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Genre Variation
in Academic Communication
Emerging Disciplinary Trends

Contents

Variation within genres and communicative practices

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Hybridisation in EU Academic Discourse: The Representation of EU Social Actors[*]

1. Introduction

Academic discourse refers to ways of thinking and using language in the academy. In doing so, it deals with such complex social activities (Hyland 2009) as constructing and disseminating knowledge. At the same time, it contributes to constructing and establishing social roles to be performed by social actors within a specific community and the outer world. Indeed, as argued by Gee (1996: viii), language can only be performed, constructed and understood in its social context as discourses, i.e. "instantiations of particular roles [...] by specific groups of people".

Insights into the social implications of genres are further provided by the notion of genres as "forms of life, ways of being [...] frames for social action [...] locations within which meaning is constructed [...]" (Bazerman 1997: 19). Among the implications of the 'socially embedded' role of genres is perceiving and using them as part of our "regularized social relations, communicative landscape, and cognitive organization" (Bazerman 1997: 22), where we "create intelligible communicative action with each other and the guideposts we use to explore the unfamiliar", as a means to construct a "symbolic landscape" for us to live in "which most fits us and the others with whom we share it" (Bazerman 1997: 19).

It seems, therefore, reasonable to assume that an investigation of EU academic discourse can provide information about the social practices of students, the institution and society itself (cf. Hyland 2009).

Along with the discourses of the universities and the academics, a type of discourse that can also be labelled academic is "operationalized [...] in social practices, relations, identities and changes in the physical world" (Fairclough 2011: 11) by the EU as a supranational institution, since it involves academic issues and related actors. Like scholarly discourses, EU discourse is characterised by systematic expressions of institutional meanings and values as

> a multitude of practices and strategies, where argument and engagement are crafted within communities that have different ideas about what is worth communicating, how it can be communicated, what readers are likely to know, how they might be persuaded […]. (Hyland/Bondi 2006: 7)

This entails that successful academic writing is embedded in a particular social world which is reflected and constructed through approved discourses that are realised in texts, which, being socially produced in communities depend on communities for their sense. An analysis of linguistic features in texts can reveal their mode and purpose, that is, how and for what social purpose(s) language is constructed and negotiated, as well as highlighting aspects of the discourse conventions, rhetorical choices, argument forms, writer's stance and reader's engagement, generic structure, and so forth in the discourse. The notion of academic discourse communities as social groupings identified by "a broadly agreed set of common public goals", "specific genre and lexis", and "participatory mechanisms of intercommunication" (Swales 1990: 24-27) points to the presence of ideological implications in discourse. In this view, in fact, discourse is not just related to the object of the discipline but also to the ideologies and argumentative tools of the discourse community that produces it. Specifically, EU academic discourse is embedded in the processes of argumentation, affiliation and consensus-building, involving sets of rhetorical choices that are employed to provide support to authorial stance and claim, creating alignment with the community's beliefs and methods (cf. Hyland 2005).

The aim of this study is to analyse how academic discourse is 'performed' by a supranational institution, i.e. to investigate how the EU promotes its commitment in Education and Training through the Erasmus Programme meant to help "Europe's universities and other institutions to work together towards modernising curricula, funding and governance of higher education").[1] The Programme also includes discourses covering different areas. For instance, a legal dimension can be found in the Erasmus University Charter, which provides the general framework for all European cooperation activities and sets out the fundamental principles and the minimum requirements with which the higher education institution must comply when implementing its activities. Specifically, the main aim of this study is to analyse the discursive representation of social actors, i.e. the EU and EU citizens, particularly with reference to hybridisation through interdiscursivity, that is elements belonging to different discourse practices (academic, institutional, promotional), and investigate the role of 'socially constitutive' discourse practices (Fairclough 1992: 64, 2011; Fairclough/Wodak 1997) in creating ties between the institution and its citizens and contributing to the construction of a common European identity based on legitimation and consensus-building around a set of shared values and approved life experience.

2. Aim, corpus and method

To appeal to its audience the EU has been exploiting a variety of different genres and discursive practices that are generally employed for communication in the commodity sector (see Caliendo 2007; Caliendo/Piga forthcoming, among others) by adopting a corporate-like approach in terms of the objects dealt with (public products), the beneficiaries of these objects (customers) and the promotional style in addressing beneficiaries/customers to represent these objects.

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1   Available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1016_en.htm (last accessed 15/10/2011).

The process of commodification of social life, showing elements of marketisation of public and institutional discourse (Fairclough/Wodak 1997; Bhatia 2004; Fairclough 2011), has been accelerated in recent years by an ever growing exploitation of new technology to make public discourse accessible to large audiences across the globe. Colonisation by promotional genres in academic and professional contexts appears to be the result of the appropriation of lexico-grammatical and rhetorical resources typical of the discourse of corporate advertising. An overgrowing prominence of promotional discourse and web mediation has affected both private and public domains and brought about changes in modes and styles of communication often leading to hybridisation and transformation of genres (see Sarangi/Polese/Caliendo 2011).

To this purpose, and specifically with a view to understanding how the EU constructs its own academic discourse through the promotion of initiatives, learning policies, and discursive strategies aiming at disseminating and promoting its own academic programme, a selection of institutionally-specific documents, legitimising the EU with reference to higher education and covering a time-span from 2007 to 2010, has been collected, forming a corpus of 57,837 running words (7,229 types). The corpus comprises brochures for university students, namely (our acronyms):

- Erasmus - Success stories - Europe Creates Opportunities (ECO) (2007);
- Erasmus - Mobility Creates Opportunity - European success stories (EMCO) (2008);
- Erasmus Higher Education: Creativity And Innovation - European success stories (EHECAI) (2009);
- Erasmus: I am One of the Million who did it! (IOM) (2010);
- Education and Training for Social Inclusion - European success stories (ETSI) (2010).

The theoretical-methodological framework adopted for this investigation mainly draws upon studies on academic discourse and genre hybridisation (Bazerman 1997; Bhatia 2004; Hyland 2005, 2006, 2009; Swales 2004), commodification of academic discourse

(Fairclough/Wodak 1997; Bhatia 2004; Balirano/Caliendo 2008; Caliendo/Magistro 2009; Caliendo/Napolitano 2010; Fairclough 2011) and legitimation (Berkenkotter/Huckin 1995; Berger/Luckmann 1966; Fairclough/Wodak 1997; van Leeuwen 1996, 2007). The text interrogation software AntConc 3.2.1[2] has been used to collect quantitative data for the investigation of specific words and phrases.

As a first step, an analysis of the social dimension in the EU academic programme is carried out on the grounds of provisions establishing the Erasmus Mundus action programme and its goals. As a second step, hybridisation in EU academic discourse is examined in relation to issues of legitimation and self-promotion through highlighting instantiations of roles as actors. A quantitative-qualitative analysis of the representation of EU social actors is carried out following the model and categories of legitimation provided by van Leeuwen (1996, 2007). The main research questions underlying the research are:

- through what linguistic choices and to what extent is hybridisation responsible for a shift in the discursive strategies employed by the EU in the dissemination of academic knowledge?
- how and in what direction is hybridisation in EU academic discourse subservient to legitimating the institution as regards the effectiveness of its broad social programme?

3. The social dimension of the EU academic programme

The social dimension is given prominence in the EU academic programme as a whole. The results of our study reveal that the strategies adopted fit in with the objectives pursued by the institution: the construction of a common European identity/home through

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2   Freeware downloadable at http://antlab.sci.waseda.ac.ip/software.html (last accessed 15/10/2011).

assessing the effectiveness of joint actions with citizens and enhancing legitimation and consensus-building *via* the academic area. The ultimate goal appears to be the creation of an identifiable social world through discursive strategies and linguistic choices on which the supranational institution negotiates claims for the significance of its academic actions on offer.

In the implementation of global policies aimed at social welfare, Decision No 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and the Council of 16 December 2008, which establishes the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 Action Programme for the enhancement of quality in higher education and the promotion of intercultural understanding through cooperation with third countries, reveals a shift from the top (i.e. decision makers) to the bottom (i.e. citizens, or associations).[3] This results in target-oriented communication which draws heavily on discursive strategies of promotional discourse. As a matter of fact, by making reference to the European Council meeting in Lisbon on 23 and 24 March 2000, a 'strategic goal' is set for the European Union to become the "most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world" (Decision No 1298/2008/EC, Art. 6). This involves several objectives or 'needs' which constitute the social dimension of the programme:

•   to step up the fight against exclusion in all its forms;
•   to promote diversity and intercultural education;
•   to promote dialogue and understanding between cultures world-wide;
•   to promote ideals of democracy and respect for human rights, including questions of equality between men and women;
•   to enhance the quality of European higher education;
•   to promote understanding between peoples;
•   to contribute to the sustainable development of higher education in third countries;
•   to avoid brain drain;
•   to favour vulnerable groups;

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3   See Balirano/Caliendo (2008); Caliendo/Magistro (2009); and Caliendo/ Napolitano (2010).

- to widen access for those from disadvantaged groups;
- to enhance the worldwide attractiveness of European higher education;
- to give the programme more publicity within the European Union and beyond its borders;
- to improve cooperation between European institutions of higher education and the quality of higher education.[4]

As is apparent, corporate-like objectives, like visibility, worldwide attractiveness, dynamic knowledge-based economy and competitiveness, are mingled with more clearly social ones, like promoting understanding between peoples, combating all forms of discrimination, stepping up the fight against exclusion, favouring vulnerable groups, or contributing to the sustainable development of higher education in third countries (Decision No 1298/2008/EC, Art. 9). Favouring mobility in the area of higher education along with promoting the ideals of democracy and respect for human rights according to "the principles reflected in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (2), in particular Article 21(1) thereof" (Decision No 1298/2008/EC, Art. 11) allows young people to experience new cultural and social environments, which is functional to accelerating the growth of social inclusion.

     The relevance of the social aim in the programme is confirmed by the findings of this study, which reveal a high frequency of *social* and the cluster *social inclusion*, and also of other clusters as alternatives to it, like *social cohesion* or *social work* (see section 5). In this setting, engaging with the audience, primarily young people, constitutes an important step. In engaging with the audience, in fact, the EU seeks to create an identifiable social world by means of rhetorical choices achieved through expressing "a textual 'voice' or community recognized personality" (Hyland 2006: 29). Stance[5]

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4   Summary of Decision No 1298/2008/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 December 2008 establishing the Erasmus Mundus 2009-2013 action programme.

5   In Hyland's (2006: 29) terms, 'stance', is "the extent to which individuals intrude to stamp their personal authority onto their arguments or step back and disguise their involvement" (see also Hyland 1999 and 2005).

features contribute to the way knowledge is framed for the audience in terms of sequencing of content and also in terms of interactional choices. In doing so, stance items assist the audience towards values, ideologies and practices by which they will interpret knowledge in institutionally approved ways. The presence or absence of the author is a conscious choice to adopt a particular stance. Personal credibility and personal interventions aiming at evaluating materials or expressing a point of view play a great part in creating a convincing discourse, seeking agreement for it and eliciting the appropriate response. This may include 'writer-oriented features', e.g. hedges, boosters, self-mention, explicit markers of evaluation and attitude as devices for expressing judgments, opinions, evaluations, commitments, and impersonality by which the writer thematises evaluations and turns them into explicit statements of opinion (see Hyland 2006).

Engaging with the audience requires, in fact, deployment of particular strategies and engagement features which allow writers to attract and focus the readers' attention, pull them along with the argument, include them as discourse participants, and guide them to interpretation. This, in our corpus, is achieved through shifting from an institution-centred discourse to first person student-centred narrative where the students perform the 'activity role' (Sarangi 2011: 278-279; see also Sarangi 2010) of a 'spokesperson', which allows the EU to disseminate positively valued information on the programme which in turn affects the perception of the institution on the part of the citizens in terms of reliability and legitimation.

4. Legitimation and self-promotional discourse

Berger and Luckmann (1966: 112) have argued that all language is legitimation:

> Incipient legitimation is present as soon as a system of linguistic objectifications of human experience is transmitted. For example, the transmission of a kinship vocabulary *ipso facto* legitimates the kinship

structure. The fundamental legitimating 'explanations' are, so to speak, built into the vocabulary.

Forms of legitimation are realised by specific linguistic resources and configurations of linguistic resources. Since legitimation is always the legitimation of the practices of specific institutional orders by "provid[ing] the 'explanations' and justifications of the salient elements of the institutional tradition" (Berger/Luckmann 1966: 111), a study of legitimation can only be carried out in context, as also implied by the notion of genre knowledge as "a form of situated cognition" embracing form and content and "including a sense of what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a particular situation at a particular point in time" (Berkenkotter/Huckin 1995: 7).

Specifically, ROLE MODEL AUTHORITY in the category of AUTHORISATION (van Leeuwen 2007)[6] relies on people following the example of role models or opinion leaders, e.g. members of a peer group or media celebrities, whose behaviour or beliefs legitimise the actions of their followers[7]. LEGITIMATION can also be achieved

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6   Van Leeuwen (2007: 92) distinguishes four major categories of legitimation, which can either occur separately or combined: (1) AUTHORISATION, i.e. legitimation by reference to the authority of tradition, custom and law, and of persons who are vested with institutional authority; (2) MORAL EVALUATION, i.e. legitimation by reference to value systems; (3) RATIONALISATION, i.e. legitimation by reference to the goals and uses of institutionalised social action; (4) MYTHOPOESIS, i.e. legitimation conveyed through narratives by means of which legitimate actions are rewarded and non-legitimate actions are punished. In our case, legitimation, which is achieved through a shift from institution- to student-centred discourse, mainly results from a combination of categories of *Authorisation* (Role model authority) and *Moral evaluation* (reference to value systems).

7   Role model authority is particularly effective in advertising and lifestyle media. The theoretical basis for the legitimacy of role models is to be found in the 1930s, in symbolic interactionism (Mead 1934), the new form of American psychology which focused on the way people "take on the attitudes of the groups to which they belong" (Mead 1934: 33), as also pointed out by van Leeuwen (2007: 96) with reference to the spreading, after World War II, of the idea of the role model "[…] encouraging young people across the world to take their cues from their peers and from popular culture, rather than from their elders and from tradition. This in turn facilitated the rapid turnover of consumer preferences that has become so vital to the contemporary economy, and to the 'lifestyle' identities it has fostered."

through storytelling. In *Moral tales*, for instance, protagonists are rewarded for engaging in legitimate social practices, or restoring the legitimate order. To this purpose, a social practice comprises the participants performing certain roles in social activities. In such case, as in this study, three dimensions are needed for the analysis: the data, the discursive strategies employed, and the linguistic realisations of such data.

Discourse as social practice (Fairclough/Wodak 1997) assumes a dialectical relationship between institutions and social structures, i.e. institutional and social contexts shape and affect discourses and discourses in turn shape and affect social and political structures, so that discourse at the same time constitutes and is constituted by social practice. It is through discourse that social actors constitute social roles and interpersonal relations between social groups. In this view, constructive macro-structures "encompass those linguistic acts which serve to 'build' and establish particular groups in our documents (agents and participants)" (van Leeuwen 2007: 92-93) in the form of linguistic utterances which distinguish between 'us' and 'them':

> Components of constructive strategies are all linguistic events that invite identification and solidarity with the 'we' group, which […] implies distanciation from and marginalisation of the 'they' group.

Van Leeuwen's (1996) model has proved particularly useful for our analysis, with special regard to the categories which mainly appear to characterise the corpus under examination: INCLUSION, ROLE ALLOCATION (ACTIVATION), SPECIFICATION (NOMINATION), INDIVIDUALISATION, ASSOCIATION, IDENTIFICATION, PERSONALISATION.

Following van Leeuwen's (1996) model of analysis, INCLUSION of social actors in the representation of a given social practice allows identification of actors and agency roles for actions. ROLE ALLOCATION allows relying on ACTIVATION in assigning an active role to social actors which signals active involvement and responsibility. NOMINATION, in SPECIFICATION, i.e. when proper names are used in a text, allows social actors to be represented "in terms of their unique identity" (van Leeuwen 1996: 52). The effect of informal nominations or ways of address is to delete authority, minimise social distance and represent social actors as people with

whom we are familiar and with whom we feel closer because their lives appear appealing and imitable.

INDIVIDUALISATION enhances the readers' self-esteem and self-confidence as individuals participating each with his/her skills in actions (promoted by the institution, in our case) in the building of Europe while focusing on singleness (see the EU motto: "United in Diversity").[8] ASSOCIATION creates cohesive ties characterised by willingness to collaborate to specific activities which are not normally implied by categorisation or classification (cf. van Leeuwen 1996: 50). A further category, DIFFERENTIATION, allows the differentiation of "an individual social actor or group of social actors from a similar actor or group, creating the difference between the 'self' and the 'other', or between 'us' and 'them'" (van Leeuwen 1996: 52). It helps keep the balance between equality and difference, the uniqueness of a social actor and the similarity with other social actors with similar experiences. Therefore, even though 'us' and 'them' are distinguished, they are represented as equivalent.

Furthermore, through IDENTIFICATION, social actors are represented in terms of what they are (van Leeuwen 1996: 54), and as ordinary people in the community, which results in nearing the distance between the institution and its audience. Providing information within a private dimension, e.g. a hobby, further contributes to humanise and represent the social actor as a real individual who shares his/her human side with common people. PERSONALISATION focuses on the 'human face' of social actors, which is essential to achieve the 'humanisation' of the institution as it calls for sympathy on the part of the readers and encourages them to identify with the institution. In the light of the parameters provided by the categories in van Leeuwen's model of analysis (1996, 2007), a quantitative analysis of the corpus under investigation has been carried out to highlight discursive strategies deployed by the European institution in the representation of EU social actors.

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8   At   http://europa.eu/about-eu/basic-information/symbols/motto/index_en.htm (last accessed 15/10/2011).

5. The Erasmus programme 'promoted' as a social phenomenon

The aim of this section is to provide data in relation to the EU discursive strategies adopted to disseminate information on Erasmus opportunities. Indeed, the Erasmus programme has been promoted by the EU as a great opportunity for students to enrich their lives and improve their personal and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, it has been endorsed as an opportunity that allows students to improve language learning, intercultural skills, self-reliance and self-awareness. Finally, it should help students to better understand the sense of what being a European citizen means.[9]

In order to investigate social implications in the Erasmus discourse, and working on the assumption that the Erasmus programme is represented and promoted as a social phenomenon, a frequency list of the corpus under examination is provided (Table 1). Through an investigation of the frequency of the lexis employed in the corpus it is possible to formulate hypotheses on the EU's stance or 'point of view' in promoting its academic programme.

Type	Hits
Erasmus	542
University	404
Students	296
Programme	202
Education	200
Mobility	161
Learning	145
Social	136

Table 1. Wordlist of the corpus under investigation.

9   See   http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80en.htm
     (last accessed 15/10/2011).

As results from Table 1, in addition to the first predictable words in the list (e.g. Erasmus, University, students, etc.), one of the most frequent words is *social*, which has been more frequently found to occur in the cluster *social inclusion*, as Table 2 shows:

	Clusters	*Hits*
1	social inclusion	40
2	and social	22
3	of social	17
4	to social	16
5	social and	10
6	social cohesion	10
7	social exclusion	10
8	social work	8
9	Social Sciences	6
10	in social	5
11	of Social	5
12	European social	4

Table 2. Clusters of *social*.

This is in line with the notion of semantic prosody which helps us identify a corpus-based evaluation where "a given word or phrase may occur most frequently in the context of other words or phrases which are predominantly positive or negative in their evaluative orientation" (Hunston/Thompson 2001: 38). However, since "the complete meaning of a word is always contextual, and no study of meaning apart from a complete context can be taken seriously" (Firth 1935: 37), a further investigation of the co-text of *social inclusion* appears to be necessary. In Figure 1, some co-textual features can be noticed, i.e. verbs with a very high agentive value collocating with *social inclusion*:

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programme contribute to social inclusion?  18| How does the Grun
programme contribute to social inclusion?  24| How does the Leon
programme contribute to social inclusion?  30| How does the Lang
programme contribute to social inclusion?  34| How do Informatic
hnologies contribute to social inclusion?  38| How do study vis:
dy visits contribute to social inclusion?      □ Member States  1
rogramme  contribute to social inclusion?   6 |  A large majorit
worked in  the areas of social inclusion  and have tackled issue
ed together to promote  social inclusion and to eliminate gender
y, are at the heart  of social inclusion. This awareness was acc
ed together to promote  social inclusion and to eliminate gender
y, are at the heart  of social inclusion. This awareness was acc
rogramme  contribute to social inclusion?   12 |  Erasmus, the 1
rogramme  also supports social inclusion  indirectly through fur
promote integration and social inclusion.   host university cover
namics of the  study of social inclusion. The course contrib-  1
tive methods to provide social inclusion.   Erasmus for higher ec
tive methods to provide social inclusion.   Erasmus for higher ec
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Figure 1. Concordances of *social inclusion*.

Specifically, the verbs *contribute, promote, provide* and *support* are functional to conveying an active role for the European Union in promoting education along with social integration through its academic programme. In the following sections, the relationship between the Erasmus experience and the social dimension will be investigated along with further dimensions implying promotional features embedded in the Erasmus discourse.

6. Hybrid features

Taking into account Swales' (1990: 61-62) notion of genre variation based on a number of 'different parameters' and 'rhetorical purposes' and a move towards a more target-oriented communication by the EU (Balirano/Caliendo 2008), EU academic discourse has been investigated in relation to hybridization of promotional and reporting genres. Indeed, each collected brochure appears to 'report' detailed information about the Erasmus programme through promotional

devices (e.g. evaluative phrases, intensifiers, emphasised phrases, etc.). More particularly, the reporting genre appears to be 'colonized' (Fairclough 2003) by promotional features that can be assumed to be peculiar of the EU academic discourse popularised and 'mediated' through the Web. A mixture of genres and text types is a phenomenon that is implicit in the 'mediation' process which

> […] involves movement from one social practice to another, from one event to another, from one text to another. […] mediation does not just involve individual texts or types of texts, it is in many cases a complex process which involves […] 'networks' of texts […]. (Fairclough 2003: 30)

Mediation seems to be responsible for promotional features in the corpus investigated. In the brochures analysed, in fact, detailed information concerning Erasmus students' mobility is reported along with personal evaluation of the Erasmus programme. This can be considered an attempt to draw the reader's attention and make the brochures and the whole programme more 'appealing'. Particularly, in the corpus under examination, detailed data concerning the programme are reported along with personal feelings and emotions of students who spent part of their life abroad on an Erasmus programme. Specifically, as can also be deduced from the brochure graphical layout,[10] each of them contains two main parts, one focusing on information concerning the universities involved in the programme and the number of students who took part in the programme in the past, and another consisting, instead, in the direct narration by students who tell a virtual audience about the value and impact of the Erasmus experience on their lives. If we focus on the micro-linguistic features of the texts examined, we can notice a mixture of two different genres – promotional and reporting – where promotional features are realised by evaluative linguistic structures:

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10   Data available at http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc2164_en.htm, and http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/erasmus/success-stories_en.pdf (last accessed 15/10/2011).
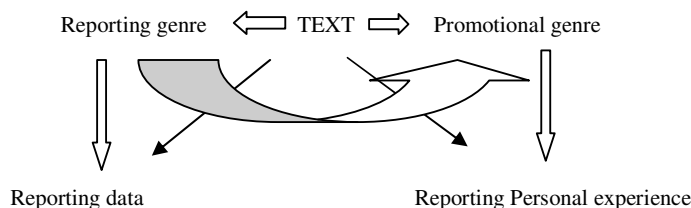
Figure 2. Genre-mixing in EU brochures on Erasmus.

The following instances are examples of the reporting genre where data and detailed information concerning the Erasmus programme are provided:

(1)   ERASMUS - twenty years of success! Since 1987, well over one-and-a-half million students - 60% female - have benefited from ERASMUS mobility grants. Under the new Lifelong Learning Programme, the European Commission aims to have a total of 3 million individuals participating in student mobility by 2012. Over 140.000 lecturers have also taken the opportunity to gain experience in one of the other 31 countries currently participating in the programme. (ECO 2007)

(2)   Erasmus, the European Union's flagship mobility programme in the field of education and training was established in 1987. Since 2007, Erasmus is a subprogramme of the EU's Lifelong Learning Programme with an overall budget of approx. € 3114 million. (EMCO 2008)

(3)   Erasmus student mobility started in 1987 with 3244 mobile students and now offers around 180 000 students every year the possibility to study or to do a work placement abroad for a period of 3 to 12 months. (CAI 2009)

As can be noticed in the examples above, detailed information concerning statistical and economic data (e.g. number of students, the budget invested in the programme, percentage, dates) is reported in the brochures. Some promotional devices, however, can also be detected. Specifically, in example (1), emphasis on past success (e.g. "twenty years of success!"), thanks to the number of students involved in the programme, is underlined by *well* functioning as an intensifier (e.g. "well over one-and-a-half million students"). In particular, in all the examples, reference to the time when the programme started is explicitly provided to emphasise the impact and increase of the

phenomenon (e.g. "since 1987, well over one-and-a-half million students - 60% female - have benefited from ERASMUS mobility grants" in example (1); "the European Union's flagship mobility programme in the field of education and training was established in 1987" in example (2); "Erasmus student mobility started in 1987" in example (3)). In the instances presented in the next sections, the report of personal experience, which marks a shift in the use of discursive strategies for communicating with the audience, will be analysed following van Leeuwen's (1996) categories.

6.1. Inclusion

As seen in section 4, the category of INCLUSION implies identification of actors and attribution of agentive roles and accountability for actions:

(4)   It is true – when you're in ERASMUS, you find out a lot about yourself."
        […] "ERASMUS is a lot more than a studying experience. For me it is a
        way to look at the world with new eyes, to feel and discover new emotions
        and learn what is not written in the textbooks. (IOM 2010)

In the quote above, an extremely positive feedback is provided by the student. In particular, promotional devices can be observed through expressions of highly positive evaluation relying on intensifiers often to reinforce comparatives or to express emotions (e.g. *a lot, a lot more than*). As Hunston and Thompson (2001: 13) remark, "identifying evaluation […] is a question of identifying signals of comparison, subjectivity, and social value". Comparison between past and present (i.e. before and after the Erasmus experience) is the strategy employed to convey a positive evaluation of the Programme. In example (4), for instance, a comparison is drawn between general expectations from Erasmus (primarily considered as a studying experience) and the actual feedback from the student (*more than* a studying experience), which is strengthened by the phrase *for me* at the beginning of an utterance expressing the student's viewpoint.

In the brochures investigated, personal experience is reported through quotes from Erasmus students (cf. Figure 3, below).
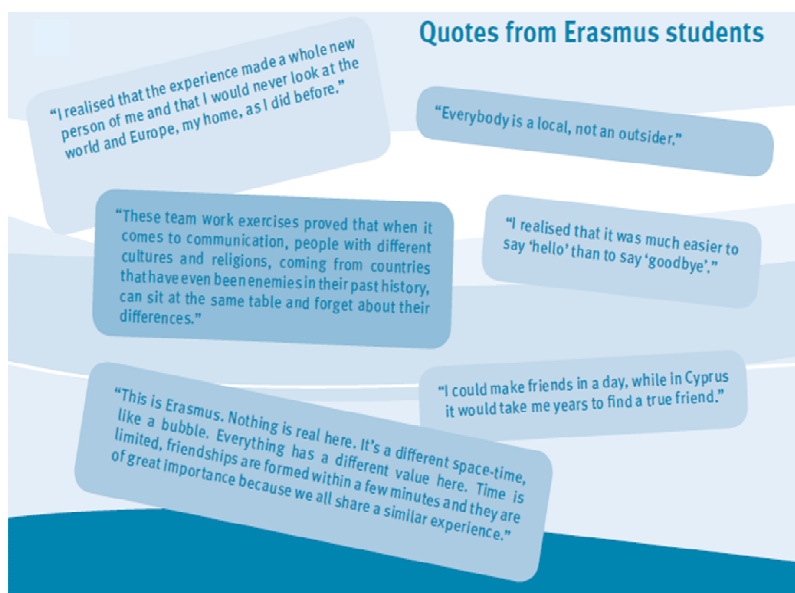
Figure 3. Quotes from Erasmus students (IOM 2010).

Figure 3 shows, in fact, that comparison between past and present, that is, before and after the Erasmus experience, is the strategy employed to promote the Erasmus programme (e.g. "the experience made a whole *new* person of me"; "it was much *easier* to say 'hello' than to say 'goodbye'"; "It's a *different* space-time [...] Everything has a *different* value") in association with evaluative adjectives in structures with a highly promotional impact on the reader (e.g. "friendships are formed within a few minutes and they are of *great* importance"; "it would take me years to find a *true* friend").

6.2. Role allocation

ROLE ALLOCATION mainly implies the use of two major categories – ACTIVATION and PASSIVATION – both related to the

'conceptualisation' of activity and passivity embedded in the representation of social actors. In particular, ACTIVATION, which implies a representation of people as active forces and participation of an actor, is conveyed through the use of foregrounding grammatical roles underlining responsibility. As can be seen in the examples below, verbs conveying personal involvement are employed (our emphasis):

(5)   **I gained** first-hand teaching experience leading lecturers and workshops for local music students and **I** also **took part** in an international creativity conference. This week of teaching, discussing and getting cultural insights into the Latvian way of teaching and living has probably been the most crucial point so far in my teaching career. Not only because of the wonderful people with whom **I became acquainted** and the fact that **I could experience** a crosscultural dimension to education, but **because I've also started** to develop a new seminar programme. (EMCO 2008)

(6)   On arriving at Cartoon Saloon in Kilkenny, **I worked** on commercials, cartoons and 2D animation films. One of my proudest achievements is **the work I did** for a trailer that was used at the Cartoon Movie Festival. The experience proved a great success both for my own work and for the studio's. When the internship period was over, Cartoon Saloon offered me a contract and **I have been working** there happily till this day. (ETSI 2010)

In particular, students are represented as active participants in interesting experiences (international creativity conference, seminar programme, crosscultural dimension to education, trailers, commercials, etc.). Promotion is here expressed through the choice of evaluative verbal items. As Hunston and Thompson (2001: 17) remark, "[i]n many cases, […], a lexical item gives information in addition to the evaluation, and as a result, its status as evaluation may be more debatable". Nonetheless, in the examples above, positive evaluation is conveyed by the use of superlative forms expressing highly positive involvement and participation, like "the most crucial point so far in my teaching career" in example (5) and "one of my proudest achievements in example" (6), which are evidence of a very positive influence of the Erasmus experience on the students' professional and personal lives and are highly effective as promotional strategies.

6.3. Specification

While GENERICISATION implies a representation of classes or group of people as equal and anonymous members, SPECIFICATION represents individuals as real people in the world and is characterised by direct reference to real individuals and their concrete world. In this category, the use of proper names, instead of categorising labels in GENERICISATION, and reference to particular educational histories and what makes a personal life unique are among the main features observed in the corpus:

(7)   **Vesela** came to Thessaloniki in 2005 from Varna in Bulgaria. She writes […] (ECO 2007)

(8)   **VedranaTrbušić**, a Slovene studying at the University of Ljubljana, writes […] (ECO 2007)

(9)   […] 23-year old medicine student **Mariana Carneiro** de Sousa Pintoda Costa from the University of Port […] (IOM 2010)

(10)   At the age of 23, **Jozef Majak** left the TechnicaUniversity in Zvolen, Slovakia, for Oslo University College […] (IOM 2010)

As we can see in the instances above, singleness is strongly emphasised through the employment of proper names, inserted in a context where the background of the students is reported. This is in line with what Caliendo and Magistro (2009: 181) point out with reference to EU officials:

> [...] the European Union makes concrete reference to its officials' experience to reach a wider public, the mass audience of 'ordinary' European citizens who can identify themselves with the 'ordinary' employees.

Also in our corpus reference to real participants in the Erasmus experience appears to be functional to identity construction through a process of identification.

6.4 Individualisation

Differently from ASSIMILATION, which emphasises conformity and collectivisation, INDIVIDUALISATION does not imply the specific identity of an individual but his/her being a single entity, that is, his/her standing out as having a separate personality from the others in the group. In the brochures investigated, INDIVIDUALISATION is above all conveyed by 'personal narrative':

(11)   In 2003, Maarika from Tartu in Estonia went to Thessaloniki in Greece. She reports: "[…] one of the most important things I gained during my Erasmus time was a new skill, to be persistent. I learned that when you arrive in a new country, it takes more than pure enthusiasm and excitement to settle down. I learned that different people need a different approach. I learned how to make friends from all corners of the world." (ECO 2007)

(12)   An Erasmus poster in Akdeniz University became my magic wand when I was a student there in 2006. Erasmus transported me to Bonn University for six months. I had never been abroad before, had no passport, no idea about visas, had never flown before. But my Erasmus period was like a fairy tale. And during my time in Bonn I started to work with the European Volunteer Service. With the self-confidence I gained, I am now working as a volunteer in Budapest with young girls with limited opportunities – sharing my magic wand. SerapYeter (EHECAI 2009)

In the examples above, personal narrative concerns narration of the Erasmus experience from a very wide perspective. As a matter of fact, the Erasmus programme is considered a chance, both at a personal and a social level, which gives the students the opportunity to live a unique experience. Adjectives and phrases with a highly positive evaluation are employed to emphasise this aspect. For instance, "my Erasmus period was like a *fairy tale*" (12) and "an Erasmus poster in Akdeniz University became *my magic wand*" (12) both contain expressions belonging to an introspective dimension.

INDIVIDUALISATION and singleness are also emphasised by a very high frequency of the pronoun *I* and the adjective *my*, as can be noticed in the following wordlist listing the most frequent words in the corpus (cf Table 3, below).

Through INDIVIDUALISATION, 'humanisation' is strongly emphasised, which fits in with the Commission's proposal: "EU

institutions and all levels of government can do more to 'give a human face' to the information they provide" (European Commission 2006: 9).

	Items	*Hits*
1	The	2,332
2	And	2,132
3	Of	1,719
4	In	1,466
5	To	1,279
6	A	1,025
7	*I*	779
8	For	575
9	Erasmus	542

	Items	*Hits*
10	With	458
11	The	432
12	University	404
13	Was	361
14	*My*	350
15	As	324
16	From	320
17	At	309

Table 3. Wordlist sorted by frequency.

6.5. Identification

In opposition to FUNCTIONALISATION, which represents social actors in terms of what they do (i.e. occupation), IDENTIFICATION represents social actors in terms of what they are, classifying people according to such classes as gender, age, religion, social class, race, regional belonging, work relations, family ties, physical features (cf. van Leeuwen 1996: 54, 56-57). In this study, IDENTIFICATION is detectable when the students' background is provided:

(13)   Vedrana Trbušić, a Slovene studying at the University of Ljubljana, writes
        […] Clémence Lacoque, a French student, sees the following differences
        compared with his university […]. (ECO 2007)

(14)   27-year old Eirini Komninou went for her electrical engineering studies with
        Erasmus from the Technological Educational Institute of Crete to the
        European Space Agency's Astronomy Centre in Madrid. (IOM 2010)

IDENTIFICATION tends to represent students as ordinary people in the EU. This kind of representation makes them appear closer to the

readers as ordinary people and their lives attractive and easier to imitate.

6.6. Personalisation

PERSONALISATION is a key element in giving a social actor a 'human side' (Caliendo/Magistro 2009: 187) by representing him/her as a human being. In this study, PERSONALISATION can be identified through personal narrative:

(15)   I was exposed to plenty of German language and culture […]. (ECO2007)

(16)   During all of my stays, I was welcomed with hospitality by both my host university and my colleagues. (EMCO 2008)

(17)   During my four months in Lithuania I was stunned by the country's forests and lakes, and fascinated by its history and folklore I confess I was surprised by how much they reminded me of people in Bulgaria […]. (IOM 2010)

(18)   I was apprehensive at first about the Erasmus programme because I wasn't interested in the universities […] I was delighted with what I'd learnt and HvA was so satisfied with the exchange, they proposed establishing more regular contacts with the Estonian Aviation Academy […]. (IOM 2010)

Attention paid to personal experiences and emotions is strengthened by a high frequency of the verbal form *was,* which is the first-word cluster with the pronoun *I*:

1	73	I was
2	42	I had
3	32	and I
4	26	I am
5	24	that I
6	22	I met
7	19	I'd

Table 4. Clusters with the pronoun *I*.

The structure '*I was*' is followed by adjectives and past participles of verbs with a high emotional value (e.g. *apprehensive, interested, surprised, delighted, encouraged, stunned*) signalling involvement and responsibility, as can be observed in the following Figure:

```
oordinator at my university, I was soon  off to Vilnius, of whic
oordinator at my university, I was soon  off to Vilnius, of whic
 my four months in Lithuania I was stunned   what I was really :
thuania I was stunned   what I was really interested in. Going a
 there. It really felt like  I was taking charge of my education
es, were  at home. I confess I was surprised by how much  they 1
 there. It really felt like  I was taking charge of my education
es, were  at home. I confess I was surprised by how much  they 1
us  exchange programme while I was studying transla-  I found my
ng abroad with their  child, I was accepted at the University o:
a Dutch aerospace company.  |I was apprehensive at first about t
ademy was  proud of my work, I was delighted with what I'd  lear
a Dutch aerospace company.  |I was apprehensive at first about t
ademy was  proud of my work, I was delighted with what I'd  lear
ch, and a few  months later, I was in Amsterdam.  The lectures a
at  tradition in this area.  I was swept into my new life the da
long with industrial design, I was  encouraged to take on course
hing I had learnt in school. I was stunned  by how many language
```

Figure 4. Concordances of *I was*.

PERSONALISATION here seems to coincide with an introspective dimension. As a matter of fact, much emphasis is placed on the psychological and social effect that the Erasmus experience has had on the life of each student.

7. Conclusions

The EU website enables visitors to retrieve information in a highly attractive manner encouraging them to participate in public policies and spread principles of equality, democracy, and human rights for all. This study has revealed that disseminating information about the Erasmus programme participation by visitors is enhanced by a type of governance through empowerment. This appears to be the main strategy adopted by the institution in its academic discourse to achieve the objectives outlined for the implementation of global policies aimed at social welfare. Direct participation and personal involvement of students leads to self-representation and self-evaluation of the supranational institution which realises legitimation by means of 'moral evaluation' (van Leeuwen 1996: 97) in the construction of a future identity 'based on moral values' which, being shared rather than imposed by the authority, need no justification. "Moral evaluation" here matches with role model authority in the category of 'Authorisation' (van Leeuwen 2007), i.e. relying on people who are invited to follow the examples of members of a peer group as role models, whose behaviour and beliefs legitimise the actions of their followers and eventually those of the institution.

Through hybridisation of academic and promotional discourse the EU constructs self-representation as a service provider rather than a supranational organisation. Self-representation is achieved through reference to real identities and personal experiences and the narrating voice relying on humanisation which attracts visitors/students and encourages them to feel at one with Erasmus students acting as EU social actors as the institution's spokespersons. Identifying actors and attributing agentive roles and accountability for their actions meant to represent the EU as the social actor is functional to creating INCLUSION. This is achieved through naming students and giving them full agency in EU activities, through making direct reference to them as real individuals and to the concrete world surrounding each of them which contributes to making him/her unique (e.g. using proper names as opposed to categorising labels; reference to particular educational histories/family environments), through using an informal (name only)

or semi-formal (name and surname) rather than a formal (surname only) way to feature social actors.

Hybridisation in the brochures is realised by mixing academic-institutional and promotional discourse, that is, by shifting from reporting to a conversational level, i.e. from indirect to direct speech through personal narrative. This allows the EU to construct a target-oriented discourse aiming at raising feelings of active involvement and equal responsibility in performing EU actions, and which is subservient to the construction of a feeling of solidarity and social integration in terms of rights and equal opportunities, which are among the main social objectives of the Erasmus programme. The strategy adopted is one of 'humanisation' and 'personalisation', which moves from the institution to the narrating *persona*: university students as real social actors are willing to promote what is being claimed, i.e. the institution's cause.

Students' life stories, which are enthusiastically narrated in the first person, are filtered through highly positive evaluative statements, i.e. in terms of human experience which sounds attractive and imitable, substantiating, from a personal stance, the sound effectiveness of EU policies. In Walsh's (2004) words, "[s]peakers interweave evaluation with description" in personal narratives through which speakers' stance coincides with the institution's. As a result, the EU achieves visibility as an institution made up of ordinary social actors who enter a human-typical relationship with the institution as members of an inclusive community. This is a way to arouse allegiance from students as citizens for the construction of a future grounded on a set of positively-experienced shared values.

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