PERSUASION IN JOURNALISTIC SUB-GENRES OF OPINION
Interpersonal metadiscursive uses in English and Spanish

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Journalistic sub-genres of opinion: preliminaries

- Communicative purpose of these sub-genres : inform and entertain readers through *persuasion* (major function among others)

- Interpersonal metadiscourse: linguistic devices that comply several functions, *persuasion* in this case

- Sub-genres of opinion in English and Spanish: presumable differences

- Why? Because metadiscourse can be constrained by generic features and socio-linguistic habits changing from one language to another (Suau-Jiménez, 2010a)

- Therefore: necessary to identify and describe interpersonal metadiscursive markers to establish a contrastive English-Spanish model

- Implications: linguistic analysis, translation and/or written communication purposes

Metadiscourse and persuasion in journalistic sub-genres of opinion

*"metadiscourse is the cover term for the self-reflective expressions used to negotiate interactional meanings in a text, assist the writer (or speaker) to express a viewpoint and engage with readers as members of a **particular community**"*
(Hyland, (2005: 37)

*"...metadiscourse is dependent on the rhetorical context in which it is used and the **pragmatic function** it fulfils.."*
(Mao 1993: 270)

*"..it represents the author's overt attempt to create a **particular discoursal effect**.."*
(Dafouz-Milne, 2008: 97)

particular community : *journalistic*

pragmatic function : *persuasion*

particular discoursal effect : *to convince readers*

Recent research in persuasion construction through interpersonal markers

- Ferrari (2004): hedges (epistemic verbs) . Genre: academic articles.

- Beke (2005): hedges. Genre: academic articles.

- Mapelli (2008): boosters. Genre: touristic web pages.

- Vázquez & Giner (2009): boosters. Genres: academic articles

- Mur Dueñas (2010): attitude markers. Genre: business management articles.

Previous research on persuasion in newspaper discourse through metadiscursive markers

- Dafouz-Milne (2008)   Sub-genres of Opinion

- Attainment of persuasion: pragmatic combination of facts narration with mitigated opinion

- Persuasion is constructed cross-linguistically by (in order of frequency):
  - 1. **hedges** (very high number)
  - 2. **atttitudinal markers** (high number)
  - 3. **certainty markers** (low number)
  - 4. **commentaries** (very few)

- Conclusion: **hedges**
- most important markers equally in English and Spanish
- essential for persuasion

This research

. Purpose

1. Analyze journalistic sub-genres of opinion in English and Spanish

2. Contrast our results with previous research, mainly Dafouz-Milne (2008)

3. Verify whether generic features influence outcome of these interpersonal markers cross-linguistically

. Corpus

14 specialized texts in English and Spanish from newspapers FINANCIAL TIMES and EXPANSIÓN (20.000 words)

Sub-genres: News, Opinion

Corpus linguistics tool: AntConc 3.2

. Methodological framework

Hyland & Tse (2004) interpersonal metadiscursive taxonomy

Results: subgenre NEWS in **English**

Markers' type						
Hedges 43'44%	Can 3'19%	Could 13'82%	Likely 2'12%	May 0'94%	Possibly 2'12%	Would 21'27%
Boosters 28'69%	A lot more 2'12%	Big 3'19%	Deep 2'12%	Many 5'31%	More 15'95%	
Commit-ment markers	I 5'31%	Our 5'31%	We 15'95%			
Attitude markers	Clearly 0'94%					

Results: subgenre NEWS in **Spanish**

Markers' type					
Hedges 6'97%	Puede 6'97%				
Boosters 27'88%	Gran 6'97%	Muchos 4'65%	Mejor 2'32%	Mucha 2'32%	Muy 11'62%
Commit-ment Markers 6'97%	Nuestros 6'97%				
Attitude Markers 58'13%	Más 58'13%				

Results: subgenre OPINION in **English**

Markers' type							
Hedges 59'96%	Can 17'14%	Just 0'71%	Might 1'42%	Could 8'57%	Little 1'42%	May 6'42%	Only 2'14%
Boosters 29'98%	Many 7'85%	More 19'28%	Most 2'85%				
Commit-ment Markers 10'70%	I 0'71%	My 2'14%	Our 2'14%	We 5'71%			
Attitude markers 2'85%	Important 2'85%						

Results: subgenre OPINION in **Spanish**

Markers' type					
Hedges 7'85%	Puede 7'85%				
Boosters 4'28%	Muy 4'28%				
Commit-ment markers 21'86%	Nuestras 1'56%	Nuestros 4'68%	Me 3'12%	Mi 6'25%	Nos 6'25%
Attitude Markers 39'06%	Más 39'06%				

Main cross-linguistic differences in interpersonal markers: NEWS and OPINION sub-genres -1-

Hedges

.   **Persuasion is created through non-imposition**.

.   Key element in English in both genres, as stated by Valero-Garcés (1996), Ferrari (2004), Mur Dueñas (2007) and Dafouz Milne (2008). Not in Spanish.

.   Mainly realized through **modal epistemics** (should, could, can/ puede, se puede).

.   In Spanish, **impersonal structures** are central, in contrast with English.

*"..all financial institutions **can contribute** to systemic risk.."*

*"..emerging markets **might be** the spark that helps forge a broader coalition.."*

*"..likelihood that Rooney **would join** United's hated neighbours.."*

*"..esa deferencia, aunque parezca excesiva, **puede ser** una forma inteligente de.."*

*"También desde este escenario **se puede** comprender la reciente.."*

*"Lo que sucede es que nada de esto **se puede** tomar a broma.."*

Main cross-linguistic differences in interpersonal markers: NEWS and OPINION sub-genres -2-

Attitude markers

. **Clear positioning of author's views to create persuasion.**

. Central in Spanish for both sub-genres, in strong contrast with Dafouz Milne's claim (2008). Not in English.

. Variety of realizations, mainly "**adjective**", "**más+adverb**", "**más+adjective**".

*"..could be **an important** voice in the search for peace.."*
*"The hope this may generate is **important** in itself."*
*"Two **important** arguments need to be kept in mind.."*

*"..el argumento **más ampliamente utilizado** para ponerlo en cuestión."*
*"Estamos, en suma, ante los presupuestos **más fiables** de los últimos años.."*
*"..el histórico no existe y la pérdida puede ser **más que notable**."*

Commitment markers

. **Persuasion** based on pronominalization (nuestros, me, nos, etc.) to create persuasion related to **opinion**.

. Homogeneous in both English sub-genres. In Spanish, however, clearly preponderant in OPINIÓN versus NOTICIA.

"*My contacts* with the Taliban also indicate a woeful.."

"..as *my* **colleague** Bill Cline estimates.."

"..as *our government* plans to do with a new generation.."

"*..probabilidad hay de que no **me** devuelvan el crédito.*"

"*En mi opinión no. Es cierto que la mejora de la crisis...*"

"*A mi juicio, además, las propias administraciones..*"

Main cross-linguistic differences in interpersonal markers: NEWS and OPINION sub-genres -3-

Boosters

- Central in creating persuasion, especially in English (Vázquez & Giner, 2009) for academic discourse.

- Some elements may have fuzzy boundaries with attitude markers.

*"..the inside is likely to be **more stable** than one in which.."*
*"..local authorities are given **more powers** to find news ways to save money."*
*"..once viewed as the world's **most successful** welfare state.."*
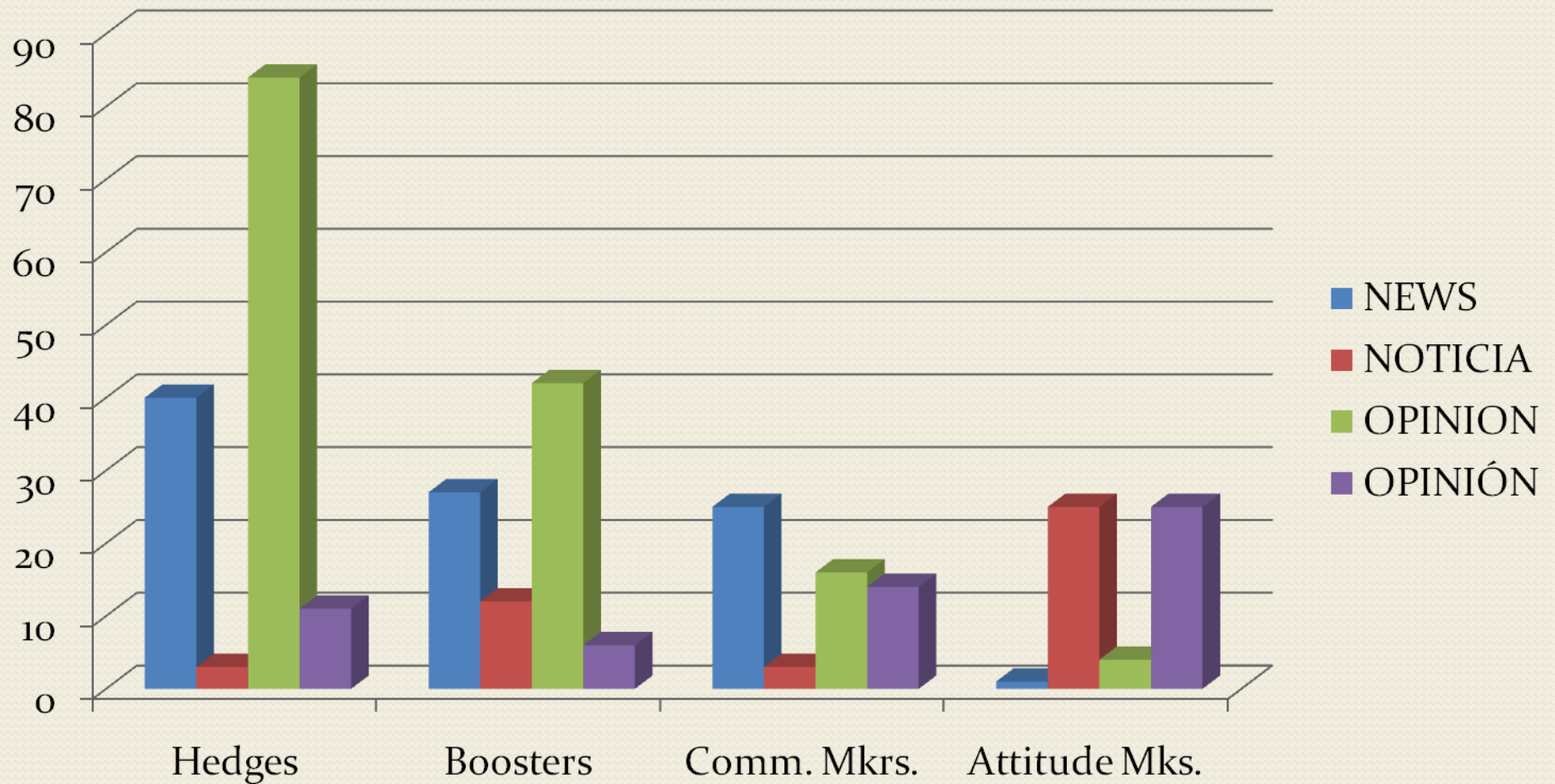*"..sooner or later even the **most revolutionary** French diehards.."*

*"..un 11'5 % hasta los 97.682 millones de €, **muy lejos** de los máximos.."*
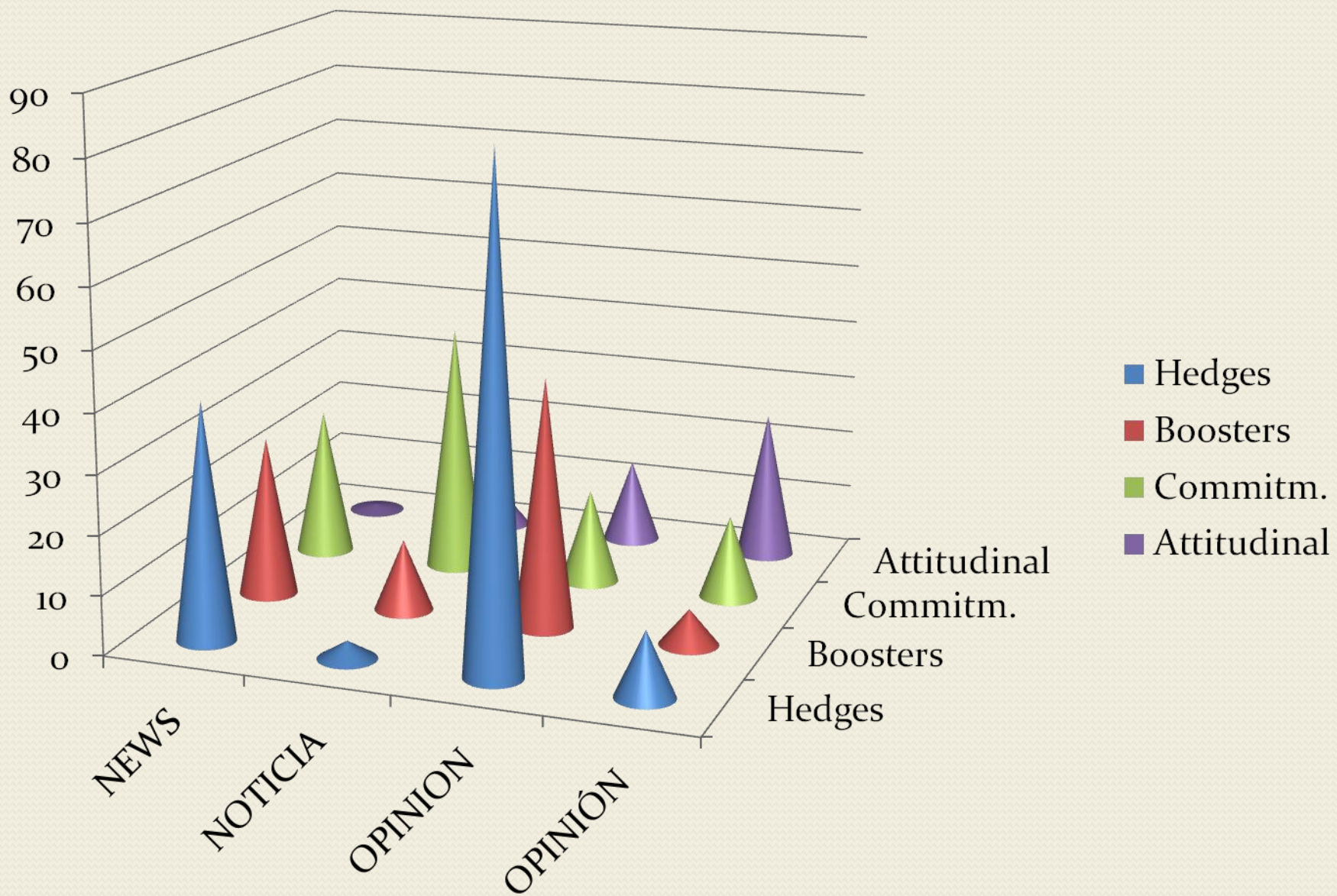*"..pero que no están **muy alejadas** del 4/4'5 % a un año.."*
*"..el Gobernador del Banco de España estuvo **muy en su papel..**"*
*"..puede costarnos **muy cara** si los mercados descuentan el carácter.."*

Interpersonal patterns in English and Spanish: *News and Opinion*

OPINION and NEWS sub-genre share of interpersonal markers English and Spanish

Conclusions
Journalistic sub-genres of OPINION
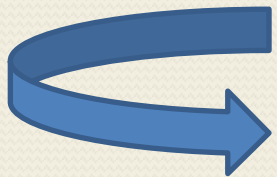
Persuasion: different interpersonal markers in Spanish and English

. **Spanish:**   1. attitudinal   2. commitment   3. hedges   4. boosters
. **English:**   1. hedges   2. boosters   3 and 4. attitudinal and commitment

Therefore, Dafouz-Milne's (2008) claim for construction of persuasion cross-linguistically:
- 1. hedges (very high number)
- 2. atttitudinal markers (high number)

. **has proved to be inconsistent for our corpus analysis**

. **more research is necessary**

. **implications for discourse, genre analysis and translation**

Thanks for your attention!!