corpus and which represents a practice of popularisation in itself is presented in Section 4.7.

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<sup>22</sup> <https://www.r-project.org/about.html>

The ABC	The E-flux
Posts and Comments of 54 Art blogs	9538 Art announcements
January- December 2013	March 1998 - May 2012
3,726,823 tokens	6,238,592 tokens

Table 4.1 *The ABC versus the E-flux.*

#### 4.6 The chi-squared test for non-parametric variables

The chi-square is probably the most widespread non-parametric significance test in linguistics. This is probably because: it is accurate, it can be used when the data are not normally distributed (i.e with nominal variables) and it is easy to calculate (Cantos Gómez 2013). The main aim of any statistical test of significance is to show whether or not the observed differences between sets of data could have been expected to occur “by chance”, or whether they are due to the alteration in the variable whose effect is being investigated (Butler 1995: 69).

Where data are compared, chi-square statistics are reported if they are significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) and have at least a small effect size. Since statistically significant differences are more likely to occur with larger sample sizes, effect sizes are necessary to understand if these differences are meaningful. In this case, the index of effect size Yule’s Q was found suitable, since it measures both the strength and direction of the relation.

#### 4.7 Practices of popularisation at work

Since, to a large extent, the audience determines the way in which a message is conveyed, it is plausible to think that art blogs represent a form of popularised communication and art announcements a form of specialised communication. As a matter of fact, the present analysis bears that out and allows an insight into the qualitative level. Each practice is briefly introduced, accompanied by the most frequent expressions it entails. Each significant lexical item is retrieved in the two corpora and, using the software R, the calculations of the chi-square test and Yule’s Q are made. Table 4.2 summarises the strategies.

Practice of Popularisation	Expressions associated
Denomination or designation	“in other words”, “meaning”, “called”, “so-called”, “known as”, “aka”
Definition	no single expression
Reformulation or paraphrase	“that is”, “that is to say”, “i.e.”, “in other words”
Analogy	“as”, “like”, “similar to”, “not different from”, “the same as”
Generalisation	no single expression
Exemplification	“for instance”, “for example”, “an example is”, “e.g.”

Table 4.2 *Practices of popularisation identified by Calsamiglia and Van Dijk (2004)*

The practice of denomination or designation introduces new objects, events or terms, for instance with neologisms or metaphors. This strategy often combines with expressions like “in other words”, “meaning”, “called”, “so-called”, “known as” (Calsamiglia and Van Dijk 2004), “aka”. “In other words” can be used both to designate and to reformulate what has already been said. All the expressions show a higher frequency in the ABC than in the E-flux.

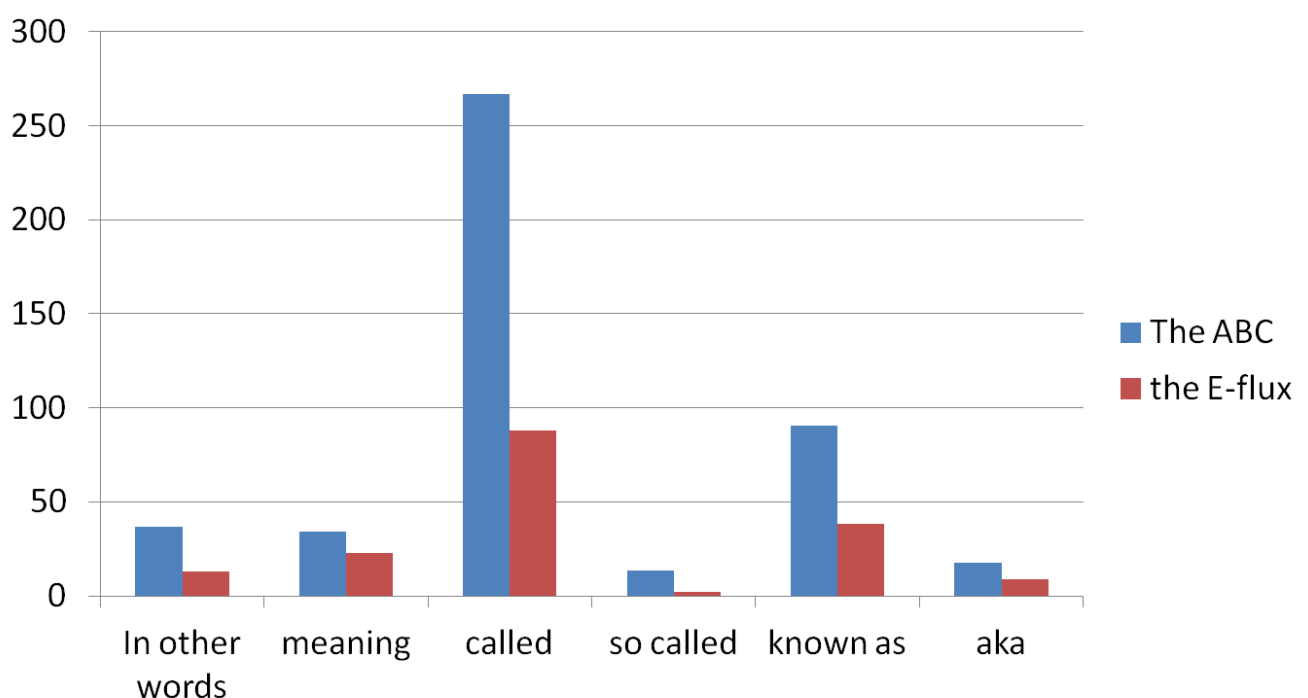


Figure 4.1 *Expressions linked to the practice of denomination*

Expression	Frequency in the ABC	Frequency in the E-flux	P-value	Yule's Q
In other words	36.9 per million	12.8 per million	2.2e-16	-0.5381382
Meaning	34.4 per million	22.7 per million	1.659e-06	-0.2744943
Called	267.0 per million	88.0 per million	2.2e-16	-0.5579559
So called	13.6 per million	2.2 per million	5.665e-14	-0.7509396
Known as	90.4 per million	38.3 per million	2.2e-16	-0.4653565
Aka	17.8 per million	8.8 per million	1.113e-06	-0.4020674

Table 4.3 *The practice of denomination or designation*

The strategy of analogy or association comprises comparisons in the forms of similes or metaphors which can be formulated, for example, using “as”, “like”, “similar to”, “not different from”, “the same as”. The adverbs “like” and “as” are difficult to disambiguate, since the automatic annotation is not accurate enough.

The practice of definition, used to define terms, cannot be parsed into single expressions and therefore was not taken into account in the present study.

The strategy of reformulation can produce a text with the same meaning but which is easier to understand. The paraphrase is often accompanied by expressions such as “that is”, “that is to say”, “i.e.”, “in other words” (the same expression as in the practice of denomination). The expression “that is” in the ABC in particular almost doubles in the E-flux.

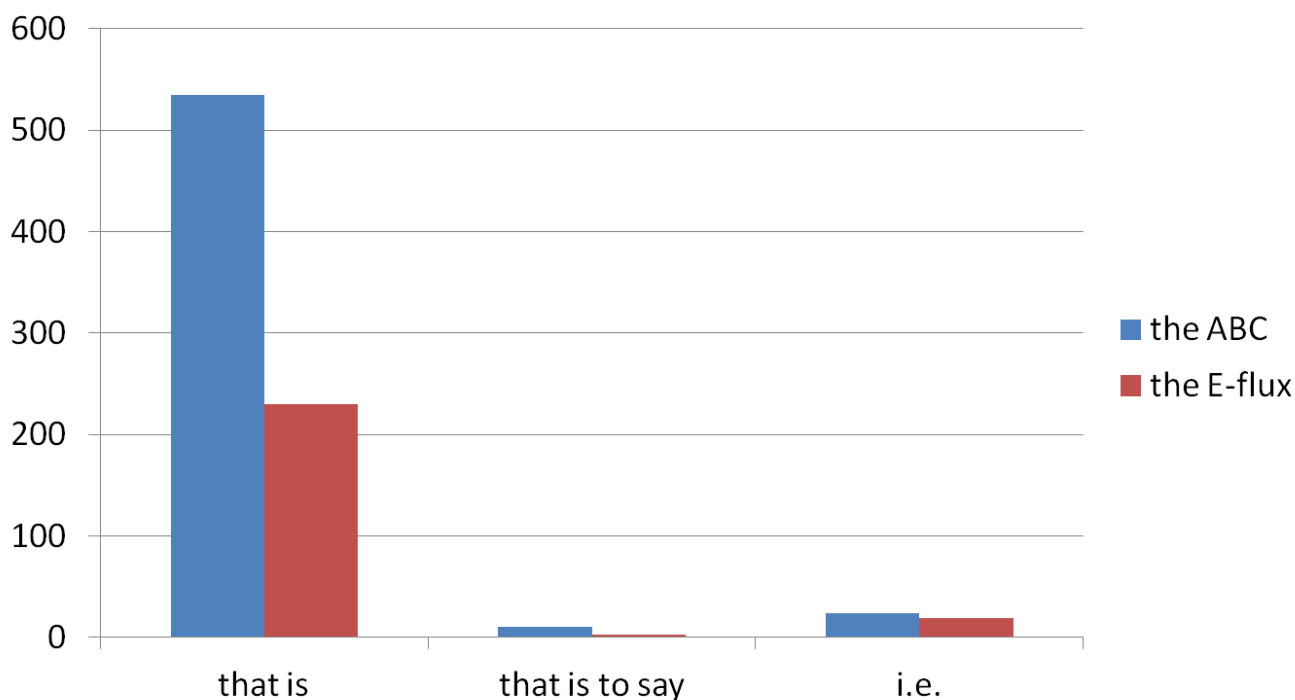


Figure 4.2. Expressions linked to the practice of reformulation

Expression	Frequency in the ABC	Frequency in the E-flux	P-value	Yule's Q
that is	534.6 per million	229.9 per million	2.2e-16	-0.4596712
that is to say	10.3 per million	2.7 per million	3.108e-08	-0.6290843
i.e.	23.7 per million	18.9 per million	0.006943	-0.1844918

Table 4.4. The practice of reformulation

The practice of analogy comprises comparisons in the forms of similes or metaphors which can be formulated, for example, using “as”, “like”, “similar to”, “not different from”, “the same as”. The adverbs “like” and “as” are difficult to disambiguate, since the automatic annotation of the corpora is not reliable. “Similar to”, “not different from” and “the same as” are much more frequent in the ABC than in the E-flux.



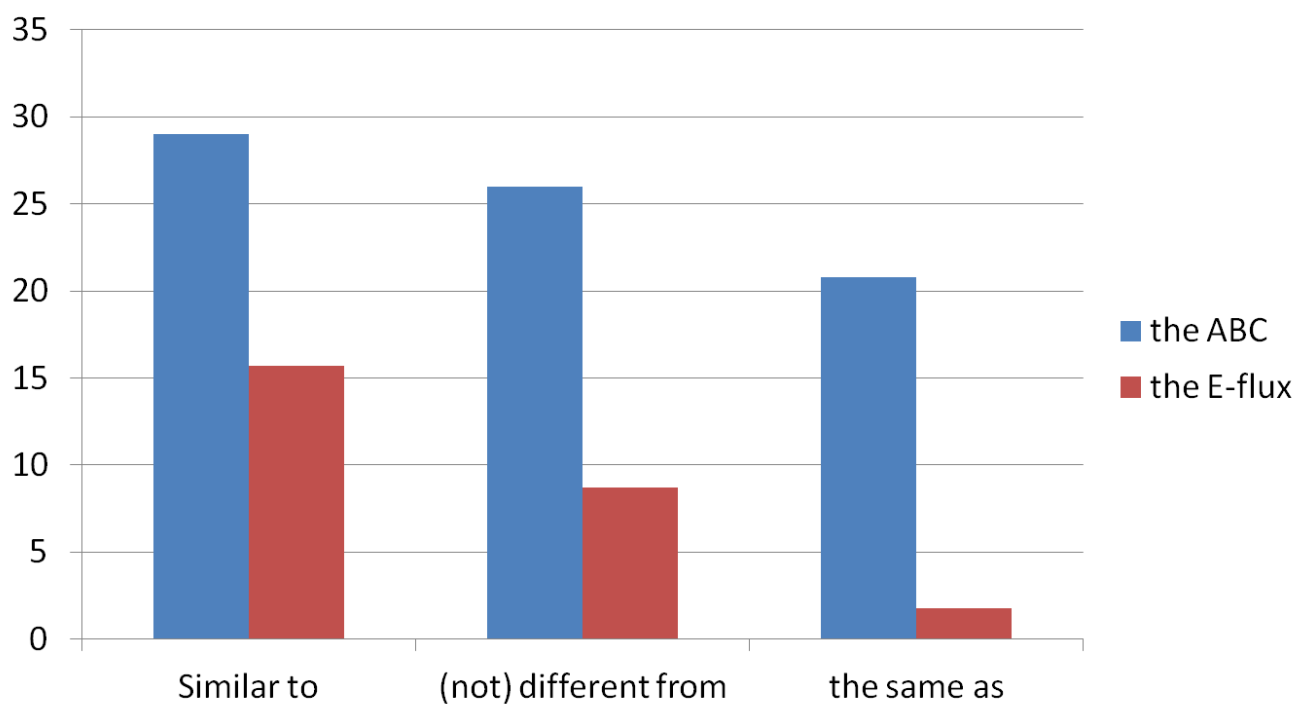


Figure 4.3. Expressions linked to the practice of analogy

Expression	Frequency in the ABC	Frequency in the E-flux	P-value	Yule's Q
Similar to	29.0 per million	15.7 per million	1.049e-08	-0.3645061
(not) different from	26.0 per million	8.7 per million	1.88e-15	-0.5543853
the same as	20.8 per million	2.2 per million	2.2e-16	-0.8303328

Table 4.5 The practice of analogy

The strategy of generalisation, which extends the validity of a proposition to all members of a set, is not necessarily accompanied by a particular expression.

The practice of exemplification substitutes a general proposition with one or more propositions often introduced by expressions such as “for instance”, “for example”, “an example is”, “e.g.”. “An example” is to be found so seldom that it is unreasonable to run a test.

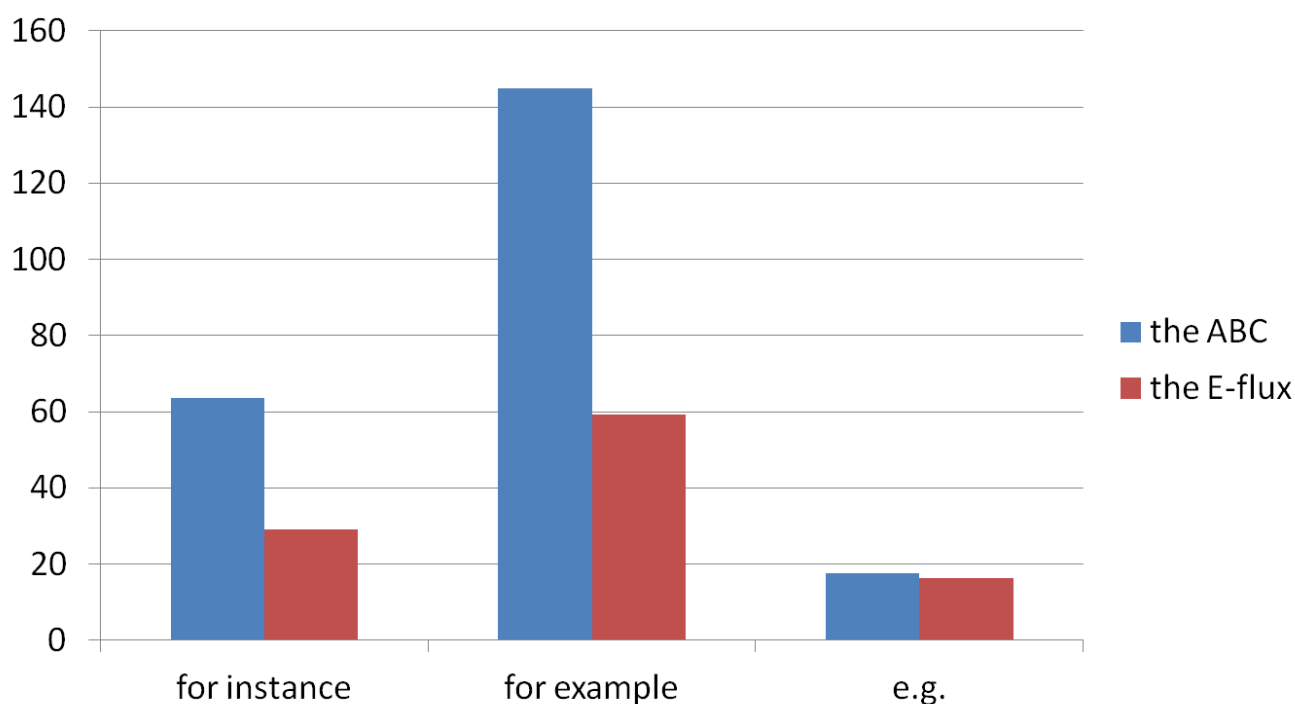


Figure 4.4. Expressions linked to the practice of exemplification

Expression	Frequency in the ABC	Frequency in the E-flux	P-value	Yule's Q
for instance	63.5 per million	29.0 per million	2.2e-16	-0.4351562
for example	144.8 per million	59.3 per million	2.2e-16	-0.4784358
e.g.	17.6 per million	16.3 per million	0.1675	-0.1102167

Table 4.6 The practice of exemplification

All the results are significant, except for “e.g.”, which has a p-value of 0.1675, which is not significant, if we take the commonly used cut-off point of  $p = 0.05$ . The effect size in every case was small. Thus the ABC shows a clear tendency for practices of popularisation, and these practices are much more frequent than in the E-flux. Only expressions linked to practices of denomination, reformulation, analogy and exemplification could be automatically retrieved, while practices of definition and generalisation could not be detected through an automatic analysis.

#### 4.8 The E-flux versus the ABC: a qualitative study

Continuing along the line of difference but in a more detailed fashion, after assessing the significance of the quantitative analysis, the different use of the

practices in the two corpora was observed in a qualitative analysis and I will now report some observations related to those strategies in particular where the two corpora behave differently: the practice of denomination or designation and that of reformulation or paraphrase.

a) Practice of denomination or designation

- “In other words”

The expression “in other words” mostly (108 times out of 157) occurs sentence initially in the ABC, while it is usually (54 on 80) preceded by a colon and incorporated in the sentence in the E-flux. In Example 3, taken from the ABC, one of Jonathan Jones’ comments, “in other words” functions as a practice of reformulation. At the beginning of the sentence, it acts as a disjunct, thus carrying the focus of the discourse. In Example 4, from the E-flux, its use corresponds to the practice of denomination. In a certain sense, a different position of the expression in the sentence often corresponds to a different function.

3. (from the ABC): “He also says his art is an attempt partly inspired by the Sufi tradition to take people out of everyday life for just a few minutes and reveal some other plane of existence. In other words , here is an artist who matters because he is trying to change how we think and see and live”. (JJ2013182) reformulation
4. (from the E-flux): “Etymologically, “important” is that which is valuable enough to be “brought in”, in other words , that which the individual or a community searches out and selects for itself”. (Ars Baltica Triennial 2003) denomination

- “Meaning”

Most of the examples with “meaning” used as a practice of denomination in the E-flux are either related to foreign terms which need to be explained, such as *dia* (Example 5), or *nous autres* (Example 8), or creative expressions which cannot be understood at a first reading, such as *dadaise* (Example 6), *infinite egress* (Example 7) or *avant garden* (Example 9).

5. “Taken from the Greek prefix meaning “conduit” or “through,” Dia was launched to enable artists to create projects that due to their scale or scope could not be accommodated by traditional galleries or museums. (Circa 1971: Early Video & Film from the EAI Archive 2011)
6. The only thing that can be done today is to either illustrate Dada or de-Dadaise it, meaning that all the elements contained in the Dada ideal would have to be put back together again. (Jake & Dinos Chapman: Die Dada Die 2010)
7. Infinite Egress—egress meaning here to depart, to emerge—considers metaphors of unending and limitlessness with an often wry sense of humour and awareness of our contemporary media-saturated environment. (Ryoji Ikeda and Infinite Egress 2009)
8. The title of the exhibition, ‘Nous Autres’ (literally meaning ‘We, the Others’, in linguistics called an exclusive ‘we’) was a deliberate choice (Frédéric Lefever 2009)
9. The theme is ‘Avant Garden’, ‘Avant’ taking the meaning of ‘proceeding’ and ‘Garden’ meaning ‘personal space’. (Upcoming opening and events 2008)

In the ABC words coming from another language – *Bentvueghels* (Example 10), *cathedra* (Example 12) - or English archaic words (*Shrove* in Example 11) are explained, as well:

10. In Dutch they were called the Bentvueghels, which is a 17th century expression meaning birds of a feather (RR2013008)
11. The expression Shrove Tuesday comes from the word shrive, meaning confess (TG2013002)
12. The name derives from the Latin cathedra meaning chair or throne, which is used to denote the chair or seat of a bishop. The cathedra in St. Peter's Basilica was once used by the popes. (VC2013005)

The only sentence-initial “meaning” in the E-flux, which can be read in Example 13, offers an explanation for *disponible*, a Spanish word used in Mexico:

13. ...his exhibition takes its name from the empty billboards reading “disponible” (+ phone numbers) that are seen across the skylines of Mexican cities. Meaning at once available and potentially changeable or disposable, the word disponible reflects the dynamic, contradictory reality of Mexican society (Disponible – a kind of Mexican show 2010)

A different string of examples in the ABC use “meaning” at the beginning of a sentence to introduce a new point of view in the discussion, using a rather informal style: this use of the verb is characteristic of the corpus of art blogs.

14. "pictorial representation of Einstein's relativity well you would say that wouldn't you? Actually, no, I wouldn't say that because I want people to believe it, it actually worked the other way around. Meaning that I did first understand their existence as the actual visual musical equivalents, and then, later, began to realize that they were also the pictorial equivalent of time, and the fourth dimension. (JJC2013142)

15. And as I worked on them I also realized that they were exactly like the abstract still lifes, but also - simultaneously, the polar opposite of them. Meaning I knew that the abstract still lifes could cause the viewer to experience a big "WOW," when they first looked at them, but.. (JJC2013144)

- "So called"

The expression "so called", neutral in the E-flux, tends to carry a negative connotation in the ABC, as illustrated in Examples 16-23, where it seems to question a predefined role of the artist or of his or her masterpiece in the society:

16. If you read the blurb on the website the so called exhibition in Puerto Rico is not an exhibition at all but it is the permanent collection of British Art. BG2013004.tx
17. This so called painter should have used a cheap Tesco camera to better effect CHC2013001
18. I was so often disappointed by so called masterpieces and their often ordinariness. JJC2013032
19. Our so called experts dismiss 500 years of tradition for a few so called artists who literally can't draw, can't paint, can't sculpt JJC2013044
20. in my day, we had none of this so called digital nonsense! JJC2013075
21. Picasso was paid for Guernica, his so called masterpiece which was a commercial transaction. JJC2013081
22. I don't think you know the first thing about modernist art, many of the so called artists were actively trying to destroy art. JJC2013082
23. The fact is, when it comes to works of so called geniuses, we are taught to see their works as works of genius before we even get to see them and cast judgement on them. JJC2013097

b) The practice of reformulation or paraphrase:

- "That is to say"

While in the E-flux "that is to say" makes explicit what has been stated before, in some of the occurrences of the ABC the explanation remains either partial, or insufficient, entailing humour (see Examples 24 and 25). "That is to say" and "that is", are not equivalent. While the former simply exemplifies, the latter marks the speaker's utterance in such a way that his or her opinion is stressed.

24. Another reader seems to be able to make sense of it all: "Though shaken by artistic gestures and provocations" That is to say - Even though the incomprehensible attitudes of the artist made an impact on the viewer (perhaps of fear, or puzzlement) he did not understand the artist's intent (and probably neither did we). BG2013005
25. What is surprising is that Emin's supporters in the art world insist she can draw. That is to say , drawing is what the experts say it is. Rubbish. DTC2013012

- “i.e.”

In the ABC “i.e.” is often included within parentheses which, as in examples 26 and 27, specify the word or the expression before and looks like a characteristic feature of an interpersonal text:

26. Artists engage the brain, remind you (i.e. one) of your responsibility to use it. JJC2013043

27. And btw, it doesn't matter if Americans in general (i.e., the average person on the street) don't applaud the art JJC2013029

#### 4.9 Conclusions

In this chapter the ABC is compared against the E-flux, a corpus of art news digests, in order to identify the type and quantity of the different strategies of popularisation, i.e. of the ability to communicate with a large audience. Both a quantitative and a qualitative analysis have been carried out on the ABC and the E-flux. The two complementary analyses result in two distinct sets of considerations. On the one hand, the art blogs proved to be more oriented to the general public, showing in general a higher frequency of expressions usually associated with practices of popularised communication; in particular practices of denomination, reformulation, analogy and exemplification (Calsamiglia and Van Dijk 2004) could be automatically detected using the SketchEngine (Kilgarriff et al. 2014), while expressions linked to other practices – of definition and generalisation- could not be identified. On the other hand, the qualitative analysis helped emphasise some aspects of register, tone, connotation, otherwise not immediately recognisable with a merely automatic analysis. More research is needed on the topic of specialised communication in parallel corpora, but the focus in such an investigation should always be twofold, considering both the strategy used, and the way it is deployed in the context. The current study is to be considered as a step in that direction.



## Chapter 5

### Linguistic Creativity in Art Blogs

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter investigates the presence of lexical and morphological creativity in the ABC, starting from the consideration that art is a creative language by which mankind expresses itself. Since quantitative means cannot easily identify instances of creative use, creativity in the present study will be assessed with a primarily qualitative approach through both manual reading and investigations using software, in a corpus-driven perspective. Although Corpus Linguistics as a discipline considers how words are used in context (Stubbs 2001:5), rather than looking at their etymology or their diachronic usage, I will add a historical overview of the term *creative* in the following section, because I am firmly convinced that an integrated approach can offer a broader and more complete *scenario* than the one offered by Corpus Linguistics alone. Section 5.3 presents a historical outline of some preliminary studies, while Section 5.4 illustrates creativity in rhetorical figures. Creativity in the present study is introduced in Section 5.5. Section 5.6 describes the methodology followed, while Section 5.7 and Section 5.8 are dedicated respectively to the manual (5.7) and automatic (5.8) detection and analysis of playful formations. The interpretation of the results starts by testing Carter's (2004) paradigm of "pattern forming" and "pattern re-forming" on the ABC. Proven unsuited to the results, a topic-driven classification of the newly formed lexical items is formulated as an appropriate interpretative hypothesis. Thurlow's (2007) distinction between structured and improvisational creativity is also questioned. Section 5.9 explores inflections, Section 5.10 neologisms through *hapaxes*, Section 5.11 hyphenated compounds, Section 5.12 meta-commentary and, finally, Section 5.13 summarises the findings and provides the conclusions.



## 5.2 Definitions of *creative* in the OED

This section provides a general outline of the history of the word *creative*, analysing how the entry is presented in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, considered the most authoritative dictionary of English based on historical principles. Two main definitions of the word are reported: on the one hand, *creative* is closely related to the noun *creation*<sup>23</sup>, thus meaning also *inventive, imaginative*; on the other hand, it can be the cause or can be productive of something. By reading the examples listed under the first definition, at least until 1750, we plunge into a clearly religious perspective which links creativity with the Christian God, who is at the origin of the first creative act ever: creation. The most frequent collocation is “power creatiue” or “creative power” (see the quotations from Jackson, Cudworth and Mallet reported below). So, according to its first definition, creativity is essentially a divine attribute.

1. 1513 J. IRLAND *Meroure of Wyssdome* (1965) II.89 Infinit perfeccioun in him the **power creatiue**.
2. 1625 T. JACKSON *Treat. Originall of Unbeliefe* iv.20 Others..imagine two eternall indefectible **creatiue powers**; the one good, and sole fountaine of all goodnesse: the other evill, and maine souse of all evill and mischiefe in the world.
3. 1678 R. CUDWORTH *True Intellect. Syst. Universe* I. v.863 This Divine Miraculous **Creative Power**.
4. 1728 D. MALLET *Excursion* 9 Fancy, **creative Power**, at whose Command Arise unnumber'd Images of Things, Thy hourly Offspring. (**my bold**)

The second sub-definition of ‘creative’ is of interest for the present analysis, in that it presents a clear reference to literature and art as sources of creativity:

“Inventive, imaginative; of, relating to, displaying, using, or involving imagination or original ideas as well as routine skill or intellect, esp. in literature or art.”

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<sup>23</sup> The first definition reads: “having the quality of creating, able to create; of or relating to creation; originative.”

The examples selected beneath – starting from the 18th century - highlight this issue, by linking creativity to human genius, thus seen as a reflection of God in humankind.

5. 1729 R. SAVAGE *Wanderer* 3 Come, contemplation,..Whose Pencil paints, obsequious to thy Will, All thou survey'st, with a **creative Skill!**
6. 1816 WORDSWORTH *Ode Gen. Thanksgiving* 30 **Creative Art**...Demands the service of a mind and heart..Heroically fashioned.
7. 1876 'G. ELIOT' *Daniel Deronda* II. III. xxii.73 A **creative artist** is no more a mere musician than a great statesman is a mere politician.
8. 1990 *Times Educ. Suppl.* 1 June A6/2 A new performing arts centre will be set up in September, involving **creative music making.** (my bold)

The lexeme is also used in the collocation *creative accounting*, a humorous way to refer to *false accounting*, or it can have a different meaning of “being the cause or occasion of something”, as shown in the following examples:

9. 1701 S. Hill *Rights, Liberties, & Authorities Christian Church* ii. 17 Not only concessive of Liberty, but **creative of all Authority.**
10. 1795 A. Thomas *Newfoundland Jrnl.* 4 Feb. (1968) 206, I wrote with the quill of a Goose. A simple Animal. Therefore all my subjects are flat, mucid, rough, heavy and **creative of lethargy.**
11. 1803 *Med. & Physical Jrnl.* 9 272 Injuries..unattended by any symptoms **creative of alarm.** (my bold)

Finally, *creative* is used in some fixed collocations, such as *creative class*, *creative destruction*, *creative director*, *creative evolution*, *creative sentencing*, *creative writer*. What this synthetic overview has shown is the degree to which the word *creative* and, consequently, the word *creativity* can be polysemous. Not all “creativities” are therefore the same, partly because the actors involved and the context may change. The creative practice of journalists, advertisers and humorists will not be the same as less “linguistically-trained” people. As Thurlow (2007: 169) points out, “high culture creativity of art and theatre or the commercial creativity of pop music and advertising” can be very different from young people’s everyday playful exchanges. I

will now map these observations on to a broader literature, in order to be able to investigate some aspects of both structured extraordinary creativity and of improvisational everyday creativity, but I will first provide an outline of the origin of the studies on creativity.

### 5.3 Preliminary studies on linguistic creativity: a historical outline

The studies on creativity can be traced back to Jakobson's (1960) work on the functions of language. For him, six factors, present in any speech event, determine a specific function. Thus, addresser, addressee, context, message, contact and code characterise the emotive, conative, referential, poetic, phatic and metalingual function. Creativity is grounded in the poetic function, which allows the manipulation of some linguistic features, having its focus on the message "for its own sake" (1960: 365). In a way, what the poetic language does is draw attention to itself. Jakobson's factors were then elaborated and further developed by Hymes in the SPEAKING model (1977) within a sociolinguistic cultural perspective which provided an alternative to Saussure's structuralism and Chomsky's generative grammar. He grouped the sixteen components (message form, message content, setting, scene, speaker/sender, addressor, hearer/receiver/audience, addressee, purposes (outcomes), purposes (goals), key, channels, forms of speech, norms of interaction, norms of interpretation and genres) of his model into eight main divisions, each corresponding to a letter of the acronym (**S**etting and **S**cene, **P**articipants, **E**nds, **A**ct Sequence, **K**ey, **I**nstrumentalities, **N**orms, **G**enre). Hymes' studies on oral and written narratives (1996) and on Native American ethnopoetics (2004) investigate narratives on the basis of their poetic relationships of equivalence, while the rhetorical art of poetic patterning contributes to the representation of experience with pragmatic effects. As pointed out by Jakobson, the poetic function - though mostly found in narrative - is closely connected with all the dimensions of the speech event, its meaning being shaped by the socio-historical context. Another prominent scholar who had a great influence on studies focused on creativity and on the dialogical function of language

was Bakhtin (Carter, 2004). Maybin and Swann (2007) identify three interrelated frames - dialogicality, heteroglossia and speech genres - through which Bakhtin's work could be read as pertaining to language creativity. The first concept they analyse is that of *dialogicality* or *polyphony*, first used by Bakhtin in a literary context, to describe Dostoyevsky's characters and their different voices, then gradually applied to other contexts, so much so that dialogism is now a very broad category, whose contours tend to blur. This concept, reformulated by Oswald Ducrot in *Le dire et le dit* (1984), has since been further developed as a theory by the Scandinavian ScaPoLine group (Nølke, Fløttum, & Noren, 2004) and discussed in the *Cahiers de Praxématique*. For Maybin and Swann, the notion of *dialogicality* could be applied to detect interactive and intertextual features of creative language, in both written and spoken texts. The second Bakhtinian idea taken into consideration is that of *heteroglossia*, i.e. the coexistence between diverse social languages, which can help investigate "the artful juxtaposition or dialogic positioning of social languages within texts and their animation in double-voicing" (Maybin and Swann 2007: 504). Finally, the concept of speech genres could be used to explore "generic intertextuality and hybridity in both spoken and written texts" (Maybin and Swann 2007: 504).

Thus, the work of linguistic anthropologists, such as Hymes, and their application of ideas from Jakobson and Bakhtin, have paved the way for new insights into the field of linguistic creativity. For example, some of the aspects of the poetic function, such as figures of speech, have been further analysed by cognitive linguists.

#### 5.4 Creativity and rhetorical figures

Research on creativity has assumed different slants and has interacted with several disciplines. Among the others, cognitive linguistics has a say in creativity, being concerned with rhetorical figures such as metonymies (Littlemore 2015 in press) and metaphors (Littlemore 2015 in press). Although this kind of research will not be dealt in the present study, I will nonetheless provide a general outline of the literature in order to situate the present research within the field.

As Ungerer and Schmid point out (2006), metaphors and metonymies play an important role in everyday language and are powerful cognitive tools for the way we conceptualise the world. While metaphors are traditionally based on the notions of ‘similarity’ or ‘comparison’ between the literal and the figurative meaning of an expression within the same domain (Deignan et al. 2013), metonymies involve a relation of ‘contiguity’ between what is denoted and its figurative counterpart, so that one constituent stands for another from a different domain. In the metonymic expression *all hands on deck*, for example, a part (hands) stand for the whole (men). The part-for-whole relation is the most common, but there are also other types of metonymic links, such as the whole for part (*to fill up the car*), the container for content (*I’ll have a glass*), or the material for the object (*a glass, an iron*). While metonymies involve a two-item pattern, metaphors are traditionally studied as involving three elements: tenor, vehicle and ground (Leech 1969: 148), as the following example illustrates:

12. You	are	a lion		(in respect of your strength, power)
X	are like	Y	in respect of	Z
TENOR		VEHICLE		GROUND
Explained element		explaining element		base of comparison

Both metaphors and metonymies are no semantic anomalies, but represent the way we connect the abstract conceptual system with our experience, thus giving us the possibility to enlarge our knowledge (Croft and Cruse 2004). They are so pervasive in everyday language that they constitute a resource for creativity (Carter 2004). In their pilot study on metonymies in text messaging Littlemore and Tagg (2014) have argued that metonymy, exactly like metaphor, can be involved in language play, as in the following text messages:

13. Hello! All well hope you are ok too. Looking forward to seeing you. R u driving or training?
14. Happy daddy day to you. happy daddy day to you. happy daddy day to daddy. happy daddy day to you. hope you've had a nice day. i bet you've been screwing something down or building something. anyway make yourself a cup of tea on me, kick back and enjoy

They read through a sample of 1000 text messages (17, 229 words) from CorTxt, a corpus of text messages (Tagg 2013) and both identified traditional categories of metonymy (Radden and Kövecses 1999) and added new ones. In Example 13 *training* is a metonymy where the object stands for the action and involves a noun – *train* - turned into a verb, while in Example 14 a series of sub-events (*screw something or build something, make a cup of tea, kick back*) stand for whole events. These types of metonymies are involved in language play.

In general, text messaging is a rich source of examples of language play, humour and creativity (Tagg 2013), as in:

15. fabtastic. i'll be round for coffee at quarter to half past 0 oclock in the afternoon.
16. Am watching house – very entertaining – am getting the whole hugh laurie thing – even with the stick – indeed especially with the stick.
17. I've got some salt, you can rub it in my open wounds if you like!

(All examples are taken from CorTxt, a corpus of text messages collected by Tagg in 2013)

Creativity plays a key role in language, in that it enables the writer or speaker to find new ways to voice their expressivity. Linguistic creativity is an umbrella term which includes several features, such as language play (Cook 2000; Crystal 1998), word coinage (Katamba 2005) and humour (Barcelona 2009; Maybin & Swann 2006). As Crystal points out (1998), language play involves the manipulation of some linguistic features, by bending and breaking the rules of the language for playful purposes: sound symbolism, puns, rebuses, reductions and abbreviations are all instances of language play since they literally “play” with language. For him, it is the “way we *break* the rules, and not the rules themselves, which is the focus” (Crystal 1998: 148). Cook extends Crystal’s themes in a socio-cultural perspective and investigates the extent to which playful forms are valued in different cultures and societies (2000). The corpus of art blogs abounds with examples of creativity:

18. Kandinsky: “If colour is the keyboard – Kandinsky can-**do**” (MM2013012)

If we analyse this example, we can see that the blogger plays on the double meaning of *do*, as a verb and as a noun (the musical note), and uses the metaphor of the keyboard to bind sound and colour together. Word coinage is a rare phenomenon, in that most of the time an already existing word-form extends its meaning (Katamba 2005: 174), but when it happens it can be considered a practice of creativity. It includes also nonce-words, words coined for a particular occasion, such as *Nottinghack*, a blend which indicates the name of an event organised in Nottingham for digital natives:

19. “If you’re looking for something a little more digital specific, then **Nottinghack** could be the regular event for you.” (CB2013006)

When nonce-words occur only once in a corpus, they come under the heading of *hapaxes*. The most creative *hapaxes* present in the ABC will be analysed in Section 5.10. As stated above, utterly new words are very rare (and connected with particular areas, such as technology); new formations tend to be reformulations of existing items. Even jokes, which constitute the heart of humour, can be analysed in depth. The following one, attributed to W.C. Fields, has been studied by Barcelona within a cognitive linguistic approach:

“Speaker A: Do you believe in clubs for men?  
Speaker B: Only when kindness fails” (Barcelona 2009: 39)

Barcelona identifies the following metonymies and “metonymic chains” within the joke (2009:44):

First utterance

Social club frame (jointly activated by clubs and young men)

(social) clubs  $\longrightarrow$  convenience, etc. of building etc. (social) clubs

Second utterance

Salient part of form  $\longrightarrow$  whole form (motivation/recognition of ellipsis)

Attitude/behavioural in human interaction domain

Kindness  $\longrightarrow$  attitude/behaviour in human interaction

Kindness  $\longrightarrow$  acting with kindness (failing)

Conflict frame

(Failed) soft strategy  $\rightleftarrows$  application of tough strategy

Category  $\rightleftarrows$  hitting the opponent (member)

(+ recategorisation of clubs as 'club stick')

club (sticks)  $\rightleftarrows$  using clubs for hitting

Schema taken from Barcelona (2009)

This complex system of relations is interpreted by Barcelona in a table which summarises the levels and functions of metonymies in the case study and which is here reproduced:

	Grammatical levels	Function of the metonymy	
		guiding inference	motivating and guiding
MEANING	Implied meaning at phrase level (with relevance for implied meaning of the utterance)	attitude (kindness) for behavior involving it (acting with kindness)	
		instrument (club) for active zone action (hitting with a club)	
	Implied meaning at lexical and phrase level (with relevance for implied meaning of the utterance)	participant (clubs) for active zone relationship (building/maintaining, etc. club is useful/convenient etc.)	
	Implied meaning at clause, sentence and utterance level	strategy in a conflict (soft strategy, acting with kindness) for conflict	
		condition (failure of the soft strategy) for result (application of the tough strategy)	
	(+grammatical and semantic recategorisation of clubs at lexemic level)	category (application of the tough strategy) for member (hitting the opponent)	
FORM	clause/sentence level ellipsis		salient part of a form for whole form

Table 5.1 *Levels and functions of the metonymy*

The afore-mentioned work by Barcelona illustrates the degree of complexity a cognitive linguistic approach can assume but at the same time it invites consideration



of as many levels as possible of analysis. As Carter points out (2004), research in cognitive poetics has contributed to showing how blurred the boundaries between the literal and the non-literal (figurative) can be.

### 5.5 Creativity in the present study

This section focuses on examples of language playfulness and word coinage in the ABC, excluding jokes and figures of speech. Considering that the ABC encompasses both posts and comments, studies on creativity with an interactional focus are briefly illustrated. In *Language and Creativity: The Art of Common Talk* Carter (2004) explores everyday creativity in an interactional context, using the 5-million-word Cambridge and Nottingham Corpus of Discourse in English (CANCODE). He identifies two different paradigms, naming them “pattern forming” and “pattern re-forming” choices. In "pattern forming choices" creativity grows from mutual interaction and is based on repetitions and echoes; in "pattern re-forming choices" creativity grows from individual innovation and is based on innovative re-shapings, re-formings and idiom manipulation. This paradigm loses its strength within the digital setting of the present study, where “pattern forming” choices can be very rare, as this study will show. Carter’s monograph anticipated aspects covered in later books, such as *The Art of English: Everyday Creativity* (Maybin & Swann 2006) on creativity as a normal feature of language. Since 2007, when the special issue of the journal *Applied Linguistics* devoted to Language Creativity in Everyday Contexts was published, testifying to growing interest worldwide, creativity has been investigated in many different fields, such as text messaging (Tagg 2012; 2013), LOLspeak (Gawne & Vaughan 2012) and political blogging (Lazaraton 2014), although many text types, in particular within the digital medium, still need to be explored. Aspects linked with creativity in journalism (Aitchinson 2007) and systematic lexical creativity (Moon 2008) will also be investigated in the ABC. As Thurlow (2012) points out, creative practices arise in the context of leisure, pleasure

and play, rather than in work time and new communication technologies invite us to take new perspectives.

The inherently playful nature of Computer-mediated communication (CMC) has been widely acknowledged (Danet 2001; Herring 2013; North 2007) and recently investigated also within a discourse analysis approach (Lazaraton 2014). Online communication seems to “foster a particularly playful interaction” (North 2007: 538), also because of the anonymity it allows, as Lazaraton observes: “the ‘masking of identity’ in anonymous or pseudonymous environments – where clues about gender, ethnicity, etc. are absent – may predispose participants to engage in behavior they would normally eschew with little or no fear of repercussions” (Lazaraton 2014: 5). She explores an example of syntactic creativity found in the American political community weblog Daily Kos, where commenters crafted “new words and phrases to fashion mock passives that enriched the playfulness of the interaction” (Lazaraton 2014: 1). The passive voice frame the author reports can also affect idiomatic phrases, such as *go to bed* and *sleep tight*, which are thus “passivised”:

A: This lurker went to bed

B: Bed was gone to. Tightness was slept

(Lazaraton 2014: 8)

In the following sections, several types of creativity in the ABC will be analysed in depth, using both manual and automatic retrieval methods. The findings will be summarised in the concluding section.

## 5.6 Methodology

As pointed out by Carter (2004: 150), instances of creative items cannot be easily retrieved from a corpus with an automatic analysis and need to be identified through manual reading. Thus, the overall approach of the present study is mostly qualitative rather than quantitative. As far as the manual investigation is concerned, a sample of 15 blogs (47% of the ABC) was read through (see Chapter 3 Section 3.3.1 for the list

of blogs included in the sample) to identify creative practices, which were broken down into the following categories: punning, rhymes and parallelism.

As to the automatic investigation, corpus-driven methodology (Francis 1993; Tognini Bonelli 2001) allows for thorough automatic searching of affixes, as shown in Chapter 1. Using *Wordsmith Tools 6.0* (Scott 2014) a *Wordlist* of the ABC was compiled and proper names of artists were selected; the names were subsequently analysed in the context of their concordance lines to find instances of creative uses and the following creative practices were identified: affixation, inflection and hyphenated compounds. The following word-formation suffixes were found in the corpus: *-esque*, *-ism*, *-ity*, *-like*, *-y*, *-ie*, *-ee*, *-ness*, *-able*, *-ic*, but only the first two suffixes – *esque* and *-ism* appeared to be used in the ABC in a creative way. Therefore, 193 occurrences of *-esque* and 3, 274 occurrences of *-ism* were analysed. Inflections, which include the morphological construction “to be VERBed out” and *-ed* endings, are analysed in Section 5.9, while neologisms are described in Section 5.10, through an analysis of *hapaxes*, words occurring only once in the corpus. Hyphenated compound words are presented in Section 5.11.

## 5.7 A survey of manually-detected creative items in a sample of the ABC: puns, rhymes and a parallelism

In this section the term creative item is used to mean any form of lexical manipulation, from puns to playful innovative formations. Most of the creative items are not institutionalised and therefore cannot be found in a dictionary, although they represent recurrent patterns of usage (Moon 2008: 3). The first creative strategy examined was a very frequent rhetorical device in English: paronomasia, commonly known as “punning”, which is defined in the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary (OALD) as “the clever or humorous use of a word that has more than one meaning, or of words that have different meanings but sound the same”<sup>24</sup>. It is considered in

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<sup>24</sup> “Pun” OALD. Oxford University Press, 2010. Web. P.1231.

written texts as a “lower form of wit,” usually “associated with less highly regarded genres such as tabloid newspaper headlines, graffiti or advertising copy” (Carter 2004: 91). Puns, as many other rhetorical devices, cannot be automatically retrieved from a corpus and need to be identified through manual reading. Thus, a sample of the ABC was read through (Chapter 3 Section 3.3.1 lists the blogs included in the sample). As pointed out by Chapman, digital means of communication show little lexical and structural innovation, since “a change in the *mode* of language use is not in itself enough to force innovation” (Chapman 2011: 131). As a matter of fact, the majority of occurrences (24 out of 62, corresponding to 39%) of language playfulness in the ABC came from the same source: a blog written by Mary Ann Adair (indicated as MM in the ABC), a follower of street-art and an amateur photographer<sup>25</sup>, living in Australia, a country with a very lively production of contemporary art<sup>26</sup>. This analysis devoted to an aspect of linguistics highlights the difficulty of considering art blogs as a whole and discerns further directions of research in this field. Table 5.2 summarises the findings related to the afore-mentioned blog: puns account for the majority (20) of creative formations, followed by rhymes (2) and by a parallelism.

Type of creative formation	Number of occurrences detected in the sample
1. puns	20
2. rhymes	2
3. parallelism	1

Table 5.2 *Types of creative formations*

All the occurrences can be considered as examples of structured conventionalised creativity, rather than instances of everyday creativity, since there is no repetition, nor interactive strategy. For this reason, it is very difficult to apply Carter’s paradigm of pattern-forming and pattern re-forming choices, since all the formations belong to the

<sup>25</sup> “Hi everyone, I’ve been a follower of street art for a few years now, taking photos of what’s new and different. I’ve got quite a large collection and have been wondering what to do, so I thought I would share some of these with you.” (<http://maryannadair.com/about/>)

<sup>26</sup> I am grateful to art-historian Richard Woodfield for pointing this out to me (in a private communication).

first type of creativity. It is very difficult to talk about “everyday creativity” (Maybin and Swann 2006) in the context of art blogs, which are only partially conversational, in the comment sections. It is a concept that hardly adapts to the ABC, even including features such as typos (Example 78) or misspellings (Example 44). Unlike online chats (North 2007), or political blogs (Lazaraton 2014), art blogs show fewer features of spoken discourse (See Chapter 3).

The topic and sources of creativity of each item were then observed and the findings can be read in Table 5.3. From the findings it emerges that names, both proper and common, can be a very productive source of creativity.

Type of creative formation	Topics, sources of creativity
1. puns	Based on proper names
2. rhymes	Based on animals and common non-living objects
3. parallelism	Based on a proper name

Table 5.3 *Topics and sources of the creative formations*

The following puns have been used by the blogger as headlines for her posts in a journalistic style, headline punning being common practice in newspapers, such as *The Guardian* (Langdon 1995: 101).

20. Chinese American architect Ieoh Ming Pei: “It’s time to grab a slice of Pei” (MM2013004)
21. Coco Chanel: “Chanel’s channel through history” (MM2013005)
22. Paul Klee: “Klee-rly you do not look a day over 90. It’s been 73 years since Paul Klee died.”(MM2013006)
23. Artist Edward Hopper: “Hopper birthday to you” (MM2013007).
24. Jean Louis Forain: “what’s so Forain about this tightrope walker?” (MM2013007)
25. Hieronymous Bosch: “Anything, but a load of old Bosch!” (MM2013008)
26. Classicist painter Arthur Hacker: “What a cracker Hacker” (MM2013011)
27. Children’s newspaper comic strip character Rupert Bear: “The Bear Necessities of Rupert”(MM2013011)
28. French oil painter Paul César Helleu: “Helleu! have you seen the “starry, starry night?” (MM2013012)
29. Kandinsky: “If colour is the keyboard – Kandinsky can-do” (MM2013012)

Puns playing with common names could also be detected in other headlines:

30. Cloisonné, an ancient technique for decorating metalwork objects: “Classy-on-eh? Cloisonné?” (MM2013002)
31. “Doe a Deer, a female deer..[ ...] Oh deer! What is the world coming to!” (MM2013003)
32. Sèvres porcelain: “Let's Sèvres the world” (MM2013003)
33. “These butterflies will no longer flutter by” (MM2013004)
34. “For Serial Cereal card collectors” (MM2013006)
35. The Sandy “Berger-meisters” (MM2013006)
36. “Who’s robb’n who?” (MM2013007)
37. Ivy Lilian Wallace, a British author, best known for writing the “Pookie” series of children’s stories “Kookie Pookie is well worth a lookie” (MM2013010)

Another creative formation is the pun on Arthur Rackham, an illustrative artist, and plays on the beginning of proverbs such as “no one is so blind as he who will not see”, “none is so deaf as those who will not hear.”

38. “None is so Grimm, when you’re Rackham’n in.” (MM2013009)

Many levels of playfulness interact in this case: the brothers Grimm, famous storytellers of folk tales remind the reader of “grim” in the sense of “stern, unrelenting, merciless”<sup>27</sup>, while “rackham’n in” is a play on “rake it in” meaning “to amass a vast sum of money”<sup>28</sup>.

Normally, cultural references are needed to understand the irony beneath the title of the post, such as for the pun on René Jules Lalique, a French glass designer, who rhymes with Le Freak, a successful 1978 song by the disco band Chic, whose refrain goes: “Le Freak, c’est chic!”.

39. “c’est chic, Lalique!” (MM2013004)

The name of Titian is used twice in the following parallelism, which plays on the fixed expression “by name and by nature.”

40. “Titian by name & Titian by colour” (MM2013009)

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<sup>27</sup> “Grim, n.2b” *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2014. Web. 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015

<sup>28</sup> “Rake, v.2, n.4a” *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2014. Web. 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Other examples play with rhymes, nursery rhymes, centred on animals (birds, cock) and non-living things (stones/bones).

- 41. “Sticks & Stones may break my bones...whilst birds sing willow, tit-willow, tit-willow” (MM2013004)
- 42. “Little Cock Feather Frock” (MM2013011)

Rhyming terms can be doubled and repeated, as in 24, with an animal as topic:

- 43. “A Horse is a Horse, of Course, of Course...” (MM2013006)

Examples of paronomasia and ordinary structured creativity (rhymes and a parallelism) were detected in a sample of the ABC through manual reading, all following Carter’s (2004) pattern re-forming paradigm. In particular, the headings of the posts of an Australian blog look more similar to the headlines of a newspaper, rather than to the entries of a personal diary.

### 5.8.1 A survey of automatically-detected creative strategies of word-formation: affixation in the ABC

As pointed out in the methodological section, different strategies of affixation were found in the ABC and attention has been devoted to creative uses of the names ending with the suffixes *-esque* (193) and *-ism* (3, 274), because the other suffixes considered (*-ity*, *-like*, *-y*, *-ie*, *-ee*, *-ness*, *-able*, *-ic*) did not present any particularly creative use. Table 5.4 reports the results, thus showing that creative items ending with *-ism* are proportionally more frequent than those ending with *-esque*, although numbers are low in both cases.

Suffixes	Total number of occurrences	Number of creative instances detected in the ABC
<i>-esque</i>	193	1
<i>-ism</i>	3,274	9

Table 5.4 Use of suffixes

### 5.8.2 –esque

The suffix *-esque* in English is widespread and, as outlined by Moon, “it is used productively after the names of writers, artists, entertainers, politicians and so on, to form adjectives which indicate or allude to qualities typical of the person mentioned”. (Moon 2008: 140). In terms of their connotations, Moon (2008: 141) points out that “very few of the ad hoc or creative formations evaluate positively; most are negative, and imply 'less good than' or 'imitative'. This contrasts with the better-attested formations, which mainly have more specific meanings and often neutral or positive evaluations”. I would go further and say that these formations deliberately provoke a desacralisation of the artists’ role and their subsequent debasement or downgrading, as Example 44 will clarify.

The ABC provided some of the most attested formations, which have not been considered creative items, such as: *Baconesque*, *Berainesque*, *Borrominesque*, *Caravaggesque*, *Titianesque*, *Daliesque*, *Raphaelesque*, *Dadaesque*, *Lowryesque*, *Eschereque*, *Rubensesque*, *Gauginesque*, *Giorgionesque*, *Goyaesque*, *Ingresque*, *Leonardesque*, *Michelangelesque*, *Rembrandtesque*, *Saatchiesque*, *Sansovinesque*, *Warholesque*. As a matter of fact, the only original instance of creativity with nouns ending with *-esque* regards the contemporary controversial artist Damien Hirst. The term *Hurst-esq* has been associated with a clear negative connotation, in the following comment from Jonathan Jones’s blog:

44. “...the intricacies of a universe that is real and beautiful, not just some Damian Hurst-esq, diamond encrusted goat, floating in formaldehyde.” (JJC2013080).

The misspellings of the artist’s family name into *Hurst* instead of *Hirst* and of the suffix *-esque* into *-esq* are endowed with an evaluative slant, where *real and beautiful* contrast with *diamond encrusted goat*.



### 5.8.3 *-ism*

*-ism* is a common suffix in the art world, widely used for art movements (impressionism, cubism), but which can also be applied to an artist's personal style (*caravaggism*). *Caravaggism* in the ABC is a relatively well-attested formation, with 9 occurrences in the corpus, as can be seen from the following concordance lines. In this case, they do not count as creative formations, since their use has become so common.

45. in Rome, though his blend of Caravaggism was taken back to (VC2013005)
46. experiments and inventions within Caravaggism secured his legacy (CR2013002)
47. working in the field of "Caravaggism" like Benedict (HT2013011)
48. one of the masters of Utrecht Caravaggism. It is conjectured (GG2013009)
49. exhibition in 2006. Dutch Caravaggism in 17th century (RR2013010)
50. Esteban March. The expert on Caravaggism, Gianni Papi, (BG2013007)
51. terms like "Caravaggisti," "Caravaggism," "Caravaggesque," (CR2013002)
52. fashioned their own brand of Caravaggism. (RR2013010)
53. up in 2018 on "International Caravaggism", (HT2013011)

Following a semantic criterion, the examples of words ending in *-ism* taken into consideration were grouped into thematic fields, related to: artists, artistic movements, street art trends and media. Two significant formations, which are also *hapaxes* (see Section 5.10), concern the artists Wei Wei and Klee: *Weiwei-isms* and *Paul Klee-ism*.

54. "Weiwei-isms by Weiwei" (MS2013001)
55. "Curator Matthew Gale investigates another classic Paul Klee-ism"(TG2013012).

Artistic movements - such as Impressionism and Realism - are quite well known, but others, such as *hypervenetianism* and *façadism* are relatively new and are explained when presented:

56. "Hypervenetianism: was the worst possible betrayal of Venetian "continuity": in the face of an evident crisis in that continuity, "hypervenetianism" was invented." (RR2013009)

57. “Newman’s new work Façadism is a selection of short stories presented as a photocopied book that goes by the same title as this lauded and decried architectural phenomenon of demolishing a building while preserving its façade.” (CB2013002)

Sometimes new trends, like *hucksterism*, carry a negative connotation:

58. Except in rare cases, modern art is hucksterism art, shyster art, a swindle. It is sign of cultural degredation. (DD2013013)

Street vernacular and hip-hop suburban culture have entered the art world on a grand scale. The result of this “contamination” is a generation of words indicating the so-called “Millenials’ attitude” (Taylor & Keeter 2010), such as *brandalism* and *hipsterism*. *Brandalism* is a blend, made up of “branding” and “vandalism”. It refers to a street art anti-advertising campaign, which also has its own website and its own lexicon: “to brandalise”, “brandalisers”... In the ABC the word is used in the Street Art UK blog:

59. “Herrods is a complex art installation and is in no way trying to ‘pass off’ any brandalism”  
(SA2013011)

*Hipsterism* and *hipster* in the ‘40s indicated a generation of jazz-lovers hippies imitating the Afro-American style, but have now acquired a new meaning, referring to the suburban generation of Millenials who follow alternative music and fashion. Hipsters are usually negatively connoted in the corpus:

60. It’s basically hipsterism for middle-aged Islingtonians (JJC2013081)  
61. This article is borderline hipster. What rubbish (JJC2013101)  
62. Ah, how I loath the hollow, soulless, hipster music and people (JJC2013077)

*-Ism* is a relatively productive suffix, considering the number of formations (3, 274 occurrences) attested in the ABC, some of which witness the development of the artistic scene, as in: *connectionism*, *diffusionism*, *gigantism*, *retro-futurism*, *orientalism*, *escapism*, *primitivism*, *precisionism*, *regionalism*, *Mexican muralism*,

*photo-realism, pictorialism, photo-journalism, shortism*. Given the popularity of the suffix, we also find it used in different media, as in *Criticismism*, the blog by Mark Sheerin on contemporary included in the ABC, and *POPism*, a book on Pointillisme cited twice in Jonathan Jones' blog:

63. In his book POPism, he explains the importance of such tactics in creating a blue chip reputation (JJC2013050)
64. Read 'Popism' and Lou's reports of that time and it becomes quickly apparent that the two were extremely symbiotic (JJ2013119)

Words ending with *-ism* have been observed in concordance lines and creative formations have been selected. Carter's paradigm of pattern re-forming choices is the only one to be possibly applied, since all the examples considered come from individual choices, rather than from interactive exchanges.

### 5.9 Inflections in the ABC as a mark of creativity

An example of inflected creativity in the ABC regards the "be VERBed out" formation, "a specific creative phrasal verb frame [...], where VERB is supplied by a word that is predominantly used as a noun, with the whole referring to a state of having had too much of the thing denoted by the noun" (Moon 2008: 137). To this definition I would add that a note of humour is present in the use of this formation in the following example:

65. "thus with a significant exhibition at this scale one reaches the end a bit 'lowry'd out" (TGC2013001)

The only occurrence of the "VERBed out"-type coming from one of the comments of the Tate Gallery's blog concerns the British painter Lowry, who is ironically held accountable for making people feel tired at the end of an exhibition dedicated to him.

So far, "pattern re-forming" choices, where creativity comes from individuals, have been the only pattern identified, mainly because no creative interactive exchanges have been detected. The unique example (53) of a "pattern forming"

choice regards the painter David Hockney, who is being insulted in this exchange between two commenters, playing on the misspelling of his family name: *hackneyed* in English means “used so frequently and indiscriminately as to have lost its freshness and interest; made trite and commonplace; stale<sup>29</sup>”, whereas *hockneyed* is a new formation derived from the artist’s family name. Negative evaluation also results from the juxtaposition of the second word *Hackneyed* with a negative meaning.

66. "Hockneyed: Hackneyed."

“Hockneyed? Artistic would be the artist with his head in the shark's mouth - just like old Cap'n Quint in the cult 'Jaws' movie. Now that would be worth viewing in real life.”(JJC2013078)

## 5.10 Neologisms

Neologisms can be automatically retrieved in a corpus, by searching for *hapaxes* through a Wordlist. As mentioned in Chapter 1, *hapaxes*<sup>30</sup> are words that occur only once in the corpus. There is a relatively high proportion of them in the ABC (30,126), accounting for almost 40% of the total number of word-types. All the *hapaxes* were read through and grouped into categories. Different types of *hapaxes* were found: misspellings (*catologue* for catalogue), blends (*cupidity*), words with affixation (*acontemporary* and *obsoleteness*), compounds (*reiopaintings*, the name of a blog, *blogstuff*), foreign words (*détaillé* in French, *lavoro* in Italian).

Three fields were identified as dominant themes, and the words were placed into one of these three groups: Netspeak (Internet language), colours, and art. The specific language of the Internet, or *Netspeak* (Crystal 2001/2006), is a productive source of creative neologisms: an example of this is *Nottinghack*, previously included as an example in Section 5.3, is a blend of “Nottigham” and “hacker”:

67. “If you’re looking for something a little more digital specific, then Nottinghack could be the regular event for you.” (CB2013006)

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<sup>29</sup> "Hackneyed, adj." *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2014. Web. 20 February 2015.

<sup>30</sup> The word *hapax*, plural *hapaxes*, comes from *Hapax legomenon* which is a transliteration of Greek ἀπαξ λεγόμενον, meaning "(something) said (only) once."

Still within the field of online communication, *Dronestagram* combines “drones” and “Instagram”, carrying a negative connotation:

68. “... posted along with the satellite view on the aforementioned blog, dubbed with cruel irony Dronestagram.” (MS2013005)

Other examples include *blogito*, as in the pun *blogito ergo sum* (HNC2013001), built on the Cartesian saying “cogito ergo sum”, the compound *photoblog* (HE2013010), used to indicate a blog where the posts are made of pictures, the blend *blogiversary* which combines “blog” and “anniversary”:

69. “I'd been looking forward to my 'blogiversary' post!” (AC2013001)

70. “I'll write a little after-blogiversary post anon.” (AC2013001)

Sometimes the blog itself is anthropomorphised and can deserve pictures, as in *blogworthy*:

71. “there are plenty of blogworthy paintings” (MS2013003)

Regarding colours, the blend *bleautiful* in 72 mixes colour blue and “beautiful”, while *yellowist* comes from the art movement “Yellowism”.

72. “blue in English ought to have the second meaning of beautiful....May I recommend a corrective measure of “bleautiful”... (JJC2013085).

73. “Pity the Yellowist didn't rip the picture off the wall...”(DTC2013013)

In the ABC many compounds obviously centre on the word art: *artangel*, *artblog*, *artcritical*, *artech*, *artland*, *artjobs*, *artprice*, *artspace*, *artsymbol*, *artworld*, *artworkers*. Art-centred creative formations evolve among commenters' discussions: *Artcyclopedia* (KTC2013001), a link on an artist's website to his paintings, *Artertainment* (JJC2013012), entertainment plus art, *Op-artish* (JJC2013044), a clipping from Optical art, with the addition of the informal suffix *-ish*, meaning “somewhat”, “vaguely” (Plag 2003:96), while *creartive* (CBC2013001) brings “creative” and “art” together. Again, even in this case, only the pattern re-forming paradigm can be applied to describe the examples provided.

### 5.11 Hyphenated compounds

Other semi-automated ways to find instances of creativity on the whole corpus include looking for hyphenated compounding, examples of which can be extremely long, as in example 62, where ‘tag’ is preceded by a long list of attributes, but can also consist of a simple reduplication or double prefixation, i.e. the repetition of a prefix twice, as in example 76:

74. “a fair dose of those-who-can't-do-teach”.(JJC2013152)

75. “HAHAHA...my 'tag' is a post-ironic tongue-in-cheek fit-for-purpose-on-the-interweb tag: I'm a doer not a talker”. (JJC2013131)

76. “young artists emerging from colleges now are, perhaps, post-post-YBAs”.(JJC2013006).

The three compounds touch upon different topics: a job (those-wh-can’t-do-teach), a description of a tag (post-ironic tongue-in-cheek fit-for-purpose-on-the-interweb tag) and an art movement (post-post-YBAs). They all follow Carter’s pattern re-forming paradigm and represent every day, improvisational creativity, being inserted in different comment threads.

### 5.12 Meta-comments and language awareness

Some of the typing errors in the ABC turned into instances of improvisational everyday creativity, as in the following extract from a comment thread on the misspelling of “time” as “tome”:

77. “take all the tome you need. Tome=time It was an autotypo. Or maybe it is in the book of time.” (AMC2013)

This could be considered an example of what Tagg defines as meta-comment in text-messaging (Tagg 2010: 498-499). In such a case, the texter (or the blogger, in the case at hand) is aware of the typing error and deliberately chooses not to correct it, but to comment on it. Meta-lingual awareness (Carter 2004: 127) also emerges from the bloggers’ linguistic comments and personal reflections on the origin of a word, or the new meanings of a term which make the bond between art and language even tighter. The following examples reflect this awareness:

78. “Have you noticed how common the term “pod” has infiltrated our vocabulary? I’ll give you an example, not so long ago we got used to our little work cubicles being referred to as ‘pods’ but we didn’t like the term. Now there are endless catalogue drops wanting us to buy items from their lists; such as i-pods, folding tripods, coffee-pods, can-I-get-my-food-from-ya-pods, senna-pods and been-there-done-that-a-pods. However, here’s an example from an earlier time. It’s called a seed pod.” (MM2013003)
79. “As a teenager you learn new words, or new meanings for existing words. As a really mean example, a person may be referred to as ‘frigid’ – meaning they are really cold (in any sense of the term). So recently, going through a country museum, seeing this particular piece, made me rethink the original ‘slur’ against someone who was referred to as ‘frigid’. Here’s what I learned: The Frigid (as pictured above), was an ice cream maker. The Frigid had a removable sealed lid at both ends and ice was put into the Frigid using the bottom opening. A mixture of cream, sugar, vanilla, and one egg was put into the Frigid using the top opening, and voilà, the result was cold and frigid. It’s not necessarily art, but it is curious, therefore I define it under my category of ‘Questionable Art’ as part of ‘The Bad’.” (MM2013004)
80. “I agree with some of your points, but please stop using "literally" quite so much.” (JJC013081)
81. “You tell me over, and over, and over again, that you can barely read what I write, and that I don’t understand the rules of grammatical syntax.” (JJC2013129)
82. “OK I’ll reply, even though your use of the expression 'gotten' made me shudder.” (JJC2013129)

It would seem, as Lazaraton maintains, that in most of these cases, observations are made to “create solidarity within the community of bloggers by using insider language and alluding to familiar topics of talk” (Lazaraton 2014:1).

### 5.13 Conclusions

Whilst manual reading was necessary to look for examples of punning, parallelism and rhymes in a sample of the corpus, the ABC was also investigated by following a corpus-driven approach, using *Wordsmith Tools 6.0* to find occurrences of creativity, through strategies of affixation (*-esque, -ism*), inflections (*be verbed out, -ed*), *hapaxes* and hyphenated compounds. It would seem that, according to these criteria, the number of creative items is limited in each case. Art bloggers are more conservative than expected, if we consider art itself as a meaningful source of innovation. As Table 5.5 shows, the vast majority of manually detected creative formations is constituted by puns.

Types of creative formations manually investigated in a sample of the ABC	Number of occurrences
1. puns	20
2. rhymes	3
3. parallelism	1
Total number of creative formations	24

Table 5.5 *Summarising table of the creative formations manually investigated*

The majority (23) of automatically detected creative items are single instances, or *hapaxes*; the first real category can be identified as words ending with *-ism* (9), all of which follow the “pattern re-forming” paradigm, apart from one case (see Example 44).

Types of creative formations automatically detected in the ABC	Number of occurrences
1. -esque	1
2. -ism	9
3. Be verbed out	1
4. Creative hapaxes	23
5. Hyphenated compounds	3
Total number of creative formations	38

Table 5.6 *Types of creative formations*

The data have shown that creative uses (99%) tend to follow the “pattern re-forming” paradigm (Carter 2004), thus indicating that creativity seems to be more the outcome of single personalities, very similar to the “semiotic merchants”, as Thurlow (2007) calls journalists and advertisers, rather than the trend of a community of art bloggers. Since Carter’s paradigm proved unsuited to the ABC, it was replaced with a topic-based classification, which shows that proper names of artists are undoubtedly the most productive source of creativity, as Table 5.7 indicates.



Types of creative formations investigated	Topics, sources of creativity
1. puns	Based on proper names
2. parallelism	Based on a proper name
3. rhymes	Based on animals and common non-living objects
4. Be verbed out formation	Based on a proper name
5. Creative hapaxes	Based on Netspeak, colours, the keyword <i>art</i>
6. -esque	Based on proper names
7. -ism	Based on proper names, art movements, street art trends and media
8. Hyphenated compounds	Based on a job, a tag description, an art movement

Table 5.7 *Topics of creativity*

Another finding concerns the quality of creativity detected: unlike political blogs (Lazaraton 2014), art blogs only rarely show instances of everyday creativity, often opting for a more structured and conventional creativity. When the former emerges, it is to be found in the comments, thus conforming the presence of clear stylistic differences between posts and comments, as shown in Chapter 3.



## Chapter 6

### Conclusions

#### 6.1 Summary of the findings

In this research I explored some linguistic features of the language of what I called “art blogs”, i.e. blogs in English dealing with various forms of art, from drawing to architecture, and published by journalists, institutions, such as museums or art galleries, or art lovers. The aim was to describe the way bloggers use language in this specific field. At present, from my bibliographic research on the state of the art, it would seem that art blogs have not been studied yet, therefore the present research is a step in the direction of filling that gap, by building and analysing a corpus of art blogs, since such texts are now an established and prospering form of online communication. From a methodological point of view, I manually collected a specialised corpus of 54 art blogs, which I analysed adopting various approaches in order to be able to provide the most accurate description possible.

In Chapter 1 I presented the Art Blog Corpus, the ABC, and illustrated some basic notions of corpus linguistic techniques. While describing the corpus, I highlighted the specificity of a blog in particular, published by art critic Jonathan Jones for *The Guardian* website, which attracted such a large number of comments to make it similar to synchronous web genres, such as online chats, than to asynchronous text types.

As shown in Chapter 2, art blogs are difficult to categorise and cannot be easily classified according to the traditional distinction between personal and thematic blogging, since they present a blended style: thus art blogging could be considered almost as a micro-genre in the field of blogging. Many art bloggers actively respond with comments to other art bloggers’ posts and are part of the same social network. Chapter 3 investigated the different text typology of posts and comments using MAT, a Multidimensional Analysis Tagger, which replicates Biber’s Multi Dimensional analysis (Nini 2014).

The analysis, run on a sample of the corpus, shows that blog entries are predominantly narrative, while the comment sections are more argumentative. Using Biber's classification, the predominant text type used in posts is text type 6, general narrative, while text type 8, involved persuasion, is mostly used in comments. This finding could pave the way for future research into text typology applied to web genres.

The extent to which art blogs differ from art announcements is the topic of Chapter 4, which compared the ABC with the E-flux, a specialised corpus available on the Sketch Engine (Kilgarriff et al. 2014). The aim of this chapter was to analyse the different strategies of popularisation, i.e. of the ability to communicate with a large audience, from a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. The two complementary analyses resulted into two distinct sets of considerations: on the one hand, art blogs proved to be more oriented to the general public, showing in general a higher frequency of expressions usually associated with practices of popularised communication; in particular I focused on those practices of denomination, reformulation, analogy and exemplification (Calsamiglia and Van Dijk 2004) which could be automatically detected. The qualitative analysis helped emphasise some aspects of register, tone, connotation, otherwise not immediately recognisable with a merely automatic analysis.

Chapter 5 concentrated on linguistic creativity, showing that most of the creative outputs come from single art bloggers, rather than being the result of bloggers' interactions. As pointed out by Hoffmann (2012), interaction between blog entries and comments is limited. I opted for a topic-based classification according to which proper names of artists resulted to be the major source of innovation.

## 6.2 Contribution to research and future paths

This study is a starting point for research into art blogs. As mentioned in the previous section, some of the findings could pave the way for future extensive studies. In particular, more research is needed on the topic of blogging as an evolving

genre moving towards synchronicity. MAT, the Multi Dimensional Analysis Tagger, was tested for the first time on a corpus of blogs, thus opening up new perspectives of use. This analysis could also have some teaching implications, for example within the area of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), an educational approach in which an additional language is used for the teaching and learning of both content and language. Given that, globally, the most common vehicular language is English and one of the most suitable subjects for CLIL is History of Art, because of its visual content, the ABC could be used by History of Art teachers and classroom practitioners directly.

Further investigations on blogging as a form of popularised communication could be fruitful, as well as on the presence of evaluative language in blogging. The current study is to be considered as a first step in that direction.



## Appendix One: Encoding and Hyperlinks

This technical section explores the processes carried out to clean the corpus. It was realised during the period I spent at the University of Birmingham as CARE<sup>31</sup> visitor, under the supervision of Dr. Suganthi John, with the help of Dr. Paul Thompson.

### 1. Encoding and Hyperlinks: Technical Procedures

#### 1.1. Encoding: Little Endian

The txt.files in ABC needed a standard encoding that *Wordsmith Tools* could easily recognise, such as Little Endian. First Python then Notepad ++ were downloaded; opening the latter the ‘Python Script’ plugin was installed, from Plugin Menu, ‘Python Script’ –‘New Script’ was chosen; the new script was named ‘convertLe’ and then the following instructions were given in the body:

```
import os;
import sys;
filePathSrc="C:\\Users\\Caterina\\Documents\\AllCorpus"
for root, dirs, files in os.walk(filePathSrc):
    for fn in files:
        if fn[-4:] != '.docx' and fn[-4:] != '.doc':
            notepad.open(root + "\\\" + fn)
            console.write(root + "\\\" + fn + "\\r\\n")
            notepad.runMenuCommand("Encoding", "Convert to UCS-2 Little Endian")
            notepad.save()
            notepad.close()
```

The fifth line is the first level of indentation, the sixth is the second level, and the final five lines are the third level. In the third line, the path for the folder where the files are kept (called AllCorpus) was provided. Where Windows uses a single slash between parts of the path, this script requires a double slash. The script was then saved. After checking that the folder specified in the path contained the files which needed to be converted, the Plugin Menu was opened, and the ‘Python Script’ –‘Scripts’-‘convertLe’ was selected.

---

<sup>31</sup> CARE stands for Centre for Advanced Research in English.

## 1.2. Hyperlinks

Hyperlinks, website and email addresses tend to alter word calculations in concordancing programmes. For this reason they were hidden in ABC, using the replace function in Notepad++. ABC was selected in the directory and all the files were replaced, so that all the hyperlinks were put into angle brackets and made invisible for Wordsmith. In order to clear the corpus, the following instructions were given to Notepad++:

Find: `\s(http?:\V.*)\b`

Replace with: `<1>` where 1 stands for what I was looking for

And then the same procedure was followed with all the www addresses:

Find: `\s(www.*)\b`

Replace with: `<1>`

Finally, a manual check was carried out and most instances of http, www, .com, @, # and email addresses were put into angle brackets, apart from the following lexicalised occurrences:

“Now that it’s no longer guardian.co.uk and instead theguardian.com” (JJC2013155);

“The artfactory.com quote [...] The thief will become a dot.com millionaire” (JJC2013176);

“from popular sharing sites like thingiverse.com” (MD2013010); “a year’s membership of re-title.com” (MJ2013001);

“he is the founder member of AerosolPlanet.com” (SA2013001);

“On the CultureLabel.com front we are rolling out the website” (SA2013006); “There is a YouTube video of the Golden Gate made by byzantium1200.com” (SC2013012);

“courtesy of Shannan Muskopf and her site biologycorner.com” (VD2013001); and finally “Glam Exhibition @tateliverpool is wonderfully evocative of my youth” (TG2013004).

All similar examples where @ is used in its prepositional function, especially on the Tate website, were left.



## Appendix Two: Expressions linked to the practices of popularisation

The following section includes the calculations run in R as presented in Chapter 5.

### Practices of popularisation (Chapter 5)

In this section, the calculations run in R are reported, concerning the presence of the different expressions linked to a practice of popularisation in the ABC and in the E-Flux.

“In other words” in the E-flux: **80** (12.8 per million)

“In other words” in the ABC: **157** (36.8 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(80, 157, 6238512, 3676270), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

This is the case where

- the frequency of a word/expression in Corpus 1 is 80,
- the **corpus size of Eflux (Corpus 1) is 6,238,592**
- the frequency of the word/expression in Corpus 2 is 24, and
- the **corpus size of ABC Corpus 2 is 3,676,427**

Pearson's Chi-squared test

```
data: data
```

```
X-squared = 85.175, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16
```

Warning message:

```
In chisq.test(data) : Chi-squared approximation may be incorrect
```

```
> ad = 80 * 3676270
```

```
> bc = 157 * 6238512
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.5381382      (Yule's Q)
```

“Meaning” in the E-flux: Query (mean)-v **830** > Sort Node **142**

“Meaning” in the ABC: **147**

Considering that “meaning” can also be a noun, a precise query of mean as a verb (v) was carried out, and manual counting was necessary to count the –ing occurrences.

```
data <- matrix(c(142, 147, 6238450, 3676280), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data
X-squared = 22.9547, df = 1, p-value = 1.659e-06
> ad = 142 * 3676280
> bc = 147 * 6238450
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
[1] -0.2744943      (Yule's Q)
```

“Called” in the E-flux: **549** (88.0 per million)

“Called” in the ABC: **1,140** (267.0 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(549, 1140, 6238043, 3675287), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data
X-squared = 668.5623, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16
> ad = 549 * 3675287
> bc = 1140 * 6238043
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
[1] -0.5579559
```

“So called” in the E-flux: **14** (2.2 per million)

“So called” in the ABC: **58** (13.6 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(14, 58, 6238578, 3676369), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data
```

```
X-squared = 56.4842, df = 1, p-value = 5.665e-14
```

```
> ad = 14 * 3676369  
> bc = 58 * 6238578  
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)  
> q  
[1] -0.7509396
```

“Known as” in the E-flux: **239** (38.3 per million)

“Known as” in the ABC: **386** (90.4 per million)

Of which: “Also known as” in the E-flux: **25** (4.0 per million)

“Also known as” in the ABC: **58** (13.6 per million)

“Known as” in the two corpora:

```
data <- matrix(c(239, 386, 6238353, 3676041), ncol=2, byrow=T)  
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

```
data: data
```

```
X-squared = 162.1341, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16
```

```
> ad = 239 * 3676041  
> bc = 386 * 6238353  
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)  
> q  
[1] -0.4653565
```

“Aka” in the E-flux: **55** (8.8 per million)

“Aka” in the ABC: **76** (17.8 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(55, 76, 6238537, 3676351), ncol=2, byrow=T)  
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

```
data: data
```

```
X-squared = 23.7221, df = 1, p-value = 1.113e-06
```

```
> ad = 55 * 3676351  
> bc = 76 * 6238537  
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)  
> q  
[1] -0.4020674
```

“That is” in the E-flux: **1,434** (229.9 per million)

“That is” in the ABC: **2,282** (534.6 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(1434,2282, 6237158, 3674145), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 942.2006, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16

```
> ad = 1434 * 3674145
```

```
> bc = 2282 * 6237158
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.4596712
```

“That is to say” in the E-flux: **17** (2.7 per million)

“That is to say” in the ABC: **44** (10.3 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(17, 44, 6238575, 3676383), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 30.639, df = 1, p-value = 3.108e-08

```
> ad = 17 * 3676383
```

```
> bc = 44 * 6238575
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.6290843
```

“i.e.” in the E-flux: **118** (18.9 per million)

“i.e.” in the ABC: **101** (23.7 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(118, 101, 6238474, 3676326), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 7.2876, df = 1, p-value = 0.006943

```
> ad = 118 * 3676326
```

```
> bc = 101 * 6238474
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.1844918
```

“similar to” in the E-flux **98** (15.7 per million)

“similar to” in the ABC: **124** (29.0 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(98, 124, 6238494, 3676303), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 32.7479, df = 1, p-value = 1.049e-08

```
> ad = 98 * 3676303
> bc = 124 * 6238494
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
[1] -0.3645061
```

“(not) different from” in the E-flux: **54** (8.7 per million)

“(not) different from” in the ABC: **111** (26.0 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(54, 111, 6238538, 3676316), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 63.1869, df = 1, p-value = 1.88e-15

```
> ad = 54 * 3676316
> bc = 111 * 6238538
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
[1] -0.5543853
```

“the same as” in the E-flux: **14** (2.2 per million)

“the same as” in the ABC: **89** (20.8 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(14, 89, 6238578, 3676338), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 105.3223, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16

```
> ad = 14 * 3676338
> bc = 89 * 6238578
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
```

```
[1] -0.8303328
```

“for instance” in the E-flux: **181** (29.0 per million)

“for instance” in the ABC: **271** (63.5 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(181, 271, 6238411, 3676156), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 100.4146, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16

```
> ad = 181 * 3676156
```

```
> bc = 271 * 6238411
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.4351562
```

“for example” in the E-flux: **370** (59.3 per million)

“for example” in the ABC: **618** (144.8 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(370, 618, 6238222, 3675809), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 273.6827, df = 1, p-value < 2.2e-16

```
> ad = 370 * 3675809
```

```
> bc = 618 * 6238222
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
```

```
> q
```

```
[1] -0.4784358
```

“an example is” in the E-flux: **6** (1 per million)

“an example is” in the ABC: **1** (0.2 per million)

“e.g.” in the E-flux: **102** (16.3 per million)

“e.g.” in the ABC: **75** (17.6 per million)

```
data <- matrix(c(102, 75, 6238490, 3676352), ncol=2, byrow=T)
chisq.test(data)
```

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data: data

X-squared = 1.9051, df = 1, p-value = 0.1675

```
> ad = 102 * 3676352
```

```
> bc = 75 * 6238490
```

```
> q = (ad-bc) / (ad+bc)
> q
[1] -0.1102167
```

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