ParlaCLARIN Workshop: Creating and Using Parliamentary Corpora

Miyazaki, 7 May 2018

Applying Multi-Perspective Approaches to the Analysis of Parliamentary Data

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Parliamentarism is an ***increasingly popular political system*** internationally, and in Europe most political systems are based on parliamentary democracy.

The common *European tradition of parliamentary political cultures* can best be understood through ***interdisciplinary and comparative perspectives*** on the emergence, evolution and experiences of parliaments across time and geopolitical borders.

European Parliaments under Scrutiny

"Parliaments are – or should be – the locus of the daily management of democratic life. As such, their *modus operandi* deserves more attention than they usually receive. This book has the merit of approaching this task from a novel perspective, by focusing on the parliamentary discursive practices – both those ritualized and regulated and the more spontaneous ones. This sheds new light on the role of discourse in the collective exercise of power in the process of social choice, in the formation of political identity, and in the nature of public 'representation' – among other things. […]"
**Marcelo Dascal,** *Tel Aviv University*

"Parliaments are by definition places where elected representatives *talk*. This panoramic survey of national, EU and post-communist styles of parliamentary discourse demonstrates in depth its continually changing complexities and is an important contribution to European self-understanding."
 Paul Chilton, *Lancaster University, UK*

"Thanks to masterly pieces of scholarship such as this one, it has gradually become a fascinating and constantly expanding field of research. The editor and the authors should be given credit for a significant contribution to parliamentary discourse analysis, which is highly recommended to all researchers with an interest in language and politics."
 Villy Tsakona, *Democritus University of Thrace, Greece*, in Journal of Pragmatics, Issue 43(2011), pages 2667-266
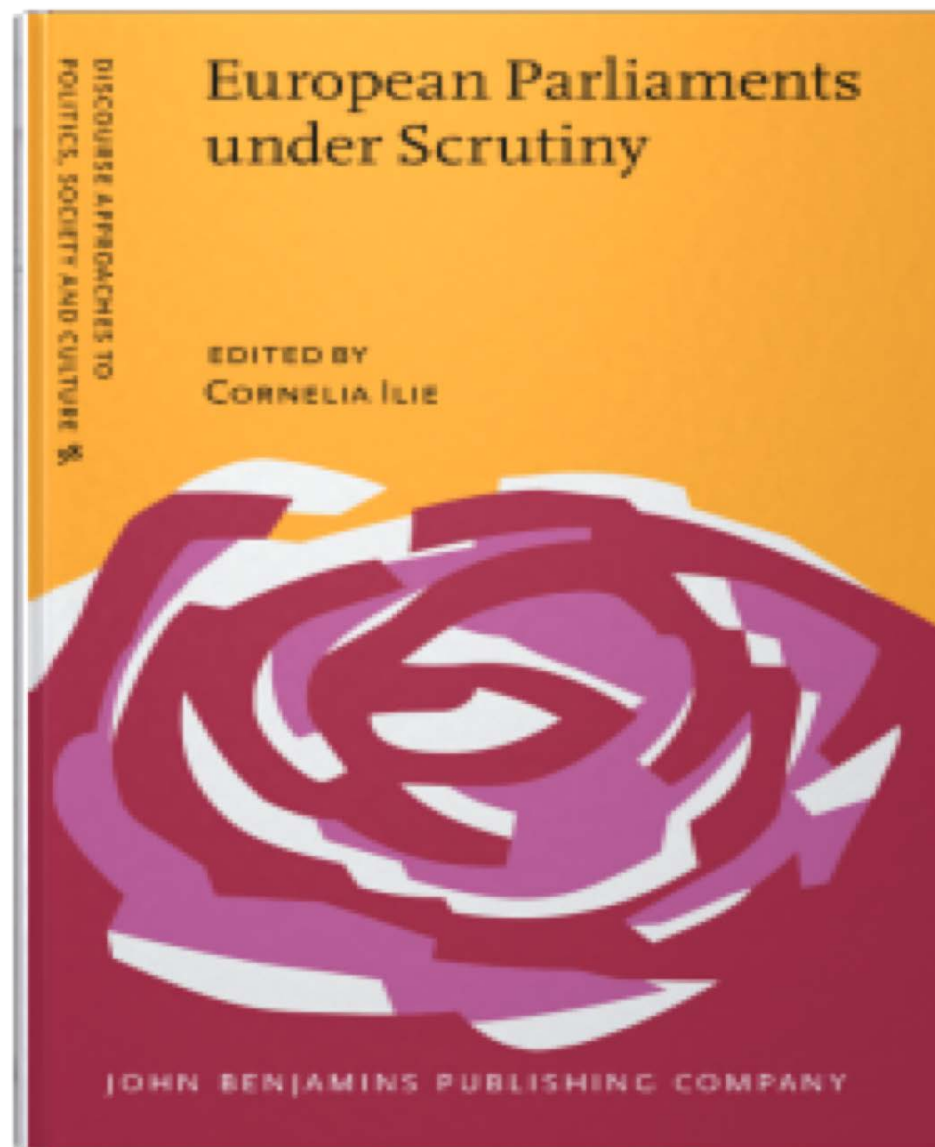
Parliamentary Institutions – Roles and Impact

In the current period of

- increasing social paradigm shifts
- political polarisations
- popular and populist movements

it has become increasingly important to examine

- the *political agendas*
- the *argumentation strategies*
- the *deeper motivations*
- the *ultimate goals*

of actors on the political stage in general, and in parliamentary institutions in particular.

The Discourses of Parliamentary Debates

➢Discourses enacted in parliament **not only reflect** political, social, and cultural configurations in an ever-changing world, but they also **contribute to shaping** these configurations at the interpersonal and institutional level.

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➢Discourse-shaped ***communication strategies and deliberation practices*** in parliaments ***have developed in different ways in different countries***.

➢Discourses in European parliaments ***reinforce and/or challenge norms, values and concepts*** that have shaped and influenced political thought and action over time.

Parliaments and Parliamentarism

- "The focus on representation, sovereignty, responsibility and deliberation offers a lot: the book convincingly demonstrates how these concepts from as early as seventeenth-century Britain recur time and time again in political controversies over what parliament is or should be. Thanks to this specific approach, the quality of the case studies and the coherence between them are significant." · **Parliament, Estates and Representation**

- "… maintaining a high level of clarity, this title provides insight not only into political history, but also the attitudes of those who contribute to it." · **Res Rhetorica**

- "This collection offers an impressive historical and geographical sweep, covering a range of conceptual issues. The individual chapters provide both breadth and depth, and they are well situated within wider theoretical concerns." · **Alan Finlayson**, University of East Anglia

Discourse in Parliament
&
Parliament in Discourse

Political discourses and parliamentary institutions are mutually constitutive through

- public display of *meaning co-construction & negotiation*

- rhetoric of *argumentation & counter-argumentation*

- *interpersonal & inter-group struggle for power*

Communication Strategies and Deliberation Practices in Parliaments

A distinguishing characteristic of parliaments as institutions is that parliamentary work essentially consists of communication, i.e.

speaking (*monologic communication*)

and

debating (*dialogic communication*)

Discursive Practices in Parliament

From a linguistic perspective, *parliamentary discourse is a genre of political discourse*.

- It displays particular *institutionalised discursive features* and *ritualised interaction strategies*, while **complying with** and/or **circumventing a number of specific rules and constraints**.

- The discursive interaction of parliamentarians is constantly marked by their institutional **role-based commitments**, by the dialogically shaped **institutional confrontation** and by the awareness of **acting in front and on behalf of multiple audiences**.

- Parliamentary debates are meant to achieve a number of institutionally specific purposes, namely **position-claiming, persuading, negotiating, agenda-setting**, and **opinion building**, usually along ideological or party lines.

Adversariality & Argumentativeness of Parliamentary Debates – good or bad?

Parliamentary debates, like political debates in general, are expected to be *adversarial and argumentative in a democratic multi-party system*.

However, when the debate turns into an exchange of *deliberately aggressive and offensive speech a*cts, it may become counter-productive, and its democratic role may become problematic.

Parliamentary Debate as a Mixed Type of Institutional Dialogue

The parliamentary debate, as a mixed type of dialogue, can be envisaged as a combination (in different degrees) of 5 types of dialogue, as distinguished by Walton (1992):

- *Information-seeking dialogue* = eliciting information
- *Action-prompting dialogue* = pressing for action on urgent issues
- *Eristic dialogue* = allowing for adversarial exchanges
- *Critical discussion* = questioning assumptions, rebuttals
- *Negotiation dialogue* = negotiating to solve conflicts of interests

Disciplinary Approaches to Parliamentary Debates

- **Political Communication Theories** (Nimmo & Sanders 1981; Franklin & Norton 1993; Raunio 1996; Bates et al. 2012)

- **Qualitative Content Analysis** (Lazarsfeld 1972; Katz 1987, Mayring 2000)

- **Social Psychology** (Bull & Wells 2012)

- **Rhetoric & Argumentation** (Antaki and Leudar 2001; Steinmetz 2002; Ilie 2004, 2007, 2016, 2018; Walton 1982; 1992)

- **Ethnography** (Crewe & Müller 2006; Wodak 2009)

- **Interdisciplinary approaches** (Ihalainen, Ilie & Palonen 2016)

Linguistic and Language-Based Approaches to Parliamentary Debates

- **Pragmatics** (Perez de Ayala 2001; Ilie 2010b, 2010c; Zima et al. 2010);

- **Pragma-Rhetoric** (Ilie, forthcoming 2018);

- **Discourse analysis** (Harris 2001; Ilie 2003, 2010, 2012; Bayley 2004; Chilton 2004; Van Dijk 2004)

- **Critical discourse analysis** (Wodak & van Dijk 2000)

- **Rhetoric** (Bouchet 2016; Burkhardt 2016; Ilie 2004, 2016; Peltonen 2016; Reid 2000; Steinmetz 2002; Walton 1992)

- **Rhetoric & Argumentation** (Steinmetz 2002; Ilie 2004, 2016, 2018; Ihnen 2009; Walton 1982; 1992)

- **Gender-based approaches** (Shaw 2002; Charteris-Black 2009; Ilie 2012, 2013, 2018 forthcoming; Formato 2014; Fuentes-Rodriguez and Alvarez-Benito 2014)

- **Cognitive linguistics** (Ilie 2001; Wyss et al. 2015)

Analytical steps in Discourse Analysis

- To establish the (closer and wider) *context of discourse* (e.g. socio-historical background, topic, political goals, participant roles and relationships, ongoing inter/action)

- To examine the *structure of the text and co-text* (e.g. sequences and overlaps, arguments and counter-arguments)

- To identify instances of *co-performativity, meaning polarisation, metadiscourse, intertextuality*, a.s.o.

- To identify (direct and indirect) *socio-cultural and cross-cultural references*

Linguistic Pragmatics of Political Discourse

By integrating multidisciplinary theoretical approaches, pragmatics proves to be a versatile analytical tool, able to combine

a *micro-level & bottom-up approach* (whereby global issues are explained through local linguistic mechanisms and strategies, drawing on social philosophy and especially epistemology)

with

a *macro-level & top-down approach* (whereby linguistic and discursive phenomena are accounted for in terms of wider social, cultural and political factors, drawing on social and political sciences).

Linguistic Pragmatics of Parliamentary Discourse

- **pragmatics of parliamentary (im)politeness** (Harris 2001; Ilie 2001; 2004; 2005; Perez de Ayala 2001)

- **pragmatics of recurring key words** (Ilie, 1999a; 2007), **recycled clichés** & **counter-clichés** (1999b; 2000; 2006b)

- **pragmatics of parliamentary forms of address** (Ilie, 2010a)

- **pragmatics of parliamentary speech acts and question-answer patterns** (Ilie 2003; 2005; 2010b; 2015; Bull & Wells 2012)

- **pragmatics of parliamentary metadiscourse** (Ilie 2003a; 2003b; 2012)

- **pragmatics of parliamentary humour** (Tsakona 2011; 2013)

- **cross-cultural pragma-rhetorical analysis of parliamentary discourse** (e.g. unparliamentary language & insults in the UK & Swedish parliaments (Ilie, 2004)

- **pragmatics of parliamentary gendering** in the UK & Swedish parliaments (Shaw 2000; 2011; Ilie, 2011; 2012, 2018 forthcoming)

Pragma-Rhetoric

Pragmatics and rhetoric provide complementary perspectives on contextualised and situation-based language use.

❑ *While **pragmatics** focuses on language as it is used by human beings, **rhetoric** focuses on human beings as they use language.*

❑ *While **pragmatics** examines the shifting aspects of **meaning construction and meaning transfer** in actual language use, **rhetoric** explores the* language users' **persuasive and argumentation-oriented strategies of communication**.

❑ ***Pragmatic approaches** are normally concerned with mapping **structural patterns and recurrent instances of language use**, whereas **rhetorical approaches** focus on the* **correlation between the purposeful correlation of linguistic strategies with the communicators' social and cultural values, as well as ultimate goals**.

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (i)

Discourse is inherently multimodal in that it displays a multiplicity of constantly shifting participant structures and identities through face-to-face interpersonal cues and social hints.

Language in use, whether it is in the form of spoken language or text, is always and inevitably constructed across multiple modes of communication, including speech and gesture not just in spoken language but through such "contextual" phenomena as the use of the physical spaces in which we carry out our discursive actions or the design, papers, and typography of the documents within which our texts are presented.

Multimodality of Communication

The multimodality of social and communicative interaction is evident in the coordinated use of multiple modes of communication:

- gesture
- speech characteristics
- body orientation/posture
- head movement
- hand movement
- facial expression
- gaze
- …

Multimodal Discourse Analysis (ii)

The conceptual framework for multimodal discourse analysis allows for the incorporation of identifiable communicative modes that social actors orchestrate in face-to-face interactions (Norris 2004).

Analyzing one mode without the others leaves out much of what is being communicated, its implications on the ongoing activity and relationships between interactants.

Studying the verbal exchanges without studying the nonverbal actions and the setting can actually distort the interpretation of many of the ongoing face-to-face interactions.

Particular talk-accompanying gesticulations may be performed in an ostensive way. This suggests that nonverbal actions are deeply interwoven with communicative processes (Filliettaz 2004).

Parliamentary Debate as Political Interaction Ritual

Envisaging parliamentary debate as political interaction rituals presupposes both an institutionalized and a performance-based conceptualization of MPs' institutional dialogic patterns – which consist of goal-oriented discourses and behaviours in front of and for the benefit of multi-layered audiences.

- Theatrical performance and discursive polarisation of MPs and their party-political groups
- Constantly reinforced use of conventional address forms
- Ritualistically performed turn-taking sequences, e.g. question-answer sessions such as PMQs
- Dramatically framed parliamentary interaction with frequent displays of heated tone and growing verbal aggressiveness

MICRO-LEVEL MEANING CONSTRUCTION	MACRO-LEVEL MEANING CONTEXTUALISATION

Lexical selection
 	
   - Key words
 	
   - Labels (name-calling)
 	
   - Forms of address
	Shared, shifting & competing meaning conceptualisation

Collocational patterning
 	
   - Clichés
 	
   - Ritual formulations
 	
   - Parentheticals
	Co-textual and contextual discourse meaning instantiation

Speech act interplay
 	
   - Dialogue adjacency pairs (Qs & As)
 	
   - Metadiscursive statements & counter-statements
	Inter-personal & inter-textual meaning negotiation

Table 1. Micro- & macro-level meaning construction & contextualization in political / parliamentary debates

The micro-macro level interface

Mr. Bercow (Con): I am grateful to the Foreign Secretary [Mr. Cook, Lab] for giving way. No sensible person – *from which category one should probably exclude the right hon. Gentleman* – would favour **European Union enlargement** at any price. […]

(Hansard Debates, 22 November, 1999, pt 13, col 367)

Challenges of Parliamentary Discourse

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- Parliamentary debate conventions are both a prerequisite and a challenge for MPs, who are expected to **comply with institutional norms** (= *parliamentary order*), while at the same time some of them attempt to **break these very norms** (= *parliamentary disorder*).

Ilie, Cornelia. 2003. Histrionic and agonistic features of parliamentary discourse. *Studies in Communication Sciences* 3(1): 25-53.

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Johansson, Alf O. / Melling, Joseph 1995. The Roots of Consensus: Bargaining Attitudes and Political Commitment among Swedish and British Workers c. 1920-1950. *Economic and Industrial Democracy* 16, 353-97.

Kavanagh, Dennis 1985. Whatever Happened to Consensus Politics? *Political Studies* 33/4, 529–546.

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Analytical Issues regarding the Rhetoric of Parliamentary Discourses

- **Order and Disorder** (across Time, Space and the Political Spectrum)

- **Adversariality and Collaboration** (Power and Solidarity)

- **Histrionic and Agonistic Rituals** (Performance and Competition)

- **Institutional and Conversational** (Non-Institutional) **Discourse Strategies**

- **Discourse and Metadiscourse** / **Intertextuality** and **Interdiscursivity**

- **Oral and Written Discourse**

- **Monologic and Dialogic Discourse**

- **Communication and Miscommunication**

- **Private and Public Roles** / **Individual** and **Group Identities**

Strategic Uses of Language

The strategic uses of language for political purposes are manifest in

- ***articulating political ideologies and practical strategies***

- ***performing political actions***

- ***legitimating political leadership***

Parliamentary Records and Corpora

The increasing number of digital corpora of parliamentary proceedings have become invaluable resources for large-scale machine-based analysis. A survey of the parliamentary records and corpora from CLARIN countries is provided by Fišer and Lenardič (2017).

Most corpus-driven methodologies have often been primarily concerned with statistical results and quantitative analyses, and less with micro-level or multi-perspective analysis (Baker 2006, Partington 2013).

The results obtained by means of quantitative corpus linguistic analyses point to rich statistical data and general patterns or trends of synchronic and/or diachronic language usage.

"Members' words are recorded by Hansard reporters and then edited to remove repetitions and obvious mistakes, but without taking away from the meaning."

(UK Parliament, 2015)

Qualitative Analysis of Parliamentary Corpora

The large amounts of data provided by means of quantitative analysis of parliamentary corpora need to be interpreted – through qualitative analysis – in terms of

- socio-historical and institutional context

- the specific/overall relevance of current issues under discussion

- the party-political and interpersonal balance of power

- the party affiliation of interacting MPs

Inaccuracies in Parliamentary Transcripts

There are benefits and drawbacks of using official parliamentary transcripts. A major drawback consists in their degree of inaccuracy, which is "a corpus linguist's nightmare" (Mollin 2008).

Previous studies identifying transformations that occur to the oral version of events in the process of constructing Official Reports (e.g. Slembrouck 1992), show that transcribers and editors make significant changes and omissions, which raises questions about their suitability for the analysis of parliamentary discourse.

(i) First, intrinsic elements of spontaneous speech, such as false starts, involuntary repetitions, or incomplete sentences, are left out.

(ii) Second, the written version does not reflect certain features of spoken language, e.g. intonation, stress and regional accents are not marked.

Reformulations in Parliamentary Transcripts

Hansard editors produce certain reformulations

    (i)   to avoid clumsy or unclear messages

    (ii)   to provide useful clarifications and specifications

Mollin (2007) compared a sample of the official transcript to a transcript made from a recording of a House of Commons session and found that characteristics of spoken language, such as incomplete utterances, hesitations and contextual talk had been omitted. She also found that the transcribers and editors also alter speakers' lexical and grammatical choices towards more conservative and formal variants.

Shaw (forthcoming 2018) made an appraisal of different types of political discourse analysis that use UK Official Report data, and concluded with suggestions that using this data for the analysis of parliamentary discourse should always be critical and reflexive.

Qualitative Approaches to Parliamentary Data

Qualitative (critical and reflexive) approaches to parliamentary corpus data can provide deeper insights into the wide-ranging correlations between the purely linguistic, the contextual and the performative levels of the parliamentary proceedings under consideration, by focusing on the interface of the micro- and macro-levels of analysis.

The behavioural and interpersonal dynamics during the actual proceedings can profitably be analysed in relation to visual prompts, which presupposes access to **video recordings**.

What Happens When Women Enter the Parliamentary Arena?

"*I find a woman's intrusion into the House of Commons as embarrassing as if she burst into my bathroom when I had nothing with which to defend myself, not even a sponge*".
(Winston Churchill)

The arrival of women MPs as newcomers to parliament, a male-dominated institution, had a "socio-spatial impact" (Puwar 1997) and caused disorientation: "being 'different' from the norm, the bodies of women … are highly visible." (Puwar 2004: 72).

The shifting gender balance in parliament is shaped and contributes to shaping cross-gender communication practices, as well as interpersonal and power relations.

Growing Visibility of Women MPs

A record number of women were elected to the House of Commons in 1997.

The number of women in the UK Parliament has been growing lately.

As the number of women in the UK Parliament has been growing, so have the occurrences of gender stereotyping and discriminatory treatment to which women MPs are being submitted. A recent national study conducted in the UK found that up to **58% of parliamentarians have been stalked or harassed** by members, as well as non-members.

What Kind of Visibility Do Women MPs Get?

Visibility can be positive, but also negative.

The increased visibility of women MPs often involves discriminatory treatment by male MPs.

When women MPs are talked about and/or spoken to, the focus is often on their physical appearance and their private lives (as wives and homemakers), rather than on their public roles and impact in the public sphere (Puwar 2000; Shaw 2000; Ilie 2010b, 2012; Mavin et al. 2010).

Women MPs Perceived as the '*Other*'

- Arriving at Westminster as newly elected **'others'**, women MPs were perceived as disrupting the established norms – which were devised by, and for, white males.

- On becoming MPs, women were shifting away from a role that used to confine them to the **private sphere,** and instead entering the **public arena** where their legitimacy is being challenged.

Gender-related Asymmetries in Political Representation

Recent research about women's and men's discursive strategies in several parliaments (Shaw 2002, Wodak 2003, Lovenduski & Karam 2005b, Atanga 2009, Ilie 2013) provide us with clear indications about **gender-related asymmetries** in political representation, women's current role in agenda-setting and decision-making.

Women MPs in different parliaments have been increasingly exposing and condemning instances of gender discrimination which constitute violations of good parliamentary practice.
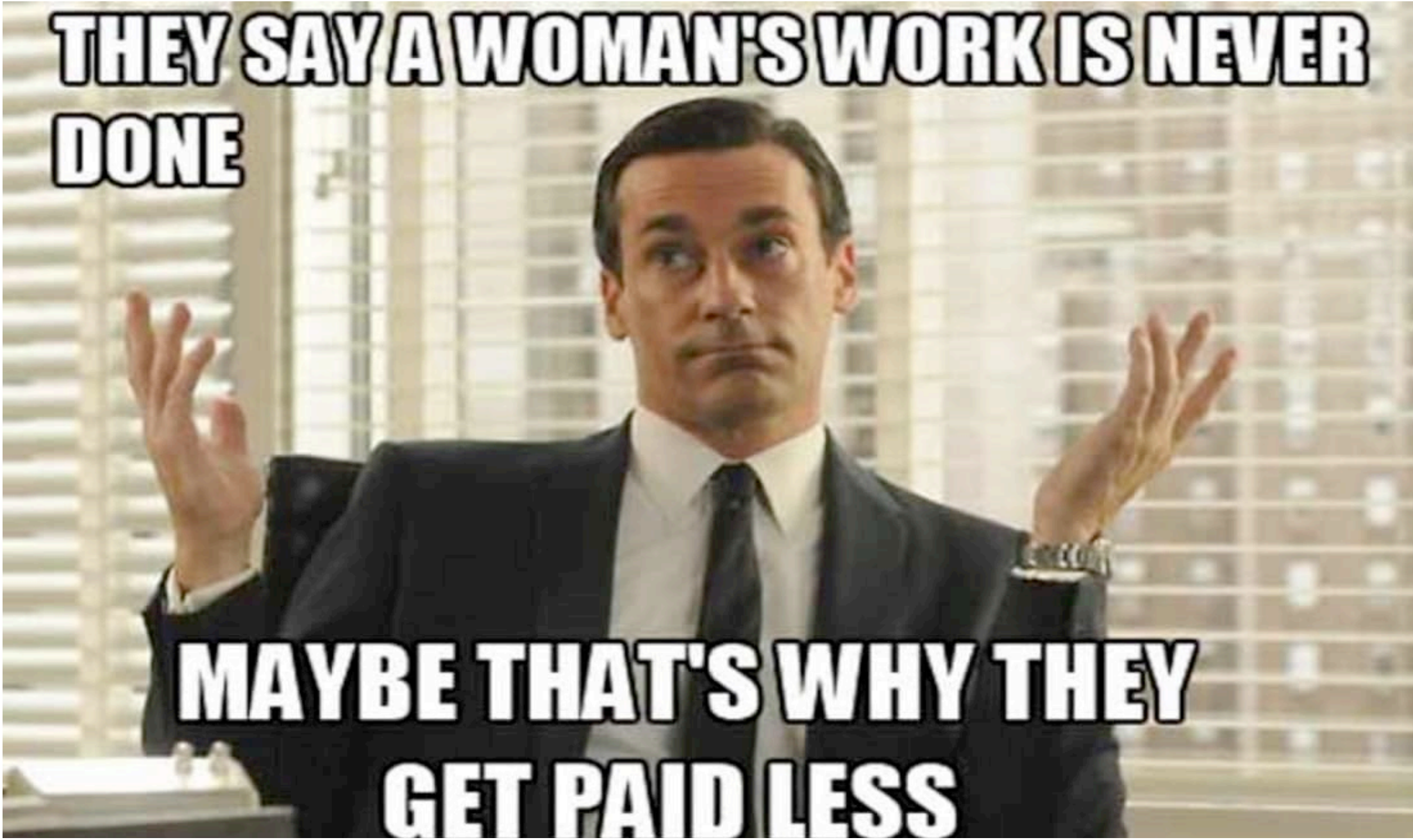
Asymmetrical Gender Roles in Parliament

Ross (1995) and **Puwar (1997)** carried out surveys that identified instances of verbal sexual harassment of women MPs.

Chappell (2002) found that the operation of masculine gender norms in certain institutions, parliament and judicial and legal systems in particular, made them hostile to the presence of women and lead to the production of gender insensitive laws.

Walsh (2013: 70) pointed out that "the overall culture of the Commons resembles a gentleman's club".

Parliamentary Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes, in particular those pertaining to culture-rooted practices, are fraught with difficulties as their complexities and dynamics reflect both institution-specific and culture-specific particularities.

- Sexism and discrimination is manifest in overt forms in *Prime Minister's Questions* (PMQs), as shown by Malley (2011:17) and Sones (2005:66).

- The institutionalised sexism in parliament is indicative of a masculinised, anti-feminist way of 'doing' politics and an underlying culture of misogyny (see Elliot 2011, Gye, 2011).

Tolerating Gender Stereotypes in Parliament

"Bias against women and femininity is entrenched" (Lovenduski, 2005:52).

Women MPs are systematically disadvantaged in a male-dominated environment like parliament, where jeering and interrupting, mostly tolerated by the Speaker and particularly male MPs, prevail (Shaw, 2000, Childs 2004b; Ilie 2012, 2013).

Belittling the image of women serves to justify anti-women prejudice and consequently undermine the significance of women's role in parliament, their legitimacy and credibility, as well as their ability to deliver.

Analytical Approaches

In order to achieve an encompassing analysis – both in depth and in breadth – several theoretical approaches have been used that originate in the main disciplines that study parliamentary discourse: linguistics (discourse analysis, pragmatics), gender studies, social psychology, rhetoric.

Discourse Analysis: identity co-construction, question-answer interplay, interruptions

Pragmatics: address forms, speech acts, (im)politeness markers, metadiscursive devices (e.g. quoting, paraphrasing, labelling)

Gender Studies: gendered power dynamics; framing the female-male dichotomy

Social Psychology: master suppression techniques

Rhetoric: rhetorical appeals, figurative use of language

Multimodal Analysis: gestures and movements in face-to-face interaction

Sexist Discrimination of Women MPs

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- *Stigmatizing women MPs through abusive and discriminatory labelling* (e.g. ascribing to them stereotypically insulting names).

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- – How do women MPs react to and counteract fellow male parliamentarians' discriminatory and sexist remarks and behaviour?

Interactively Shaped Identities

Social and institutional settings become sites of *identity construction by means of discursive practices* in which individuals engage and which shape their complex identity and constrain their behaviour.

During various kinds of interactions in particular communities of practice, individuals can be seen to display *multiple identities*, some of which are changing over time.

In particular contexts and at particular times, *different identities are able to coexist with each other*: e.g. newly emerging identities in post-modern societies (e.g. top-ranking female leaders) tend to coexist with tradition-rooted identities (e.g. wives and mothers).

Interactively Shaped Identities

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• *Situated identities*, when individuals are engaged in a social activity, are conferred by the context of communication, such as shopkeeper/customer, or doctor/patient identities in a medical context, or teacher/student identities in a classroom context;

• *Transportable identities* are carried from one interactional context to another; they are latent or implicit but can be invoked during the interaction, such as when a teacher alludes to her identity as a woman, a mother or as a keen gardener during a language lesson.

Master Suppression Techniques (I)

The theory of the **master suppression techniques** was developed by the Norwegian social psychologist Berit Ås (1978).

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According to her definition, master suppression techniques are ***strategies of social manipulation*** by which a powerful person or a dominant group – consciously or unconsciously – exercises power to maintain their position in a hierarchy. This may be achieved by making gender-biased remarks, by displaying derogatory behaviour, by using abusive and loaded words.

Master Suppression Techniques (II)

Ås's theory helps to identify what is going on when individuals notice they are not listened to, when they are looked down upon, trivialized, overlooked or ignored.

She pointed out that in many male-dominated institutional settings these techniques are used in specific combinations and situations with regard to women.

Master Suppression Techniques (II)

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The use of **Berit Ås's theory of master suppression techniques provides a basic systematic framework for examining and comparing the various ways in which women are being discriminated against by men during debates in parliament**.

The 5 Master Suppression Techniques (III)

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(1) *Ignoring/Making Invisible*

The 5 Master Suppression Techniques (III)

(1) *Ignoring/Making Invisible*

(2) *Ridiculing*

The 5 Master Suppression Techniques (III)

(1) *Ignoring/Making Invisible*

(2) *Ridiculing*

(3) *Withholding Information*

The 5 Master Suppression Techniques (III)

(1) *Ignoring/Making Invisible*

(2) *Ridiculing*

(3) *Withholding Information*

(4) *Double Binding* (Damned If You Do and Damned If You Don't)

The 5 Master Suppression Techniques (III)

(1) *Ignoring/Making Invisible*

(2) *Ridiculing*

(3) *Withholding Information*

(4) *Double Binding* (Damned If You Do and Damned If You Don't)

(5) *Blaming and Shaming* (Heaping Blame and Putting to Shame)

(1) Ignoring/Making Invisible

Ignoring/Making Invisible is to silence or otherwise marginalise persons. Making someone invisible means that a person chooses to treat an individual or a group as if the person or group were not there or as if the person were not worth taking into consideration or paying attention to.

This technique serves *to deprive individuals of their identity, making them feel inferior and insignificant*. In parliament women MPs appear to be most affected by this technique. By learning to recognize and counteract this master suppression technique, women, as well as men, can learn to avoid this humiliating and depressing feeling.

(2) Ridiculing

Ridiculing is to deliberately describe the efforts and arguments of, or the persons themselves, in a ridiculing fashion.

This technique is used when women are made fun of, are laughed down, are called names – like "bitch" or "whore" or "feminist" – or compared to animals. According to Ås, it is often used *when men discuss how and why women say something instead of discussing what they have actually said*. It is a technique meant *to create a feeling of insecurity and to silence the targeted individual*. Some frequent effects of ridiculing in institutional settings are: laughter, scoring points (audience-related); embarrassment (interlocutor-related).

(3) Withholding Information

Withholding Information is *to exclude someone from the decision making process* or play down her/his role by deliberately withholding information from her/him so as to make the person less able to make an informed choice.

Formal and informal social rituals in traditionally male institutional settings – insiders' meetings at exclusive clubs, drinking after work, sauna sessions – allow men to meet and make preliminary decisions without involving their women colleagues. This suppression technique *fosters discrimination and it results in competent persons feeling ignorant, insecure and disconnected*.

(4) Double Binding (Damned If You Do and Damned If You Don't)

Double Binding – also called "*the 'can't win' approach*" – is to put someone in a situation where s/he is belittled and punished regardless of which alternative s/he chooses; it involves *being squeezed between mutually exclusive choices*. For ex, a female manager can be accused of weakness when she tries to listen and act democratically - and of lacking femininity when she shows her claws and forces her will through.

A female politician can be attacked for tunnel vision when she insists on women's interests and for being a traitor when she doesn't. This suppression technique is used when *what women do and don't do is equally wrong*. It discourages initiative and results in constant guilty conscience, in addition to the feelings of inadequacy and burnt-out.

(5) Blaming and Shaming (Heaping Blame and Putting to Shame)

Blaming and Shaming is to embarrass someone, or to insinuate that they are themselves to blame even when they are victims; it thereby *forces victims to accept blame*. Thus the persons ill-treated feel deeply ashamed and partly responsible for what is happening to them.

This suppression technique *discourages assessing the actual or real source of problems and concerns*. The result is that it *encourages those ridiculed to 'accept' their lowered status by shaming them directly or in front of others*.

The British Parliamentary Bully Tradition (I)

Male parliamentarians take advantage of institutional tolerance to aggressive, face-threatening communication, including sexist verbal attacks against women, in order to discredit their targeted addressees and to boost their own image, thus acquiring notoriety since such aggressive incidents get publicized in the media as "*confrontainment*"

(Garcés-Conejos Blitvich 2015)

The British Parliamentary Bully Tradition (II)

Duffel, a psychological and behavioural neuroscientist, explains that many of the male British political leaders have been shaped by the public school ethos, which prizes rationality and confident talk while it minimises emotions (2015/2014).

The British "elite are raised in boarding schools – away from their families, out of the reach of love, far from the influence of any feminine values" (Duffel, 2015:2).

Public school survivors tend to hide their vulnerability behind a façade of ostensible confidence and tough behaviour, having to "reinvent themselves as self-reliant pseudo-adults". His conclusion is that "we are being run by 'the boys in the men who run things.'"

Scrutinising the Sexist Strategies Used by Male MPs

Three sexist discrimination strategies are frequently used by male MPs:

(a) **Objectifying women MPs** through *stereotypically sexist remarks*

(b) ***Patronizing women MPs*** through *derogatory forms of address*

(c) ***Stigmatizing women MPs*** through *abusive labeling*

(a) *Objectifying Women MPs through Stereotypically Sexist Remarks*

Through sexist objectification of women MPs, men are reinforcing stereotypical thinking patterns by downplaying and trivializing women's role and contribution to parliamentary work.

Eric Pickles (Con) to Hazel Blears: *"… may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?"* (6 December 2010)

Objectifying Women MPs

(1)

Hazel Blears (Labour): *The right hon. Gentleman appears to be floundering a little* at the start of his contribution, and *I wonder whether I might*, in a constructive spirit, *offer him a small lifeline*. […]. *If the right hon. Gentleman accepts my lifeline I will be very happy*.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Mr Eric Pickles (Con): I am most grateful to the right hon. Lady for that, and, ***to start on a positive note, may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?*** *There is not a £3.5 billion surplus in non-domestic rates in the year coming. There is a potential £2 billion surplus in 2013-14.* […]

(Hansard, 6 December 2010, Col. 42)

"...may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?" (I)

Pragmatically, MP Pickles starts with a metadiscursively inserted patronising comment ("to start on a positive note") followed by a misplaced compliment, which is overtly **sexist**, and contextually **inappropriate** and **irrelevant** – it activates the gender **objectification stereotype** through fixation on personal appearance.

His remark serves *to distract the attention and surreptitiously undermine the sense of legitimacy and professional competence of the targeted female MP*, by focusing the attention on a physical attribute with no relevance whatsoever for the ongoing debate, instead of addressing the serious issue raised in her well-motivated question.

"...may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?" (II)

Pickles's strategy is a reversal of Berit Ås's **Master Suppression Technique number 1** (*Ignoring/Making Invisible*): rather than marginalising this female MP by ignoring her, Pickles misbehaves in the opposite direction in that he *directs disproportionate attention to MP Hazel Blears's appearance*.

Berit Ås's **Master Suppression Technique number 4**, *Double Binding*, is also used, as *the targeted person is belittled and punished regardless of which action/intervention s/he happens to choose*. In other words, what a woman does and doesn't do is equally wrong.

"...may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?" (III)

Identity reversal

In Pickles's remark, the ***transportable identity*** as a woman, which bears no particular relevance in the context of this parliamentary debate, is deliberately foregrounded at the expense of her ***situated identity*** as MP, which is indeed relevant in this context.

Rhetorical approach

Pickles wants to show that he controls the situation after Blears's unflattering remarks regarding his earlier contribution, and produces a rhetorical shift in the the logos-oriented dialogue by 'jokingly' inserting a pathos-oriented appeal to the sexist sense of humour of some of his male MPs ("may I say that the entire Front-Bench team likes her new hairstyle?"). He intends to show she is not to be taken seriously.

William Hague (Con) to Harriet Harman (Lab): "…she dresses in accordance with wherever she is going"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AsiKI7uCog

Gendering Forms of Address in the U.K. Parliament (i)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AsiKI7uCog

Mr. William Hague (Richmond, Yorks) (Con): [...] On a lighter note, I should like to congratulate the Leader of the House on being the first female Labour Member ever to answer Prime Minister's questions. She must be proud, three decades on, to be following in the footsteps of Margaret Thatcher, whom we on the Conservative Benches, and the Prime Minister, so much admire. [...]

Ms Harman (Lab., Leader of the House of Commons): I thank the right hon. Gentleman for his congratulations, but I would like to ask him: why is he asking the questions today? He is not the shadow Leader of the House; the shadow Leader of the House is sitting next to him. Is this the situation in the modern Conservative party—that women should be seen but not heard? If I may, perhaps I could offer the shadow Leader of the House a bit of sisterly advice: she should not let him get away with it.

(Hansard, PMQs, 2 April 2008)

Gendering Forms of Address in the U.K. Parliament (ii)

Mr. Hague: Before turning to domestic issues, I was going to be nice to the right hon. and learned Lady. She has had a difficult week. She had to explain yesterday that she dresses in accordance with wherever she is going: she wears a helmet on a building site, she wears Indian clothes in the parts of her constituency with a large representation of Indian people, so when she goes to a Cabinet meeting, she presumably dresses as a clown. [Interruption.] As I said, I was going to be nice to her before her previous response. [...]

Ms Harman: I would just start by saying that if I were looking for advice on what to wear or what not to wear, the very last person I would look to is the man in the baseball cap. [...]

(Hansard, PMQs, 2 April 2008)

(b) Patronizing women MPs through derogatory forms of address

Forms of address like "*honey*", "*love*" and "*dear*", normally classified as endearments, do not always or necessarily express affection. They are unmarked when used symmetrically between people who perceive their relationship as intimate (Coates 2003).

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(b) Patronizing Women MPs through Derogatory Forms of Address

Forms of address like "*honey*", "*love*" and "*dear*", normally classified as endearments, do not always or necessarily express affection. They are unmarked when used symmetrically between people who perceive their relationship as intimate (Coates 2003).

Asymmetrical usage signals condescension, for example, in service encounters where the relationship between server and customer is not one of intimacy. Wolfson & Manes (1980) found that the usage of terms of endearment like "*dear*" is directly related to the sex of the addressee. *In male-dominated institutions, like the parliament, the use of "dear" can actually be condescending or demeaning, especially when addressed by a male MP to a woman MP*.

David Cameron's 'Calm down dear'-gate
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URWXkPDwG0g

Patronizing Women MPs

(2)

The Prime Minister: The right hon. Gentleman asks me to listen to doctors, so here is one doctor I am definitely going to listen to. I hope Opposition Members will remember Howard Stoate, who was the Member of Parliament for Dartford. He is no longer an MP because he lost the election—because of the Conservative candidate, I am afraid. He is now a GP—

[**Interruption**.]

Calm down, dear. Listen to the doctor. Howard Stoate, GP, says: "My… discussions with fellow GPs… reveal overwhelming enthusiasm for the"—

[**Interruption**.]

I said calm down. Calm down, dear—and I will say it to the shadow Chancellor, if he likes. [Interruption.]

(Hansard, 27 Apr 2011: Column 169-170)

Edward Miliband:

/Now, Mr. Speaker,/ One of the reasons why waiting times have gone up is that /because he's/ the right hon. Gentleman is diverting billions of pounds /away/ from patient care into this costly reorganisation. Let me /give him/make this suggestion: just for once, why /doesn't he/ does he not listen to the doctors, the patients and the nurses and scrap his reorganisation?

addresssing the Speaker = self-evident

redundant sentence connector

"he" does not identify the addressed PM

optional/redundant element

stylistic choice

informal style

The Prime Minister:

/He/The right hon. Gentleman asks me to listen to doctors, so here is one doctor I am definitely going to listen to. I hope the /Honorable Members opposite/ Opposition Members will remember Howard Stoate, who was the Member of Parliament for Dartford.

"he" does not identify the addressed MP

contextual space-related reference

The Prime Minister:

/Yes,/ He is no longer /he is no longer/ an MP because he lost the election— /I'm afraid/ because of the Conservative candidate, I am afraid. /But/ He is now a GP—

[Interruption.]

Calm down, dear. /Calm down, calm down/ Listen to the doctor. /Calm down and listen to the doctor/. Howard Stoate, GP, says /this/:

"My… discussions with fellow GPs… reveal overwhelming enthusiasm for the"—

[Interruption.]

I said calm down. /Yes/ Calm down, dear—and /I'll say to you if you like/ I will say it to the shadow Chancellor, if he likes. *[Interruption.]*

repetition (due to noise caused by MPs)
initial (not final) positioning of "I'm afraid"

considered not relevant

significant / relevant repetition was left out
idem

dialogic discourse marker
"you" does not identify the addressed MP

Mr Speaker: Order order. /Let's have the answer briefly/ Let us briefly have the answer and move on to Back Benchers, whose rights I am interested in protecting. /I want/ a brief answer /from/ the Prime Minister.

stylistic choice

additions to complete the sentence

The Prime Minister: This is a very brief quote from a Labour MP who is now a GP. /who/ He said:
"My... discussions with fellow GPs... reveal overwhelming enthusiasm for the chance to help shape services for the patients they see daily".

addition to complete the sentence

stylistic choice

That is what Labour MPs, now acting as GPs, think of the reforms. /That's what's/ That is what is happening. /And I have to say/

informal style

false start

Ed Balls (Morley and Outwood) (Lab/Co-op): Apologise to her!

overlapping talk: context- & situation-relevant addition (hardly audible in recorded PMQs)

The Prime Minister:
I am not going to apologise; you do need to calm down. *[Interruption.]* /What I would say to the Honorable Gentleman, in the week/ *[Interruption.]*

false start

Mr Speaker:
Order, /order/. There is far too much noise in the Chamber. *[Interruption.]* Order. It makes a very bad impression on the public as a whole, and /there are other people/ <u>others</u> are waiting to contribute. I think the Prime Minister has finished.

frequently occurring repetition

addition to complete the sentence

"a prototypical instance of the parliamentary bully tradition"

The Prime Minister's humourless remark '*Calm down dear*' - mimicking the famous car insurance advert starring Michael Winner - was directed at shadow chief secretary to the Treasury Angela Eagle as she heckled him in the Commons.

Telling a woman to '*calm down dear*' is a common male act of misogyny. Such language also enforces male pseudo-superiority over females.

Cameron was emotionally upset and wanted to maintain control of the floor by his presumably humorous impersonation.

Michael Winner's eSure Home Insurance ad
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efl5pFTFnBU

"Calm down, dear. Listen to the doctor" (I)

In typical parliamentary bully tradition, Cameron reacted by addressing sexist and patronizing remarks to Labour MP Angela Eagle, drawing on *the stereotype of women as hysterical and needing to be contained*. The premise is the preconceived idea that women are more emotionally volatile and their opinions are less important.

It activates the **patronizing stereotype** through the use of the derogatory forms of address "*dear*".

Cameron makes use of the **Master Suppression Technique number 2** (*Ridiculing*), which is explicitly aimed at embarrassing and silencing MP Eagle, *who actually corrected an inaccuracy in one of his statements*.

"Calm down, dear. Listen to the doctor" (II)

Identity overturn

Putting the spotlight on *MP Angela Eagle's **transportable identity** as a woman*, Cameron was in fact *suppressing her **situated identity** as shadow chief secretary to the Treasury*, as well as *her **discourse identity*** *as parliamentary commentator*.

It confirms Duffel's theory of the **parliamentary bullying tradition**, according to which powerful bullies like Cameron actually hide inner vulnerability and insecurity, which make them overreact by (counter)attacking someone else rather than taking a moment of reflection and self-scrutiny. He actually projects unto Angela Eagle his own anxiety.

"Calm down, dear. Listen to the doctor" (III)

Discourse Analytical approach

Violation of parliamentary rules of address

Apart from his sexist remark, which is unparliamentary, Cameron also violates the default form of parliamentary address, which is the 3rd person pronoun or the the gender-specific title ("the hon. Lady" or "the right hon. Lady", for a member of the Privy Council).

Non-intervention of the Speaker of the House

It is surprising that the Speaker of the House did not intervene, as he should, to reprimand PM Cameron and ask him to withdraw the derogatory and sexist comment addressed to Labour MP Angela Eagle.

"Calm down, dear. Listen to the doctor" (IV)

Rhetorical Approach

Cameron resorts to a *fallacious ad hominem argument* – by insinuating that Angela Eagle demonstrated emotional instability, since he attacks the person rather than the message conveyed by the person.

Pragmatic Approach

Cameron is not simply making a statement, i.e. performing an assertive speech act, he is actually performing a *directive speech act*, by means of which the hearer is requested to carry out an order – this normally presupposes that that the speaker holds a position that is hierarchically superior to that of the hearer. Thereby, Cameron breaks a fundamental parliamentary rule, according to which all MPs are equal and should be treated equally.

(c) Stigmatizing Women MPs through Abusive Labeling

Labeling practices do not simply characterize, but rather *evaluate, often negatively, their targets* (McConnell-Ginet 2003).

With regard to **gendering labels** that target women, they serve to de-emphasize those women's status as worthy individuals, focusing on power and status differentials.

Barry Sheerman to Esther McVey: *”… Will she stop for a moment being the "hard-hearted Hannah"?* **(9 March 2015)**

Stigmatizing Women MPs

(3)

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): One of the greatest disabilities that stops young people getting a job is autism. […] *Will she stop for a moment being the "hard-hearted Hannah" of the Front Bench and be a little more compassionate about disabled young people looking for work?*

The Minister for Employment, Ms. Esther McVey (Con): I understand a lot about autism and the extra support, help and work that we need to do. That is why the Secretary of State and I introduced the campaign, Disability Confident, which reaches out to employers and says, "Listen to the needs of the people and find out what we can do and how we can best work with these people." *I do hope that the hon. Gentleman's comment was not sexist, as I have had very many such comments from the Opposition Benches*.

(Hansard, 9 March 2015: Column 15-16)

Hard Hearted Hannah (song by Ray Charles)

In old Savannah […]

They got a gal there

A pretty gal there

Who's colder than an arctic storm

Got a heart just like a stone […]

They call her

Hard-hearted Hannah

The Vamp of Savannah

The meanest gal in town

Leather is tough, but Hannah's heart is tougher

She's a gal who loves to see men suffer

To tease them and thrill them

To torture and kill them

Is her delight, they say […]

"Will she stop for a moment being the "hard-hearted Hannah" …?" (I)

Sheerman's discrediting comments about Esther McVey, Minister for Employment, are framed in a powerful rhetorical question aimed at triggering an emotional response from the audience.

It activates the **Stigmatization stereotype** through the use of abusive and discriminatory labelling.

Master Suppression Techniques

MP Sheerman he uses a combination of two **Master Suppression Techniques**, i.e. **number 2 (Ridiculing**) and **number 5 (Blaming and Shaming)**. The latter is aimed at embarrassing his addressee (blaming) and making her feel ashamed (shaming).

"Will she stop for a moment being the "hard-hearted Hannah" …?" (II)

Reacting to & counteracting stigmatising remarks

MP McVey counteracts Sheerman's reproachful words about her alleged lack of compassion by providing information that disproves his accusations, and ends with a meta-comment targeting his sexist behaviour.

Later, during the same session, under Points of Order, she added:

"The reason I want this put on the record is that it is not the first time Opposition Members have been like this to me. John McDonnell came to my constituency and asked people—I know this is **unparliamentary language**—to "*lynch the bitch*" live in Wirral West. That is what Labour Members ask people to do in other people's constituencies."

Reactions against Male MPs' Sexist Language and Behaviour

Recent disclosures and developments in parliamentary communication practices have shown that female MPs (as well as male MPs) are increasingly exposing and condemning instances of gender discrimination and sexist stereotyping.

(i)   Immediate verbal reactions and follow-ups

(ii) Online feedback (through twitter, social media)

(iii) Institutional initiatives: Constructive proposals and sanctions

(i) Immediate verbal reactions and follow-ups

➤ **Some female MPs reacted to sexist behaviour on the spot** by naming and accusing the perpetrator.

➤ **Some female MPs took the initiative to give interviews in the media**, reporting incidents of sexist behaviour that they have been subjected to by fellow male MPs

➤ **Some male MPs did actually apologise**, when faced with strong criticism for their gendering behaviour. For example, David Cameron apologised after he told the then Labour shadow treasury chief secretary, Angela Eagle, to "*calm down dear*" multiple times during a debate in parliament.

(ii) Online feedback (through twitter, social media)

➢ Anna Bird, a member of the gender equality campaign group the Fawcett Society, jumped to the defence of Angela Eagle who was subjected to Cameron's sexist remarks "Calm down, dear".

➢ MP Anna Soubry, Minister for Small Business, Industry and Enterprise, commented on Twitter that certain male MPs, whose sexist transgressions had been disclosed, seemed to think that women "should be seen and not heard".

(iii) Institutional initiatives: Constructive proposals and sanctions

➢ A motion establishing a Women and Equalities Committee was announced in the House of Commons by MP Angela Eagle.

➢ The All-Party Political Group of Women in Parliament – which includes two deputy speakers – recommended that Parliament adopt a zero tolerance stance towards bullying or unprofessional behaviour, including considering "additional sanctions" such as stopping an offending MP from speaking in debates for a few days.

➢ Speaker John Bercow admitted (in September 2017) that MPs' behaviour in the Commons is out of control, and sexist politicians are getting out of hand as they heckle each other during debates. He expressed the intention to introduce yellow cards for rowdy MPs to stop sexist behaviour.

Concluding Remarks

The findings of this gender-based investigation show that, as women MPs are becoming more solidly and institutionally established in parliament, they acquire more self-assuredness and know-how about effective ways in which to react to and counteract gender discrimination and sexist behaviour.

Above all, there is growing need for substantive change of the parliamentary culture of prevailing abusive behaviour, gender bias and sexism, especially during PMQs, which can only be brought about by means of concerted institutional and behavioural normative reform (Shackle 2011), as well as by parliamentary culture 'regendering' (Chappell 2006).