



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

***GENERATING WORD-OF-MOUTH VIA ORGANIZED
BUSINESS NETWORKS: THE ROLE OF NARRATIVE AND
METAPHOR IN 60-SECOND SELF-MARKETING SPEECHES***

by

HANA BLAZKOVA

A thesis submitted to
The University of Birmingham
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Volume I

Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics
College of Arts and Humanities
The University of Birmingham
July 2015

UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

University of Birmingham Research Archive

e-theses repository

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

Dedication

*To my wonderful family, who mean a world to me. To my husband David and my daughters
Anna and Lada.*

&

To my parents who will always hold my heart.

Acknowledgements

I am indebted to the many people who have helped me throughout the years of working on this thesis.

First and foremost to my PhD supervisor, Almut Koester, who has been a great source of knowledge, inspiration and guidance throughout the whole process, and whose confidence and wonderful optimism has kept me going even at times when life interfered in ways both good and bad. Indeed, without her steady and unfailing support this endeavor would not have been successful. I am also very grateful to Rosamund Moon, who has been thoroughly amazing in her role as my PhD supervisor in the final stage of this project, giving intellectual, practical and moral support.

I would also like to thank the following people for their constructive comments and helpful advice on earlier drafts of the thesis chapters: Gerhard Steen, Katja Pelsmaekers, Geert Jacobs and Sylvain Dieltjens. The input of these readers has been invaluable in improving the quality of this thesis, as has been their support and encouragement.

Many people have provided inspiration, ideas, feedback and help of various kinds:

I am very grateful to Mirjaliisa Charles for her contagious excitement that spurred my interest in the field of business discourse research, and sent me on the Birmingham PhD trajectory. I would like to thank Celia Roberts for the most memorable and influential advocacy of ethnographic studies, and for her kind advice during the research process. I am also thankful to Gudrun Reijnierse, Tom Van Hout, Gerlinde Mautner and Veronika Koller.

This project would not have been possible without the people who enabled me to collect my data. I am thus very grateful to the members of all BNI groups that were involved in this study, and particularly to BNI Victoria, for letting me into their inner circle and for allowing me to come along to their meetings and record their speech with a little 'doobrie firkin'. I am grateful to them for sharing their insights and opinions in a number of tedious and time-consuming interviews and surveys, and for giving me permission to use the transcripts of their speeches and interactions in this project. Some of the species

under the magnifying glass have become dear friends, namely Rob Griffin, Paul Duke Thomas and Shaun Thomson.

Then I would like to thank the CEO of the researched organization, Dr Ivan Misner, who has kindly provided access to numerous data, both public and confidential. I very much value his trust and the support he has given to this research project, but above all, the very precious resource of his time.

Special thanks belong to the best friend out there, to Gwenan Richards, for her big heart and wonderful, bright mind. For being an avid critic who took the pains to proof-read the entire thesis.

I want to thank the amazing trinity of Grannies: Anna Tumova, Jana Blazkova and Bozenka Sipatkova, and also my niece Sarka Petakova, for giving me a break and giving my daughters a wonderful time during the final push in this project.

Acknowledgments tend to be full of clichés, and this one is no exception, although each of these is deeply felt. Thus, finally, I would like to thank my husband David and my daughters Anna and Lada, the three people who are collectively the love of my life. Thank you for making my days so very, very beautiful and worthwhile and also full of surprise at times. But then I never liked it boring.

Table of Contents

CHAPTER 1 Introduction	1
<hr/>	
Because I can make you look good on paper. Because I can make you look good between the sheets.	1
1.1 Small business networking, the genre of self-marketing and the X-second rhetoric	4
1.1.1 Business discourse research	4
1.1.2 Self-branding discourse	6
1.1.3 X-second rhetoric: Research into minimalist speeches such as the elevator pitch	7
1.2 Background to the Business Development Networks	10
1.2.1 Key factors influencing the success of a small business involved in a Business Development Network	13
1.3 The genre of 60-second networking speeches	18
1.4 Core themes in this thesis and major threads connecting core themes	21
1.4.1 Narrative, identity and metaphor	22
1.4.2 Identity	22
1.4.3 Multidisciplinarity	25
1.5 Methodology synopsis and key terminology	26
1.5.1 Approaches to narrative analysis (Chapter 3 – Chapter 5)	26
1.5.2 Approaches to metaphor analysis (Chapter 6 – Chapter 7)	28
1.5.3 Longitudinal and cross-sectional perspectives	29
1.6 Overview of the present study and data collection	29
1.7 Organization of the thesis	33
1.7.1 Taxonomy of the research questions and hypotheses addressed in individual chapters	36
CHAPTER 2 Background to Word of Mouth and Organized Networking	40
<hr/>	
Word of mouth is the oldest, newest marketing medium.	40
2.1 Changes in the marketing landscape and the growing prominence of word of mouth	42
2.1.1 Networking as the chief marketing strategy for small businesses	46
2.2 Networking breeds word of mouth: key drivers based on their relevance to Business Development Networks	50
2.2.1 Self-interest and reciprocity	52
2.2.2 Altruism and sense of belonging/group identity	55
2.2.3 Self-enhancement and interpersonal influence	58
2.3 Difference in WOM attraction depending on the category of service and product	60
2.4 Offline and online word of mouth	63
2.5 Conclusions	65
CHAPTER 3 Towards a Definition of the Competence Tale: Generic Structural and Lexical Features	67

3.1	Research questions and introduction into key concepts	69
3.2	The organization of the chapter	71
3.3	Theoretical backdrop: Approaches to narrative analysis and narrative identity	71
3.3.1	Structuralist perspective and the Labovian definition of narrative	73
3.3.2	Competing structural patterns	75
3.3.3	Ethnopoetics	76
3.3.4	Criticism of traditional structural research	79
3.3.5	Discursive turn in narrative analysis	81
3.3.6	Theorizing narrative identity	82
3.3.7	Criticism of positioning theory	86
3.4	Data and method	87
3.5	Defining the competence tale	90
3.5.1	Model problem-solution structure	94
3.5.2	Unorthodox structures	96
3.6	Discussion	101
3.6.1	Structural analysis	101
3.6.2	Problem-solution pattern in competence-communicating narratives	106
3.6.3	Specific lexico-grammatical features structuring competence tales	109
3.7	Conclusion	116
CHAPTER 4 Reported Speech and Temporal Features of Competence Tales		121
<hr/>		
4.1	Reported speech in competence tales	121
4.1.1	Research questions specific to RS theme	122
4.2	Temporality in competence tales	123
4.2.1	Research questions specific to the theme of temporality	124
4.3	Reported speech in competence tales	124
4.4	Dataset and method	125
4.4.1	Overview of narrative data involving RS	126
4.4.2	Overview of narrative data involving RS	127
4.4.3	Note on methodology	130
4.5	Theoretical backdrop: Core themes in the current study of reported speech	131
4.5.1	Direct and indirect form of reported speech	132
4.5.2	The study of RS in context: Authenticity of RS	133
4.5.3	Interactional functions of RS	135
4.6	Interactional functions of RS in competence tales	138
4.6.1	Simulated customer reference: Case Study A	143
4.6.2	Simulated customer reference: Case Study B	145
4.6.3	Direct customer reference: Case Study	149
4.7	RS in non-narrative data: problem scenario	151
4.7.1	Defining problem scenario vis-a-vis competence narrative	155
4.8	Temporal framing of competence tales	156
4.8.1	Analysis	156

4.8.2 Discussion: Temporal proximity in CTs	160
4.9 Conclusion	162
CHAPTER 5 Competence Tale as a Shortcut to Professional Identity	167
<hr/>	
5.1 Research questions	169
5.2 The organization of the chapter	169
5.3 The dataset and methodology	170
5.4 Theoretical backdrop: Theorising professional identity	171
5.4.1 Professional identity in the study of institutional and organizational discourse	171
5.4.2 Professional identity in the context of networking and self promotion: the need for an explicit definition	173
5.4.3 Defining the dimensions of professional identity based on the current conception of credibility	175
5.4.4 Professional identity dimensions in BDN narratives	177
5.4.5 Exploring the interplay of competence and likeability	178
5.5 Professional identity in the making	181
5.5.1 Ethnographic background	181
5.5.2 Narrative 1: Communicating competence and goodwill	182
5.5.3 Narrative 2: Cultivating trustworthiness	184
5.5.4 Narrative 3: Addressing the audience as direct clients through pain narrative	188
The way people use pronouns, particularly in addressing recipients, has implications for their interpersonal relationships and the way the receivers are positioned.	188
5.5.5 Discussion and the summary of key outcomes	190
5.6 Macro-factors influencing the tendency to enlist CTs	194
5.7 Conclusion	196
CHAPTER 6 Positioning Metaphor as an Instrument of Linguistic and Identity Co-construction in 60 seconds	200
<hr/>	
6.1 The dataset and the formulation of research questions	202
6.2 The organization of the chapter	205
6.3 Theoretical backdrop to current conception of metaphor	206
6.3.1 Traditional vs. cognitive-scientific paradigm	206
6.3.2 Applied perspective: ‘real world’ metaphor research and the discourse shift in metaphor theory	209
6.4 Background to the Olympic case: the methodology and data	211
6.4.1 The case study	213
6.5 Local dynamics of Olympics metaphor co-construction	219
6.5.1 Echo metaphor: Metaphor repetition, explication and relexicalization	220
6.5.2 Contrast and redeployment processes	223
6.6 Emergent systematic metaphors: OVERCOMING LIMITS/HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITS and PERFORMANCE metaphors	225
6.7 Factors motivating metaphor co-construction in 60 seconds and prototypical identity	229

6.7.1 Recency effect and temporal creativity crisis	230
6.7.2 Ingroup status and alignment with audience	233
6.7.3 Enduring metaphorical concepts	234
6.8 Prototypical identity construction via dominant positioning metaphor	235
6.9 Conclusion	237
CHAPTER 7 Key variables affecting BDN metaphor persuasiveness and recall	240
<hr/>	
7.1 Research questions and theoretical background	241
7.2 The dataset and a note on methodology	243
7.3 The organization of the chapter	243
7.4 Background to individual variables and hypotheses	244
7.4.1 Contextual relevance	244
7.4.2 Complexity	247
7.4.3 Novelty	252
7.4.4 Perceptions of memorability and persuasiveness	255
7.5 Methodology	255
7.5.1 Participants	256
7.5.2 Procedure	256
7.5.3 Measures	257
7.6 Data Analysis	258
7.6.1 RQs1: basic statistical analysis	258
7.6.2 RQs 2 and hypotheses 1-4: Correlational analysis	262
7.7 Results	263
7.7.1 The impact of positioning metaphor on persuasion	263
7.7.2 The impact of positioning metaphor on perceived memorability	266
7.7.3 Contextual relevance	267
7.7.4 Complexity	268
7.7.5 The relationship between contextual relevance and complexity	269
7.7.6 The relationship between novelty and complexity	270
7.7.7 Novelty	270
7.7.8 Perceptions of memorability and persuasiveness	272
7.7.9 Key predictors of perceived metaphor persuasiveness and memorability	272
7.8 Discussion and conclusions	273
CHAPTER 8 Conclusions and recommendations	278
<hr/>	
8.1 Narrative in 60-second speeches	279
8.1.1 Construction of professional identity via a series of narratives	286
8.2 Positioning metaphor in the self-branding 60-seconds	290
8.2.1 Metaphor dynamics and potential implications for construction of identity	291
8.2.2 The perceived effects of positioning metaphor on the persuasiveness and memorability of 60-second speeches.	294
8.3 Recommendations for practice	298
References	303
<hr/>	

List of Illustrations

List of Examples

Example 1.1: BDN 60-second speech delivered by a printer	1
Example 1.2: Generic structure of the self-marketing 60-second speech	19
Example 1.3: Generic structure of the BDN 60-second speech embedding a narrative	20
Example 2.1: Responses to the interview about the financial returns of participation in the target BDN (2008).....	50
Example 2.2: Reciprocity as the motif underlying the existence of the target BDN	54
Example 2.3: Group leaders opening the BNI meeting in the primary group: elite group identity .	56
Example 2.4: Group leaders opening the BNI meeting in three different BDN groups: elite group identity	57
Example 2.5: Negative WOM as an opportunity for referral.....	62
Example 3.1: BDN example of the Labovian narrative structure (lines 1-11) embedded in a BDN 60-second speech	74
Example 3.2: Ethnopoetic organization of the BDN narrative	77
Example 3.3: Success owned by the speaker	90
Example 3.4: Success as a result of joint effort.....	91
Example 3.5: Failure is exogenous	91
Example 3.6: Client as a passive undergoer.....	91
Example 3.7: The speaker as proactive force.....	91
Example 3.8: Therapist embeds a story of a successful treatment in his 60 seconds.....	93
Example 3.9: Prototypical problem-solution narrative	95
Example 3.10: Product sourcer finds a desired product.....	96
Example 3.11: Chartered surveyor highlights attention to detail.....	97
Example 3.12: Business consultant highlights a client's incompetence	98
Example 3.13: Product sourcer positions himself as an expert business consultant	99
Example 3.14: Solicitor contrasts lay and expert solutions to the payment of tax and care fees...	100
Example 3.15: Labovian structural analysis (revisited)	103
Example 3.16: BDN narrative embedding another narrative	105
Example 3.17: Implicit solution.....	108
Example 3.18: The use of quantifiers and hyperbole amplified by parallelism in problem evaluation in #29.....	115
Example 4.1: DRS or quasi-DRS in the competence tale dataset.....	127
Example 4.2: IRS in the competence tale dataset	127

Example 4.3: Problem scenarios involving client voice (S1-S12) or audience as clients (S13-S15)	130
Example 4.4: Pronoun + say in DRS	132
Example 4.5: Pronoun + tell + that in IRS	132
Example 4.6: Freestanding structure in DRS	132
Example 4.7: Quasi-direct form	133
Example 4.8: Story background cast as IRS, climax cast as DRS	136
Example 4.9: DRS deployment in #5	137
Example 4.10: The scale of client involvement in problem evaluation depending on the form of RS deployment.....	140
Example 4.11: The scale of client involvement in solution evaluation depending on the form of RS deployment.....	141
Example 4.12: Simulated customer reference in narrative # 3.....	144
Example 4.13: Simulated customer reference in narrative #27.....	146
Example 4.14: Problem evaluation in narrative #27	147
Example 4.15: Direct customer reference in narrative #29	150
Example 4.16: Prototypical scenario involving DRS.....	153
Example 4.17: Discourse markers/lexical clusters typically introducing scenario	155
Example 4.18: Temporal framing of the BDN small narratives	158
Example 4.19: Distribution of time adverbs in the situation and abstract	159
Example 4.20: Contemporary and temporary target market specification.....	161
Example 5.1: PI construction via embedded competence tale	177
Example 5.2: Angelo's first speech embedding CT.....	183
Example 5.3: Angelo's second speech embedding CT	185
Example 5.4: Poetic organization of the second narrative	186
Example 5.5: Angelo's third speech embedding CT	189
Example 5.6: Poetic structuring of problem and evaluation phases in CT2	190
Example 6.1: Group leader soliciting the use of an Olympic sports metaphor.....	203
Example 6.2: Echo metaphor's mirror structures.....	221
Example 6.3: Contrast (marathon as a source term) and redeployment (sprint as a source term) .	223
Example 6.4: Example of development and re-deployment: bar as a source term	225
Example 6.5: OVERCOMING LIMITS in the steeplechase and pole vault metaphors	226
Example 6.6: HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITS in the hurdles and high jump metaphor	227
Example 6.7: PERFORMANCE metaphor in archery and javelin thrower metaphors.....	228
Example 6.5: Outlier metaphors	233

Example 6.9: The influence of enduring metaphorical concepts on metaphor choice.....	235
Example 7.1: Positioning tag lines illustrating different degrees of contextual relevance	245
Example 7.2: BDN Olympic speeches illustrating different degrees of contextual relevance	246

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Perceived research gap in the overlap of the four domains addressed by this study	6
Figure 1.2: Distribution of referrals in the first, third and fifth year of membership	16
Figure 1.3: Persuasion as the conceptual link underlying the central themes	22
Figure 1.4: Summary of research questions and hypotheses addressed in individual chapters	39
Figure 2.1: Marketing strategy as the primary source of new business (based on BNI online survey, 8,247 respondents, 2015).....	46
Figure 2.2: Structure of marketing budget projection/ Small business owners (based on BNI online survey, 9,345 respondents, 2015).....	47
Figure 2.3: BNI membership between 1986 and 2012 (based on Misner, 2014).....	49
Figure 2.4: WOM motivational mix for the organized networking context	52
Figure 2.5: WOM attraction of different product categories (Keller Fay TalkTrack, 2014b)	60
Figure 2.6: Negative WOM in % depending on industry (based on Oetting et al., 2010)	61
Figure 2.7: WOM attraction of different product categories (Keller Fay TalkTrack, 2014c).....	62
Figure 3.1: Problem-solution pattern (based on Hoey, 1983)	93
Figure 3.2: Distribution of hyperbole in % in CTs	111
Figure 3.3: Generic structure of competence tale	117
Figure 4.1: Client involvement matrix	142
Figure 5.1: Leveraging distrust against the profession to showcase professional identity	191
Figure 5.2: Structural pattern of pain speech	193
Figure 6.1: Generic overview of dominant systematic metaphors and corresponding linguistic metaphors in abridged transcripts	215
Figure 6.2: Core drivers of co-construction in networking context	230
Figure 6.3: Time proximity motivating metaphor appropriation in the Olympic dataset	231
Figure 7.1: Variables examined for potential influence on metaphor persuasiveness and retention.....	242

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Distribution of hyperbole in the problem-solution pattern of CTs	111
Table 7.1: Overall effect of positioning metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on weighted arithmetic mean	260
Table 7.2: Overall effect of metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on mode ...	262
Table 7.3: Pearson correlations among observed variables	263
Table 7.4: Summary of perceived impact on persuasion	264
Table 7.5: Overall effect of positioning metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on mode – selected metaphors	265
Table 7.6: Summary of perceived impact on retention	266
Table 7.7: Transcript of and statistics on the outlier metaphor	269

Data: Transcription Conventions, Ethics and Confidentiality

In this thesis, I have used the transcripts of Business Networking International (BNI) 60-second speech recordings, recordings of BNI meetings and interviews with the members.¹ Standard protocols for ethical research were followed including confidentiality of informants. The recordings were transcribed orthographically with some exceptions such as overlaps, latching and information on basic prosodic features. Generic responses such as laughter and the expressions of appreciation or rejection have been documented in the full transcripts in the appendices.

For the sake of clarity and readability, the extracts illustrating the text proper in individual chapters are further simplified to read rather as a written text. Transcripts appearing in the text are separated from the text proper by borders. While their formatting is similar to the Tables that contain numerical data, they can be easily identified as transcripts by the label Example, and by being numbered separately from both Figures and Tables (see the List of illustrations for details). Line numbers are given, whenever it makes sense to include them, i.e. when the focus is on microanalysis, and individual segments are commented on in the text. The extracts in the text do not contain detailed information on prosody, unless it is considered salient to the analysis at hand. This information is given in the full transcript in the appendices.

A variety of linguistic features is studied in this thesis, with different chapters exhibiting different foci, the studied features are highlighted by means of underlining or italicizing. Each chapter contains specific information on how the given phenomena are highlighted in the extracts and the system is consistently followed throughout the chapter.

¹ Other textual data consists of the input by respondents produced in the metaphor online survey that underlies Chapter 7, interviews with the CEO of BNI Ivan Misner, and in Chapter 1 also the responses of the BNI members that Misner collected in his doctoral thesis.

At times when ethnopoetic perspective is applied to the analysis of text in the narrative chapters, examples are presented in poetic lines rather than prosaic blocks to better capture the particular poetic effect and organization of the given speech. Lines in such cases represent intonation units, to capture the natural organization or chunking achieved by a combination of intonation, prosody, pauses and verbal particles such as discourse and hesitation markers (Tannen, 2007).

The following transcription conventions were used²:

< n Clive >	speakers' identification at the beginning of a turn
,	slight rising in intonation at end of tone unit, listing intonation
?	high rising intonation at end of tone unit
.	falling intonation at end of tone unit
!	animated intonation
[.]	brief but perceptible dysfluency within a turn
[..]	short pause <0.5> within a turn
[...]	noticeable pause or break of <0.5; 1> within a turn
[2s]	pause longer than a second
-	sound abruptly cut off, e.g. false start
Bold	emphatic stress ³
:	colon following vowel indicates elongated vowel sound
::	extra colon indicates longer elongation
/could/	words between slashes show uncertain transcription
/?/	indicates inaudible utterances: one ? for each syllable
┌	overlapping or simultaneous speech
┌ ┐	words in these brackets are utterances interjected by a speaker/s within another speaker's turn
=	latching: no perceptible inter-turn pause
()	nonlexical phenomena (vocal and nonvocal), that interrupt the lexical stretch, as in 'I asked her to (cough) excuse me'
[()]	nonlexical phenomena, both vocal and nonvocal, that overlay the lexical stretch, as in [(handing paper to the chair) is this it?]
(laughter M)	laughter, the letter S-XL indicates the laughter intensity, 'S' indicates small or scattered laughter. 'M' - 'L' indicates higher intensity, 'L' amounts to a generic reception of a good joke, 'XL' indicates particularly intense laughter.
Transcription conventions specific to metaphorically used words in the Olympics metaphor transcript	

² With minor alterations, the transcription system was adopted from Koester (2006).

³ This information is given in all transcripts except the Olympics metaphor transcripts, where it would visually interfere with the MIP(VU) method.

(Appendix 2):	
Italics	lexical unit marked as metaphorical (e.g., you can't see the finish line)
Bold +italics	source domain term in A is B or A is like B formula (e.g., it's gonna be like a relay race)
Shading	deliberate sports or related metaphor
Transcription conventions specific to the Narrative transcript (Appendix 3): For the purposes of analysis reported in the first narrative chapter, the transcript contains structural information on the individual phases of narratives.	
Italics	generic phase (e.g., Problem: he told me, he couldn't get it in Britain)
Colour scale +bold	Signal the beginning of a narrative and communicate the specific type of narrative. For details, see the legend in Appendix 3.

List of Abbreviations

BDN	Business Development Network
BNI	Business Networking International
CA	Conversation Analysis
CDA	Critical Discourse Analysis
CMT	Conceptual Metaphor Theory
CoP	Community of Practice
CT	Competence Tale
GI	Group Identity
MCA	Membership Categorization Analysis
MD	Managing Director
offline WOM	Face-to-face Word of Mouth (as opposed to online/electronically mediated WOM)
PI	Professional Identity
PT	Positioning Theory
RS	Reported Speech
SCT	Self-categorization Theory
SIT	Social Identity Theory
sWOM	Social Word of Mouth, i.e. recommendations made via social media
USP	Unique Selling Proposition
WOM	Word of Mouth Marketing

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Because I can make you look good on paper. Because I can make you look good between the sheets.

Marketing studies have demonstrated that small businesses increasingly rely on business networking as their chief marketing strategy (O'Donnell, 2014 *inter alia*). However, the discourse practices of the representatives of small business have rarely been examined, and their self-branding networking rhetoric remains largely overlooked. This study examines the previously untapped genre of the 60-second self-marketing speeches that were delivered by the small business owner-managers engaged in organized networking, such as the example below, delivered by the printer whose tag line introduces this chapter.

1	< n Paul > Good morning everybody. Morning uh: my name's PDT,
2	I am very fortunate to work for a company called [.] D's Print based in the heart of city.
3	We can make you look good on paper.
4	And we've recently been doing a lot of uh: pads.
5	We can do A5 pads, A4 pads, A3 pads, A2 pads,
6	we can't do A8 pads, but I've got an A8 outside so I don't care. [laughter and cheering]
7	Nobody throws away pads, they always use them. They keep them on their desk,
8	they use them to write phone numbers on.
9	So if you know anybody [...] uh: who uses pads, go and see them.
10	Go and see them and talk about the pad.
11	It won't make them mad, it won't make them sad.
12	I'll go and see them and I'll make them glad.
13	Because I [.] can make them look good [...] between the sheets. ⁴

Example 1.1: BDN 60-second speech delivered by a printer

⁴ The initial positioning line and the tagline: *We can make you look good on paper* and *Because I [.] can make them look good [...] between the sheets* represent the printer's brand recognition lines and as such were used regularly (with incremental changes) in his weekly 60-second slot – hence the pronoun variation between the opening quote and this example.

The core interactional goal of these minimalist speeches is informational and emotive, informing on the business and desired client segment in a memorable manner, while building trust with the audience so that they are willing to share their reference network with the speaker. The strategies that inform and involve the audience are diverse, as evident from the body of the above presentation: Apart from the playful uses of metaphor/metonymy and polysemy in the tag lines (lines 3 and 13: *paper/sheets*)⁵ and again polysemy in the body of the speech (line 6: *A8 pads/ Audi A8*), the speech involves an intriguingly poetic structuring, created by the syntactic aspects of parallelism and contrast.

This study focuses on two involvement strategies that have emerged from the data as prominent and particularly powerful credibility-building instruments, i.e. deliberate metaphor and narrative. These strategies are directed towards inducing credibility and trust in the professional's competence and integrity, while building a positive relationship with fellow group-members. Both narrative and metaphor have a strong relational value, and unequivocal potential in the construction of identities. The primary aim of the current study is to thus evaluate the impact of narrative and metaphor on the construction of the speakers' professional and group identities and on the elicitation of on-target referrals, leading to the following research question:

How are narrative and metaphor used in 60-second self-marketing speeches to convey positive professional identity and generate positive word of mouth?

⁵ The statement involves polysemy and a background, rather tired, sexual metaphor, which nonetheless charges the literal use, making the tag line memorable, while establishing a clear contextual link to the printing domain.

The central research question has been divided into three sub-questions which address the use of narrative and deliberate metaphor in the genre of the 60-second self-marketing speeches:

- 1) *What are the prominent structural and lexical characteristics that mark the deployment of these strategies in this context?*
- 2) *What are the core interactional goals that motivate the deployment of these strategies?*
- 3) *How effective are these strategies in achieving these interactional goals and what are the variables that appear to increase their effectiveness?*

The current study draws on a dataset of 250 such speeches and on the supporting ethnographic data collected between 2005-2007 in five networking groups in Birmingham. It centres on the characteristic use of two strategies prominent in 60-second rhetoric, namely on narrative and deliberate metaphor, their role in shaping the speakers' professional and group identities, and on their effectiveness in eliciting new business for the speakers. The research interest motivated a multi-method approach to analysis, establishing a triple nexus between structure, professional and group identities, and the achievement of core interactional goals via narrative and metaphor.

This introductory chapter sets the research and business context, establishing first the research gap addressed in this study and then outlining the characteristics of the specimens under the magnifying glass, including the genre and the communication practices which are studied, and the wider business and discourse setting in which these communication practices are situated. Both research and business contextualisation of this study might appear as potentially containing more detail than customary in such business

discourse research projects, but is seen as necessary due to the relative paucity of existing research in this domain, and due to low public awareness of the organized business networking mechanisms.

1.1 Small business networking, the genre of self-marketing and the X-second rhetoric

1.1.1 Business discourse research

A large and growing body of discourse analytic and pragmatic studies has investigated real-life language in the business and workplace contexts. Bargiela-Chiappini et al. (2013) provide a comprehensive map of this research and describe the major developments in the current business discourse research field, discussing the established research traditions and the trends emerging rather predictively from the field, such as the role of online social networks and globalization in terms of their impact on corporate communication. Their volume thus reflects the mainstream research interests, clearly showing that the field still continues to sail first and foremost in corporate waters, covering a range of aspects of organizational discourse, i.e meetings, business reports, presentations, negotiations, advertising and related interactional outcomes and goals.⁶

The same overriding concern with the large, global and organizational resonates, for example, in Planken's (2010) keynote speech to the business discourse research community on the major challenges to the business discourse research field:

⁶ Business discourse research has traditionally covered the area of meetings (e.g. Poncini, 2004) negotiations (Charles, 1995), job interviews (Roberts, 2009), corporate documents, such as annual reports, mission statements (Bhatia, 1993, 2004; Koller, 2011), advertising: TV commercials, web, newspaper ads, social media (McQuarrie and Mick 1996; Cook, 2000; Toncar and Munch 2001), workplace discourse (Holmes, 2000; Koester, 2006), intercultural research (Spencer-Oatey and Ying, 1998), customer-client interactions in service encounters (Hasan 1985; McCarthy 2000). Due to the diversity and the sheer volume of the research in the target areas, the brackets refer to either pioneers or major protagonists in the given area.

The business world has been and still is subject to rapid changes in a relatively short time. Global forces are reshaping work and the way people are engaging with each other through new technologies, across organizational functions, and across countries. Organizations today represent complex research environments. To remain relevant, for both teaching and practice, a contextualised approach to business communication research can generate purposeful insights into the interplay between the organizational or multicultural/multilingual context, communication processes, and the people engaged in them, and how this is shaping and reshaping business communication.

[Keynote speech on the major direction
of business discourse research, ABC, 2010]

As illustrated by the above speech, the thrust of applied linguistics in business discourse research has naturally always run parallel to the major interests and concerns of the organizational, management and marketing research domains, addressing primarily the corporate world and thus focusing mostly on aspects of communication in large organizations, and marginalizing the study of small business discourse in comparison.

Naturally, marketing and promotional discourse studies have mirrored this direction, focusing on easily accessible multimedia and textual data, i.e. TV and print advertising (e.g., Mulken et al., 2010, Mulken et al., 2014) and branding and positioning resources to communicate organizational and corporate identities, such as mission statements (e.g. Koller, 2011), annual reports (e.g. Bhatia, 2004), and social media presence and/or product launches (e.g. Kast, 2008).

The marketing discourse of the small business and startup segment, i.e. of the companies that operate without a substantial marketing budget, has attracted very little attention. The present study sidesteps the well-researched corporate domain to focus specifically on the marketing and self-branding networking discourse of small businesses. This study begins to tap into an uncharted area, represented in Figure 1.1 below by the overlap

of the four domains of small business discourse practices, business networking discourse, self-branding discourse, and X-second rhetoric.

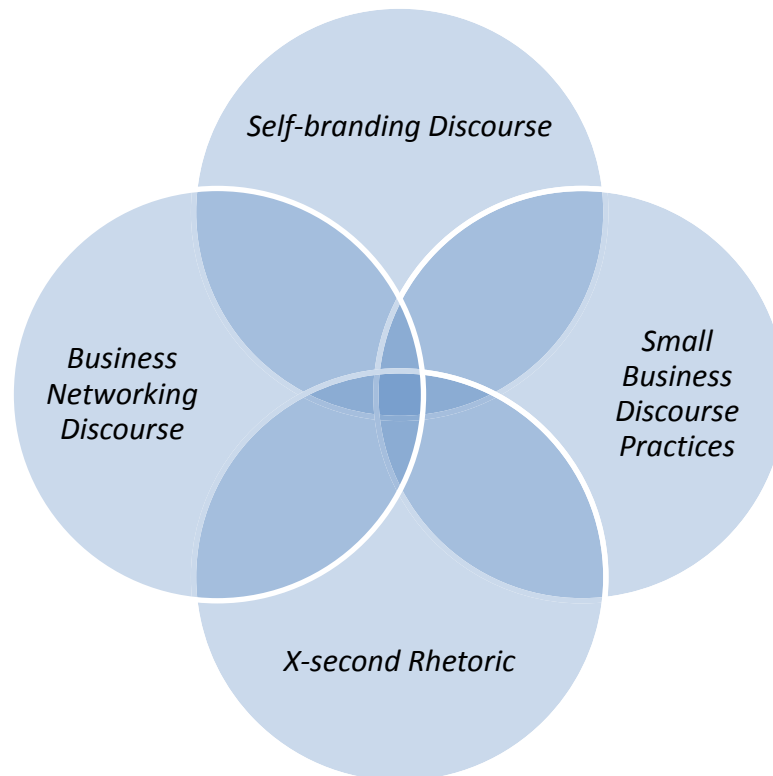


Figure 1.1: Perceived research gap in the overlap of the four domains addressed by this study

1.1.2 Self-branding discourse

The last two decades have seen a growing trend towards discourse marketization and a consequent emergence of studies that explore self-branding discourse. Recently, the public interest in personal branding has been further spurred by the advent of social media, namely LinkedIn, which tends to be seen as the main self-branding textual space. A search on self-branding self-help books retrieves a plethora of recent publications,

evidencing that there is an avid audience ever more ready to be educated in self-marketing (e.g., Reynolds, 2013; Sander and Haley, 2013⁷).

The studies that explore the marketization and self-branding phenomena have been mostly constructionist, engaging critically with the phenomenon of self-branding (e.g., Vallas, 2015), or involve studies straddling the organizational science and the discourse analysis domain (e.g. Oswick and Robertson, 2007; Oswick et al. 2005) and corpus linguistic studies evidencing the entanglement of the personal, professional and corporate (e.g. Koller, 2011). Mautner's influential volume (2010) gives the pulse of developments in this burgeoning field of research, exploring intertextuality and interdiscursivity, and discussing self-branding as a sub-issue of the invasion of marketing discourse into academic, public administration, governmental and religious domains of discourse.

This study may be seen as tapping into this area of research, although in respect to the data and approach, limited common ground is shared. In contrast with most of the marketization literature, this study covers a business networking domain, i.e. self-marketing occupies a legitimate 'business' ground, in which the entrepreneurs market their own businesses rather than transforming themselves into a product with a unique value.

1.1.3 X-second rhetoric: Research into minimalist speeches such as the elevator pitch

X-second rhetoric⁸ has become a clearly recognizable trend, transpiring into numerous areas, and now occupying a solid ground in the field of public discourse including media,

⁷ Publications pertaining specifically to LinkedIn presence.

⁸ Term deployed in this thesis to describe the broad category of minimalist speeches and speech forms that typically last mere seconds.

political, academic, romantic⁹ and most relevantly, business discourse. In business discourse, it suffices to consult the dominant sales methodologies (cf. Sandler Sales System, 2006; JAWS; TAS; Value Selling) to discover that apart from the proverbial elevator speech deployed by startup companies to attract funding from venture capitalists and the 60-second business networking speech, which is subject to research in this thesis, X-second rhetoric translates into a whole taxonomy of sales speeches, i.e., 60-second generic sales pitch, with subcategories such as a 30-second sales pitch designed specifically for cold calling purposes.

As regards the minimalist sales pitch, much of the self-help literature (e.g. Jodin, 2012; Miller, 2014) and some of the aforementioned sales methodologies (Sandler, 2006) provide a prescribed generic structure that even supplies prefabricated structures for each of the generic phases and may be highly detailed, down to advising the sales people on which metaphor may be most effective with the particular prospect. This shows the investment in short promotional speeches amongst practitioners, which has not as yet been paralleled by academic research¹⁰.

In political discourse, prior to the presidential election in 1992, Bill Clinton delivered a speech lasting a little more than a minute, a speech which has since been presented in numerous presentation textbooks as the epitome of persuasion in practice (e.g. McCarter and Hatcher, 2002). Since then, media across the globe have adopted a pre-election

⁹ Speed-dating discourse has been relatively widely researched in the field of social psychology and discourse, mostly for the relationship between gender and romantic attraction (e.g., Korobov, 2011)

¹⁰ The research in business presentations centres mostly on conventional power-point presentations, often product presentations delivered by the paragons of business such as Steve Jobs (Jurado and Ruiz-Madrid, 2015; Kast, 2008). These tend to be researched in respect to their central goal of persuasion (e.g. Bamford, 2008, 2007; Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). For an exception see Lehtonen (2010) who targets the PechaKucha presentational format, created in 2003 by two architects to enable faster and more interactive transmission of ideas. The rather minimalist format of 20 images that are shown for 20 seconds each, are rolled out to spread globally in the architectural and design domain.

campaign format in which the candidates are given 60 seconds to express their views on a specific public issue. A different example of abbreviated rhetoric, illustrating the proliferation of the minimalist format in covering politics in media, is a sound bite. This phenomenon has been widely discussed, but again outside the applied linguistics research domain (e.g., Scheuer, 2001; Berry, 2008).

The fact that the 60-second format has equally seeped into the academic discourse is illustrated in the self-help literature: Sjodin (2012) gives examples of its application in the entrepreneurial, corporate and also academic context. The degree of the proliferation of 60-seconds is also evident from the following anecdotal evidence: twice during this research study, when I participated in an applied linguistics conference¹¹, the speakers were invited to prepare a one-minute presentation, which would contain their research neatly packed into seconds, i.e. along the lines of a more compelling oral version of the conference abstract. Similar experience from the world of international conventions is based on my husband's experience, in whose industry¹² such introductory minimalist speeches have over the last decade become commonplace.

This is due to the logical commonality between the X-second slot format used in business and academic networking, where the dictate of the increasing number of participants, limits of time, and the goal of maximizing the relational, informational and ultimately financial returns logically results in a firm establishment of the minimalist speech genre. In other words, in business, political academic and social contexts, X-second rhetoric helps to identify and engage individuals with shared interest.

¹¹ RaAM Conference in Amsterdam, 2010; ABC European Convention in Antwerp, 2009.

¹² Major design software for the design of process industry plants in oil & gas, power and marine industries.

It is therefore surprising that while X-second rhetoric seems to exert considerable influence over current society and discourse, it is very far from being an established research subject within discourse analytic and pragmatic studies. In fact, repeated search for relevant research has resulted in frustratingly little. Research on the subject has been mostly restricted to studies applying empirical advice from communication professionals to a particular communication domain, arguing the importance of the elevator pitch. In the field of business discourse, extensive research has been carried out on business presentations, yet, with the exception of Holden's concurrent research¹³, no single study exists which treats specifically the 60-second self-branding format.

1.2 Background to the Business Development Networks

In most North American and European post-industrial economies, the past decades have been marked by a paradigm shift in respect to the structure of business activity, particularly in the sphere of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). This trend is evidenced by the Sectors of US Economy 1947-2009, and Clark's Sector Models (2011), given in Appendix 1. With the increase of centralized production in the Asian production hubs, the proportion of small businesses involved in product manufacturing has further declined, and the role of small businesses has become primarily service-oriented, whether involved in product reselling or customization and/or the provision of services (cf. Goss, 2015; Chaston, 2014; Brauer and Miller, 2008; Reehar, 2010 *inter alia*). This trend has naturally

¹³ Cheryl Holden (University of Manchester) is currently researching the 60-second networking format, focusing on persuasion, and using a combination of rhetoric, argumentation theory and CA in her analysis. She recorded her data at meetings of a single independent networking group, whose members were former participants of the same networking organization as is studied here. The participants brought the target's BDN networking meeting format to the new group. Her PhD is in progress; Holden is currently at the writing-up stage.

led to increased competition between service providers and it is relatively difficult for new entrants to attract substantial business (ibid).

Indeed, the 5-year survival rate for UK businesses established in 2004 and still active in 2009 was 46.8% (Office for National Statistics, 2010), with similar figures for business survival rates presented by the National Statistical Institutes in the countries of the Eurozone and the U.S. (2009). While the figures for 2009 were arguably influenced by the 2007-2009 financial crisis, the U.S. data for the year 2000 still indicate a 5-year survival rate of between 44% and 57%, depending on the industry or service sector (Shane, 2010). The proportion of unsuccessful start-ups is therefore substantial and there are a number of reasons for the lack of success. Since word of mouth and personal networks have traditionally been the most productive source of new business for small enterprises (Litvin et al. 2007), it is presumed that the absence of a robust partner network contributes to the failure rate. With changes in the economic environment and society, the nature of networking has also evolved beyond simple reliance on personal networks (Carl, 2008). Commenting on this substantial trend, Misner argues:

At one time, most people knew the local grocer, lawyer, bookkeeper, etcetera. However, in a more technological society, relationships with the local businessman have all but disappeared. BDNs are artificially replacing these lost relationships. By meeting regularly with other business professionals, BDNs enable business professionals to develop structured professional relationships with each other. It's through this exposure and relationship building that business professionals learn more about each other's businesses and feel comfortable about referring one another.

[1993, p.41]

Since small businesses tend to systematically seek partnerships and form strategic alliances with other businesses in the same geographic area, they have strongly contributed to the emergence of Business Development Networks (BDNs), i.e. the coalitions

of business owners and professionals who, through a structured support system, help each other to generate business. Business Development Networks proliferate, attracting large numbers of small business owners and forming a distinct community of practice with distinct rhetoric and discourse practices.

This study into their discourse practices draws specifically on data recorded in the meetings of five networking groups which operated under the UK franchise from the largest referral organization and Business Development Network in the world. Since its origins in 1980s it has spread into over 55 countries, currently attracting 178,000 of members and generating close to 6.5 billion USD worth of business for its members (BNI Statistics, 2015).

The members in the researched organization are organized into local reference groups of businesspeople (called chapters) who meet on a weekly basis for a breakfast meeting of about 90 minutes. ¹⁴In order to eliminate internal competition and maximize the benefits for the members, the code of practice allows only one member per profession within a single group. The underlying principle is that of reciprocity: members provide leads to new business to their fellow members with the hope of benefiting their business in the process. The participants consciously operate on the premise that by helping other participants and by cultivating mutual relationships, they will be able to access their co-members' network.

¹⁴ The meeting agenda and the leadership roles are fixed and identical for all groups in the target organization, irrespective of their geographical locations. The meeting agenda and information on the organizational structure of each group (chapter) is given as Appendix 2.

1.2.1 Key factors influencing the success of a small business involved in a Business Development Network

1.2.1.1 Engagement in a contact sphere

One of the key factors to successful participation in a business network seems to be the propensity to apply effective joint-venture marketing techniques and the ability to effectively leverage the potential of contact spheres (Misner, 1993, 2008, 2009). Contact spheres¹⁵ are professions that tend to have a symbiotic relationship, i.e. they share the same end customer, while being noncompetitive in nature (ibid; Alessandra et al., 2012). An example of a contact sphere relationship is a real estate agent and a mortgage broker, who are both in the same broad industry, i.e. the housing market, and deal with the same clients for two different aspects of the same business transaction. By forming a partnership and by sharing their network of clients, they may further improve their business opportunities.

Misner (2008) lists several examples of contact spheres that involve multiple businesses, such as legal/financial services (solicitor, CPA, financial planner, banker) or contractors (painters, carpenters, plumbers, landscapers, electricians). A networking group that brings together a sufficient number of diverse businesses to facilitate the development of a range of contact spheres is likely to generate a significant number of quality referrals for its members.

¹⁵ The concept of contact spheres is similar to Jarillo's conceptualization of a hub firm (1988), with the hub being at the centre of a constellation of businesses tethered to one another in order to make the most effective use of their respective specializations.

1.2.1.2 The size of a networking group

The size of a networking group is another logical denominator of success, as shown in a large cross-sectional analysis by Misner (1993), in which the size had a substantial impact on most of the independent variables that communicated financial success¹⁶. It appears that small groups, i.e., groups with fewer than 20 members, do not enable the development of contact spheres, which are the most effective source of referrals. Misner (ibid.) suggests that larger groups generate more substantial results not only because of the ability of more members to pass proportionately more business, but also because of the group dynamics of a larger body of individuals. The larger BDN chapters tended to be more structured and have better attendance than their smaller counterparts.

1.2.1.3 The temporal element in the development of trust

Based on the aforementioned cross-sectional study conducted in the United States that involved 764 respondents from 42 networking groups across the country, there is a direct and dramatic correlation between the length of time an individual has participated in the group and the number and value of business transactions that they receive per given period of time. (Misner, 1993). In fact, the Misner study revealed that the length of time a member had participated in a business network affected the members success more than any other single variable that his study explored, leading him to conclude that:

¹⁶ The variables included total number of referrals a member can expect, the percentage increase in their business closed, the percentage of spin-off business they can expect to receive, and the size of their largest referral.

A BDN offers an opportunity for members to pass referrals. However, in order to do that, a certain level of trust must be established between the various members. The length of time an individual is a member clearly aids the process of relationship building. The longer an individual is a member, the more well established the relationship. It appears that the longer the relationship exists the more substantial the results. In marketing parlance, this implies that BDN involvement is more about farming for referrals, not hunting for them. In other words, cultivating relationships over a period of time appears to offer substantially better results for those patient enough to do so.

[ibid, p. 75]

The impact of time on the ability to reap substantial business from the network is apparent from the sequence of the three charts below¹⁷. The first year of membership rarely brings significant profits, with close to 60% of the members attracting less than 10 referrals. In the second year, the differences between individual members seem to become notable, and by the third year the division is quite distinct, as clear from the second chart below, with members clustering around two local maxims with roughly half of the members attracting a significant number of referrals. In the fifth year, the vast majority of members will receive over 60 referrals, with close to 25% receiving more than a hundred. Misner (ibid.) has identified similar trends in regard to the percentage of clients that form a business relationship with the participant, the percentage of spin-off business, and the size of referrals and their average value.

¹⁷ The analysis is based on the data from the Misner study (1993)

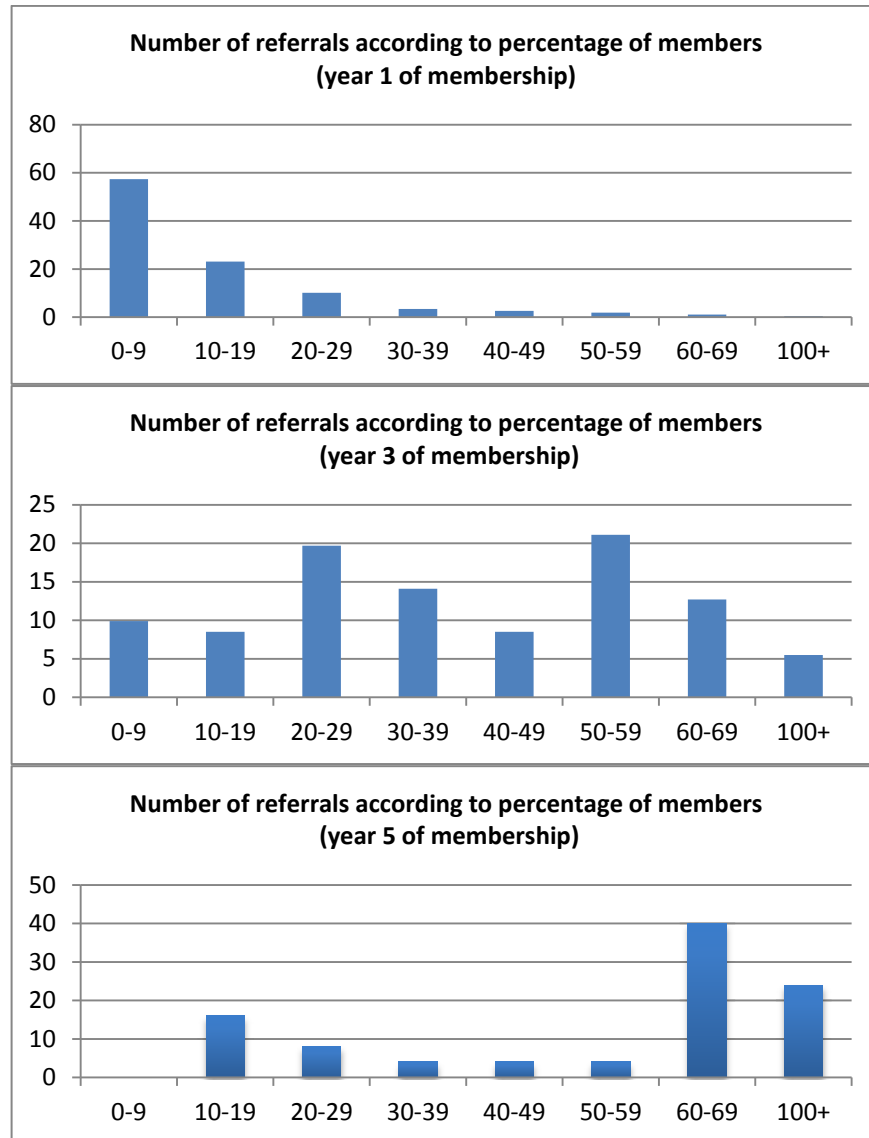


Figure 1.2: Distribution of referrals in the first, third and fifth year of membership

1.2.1.4 Trust and its discursive development via the 60-second speech

While Misner’s findings show that the time factor cannot be entirely sidestepped (see the first chart in Figure 1.2 above), by the second year, there are already notable differences in the success of individual members in attracting referrals. This study argues that one of the core determiners of success¹⁸ is the ability of members to cultivate trust,

¹⁸ Networking success is clearly influenced by a number of factors. Different people take a different amount of time to establish themselves, depending not only on their capability to develop trust, but also, for example, on whether they operate a start-up business and whether their business fits naturally into an existing contact sphere.

communicate competence, and convey with clarity and in a memorable manner sufficient information relating to the product or service range offered by the particular business. In line with the constructionist stance towards discourse (see e.g., de Fina et al., 2006, inter alia), this study maintains that these success factors are all predominantly discursively constructed through a variety of mechanisms, both in and outside the meetings.¹⁹

One of the central discursive resources at the disposal of the network's members is the 60-second weekly speech, conducted in a fairly unchanging and controlled environment in which speakers compete for attention with some 20-30 other marketing messages. The 60-second speech is the entry point and the bottom line, both establishing awareness of the core business activities the professional is engaged in, and answering the question of competence. The level of understanding of the person's business determines how quickly they can access their co-members referential network, and, ultimately, whether and how fast they will enter into established contact spheres.

This study will show that the short promotional speeches which members deliver on a weekly basis are highly instrumental in influencing their networking success. This study also seems to suggest that the members who fail to recognize the potential of the 60-second speech, and who do not leverage its informational and persuasive value, may underperform in the network as a result.

¹⁹ The professional identity of the member, and their influence in the network clearly depends on the activity of the member, i.e. whether they bringing in referrals for their co-members, and whether they actively seek to become a part of a relevant contact sphere, engaging in task-related co-operation.

1.3 The genre of 60-second networking speeches

The impact of and almost magical ripple effect of a well-crafted elevator speech in today's changing and challenging market cannot be denied.

[Sjodin 2012, p. 4]

As discussed above, a new member will generally establish a position of credibility within a group in the scope of one to three years. The second year of membership is a significant milestone augmenting the value of business generated via the network for a proactive member. In other words, the first year of membership rarely brings significant profit to the person as it is initially difficult for new members to communicate their expertise and build sufficient rapport with the group.

The self-promotional 60-second speech could be seen as a loose equivalent of an elevator pitch that needs to be changed and updated on a weekly basis. Elevator speech has been broadly defined as 'a brief presentation that introduces a product, service, philosophy, or an idea. The name suggests the notion that the message should be delivered in the time span of an elevator ride. Its general purpose is to intrigue and inspire a listener to want to hear more of the presenter's complete proposition in the near future' (Sjodin, 2012 p.3).

In order to achieve this outcome, the 60-second networking speech is typically built around a unique selling proposition (USP)²⁰, and has a prescribed structure (see Appendix 6 for the 60-second speech template) which shares significant similarities with the format of the 'perfect' pitch proposed in an array of self-help books (cf. Sjodin, 2012; Miller, 2014). The speakers tend to structure their speeches to follow a format entailing a personal introduction, positioning of the speaker's business vis-a-vis competition, specific service

²⁰ USP – Unique selling point is a factor that differentiates a product from its competitors, such as the lowest cost, the highest quality or the first-ever product of its kind. (Laskey et. al., 1989)

offer and target clientele identification and a memorable close. The printer's 60-second speech, which was introduced at the beginning of this chapter, is used here to illustrate the prototypical structure:

Possible structure	Transcript
Personal introduction	Good morning everybody. Morning uh: my name's PDT, I am very fortunate to work for a company called [...] D's Print based in the heart of city.
Positioning of the business (in this case via metaphor)	We can make you look good on paper.
Specific service offer	And we've recently been doing a lot of uh: pads. We can do A5 pads, A4 pads, A3 pads, A2 pads, we can't do A8 pads, but I've got an A8 outside so I don't care. [laughter and cheering] Nobody throws away pads, they always use them. They keep them on their desk, they use them to write phone numbers on.
Target clientele	So if you know anybody [...] uh: who uses pads, go and see them. Go and see them and talk about the pad. It won't make them mad, it won't make them sad. I'll go and see them and I'll make them glad.
Memorable close/tag line	Because I [...] can make them look good [...] between the sheets.

Example 1.2: Generic structure of the self-marketing 60-second speech

Apart from the aforementioned reliance on poetic structuring, contrast, and humour, the example also shows a typical usage of metonymy and metaphor in the networking 60-seconds, illustrating its core functional characteristics in this subgenre, where metaphor and metonymy are mostly used in the initial or closing positioning of the speaker's business.

In another example of the 60-second slot, the speaker exhibits the normative speech structure and uses a narrative to lend further strength to his service offer through displaying

his general competence. The transcript below illustrates this use, again documenting the generic and functional use of narrative: this is, in the majority of cases, used in the service definition generic phase of the 60-second speech to evidence specific competence or competency.

Personal introduction		JC, homeopath and Bowen therapist
Specific service (in this case defined via narrative)	Situation	a success story, I was particularly pleased about this week, is a young lad, who I've been treating for about six months
	Problem	really nice young lad, the trouble is he used to keep losing his temper and getting excluded from school for beating other kids up
	Solution	now after about six months of my treatment
	Evaluation	this kid is totally transformed and I'm really pleased. It'll save a lot of kids from getting beaten up, and it will save him from a life of crime and God knows what, so it's pretty important.
Target clientele		So if you know any kids with behavioural problems, whether they're labelled ADD..., send them in my direction and I can help them, it's not the same as drugging kids.
Memorable close		JC, I can improve your kids' health, that is more important than your wealth.

Example 1.3: Generic structure of the BDN 60-second speech embedding a narrative

While the genre is marked by a high degree of structural predictability, the realization of the self-branding 60 seconds is as diverse as are the discourse and rhetoric strategies enlisted in the process. Both examples above illustrate that humour and a range of involvement strategies²¹ tend to be deployed, marking primarily the initial and the closing phase. Outside these two generic stages, high-involvement features, such as hyperbole, reported speech, or modality, are typically used in synergy with narrative to heighten its persuasive impact (see Chapter 4). The use of narrative and deliberate

²¹ The concept of involvement as central to all interaction was initially discussed in Gumperz (1982) and Chafe (1982), involvement being typically connected with the emotive and evaluative aspects of interaction, and the strategies that increase the participants' involvement include strategies that work on sound (rhythm, patterns based on repetition and variation including schemes) and strategies that work on meaning (tropes, i.e. metaphor, metonymy, and hyperbole, but also the use of imagery and detail, and most importantly, narrative. See Tannen, 1989, p. 17).

metaphor is particularly prominent in this subgenre, and both are used as potent persuasive and retention strategies.

The data explored in this thesis appear to suggest that narrative and metaphor are the primary positioning discourse strategies available to the speaker, and that their role is often complementary. While metaphor tends to be deployed in a one-liner, in either initial or closing position within the speech, communicating the theme of the speech or core competence, narrative tends to structure the body of the speech, supplying evidence to the theme or core competence. The decision to focus on narrative and metaphor has thus been data-driven, but also motivated by the intrinsic interest of these widely researched phenomena, which hold an ontological status, reaching beyond the respective research domains. Both strategies have a profound cognitive dimension and are recognized as the chief meaning-, coherence- making and persuasive mechanisms.

1.4 Core themes in this thesis and major threads connecting core themes

The research is situated in the wider business context of networking, and explores the communication practices of small businesses, by focusing on the subgenre of very short promotional presentations. Persuasion is the chief communicative purpose in the given context, and construction of a positive professional identity, i.e. building the professional's credibility, is of paramount importance to the process. Metaphor and narrative are two prominent involvement strategies deployed in this process, hence the triple nexus of this thesis can be seen to be a connection between narrative, metaphor and professional identity subsumed under the conceptual link of persuasion.

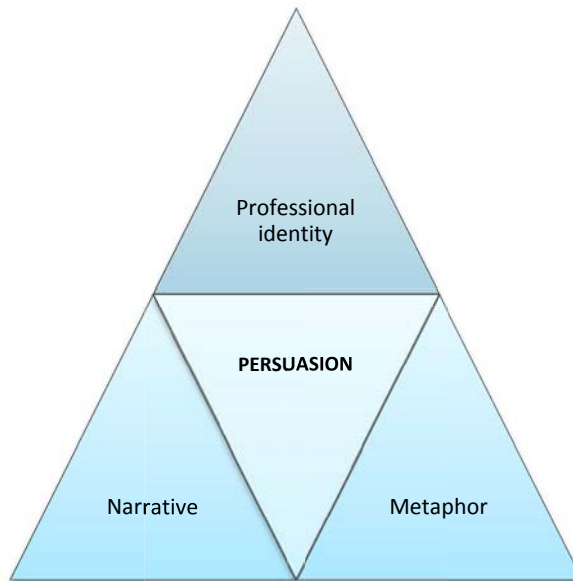


Figure 1.3: Persuasion as the conceptual link underlying the central themes

1.4.1 Narrative, identity and metaphor

It emerged from the data analysis that narrative and metaphor were two prominent involvement strategies deployed in the self-branding speeches towards achieving the goal of persuasiveness. These strategies are directed towards inducing credibility and trust in the professional's competence and integrity, while building a positive relationship with fellow group-members. They both have a strong relational value, and both have powerful potential in the construction of credibility, i.e. professional identity and its dimensions. This thesis shares the dominant view that identities are made coherent and meaningful through narrative, with narrative having the most potential to project professional identity (cf. Angouri and Marra, 2011).

1.4.2 Identity

Identity, and specifically professional identity, is one of the major themes connecting individual chapters in this thesis. Identity is seen in this thesis as a process embedded

in social practices in which discourse plays a central role, i.e. this study approaches identity as constructed and co-constructed in discourse. In regard to agency, it is seen as bidirectional: speakers and their identities are constructed in discourse, influenced by historical and sociocultural forces in the form of dominant discourses. In turn, the interactants themselves shape and influence these by their acceptance, rejection or negotiation.

Approaches to identity tend to occupy either essentialist or constructionist ground. In essentialism, identity is located inside a person. In early accounts, identity is personal and utterly subjective, a product of mind or psyche²². This concept of identity contrasts with the developments in the second half of the twentieth century, when the notion that identity as a product of social practice began to pervade. Identity has since been primarily seen as intersubjective: 'An individual's self-consciousness never exists in isolation, it always exists in relationship to an 'other' or 'others' who serve to validate its existence' (Hall, 2004, p. 51). The self is defined primarily by membership to particular group or groups, and each person has multiple identities, which intersect in a multi-dimensional manner and are activated and made salient through social interaction. Yet, identity in this conception remains essentialist: a pre-discursive and relatively stable phenomenon. This view of identity underlies most group accounts of identity²³, such as self-categorisation theory or variationist sociolinguistics.

²² See Benwell & Stokoe (2006) for a comprehensive overview of major developments in the essentialist and constructionist accounts of identity.

²³ with the exception of Communities of Practice (CoP) theory proposed in Lave and Wenger (1991). In contrast to some other group accounts, Communities of Practice are defined by social engagement rather than location or population, describing social groups that are meaningful to the participant. This approach treats people as actor(s) articulating a range of forms of participation in multiple communities of practice' (Eckert and McConnell-Ginet (1998, p. 490) rather than claiming a pre-given, automatic membership of a particular group, singled out by the analyst. This thesis adopts the CoP perspective in the analysis of group identities, viewing BDN as a CoP in its own right.

The ensuing social constructionist turn has fully reoriented identity to social practice and discourse, embracing identity as a fluid discourse construction subject to changes, thus destabilising its essential and permanent quality. Social constructionist accounts thus currently seem to predominate in contemporary social theory, being the main undercurrent in empirical analysis of personal, social and professional identities in both ordinary and institutional talk (e.g., Angouri and Marra, 2011; de Finna et. al., 2006). In the approach to the analysis of narrative and metaphor construction of identity, this thesis also adopts a clearly constructionist stance.

A growing body of literature in the domain of professional identity has investigated contextually-bound profession-related identities in a variety of institutional and business settings. In conversation analysis (CA) and membership categorisation analysis (MCA), this body of research is, however, generally restricted to conceptualising profession-related identities in occupational terms: hence, a photographer's professional identity is simply photographer. This study understands the concept in broader terms and seeks to clearly delineate its dimensions for the sake of both research integrity and the audience.

Following McCroskey and Teven (1999), professional identity is thus envisioned as a three-dimensional construct, a dynamic compound of competence, trustworthiness and goodwill, i.e. the dimensions of ethos formulated by Aristotle. Competence is here defined as expertise, intelligence, knowledge, and skills related to performance; trustworthiness subsumes qualities such as honesty and morality and is defined as the audience's perception that the speaker is genuine and ethical, and goodwill is conceptualised as intent-toward-receiver (McCroskey and Young, 1981) and perceived caring (McCroskey, 1992; Teven and McCroskey, 1997). Based on McCroskey (1992),

goodwill is seen as ‘a means of opening communication channels more widely’ and comprises three elements: understanding (or the degree of sensitivity to another person’s communication), empathy (which includes acceptance of other person’s views as valid, even in the case of disagreement) and responsiveness (the readiness to respond to another person’s communication).

A positive interpersonal affect, related to the source credibility dimensions of trust and goodwill (McCroskey and Teven, 1999) is seen as the catalyst for a positive response to competence (Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2008; 2005) since it significantly increases the likelihood that the professional will be sought for task cooperation and business partnership, and will gain access to referrals.

Thus, while competence claims have in this study been found to be the central professional identity message communicated via the self-promotional 60 seconds, it has also been found that competence cannot be effectively constructed at the expense of either the aspect of trust or goodwill. Competence claims are powerful evidentiary strategies within this genre, whereby both the service and the target market can be defined, and are therefore seen as crucial to the professional identity construction. The parallel discourse construction of trust and goodwill supplies the complementary relational focus for the most effective professional identity projection achieved from the synergy of the three dimensions.

1.4.3 Multidisciplinarity

The multidisciplinary character and eclecticism of this study results in several challenges. These range from the purely structural, since the flow of ideas is open to various configurations, to questions related to the depth of insight and research required to provide a sufficiently robust analysis. The quantity but also depth of insight will necessarily

be more limited in some areas than if all research energy had been concentrated on one single domain, and so a non-eclectic approach would be more customary and significantly more secure towards ensuring a good end product.

The question thus stands: ‘Why did I choose to be eclectic and embrace a number of perspectives despite the inherent dangers described above?’ The answer to that is rather straightforward. I believe that each of the interests expressed in this thesis runs in the direction of better understanding of the discourse practices of a very particular community of practice. While the members’ usage of metaphor by itself might not be remarkable enough to warrant a whole PhD study, the same may be said about the use of narrative in the business networking context. However, brought together, the synergy results in a far more interesting work, providing, to varying degrees, valuable insight into a) the community of practice and prototypical group identity, b) professional identity, c) narrative and metaphor use in their own right.

1.5 Methodology synopsis and key terminology

This section presents an overview of the methods that were used in the process of answering the central research question. The three research subquestions given above on page 3 are naturally treated to varying degrees in the narrative and metaphor analyses, and their central analytical aims will involve different approaches driven by the established research methodologies native to the respective fields of narrative and metaphor research.

1.5.1 Approaches to narrative analysis (Chapter 3 – Chapter 5)

Since narrative analysis has developed across very different academic disciplines, it encompasses a diverse set of methods and approaches without a consistent major

approach to the analysis of empirical data. One significant division runs along the conception of narrative and its relationship to identity. Narrative is either seen as a true representation of identity (McAdams et al., 2006), or a means of identity construction and performance (e.g., Bruner, 2003). The current study has subscribed to the latter view, treating narrative as interaction produced for and with a particular audience, thus viewing it as a gateway to the portrayal of personal experience and identity, rather than an entry point to the actual event. The major divide in the approach to such analysis may be seen as pertaining to its level (micro- vs. macro-perspective). This study attempts to combine both micro-detail and the macro-perspective.

The structural and functional analyses in Chapter 3 and 4 were thus based on a logical conflation of methods that help to pin down the micro-level local detail as well as those that bring home larger generic outcomes. In addition to the qualitative methods deployed to determine the generic fingerprint of narratives enveloped in the self-branding 60 seconds, the statistical distribution of the core defining structural and lexical features in the underlying dataset of 250 speeches was measured, thus supplementing the qualitative analysis and extending the applicability of the structural and functional findings. The analysis of sequential and interactional features of this mini-narrative was informed by multiple structural approaches, namely Hoey's problem-solution structure (1983), the traditional Labovian paradigm (1967), ethnopoetics (Hymes, 1996) and small story research perspectives (Bamberg, 2004). The problem-solution structure identified by Hoey (*ibid.*)²⁴, and some of the perspectives that further informed the analysis, such as CA and CDA are not exclusive to narrative analysis.

²⁴ Hoey's work is a development of work by Eugene Winter (1977) on clause relations.

1.5.2 Approaches to metaphor analysis (Chapter 6 – Chapter 7)

A case study approach was used in Chapter 6 to explore the dynamics of professional and group identity co-construction via metaphor in a BDN meeting in which the members were asked to produce a metaphor that would best position their business, using Olympic games as the source domain.²⁵

The following methodology was used in respect to metaphor analysis: linguistic metaphor was identified following a modified version of the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP), developed by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). Only deliberate metaphor from the conceptual domain of Olympic sport was subject to analysis, which was informed mostly by the discursive take on metaphor (Cameron and Stelma, 2004; Cameron, 2007; Cameron and Deignan, 2006; Semino, 2008; Koller, 2009; Steen, 2011; Musolff, 2012) along with the dynamical systems approach developed predominantly by Cameron (Cameron et al., 2009; Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).

The analysis of the local dynamics of deliberate metaphor has been used to show the emergence of a prototypical member identity from what can be seen as primarily professional identity claims. Systematic metaphors that connect the local level of metaphor use to the discourse level were identified following the method proposed by Cameron (2007).

The linguistic data from the above case study were used as the core material in the series of correlational analyses in Chapter 7. These were designed to determine the chief variables influencing metaphor persuasiveness and recall in the interactional context

²⁵ The task was spontaneous in that it was not prompted by the researcher, and the case study thus investigates real-life data rather than being a contrived experiment. The task was announced at the beginning of the meeting, giving the group members limited time to come up with a suitable metaphor.

of 60-second speeches. The analysis in this chapter rested primarily on the results of an extensive online survey, in which each variable was measured by a 12-item questionnaire.²⁶ The survey additionally contained a set of 8 complementary open-ended questions. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches was utilized in an effort to maximize the generalizability of the findings.

1.5.3 Longitudinal and cross-sectional perspectives

The relatively large dataset, recorded over an extended period of time across three comparable research settings (primary business networking group, 2 secondary business networking groups), enabled the use of longitudinal and cross-sectional analyses. A longitudinal approach was deployed for the case study in Chapter 5. This facilitated the process of tracking the long-term dynamics of identity construction via a series of narratives, and resulted in the identification of key macro-tendencies in the repeated usage of narrative in the 60-second slot. A cross-sectional perspective was used whenever a large dataset was needed, enabling a cross-comparison between individual groups. This approach was therefore used in Chapters 3 and 4, which analyse the generic structural and lexical tendencies in the use of narrative, and in Chapter 2 which informs on the wider business and discourse context of the study.

1.6 Overview of the present study and data collection

The study is a longitudinal research project for which the discourse and supporting ethnographic data was collected in business networking meetings over the period of two years (2005 – 2007) in Birmingham, UK. Initially, the weekly meetings of five networking

²⁶ See Appendix 15 for a copy of the questionnaire.

groups were visited and observed for a period of one month, with three of these networking groups, ranging from between 11 and 30 participants, being then chosen for data collection.

The discourse data in 17 meetings was audio-recorded and a subset consisting of 14 meetings (i.e. 250 60-second speeches) was transcribed (the details of the transcription are given in the preliminary pages). The ethnographic data involved observations of the meetings and follow-up interviews with the members of the group. Three groups were selected in order to both enable a chronological/longitudinal perspective on the data, and to facilitate a cross-sectional study that might have a valid degree of generalizability to the organization.

One of these groups was selected as the primary research site. The choice of primary group was motivated by its size and dynamics, with the largest group, which appeared to be the most functional and most diverse, being selected. Its membership ranged from 20 to 34 members during the period 2005-2007. Four informants in this group provided me with background information about both the organization and the group itself. I was present during the meetings so that I could make notes on extralinguistic information, gain basic understanding of the members' core business activities, learn about their relationships with their co-members and their group status, and also develop a relationship of trust with the researched group. I also had a sequence of one-to-one meetings with individual members. Understandably, the participation and the level of research involvement in the two secondary groups was less involved.

The demographics of the three studied groups were surprisingly uniform; their ethnic make up was largely homogeneous with the majority of members classifiable as White British

(94%) and the rest as British Black and Minority Ethnic. The majority of participants (56%) were in the 35 to 45 age group. In respect to the gender make up, a larger disproportion was found than in the US study (Brewer, 2002) in which women represented 41%. In comparison, women in the three researched groups formed between 20% and 25%. While the demographics of the researched population are noted here, ethnic, gender or age identities were not in themselves subject to analysis in the current study.

The professional makeup of the primary group between 2005 and 2007 reflects the typical structure of BDN groups, showing the clear service orientation of the small businesses involved in the network:

audit	psychotherapy	business entertainment
financial advisory	sales training	photography
retail banking	business consulting/coaching	catering
bookkeeping	marketing consulting	floristry
chartered accounting	recruitment	plumbing
business consulting	web consulting	stationery
marketing consulting	IT solutions and support	printing
legal services	telecommunications	signs design
insurance provision	computer graphics	promotional items
dentistry	product sourcing	construction and maintenance
homeopathy	bartering	surveyor
Bowen therapy	real estate	
NLP training	organizing events	

In terms of the proportion of service-oriented businesses, the group is largely representative of the whole organization. An earlier study that involved members of the researched organization in the US showed similar results, i.e. the clear prevalence of service provision, encompassing the financial industry, law, health and well-being, IT, business consultancy, real estate and housing (Misner, 1993). The proportion

of the start-ups²⁷ to established businesses in the group was relatively small: 7% in the years 2005 and 2006 and 4% in 2007. Similar proportion was found in the secondary groups.

The ethnographic data used in this study were collected in interviews with the members of the primary group. The study also contains data from interviews (telephone and email) with the CEO of the researched organization, Dr Ivan Misner. These interviews supplied data on the core business practices of the organization, its vision and strategy, the core mechanism underlying the business network, basic information on the membership, and the financial effectiveness of their membership for the members. These interviews were conducted in the period 2009 to 2013.

The data that supports the quantitative, namely correlational, research in this thesis, such as online survey data, were collected mostly during the period 2008 - 2010. The survey data that support the correlational study of metaphor appreciation and retention in Chapter 7 were collected in an online survey carried out amongst members of the primary group, and an outgroup of Birmingham-based business professionals and academics from the University of Birmingham. Responses to large online surveys that supply information on the researched organization and on the networking and business practices of its members were kindly shared by its CEO. I have also used the data from the PhD thesis by Dr Misner, namely the results of a large cross-sectional study conducted in the United States that involved 764 respondents from 42 BDN groups across the country.

²⁷ Current definitions of a startup company are vague on both the nature of the business that can be considered a startup, and equally on the question how long a company is considered a startup, with vastly different opinions on the criteria that determine the border between a new and established business (see e.g., Hall, 2011). In this thesis, a startup or new business denotes businesses that have been actively engaging in the business activity for less than 2 years. This is a simplistic definition, albeit a practical one and is in this context seen as sufficient.

As this thesis deals with a relatively wide focus and diverse types of data, comprising transcripts, field notes, interviews, and survey results, detailed information on the data and method that pertains to the analysis in respective chapters is given in a separate section, labelled 'the dataset' in Chapters 3-7.

1.7 Organization of the thesis

In cases where the research focuses on a single theme and uses a relatively homogeneous set of research methods, it has been the convention for theses in the humanities to adopt the focusing-down model, first providing a detailed and broad literature review, followed by an extensive methods section, which is only then followed by the core research and analysis. While still a traditional method of thesis presentation, the model has been subject to a fair amount of criticism (see Dunleavy, 2003), namely for having adverse effect on the reader, who is unrealistically expected to link relevant existing research and methods with applied analysis across a span of hundred(s) of pages.

Throughout this thesis, I adopt an interdisciplinary approach, predictably drawing on the discipline of linguistics and English language, but also on work done in the field of marketing, consumer behaviour, organizational science, and sociology. Such interdisciplinary data-driven research that connects several core themes and is inevitably eclectic in the choice of methodology will therefore necessarily require an alternative model of presentation, i.e. the criteria of clarity and readability must be met through a different structural strategy.

This thesis thus adopts an alternative model of presentation, labeled by Dunleavy (*ibid*, p. 59) the opening-out model, whereby the thesis first presents a deliberately short and terse

specification of the research question, along with a brief discussion of the most relevant themes, and a compressed amount of essential information, all of which is done within the introductory section of each chapter. The ensuing sections then present the core research, including analysis, and in the final section the thesis opens out into a discussion of wider themes or the theoretical and applied implications arising from the research. This model has been selected as the most appropriate structure for this work, and therefore each chapter firstly contains the relevant theoretical backdrop and methodology against which the empirical data in the respective chapter is then analysed.

Chapter 2, the traditional locus for the thesis-wide literature review, is therefore used to provide a business background, describing the wider business context from a marketing perspective, and connecting the communication practices deployed in organized networking with current research in word of mouth marketing. It thus establishes the importance of Business Development Network as a marketing strategy in which word of mouth is deployed.

Chapter 3²⁸ provides an introduction to narrative research, structural analysis, and the concept of competence, the fundamental aim being to determine whether there is any generic pattern navigating stories of competence embedded in the 60-second speeches.

Chapter 4 delves into lexical characteristics of competence tales, narrowing down on the particularities of reported speech usage and its role as a core evidential strategy

²⁸ Early analysis of some of the material appearing in this chapter was published as a paper in a special issue of *Journal of Business Communication* on *Displaying Competence* in 2010. See the References for a full reference.

in the stories of competence in the self-branding speeches. The chapter also deals with the very specific temporal location of these competence tales.

Chapter 5 conceptualises competence as one of the three core dimensions of professional identity in the business networking context. Through an analysis of a selected case study, it documents how business professionals construct their professional identity through a series of narratives and also examines the macrofactors influencing the tendency to enlist competence tales repeatedly.

Chapter 6²⁹ addresses the why, when and how of deliberate metaphor use in the self-branding 60 seconds, discussing metaphor development through interaction and making an explicit connection to the evolution of social (group) identity.

Chapter 7 attempts to ascertain whether deliberate metaphor tends to have an overall positive effect, not only on persuasiveness, but also on the memorability of the self-branding message. It identifies from a correlational study the key variables that influence the effectiveness of deliberate metaphor use.

Chapter 8 forms the conclusion to the thesis, providing a summary of key findings and highlighting their implications for both further research and business networking practice.

²⁹ This chapter has been the core material underlying a chapter published in a volume edited by Herrera-Soler and White (2012). See the References for a full reference.

1.7.1 Taxonomy of the research questions and hypotheses addressed in individual chapters

The core research question raised in the introduction to this chapter was presented as:

How are narrative and metaphor used in 60-second business networking speeches to convey positive professional identity and generate positive word of mouth?

Its core aspects are thus addressed in three subquestions:

- SRQ 1) What are the prominent structural and lexical characteristics that mark the deployment of these strategies in this context?*
- SRQ 2) What are the core interactional goals that motivate the deployment of these strategies?*
- SRQ 3) How effective are these strategies in achieving these interactional goals and what are the variables that appear to influence their effective deployment?*

These motivated a multi-method approach to analysis, establishing a triple nexus between structure, professional and group identities, and the achievement vs non-achievement of core interactional goals via the selected strategy. Despite the strong threads connecting the central themes of narrative and metaphor, their diverse character dictated different analytical foci and modes of analysis. These foci were the subject of individual research questions which are listed below.

In respect to SQ1, the structural and lexical aspects of narrative are addressed in Chapters 3 and 4, while the lexical aspects of metaphor/metaphor co-construction are discussed in Chapter 6 (RQs 6.1. and 6.2). SQ2, which sets out to identify the interactional goals that

motivate the deployment of narrative and metaphor, is examined in Chapter 4 and 5 (narrative) and in metaphor Chapter 6 (RQ 6.2 and 6.3). The final subquestion SQ3, directed at the aspect of persuasion and/or memorability, is addressed primarily in respect to metaphor use in Chapter 7.

Chapter 2 has a context-setting function, situating this a priori linguistic study in the research contexts of networking and word-of-mouth marketing. Its inclusion in the study was dictated by the relative lack of general understanding of the research site and its wider business context. Research statements (RS) raised in this chapter do not therefore immediately tie in with the central RQ or any of the three subquestions.

The following table presents the individual research statements, research questions and hypotheses addressed in Chapter 2 to Chapter 7.

Chapter 2	
RS 2.1	<i>The prominence of word-of-mouth marketing has increased in both corporate and small business worlds.</i>
RS 2.2	<i>Networking is the chief marketing strategy for small businesses.</i>
RS 2.3	<i>Organized networking stimulates word of mouth.</i>
RS 2.4	<i>Negative word of mouth is less prevalent than positive word of mouth.</i>
RS 2.5	<i>Word-of-mouth is not primarily driven by satisfaction and dissatisfaction but is motivated by a complex set of drivers.</i>
RS 2.6	<i>Different product and service segments are talked about with different frequency and attract different proportions of positive and negative WOM.</i>
RS 2.7	<i>Offline (face-to-face) word of mouth continues to be more prevalent and more influential than online word of mouth.</i>
Chapter 3	

RQ 3.1	<i>Are the stories that communicate competence marked by a prototypical generic structure?</i>
RQ 3.2	<i>If so, what structural commonalities do they share?</i>
RQ 3.3	<i>Are there prominent lexical features intrinsic to CTs which index individual stages in the structural pattern?</i>
Chapter 4	
RQ 4.1	<i>Which are the most prominent interactional functions of reported speech in competence tales and how do they effect competence claims?</i>
RQ 4.2	<i>What are the tendencies in RS use in the non-narrative BDN sample?</i>
RQ 4.3	<i>Are there similarities in its usage in CTs and non-narrative data?</i>
RQ 4.4	<i>Is there a recognizable tendency to employ particular time frames within CTs ?</i>
RQ 4.5	<i>If so, how can we account for their specific temporal location?</i>
Chapter 5	
RQ 5.1	<i>How is professional identity conceptualised in the context of business networking?</i>
RQ 5.2	<i>How does a competence tale series delivered over a period of time communicate evolving professional identity?</i>
RQ 5.3	<i>Are there recognizable macro-tendencies in the frequency and nature of competence tale use? If so, what are the main variables affecting the frequency and the nature of CT use?</i>
Chapter 6	
RQ 6.1	<i>How does the metaphor embedded in self-branding 60 seconds evolve through interaction?</i>
RQ 6.2	<i>What are the main factors influencing whether a self-branding metaphor will be further developed in interaction?</i>
RQ 6.3	<i>Is the data suggestive of a connection between the dynamic development in certain metaphors and the evolution of the salient group identities?</i>
Chapter 7	
RQ 7.1a	<i>Is the use of positioning metaphor in the context of a self-branding 60-sec speech perceived as having a positive impact on message persuasion?</i>

RQ 7.1b	<i>Is the use of positioning metaphor in the context of a self-branding 60-sec speech perceived as having a positive impact on message retention?</i>
RQ 7.2a	<i>Which factor – contextual relevance, complexity or novelty – is potentially the most effective predictor of metaphor persuasiveness in 60-second speeches?</i>
RQ 7.2b	<i>Which factor – contextual relevance, complexity or novelty – is potentially the most effective predictor of metaphor persuasiveness in 60-second speeches?</i>
Chapter 7	
H 7.1a	<i>There will be a significant and positive relationship between contextual relevance and perceptions of the memorabilibily of the metaphor.</i>
H 7.1b	<i>There will be a significant and positive relationship between contextual relevance and perceptions of the persuasiveness of the metaphor.</i>
H 7.2a	<i>Complexity of the metaphor does not significantly correlate with perceptions of metaphor retention.</i>
H 7.2b	<i>Complexity of the metaphor does not significantly correlate with perceptions of enhanced persuasion.</i>
H 7.2c	<i>Complexity of metaphor is inversely related to contextual relevance.</i>
H 7.2d	<i>Complexity of metaphor is directly related to novelty.</i>
H 7.3a	<i>here will be a significant and positive relationship between novelty and perceptions of metaphor retention.</i>
H 7.3b	<i>There will be a significant and positive relationship between novelty and perceptions of metaphor persuasiveness.</i>
H 7.4	<i>There will be a significant and positive relationship between perceptions of metaphor retention and persuasiveness.</i>

Figure 1.4: Summary of research questions and hypotheses addressed in individual chapters

CHAPTER 2

Background to Word of Mouth and Organized Networking

Word of mouth is the oldest, newest marketing medium.

[Silverman, 2005, p. 193]

This chapter situates the current applied linguistic study in the largely independent research traditions of business networking, consumer behaviour and organization science. It combines state-of-the-art research into organized networking with the study of institutional and everyday word-of-mouth communication in order to explore Business Development Networks in their original context, providing a theoretical and applied background to the study of their communication practices.

The chapter is also an attempt to respond to frequently asked word of mouth- and networking-related questions, and to some of the popular misconceptions that have emerged in conversations with colleagues and friends and which have sometimes hindered the understanding of the mechanics underlying organized networks and how organized networking translates into word of mouth to benefit small businesses. In setting the scene, I am describing the current marketing landscape, sketching the major changes that affect corporations and those that impact small businesses, to suggest that these changes naturally lead to the establishment of organized networking as a growing trend for small businesses.

Equally, I am trying to explain why the organized networks work, i.e. what drives word-of-mouth both within and outside networks. At times this chapter spends considerable time on examples from the corporate domain, including social media word of mouth. At face value, this may not seem to directly pertain to organized network

or the small business segment, but in most instances, such examples are used to showcase general word of mouth behavior as pertaining to human interaction, regardless of the size of the businesses.

In brief, this chapter sets out to evidence and explain the following research statements (RS):

RS 2.1: The prominence of word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing has increased in both the corporate and small business worlds.

RS 2.2: Networking is the chief marketing strategy for small businesses.

RS 2.3: Organized networking stimulates word of mouth.

RS 2.4: Negative word of mouth is less prevalent than positive word of mouth.

RS 2.5: Word-of-mouth is not primarily driven by satisfaction and dissatisfaction, but is motivated by a complex set of drivers.

RS 2.6: Different product and service segments are talked about with different frequency and attract different proportions of positive and negative word of mouth.

RS 2.7: Offline (face-to-face) word of mouth continues to be more prevalent and more influential than online word of mouth.

In respect to the data, the chapter relies on a large body of WOM literature, and the following ethnographic evidence collected in my research: transcripts from meetings in four networking groups recorded between 2005 and 2007 in Birmingham, the results of a large ongoing online survey in the target organization at the global level (close to 10,000 respondents in 2015), and statistical data and interview responses from the participants in the primary Birmingham group. In order to establish the role of organized

networking in active dissemination of positive word-of-mouth, the primary group was interviewed twice: first, in order to be able to quantify the financial returns of network participation³⁰ for individual members (2.2), and, in the second case, to determine key factors motivating their BDN participation (2.3)³¹.

2.1 Changes in the marketing landscape and the growing prominence of word of mouth

A cursory search of marketing and consumer behaviour literature written over the last fifty years reveals how the awareness of WOM influence has evolved alongside changes in the marketing landscape. In his influential paper in 1967, Arndt tentatively suggests that ‘word of mouth emerges as one of the most important, if not the most important source of information for the consumer’ (p.70). Later, in 1998, Buttle comments on the well-established understanding of the significant impact of word of mouth on human cognition and behaviour, stating that ‘word of mouth has been acknowledged for many years as the major influence on what people know, feel, and do’ (p. 241). Rather more recently, in 2008, Litvin et al. champion the interpersonal influence and word of mouth as ‘the most important information source when a consumer is making a purchase decision (p. 458). In 2014, Kimmel and Kitchen comment on the hype associated with word of mouth, suggesting that ‘the promises of WOM marketing are often oversold’ (p.5), yet agreeing that its influence will only continue to grow.

³⁰ 15 members were interviewed between 2006 and 2009, the sole criterion for selecting the subjects being the length of their participation in the network (more than 18 months of active involvement).

³¹ The second interview subsisted of 11 questions – the list of question is available in Appendix 8. Responses were collected in September 2007 in the primary group from the 20 members who were available to be interviewed.

While word of mouth sustained the interest of scholars and managers for the latter half of the last century, current trends have clearly amplified both research and public attention. Along with growing awareness of successful corporate word-of-mouth marketing campaigns such as Dove's 'Share a Secret'³², WOM has firmly settled in the public's collective consciousness as a more effective marketing alternative to traditional advertising (cf. Kimmel and Kitchen, 2014; Godes et al., 2005). Consumers' power in the buyer-seller relationship has noticeably increased, and new channels and forms of word-of-mouth have emerged, mostly due to three reasons which are all broadly related to the advancement in technology:

- 4) *Rising consumption of products and their complexity makes the buyer's/consumer's decision-making more difficult.* Individual consumption has increased, as has product range and the number of competing products, along with the product information that is readily available online to a consumer. The lists of features and benefits defining even the most mundane products have now reached beyond consumers' analytical powers, resulting in information overload³³ (see Blair 2011; Wellmon, 2012). Consumers therefore consult their relational and professional networks to gain relevant and unbiased information from their peers (see Godes et al., 2005 *inter alia*).
- 5) *The emergence of Internet-based media facilitates access to previously unavailable information and communication channels.* Fast access to diverse

³² Dove launched its hair fall treatment product via real women sharing their experiences with the product through videos and blog posts, involving YouTube and Facebook as key channels, and a custom application to be shared in a reference network via FB.

³³ Information overload, also known as infobesity or infoxication, refers to the difficulty a person can have understanding an issue and making decisions when caused by the presence of too much information (Yang et al., 2003).

information has greatly diminished corporate control of information flow and the power of marketers over the information content that eventually reaches the consumer. Diffusion of information is instantaneous due to the expansion of communication channels, namely social media networks. This information also gets through to culturally and socially diverse groups, and can at the same time affect geographically dispersed communities. Personal reach has extended beyond one's relational network, and consumers-to-consumer influence has taken precedence over buying decisions that were previously shaped by business-to-consumer marketing tools (Kimmel and Kichen, 2014; Cheung et al., 2012; See-To and Ho, 2014).

The following quote documents the perception that social media have shattered the information dominance of traditional forms of advertising:

It's not that we no longer need information to initiate or to complete a transaction; rather, we will no longer need advertising to obtain that information. We will see the information we want, when we want it, from sources that we trust more than paid advertising.

[Clemons, 2009]

Despite its naïve belief in absolute consumer power, the statement is indicative of a clear trend. However, Clemons, writing in 2009, seems to fail to see, and foresee, that corporations can jump on the social media bandwagon, being by now greatly invested in social media WOM (sWOM).³⁴

Social media have been said to revolutionize corporate communication, (e.g., Kimmel and Kitchin, 2014), changing the traditional unidirectional delayed model to a direct and instantaneous multilogue, which engenders

³⁴ According to eMarketer (2012), 88% of US companies with at least 100 employees were using social network tools for marketing purposes, a figure that was predicted to rise to 92% by 2014.

unprecedented opportunity for corporations to use the full potential of external and internal stakeholders, as evidenced by well-known crowdstorming projects deployed by brands such as Starbucks³⁵. The marketing focus of large businesses and institutions has further shifted towards embracing the potential of relationships (see Veldeman et al., 2015), and a number of various mechanisms stimulating word of mouth has emerged.

- 6) *Overexposure to promotional messages has lessened the salience of traditional advertising.* Ample evidence shows that word of mouth currently represents the primary source of information for consumer buying, is the driving force of most purchase decisions, and influences post-usage perceptions of the product or service more than any other phenomenon (cf. Kimmel and Kitchin, 2014). Based on a recent landmark study by Keller Fay (11/2014), WOM drives 13% of consumer sales, with face-to-face (offline) WOM being twice as influential as online WOM. Offline WOM alone drives at least 5 times more sales than paid advertising.

These figures appear to suggest the demise of traditional paid advertising, such as mass media advertising, yet contrary to this intuitive conclusion, traditional media still seem to matter. In fact, research has shown that the relationship between WOM (offline and online) and traditional media is symbiotic, rather than competitive. In fact, the above Keller Fay study has proven that WOM amplifies the effect of traditional advertising, boosting the impact of paid media by 15%.

³⁵ See My Starbuck's Idea: <http://www.starbucks.com/coffeehouse/learn-more/my-starbucks-idea>.

2.1.1 Networking as the chief marketing strategy for small businesses

While word-of-mouth marketing has only relatively recently emerged as a corporate trend, it has traditionally been the primary promotional strategy for small entrepreneurs. A large online survey carried out in the networking organization under study asked 8,247 small business owners and sole entrepreneurs to identify their marketing strategies (BNI Surveys, 2015). Figure 2.1 shows that respondents marked formal and informal networking leading to offline WOM as their chief strategy, constituting 71% of their marketing portfolio, followed by other forms of advertising (12%), cold calling (11 %) and PR (5%).

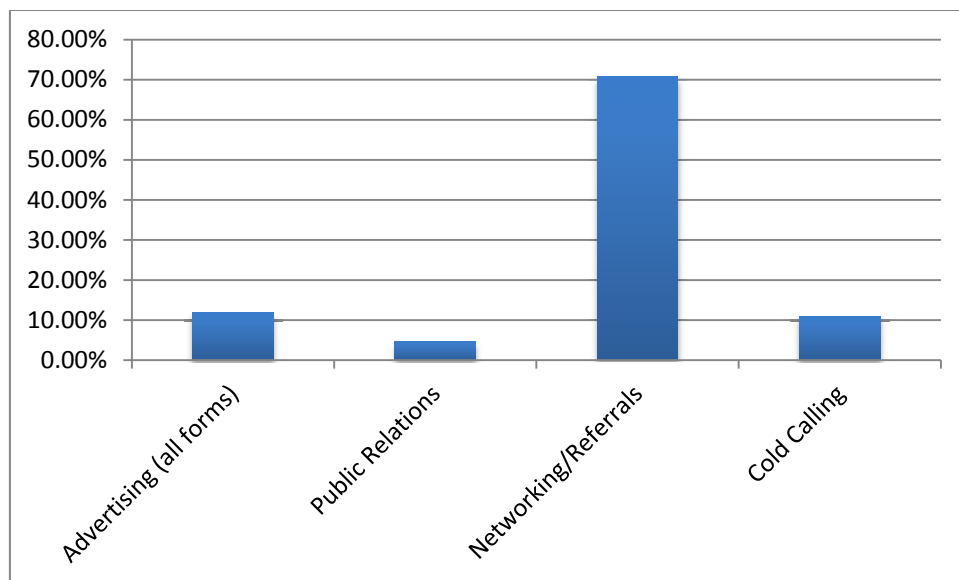


Figure 2.1: Marketing strategy as the primary source of new business (based on BNI online survey, 8,247 respondents, 2015)

In another question measuring the degree of reliance on word-of-mouth (BNI Surveys, 2015) a sample of 9,345 small business owners were asked how they were planning to allocate their marketing budget in the forthcoming year.³⁶ The results, shown below in Figure 2.2 indicate that word-of-mouth was planned to be the primary marketing

³⁶ There is a certain limitation to the data as the entrepreneurs in the sample were not fully representative of all small business owners. Respondents were recruited from people who visited the organization's website, i.e., they represent an entrepreneurial segment that actively seeks information on word of mouth and institutional networking.

activity, with the allocation of 41% of the marketing budget, followed by direct marketing (17%) and web marketing (11%), with other forms of marketing each constituting less than 6% respectively.

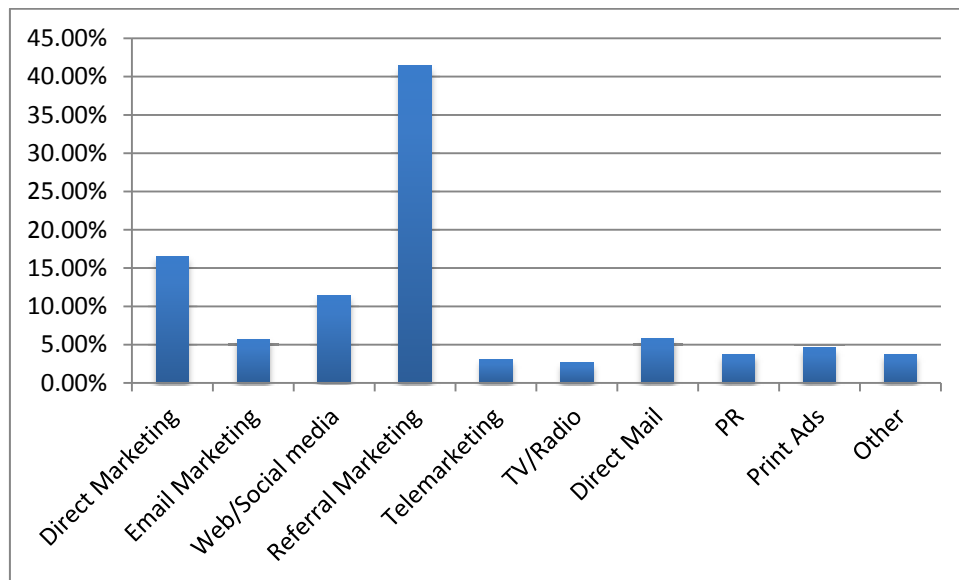


Figure 2.2: Structure of marketing budget projection/ Small business owners (based on BNI online survey, 9,345 respondents, 2015)

In accord with a recent study into formal and informal networks (O'Donnell, 2014), the above data suggests that owner-managers of small businesses rely primarily on their network of contacts to breed further business. In addition, it appears that small businesses are becoming more invested in organised networks to generate word-of-mouth.

While technologies have changed the corporate advertising world beyond recognition, the marketing landscape has also dramatically changed for small businesses. In the small business world, the force igniting word-of-mouth has in many cases been networking (See section 2.2), and, as suggested in the introduction, the nature of networking is also changing, with organized networking emerging as a clear trend, mostly in response to the following challenges:

- 1) *The dominance of service-oriented industries result in increased competition within the service segment, thus the traditional peer networks no longer suffice and wider contact networks are needed (cf. Alessandra et al., 2012).*
- 2) *Increased mobility of people and products and information accessibility mean that geographical proximity has in many areas ceased to be the primary criterion in selecting a service provider. Thus, service providers again face increased competition as their spheres of influence, and their competitors', grow beyond former geographical boundaries, e.g. a landscape architect in the studied network worked within the immediate vicinity of Birmingham, on several projects across the UK, and also on projects in Zimbabwe and Malta.*
- 3) *The growing need for an explicit marketing plan conflicts with limited resources and information overload (cf. O'Donnell, 2014). In the wake of social media, small businesses also need to exhibit a greater degree of sophistication in regard to their marketing, exploiting both offline and online channels. Yet, the limits of marketing resources (financial, time, knowledge), along with information overload, make this particularly challenging. Joining a formal network supplies an initial marketing solution that may help establish a degree of offline and online presence.*

In this climate, it is natural for business development networks to emerge and grow, allowing small businesses to benefit from a significantly larger contact base, more efficient use of contact spheres, and better organized word-of-mouth campaigns. The dynamics of growth of the researched organization point to the fact that the nature of small business marketing is changing and organized networking has become a trend.

Based on its steady and steep rate of membership increase, it appears that the current organizational model that involves primarily face-to-face referrals, but appears to also tap into the symbiosis of offline and online WOM, is indeed alive and doing very well, as evident from the Figure below, documenting the membership growth since 1986.

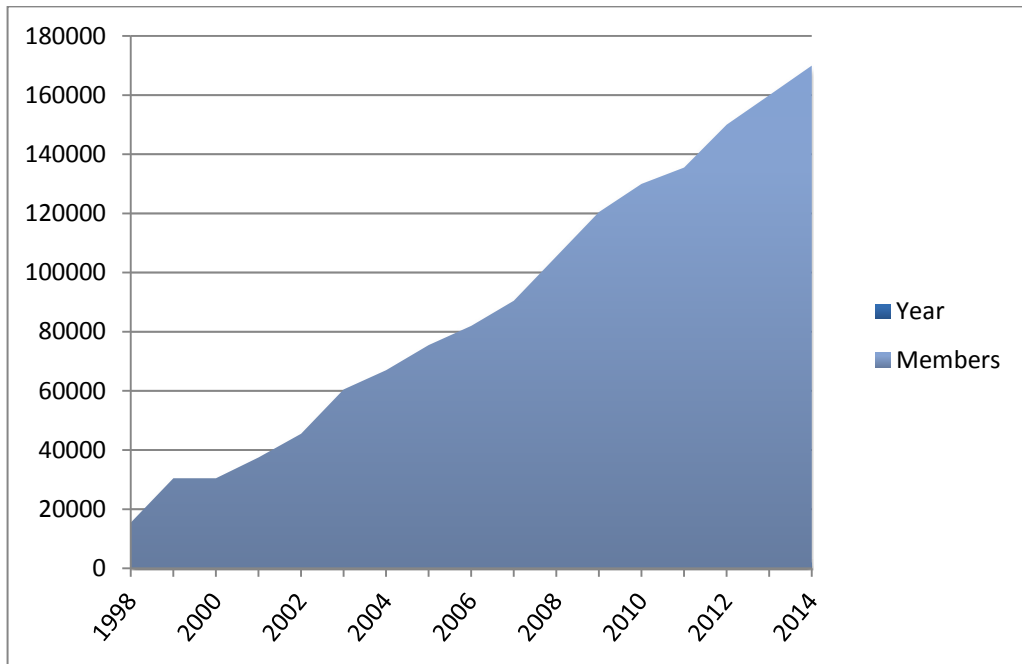


Figure 2.3: BNI membership between 1986 and 2012 (based on Misner, 2014)

The financial benefits of network membership are illustrated by the responses of network participants to the question regarding how their participation in the studied BDN had affected their business (Example 2.1.). 15 long-standing members from two groups were interviewed, and the four extracts below are broadly representative of the interview sample. The respondents comment on how the network has proven to be a substantial source of their income.

<p><i>Male; 45-55;</i> <i>mortgage</i> <i>advisor</i></p>	<p>In the first year, it's been thirty percent of my business, in the second year[...] it was sixty percent of my business and last year, we /get my old time target/ which is a hundred thousand pounds [...] just from BNI. That's not just from the people you see sitting round the table, but people behind those people,</p>
-------------------------------------------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

	and contacts that they have.
<i>Female; 35-45; personalized clothing</i>	My business has grown four fold over the last five years, and I can attribute approximately 30% of that growth to the BNI.
<i>Female; 45-55; planning lawyer</i>	It now accounts for nearly a hundred percent of legal work, I do. It comes either from the members of my own chapter, or if I go substituting to other chapters, it comes from substitutes and visitors, of other chapters, I go substituting. And it now goes rippling [.] beyond [.] that [.] to [..] referrals from referrals.
<i>Male; 35-45; overseas property</i>	A fair amount of business's come from the chapter. I sold to the members [...] but not through the members. Difficult in my business, though.

Example 2.1: Responses to the interview about the financial returns of participation in the target BDN (2008)

This section has so far presented evidence towards proving the initial claims (RS 2.1 and 2.2) that networking is one of the chief marketing strategies for small businesses, and has shown how certain aspects of networking have recently evolved. The chapter has set out to draw a causal link between organized networking and word-of-mouth and the following section thus goes some way towards explaining how organized networking stimulates word of mouth, in that it explores the chief drivers of word-of-mouth and how they pertain to the network.

2.2 Networking breeds word of mouth: key drivers based on their relevance to Business Development Networks

Early research on the proportion of positive to negative word of mouth, i.e. mostly studies up to 2005, reported on the prevalence of negative WOM³⁷, and its pronounced influence on purchase decisions (Engel et al. 1969; Richins, 1983; Anderson, 1998; Schlosser 2005).

³⁷ Early studies showed a substantial negative bias, with the reported proportion of positive WOM to negative WOM being 1:2 (Hart et al., 1990) and 1:3 in Anderson (1998)

Recent studies seem, however, to have proven otherwise (Chevalier and Mayzlin 2006; Wojnicki and Godes, 2008; Oetting et al., 2010).

The most recent and robust study, called *Debunking the Myth on Negative WOM* (KellerFay TalkTrack®³⁸, 2014a), reports on the significant prevalence of positive word of mouth in product talk: ‘More than two-thirds of all brand WOM is actually positive in nature, while less than 10% is purely negative. ‘ Positive WOM also appears to be more credible: people exposed to positive word of mouth describe 64% of it as highly credible, in comparison to 45% in the case of negative WOM.

The large discrepancy between earlier and current research has been attributed to the popular belief that dissatisfaction and satisfaction are the chief forces driving word of mouth, which might have skewed both the analysis and its interpretation in the earlier studies (cf. Kimmel and Kitchin, 2014).

This section shows that service/product satisfaction is clearly not the only and often not the primary driver of word of mouth, by shedding some light on the complexity of the motivational mix involved in WOM relaying. Much of the current literature in the field pays particular attention to the motivation underlying word of mouth relay³⁹, offering multiple perspectives and a highly complex range of motivators (e.g. Kimmel and Kitchin, 2014). Logically, this section will explore the drivers that directly pertain to organized networking and WOM.

³⁸ TalkTrack® involves a survey of 3,000 consumers every month, reporting on their daily conversations, 75% of which happen face-to-face.

³⁹ The meta-analysis of 13 studies carried out by East et al. (2007) reported a greater incidence of positive WOM to negative WOM, with the ratio being 3:1. Oetting et al. (2010) focused on recall of positive WOM and negative WOM, and found that in the majority of cases (89%) the respondents recalled positive WOM incidence.

The key drivers identified as such include reciprocity and self-interest (Engel et al., 1969; Gatignon and Robertson, 1986; Dellarocas et al., 2004), belonging/group identity (Cornes and Sandler 1984, 1994 in Dellarocas et al., 2004), self-enhancement and influence (Wojnicki and Godes, 2008) and altruism (Price et al., 1995), and are here given in the order of perceived importance. The compound of these factors is theorized in this study as a motivational mix model pertaining to the networking context (see Figure 2.3. below). Naturally, clear-cut boundaries do not exist between individual drivers, and the synergy effects arising from their combination are also explored below.

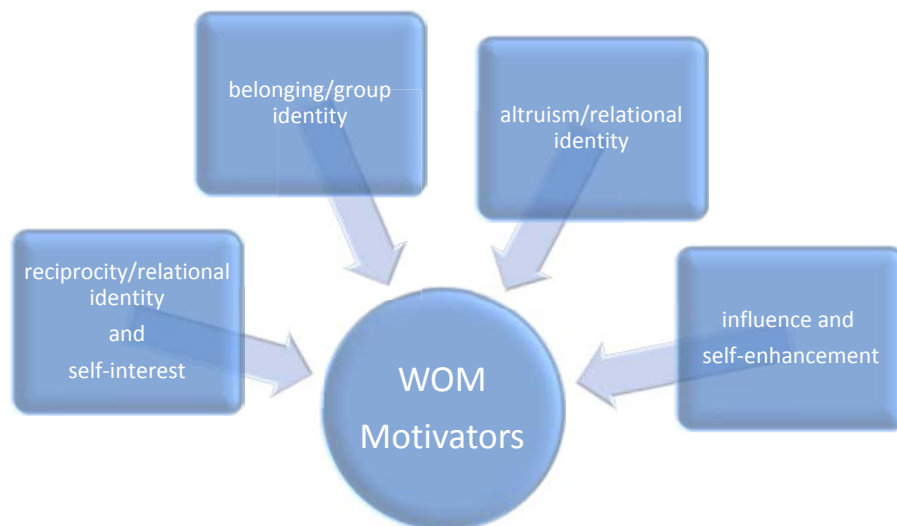


Figure 2.4: WOM motivational mix for the organized networking context

2.2.1 Self-interest and reciprocity

Most of the positive word-of-mouth dissemination in business-to-business situations can be attributed either to self-interest or reciprocity. Traditionally, reciprocal behaviour has been theorised by using concepts from psychological game theory⁴⁰(see Rabin, 1993) which introduce the concept of fairness. Several studies have revealed that our willingness

⁴⁰ Conventional game theory modified so as to allow payoffs to depend on the players' beliefs as well as on their actions. GPS framework formalized by Geanakopolos, Pearce and Stacchetti (1989)

to help others is highly contingent on their behaviour, and on our beliefs about their intentions. The concept has been explored through the ultimatum game (Thaler 1988) in which two players split a fixed amount of money based on the following rules: player A proposes to give a certain share of the money to player B, who decides either to accept or reject the proposed division. If B accepts, they split the money according to the proposition, if B declines, neither gets any money. If the players were motivated by pure self-interest, there would be only one possible result, i.e., A would never offer more than a penny, and B would always accept an offer of at least a penny. However, the experiments clearly reject such behaviour, indicating that players tend to give 'fair' and reject 'unfair' offers. People generally reward good intentions in others even if that means personal sacrifice, and equally, they tend to punish what they perceive as bad intentions even if that involves personal sacrifice. However, this fairness or reciprocity element only holds in situations where the personal sacrifice is not perceived as large.

Dellarocas et al. (2004) applied this research to the positive word-of-mouth territory, investigating the propensity of eBay users towards rating each other positively. Based on their study, self-interest is an important motivating force behind the high levels of feedback submission on eBay. Both buyers and sellers tend to exhibit reciprocity, being influenced by their trading partners' comments. Dellarocas et al. (ibid.) suggest that this creates the selfish motivation to rate a trading partner highly and quickly in order to elicit better feedback, increasing the propensity to participate in the eBay feedback mechanism. The feedback thus tends to be more positive than in a unidirectional situation in which the agent cannot reap any benefits from referring their trading partner.

Self-interest and reciprocity have also been shown to be the most prominent forces in the BDN motivational mix, representing the common ground and being the ultimate reason behind the existence of BDNs (see Misner, 2003, 2006, 2008; Alessandra et al., 2012). Reciprocal behaviour as the underlying philosophy of business development networks is evident in the following excerpt from the primary group's meeting.

<i>Group leader</i>	<p>the purpose is to actually help you find business, because if you give me business, then I'll give you business, Giver's Gain, that's the philosophy [...] of BNI. And those that members-, those who are members of this chapter, certainly find that is the case.</p> <p><i>September 2005</i></p>
---------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Example 2.2: Reciprocity as the motif underlying the existence of the target BDN

Between 2005 and 2009, I attended 20 meetings of the primary group and 10 meetings in the other groups. The discourse data in 17 meetings was audio-recorded and a subset consisting of 14 meetings was transcribed. In all but two meetings, the introductory part contained the reciprocity mantra: *'if you give me business, I'll give you business'*. In order to further establish the core motivators of the BDN participation, 20 members of the primary group were interviewed⁴¹. Most of the respondents (75%) made a reference to the reciprocity principle as the reason for their active participation in the network.

The results of the aforementioned interview with the members of the primary group suggest that self-interest and reciprocity are the primary drivers behind referral activity. When the respondents were asked who they recommended most frequently, 55% of the respondents indicated that they mostly tried to obtain referrals for highly active co-members. As one participant put it, he was primarily referring 'well-connected' members with the hope of eliciting the same response. Three respondents were new

⁴¹ see Appendix 8 for the list of interview questions

to the network (2, 4 and 6 months), and two of them reported that in their attempts to refer their fellow members, they focused primarily on the established members, so as to ‘gain trust’ and ‘get into the network.’

2.2.2 Altruism and sense of belonging/group identity

The assumption that people are altruistic has a long history in consumer research. Dichter (1966) talks of ‘people of goodwill’⁴² and Price et al., (1995) study altruistic behaviour as a predictor of general market support and product/service information sharing. Even though plenty of evidence in the domains of psychology, sociology and economics has indicated that altruism is an inherent part of human disposition, recent research deposes the pure altruism model as lacking in predictive power. Cornes and Sandler (1984, 1994) have complemented the model by combining altruism with ‘joy-of-giving’ or ‘warm glow’ associated with the sense of belonging to a community, and adhering to its norms or contributing to its health and well-being (Dellarocas et al., 2004).

In the aforementioned motivation interview, the respondents were questioned, without cues, as to what drove them to refer their fellow members. 40% respondents seemed to partly subscribe to the semantic category of ‘altruism/belonging in a community’, i.e. their answers involved the following lexical choices: *help the group, improve the sense of community, maintain the group’s position, not disappoint others in the chapter, help the ailing chapter*. While their answers ought to be interpreted with caution, the sense of belonging, combined with altruism, may be a valid, albeit ancillary factor.

Within the first year of membership, members mostly strive for recognition within the group, often taking an active role within the network to establish their position. Based

⁴² See Chapter 5 for detailed treatment of the goodwill phenomenon.

on observations of the primary group over the period of two years, group leader attempts to reinforce group identity appear to correlate with the increase in members' activity, in both their preparation for the meeting and word-of-mouth advocacy for their fellow members. When group identity was invoked in a meeting, members brought an increased number of referrals for their fellow members, and general activity within the group seemed to intensify.

Attempts to boost group identification and activate the sense of belonging to an elite group are plentiful and easily evidenced by the discourse data. Claims on the privilege of belonging to a particular group and on the exclusive character of a particular group, appear to be a universal discourse feature shared amongst the group leaders of all researched groups. Interestingly, these elitist statements seem to be entirely independent of the group's financial performance. Example 2.3. below contains extracts from the target BDN's meeting openings and shows a longitudinal perspective on the elitist construction of group identity in the primary group over the period of three years, (10/2005; 11/2006 and 04/2007) under three different group leaders.

Group leader 1	Good morning and welcome to BNI Victoria Chapter, the-, the <i>most fantastic</i> and <i>greatest</i> chapter of BNI in the whole of the UK, I think members would agree with me.< (n <i>Audience</i>) cheering and clapping: Hey!) <i>February 2005</i>
Group leader 2	... I have the privilege of being the chapter director of this <i>fantastic</i> chapter, and isn't it a <i>great</i> chapter, chapter members? <(n <i>Audience</i>) cheering: Yeah!> Yeah, that's <i>fantastic</i> , that's what I like to hear! <i>November 2006</i>
Group leader 3	Morning, morning, morning [...] mo::rning. Welcome [...] to BNI Victoria, <i>best BNI chapter in the UK!</i> Nice to see you all. <i>April 2007</i>

Example 2.3: Group leaders opening the BNI meeting in the primary group: elite group identity

Example 2.4 below gives meeting openings for the three other groups. The last extract is rather interesting in that the group was underperforming at the time of the recording and had experienced a significant fallout rate. As in the other extracts, the group leader deploys positive hyperbole, here in an attempt to boost the waning group-esteem.⁴³

Group leader 4	welcome to BNI Metro chapter, the up and coming chapter of the West Midlands, and I think everybody agrees, <i>best BNI chapter in the world.</i> <(n Audience) Ye::s!) <i>March 2005</i>
Group leader 5	Welcome to [...] Philips BNI. For the members who are here, we know that this is the <i>world's leading BNI chapter...</i> <i>February 2005</i>
Group leader 6	a very warm welcome [...] to the <i>fantastic</i> Sunrise [...] BNI Chapter! <i>November 2005</i>

Example 2.4: Group leaders opening the BNI meeting in three different BDN groups: elite group identity

In accord with the findings of social identity research on group behaviour (e.g., Hogg, 2006; 2010), the leaders here position their group as unique and better, i.e. the above data evidence a normative group behaviour. The sense of belonging and identification with a particular group/sub-group arises in particular when in contact with an outgroup. As Hogg (2010, p. 193) argues: ‘although leaders provide a focus for ingroup members, they often lead their groups against outgroups and struggle to promote their group in competition with other groups’.

The behavior towards other groups may be cooperative rather than hostile, yet group identification is boosted through a sense of belonging to an elite. The responses of the primary group to the motivation interview documented that group identification was relatively strong, with 50% subscribing to the group identity. In the description of their

⁴³ Instances of hyperbole were italicized and appear in bold in Examples 2.3. and 2.4.

group, they used positive evaluative lexis, such as *better, more fun, more effective, dynamic, vibrant, and good people*.

2.2.3 Self-enhancement and interpersonal influence

A considerable amount of early research on word-of-mouth motivation has discussed self-enhancement and interpersonal influence as potential WOM drivers (see Dichter, 1966; Engel et. al., 1969; Feick et al., 1986; Gatignon and Robertson, 1986). Recent evidence suggests that self-enhancement motivates primarily positive word-of-mouth dissemination (see Wojnicki and Godes, 2008). Their experiments in scenarios highly susceptible to WOM, such as the choice of restaurant or digital camera, have shown that people who consider themselves experts in a given consumer field are more likely to disseminate positive word of mouth following a satisfying experience than non experts. The authors concluded that the experts' behaviour is motivated by the potential to influence the experts' network, as positive experiences confirm to the outer world that the expert's product choice was a correct one, thus serving as further evidence of expertise (ibid.).

Consumers with high subjective expertise seek to extend their product knowledge to bolster their self-concept, subsequently seeking the opportunity to flash their product knowledge among their peers and in their social network. Thus, one of the forces propelling online and also organized word of mouth, is the human need for recognition and also the need to exert influence over respective social networks (Carl, 2008; Marks,

2005). Carl (ibid.) studies self-enhancement as an important force propelling buzz⁴⁴ agents' recommendations.

Buzz agents are volunteers who participate in a campaign for a selected product by recommending it to their friends and relatives. Buzz agents are typically incentivized by being able to sample new products for free, yet Carl's study has shown that material motivation per se was less important in driving WOM recommendations than self-enhancement, i.e. 'the knowledge that they are the first among their peers to have access to a new product.' Marks (2005) also suggests that seeking interpersonal influence is potentially the most salient motivator for many involved in incentivized buzzing:

Pretty much everyone likes the feeling of having 'the upper hand,' ... Even in the small orbit of your own social circle, knowing about something first – telling a friend about a new CD, or discovering a restaurant before anyone else in the office – is satisfying. Maybe it's altruism, maybe it's a power trip, but influencing other people feels good.

(Marks, ibid.)

Self-enhancement and the influence over the peer network appears to be of relatively minor significance in the dynamics of WOM participation in organized networking, yet, in the motivation interview with the network's members, 25% of the participants indicated that being able to exert influence over their peers and/or co-members was important.

⁴⁴ Buzz, a term used in viral marketing, is the interaction of consumers and users of a product or service which amplifies or alters the original marketing message (Thomas, 2006). Buzz can be positive or negative and can be generated by intentional marketing activities by the brand owner or can be the result of an independent event that enters public awareness through social or traditional media (Berger & Chen, 2014). Marketing buzz originally referred to oral communication but social media such as Facebook and Twitter are now the dominant communication channels for marketing buzz. Buzz marketing companies thus engage in organized buzz generation.

2.3 Difference in WOM attraction depending on the category of service and product

Businesses differ in their word-of-mouth attraction based on the industry, i.e. different service and product categories are talked about with different frequency, and differ also in the proportion of positive and negative WOM they attract (cf. Benjamin, 2014; Oetting et al., 2010). Product categories that tend to benefit most include food, drink, media and entertainment, clothing and technology (See Figure 2.5 below).

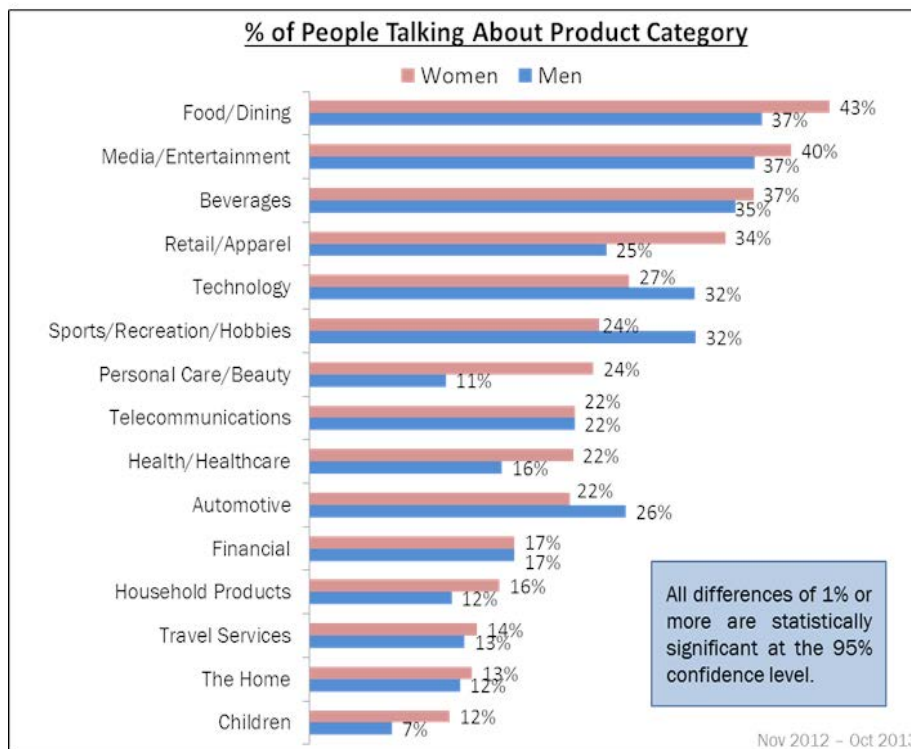


Figure 2.5: WOM attraction of different product categories (Keller Fay TalkTrack, 2014b)

It is not only that certain product categories attract significantly more WOM, but research has also shown that while positive word of mouth prevails, certain categories of products and services attract more negative word of mouth than others. The highest proportions of negative WOM has been found in the fields of transport and telecommunications, while

art, food, and body care are rarely badmouthed, as shown in Figure 2.6 below (Oetting et al., 2010).

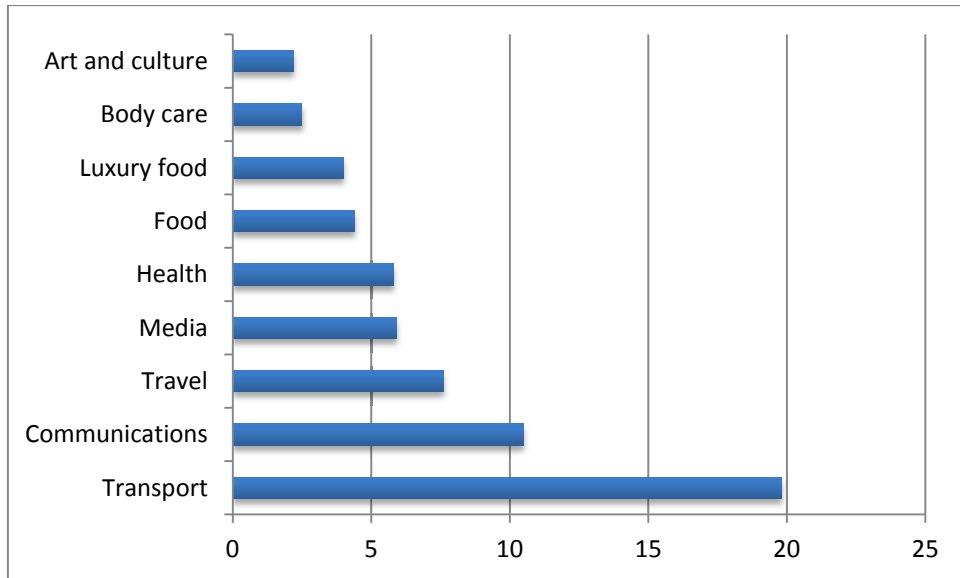


Figure 2.6: Negative WOM in % depending on industry (based on Oetting et al., 2010)

This section has suggested that different businesses a) differ in the frequency of word of mouth, and b) attract different proportion of positive and negative WOM. While this appears to be the case, this may not necessarily mean that some businesses will by definition reap a higher return on investment from their participation in the network than others.

Being aware of these differences may help the network's participants to make more effective use of WOM, and reflect this in their marketing strategy. Banking, financial services and insurance are all categories that are talked about very frequently, and also represent categories that attract a substantial amount of negative word of mouth. This is illustrated by Figure 2.7 below, adopted from Keller Fay TalkTrack data (2014c) representing net sentiment towards a mix of product and service categories (see also Oetting, 2010).

Net sentiment in conversation - 2013
(Positive minus Negative/Mixed)

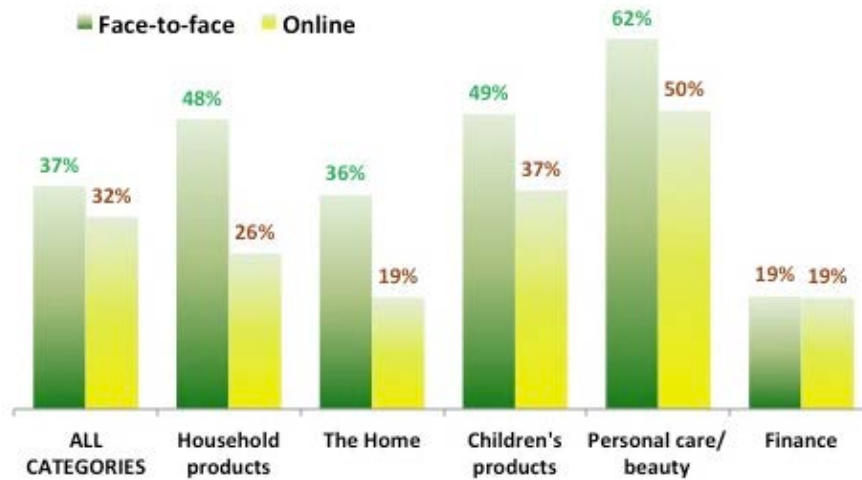


Figure 2.7: WOM attraction of different product categories (Keller Fay TalkTrack, 2014c)

A higher proportion of negative WOM may be leveraged by the participants who engage in the finance and insurance industry as a window of opportunity for formulating their unique selling point. This is also an opportunity to have their business referred by their co-members as evidenced by the following example from my data, a transcript of a 60-second delivered by a retail banker:

<i>Dissatisfaction with a bank</i>	<p>< n R >... so she said to them you know how, how did they get along with their bank, and unfortunately, [...] or fortunately for me, they were not having a good time with them. So [...] she phoned me and said [...] could we [...] could we do some business? And that's an ideal referral for me, if you just ask the question, if someone passed you a Lloyd's cheque or a Barclays cheque, or [...] any of the other banks, how they're getting along with their bank at the moment. If they're not having a good time, then please pass them my card...</p> <p>July 2005</p>
-------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Example 2.5: Negative WOM as an opportunity for referral

Businesses also differ in respect to the degree of influence that WOM has on the actual purchase decision. Personal referral has been found to have a stronger influence on the consumer decision in the purchase of services than of products (e.g., Mangold,

1987), which may be a factor benefiting service providers in BDNs. The more substantial impact on purchase decision in the choice of services than products has been ascribed to two factors: a) services tend to be intangible and thus difficult to evaluate prior to consumption, and b) the service market is increasingly competitive, with highly heterogeneous outcomes (cf. Murray, 1991; Kotler and Bloom, 1984; Buttle 1998).

In services, peer recommendation has been found to be most influential if the service is complex or scores high on inherent risk.⁴⁵ Such service segments might be in a somewhat better position to benefit from participation in BDNs, albeit only once the members have become established. Another factor that may further strengthen the position of legal, financial and property segments is their propensity to cross-refer, i.e. engage in the same contact sphere⁴⁶, as evidenced e.g. by Buttle (1998).

2.4 Offline and online word of mouth

This section debates the sustainability of offline word of mouth and the BDN face-to-face networking model in a world that increasingly embraces social media, including online WOM. The influence of social networks is clearly enormous, enabling exchanges amongst multitudes of people who are only connected by a shared interest. In addition, since social word of mouth (sWOM) is marked by a higher degree of specialization, online WOM conversations tend to involve product category experts, and may therefore incite high levels of trust (Brown et al., 2007). Also significant, and unlike face-to-face WOM, sWOM is not transitory (Kimmel and Kitchin, 2014). Naturally, much research has firmly nestled

⁴⁵ Particularly susceptible industries include holiday and travel destinations, hotels and restaurants (e.g., Litvin et al., 2007), finance and health.

⁴⁶ Contact spheres are professions that tend to have a symbiotic relationship, i.e. they share the same end customer, while being noncompetitive in nature (Misner, 1993, 2008, 2009; Alessandra et al., 2012). The concept of contact spheres and their role as one of the key factors to the success of BDNs has been argued at some length in the introductory chapter (1.2.1.1).

in the online word of mouth domain, displaying significant confidence in the role of virtual WOM and its future (see e.g. Hennig-Thurau et al., 2004; Diaz, 2010 *inter alia*).

In this light, it is natural that the marketing mechanism of organized networks, which operates primarily on face-to-face principles, has triggered some scepticism in respect to its sustainability. Yet, there is compelling evidence that in what clearly appears to be social media-, and blog- dominated marketing world, the majority of word of mouth conversations still happen offline, mostly amongst friends and family (Berger and Yiengar, 2012; Kimmel and Kitchin; 2014). Based on the recent robust TalkTrack study by Keller Fay (2014), 90% of all WOM conversations occur offline and face-to-face WOM accounts for two thirds of the sales impact of word of mouth.

The finding that offline WOM is more prevalent, more trusted and playing a larger role in the purchasing behaviour thus seems to further legitimize the current study into discourse practices that tend to trigger offline WOM episodes. Similar to the reported study, in the researched network, face-to-face recommendations rule by a wide margin. The results of a survey carried out in the organization⁴⁷ have shown that the members gave 86% of their recommendations in a conversation or over a phone, the rest being passed via digital channels, albeit constituting only 14% of referrals. While in BDNs the marketing message is by definition initiated offline in a networking meeting, it seems that social media represents an increasingly important entity in the further transmission of the message to the members' reference networks. As Kimmel and Kitchin argue:

⁴⁷ 25 participants from the researched organization were asked to maintain a referral log for a period of one month to monitor the channels through which they gave referrals.

Given the increasing pervasiveness of social media platforms, the time has come for marketers to stop treating offline and online WOM as if they were separate entities.

[ibid. 2014,p.14]

Even if the proportions of offline and online WOM change dramatically in the future, it appears that face-to-face interaction will continue to inhabit a legitimate space, and the relationship between these channels will almost certainly be defined as one of symbiosis.

2.5 Conclusions

This chapter has explored the current marketing landscape in relation to word of mouth and networking, discussing the implications of the major trends for small business marketing. It has suggested that in response to the current challenges, i.e. increased competition within the SME segment, information overload, and limited resources, organized networking may supply a comprehensive marketing strategy that may effectively stimulate word of mouth. It has explained how word of mouth is spurred via networking, i.e. it has outlined the core motivators pertaining to organized networks, highlighting self-interest and reciprocity as the core driving force stimulating word of mouth in that context.

Word of mouth has been here discussed as the most prominent factor influencing sales for all types of businesses, and evidence has been presented that the face-to-face recommendation from friends and family is currently the most influential purchase motivator, outperforming online word of mouth, and all other forms of advertising by a wide margin. This chapter has also shown how the current conception of word of mouth is changing in that it tends to be understood as the driving force of most advertising,

rather than a discreet category competing with other forms. This understanding has been now aptly summarized by Brad Fay:

Recently, we have been discovering that the imagined wall of separation between advertising and “word of mouth marketing” does not actually exist. As we use increasingly sophisticated analytical tools to evaluate the impact of earned and paid media, we are learning the two are in fact inextricably linked; the most powerful advertising is that which stimulates sharing and conversation, both online and offline.

[Fay, 2015a]

The chapter has presented evidence that marketing strategies which focus primarily on face-to-face word of mouth, such as organized networking, will continue for the foreseeable future to be viable, and has pointed to the symbiotic relationship of offline and online WOM channel.

All in all, this chapter has sought to provide background information to a field that has not been previously subject to linguistic research, thus bridging the fields of applied linguistics and marketing/business networking with the hope of raising awareness in both disciplines of the interest inherent in this previously under-researched phenomenon and potentially spurring more research on both sides of the proverbial fence.

CHAPTER 3

Towards a Definition of the Competence Tale: Generic Structural and Lexical Features

People don't know who I am, what I do, and people don't know what I can do! A story paints them the picture.

[BDN member; 2005]

The opening line highlights the most essential questions of member identification within a BDN group: 'who am I in terms of profession, competence and personal credibility', all of which deal with professional identity and its aspects. Before these questions are answered in a satisfactory manner and to a satisfactory degree, the networking group is unlikely to yield much business for the member. This is evidenced by the fact that the first year of membership in the researched network rarely brings significant profits. Two years seems to be the milestone augmenting the value of business generated via the network for a member, as based on company statistics⁴⁸.

Credibility and the related sense of member competence are gradually built both in and through social interaction with other members. Ideally, the initial void of interpersonal and interprofessional knowledge would be gradually filled through direct experience of the businessperson's professional and personal qualities and the nature and quality of their service. In networking meetings, where this direct experience is unavailable, narratives embedded in the minimalist 60-second messages represent its best approximation. As the opening statement suggests, narrative is a potent rhetorical

⁴⁸ See Chapter 1, section 1.2 for analysis of the role the length of participation plays in attracting business via the network.

strategy which mediates this experience by constructing the characters of both the narrator and the narrated, thus helping the process move along.

Narrative seems to hold a privileged position in respect to communicating who we are to ourselves and others, an aspect which was intuitively summed up by the BDN member in the opening statement. Many narrative theorists (e.g., Bruner, 2003; Polkinghorne, 1988; Mishler, 1999; Riessman, 2003) view narrative as doing more than simply enabling us to *access* our identity: it enables us to *have* an identity. This almost ontological status of narrative in regard to identity construction is, for instance, asserted by Cortazzi (2001, p. 388): ‘they tell what they are or what they wish to be, [and] as they tell so they become, they are their stories.’ The immediacy with which the human experience or would-be experience is accessed via narrative is inherently attractive.

The attribute of storytelling which is particularly relevant in the networking context and, by extension, in any marketing setting, is the audience-design of stories, i.e. the way that stories convey the speaker’s identity in a way that is constructed and tailored for the specific audience. The particular relevance of the situational circumstances in which a story is related is aptly identified by Bruner (2003, p. 210): ‘our self-making stories need to fit new circumstances, new friends, new enterprises.’ In this and the two following chapters, I claim that the minimalist narratives in my data seem to share specific interactional and structural features. The uniting force that clearly appears to have been dictated by the particular situational circumstances of the telling is the projection

of competence and/or professional expertise as an essential narrative message in the business networking setting.⁴⁹

3.1 Research questions and introduction into key concepts

Stories of professional competence are a universal phenomenon cutting across a variety of workplace and institutional settings. For example, Dyer and Keller-Cohen (2000) analysed narratives embedded in academic lectures in which the lecturers recounted their expertise in resolving a problem specific to their field. Roberts and Campbell (2006) studied narratives of professional competence elicited by job interviewers. The applicants were prompted to produce a narrative documenting their professional competence, such as in the area of teamwork or decision-making. However, these studies have not attempted to label the stories or present detailed analysis of their generic format. In addition, none of the relevant research has targeted a business narrative that is limited to 60 seconds. This chapter thus serves two goals. Firstly, it addresses this gap, and secondly, it further defines the discourse practices of the researched business network as a specific Community of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 1991).

In short, this chapter aims to determine whether there is any generic pattern navigating stories of competence embedded in the self-branding 60-seconds. Based on this goal, I formulated the following research questions:

RQ 3.1 Are the stories that communicate competence marked by a prototypical generic structure?

RQ 3.2 If so, what structural commonalities do they share?

⁴⁹ 88 % of narratives in the dataset communicate competence. For the evidence of their prevalence, see p. 400 and the results of structural analysis in this chapter.

RQ 3.3 If so, are there any lexical features that tend to index the staging of the CT subgenre?

Competence is a multifaceted phenomenon that can be conceptualised in many ways, depending on the research perspective. For example, the research into the influence of supervisor communicator competence and leadership style on employee job and communication satisfaction in Madlock (2008) takes a very different point of departure in terms of understanding competence from the intertextual and narrative competence study in O'Connor (2002)⁵⁰. In this thesis, competence is conceptualised in line with Aristotle's perspective on the construct, i.e. it is theorized as a synthesis of the speaker's expertise, knowledge and skills related to performance, including performance in a particular professional field (Reynolds, 1983; McCroskey & Teven, 1999). This understanding appears to best reflect the nature of the analysed data and suits the purpose of this study, which attempts to chart the core structural and lexical characteristics of narratives in which speakers communicate their competence in a particular professional field.

In respect to the overarching concept of professional identity, this thesis assumes equivalence between the concepts of the speaker's credibility/ethos and professional identity. The core dimensions of competence, goodwill and trustworthiness that traditionally define ethos/credibility (e.g. Banfield et al., 2006 *inter alia*) are therefore aligned with those demarcating professional identity. Professional identity per se is defined and discussed in detail in Chapter 5, Section 5.4. Two major approaches are combined in this study to explore narrative identity communicated in the self-marketing networking stories. The first is positioning theory, grounded in the constructionist stance to identity,

⁵⁰ For a variety of data-driven definitions of competence see a special issue of Journal of Business Communication on the display of competence in business and institutional discourse (2011).

and the other is self-categorisation theory, which has a decidedly essentialist outlook. Positioning theory is outlined in this chapter in Section 3.3.6, which deals with narrative identities, while self-categorisation theory is considered in Chapter 6.

3.2 The organization of the chapter

The chapter opens with a theoretical section 3.3, reviewing approaches to narrative analysis relevant to the study of minimalist self-branding narratives in this thesis. Close attention is paid to the methodological debates taking place in the fields of structural analysis and narrative identity. Part 3.3 introduces the dataset of 32 self-marketing stories underlying the narrative chapters and outlines the methodology. Section 3.5 classifies the broad narratives that run through these stories, introducing the concept of competence tale and identifying its defining features at the macro level. Section 3.6 brings detailed analysis and discussion of the structural variations within the sample, including statistics, to show the significance of individual tendencies within the sample. Subsection 3.6.3 discusses whether competence tales share any specific lexico-grammatical features that tend to index individual phases in the generic pattern. Finally, the conclusion 3.7 brings together dominant features delineating the concept of a competence tale.

3.3 Theoretical backdrop: Approaches to narrative analysis and narrative identity

This section reviews some of the major developments in the field of narrative analysis and traces narrative and narrative identity theories from the 1960s to the current state of knowledge. The path through the literature is necessarily selective, and focuses primarily on the perspectives within the field of discourse/narrative analysis that either

directly inform this study or were perceived as relevant to this study. Methods which tend to be used to analyse narrative in conjunction with narrative identity, but which do not treat narrative as an exclusive category, are therefore not addressed. This concerns specifically the following methods that have had some influence on this thesis, but are beyond the remit of this chapter: conversation analysis (CA), membership categorization analysis (MCA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Neither will the reader find any mention of a variety of interview-based narrative perspectives existing in the field of psychology, as they bear no relevance to this study.

Both the traditional Labovian paradigm and alternative structural patterns, are specifically discussed. Examples from the BDN data are supplied to illustrate the dominant patterns, and critical positions towards traditional structural analysis are also considered. I then proceed to discuss the current discursive turn in narrative analysis, examining in particular the concept of small stories. Small stories are narratives that naturally occur in interaction, as opposed to narratives elicited in interviews, so called big stories, which have long comprised the data for the majority of narrative research (Bamberg, 2006). Finally, I discuss narrative as a cognitive superschema and introduce prevailing perspectives in narrative identity theorizing, paying specific attention to positioning theory (PT), which is presented as an influential epistemological stance towards identity construction in narrative. Positioning theory, as a take on narrative identity, has, to some degree, influenced the understanding of identity in this thesis. Again, the discussion includes a critical position towards PT.

3.3.1 Structuralist perspective and the Labovian definition of narrative

The study of the internal structure of stories and the ambition to determine its component parts lies at the roots of narrative inquiry. The most influential structural research dates back to the late 1960s, and largely stems from the work of Labov and Waletzky (1967), further developed by Labov (1972, 1997). Interest in the narrative format emerged from a large biographical project, a sociolinguistic study oriented towards combatting social prejudice against poor Afro-Americans. Labov collected a large corpus of interview data targeting Afro-American male teenagers, eliciting narrative to bring evidence of their capacity to deploy conventional textual and syntactic structures, and thus demonstrate that Black English was used primarily as an identity statement, as a marker of belonging in the Black community rather than lack of ability to use the conventional structures (Bamberg et al., 2011).

In the process of defining a narrative, Labov (1972) argued that the key principle underlying narrative format is temporality, the sequential nature in which X follows Y. The narrative must contain at least two clauses, which are temporally ordered, that is: *X happened, Y happened*, often containing a causal link: *X happened. As a result, Y happened*. Labov (ibid., p. 360) defined narrative as a ‘method of recapitulating past experience by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which (it is inferred) actually occurred.’ This definition therefore seems to include two aspects: a) narrative is framed as a past event and b) the temporal sequence of events is mediated through a corresponding generic structure.

The generic composition of a narrative was elaborated by Labov (1972) when he proposed a normative structure that comprised six components: abstract, orientation, complicating

action, evaluation, resolution and coda. The Labovian story always entails complicating action, the inclusion of the other elements being optional. The following example from the BDN data (#17 in Appendix 10) illustrates the individual components of the prototypical structure.

1	Abstract	And I am a man on a mission [...] to track down the top fifty
2		spenders on my products and services in this area.
3		And this week, I'm not going to ask you for any information [...]
4		about a specific pro- er: prospect.
5	Orientation	And that's because last week I went to an event in Coventry, where
6	Complicating	I got to meet the senior procurement people from fourteen
7	action ⁵¹	of the largest local councils, universities and housing associations
8		in the area.
9	Evaluation/	And I'm up to there (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts,
10	Resolution	information and leads that I need to follow up on.
11	Coda	What I'm going to say instead is that [...]
12		I've done very well from you guys, and information you've given
13		me over the last few months..
14		I've managed to get seventy four thousand pounds of business out
15		of BNI so far this year,
16		and I think, I am going to clear the hundred thousand pound mark
17		[...] next month.
18	Coda	Instead, what I would like to do is,
19	Evaluation	this information that I got has cost me a fair amount of money
20		and a lot investment of time, what have you,
21	Coda	I would like to offer that to you free [...] to all the members
22		of Victoria.
23		All you have to do is email me after this meeting and I will get
24		the information to you [...] in the next couple of weeks.
25		Thank you for the business you've given me, I hope I can get some
26		back to you. Thank you.

Example 3.1: BDN example of the Labovian narrative structure (lines 1-11) embedded in a BDN 60-second speech

⁵¹ Alternatively, this part could be labelled as the orientation and the following could be interpreted as complicating action. This arbitrariness is addressed in detail below in Section 3.3.4 Criticism of traditional structural research.

A fully formed 'normative' narrative begins with an abstract which serves as a preface, indicating the main point of the story. In the BDN extract, the abstract opens with the proclamation of the speaker's mission: *and I am a man on a mission to track down the top fifty spenders on my products and services in this area*; it continues with a teaser: *And this week, I'm not going to ask you for any information about a specific prospect* (lines 1-4). Orientation sets the scene, supplying information on key characters, narrative action, time and spatial frame, i.e. the 'who, what, when, where' (ibid, p. 370). In the BDN example, the scene is set through: *And that's because last week I went to an event in Coventry* (line 5). The complicating action is the core element of a narrative conveying what happened: *I got to meet the senior procurement people from fourteen of the largest local councils, universities and housing associations in the area* (lines 6-8). Evaluation indicates the point of view of the narrator and establishes why the story is worth telling. Resolution provides the ending, telling the audience 'what finally happened' (ibid, p. 370): *And I'm up to there (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts, information and leads that I need to follow up on* (lines 9-10). The final component coda wraps up the narrative, linking it to the here and now: *what I'm going to say instead is...*(line 11).

3.3.2 Competing structural patterns

While Labov's structural paradigm of six components has attracted the most attention, other scholars have also worked towards the identification of a universal narrative format. One of the most prominent narrative scholars, the psychologist Bruner (1990, p. 72), lists five defining features of narrative: action, scene, actor, instrument, or goal, and trouble, characterized as imbalance or conflict between the five elements motivating subsequent actions. Conversation analysts Ochs and Capps (2001, p. 173, in Benwell and Stokoe,

2006) supply another rival model consisting of the setting (temporal, spatial and psychological information), an unexpected event (potentially problematic), a psychological/physical response (a change in emotion), an unplanned action (unintended behaviour), an attempt (behaviour oriented towards resolution of the problem) and a consequence (the outcome of the psychological/physical response). Another structural perspective which has so far been rather marginalized, but deserves specific attention is ethnopoetics (Hymes 1996, 2003).

3.3.3 Ethnopoetics

Ethnopoetics shares some of its primary motivation with the Labovian framework, i.e. to supply linguistic evidence of equality which would erase social prejudice against victims of minorization⁵² (e.g., asylum seekers), but in every other aspect stands apart from conventional structural research. It is rooted in the ethnography of communication and poetics (see Bauman & Briggs, 1990) and steers attention away from formal patterning and towards language and narrative as verbal art and poetic performance. Ethnopoetics as an approach to narrative analysis perceives meaning as an effect of performance (Blommaert, 2006a, p. 181) and narrative as a form of action or performance. Like poetry, narrative is internally organized into lines or verses. These are usually easily recognizable, being marked by one of the main intonational contours. The verses form larger units, sequences or stanzas that are internally coherent (Hymes, 2003, p. 302 – 303).

Hymes (2003, p. 204), influenced by Jakobson (1960), defines the internal coherence of stanzas as based on equivalence, a principle basic to all poetry. ‘Sequences, however diverse, may count as equivalent in the organization of narrative, if some recurrent feature

⁵² Blommaert (2006, p. 181)

marks them as such.’ Recurrent features encompass all aspects of language: primarily prosody, syntactic aspects such as repetition and parallelism, morpho-grammatical features such as similarity in tense and aspect, phonetic aspects such as alliteration, and lexico-syntactic features such as the use of certain discourse markers (Hymes, 1996:166 in Blomaert, 2006b, p. 182).

Revisiting the BDN example previously used to document Labovian structure may help to illustrate the ethnopoetic organization of a narrative (see Example below). In this case, the first verse in the first stanza has a parallel structure to the fourth and the second to the third. Consider the use of ‘*and*’ as a dominant discourse marker opening each verse in the first stanza. Note the parallel structures in the first and the fourth verse: *and I am a man.../and I am up to there*, and in the second and the third verse: *this week/last week*, which provide the following poetic organization: (a)-(b)-(b)-(a).

Stanza 1

And I am a man on a mission to track down the top fifty spenders ...

And this week, I’m not going to ask you for any information about a specific prospect.

And that’s because last week I went to an event in Coventry, where I got to ...

And I am up to there (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts, information...

Stanza 2

What I’m going to say instead is that ...

Stanza 3

Instead, what I would like to do is, ...

Example 3.2: Ethnopoetic organization of the BDN narrative

Hymes also suggests particular patterns of succession, a particular rhythm to how stanzas are organized: a succession of two or a pair, alternatively four or two pairs. A common succession involves the typical Labovian patterning, a succession of three which is indicative of an onset, ongoing action and an outcome. This may alternatively be organized into a sequence of five: a double sequence of three with the third stanza

forming both a pivot to the preceding part and a beginning to the closing stanzas (Hymes, 2003, p. 3).

Blommaert (2006a, p. 181, 2006b, p. 230, 240-241) repeatedly made a case for an applied ethnopoetic approach. He argues the merits of ethnopoetics in the analysis of data in which 'different systems of meaning-making meet' and where personal narratives 'determine people's fates', e.g. asylum application interviews, police and courtroom hearings, or job interviews that involve candidates born abroad. However, the ethnopoetic approach, combined with other modes of analysis, may be truly revealing, even when applied to data that are culturally homogenic and which lie outside the field of critically important personal stories. Being primarily marketing messages, and being limited to a maximum of 60 seconds, networking small stories represent a specific category amongst stories that are typically related in business and institutional discourse.

Many scholars hold the view that the marketing aspect induces poetry, with the marketing messages relying on sound equivalence more than any other genre within organizational and business discourse (Toncar and Munch, 2003; McQuarrie and Mick, 1996 *inter alia*). The time constraints of this genre mean that often the narratives are iconic, condensed fragments of a story, a promise of a story rather than a story itself, and thus their poetic structure is pronouncedly semantic, helping to the audience to process and remember the central message. The tendency for poetic organization of the self-branding 60-seconds thus makes ethnopoetics an applicable method for this study, and while not the primary mode of analysis, the ethnopoetic approach has been apposite to this study, informing analytical sections in both narrative chapters.

3.3.4 Criticism of traditional structural research

Traditional structural research aimed at defining narrative by establishing its format has been criticized for a number of perceived shortcomings. Many scholars and conversation analysts have challenged Labov's seminal work on narrative research, including the research which focuses on stories produced in conversations (Schegloff 1997, p. 101, or Ochs and Capps 2001, p. 57, in Georgakopolou 2006, p. 2). Primarily, criticism has been raised of the tendency to present isolated, decontextualized examples of the narrative format without much consideration for the interactional context in which they were told⁵³.

Conversation analysts often argue that stories should be primarily analysed for the way they are managed turn-by-turn in interaction, and how they get embedded in surrounding discourse, rather than for their internal structure. The fact that Labov's biographic narratives, the data on which the structural research relies, have been invariably elicited in interviews, makes the Labovian analysis an imperfect tool for the analysis of narratives that are not solicited in an interview, i.e. naturally occurring conversational and institutional narrative data (Schegloff, 1997), unless the analysis is complemented with other methods.

Another criticism levelled at the Labovian type of analysis (but in this case also with its alternatives) is their alleged failure to identify a universal formal system of narrative (Brockmeier and Carbaugh, 2001). The critics maintain that narratives have to be navigated to fit the ready-made and idealised model categories, i.e. the fit is at times forced and arbitrary, not accounting for the variety and ambiguity that exists in discourse

⁵³ An objection that is subscribed to in this thesis. While structural analysis lies at the core of this chapter, competence tales are a) given in the full context of the BDN 60-second speech in Appendix 10, b) their structural features are perceived as salient only in conjunction with their functional and interactional features.

(Georgakopolou, 2006; Benwell and Stokoe, 2006; Edwards, 1997). The arbitrariness of the analytical decision has been briefly noted above in subsection 3.3.1 and can be illustrated with the 60-second speech given in Example 3.1, which can be broken down into the components of the Labovian prototypical structure in several ways. In this case, lines 6-8 could be labelled as the orientation and the following segment could then be interpreted as complicating action. Alternatively, the resolution in lines 9-10: *And I'm up to there (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts, information and leads I need to follow up on* could equally be read as an evaluation, depending on the analyst's perspective.

To continue in the same vein, and to introduce another issue for which narrative structural analysis is often critiqued, in the narrative example 3.1 above it is relatively difficult to decide where to draw the imaginary line of analysis or where the story ends. In accordance with the prescribed structure, lines 1-11 could by Labovian standards represent a fully-formed narrative and thus a legitimate object of analysis. However, after the story wraps up with the coda in line 11, and the connection to the present time and location is established, the narrative resurfaces again repeatedly, first with what could be coded as another coda (line 18) interrupted by an evaluation (lines 19-20), with the coda being resumed again (line 21). This zigzagging between the narrative world of there & then and the world of the here and now demonstrates that understanding of the discourse environment in which the story is embedded is important and the boundaries of a narrative, both textual and temporal, are not always clear-cut.

3.3.5 Discursive turn in narrative analysis

The remaining bias for narrative as an interpretation of an autobiographical experience, i.e. a closed event firmly situated in the past, has been criticized by many scholars (e.g., Schegloff 1997, Georgakopolou, 2006). This rendition of narrative has dominated the tradition of narrative inquiry since the 1960s, regardless whether grounded in interactional sociolinguistics or conversation analysis. Recently, however, the paradigm has been shifting to embrace the less orderly forms that seem to pervade everyday conversations and which also occur in institutional talk. Researchers engaged in this discursive turn have labelled it small story research, to distinguish it clearly from traditional biographic (big story) research (Bamberg 2004, 2006, 2008a; Georgakopolou, 2006; Bamberg and Georgakopolou, 2008, *inter alia*).

While biographic research typically works with autobiographical narrative data elicited in interview situations and tends to deal with a fully developed Labovian story as a past closed event, the concept of narrative as small stories includes a spectrum of narrative activities along a temporal continuum of ongoing events, future and hypothetical events, or broad generic scenarios that happen outside any temporal specification (e.g., Georgakopolou, 2006). The small story perspective thus includes narratives that are not fully developed, including mere embryonic suggestions of a narrative, and treats these as relevant, eligible and substantial objects of analysis. This approach displays an equal interest in the story as it does in the cotext and context in which the story is embedded.

Small story research attempts to integrate micro-level analysis with a focus on the interactional goals found in conversation analysis, sociolinguistics and, to a degree,

in the critical discourse perspective. Narrative is analysed primarily as a discursive practice in the way it surfaces in conversation and other kinds of everyday interactions (including institutional talk). Narrative at the level of local discourse is perceived as shaped by and in turn actively shaping the wider socio-cultural narratives (De Fina et al., 2006; Bamberg et al., 2011; Harré and Moghaddam, 2003).

Most narrative approaches naturally converge to the study of identity, and in respect to identity, small story research has a pronouncedly constructionist underpinning. Bamberg et al. (2011, p. 186) describe the small story approach as ‘interested in how people use narrative in their in vivo and in situ interactive engagements to construct a sense of who they are’, in contrast to the aforementioned biographic research, which tends to ‘analyse stories predominantly as representations of the world and of identities within those representations.’ This latter concept foreshadows the engagement of narrative research with identity. So far, I have focused on distinguishing types of narrative (small versus big story) and defining the components of individual narratives (structural research). Narrative has also been identified as functional, occasioned, and most importantly constitutive of identity. The next section will thus explore the construction of narrative identity in some detail.

3.3.6 Theorizing narrative identity

Contemporary narrative research adopts mostly a constructionist understanding of identity, which could be defined as the postmodern negation of a pre-discursive self, i.e. a rejection of the notion of identity as an internal entity, which is stable, absolute and knowable. In stark contrast to an essentialist take on identity, constructionists thus see identity and self as produced *in*, rather than *prior to*, discourse, and as dynamic, and culturally

and historically situated. As Bruner (2003, p. 222) argues: ‘identity is a product of our telling and not some essence to be delved for in the recess of subjectivity.’ Identity is fluid, constructed in interaction with and for other people or institutions. It is unstable and subject to the social space and temporal location in which it is produced.

Broadly speaking, narrative theorists ascribe a special status to narrative discourse as a primary space for identity construction. Bamberg et al. (2011, p. 185) argue that ‘in addition to the functions of discourse for the construction of agency and self-differentiation, narratives add a temporal and a spatio-temporal dimension to the sense of self and identity.’ It is a salient point, as it is precisely the spatio-temporal dimension which facilitates the emergence of identity as continuous and coherent. The turn to narrative as ‘the primary meaning-making method’ (Polkinghorne, 1988) was largely triggered by the psychologist Jerome Bruner (1986), who reified narrative as a cognitive superchema⁵⁴ by which we make sense of human experience and self. Bruner was the pioneer of the narrative turn which elevated narrative to have an ontological status: ‘My position is that the story is prior to, but not independent of, the discourse. We abstract the story from discourse, but once abstracted the story serves as a model for future discourse’ (ibid., p. 143).

The belief in the cognitive underpinning of narrative, and above all, its power to directly communicate both reality and identity is evidenced in the work of many narrative scholars. In this strand of research, narrative holds an equally central position as metaphor in the traditional take on conceptual metaphor theory⁵⁵. People are perceived as storied selves and this conception provides the grounds for understanding human life. Narrative

⁵⁴ According to Bruner (1986), human sense-making is realized through two modes: logico-scientific mode and narrative mode of ordering experience.

⁵⁵ See Chapter 6 for detailed account of conceptual metaphor theory (CMT).

thus has a defining character: 'Our narrative identities are the stories we live by' (McAdams et al., 2006, p. 4); 'We become the stories through which we tell our lives' (Riessman, 2003, p. 7). This line of thought has been very influential in biographic research. It is the aspect of immediacy, the sensation of viewing the naked human experience and the naked self, which makes narrative such an attractive and powerful rhetorical resource. While this sense of immediacy holds an undeniable attraction, turning this sensation into an epistemological stance is not unproblematic.

One of the caveats seems to lie in what Bamberg (2012) calls 'overdetermining narrative' and 'underdetermining discourse', i.e. the tendency to downplay the interactive facet of narrative, the audience-design of narrative. Shuman (2006, p. 20) points out the inherent danger of viewing narrative as a route to reality: 'the biggest challenge to the study of personal experience narrative continues to be to avoid the conflation of experience and the personal with the authentic and the real and at the same time to understand why this conflation is so compelling.' Narrative should therefore never be interpreted as the entry point to reality or experience but as the gateway to the portrayal of reality or experience. This understanding is central to positioning theory, where narrative is perceived as an interaction told for and with different audiences, it has a performative function and a profound impact on identity.

Positioning theory was developed in the 1990s to connect the local 'on the ground' narrative interactions and the overarching sociocultural narratives or master narratives (e.g., Davies and Harré, 1990). Bamberg et al. (2011, p. 186) champion this approach as allowing 'exploration of self at the level of the talked about that reaches from a past into a present' as in biographic research, and allows for interaction and 'exploration of self

at the level of tellership and performance in the here and now of the storytelling contexts.’ The chief concept underlying positioning is that the local stories we tell about ourselves are inextricably linked to a wider cultural narrative or master narrative: the local ‘storyworld’ constructed in narrative supplies a ‘backdrop of cultural expectations about a typical course of action; our identities as social beings emerge as we construct our own individual experiences as a way to position ourselves in relation to social and cultural expectations’ (Schiffrin, 1996, p. 170).

The wider cultural stories tend to be given a variety of labels depending on the theoretical or methodological stance of the analyst. They are master narratives, cultural plotlines, dominant discourses, interpretative repertoires or capital-D discourses (as opposed to the local small-d discourses). Whatever the term, these refer to ‘the pre-existent sociocultural forms of interpretation’ (Bamberg, 2008) in that they express the norms that the audience applies locally to the interpretations of personal stories. These norms may obviously be group-subjective. Positioning then refers to the process through which speakers adopt, resist and offer subject positions that are made available in D discourses or master narratives (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 139). Agency is in this epistemological stance thus seen as bidirectional and as a continuum, with the sense of self as an actor (agentive self-constructor) at one end and an undergoer (a passive being/ potential victim) at the other end. As Bamberg et al. (2011, p. 186) intimate in the following excerpt:

The model of positioning affords us the possibility of viewing identity constructions as twofold: We are able to analyze the way the referential world is constructed, with characters (such as self and others) emerging in time and space as protagonists or antagonists, heroes or villains. Simultaneously, we are able to show how the referential world is constructed as a function of the interactive engagement. In other words, the way referential world is put together points to how tellers index their sense of self in the here and now.

[Bamberg et al. 2011, p. 186]

3.3.7 Criticism of positioning theory

Although positioning theory seems to be the major perspective on narrative identity in the small story research camp, many authors, in particular conversation analysts, criticize positioning for the ascription of theorized labels to chunks of discourse (e.g. *masculinity master narrative/fatherhood master narrative*).⁵⁶ Benwell and Stokoe (2006, p. 140-141) see such classification as grossly reductive due to its failure to take into account the complexity of social interaction. The analyst finds a particular set of master narratives (dominant discourses, repertoires, cultural models) operating in a stretch of talk and then directs analysis along the preset route. Wooffit (2005) argues that not only does the tendency to attribute generic labels to chunks of talk distort the analysis, but it is also problematic due to the lack of evidential basis for such attribution.

This criticism may be legitimate in cases when the analysis is self-serving and rests solely on labelling and categorizing, with an attempt to steer stories into clear-cut boxes. In general, analytic tools operated at the macro level tend to render subjective, debatable, and at times ideologically/politically skewed outcomes. Thus, the debate seems

⁵⁶ It might be helpful to disambiguate between the levels of analysis: while previously discussed structural methods apply to micro-level/generic analysis, PT puts a macro-label on a story itself, depending on the type of story, such as sisterhood narrative, coping narrative told by patients with cancer, etc.

to be the traditional one, resting on the role of context⁵⁷ and intertextuality. While it is important to bear in mind the possible bias, abandoning the attempts at macro levels of analysis, which are by definition subjective, and concentrating solely on what can be safely related based on the micro level, limits the value of analysis, negating the role of context.

This thesis subscribes to the view that intertextual understanding of identity narratives enriches the analysis of local identities (Benwell, 2005), and similar to Wetherell (1998) adopts a synthetic approach that strives to combine micro- and macro- analysis, benefiting from both the insight offered by PT and other poststructuralist models and CA-motivated attention to fine-grained analysis of the local discourse.

3.4 Data and method

This chapter draws primarily on a dataset recorded between 2005 and 2007 in 14 networking meetings. The dataset represents 250 self-marketing 60-second speeches. Despite the brevity of this minimalist rhetoric, narrative is seen to be a recurrent discourse strategy, with two or three speeches at every meeting deploying a narrative format. The sample of 250 contained a total of 32 (13%) of speeches of a narrative format, all of which were transcribed. The vast majority, i.e. 89% of these narratives, were identified as competence tales (CTs)⁵⁸, and these were then subjected to a structural analysis⁵⁹. Generic trends observed in the sample are illustrated in the main body of this chapter. All stories are numbered, based on their sequence in Appendix 10

⁵⁷ See e.g., Koester (2006, p.16) on the approaches to context.

⁵⁸ See the conception of a competence tale below in Sections 3.5 and 3.6.

⁵⁹ See Appendix 10 for details, or the structural analysis section for an overview of generic trends.

and whenever empirical examples appear in the text, they contain the reference number of the respective competence tale.

With regard to methodology, the analyses in this study were informed mostly by a combination of narrative theory, small story research (Bamberg and Georgakopolou, 2008), genre-based structural analysis (Hoey, 1983, in Koester, 2006), and marginally also by ethnopoetics (e.g., Blommaert, 2006a, 2006b). Structural narrative research, small story research perspective and ethnopoetics were elaborated upon in the theoretical section above (3.3), while Hoey's (1983) problem-solution pattern is introduced later, in the applied section (3.5.1). Small story research and ethnopoetics are given specific attention as they are far from being the mainstream modes of narrative analysis. The former has only occasionally been applied in organizational discourse studies (e.g., Roberts, 2009), while the latter has only been applied in sites of inequality, such as in the context of asylum seeker interviews (e.g. Blommaert and Slembrouck, 2000).

This chapter studies narrative data by focusing both on the interaction-oriented and rhetorically organized structure of the minimalist stories and also on their individual components. As discussed above in section 3.3, the choice of methodology does not always imply unconditional agreement with the particular perspective, but rather the proximity of research purpose and the nature of data that is being analysed. In the same manner, particular layers of analysis present in the analytical section do not represent one united methodology. This is a logical conflation of methods that helps to pin down the micro-level local detail as well as those that bring home larger generic outcomes. Some of the perspectives deployed in the narrative chapters are hence not exclusive to narrative analysis.

This chapter focuses primarily on structural analysis, attempting to distill a generic pattern towards which CTs converge. In the process, an important question arises as to whether competence tales share any specific lexical features that tend to index individual phases in the generic CT pattern. The assumption that lexico-grammatical choices can be indicative of the staging of the particular genre is well supported in prior research (see e.g., Koester 2010, Adolphs et al., 2004). The final part of this chapter discusses specific lexico-grammatical usage in the data, focusing first on a group of lexical items that Hoey (1994) identifies as signal words for the problem-solution pattern. High-involvement lexis (Tannen, 2007) is also explored, since it appears to have an organizing effect.

High-involvement lexis includes words and expressions typically deployed to signal emotional investment by the speaker and to increase the emotional impact on the audience, i.e., intensifiers, hyperbole, modality, repetition, reported speech and expressions conveying emotional states. This chapter pays specific attention to the usage of hyperbole, which is seen as indicative of other uses of high-involvement language. Hyperbole⁶⁰ has first and foremost an evaluative and emotive function, and is typically defined as the use of exaggeration, ‘a claim that exceeds the (credible) limits of fact in the given context’ (Claridge, 2011, p. 5) and is not meant to be taken literally. It is a statement which should be ‘semantically interpreted as a claim that is higher (or lower) on some scale than warranted’ (Norrick, 2004, p. 1728).

Taking this definition as a starting point, and picturing hyperbole as a form of cline, the far end of the hyperbolic scale is occupied by so called extreme case formulations (ECFs), which are in literature often considered a discreet type of hyperbole. Norrick (2004, p. 1728) describes ECFs as ‘built around extreme expressions such as ‘every’, ‘all’, ‘none’,

⁶⁰ For more on hyperbole, see McCarthy and Carter (2004); Claridge (2011).

‘best’, ‘least’, ‘as good as it gets’, ‘always’, ‘never’, ‘ever’, ‘perfectly’, ‘brand new’, and ‘absolutely’ such as in the following examples: ‘the worst storm ever’, ‘you never write’ or ‘nobody cares’ (ibid., p. 1728).

3.5 Defining the competence tale

As mentioned in the introduction, 88% of narratives can be categorized as stories of professional success and competence⁶¹ or competence tales. This part explores how the projection of specific professional competencies and/or business competence in a minimalist narrative influences its discursive makeup, first considering the influence it exhibits at the levels of genre and text⁶² and then discussing the textual pattern towards which the majority of competence tales seem to converge. In general, competence tales typically involve two aspects: a hapless client in difficulty, either explicitly or implicitly expressed, and a competent solution provided by the narrator/service provider. At the macro-level, CTs are further characterized by the following features:

- 1) Success is owned by the speaker. It is a direct outcome of the speaker’s intervention as illustrated by the example below.

The narrator in story #6 on a project:

If I hadn’t gone round the completion would not have gone through.

Example 3.3: Success owned by the speaker

- 2) Success can be the result of joint effort. In such a case, it belongs either to the speaker and the client, or the speaker and the business partner. See below for an example.

⁶¹ Non-competence stories (#9, #16, #23, and #25) tend to be educational, mostly directed at defining to other members the nature of a quality referral for the target business professional.

⁶² Levels of analysis are based on Bhatia’s (2004) patterns of discourse realization in professional contexts.

The narrator in story #26 on her work with a client:

So what did I do? We worked together, to find the best aspects of her business and narrowed it down. We helped [...] to- working together, by promoting it and finding a niche. We also identified what her strengths were, and what her weaknesses were and outsourced some of the skills and jobs to other people. What is the outcome? Now she has better confidence, she has more clarity about where she is going, erm she has more profitable, erm [...] contracts, an-and increased turnover, and also she has less stress, and her health improved.

Example 3.4: Success as a result of joint effort

- 3) Failure or difficulty is never owned by the speaker. It is typically seen as pertaining to the other. The other is either a competitor or a client, as in the example below.

The narrator in story #27 on his clients:

they cannot control cash, they cannot provide information, they've got no experience

The narrator in story #30 in Appendix 3 on her competitors:

they're either not delivering, they're not creative enough, they're not hitting budget or time scales.

Example 3.5: Failure is exogenous

- 4) The client tends to be positioned as a passive undergoer.

The narrator in story #3 on her client:

And one of the members of the audience said, I know who that person [client] is, he works for me, he's in-, in my team. And when he [the client] went on your programme in Scotland in in October, erm, he was /????/. And I don't know what you did with him, ..." (continued in the next example)

Example 3.6: Client as a passive undergoer

- 5) The professional is positioned as proactive and having the capacity to resolve the problem.

The narrator in story #3:

"...but when he [the client] came back, he was absolutely transformed. And he [the client] has made him such an impact in the business, it's only that you /fished /his brain out and you put something else in. It's absolutely magical."

Example 3.7: The speaker as proactive force

The competence tale appears to be a broad category subsuming different types of narratives. For example, professionals in consultancy businesses often rely

on a particular format, which works both literally and metaphorically. Initially, a client is in a difficult physical, financial, or emotional position. Next, the professional help restores the client to literal or metaphorical health. Through this *healing narrative*, therapists help their ill patients (e.g., narrative #18), while business coaches redeem failing businesses, albeit sometimes as ‘joint enterprise’ as in the above example 3.4. Another macro-categorical label that can be ascribed to a type of competence-communicating narrative is *discourse of transformation* or *transformation narrative*. These are narratives that involve a catalytic influence of the speaker on bringing about a complete change of professional, personal or social identity in a client. Empirical examples include, for example, narratives #26 and #3 above, or #22, which, along with the element of identity transformation, is discussed in the following chapter.

Another prominent macro-category is that of *pain narrative*, a subcategory of *pain-eliciting* speech which does not necessarily contain narrative evidence (see, e.g., pain scenarios S13, S14 and S15 in the following chapter). Pain-eliciting speech always focuses on the audience as a direct client. It functions to create an intense emotional response in the hearer, a perception of a specific pain and resultant conviction that a certain service/product is urgently needed to alleviate the pain/remedy the situation. Pain-eliciting stories and scenarios are recurrent in the wider BDN dataset supporting this chapter, the narrative sample of 28 competence stories containing 3 such speeches.

At the structural level, competence tales can be characterized by a relatively high degree of generic predictability. While they do not follow a single predetermined textual pattern that could be labelled and regimented into a neatly fixed structure, these stories tend to converge towards a conflation of the problem - solution pattern (Hoey, 1983)

and the normative narrative structure (Labov, 1972) detailed above in the methodological section. The problem-solution pattern was first described by Hoey (1983) and it involves the positing of a series of propositions, typically in the following order: situation, problem, solution and evaluation (see the transcript below for a BDN narrative example of the target structure). Lexically, the individual phases tend to be signalled through the use of certain keywords (Hoey, 1983, 1994; Koester, 2006). For example, the problem phase is often associated with the following lexis: problem, trouble and difficulty, while the solution phase tends to be signalled through the use of words such as resolve, sort out, figure out and result. In the following examples, lexis associated with the problem, solution and evaluation phases of the pattern appears in bold.

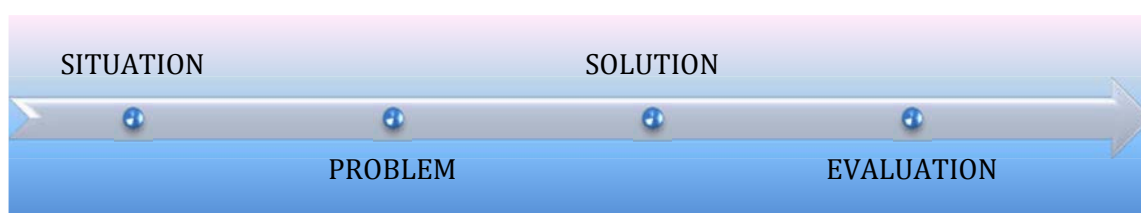


Figure 3.1: Problem-solution pattern (based on Hoey, 1983)

Situation	1 2	a success story, I was particularly pleased about this week, is a young lad, who I've been treating for about six months
Problem	3 4	really nice young lad, the trouble is he used to keep losing his temper and getting excluded from school for beating other kids up
Solution	5	now after about six months of my treatment
Evaluation	6 7 8	this kid is totally transformed and I'm really pleased . It'll save a lot of kids from getting beaten up, and it will save him from a life of crime and God knows what, so it's pretty important.

Example 3.8: Therapist embeds a story of a successful treatment in his 60 seconds

The problem-solution pattern inhabits a variety of written and spoken genres. It was first discussed in Hoey in the context of expository prose (1983) and has since been analysed in both ordinary and institutional talk. For example, Koester (2006, p. 37-41) explored

its usage in workplace interaction in reporting and requesting as well as in decision-making.

In advertising discourse, the consumer imperative by default necessitates the continual development of problem/pain (Sandler et al., 2007), which is resolved through the offered product or service. It is therefore not surprising that the generic structure of marketing messages often adopts the problem-solution pattern. McCarthy and Carter (1994) explored the use of this textual pattern in advertising, while Benwell and Stokoe (2006, p. 177-178) give empirical examples of its use in cosmetic adverts. However, the discussion has so far focused mostly on newspaper and TV adverts and excluded self-promotional messages in spoken discourse and business presentations per se. The following set of examples will demonstrate that a large proportion of the narrative in my data is modelled on this pattern.

3.5.1 Model problem-solution structure

In the first model narrative (see example 3.8 above), a therapist delivers a success story which indicates his competency in the treatment of children with an array of behavioural problems. His speech faithfully follows the problem-solution pattern, thus representing the category of BDN competence tales that model Hoey's prototypical structure without additions, omissions or alterations to the sequence. The narrator highlights his emotional investment in the evaluative comment in the situation: *a success story, I was particularly pleased about*. High-involvement lexis (evaluation in lines 6-8), namely intensifiers and hyperbole/ECF (*it will save him from a life of crime/totally transformed*) are used, as well as irony in the problem phase in lines 3-4: *a really nice young lad,...getting excluded from school for beating other kids up*. I will revisit this usage of emotive evaluative lexis in the discussion section.

The second story again illustrates the use of the prototypical pattern. In this narrative, a telecommunications provider focuses on his professional competency and the company's unique selling point, which translates into a significant reduction in telephone costs for the client. In the *abstract*, the narrator first draws attention to a specific competence (lines 1-3) which he later documents by means of a narrative. The tendency to directly flag professional competence or introduce a specific competency occurs in about 30% of the CTs in the sample. Narrators tend to first flag the main point to be made, i.e. the delivery of service resulting in *really happy customers*, and follow this with narrative evidence (problem-solution phase) before delivering a conclusion (evaluation). The evaluation creates a link between the initial claim and the narrative evidence by reverberating *really happy customers* in *fantastic saves*. Again, the use of high-involvement lexis in the form of intensifiers and an overstatement is evident.

Abstract/Specific competence defined	1 2 3	Pushing (lost in somebody's coughing) /??/?/voice overs at the moment, it's been around for some time but we've now got it working [...] and we've got some really happy customers.
Situation Problem/+Evaluation	4 5 6 7	Went to company called Strand Europe yesterday, they're a [...] not a big company but they import media from all of-, from China, er: a lot stuff from the Far East, UA, and they had a huge phone bill, and they got ten people but their phone bill was about six thousand pounds a month.
Solution	8 9	Er: [...] they've got on the voice over /??/?/, they've come to less than four hundred.
Evaluation	10	Er: there are fantastic saves
Coda	11 12	So, I'm looking for anybody, who has any business which makes international calls.

Example 3.9: Prototypical problem-solution narrative

3.5.2 Unorthodox structures

3.5.2.1 Problem-solution phase repeated

The narrative below represents a slight diversion from the prototypical structure in that the problem-solution phase is repeated twice, each time highlighting another aspect of the problem.

Situation	1 2	Two things that I am doing at the moment, just to go and say, how I find products.
Problem	3	A glass cylinder was what I was given,
Solution (temporal)	4	and found it in 3 days.
Problem (geographical)	5 6	He told me he couldn't get it in Britain, he was thinking that it's going to be Eastern Europe, if not China,
Solution (geographical)	7	and we found it in the Midlands,
Evaluation (Client)	8	and he's delighted!
Coda	9 10	And people come to me with things that they can't find or the price is high and I go find this.

Example 3.10: Product sourcer finds a desired product

In the first problem-solution couplet (lines 3-4), the task is broadly defined and the solution emphasizes the speed with which it was fulfilled. The second couplet (5-7) focuses on the geographical aspect in that the problem highlights the unavailability of the product in the domestic market, which is intensified through the use of the problem-signalling lexis *couldn't*. The solution stresses the narrator's ability to find the desired product not only in the domestic market but in the close proximity of Birmingham. The reiteration of the problem and solution phases reinforces the perception of the narrator's competence, communicating both the speed and the resourcefulness of the service provider. The story closes with an emotional evaluation of the solution by the client.

3.5.2.2 Reverse structure

The next example is characteristic of the researched data, again in the sense that the narrative functions as clear evidence of a specific competence that is explicitly stated at the beginning.

Competence defined	1 2	The special features we offer are attention to detail and going that extra mile.
Solution/ Pre-emptive action	3 4	Very briefly, last night after work I went round to somebody's property because they were to complete on Friday.
Potential problem	5	If I hadn't gone round the completion would not have gone through.
Coda/ Competence reiterated	6	We will always go that extra mile to help people solve their problems.

Example 3.11: Chartered surveyor highlights attention to detail

Here the narrative pattern is the reverse of both the problem - solution structure and the Labovian normative pattern. The narrator starts with a solution/resolution, which he follows with a potential problem/complicating action. Having provided the evidence upon which the initial claim of possessing specific competence (*going that extra mile*) was predicated, the narrator reinforces the message by repeating the core competence, this time with more confidence, signalled through the use of extreme case formulation in line 6: *we will **always** go that extra mile.*

3.5.2.3 Implicit solution phase

The following narrative illustrates another recurring pattern in the competence stories, i.e. the problem is specifically stated but the solution is not explicitly communicated.

Situation	1	I am working with a client now down in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales,
Problem/ (+Evaluation)	2 3	and it is quite unbelievable, the areas that this particular business is missing out on in terms of costing their particular service.

Coda (Request for leads to clients defined through narrative)	4	So who do you know, who's having difficulty, they may not realize, they're
	5	having difficulty, but they are not making as much money as what
	6	the quotations say...

Example 3.12: Business consultant highlights a client's incompetence

Even though an overt solution phase is missing, the competence needed to resolve the problem is implied in the situation (*working with a client now*), in the problem/evaluation phase, where the speaker implies that he is more proficient at costing, and in the *coda* (lines 4-6) of the narrative, in the request for leads into clientele with similar problems. At a lexical level, the presence of a problem is signalled by the following items: *miss out on, have difficulty*. An extreme case formulation is again used (line 2), in this case to evaluate the client's incompetence. Emphatic evaluations of client failure are, however, relatively sparse in self-promotional narratives. The strategy is inherently dangerous as evidenced later in Chapter 4 in subsection 4.6.3 and again in Chapter 5 in 5.7, although by lamenting a clients' lack of competence, the narrator can create a contrastive background to emphasize his own expertise.

3.5.2.4 Projected solution and evaluation following problem

The following narrative involves a slight alteration to both the model problem – solution pattern and the Labovian paradigm. In regard to Hoey's structure, the evaluation phase follows the problem and not the solution. This structure in which the problem is emphatically evaluated either by the narrator or the client is common and shared in a number of other narratives in the sample (#4, #8, #14, #18, #27). In respect to the departure from the Labovian narrative, the solution or resolution phase is framed as a future event rather than being a temporally closed event situated in the past,

as is the dictate of the traditional paradigm. This element recurs in the sample (see #5, #13, #21).

Situation	1 2	An example of what I do is I am having a meeting with somebody later on this morning,
Problem	3 4 5	and he is aware of how his business is going, and if there's a graph, it's going like this (signals a steep downward progression). He asked me to give him a call, because he was having difficulty, he makes props.
Problem evaluation (client)	6	And the words were: "I am getting slaughtered by the Chinese".
Evaluative response to the problem evaluation	7	And those are music to my ears.
Solution (generic)	8 9	On the basis of if you can't beat them, join them! If you've got something which is stopping you making a profit, change what you do.
Solution (projected)	10 11 12	I'm gonna help him get value in order to keep his business going, his profits going, and if we need to change his business model, that's what I do.
Coda	13 14	I source products from China, Far East, Eastern Europe, or even the UK, to make sure people can get the right product at the right price.

Example 3.13: Product sourcer positions himself as an expert business consultant

On a lexical note, the narrative illustrates another prominent feature in the data, which is the client's voice animation in the problem evaluation phase of the narrative. The client's voice is constructed to produce the effect of an unmediated assessment of the client's initially difficult position. In the problem specification (lines 3-5), the client appears to be addressing the audience directly, while, as previously identified by Goffman (1981), the persona of the narrator is distanced and reduced to the role of the animator.

The use of the extreme hyperbole in the evaluation "*I am getting slaughtered by the Chinese*" (line 6) further intensifies the client's desperate situation and signals high involvement. This is followed by a similarly emphatic response by the narrator: *and those*

are music to my ears (line 7). The story concludes first with a generic solution (lines 8-9) that is directly addressed to the audience, followed by a projected solution to outline the speaker's next actions. The direct address to his audience changes the power symmetry between the speaker and the audience through the speaker elevating himself from the position of a mere narrator to one of an educator, further underlining his expert status.

3.5.2.5 Solution phase repetition

The narrative below does not represent a generic tendency but is interesting in the way it manipulates the problem - solution sequence to induce a higher emotional response. In this case, the structural organization of the narrative helps to communicate the contrast between lay and expert solutions to a legal and financial issue.

Abstract	1	...about old people but I'll carry on (laughter XL).
Situation	2	??/A client] recently who says [...] er, I've got an an old old old mum, who
Problem	3 4	needs to sort out her tax and erm [...] avoid kep- paying care fees as she goes into a home.
(Lay) Solution	5 6	But it's alright, we've got it sorted, we're gonna put the house in my name.
Evaluation/Solution dismissal	7	Well, firstly, it doesn't say tax and firstly it doesn't say care fees.
Problem evaluation/ response to dismissal	8	So she was kind of [...] distraught when she realized that,
Solution (projected)	9 10 11	but I said don't worry, we'll sort it out for you. Erm, and working this one might Bryan Fisher with [...] you know [...] financial advice, we can sort that problem out, no problem.
Coda	12 13 14	So if you know anyone who's got elderly parents or grandparents, who just need to talk to somebody, to make sure that they, they erm [...] (covered) their state well,

Example 3.14: Solicitor contrasts lay and expert solutions to the payment of tax and care fees

The solicitor opens her story by alluding to the previous week when she had asked for leads to old people, and in the final solution phase (lines 10-11) she mentions the cooperation with the financial consultant in the BDN group. While this example again follows the problem-solution structure, it is made more complex by recycling rather than repeating the pattern. This time the lay solution (lines 5 – 6) is resolutely dismissed in the evaluation phase (line 7). The problem and evaluation resurface in the client's emotive response (line 8). The respective positions of the client as a hapless layperson and the narrator as the expert are reinforced by the speaker's reassurance in the solution phase: *but I said don't worry, we'll sort it out for you* (line 9). Again, the solution is not communicated in explicit terms, and in respect to Labovian canon, its temporal framing is unclear. The repetition of problem-solution lexis, such as sort out and problem, acts to reinforce the emotive effect of the structural manipulation in this example.

3.6 Discussion

3.6.1 Structural analysis

Data from this research study reveals the dominance of the success story as the principal master narrative governing competence tales. Accordingly, I proposed a generic pattern that appears to structure the majority of competence tales, i.e. was found in 94% of CTs. The structure of most stories communicating competence converges towards a conflation of problem-solution pattern and the Labovian structure. In respect to the Labovian paradigm, substantial diversion was found only in respect to the temporal framing of individual stories, with about 30% of the narratives framed as ongoing events or future

projections, rather than past temporally closed events.⁶³ The temporal aspect is addressed in detail in the following chapter in Section 4.2.

In respect to the structure of future projections, it is the solution (in the problem-solution structure) that tends to be thus projected (see Section 3.5.2.4 above). Solution can also be implied or presupposed⁶⁴ rather than explicitly stated, as exemplified by #12 in Appendix 10. In these cases, the temporal framing of the narrative tends to be unclear. Based on the dataset, the solution phase can appear in the following segments of the Labovian narrative: complicating action, evaluation, resolution and, at times, also coda. Contrary to expectations, the solution does not typically occur in the resolution phase. I suggest that this may be a general tendency for narratives that deploy a problem-solution structure, but a comparative analysis would be needed to confirm that this finding is not specific to the BDN dataset. It appears, however, to proffer some evidence for the criticism of Labovian structure in terms of its limited capacity to communicate the interactional functions of narrative.

In respect to the sequential organization, some of the Labovian segments may be absent and/or the components may appear in a different order. In the narrative below (#8), which represents the most minimalist story in the sample, the structure is reduced to a sequence of three or four segments in which the phase following orientation could be coded as either evaluation or complicating action. In the Labovian research tradition, it is the complicating action that is seen as the obligatory nucleus (Toolan, 2001) or the defining prerequisite

⁶³ See e.g., Geourgakopolou (2006), who identified the tendency to frame small stories as ongoing in her sample of teenage narratives. She does not provide specific information on the prevalence in the sample.

⁶⁴ Implicature is the additional meaning that arises between the surface form of the utterance and its underlying intention, and is inferred by the reader as a result of a particular language choice ... Presupposition refers to meaning embedded in one part of the text that must be both understood and accepted for the whole proposition to make sense (Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p. 179).

of a story. Yet, even this segment can be implied or presupposed rather than explicitly articulated, as is the case in the example below.

Orientation	1	I am working with a client now down in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales,
Evaluation/Complicating action	2	and it is quite unbelievable, the areas that this particular business
	3	is missing out on in terms of costing their particular service.
Coda	4	So who do you know, who's having difficulty, ...

Example 3.15: Labovian structural analysis (revisited)

Another important finding which transpired from the analysis of the sample is that, regardless of their structural make up, narratives embedded in 60 seconds always contain some kind of scene-setting in the form of an orientation (situation), and always attempt to forge a strong connection to the here and now in the form of a coda. The abstract is optional and tends to serve the function of competence definition (in 35% of the stories in the sample). In the abstract, the narrator claims a particular competence which is then substantiated through the body of the narrative. The coda then functions as competence reinforcement and brings the competence statement back from the past event to the present, thus transforming a specific occurrence involving an individual into general scenarios involving the audience and their contacts. The coda tends to be linked to the body of the narrative by conjunctions or implicit relations of causality, with 'so'/'and so' being the dominant markers (65%). Other discourse markers commonly found in this transition from the storied world to the present place and location include 'and', 'but', and 'anyway'.

The presence of a coda as a generic feature of competence tales is a clear deviation from the structural patterns of small stories identified by Georgakopolou (2006) in ordinary talk. This can be easily explained if we take into consideration the situational constraints of the genre. In ordinary talk, it is admissible to start a story and either not finish it or tell a story just for the sake of telling a story, the narrator does not always have to justify his

or her telling of the story. As might be expected, given the business context, the question of relevance, i.e. of tellability, is particularly pronounced in the institutional setting of the self-branding speeches, where most talk could be labelled as transactional.⁶⁵

It may be expected that narratives embedded in a speech as short as the prescribed 60 seconds would tend to have a simple and minimalist structure. Despite the obvious limits of the self-branding mini speech, the sample contains complex and elaborate narratives, such as the example below, which comprises a competence communicating narrative embedded in a frame. The transcript indicates the boundaries of the frame and its interaction with the embedded competence tale. The frame comprises an abstract, orientation and complicating action, and an embedded competence tale that at one level supplies both the evaluation and resolution to the framing story and at another is a full-fledged Labovian story containing the representational problem-solution structure.

⁶⁵ Transactional talk/genre is defined by the primary goal-/task-orientation, while relational talk/genre is primarily interaction-oriented, i.e. geared towards developing mutual relationship. While speakers tend to have multiple goals, the generic label is determined by the predominant orientation. See e.g. Koester (2006) for detailed discussion of the distinction between transactional and relational talk.

Frame	Embedded CT	Transcript
Abstract		We're amazing amazing, and so are you! [(Laughter SM). We run] incredible achievement programmes.
Orientation		This week, yesterday, we were in /??. in /???/ university in /???/. And we were talking to them about how we help people to set and achieve massive goals that enable them to make a huge step up.
Complicating action		And when we came to the end of our presentation, we said to them, Look! You don't have to believe us, just speak to somebody, in your business, we know, who came on one of our programmes.
Resolution	Abstract (<i>Situation</i>)	And one of the members of the audience said, I know who that person is, he works for me, he's in-, in my team.
	Orientation (<i>Problem</i>)	And when he went on your programme in Scotland in in October, erm, he was /???/.
	Complicating action (<i>Solution</i>)	And I don't know what you did with him,
	Evaluation (<i>Evaluation</i>)	but when he came back, he was absolutely transformed. And he has made him such an impact in the business
	Resolution (<i>Evaluation ctd.</i>)	it's only that you /fished / his brain out and you put something else in. It's absolutely magical.
Coda		So if you want to make a huge step up, talk to me...

Example 3.16: BDN narrative embedding another narrative

The transcript illustrates the potential for complexity of narratives limited to a maximum of a minute. It also shows the full generic structure of a competence tale in Labovian terms and via the problem – solution structure communicates the core interactional goals performed in individual segments. The analysis in this section has so far illustrated the key features of BDN competence tales and supplied evidence leading to the conclusion that narratives converge towards a conflation of Labovian and problem-solution structures. As a result, the generic structure of competence-communicating narratives can be identified as:

- a) Competence defined in a general scenario/*Abstract*
- b) Competence evidenced in a specific scenario/Narrative body:
 - a. Situation
 - b. Problem/+ Problem evaluation
 - c. Solution
 - d. Evaluation
- c) Competence reinforced in a general scenario/*Coda*

3.6.2 Problem-solution pattern in competence-communicating narratives

The empirical examples in Section 3.5 that introduced the concept of the BDN competence tale illustrated both the use of the prototypical structure and a number of potential variations to the prototype. Based on the underlying dataset, the *problem-solution* pattern is absent in only two competence-communicating narratives in the sample.⁶⁶ Almost 50% of the competence tales comply with the prototypical structure with no or minimal variation,⁶⁷ but the other half depart from the model in greater degrees of unorthodoxy and complexity. For example, instances of complex patterning may involve successive layers of problem-solution phases, with each focusing on a different dimension of the problem and solution, as shown in 3.5.2.1⁶⁸

Situation → *problem* → *solution* → *problem* → *solution* →
evaluation → *coda*

⁶⁶ Narratives #17 and #20 in Appendix 10.

⁶⁷ These are the following stories: #1, 3, 7, 10, 12, 15, 19, 22, 24, 26, 28 and 29 in Appendix 10. See the appendix for the details of analysis.

⁶⁸ #2 in Appendix 10.

Alternatively, the sequence may involve *multiple solution phases*, in which one is the repair of the other, as illustrated in 3.5.2.1 ⁶⁹

Situation → problem → solution → evaluation/sol. 1 dismissal → solution 2 → coda

The sequence also tends to be realized with an *evaluation either contained within the problem phase*, as in story #8 in Appendix 10, or *following the problem phase*, as in narrative #11 in Appendix 10.

94% of the stories involve a problem evaluation either embedded in or following the problem definition, while a separate problem evaluation phase was identified in 25% of the stories⁷⁰. The *evaluation phase may follow both the problem and solution phases*, as in narrative #4 in Appendix 10., i.e.:

Situation → problem [evaluation] → solution → coda

Situation → problem → evaluation → solution → coda

Situation → problem → evaluation → solution → evaluation → coda

Simple variations of the prototype, i.e. the variations that involve a maximum of four propositions followed by a coda, include a *reversal of the structure*, in which the speaker's action serves as a preventative measure countering a negative outcome for a client.

Situation → solution → problem (prevented) → coda

According to Benwell and Stokoe (2006), the minimum number of propositions in the problem - solution structure is two: a problem in conjunction with a solution. While both problem and solution are crucial to the structure, they do not have to be explicitly

⁶⁹ #5 in Appendix 10.

⁷⁰ #4, 8, 11, 12, 14, 18 and 27 in Appendix 10.

communicated. The minimum number of propositions in a competence narrative in the BDN sample consists of three, as illustrated by the example below. The problem phase is explicitly communicated and contains an evaluation. An explicit solution phase is absent⁷¹ yet the *solution is implicit* in the coda of the narrative.

Situation → *problem [evaluation]* → *coda [implicit solution]*

Situation	1	I am working with a client now down in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales,
Problem/ (+Evaluation)	2 3	and it is quite unbelievable, the areas that this particular business is missing out on in terms of costing their particular service.
Coda (Request for leads to clients defined through narrative)	4 5 6	So who do you know, who's having difficulty, they may not realize, they're having difficulty, but they are not making as much money as what the quotations say...

Example 3.17: Implicit solution

The solution phase in this case takes the form of a presupposition either directed to a general problem scenario involving potential clients, as in lines 4-6: *so who do you know, who's having difficulty*, or involving the audience, as in story #8: *You need a policy that's gonna look after you in that regard, and that's when you need to come to someone like me. Because what I'm gonna do...* This allows the audience to infer that the specific problem has either been resolved or the solution is forthcoming and that the speaker has the competence necessary to resolve the problem.

In advertising discourse, presupposition and implicature tend to be perceived as more persuasive than assertion (see Benwell & Stokoe, 2006, p.179). Yet, in the context of minimalist self-promotional speeches, this may not necessarily be the case. Explicit solution, i.e. clearly-defined competence, might be more likely to enhance the professional

⁷¹ Alternatively, the structural pattern here could be viewed as reversal, i.e. situation could be interpreted as solution. Yet, this alternative analysis does not affect the form the solution takes, i.e. is presupposed rather than explicitly communicated.

credibility of the speaker and more effective in terms of educating the co-members vis-a-vis the speaker's core business activities and desired clientele. Statistically, a solution is explicitly communicated in 82% of the CT sample.

3.6.3 Specific lexico-grammatical features structuring competence tales

I previously suggested that competence tales share some specific lexical and interpersonal markers that tend to index different phases in their generic pattern. Prior research (see Hoey 1994; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; Koester, 2006) examined a group of lexical items that according to Hoey (1994) are signal words for the pattern. The problem-signalling words, such as *trouble*, *difficulty*, or *problem*, and solution-signalling lexis, such as *sort out*, *solve*, and *work out* predictably occur in the sample as markers of the problem and solution phases. However, apart from problem-solution lexis, there seem to be other features that are not only prominent in comparison with the non-narrative dataset, but appear to bear structural implications.

The most prominent of these lexical features amongst the competence tales in the narrative sample relate to heightened involvement. Indeed, with the exception of the opening and closing lines⁷² of the self-branding 60-seconds, the competence tales appear to communicate significantly higher involvement than the non-narrative dataset. The level of interpersonal involvement in discourse could be characterised as a function of the following combined factors: the use of hyperbole and other evaluative language, repetition/parallelism as evaluation, reported speech, metaphor and modality.

Given that the networking presentations would be best classifiable as promotional genre, and are in many aspects close to advertising, it is clearly predictable that they will

⁷² see the *memory hook database* in Appendix 13 for reference.

involve frequent use of hyperbole. Based on current advertising taxonomy, which follows Laskey et al. (1989), hyperbole forms a separate higher category amongst informational appeals (see e.g., Shen, 2012), and it is therefore unsurprising that speakers tend to often rely on hyperbole. While it seems that, in comparison with the non-narrative dataset, competence tales are marked by increased use of hyperbole⁷³, a corpus study that would involve tagging hyperbole in all 250 speeches would be needed to substantiate this observation. Currently, the merit of such a study is perceived as limited and clearly beyond the remit of this thesis.

Of more relevance to this study, hyperbole and its polarity seem to serve as a marker of particular phases in the problem-solution pattern. In order to establish whether there are structural tendencies in the usage of hyperbole, first its distribution in the whole CT sample was measured, counting every hyperbolic locution appearing in the respective phase, i.e., if one speaker used more than one hyperbole, all instances were counted. Next, the percentage of narratives that used hyperbole in the given stage was counted and the two values were used to calculate the arithmetic mean, which was used as the key indicator of the generic tendencies that were observed. Table 3.1 and Figure 3.2 below show the results.

CT Phase	Distribution in the sample Total count/no of speeches	Distribution in the sample (%) Total count ⁷⁴	Proportion of speeches using hyperbole in given phase (%) ⁷⁵	A ⁷⁶	CT#
Abstract/ Comp def	2/2 speeches	5.2	6.2	5.7	#3; #26

⁷³ Fixed *opening/closing lines* of BDN 60-seconds, termed here *memory hooks*, represent the only exception (see the *memory hook database* in Appendix 13).

⁷⁴ Total count of hyperbolic locutions = 100%

⁷⁵ 32 speeches in the dataset = 100 %

⁷⁶ A = arithmetic mean

Situation	1	0.8	3.1	1.9	# 30
Problem/ Eval (-)	13/12 speeches	34.2	37.5	35.9	#4; #5; #8; #11, #11; #12; #14; #19, #21; #22; #27; #29; #30;
Solution	2/2 speeches	5.2	6.2	5.7	#11; #14;
Eval(+)	13/7 speeches	34.2	21.9	28	#2; #3, #3, #3; #4; #19; #20; #22, #22; #29, #29, #29, #29
Coda /Comp reintr in general scenario	7/7 speeches	18.4	21.9	20	#1, #3; #6; #14; #23; #26; #30

Table 3.1: Distribution of hyperbole in the problem-solution pattern of CTs

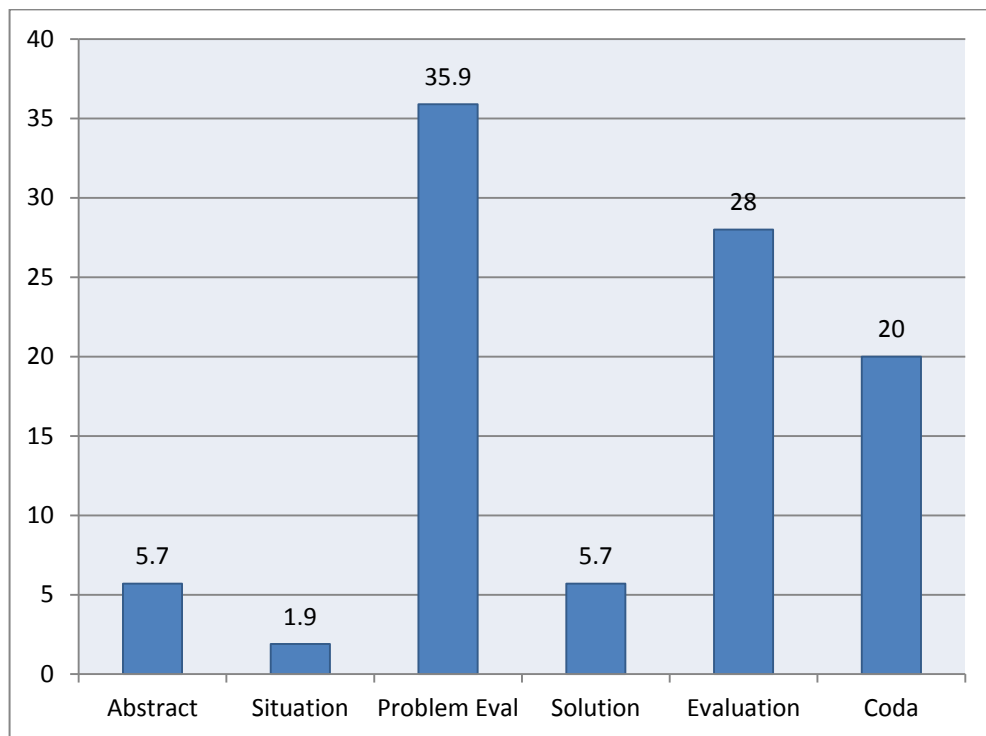


Figure 3.2: Distribution of hyperbole in % in CTs

The results show that the use of hyperbole and its polarity tends to be related to specific phases in the pattern, with hyperbole being most frequently used in problem/problem

evaluation (35.9%), where it had exclusively negative polarity. Very strong reliance on hyperbole was also observed in the evaluation phase (28%), where the polarity was decidedly positive. Coda, which often serves as a summary of the speaker's competence in the general scenario, or defines the prospective clientele by the problem/need they own, involved frequent hyperbolic use (20%) of predictable respective polarity. The use of hyperbole outside these three phases was, in comparison, negligible (5.7 % in abstract and solution, 1.9 % in situation). A question may arise as to why hyperbole occurs more frequently in problem/problem evaluation stage than in the evaluation. The answer may be that while the problem phase is present in all but 6% of competence tales, solution and evaluation phases as such are missing in 18% of CTs. While problem definition appears to be a precondition or rather obligatory element, the solution may be only implied, as described above.

Hyperbolic use involved both non-extreme and extreme hyperbole (ECF). Norrick (2004) maintains that ECFs, although a subcategory of hyperbole, are very different from non-extreme hyperbole in terms of the kinds of formulaic units they occur in and in terms of their distribution and contextual effects. Both Norrick (2004) and Pomerantz (1986) maintain that extreme hyperbole tends to have a negative polarity. However, the analysis of this CT dataset did not corroborate their findings, since the polarity in the sample veered towards the positive.⁷⁷ The evaluation phase following solution involved positive statements (60% of all ECFs), such as: *absolutely transformed*, *absolutely magical*, *absolutely fantastic*, *totally transformed*. Coda involved a single use of ECF (positive), but in this case it was simply a repetition of a hyperbole used before in the speech. Negative statements formed close to 40% of ECFs and appeared exclusively in problem/problem

⁷⁷ Yet, the CT dataset is too small to provide any conclusive evidence of ECF dominant polarity, generalizable to the BDN context.

evaluation, utilising expressions such as *quite unbelievable*, *absolutely shocking*, and *massive (about a bill)*.

Affect and high involvement are central to evaluation (Goodwin and Goodwin, 2002 in Koester, 2006; McCarthy and Carter, 2004), and in addition to the use of hyperbole, the problem/problem evaluation and evaluation phases were marked by increased reliance on other forms of evaluative language/high-involvement lexis:

- Intensifiers, particularly *really*, which was the most frequently used intensifier in the sample, followed by *very*; the use of other intensifiers was limited. In the problem/problem evaluation phase, the speakers doubled the intensifier ‘really’ as in #4: *really really ill*, which is picked up again in the coda: *so if know somebody, who’s really really ill...*, or as in #15: *we had it sort of really really rough*. The intensifier ‘very’ was deployed in the same way, as in the evaluation in #12: *very very significantly improved [bottom line]*, and in #18: *very very happy [client]*. Quantifiers were generally less frequently used than intensifiers, with occasional occurrences of *a lot*, *lots of* and *many*).
- Parallelism as an evaluative strategy was often used, as in this example from #30: *They’re either not delivering, they’re not creative enough, they’re not hitting budget or time scales*. Parallelism is one of the most frequent evaluation techniques in the sample, and was often used in synergy with other strategies, namely hyperbole and reported speech.
- Vague language, as in modifying evaluative adjective/adverb in #5: *she was a bit kind of distraught* (with again a tendency to double such usage).

- Reported speech, as in #11: *he told me, he couldn't get it in Britain, he was thinking that it's going to be Eastern Europe, if not China...*
- Entrenched metaphor/idiom, as in #6: in this case a hyperbolic statement: *we will always go the extra mile...*
- Modality, such as the use of deontic modals expressing necessity or need, as in #13, here again in combination with parallelism: *lot of businesses there that **will need** to rebuild, and they **will need** some new signs, and they're all going through...*

In respect to modality, detailed analysis has shown that problem and problem evaluation phases tend to contain the following epistemic modals: *can (not)*, *could (not)*, *(not) be able to* as e.g. #2, #4 or #18; *would (not)* as in #6 and *be going to* (a negative outcome as in 'shut the company' in #7). The actor is in most cases the client, and the modals in question communicate inability/impossibility, or, in the case of deontic meaning (*need*, e.g. #5, 14, #26), the crucial importance/necessity of a solution. Modal items in the solution and evaluation phase are used most frequently to express ability or professional competence as in #4, #15, #3. *Can* and *be able to* are used again in the coda/comeback to generic scenario for the purposes of summary and to assert a specific competence in scenarios involving the audience and its contacts. Deontic modals expressing high modality, such as *must* or *need* in #21, unsurprisingly tend to co-occur with high-involvement language, i.e., intensifiers and both extreme and non-extreme hyperbole.

Prior research (e.g., Mick and McQuarrie, 1996) suggests that all the above listed strategies tend to work in synergy, which is illustrated by the example below, in which hyperbole is amplified by the use of quantifiers and parallelism.

She plays golf,
but she's got **plenty of balls**, (laughter M),
she's got **lots of** pair of drawers,
she's got **lots of** T-shirts, I couldn't buy her anything for golf.
She's got **more handbags than you can /???** (audience chuckles)
and she's got **shoes that fill the wardrobe**.

Example 3.18: The use of quantifiers and hyperbole amplified by parallelism in problem evaluation in #29

Statistically, similar results were found when I focused on the above listed forms of evaluative language communicating high involvement, i.e. a close correlation was found namely between the use of hyperbole, quantifiers, intensifiers and parallelism.

It was found that evaluative language most typically marks the problem/problem evaluation, the second highest distribution being found in the evaluation, followed by the coda stage in the narrative. Only 6% of the CTs in the sample⁷⁸ did not contain problem qualification in emphatic terms. In these cases, the problem was stated, but not negatively evaluated. For example, in #10, the speaker states the problem: *they had branding issues*, without qualifying it further. In #6 the problem is in fact qualified as serious through a statement of potential consequences rather than any form of high-involvement/evaluation: *If I hadn't gone round the completion would not have gone through*. These findings suggest that emotional involvement in the problem is a universal feature marking most competence tales. In 97% of the stories the evaluation phase contained at least one of the types of evaluative language listed above.

⁷⁸ The two CTs that do not follow the problem-solution structure (do not contain problem phase) were considered outliers, and not included in the analysis.

3.7 Conclusion

The narrative part of this thesis, represents an endeavour to understand how the network's members construct the competence aspect of their professional identity via the use of small stories. In the dataset containing 32 small stories, expressions of professional competence have been identified in 88% of narratives in the sample⁷⁹. This study has ascribed a macro-label of competence narrative to this particular type of communally shared discourse, and has also found that the broad category of competence tales appears to subsume different types of such narrative, namely the *transformation* and *healing* narrative.

The main goal of this chapter was to identify the generic fingerprint of the competence-communicating narrative by analysing its dominant structural and lexical features along with their respective interactional functions. The research has shown that the structural makeup of competence tales is characterized by a relatively high degree of generic predictability and has identified three major steps in the progression of a competence tale as shown below in Figure 3.3. First, competence is defined in a general scenario via abstract, then it is evidenced in a specific scenario via a story inhering a problem-solution pattern⁸⁰, and last, it is reinforced in a general scenario through the coda of the narrative.

⁷⁹ 12.5 % of the narratives in the sample were not classifiable as *competence tales*: 6% were *educational narratives*, designed to inform and incite desired behaviour in co-members, while the other 6% fell into the category of *working anecdotes*. Working anecdote has primarily a contextual function, and is related mostly for its entertainment value. (Marra& Holmes, 2004)

⁸⁰ Problem-solution pattern subsists of four stages: *situation* → *problem* → *solution* → *evaluation*, and was first identified by Hoey (1983).

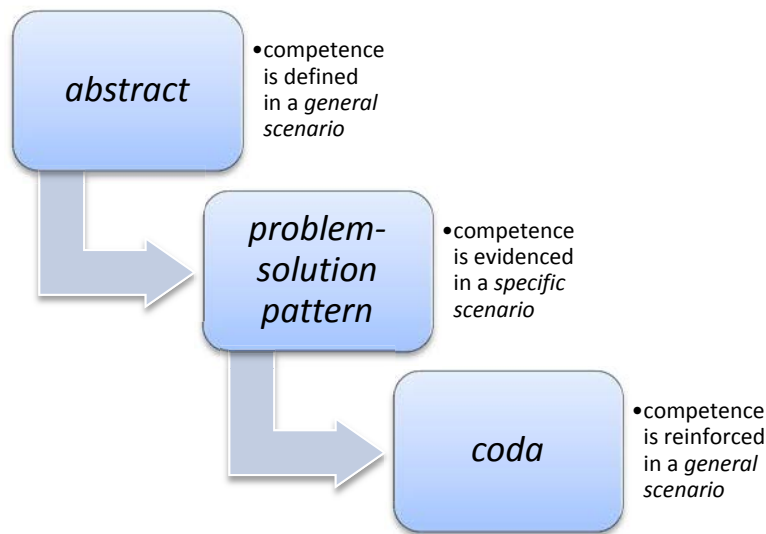


Figure 3.3: Generic structure of competence tale

The results of the structural analysis have shown that the narratives enveloped in the 60-second speech always contain some kind of scene-setting in the form of an orientation/situation, and always attempt to forge a strong connection to the here and now in the form of a coda. The abstract is optional and tends to serve the function of competence definition, i.e., the narrator claims a particular competence which is then substantiated through the body of the narrative. The coda brings the competence statement back from the past event to the present, thus transforming a specific occurrence involving an individual into general scenarios involving the audience and their contacts. The presence of a coda as a generic feature of competence tales is a clear deviation from the structural patterns of small stories in conversations identified in previous research.⁸¹

In respect to the the narrative body structured according to the problem-solution pattern, this study has found that close to 50% of the competence tales fully conform to the prototypical structure of four propositions in the order: situation-problem-solution-evaluation. The larger half depart from the model in varying degrees of unorthodoxy,

⁸¹ e.g., Georgakopolou (2006).

the variation mostly concerns differences in the sequential organization of the narrative and pattern alteration. Simple variations of the prototype, that is the variations of the model that involve at maximum four propositions followed by a coda, included a reversal of the structure in which the speaker's action serves as a preventative measure countering a negative outcome for a client. Complex variations have been found to involve instances such as successive layers of problem-solution phases or multiple solution phases.

The most important finding to emerge from the analysis involved the identification of additional proposition, the problem evaluation phase. The study has shown that 94% of competence tales involved problem evaluation embedded in or following the problem definition. Another marked tendency involved the communication of the solution which in an alternative setup may be implied or presupposed. In advertising discourse, presupposition and implicature tend to be perceived as more persuasive than assertion (see Benwell and Stokoe, 2006, p.179). In contrast, competence tales seem to have a more pronounced effect if the solution is explicitly communicated. While communicating the solution implicitly allows the speaker to make a fast transition from specific experience involving an individual client to involving directly the audience and their contacts, the explicit solution, i.e. clearly-defined competence is more effective in terms of educating the co-members vis-a-vis the speaker's core business activities and desired clientele as well as in raising the speaker's profile.

This chapter has also set out to determine prominent lexical features that tend to index the staging of the CT subgenre. In accord with previous studies⁸², the analysis has confirmed frequent use of problem- and solution-signalling lexis, each in turn indexing the respective problem/solution phase. Next, in comparison with the non-narrative dataset,

⁸² E.g., Koester (2006).

speakers also exhibited a pronounced tendency towards deployment of high-involvement lexis such as hyperbole and reported speech. Following previous research⁸³, the use of hyperbole was perceived as indicative of other forms of evaluative language, and was explored in most detail.

The study has found that the use of hyperbole and its polarity tends to be related to specific phases in the pattern, with hyperbole being most frequently used in problem/problem evaluation (36%, exclusively negative polarity). Second highest incidence was observed in the evaluation phase (28%, positive polarity) Coda, which often serves as a summary of the speaker's competence in the general scenario, or defines the prospective clientele by the problem/need they own, involved frequent hyperbolic use (20%) of predictable respective polarity. In contrast to earlier findings, statistically highest incidence of hyperbole and other evaluative language was detected in the problem/problem evaluation, i.e. higher than in the evaluation. This result may be explained by the fact that while the problem phase appears to be an obligatory element inherent in 94% of competence tales, explicitly communicated solution and evaluation phases appear in 82% of the sample.

High-involvement lexis was thus in most cases used to index the urgency of the initial client's problem and to communicate the client's positive response to the solution proffered by the narrator. Apart from the use of hyperbole, problem/problem evaluation and evaluation phases were marked by increased reliance on other forms of high-involvement lexis, namely on the use of quantifiers, intensifiers, parallelism (apart

⁸³ Prior research (e.g., Mick and McQuarrie, 1996) suggests that high-involvement strategies such as quantifiers, modality, parallelism, metaphor and vague language tend to be used in synergy.

from hyperbole, the most frequent evaluation technique in the sample), vague language, reported speech, entrenched metaphor and modality.

In respect to modality⁸⁴, detailed analysis has shown that problem and problem evaluation phases tend to contain the following epistemic modals: *can (not)*, *could (not)*, *(not) be able*; *would(not)* and *be going to* (+a negative outcome). The actor is in most cases the client, the modals in question communicate inability/impossibility, or in the case of deontic meaning (*need*) the necessity of a solution. Modal items in the solution and evaluation phases are used most frequently to express ability or professional competence. *Can* and *be able to* tend to be used again in coda for the purposes of summary and to assert specific competence in scenarios involving the audience and its contacts. Deontic modals expressing high modality, such as *must* or *need* unsurprisingly tend to co-occur with high-involvement language, i.e., intensifiers and both extreme and non-extreme hyperbole.

High involvement was often signalled through the use of reported speech, which again indexed mostly problem/problem evaluation and then also evaluation phase. The specifics of reported speech usage in the competence tales and its prominence in the dataset warrant further attention and are therefore explored in detail in the following chapter that focuses on further defining features of CTs, beyond their structure.

⁸⁴ Chapter 5 revisits the use of modality in competence tales in case study analysis.

CHAPTER 4

Reported Speech and Temporal Features of Competence

Tales

Had a client recently who says: “er, I’ve got an an old old old mum, who needs to sort out her tax and avoid paying care fees as she goes into a home.”

[#8, BDN member, Birmingham 2005]

The structural analysis in the previous chapter went some way towards defining the concept of competence-constructing narrative. This chapter continues to explore CTs and is geared towards capturing two lexico-syntactic and discourse phenomena that are prominent in, and in some ways specific to the competence tales. The chapter first turns towards the investigation of *multivocality*⁸⁵, i.e. the use of reported speech in competence tales, while the second theme explored here is *temporality*, i.e. the specifics of CTs’ location in time. Despite the obvious divergence or relative unrelatedness of the two themes, they are brought together in this chapter as both further define the subgenre of competence tales. Each seems to perform specific interactional functions, and each seems to have implications for the professional identity of the speaker.

4.1 Reported speech in competence tales

The first theme to emerge from this chapter has been touched on above in Section 3.7, in which I suggested that reported speech in CTs signals structural salience, highlighting key stages in the generic structure. A closer analysis of reported speech/voice

⁸⁵ Term used in de Finna et al. (2006, p.12)

construction⁸⁶ in CTs in this chapter shows that it is the key resource in evidencing and supporting professional identity claims, namely the statements of competence, with above 40% of the narratives involving a form of reported speech. In fact, RS is the primary resource to create the allusion that the audience can access a naked reality, and narrators step into their own voice or the voices of others to ‘construct their identity in opposition to, or in agreement with, what figures of authority [co-members, clients] express in their story-worlds’ (de Finna et al. 2006, p.13).

Tracing current research into reported speech and identity has shown that the study of multivocality as an instrument of identity construction remains rather limited⁸⁷. On the other hand, the investigation of its interactional functions reaches across a range of both conversational and institutional sites, involving reported speech in casual conversations (e.g. Tannen, 1989, 2007), narrative and sociolinguistic interviews (e.g., van der Houwen, 2012), newspaper articles (ibid.), witness testimonies in court (e.g., Galatolo, 2007; Berg-Seligson, 2009), or interaction between spiritual mediums and their clients (Wooffitt, 2007). This study attempts to address the lack of research in this area that targets a marketing institutional domain such as a networking context.

4.1.1 Research questions specific to RS theme

The first research question is central to this chapter and deals with RS use in competence tales, namely its interactional outcomes and implications for the construction of competence as a dimension of identity. While multivocality is the inherent part of storytelling (Bakhtin, 1981 inter alia), the use of reported speech is not limited

⁸⁶ Throughout the chapter, I rely to the same extent on the term reported speech and constructed dialogue. Terminology is handled in the theoretical section, including a debate on their equivalence and reasons for the decision to use both.

⁸⁷ See de Finna, 2011 for exception.

exclusively to the narrative form. The following research questions thus address reported speech use in the non-narrative BDN sample.

RQ 4.1 Which are the most prominent interactional functions of RS in competence tales and how do they effect competence claims?

RQ 4.2 What are the tendencies in RS use in the non-narrative sample?

RQ 4.3 Are there similarities in its usage in CTs and non-narrative data?

4.2 Temporality in competence tales

The second theme to be addressed in this chapter is the temporal locatedness of competence tales since specific temporal location in the near past or present is one of the factors uniting all small stories delivered in the researched context. It appears that framing a story as a recent past or ongoing event is in fact *conditio sine qua non*, the necessary requirement, to legitimize the competence tale and the particular identity constructed via the story.

The theme of temporality has played a critical role in the conception of narrative and narrative identity. It has been the critical factor in defining a narrative (Labov and Waletzky, 1967/1997), an important element in terms of organizing a narrative (Ricoeur, 1984), and a crucial variable in identity construction (Taylor, 2003). Some have argued that despite the degree of attention that the temporal dimension has attracted in analysis, temporal and, for the matter, spatial dimensions have not been recognized as doing much more than simply providing a background that is auxiliary to the narrative action and identity constructed in that action (e.g., De Fina, 2003; Georgakopolou, 2003; Taylor, 2003; Bamberg, 2009).

Georgakopolou (2003) argues that these two dimensions crucially interact with, and shape the action itself; they influence the audience's interpretation and thus the whole meaning of the story. Taylor (2003) maintains that these dimensions connect a speaker to the multiple established meanings and identities of that time and space.

4.2.1 Research questions specific to the theme of temporality

While the discussion of spatiality is beyond the remit of this chapter, the second part of this chapter highlights the potential salience of a specific time frame as actually contributing to the tellability (Ochs and Capps, 2001; Norrick, 2005) of the self-marketing small story. Deploying a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, dominant temporal frames have therefore been isolated in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

RQ 4.4 Is there a recognizable tendency to employ particular time frames within CTs ?

RQ 4.5 If so, how can we account for their specific temporal location?

4.3 Reported speech in competence tales

This chapter opens with an overview of RS usage in the competence tale dataset, followed by an overview of RS deployment in the non-narrative data. After introducing the dataset and methodology, the chapter continues with a discussion of how reported speech has been viewed since its emergence as a feature in the field of literary theory (4.5). The discussion engages in the exploration of RS form, its authenticity and its specific uses in a variety of interactional sites, including the institutional domain. Part 4.6 identifies the core interactional functions of RS use in competence tales, isolating both the evidential

and involvement functions. This section also discusses the cline of evidentiality and client involvement, as based on the form of RS and the structural phase of the CT which incorporates RS. It also presents a detailed analysis of two empirical RS examples of extreme client involvement (called here simulated customer reference), and contrasts its use with a case of direct client endorsement. Section 4.7 discusses RS usage in non-narrative data, i.e. data which is here categorised as scenarios, and charts its key lexical and structural characteristics. This allows for a comparison between CTs and scenarios, in respect to their generic and functional characteristics and particularly to the usage of reported speech. Section 4.8 then addresses the second major theme of this chapter, i.e. temporality in competence tales, discussing evidence of dominant temporal framings.

4.4 Dataset and method

As the primary focus is on further delineating the concept of competence tales, and identifying the specifics of reported speech usage in CTs, it is important not to lose sight of the whole sample of 250 speeches from which the narrative dataset was isolated. All instances of voice construction in the narrative and non-narrative data in this sample were therefore identified and analyzed for shared generic features and interactional similarities between RS usage. The two subsections below bring an overview of RS usage in the two subsets of data, while the data platform for the temporal analysis, given in the penultimate section of this chapter, is identical to the narrative dataset of 32 speeches underlying the previous chapter.

4.4.1 Overview of narrative data involving RS

The overview below lists all occurrences of direct reported speech and quasi-direct reported speech in the competence tale dataset. Elements introducing direct speech, such as *she said* (quotatives) are underlined. Quotation marks have been inserted to demarcate the onset and the ending of direct reported speech (DRS) utterance. All occurrences of DRS are italicised and individual examples referred to in the text of this chapter, are number-labelled according to the order in which the source narratives appear in Appendix 10.

#3	We <u>said to them</u> : <i>“Look! You don’t have to believe us, just speak to somebody, in your business, we know, who came on one of our programmes.”</i>
#3	And [...] <u>one of the members of the audience</u> [...] <u>said</u> [...] <i>“I know who that person is, he works for me,...”</i>
#5	... <u>a client</u> recently who <u>says</u> [...] : <i>“er, I’ve got an an old old old mum, who needs to sort out her tax and erm [...] avoid kep- paying care fees as she goes into a home...”</i>
#5	But <u>I said</u> : <i>“don’t worry, we’ll sort it out for you...”</i>
#9	Er, and so she said to them you know how, how did they get along with their bank, and unfortunately, [...] or fortunately for me, they were not having a good time with them. So [...] <u>she phoned me and said</u> : <i>“Could we [...] could we do some business?”</i>
#11	<u>And the words were</u> : <i>“I am getting slaughtered by the Chinese.”</i> And those are music to my ears.
#16	Now <u>I asked in the office</u> [...] yesterday, <i>“does anybody want erm [...] some leads into a company.”</i> I don’t know if (female name) was winding me up, because she’s asked me to stand up and ask for Firkin’s Head Office.
#17	And [...] when the staff’s out there, we asked how they would like to be [...] have their morale raised [...]. <u>They actually said</u> , <i>“those nice badges [...] they would like to have.”</i>
#23	And anybody who sits there, and just sits there <u>thinking</u> : <i>“I’ve never had a bad debt”,</i> you must think about it!
#27	And <u>he says</u> : <i>“ Paul, the problem is that all my background is auditing.”</i>
#27	And this is what <u>he says</u> [...] in his return reference, he’s given me [2s]: <i>“I found Paul to be highly effective and focused...”</i>
#29	So [...] <u>I was raking my brain</u> , <i>“what on Earth can I get her for her birthday that she’d really enjoy?”</i> And one thing that came to me was that [...] we never ever had our family pictured

	together.
#32	and I just have to say, David’s lamp doesn’t work. I know that, because my wife borrowed it a bit before, and she rubbed it three times. And <u>she said</u> “ <i>it doesn’t work!</i> ” <u>I said</u> , “ <i>how do you know that?</i> ” <u>She said</u> , “ <i>cause you’re still here!</i> ” (laughter L).

Example 4.1: DRS or quasi-DRS in the competence tale dataset

The following overview lists all occurrences of indirect reported speech (IRS) in the competence tale dataset. The elements introducing indirect speech are underlined and all occurrences of IRS are italicised.

#2	He <u>told me that</u> <i>he couldn’t get it in Britain, he was thinking that it’s going to be Eastern Europe, if not China</i>
#3	...,yesterday, we were in /???./ university in /???./. And <u>we were talking to them</u> about how <i>we help people to set and achieve massive goals, that enable them to make a huge step up.</i>
#7	I <u>gave ah the client the truth</u> about its premium, which <u>he said</u> <i>was fine in sense of what his budget was, and he was gonna shut the company down.</i>
#9	Er, and so <u>she said to them</u> <i>you know how, how did they get along with their bank,</i> and unfortunately, [...] or fortunately for me, they were not having a good time with them.
#16	I don’t know if (female name) was winding me up, because <u>she’s asked me to stand up and ask for Firkin’s Head Office.</u> Now I asked in the office [...] yesterday, “does anybody want erm [...] some leads into a company.”
#17	And [...] when the staff’s out there, <u>we asked how</u> <i>they would like to be [...] have their morale raised [...].</i> They actually said, those nice badges [...] they would like to have.
Ref to #19	It’s interesting, actually, you spot opportunities everywhere, it’s like <u>Steve just said,</u> <i>he saved his client four and a half thousands pounds a month.</i>

Example 4.2: IRS in the competence tale dataset

4.4.2 Overview of narrative data involving RS

The non-narrative segments relying on reported speech are in this thesis labelled *problem scenarios*. To supply a shorthand definition here, a problem scenario is a universally accessible situation that inheres a problem and tends to be described vividly and in detail.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ The conception of *problem scenario* in this thesis is different from the concept of *metaphor scenario* as defined in Musolff (2006). See Section 4.7.1 for a detailed definition.

Scenarios and their close connection to competence tales will be discussed in section 4.7 in this chapter. The plate below lists 15 non-narrative examples of DRS and IRS that involve either client voice constructions (80%) or audience voice constructions (the remaining 20%), in which audience tend to be positioned as direct potential clients. Other types of usage, such as internal monologue, have not been identified in the non-narrative dataset. The examples are labelled with an initial S and a corresponding number (e.g., S1) to distinguish scenarios clearly from narratives. Discourse markers/signalling phrases introducing a scenario are in bold.

S1	< n Lawrie > Things to listen out for that really mean they're the ideal people for me is: <i>"I can't find something", "people can buy cheaper than I can make", "I've just been let down on quality", "I wanna create a new product but I don't have the time" or "if only I could go and find this product here my customer would buy, but I just don't know where to look".</i>
S2	< n Billy > You know how many small businesses are really successful at what they do [...] but, <u>they're always telling me</u> [...] <i>when they start to expand, they find themselves struggling to cope [...] with all of the extra things, that they need to know about or do...</i>
S3	< n Salvia > One of the main barriers , why people don't like to come to see solicitors, is because of the costs. <i>"How much is this going to cost me?"</i> It's like a meter running [...] erm, it's like a taxi. <i>"How much is /??/?/ gonna cost me, how much is /??/?/ gonna cost me. Crickey [...] have I got the money?"</i> (< n David > in agreement: Mhm.) What we do for clients, is that we agree a fee [...] upfront.
S4	< n Richard > So [...] in terms of what to- to listen out for , erm [...] <u>somebody saying</u> <i>"I've lost a piece of paper"</i> , spent about thirty minutes trying to find it, and gave up. Or [...] you're on the phone to somebody and <u>they say</u> [...] <i>"oh wait a minute, I'll just see if I can find a piece of paper"</i> , rustle, rustle, rustle, two minutes later <i>"still not found it, sorry I'll get back to you later."</i> Erm, so if you're aware of people that have got lots of paper, can't find the piece, they want, then that would be an ideal referral for us.
S5	< n Rob > Do you know anybody who says [...] <i>"I would love to own a holiday home."</i> <i>"I'd love to build a property portfolio."</i> [...] <i>"I'm concerned about my retirement and my pension?"</i> Please give him my card. We're aiming at a hundred per cent return on investments. I am looking for people who [...] are looking to [...] learn about the opportunities of investing overseas
S6	< n Matt > and also, you know that- you probably know either <u>friends or family that are saying about their new year's resolution</u> already: <i>"next year I'm going to lose weight."</i>

	<p>"Next year, I'm gonna quit smoking." "Next year, I'm going to get myself organized." Yeah? Well [...] why not buy them, for Christmas, a gift voucher [...] from me?</p>
S7	<p>< n Richard > Um: so what [...] what sort of thing should you listen for in terms of trying to find us a [...] ah: a referral, uh <u>someone that says</u> "I lost a piece of paper and spends 30 minutes looking for it," well we [...] hear that all the time. "Uh: wait a minute," you're on the phone with somebody, "wait a minute I'll see if I can find the right file", and about five minutes later "no sorry can't find it we'll discuss that later".</p>
S8	<p>< n Clive > Now [...] I- if you hear anyone who says "well the pictures that I get from my nursery they're the same every year. You might just as well take the picture and just transpose the head and it looks the same". But if you [(laughter XL) want to capture the personality]..</p>
S9	<p>< n Vicky > Um:: things to listen for are [...] <u>people just basically slagging their staff off</u> [(S/audience) Oh shit! (laughter XL) [...] so "they're always late", "they don't put things through on Friday", "just basically useless." So anything like that any companies that you hear people [...] ah moan about the staff at lease, let me know.</p>
S10	<p>< n Jean > What to listen for: so many things, uh "I'm starting a new business", "I'm looking to sell my business", "I'm looking to purchase a new business", any of those phrases please think of us.</p>
S11	<p>< n Jeremy > So if you know anyone <u>who's always saying</u> "my staff are a bunch of idle useless unreliable bastards who never do enough work" then [...] maybe they m- might have a health problem [laughter].</p>
S12	<p>< n Lawrie > Problem: And this is my difficulty, if I go to a manufacturer [...] they don't feel comfortable talking to me. What they'll do, they'll get me to [...] find a product, and I'll get the price, <u>they say</u> "that's really good"/, then they'll go to their incumbent [...] and get their incumbent to get as close to that as they can. Which is not really fair.</p> <p>Contrast good scenario:</p> <p>But what I need [...] a people who deal with manufacturers, <u>who are prepared to say</u>, "well, have a chat with this fellow, he's worthwhile having a talk to, and he's honest, and he'll be fair." Because that's what people need, they need to go and have an introduction.</p>
S13	<p>< n Mark > You know how, you're running around, making your business grow, and you always forget something. <u>Most people</u> run out of the office, they've got the car keys and their mobile phone, they leave the diary, leave their file facts, leave the appointments notes [...] get to the appointment, <u>thinking</u> "blimey, what am I gonna do? I don't know who I'm talking to, who I need to meet with, or exact directions."</p>
S14	<p>< n Bryan > Uh [...] areas we are still massively busy, and especially as <u>Mat said</u> this morning, <u>you wake up this morning, you open the curtains and you think</u>, "oh: my: God, I could really not do with this, is overseas property purchase."</p>
S15	<p>< n David > and I'm a genie. I hear you say "what does a genie do?" A genie grants you</p>

three wishes. “ <i>I wish I could save time on all my key processes I spend far too much time on them.</i> ” Now I can grant you that wish. “ <i>I wish I could reduce my costs [...] of running my business.</i> ” Now I can grant you <i>that</i> wish. “ <i>I wish I could improve the quality of my products and services [...] without [...] sacrificing cost.</i> ” Now I can help you- I can grant that wish also.

Example 4.3: Problem scenarios involving client voice (S1-S12) or audience as clients (S13-S15)

4.4.3 Note on methodology

In exploring the RS theme, the prominence of its usage in both the narrative and scenario data was measured statistically. The results are reported throughout the RS section, based on their relevance to the analysis carried out in the particular subsections. CA⁸⁹-based study of interactional functions of DRS and IRS and social constructionist analysis of the identity outcomes of direct reported speech were deemed to be the most useful foci for analysis of its use in competence tales. In the analysis of individual examples, attention is again paid to some of the structural features of segments relying on RS, and the overall level of involvement the speeches communicate. At times, ethnographic insight supplies useful commentary on the perceived effectiveness of individual speeches, based on interviews with the members of the audience. The second theme of temporality was explored deploying a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses, this investigation being geared towards establishing the dominant temporal framing of BDN small stories as based on the analysis of deixis (time adverbs, tense, aspect).

⁸⁹ CA – Conversation Analysis.

4.5 Theoretical backdrop: Core themes in the current study of reported speech

Reported speech (RS) is commonly understood as reconstruction of prior talk or construction of hypothetical talk transmitted from another context into current interaction (Holt and Clift, 2007, *inter alia*). Research⁹⁰ into reported speech was initiated mainly in the field of literary theory (Bakhtin, 1981), and recent RS work still resonates with Bakhtin's notion of polyphony and dialogism in talk (*ibid.*), the influential premise being that talk is permeated with the voices of others. In terms of direction, most research has focused on one of four central themes, engaging fundamentally in the study of:

- a) *form*, distinguishing broadly between direct and indirect RS
- b) *authenticity* or fidelity of the reported utterance to the semantic value of the original statement; *analysis of reported speech in context*
- c) *interactional functions*, i.e. what RS *does* in discourse (including research into identity construction)
- d) *relation to identity construction*

All four areas are a matter of ongoing research, but most of the current interest is directed towards the study of RS in the context in which it appears, and the related concern with the specific interactional functions of RS. I will now briefly attend to each theme, addressing these only in so far as they relate to the current study.

⁹⁰ This section provides a minimal map situating the study in the RS research landscape. A detailed tour of research on RS is given in Tannen et al. (2015) and Holt and Clift (2007).

4.5.1 Direct and indirect form of reported speech

The most historically established research has studied the form of RS, namely, the distinction between direct reported speech and indirect reported speech. Direct discourse applies to utterances that are cast in the original speaker's voice, while indirect discourse is framed as the voice of the current narrator in the current interaction. Thus, IRS is related from the current speaker's point of view, while DRS was in this line of research viewed as 'not the reporter's speech, but the reported speaker's speech whose role is played by the reporter' (Coulmas, 1986, p.2 in Holt and Clift, 2007). This section will later discuss, therefore, authenticity as an issue which subjects such a position on DRS to criticism. The introductory components, called *quotatives*,⁹¹ tend to be identical for both DRS and IRS in that they are prototypically in the form of *pronoun + say* (or its variant) as in the example from my data below.

Pronoun + say in DRS in #27

And he says: "Paul, the problem is that all my background is auditing."

Example 4.4: Pronoun + say in DRS

In IRS the sequence tends to be followed by the complementizer 'that'

Pronoun + tell + that in IRS in #2

He told me that he couldn't get it in Britain,...

Example 4.5: Pronoun + tell + that in IRS

RS does not necessarily require any introductory component, i.e. it can be freestanding, as in:

Freestanding structure in DRS in S2

A genie grants you three wishes. "I wish I could save time on all my key processes I spend far too much time on them." Now I can grant you that wish.

Example 4.6: Freestanding structure in DRS

⁹¹ Mathis and Yule, 1994.

However, the categories of direct and indirect discourse are not always clear-cut so the amalgam of the two, termed quasi-direct speech, needs to be employed in diverse cases (see e.g., Coulmas, 1986; Li, 1986, for a detailed treatment of lexico-syntactic and prosodic features of individual forms). The following example from my data involves a quasi-direct form.

Quasi-direct form in #17

They actually said, those nice badges [...] they would like to have.

Example 4.7: Quasi-direct form

This type of quotative signals full commitment to the original statement (this is what *they actually said*), thus preparing the audience for direct speech. The initial evaluation including the deictic referent: *those nice badges* appears to be cast in the voice of the client, while the use of the personal pronoun *they* in *they would like to have* is an element of IRS.

At this point, a question may arise as to why attention was paid to the form of RS, especially if the distinction between the direct and indirect form appears to be a rather moot point. The reason for the detailed explanation supplied here, is the functional differences that direct and indirect discourse are claimed to possess (see e.g., Holt and Clift, 2007) and which will be subject to study in the analysis of the data in Section 4.6.

4.5.2 The study of RS in context: Authenticity of RS

Unlike the previous research that seems to be predominantly rooted in Conversation Analysis, the sociolinguistic perspective (but also current CA interactionally-grounded research) views reported speech as inseparable from both the reported and the reporting

contexts (Bakhtin, 1981; Tannen, 1989; Holt and Clift, 2007; van der Houwen, 2012). This line of thought follows or corresponds with the Bakhtinian notion of the dynamic interplay between RS and the reported context:

(T)he speech of another, once enclosed in a context, is – no matter how accurately transmitted – always subject to certain semantic changes. The context embracing another’s word is responsible for its dialogizing background, whose influence can be very great. Given the appropriate methods for framing, one may bring about fundamental changes even in another’s utterance accurately quoted.

[1981, p. 340]

This is in loose terms a social constructionist perspective on RS and discourse in general, rejecting the early notion that reported speech or direct discourse for the matter, is a faithful reproduction of the original statement:

My reasons for claiming that one cannot, in any meaningful sense report speech are as follows. First, much of what appears in discourse as dialogue, or reported speech, was never uttered by anyone else in any form.

[Tannen, 1989, p. 112]

This perspective has very clear implications for identity construction since RS is thus a valuable means of constructing a particular identity or identities to suit particular audiences and situations (Bruner, 2003). Tannen (1989) supports her claim with a number of hypothetical past and future scenarios, including a case in which cat’s voice is animated by its owner. She defies Coulmas’ (1986) take on DRS mentioned earlier, driving her point further home:

Second, if dialogue is used to represent utterances that were spoken by someone else, when an utterance is repeated by the current speaker, it exists primarily, if not only, as an element of the reporting context, in keeping with Bakhtin's sense of polyphony. In the deepest sense, the words have ceased to be those of the speaker to whom they are attributed.

[ibid., p.112]

Clearly, there is an inherent terminological issue in the very label of *reported speech*. Tannen (ibid.) suggested that the term RS is replaced by a more apt term *constructed dialogue* which appears to better capture the fact that RS is apriori a construction (or reconstruction) of a previous or hypothetical locution. As with narrative, although the notion that reported speech provides direct access to the voice which is being animated is attractive, it is still a trap.

This understanding and the related sense of contextual embeddedness sits very well with the central position of this thesis and the emphasis it places on the situational constraints of a particular context and particular audience. Despite the fact that reported speech is not the most felicitous term, both reported speech (RS) and constructed dialogue (CD) are used in this chapter, as RS continues to be most widely used. In addition, it allows for the distinction between direct and indirect form, which seems to have specific implications for what RS does in interaction.

4.5.3 Interactional functions of RS

Most research has targeted the general functions of reported speech in narratives. As a consequence, reported speech has been established as a prominent involvement strategy that frequently acts as a summary, serves as an example of an utterance type, and is used as a collaborative strategy to signal mutual understanding amongst the speakers (Tannen, 1989; van der Houwen, 2012). Of more relevance, reported speech appears

to transfer thoughts in a seemingly unmediated manner, providing what appears to be direct access into the mind of the reported, a function that is attributed primarily to direct discourse. Different forms of reported speech are claimed to serve different functions and have been found to index different stages of narrative (see Berg-Seligson, 2009, p.187).

While indirect discourse tends to form the background to a story, key events and the climax of the narrative tend to be related as direct discourse. The extract from the narrative dataset given below exemplifies this tendency. The speaker first introduces the situation, using indirect discourse (or, in this case, quasi-direct speech): *so she said to them, you know, how did they get along with their bank*; while the complicating action or climax is cast as direct discourse: *she phoned me and said, could we do some business?*

#9

Er, and so she said to them *you know how, how did they get along with their bank*, and unfortunately, [...] or fortunately for me, they were not having a good time with them. So [...] she phoned me and said: “*Could we [...] could we do some business?*”

Example 4.8: Story background cast as IRS, climax cast as DRS

Direct discourse is generally seen as a more powerful involvement tool (e.g., Wooffitt, 2007), in that it signals particular ‘structural and thematic salience’ (Hickmann, 1993, p.119). DRS has a clear evidential function, providing evidence (Galatolo, 2007, p.112), and making a claim more robust (see Holt and Clift, 2007, p.12; Wooffitt, 1992, 2007). It also gives a statement specific authority, as found by Lucy (1993, p.177), who claims an unequivocal connection between direct report, or literal re-enactment, and perceived authoritativeness. Similar findings have been reported across diverse interactional sites, with most prominent research conducted in forensic linguistics (e.g., Galatolo, 2007; Berg-Seligson, 2009).

DRS enables the speaker to take on different roles and shift positions, creating a context that best fits the speaker’s interactional purpose with a reduced risk of compromising the narrator in the process. Goffman aptly comments on this quality:

When a speaker employs conventional brackets to warn us that what he is saying is ... mere repeating of words by someone else, then it is clear that he means to stand in a relation of reduced personal responsibility for what he is saying.

[1974/1986, p.512]

Goffman drove this understanding further home by breaking down the roles of speaker and hearer into their constituent parts. He identified three categories of narrative persona: the author as someone who ‘has selected the sentiments that are being expressed and the words in which they are encoded’, the animator as ‘the talking machine’, and the principal as someone who ‘believes personally in what is being said and takes the position that is implied in the remarks’ (1981, p.144).

The example below illustrates how a speaker may steer a narrative through individual categories. She starts off as an animator (lines 1-3), then steps out to assume her reporting voice (lines 4-5), providing an expert assessment of the problem and commenting on the client’s emotional response. In lines 6-7, she then returns to the storied world as both an author and principal of the solution.

1	A*	A client recently <u>who says</u> “I’ve got an an old old old mum,who needs to sort out her
2	A	tax, and avoid kep- paying care fees as she goes into a home. But it’s alright, we’ve got
3	A	it sorted, we’re gonna put the house in my name.”
4	R	Well, firstly, it doesn’t say tax, and firstly it doesn’t say care fees. So she was a bit kind
5	R	of distraught, when she realized that.
6	AT+P	<u>But I said</u> “don’t worry, we’ll sort it out for you. And working this one might Bryan
7	AT+P	Fisher with, you know, financial advice. We can sort that problem out, no problem.”

Example 4.9: DRS deployment in #5

Legend: *A – animator, R – reporting voice, AT – author, P – principal

This is a typical competence narrative, condensed and brief. Multivocality is in this case a careful navigation between the client's voice and the narrator's reporting voice and the narrator's constructed voice, enabling the speaker to communicate clearly and briefly two aspects of her professional identity, i.e. her competence and goodwill towards her client. The competence tale gives evidence of both, and the speaker manages to create a solid position of relative power vis-à-vis her client, with no implied discomfort or face threat.

4.6 Interactional functions of RS in competence tales

Self-promotion is becoming part-and-parcel of self/identity in contemporary societies.

[Fairclough 1995, p.140]

The example concluding the preceding section illustrated the potential power of multivocality in CTs. In the researched networking context, 62% of all voice constructions involve the client's voice, which either communicates/evaluates the problem as in the example given on the previous page, or evaluates the solution/narrator's performance. Client voice animation relieves the narrator of a face-threatening position that is related to overtly positive self-evaluation.

Client voice appropriation puts the speaker into the role of an animator distanced from either emotive appraisal of the situation or of their own performance, while providing a stronger evidential base for these implied claims. These voice constructions tend to be perceived by the audience as 'an opportunity to directly verify' the statement,

(Galatolo 2007, p.12).⁹² The remaining 38% of voice construction in the data mostly involve narrators animating their own voice in a response to the client's utterance. Involving both the client and the narrator as in a dialogue seems to amplify the evidential power of the competence claim, increasing the immediacy of the narrated exchange and heightening the overall involvement. The speakers thus solidify their position as credible professionals, re-enacting the situation in which they supplied expert help to a client.

The primary interactional goals of competence tales are to construct the speaker's professional identity, communicating competence as well as goodwill and trustworthiness, but also to elicit on-target referrals for the speaker. Competence tales define the target market in explicit terms, identifying the clientele the professional is able to help. The use of reported speech is a catalyst in achieving these two goals. Reported speech is one of the most prominent implicit self-promotion strategies available in CTs in the dataset, since it allows the absent client to directly endorse the speaker. The catalytic effect of voice construction is enabled by the synergy of the following interactional functions:


- a) *evidential* (namely voice constructions involving *the client/witness* voice)
- b) *mediating first-hand experience* (related to the above)
- c) *mitigating the face threat inherent in positive self-evaluation*

In terms of the evidentiality of RS claims, there seems to be a progressive degree of client involvement in the competence claim, a scale spanning from a subtle indication of client investment in the situation to the direct endorsement of the speaker by the client. While there seem to be a number of factors at play, the form of reported speech appears to be the most influential in affecting the evidential value of the competence claim. The two

⁹² Galatolo refers specifically to witnesses testifying in court.


plates below help to illustrate this, starting with the forms that do not involve reported speech, and spanning across indirect discourse to constructed dialogue. The first comparative sample contains problem evaluations, while the second focuses on solution/performance evaluations.

The first extract in the plate below represents the narrator's evaluation of the problem, the IRS, quasi-, and DRS claims that involve the client's voice. A palpable increase in the intensity of client investment in the problem phase can be sensed as the statements progress towards DRS use.

Client Involvement	RS form	Problem evaluation
None  High	-	it is quite unbelievable, the areas that this particular business is missing out on in terms of costing (#8)
	IRS	He <u>told me that</u> he couldn't get it in Britain, (#2)
	Quasi	He <u>was thinking that</u> it's going to be Eastern Europe, if not China (#2)
	DRS	<u>And the words were:</u> "I am getting slaughtered by the Chinese." And those are music to my ears. (#11)

Example 4.10: The scale of client involvement in problem evaluation depending on the form of RS deployment

The next set of statements illustrates the same point in the solution evaluation phase. Again, the intensity of the client investment in the claim increases progressively from non-RS use to the DRS statement.

Client Involvement	RS form	Solution/Performance evaluation
None  High	-	I'm really pleased (#22, self-evaluation)
	-	He's delighted (#2, client's response to the solution)
	IRS/quasi	They (clients) actually <u>said</u> , those nice badges, they would like to have (#17)
	DRS	This is what (the client) <u>he says</u> in his return reference, he's given me: <i>"I found Paul to be highly effective and focused..."</i>

Example 4.11: The scale of client involvement in solution evaluation depending on the form of RS deployment

Apart from the form of the RS statement, another factor which seems to influence the intensity of client involvement and the evidentiality of the claim is the structural variable, i.e. the phase in the structural makeup of the CTs involving the client voice. This variable is practically dichotomous; the client's voice tends to be animated either in the problem/problem evaluation or solution/performance evaluation. Based on the interplay of the form variable and the structural variable, each locution can be mapped onto a simple matrix (Figure 4.1), giving an approximation of the intensity of the client involvement. The horizontal axis organizes RS statements based on the form, spanning from indirect (left) to direct discourse (right), with quasi form occupying the middle. The vertical axis organizes the statements based on whether they appear in the problem evaluation (the lower half), or solution/performance evaluation (the top half).⁹³

⁹³ problem and performance evaluations are the most likely sites for RS.

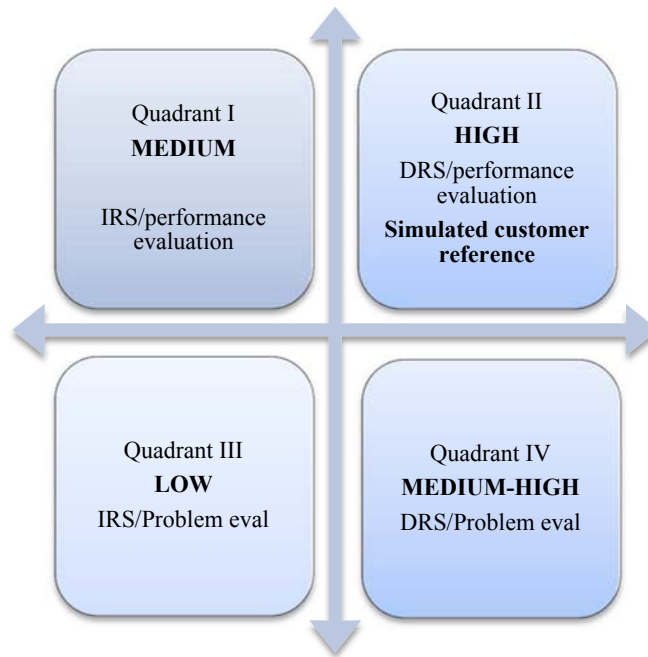


Figure 4.1: Client involvement matrix

Quadrant II signals the most intense client investment in the competence statement. It denotes the instances when performance/solution is evaluated directly in client's voice: a case of *simulated customer reference*. The term is derived from the fact that the absent client appears to directly endorse the professional. Quadrant I and IV display mutually comparable amounts of client involvement, although the structural phase variable affects the claim more than the form of RS. Quadrant III displays the lowest intensity of client involvement amongst RS claims.

While the matrix maps a simple interrelationship between two variables, giving a rough guide to the resulting degree of involvement, it is an obvious simplification. There are a number of factors at play, and the most dynamic variable seems to be the *dialogism* or the *multivocality* of the speech. Speeches in which the narrators construct the whole exchange between themselves and the client, taking on in turn the role of mere animator, and in turn claiming also the authorship, and recouring at times to reporting voice would seem to have both the largest involvement and evidential potential.

Although the quality of evidence is clearly a limiting factor, these observations from the BDN context are consistent with the findings from other interactional sites, such as law courts, where incorporating dialogism into witness reports has been found to increase the authenticity of the witness claim (see Galatolo, 2007; Holt, 2009; Coulthard and Johnson, 2010).

Simulated customer reference (SCR) refers to the use of DRS in which the narrator constructs a client's voice to express appreciation for the solution proffered by the narrator, or, alternatively, to directly praise the persona of the narrator. The term 'simulated'⁹⁴ here communicates that the reference is not voiced directly by the customer and in some cases may not be authentic (Bakhtin, 1981; Tannen, 2007, *inter alia*.)

In comparison with the remaining CTs in the BDN sample, the degree of reliance on constructed dialogue in the following two examples is remarkable. The main interactional goal of both speeches, which rely heavily on constructed dialogue, is to proffer the evidence of the narrator's professional competence and position the narrator as an expert vis-à-vis the client and the audience. It is apparent that both speakers enlist several different strategies and that the audience responses to the respective speeches also vary.

4.6.1 Simulated customer reference: Case Study A

In the following example the narrator exploits *multivocality* to construct identities for herself and her clients by navigating between three voices: the narrator addressing her current audience, the narrator addressing the audience in the storied world, and the direct

⁹⁴ The term is inspired by Baudrillard's (1998) conception of simulation (a copy without original), even though the context in which it is applied relates to the relationship between identity and consumption.

witness of transformation in the storied world addressing the narrator. At the time of the delivery of her speech, the narrator had for 3 years run a business focusing on the area of personal development, executive coaching and change management. The type of master narrative that dominates her competence tale has been ascribed the macro-categorical label of the transformation narrative in the previous chapter (following Bruner, 2003). A transformation plot typically involves the catalytic influence of the speaker on bringing about a complete (and positive) change of professional, personal or social identity in a client.

Compet. statement	1	We're amazing ⁹⁵ , and so are you! (Laughter SM). We run (more laughter S)]
	2	incredible achievement programmes.
Situation	3	This week, yesterday, we were in /??/, in /???/ university in /???/. And we were
	4	talking to them about how we help people to set and achieve massive goals,
	5	that enable them to make a huge step up. And when we came to the end of our
	6	presentation, <u>we said to them</u> : " <i>Look! You don't have to believe us, just speak</i>
	7	<i>to somebody, in your business, we know, who came on one of our programmes.</i> "
	8	And <u>one of the members of the audience said</u> : " <i>I know who that person is, he</i>
	9	<i>works for me, he's in-, in my team.</i>
Problem	10	<i>And when he went on your programme in Scotland in in October, he was /???/.</i>
Solution	11	<i>And I don't know what you did with him,</i>
Evaluation	12	<i>but when he came back, he was absolutely transformed. And he has made him</i>
	13	<i>such an impact in the business. It's only that you /fished/ his brain out and you</i>
	14	<i>put something else in. It's absolutely magical.</i> "
Compet. Reinforced /Coda	15	So if you want to make a huge step up, talk to me...

Example 4.12: Simulated customer reference in narrative # 3

The narrator first constructs her own voice to elicit the evidence of competence: "*Look! You don't have to believe us, just speak to somebody, in your business, we know, who came on one of our programmes.*" The 'witness' voice supplies the evidence to position

⁹⁵ High-involvement lexis, namely hyperbole is italicized.

the narrator as a professional with magical potential: *he was absolutely transformed. And he has made him such an impact in the business. It's only that you /fished/ his brain out and you put something else in. It's absolutely magical.* The deployment of transformation hyperbole would not be socially admissible if the narrator was positively evaluating her own performance in her own voice. Assuming solely the role of animator does not only allow her to proffer direct evidence, but mitigates, albeit only to some degree, the face threat inherent in overt self-praise.

Following the networking meeting, I engaged in a conversation with five male members. We briefly talked about her narrative and they evaluated the story in positive terms. While laughing at the expressive quality, they agreed that it was a *good and persuasive* narrative.

4.6.2 Simulated customer reference: Case Study B

While most examples in this chapter are extracts from speeches delivered in the primary networking group (Victoria), Example 4.13 below was delivered in one of the reference/secondary groups (BNI Hagley). At the time of delivery (2005), the speaker was an established member who had worked as a freelance finance controller for 7 years. In his speech he flashes his competence by combining two strategies: a) delivering an SCR written on a piece of paper, and b) laying affront both on his client and generally on the profession of auditors. High involvement lexis, which has been already commented on above, is italicized.

The first case study communicated the highest level of involvement identified in the sample narratives, culminating in the evaluation phase delivered in the voice of direct witness. In the example below, the client's voice in the evaluation of the speaker is much less extreme, but explicit and highly positive as in *very impressed* (with

the speaker’s performance) and *highly effective*, or positive yet neutral: *focused, simply concerned with achieving* (about the speaker’s qualities). The problem phase relies heavily on negative hyperbole, the speaker attempting to increase the impact on the audience by using incompetence parallelism (*they cannot control cash/cannot control management information*). Amongst the narratives in the sample, this example came closest to *direct customer reference* as the speaker read the reference part from a piece of paper, ostensibly presenting direct evidence, presumably word-for-word as composed by his client.

Competence defined	1 2	I help company directors, or managing directors sleep at night! I’m a freelance financial controller.
Situation	3 4	Now I was called in by [...] the Operations Director of Chartered Accountants.
Problem	5	And <u>he says</u> , <i>Paul, the problem is that all my background is auditing</i>
Evaluation	6 7 8	Now, we know about auditors. They /do/ by double entry (audience sniggering) What? They cannot control cash, because they’ve got no experience in it, and they cannot provide management information!
Solution (Implied)	9	So he’s called me in
Evaluation/Client’s	10 11 12 13 14 15 16	and this is what <u>he says</u> [...] in his return reference, he’s given me [2s] (pulls a piece of paper out of his pocket and reads) “ <i>I found Paul to be highly effective and focused [1.5s] I was very impressed by the way he delivered the job. Most unusually for the /??/?/ consultant, he was simply concerned with achieving our goals. And not with trying to create more work for himself. As /??/?/ Director, it’s my job to /??/?/.</i> ”
Coda	17 18 19	And those are sort of Managing Directors, I want to deal with. [2s] More than 20 employees [2s] and using their auditors to control their businesses. Thank you.

Example 4.13: Simulated customer reference in narrative #27

The narrator exploits two distinct voices, in an attempt to position himself vis-à-vis his ‘incompetent’ client as both an expert and a highly reliable professional. The core elements

of the story are delivered in the client's constructed voice⁹⁶ (problem and evaluation), the rest of the story is in the narrator's reporting voice. The speaker first animated his client voice to name the problem, (hyperbolic: *the problem is that all my background is auditing*) and then then resumed his own voice in evaluating the client's lack of competence, congenially involving the audience: *now we know about auditors*, following this with an evaluation in particularly negative terms. He combines hyperbole and modality communicating incompetence, both are accentuated by parallelism. There are two layers of evaluation, i.e. the middle line works as an evaluation of the evaluation:

they cannot control cash they've got no experience they cannot provide information

Example 4.14: Problem evaluation in narrative #27

Here, he creates a marked power asymmetry, with power being located in the possessor of knowledge and expertise (e.g., Drew and Heritage, 1992). The speaker highlights his own financial competence by exhibiting the lack of it in his client, and by extension, in the profession of auditors. The emphatically negative evaluation of his client and auditors in general created a contrastive background against which he highlighted his competence communicated in the customer reference.

While the speaker managed to attend to the competence aspect of his professional identity, his strategy seems, however, to have failed to communicate the goodwill aspect by ridiculing his client's professional abilities. The lack of respect for the face needs of a client, albeit an absent person, seems to be an ill-advised strategy (see e.g., Holmes & Stubbe, 2003), which tends to lessen the overall impact of the 60-second speech. None

⁹⁶ as claimed repeatedly above, story climax is a recurrent site for DRS (see e.g., Holt and Clift, 2007).

of the competence tales in the sample exhibits open ridicule, i.e. similarly blatant lack of consideration for the client face⁹⁷.

As argued in the theoretical sections of the previous and the following chapter, professional identity is a three-dimensional compound of equally important constructs: competence, goodwill and trustworthiness. The violation of one aspect undermines the resulting professional identity construction, diminishing the overall credibility of the business professional within the network. The tendency is thus to protect the client's face, mitigating a potential face threat (see e.g. # 1 and its detailed analysis in Section 5.5.2, or #5 and #7), or, alternatively, to completely disassociate from the criticism, using the client's or witness voice as in the previous example.

The hyperbolic condemnation of the client's incompetence in financial management, or rather incompetence of the client's professional class, followed by the hyperbolic commendation of his own competence cast in the incompetent client's voice creates an interesting mix with rather negative dynamics. The audience responded with a hesitant applause, and after the meeting this particular speech received negative commentary from the four people whom I talked with. Yet, a glimmer of positivity may be detected in the auditor's stance, albeit signalling a problem, and the relatively negative response of the audience might also in this case be because the speaker is criticising a whole class of professionals, and demanding a similar world-view.

While both speeches presented in this section involve different characteristics that influence the resulting reception of their narrative, it can be concluded that the line between an effective and a compromising voice construction is thin. The client's voice

⁹⁷ Narratives #8 and #12 (both delivered by one speaker) tend towards disrespectful evaluations, though neither is as overt criticism as the SCR discussed above.

construction has the potential to render a competence tale more powerful, yet there are clearly confounding factors, namely the quality of evidence and the manner of professional identity construction.

4.6.3 Direct customer reference: Case Study

This section allows for a brief sidetrack in order to contrast simulated with unmediated direct customer reference. The most effective strategy in terms of utilizing a customer reference is having the client directly report on the positive experience. The network's members meet on a weekly basis, and in case they are absent, they are asked to nominate a substitute to deliver the 60-second speech on behalf of the absent member. The members should theoretically function primarily as word-of-mouth agents, rather than direct customers, for their fellow members.

Yet, in practice, BDN members very often recruit their clients directly from their network (see the business background and the following chapters for discussion on this). Also, complementary businesses involved in the same contact sphere tend to partner for individual projects (e.g., property purchase typically involves financial services/mortgage, real estate and insurance services). In the case of planned absence, it therefore appears beneficial to nominate as substitutes people who have direct (positive) experience as business partners or clients.

While members in the observed groups did not seem to realize this opportunity to its full potential, some (as in the example below, #29) have utilized their absence to have their customer or partner give a positive reference:

Intro	1 2	Jackie standing for Paul today. Erm [...] I'm gonna tell you a story. (laughter S)
Situation	3 4	It was my mum's seventieth birthday last week (audience emphatically sighs)
Problem	5 6 7 8	And <i>I haven't got a clue</i> what to buy her. She plays golf, but <i>she's got plenty of balls</i> , (laughter M), <i>she's got lot's of pairs of drawers, lots of T-shirts</i> , I couldn't buy her anything for golf. She's got [...] <i>more handbags than you can /????/</i> (audience chuckles) and she's got <i>shoes that fill the wardrobe</i> .
Solution (decision process):	9 10 11 12 13	So [...] I was <i>raking</i> my brain, <i>what on Earth</i> can I get her for her birthday that she'd really enjoy. And one thing that came to me was that [...] <i>we never ever</i> had our family pictured together. Me, my sister, my mother. And my sister recently got married last year, and I've got a partner, so I thought what a great [...] present to give my mum. Go and get your family portrait taken.
Evaluation	14 15 16 17	And it wasn't only just getting the portrait taken, but we had an <i>absolutely fantastic time</i> with Paul in his studio. He was <i>brilliant!</i> He had us <i>on the floor, off the floor [...]</i> (chuckle), <i>standing, sitting, lying [...]</i> <i>laughing, joking, absolutely fantastic!</i>
Coda	18 19 20	So [...] Paul's looking for anyone else that you know, that might want to have some family portraits /????/. So that's what he's looking for this week. Paul P, <i>photographer extraordinaire</i> .

Example 4.15: Direct customer reference in narrative #29

This speech represents the most expressive speech in the sample in terms of the choice of affective lexis with positive connotation attributed directly to the professional's qualities: *he was brilliant/absolutely fantastic/had absolutely fantastic time with Paul*. Yet, the speech was very well received and put the institution of substitute to a very effective use. Despite the evident potential of simulated customer reference, positive word of mouth delivered directly by a client holds unrivalled power in positioning a member.

4.7 RS in non-narrative data: problem scenario

Analysis of the wider sample indicates that voice construction is not inextricably linked to the narrative format.⁹⁸ Indeed, the data shows that narratives form roughly 40% of the speeches incorporating RS, with the remaining 60% of RS speeches showing a surprisingly uniform deployment of RS, where RS locutions typically express a problem or need, by replaying general experience or enacting an easily imaginable scene. They were therefore classified as scenarios, and, more explicitly, problem/need scenarios.

The concept of scenario is currently used mostly in the field of conceptual metaphor theory, where Fillmore's notion of *conceptual scene* as: 'any kind of coherent segment of human beliefs, actions, experiences or imaginings' associated with an underlying *conceptual frame* (Fillmore, 1975, p.124 in Musolff, 2006) was later developed by Musolff (2006), with reference also to Putman's view of scene or scenario, as 'conventional assumptions, which may be revealed by experts to be empirically wrong but are still the default expectations that underlie the folk-theories held by non-experts' (Putnam, 1975, p.148, 249-250).

Musolff (2006, p. 27) focuses on metaphor/source scenarios, maintaining that they have stereotypical status i.e., 'they include conventionally required assumptions, made by the members of discourse community about *typical* aspects of a source-situation, for example, its participants and their roles, the dramatic storylines and outcomes, and conventional evaluations of whether they count as successful or unsuccessful, normal or abnormal, permissible or illegitimate, etc.' In Musolff's conception (ibid.), scenario is by definition narrative, and his notion of scenario seems to be highly akin to that

⁹⁸ 15% of the 250 speeches involved reported speech.

of *dominant discourse* or *master narrative* deployed in positioning theory and small story research (Bamberg, 2011, inter alia).

In this study, the term is used differently. *Problem scenario* is seen as a universally accessible situation that often tends to be described in detail (mostly visual and auditory). It may replay generally shared experience, but relates to situations that are generally too small to be labelled dominant discourse. Problem scenarios are not narratives. They are told to conjure up a picture or communicate universally understood situations and evoke emotions corresponding to these situations. In contrast with narrative, scenarios are universally accessible/recognizable situations, and often repetitive (e.g., S2).

Unlike narrative, they are not related to a one-off specific event, indexed by a particular spatial and temporal location, or a specific actor; scenarios are never tied to a particular human subject as clear from the nominal and pronominal choice in the following examples: *things to listen out for that really mean, **they're ideal people for me*** (S1), *you know how **many small businesses*** (S2), *one of the main barriers **why people*** (S3), *do you know **anybody**...*(5).

The extract below is fairly representative of the scenario sample where the speaker delivered a speech involving a widely recognizable problem scenario which is easy to re-experience or imagine, thus clearly identifying the desired referral and target clients for his business.

1	So in terms of what to listen out for ,
2	<u>somebody saying</u> : “ <i>I’ve lost a piece of paper</i> ”,
3	spent about thirty minutes trying to find it, and gave up.
4	Or you’re on the phone to somebody and <u>they say</u> : “ <i>oh wait a minute, I’ll just see if I can find</i>
5	<i>a piece of paper</i> ”,
6	rustle, rustle, rustle, two minutes later: “ <i>still not found it, sorry I’ll get back to you later.</i> ”
7	So if you’re aware of people that have got lots of paper, can’t find the piece, they want, then
8	that would be an ideal referral for us.

Example 4.16: Prototypical scenario involving DRS

The beginning of the scenario is marked by the lexical cluster: *what to listen out for*, activating the audience’s auditory channel and signalling that a problem scenario is likely to follow and that the problem scenario is likely to involve RS. Next, he presents two problem scenarios, both involving client voice constructions to express the problem. The first is presented in fairly general terms: *somebody saying: “I’ve lost a piece of paper”*, whilst the second is presented as a vivid scene: A client on the phone saying: “*oh wait a minute, I’ll just see if I can find a piece of paper*”, followed by a fadeout⁹⁹ in which the speaker comments on the scene, introducing the noise of rustling paper before fading in (line 6): “*still not found it, sorry I’ll get back to you later.*” The problem scenario is followed by a summary, which seems to be the equivalent of the coda, in lines 7-8, employed in narratives.

In line with previous studies that have noted the importance of DRS in signalling structural and thematic salience (e.g. Hickmann 1993), constructed dialogue in the 60-second speeches tends to structure the core stage of the speech, i.e. the request for referrals. The interactional goal underlying most scenarios is thus to create a particular memorable scene that:

⁹⁹ see van Houwen, 2012 on fadeout and fade in.

- helps the audience identify potential clients amongst their reference network (see e.g., S1, S4, S6, S7, S8)
- generates the need for service directly amongst the audience (e.g., S14, S15).
- may also construct professional identity, by communicating the competence dimension. In most cases PI aspects are conveyed more implicitly than in narratives, see e.g., S8 (competence aspect), or S2 (trustworthiness and goodwill).

At the structural level, the segments involving the usage of RS tend toward a fairly predictable generic pattern. This study has identified the following stages in the progression of a prototypical problem scenario:

- 1) discourse marker/cluster introducing the situation (e.g., you know how)
- 2) problem/need situation typically involving DRS
- 3) optional: summary/ request for referral

The following three clusters are used most frequently to introduce problem/need scenarios: *do you know anyone/anybody...*, *what to listen out for*¹⁰⁰ and *you know how*. These are given in bold in the table below, along with their lexical variants:

Core cluster	Do you know anybody who says (e.g., S5, S11, S8, S6, S15)
Lexical variants of the core cluster	if you know anyone who's always saying now if you hear anyone who says you know that you probably know people/friends that are saying I hear you say
Core cluster	What to listen for (e.g., S9, S10, S1, S7, S4)

¹⁰⁰ The clusters: *do you know anyone/anybody*, *what to listen out for* typically introduce request for referral. These do not necessarily involve RS, nor a problem/need scenario. The cluster/marker *you know how* is used exclusively to introduce a problem/need scenario, which may/may not involve RS.

Lexical variants of the core cluster	things to listen out for so what sort of things should you listen for so in terms of what to listen out for
Core cluster	You know how (e.g.S2, S13)

Example 4.17: Discourse markers/lexical clusters typically introducing scenario

4.7.1 Defining problem scenario vis-a-vis competence narrative

Although scenarios, unlike competence tales (CTs), are not classifiable as narratives, the data suggests that there is a close resemblance between CTs and scenarios in their use and function. First, both are used to elicit on-target referrals. Second, CTs tend to express a problem or a need owned by an existing client, and scenarios tend to locate a problem or a need owned by a prospective client (see S12 for an exception, in which the speaker owns the problem: *this is my difficulty*). Third, CTs directly communicate or presuppose competence, while scenarios imply or presuppose the existence of the competence needed to resolve the problem or saturate the need. Both construct professional identity, including aspects other than competence.

In the long term, the data shows that scenarios are often used in synergy with CTs. Indeed, the speakers who exhibited a greater general tendency to implement CTs¹⁰¹, were more likely to implement a scenario containing RS. For instance, S1 and S12 were delivered by the same speaker as narratives #2, #11 and #32; S11 was delivered by the same person as # 4,#18, #22 and #31.

This study has also identified similarities in the usage of RS in CTs and scenarios. Both CTs and scenarios exhibit a marked tendency towards voice construction, and both tend

¹⁰¹ See the following chapter, Section 5.6, for detailed discussion of the macro-factors influencing the tendency to enlist CTs.

to rely on constructed dialogue in the problem or need specification. There is a clear propensity to deploy the client's voice to phrase the problem situation. In problem scenarios, voice constructions are used primarily to heighten the involvement, thus intensifying the emotional impact of the problem. On the other hand, multivocality in CTs has an impact beyond simply rendering the speech more vivid and involving. First and foremost, DRS in CTs increases their evidential potential and can communicate professional identity aspects in a manner more powerful and effective than any non-narrative form.

4.8 Temporal framing of competence tales

4.8.1 Analysis

Based on the analysis of the narrative sample, the small stories seem to be invariably framed as happening either in the recent past or as an ongoing event. In accordance with the Labovian paradigm, initial temporal reference is in most cases introduced in the orientation/situation. The time proximity to the *here and now* is realized through the deictic references of tense, aspect and, most obviously, time adverbs. This part looks specifically at the use of time adverbs in either the abstract or the orientation. The extracts of the 32 narratives¹⁰² that involve the abstract or the orientation/situation, and at times both, are given in sequential order in the table below. Adverbs that locate individual narratives in time were underlined.

¹⁰² The reader can again refer to Appendix 10, p.401 for full transcripts.

Na r.	Extract
#1	Have a story for you this week, we had a guy in who we've been dealing with <u>for three months</u>
#2	Two things that I am doing <u>at the moment</u> , just to go and say...
#3	<u>This week, yesterday</u> , we were in /??., in /???/ [...] university in /???/ ...
#4	... one of the things, I helped her with <u>recently</u> ...
#5	... a client] <u>recently</u> who says [...] er, I've got an an old old old mum,
#6	Very briefly, [...] <u>last night</u> [...] <u>after work</u> [...] I went round to somebody's property,
#7	Something which I've been looking [...] ah: and found <u>over the last week</u> have been arms [...] with lamps...
#8	Uh [...] good example <u>yesterday</u> was, I gave ah the client the truth about his premium ...
#9	I am working with a client <u>now</u> down in- in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales ...
#10	I've actually er, advised an agency,
#11	An example of what I do is I am having a meeting with somebody later on this morning,
#12	I'm coming back from a client in Merthyr Tydfil, ...
#13	And in <u>the last week</u> , we've had our first calls from businesses...
#14	Perhaps you're abroad like a client of mine was <u>recently</u> ,
#15	We're getting quite big, we started <u>in January</u> but we've just signed a first million-pound contract. [...] last week,
#16	Now I asked in the office [...] <u>yesterday</u> , if anybody wanted erm [...] some leads into a company...
#17	Erm, I've <u>just</u> supplied the Birmingham Children's Hospital...
#18	I work with a charity called Fresh Winds. I've been working with them <u>for about three months</u> ...
#19	Went to company called Strand Europe <u>yesterday</u> ,
#20	And that's because <u>last week</u> I went to an event in Coventry, ...
#21	So <u>now</u> , I'm a man on a mission. And [...] as my research went shopping <u>on Saturday</u> ,
#22	Erm:, a succ-success story, I'd like- [...] I was particularly pleased about <u>this week</u> ,
#23	I've <u>recently</u> had a large client, part of a- a European group [...] go into liquidation ...
#24	I was looking for- at at the the bills <u>recently</u> and they're certainly going up by...
#25	One of the things, that I would say [...] is we partnered a-a couple of people <u>recently</u> ...
#26	A success story of mine is a business owner, who [...] I've been working with for <u>seven years</u> ,
#27	I've <u>just</u> finished a new project, with a new client /????/ in Shrewsbury ...
#28	Erm, <u>this- last- week</u> , I've been, I was interviewing an individual <u>yesterday</u> in fact ...
#29	It was my mum's seventieth birthday <u>last week</u> ...
#30	there's this marketing manager who's [...] basically fed up with their agency,
#31	Now /????/a cold sore, a baby, a son, I gave him two months treatment, and <u>he hasn't had a cold</u>

	<u>sore in six years</u>
#32	...and I just have to say, David McKee's lamp doesn't work. I know that, because my wife borrowed <u>it a bit before</u> , and she rubbed it three times.

Example 4.18: Temporal framing of the BDN small narratives

As shown in the example above, 88% of the narratives contain an explicit reference in the situation or abstract, expressed via an adverb of time that locates the narrative in time. The dominant time frame that is thus communicated tends to be either recent past or the present. In a single narrative, the temporal location appears in the resolution/evaluation phase (#31) and three narratives in the sample do not contain a specific temporal reference (narratives # 10, #12, #30). The time frame is in these cases communicated via the choice of tense and aspect. In #10, the speaker uses the present perfect, in #12 the speaker deploys the narrative present, and in #30, the situation and problem scenario are framed combining the present tense and the progressive aspect.

Most of speeches (91%) are thus explicitly located in time via the choice of time adverb. The distribution of time adverbs in the sample is evident from the table below. Individual adverbs were listed so as to capture their order on the arrow of time, descending from the most distant to the most temporally proximate. The cumulative frequency figures indicate that 55% of the adverbs in the sample pertain to recent past or the past that is clearly linked to the present. The remaining 45% relate either to the previous day (17%) or represent an explicit reference to the present moment (27%). The outlier cases: *on Saturday, in January* and *(have been working) for seven years* (each represented once in the sample) were not included in the analysis below, yet they clearly either point to the recency of the events that were thus framed, or their duration up to the present moment.

Progression	Temporal location	Frequency	Frequency (%)	Cumulative (%)
RECENT PAST	FOR X MONTHS/YEARS (UP TO NOW)	5	14	14
	RECENT/LY/A BIT BEFORE	8	22	36
	LAST WEEK/OVER THE PAST WEEK	7	19	55
	YESTERDAY/ LAST NIGHT	6	17	72
PRESENT	THIS WEEK	3	8	80
	JUST	3	8	88
	NOW +/- AT THE MOMENT /THIS MORNING	4	11	99-100

Example 4.19: Distribution of time adverbs in the situation and abstract

The analysis has shown that the narratives tend to be framed as either recent or ongoing events. The temporal relevance of the story is sometimes further augmented through the use of markers such as: *this week* or *now* that do not refer to the time frame of the story itself, but index the act of telling the story. In #1, the recency of the story that has been ongoing for the past three months is further intensified by the use of *this week* in the foregrounding: *I have a story for you this week*, and #5, #16, and #31 provide further examples of similar use in which attention discourse marker *now* primarily signals the beginning of a narrative (Norrick, 2009; Fraser, 2009).

There are examples of narratives that started unfolding in the distant past, such as #31 or #26: *A success story of mine is a business owner, who I've been working with for seven years*. These temporal markers are also tied to the present moment or a recent past, and are used to signal prolonged success. This tendency is evident in the *evaluation* phase of the narrative, in which the speaker comments on the positive outcome which her actions brought for the client: *Now she has better confidence, she has more clarity about*

where she is going, she has more profitable, contracts, and increased turnover, and also she has less stress, and her health improved.

4.8.2 Discussion: Temporal proximity in CTs

Temporal proximity might be expected to exert more pull than temporal distance, i.e. a recent event tends to be seen as more appealing than one firmly nested in the past. This would seem to be at least subconsciously recognised by the network participants whose stories are embedded in the minimalistic context of 60 seconds. Their speeches are primarily marketing messages, designed to inspire confidence and a positive emotional response, and ultimately generate positive word-of-mouth communication. From a marketing perspective, these stories as identity-/brand- construction instruments are subject to the key principle of effective brand management, i.e., maintaining relevance (Thompson et al., 2006). The relevance principle¹⁰³ is defined in the marketing domain as: ‘the need to update continuously the brand’s user/usage imagery, brand personalities, types of relationships, and promotional themes to keep a brand image fresh, energized and contemporary’ (ibid, p.61).

At the ground level, the relevance principle communicates the role of brand adjustment to constant changes, and the need to morph competence tales into a narrative that reflects these changes. Even on the scale of a small business, the network’s members design their stories as breaking news¹⁰⁴ in an attempt to keep their image fresh and energized. The limitation of 60-seconds does not allow for an old story to be told and it does not offer much space for the contextualization, i.e. the explicit explanation as to the relevance

¹⁰³ The concept of relevance is studied in many different fields, including cognitive sciences, logic, and marketing. The relevance principle introduced here does not share an explicit connection with the relevance theory, which has a cognitive underpinning.

¹⁰⁴ Here I adopt Georgakopolou’s (2006) term for stories located in the recent past, and/or the present.

of the story. More importantly, as one participant put it: ‘an old story means the lack of new stories.’

The message does not only need to be relevant to the audience, but also to the speaker. The audience are primarily word-of-mouth agents for the speaker and thus the speaker needs to identify their desired target market, i.e. their current prospects. The more specifically defined the target market, the higher the probability of obtaining on-target referrals (e.g., Misner, 2009 inter alia). Narratives often serve as a rationale for the current target market specification as illustrated by the example below. The speaker, a UK master franchisee for a sign making business, delivered the following speech three weeks after a tornado¹⁰⁵ hit an area of Birmingham and damaged a number of local business that became consequently in need of new signage. Temporal markers are italicized and underlined in the transcript.

1	And in <i>the last week, we've had</i> our first calls from businesses, based in Birmingham's [...] very own
2	tornado alley. (laughter S) And these are the businesses, whose premises <i>were devastated</i> by the- [...]
3	the <i>recent</i> tornado. And <i>we've been</i> to visit the tornado office, and <i>we've spoken</i> to the tornado
4	manager! (laughter S) Really! There's going to be a lot of businesses there that need to [...] rebuild,
5	and <i>they will need</i> some new signs. And <i>they're all going through</i> the process of putting together
6	their insurance claims at the moment. And <i>talking to</i> the manager there, <i>we're looking</i> to put together
7	some kind of a deal, which may involve some government money [...] as well [...] to help fund [...]
8	the rebuilding and resigning of these premises. So, if you know a business [...] based in that area [...]
9	that was / affected/ by it, please let me have their details. Our advice is [...] come to Signs X,
10	we are the living proof [...] that every tornado has a silver lining.
	Recorded 18.08 2005

Example 4.20: Contemporary and temporary target market specification

The speaker deploys a competence tale that is temporally located as recent (lines 1, 3, 4) and ongoing (lines 5-7). He was very specific about the desired target market, the *tornado*

¹⁰⁵ In July 2005 a tornado hit Birmingham suburbs with the resulting repair costs estimated to be £40 million (BBC Birmingham, 2005)

market, that was at the same time both contemporary and temporary (lines 8-9). Via his contemporary story, he manages to (a) focus the audience on his current priorities (b) energize his brand/identity. The professional identity he portrays emanates competence, highlighting the speed and efficiency with which his business responded to an emergent opportunity. His newly-minted (contemporary) brand of the sign-maker for the tornado-affected area is designed to inspire confidence in all potential customers, not only in his current target clientele.

The above example illustrates that this explicit temporal framing, which appears to be rather normative, may be driven by the urgency to continually update the brand. Also, narrative contextualization of referral requests leads to more involvement, inspires confidence, and results in enhanced memorability of target market demarcation.

4.9 Conclusion

The main goals of this chapter were to explore the role of multivocality and temporality in competence tales. In respect to the use of reported speech, the study has found that 42 % of the narrative sample involved at least one locution that was framed as reported speech, while the majority (60%) of these took the form of direct reported speech. The analysis has shown that the use of multivocality in competence tales appears to bear a particular thematic and structural salience, and reported speech has been established as one of the most prominent implicit self-promotion strategies available to the narrator.

The primary interactional goal of competence tales is to construct the speaker's professional identity, communicating competence, goodwill and trustworthiness, and the purpose of this is to elicit on-target referrals for the speaker. Competence tales

allow the speaker to define her target market in explicit terms by identifying the clientele the professional is able to help. Reported speech appears to allow the absent client in varying degrees to directly endorse the speaker. This chapter has suggested that reported speech may have a catalytic effect on achieving these goals and concludes that this might be due to the synergy of the following three interactional functions: *evidential*, *involvement* and *face-threat mitigation*. The evidential force of DRS claims might be the most substantial factor contributing to the persuasiveness of competence claims, thus confirming and extending the results observed in studies in the domain of forensic linguistics.¹⁰⁶

In the networking 60-second context, 62% of all voice constructions involve a client's voice either communicating and evaluating the problem, or evaluating the solution/narrator's performance. The tendency to primarily structure the evaluation phase is in no way incidental, since it is the client's claim that often seals the careful construction of the narrator's professional identity. In the same vein, De Finna (2006, p. 12), in her edited volume on identity in discourse, notes that 'narrators can borrow the voices of others to construct their own identity, ... as well as to convey evaluations of their roles and the roles of others within present and past experience'. The case studies in this chapter have documented that client voice appropriation enables the speaker to assume the role of an animator, distanced from either emotive appraisal of the problem or their own performance, while providing an effective evidential base for claims of competence.

In regard to the evidentiality of reported speech claims, this study has identified a progressive degree of client involvement in the competence claim, presenting a scale spanning from a subtle indication of client investment in the situation to the direct

¹⁰⁶ See Galatolo, 2007 or Coulthard, 2010.

endorsement of the speaker by the client. While there seem to be a number of factors which influence the resulting evidential and endorsement force of the statement, the form of reported speech deployed in the competence tale, and the phase in the structural makeup of the CTs involving RS, appear to be the two most prominent factors. In accordance with previous findings from non-marketing interactional sites¹⁰⁷, the involvement of the client in the competence statement has been found to increase with the use of direct discourse and to be more intense if the client voice is appropriated in the solution/performance evaluation. The most dynamic variable appears to be the *multivocality* of the speech. Speeches in which the narrator constructs the whole exchange between herself and the client, taking the role of animator, then in turn claiming also the authorship, while recouring at times to reporting voice, appear to have the largest evidential and involvement potential.

While previous research seems to focus almost exclusively on reported speech in narrative, this study has included a comparative analysis of voice construction in the 60-second speeches that were non-narrative. One unanticipated finding was that only 40% of the speeches incorporating RS were narratives, i.e. the majority of the speeches involving RS did not deploy the narrative format. More importantly, the study of the remaining 60% of RS speeches has shown a surprisingly uniform deployment of RS, where RS locutions typically express a problem or need and were all found to replay general experience or enact an easily imaginable scene. They were therefore classified as scenarios, or, more explicitly, problem scenarios.

In respect to the generic structure of 60-second speeches, problem scenarios implementing constructed voice were found to structure the core stage of the speech, i.e. the request

¹⁰⁷ Galatolo, 2007; Holt and Clift, 2007; Lucy, 1993; Wooffitt, 1992, 2007.

for referrals, thus confirming previous research on the importance of DRS in signalling structural and thematic salience (e.g. Holt and Clift, 2010). The interactional goal underlying most problem and need scenarios was seen to be the creation of a particularly memorable scene to help the audience identify potential clients amongst their reference network, or generate the need for service directly amongst the audience, leading to direct sales. Some of the scenarios were also found to construct professional identity, communicating namely the competence dimension, although the professional identity aspects were generally conveyed more implicitly than in narratives.

The analysis of the networking data has shown that problem scenarios tend to be used in synergy with competence tales. In relation to competence tales, the study identified substantial similarities with the use and function of problem scenarios. Both are used with the purpose of eliciting on-target referrals through expressing a problem or a need owned by an existing or prospective client. While competence tales directly communicate or presuppose competence, scenarios imply or presuppose the existence of the competence needed to resolve the problem or saturate the need. Both forms construct professional identity, including aspects other than competence.

The second major theme explored in this chapter was the role of temporality in the competence tales. 91% of speeches were explicitly located in time via the choice of time adverb. The results of frequency analysis show that the narratives enveloped in the 60 seconds tend to be breaking news¹⁰⁸, i.e. are temporally framed as either very recent or even an ongoing event. 55% of the adverbs in the sample pertain to recent past or the past that is clearly linked to the present, while the remaining 45% relate either to the previous day (17%) or represent an explicit reference to the present moment (27%).

¹⁰⁸ Here I adopt Georgakopolou's term for stories located in the recent past or present (2006).

These results suggest that in general the network's members design their stories so as to keep their image fresh and energized, primarily communicating that their business is active and thriving. The temporal proximity of the competence stories can partly be attributed to the fact that the speakers use the stories to define their current target clientele, prospects that are relevant at the given time.

CHAPTER 5

Competence Tale as a Shortcut to Professional Identity

We constantly construct and reconstruct a self to meet the needs of the situations we encounter, and we do so with the guidance of our memories of the past and our hopes and fears of the future.

[Bruner, 2003, p. 210]

Competence tales have emerged in this study as powerful platforms for the construction of the speakers' identities. This chapter therefore focuses on professional identity, exploring the concept both theoretically and empirically through the study of sets of narratives which document the evolution of the speaker's professional identity. This chapter is thus directed first at the conceptualization of professional identity and then at its exploration through a case study that demonstrates the continual process of professional identity formation and reformation in a series of narratives delivered by the same speaker in networking meetings over an extended period of time.

Key approaches to narrative as the locus for the study of identities have been reviewed in the first narrative chapter. This chapter goes a step further in conceptualizing identity, delineating in particular the constructs of professional and group identities. It tracks the recent research in discourse and identity to discuss how these studies tend to operationalize the concept of professional identity, suggesting that, while widely used, the understanding of the construct is mostly implicit, depending partly on the context in which it is used, and partly on the researcher's discretion¹⁰⁹. This chapter proposes that the concept of professional identity is indeed contextually-bound, yet it reaches well

¹⁰⁹ cf. Holmes, 2006; Koller, 2012, Dyer & Keller-Cohen, 2002

beyond the simple occupational definition often supplied in group accounts¹¹⁰ or membership categorization analysis¹¹¹. Instead of perceiving professional identity in terms of classifying people as bankers, solicitors, or mortgage advisors, this study offers a categorization that seems to hold for business professionals in sales, networking and promotional contexts.

Once the concept of professional identity has been established, the chapter delves into the empirical analysis of a case study documenting professional identity evolution. The case study follows evolving professional identity in a series of three narratives delivered over a period of six months. The case demonstrates that despite the macro-categorical label of competence-constructing narratives, competence may be communicated implicitly, with the story focusing primarily on professional identity facets other than competence, i.e. on goodwill and trustworthiness. The narrative series demonstrates how competence tales construct an array of personal identities for the speaker and also how narrators may position themselves in relation to their audience, i.e. narrators may either construct their audience as their relational network, their professional network or even as direct consumers. The case study also allows for detailed investigation of the macro-category of pain eliciting narrative¹¹².

The competence tale is a resource shared by the majority of the network's participants, yet the data seems to suggest that factors such as belonging to certain occupational domains and the length of membership appear to influence the tendency for enlisting competence

¹¹⁰ e.g., variationist sociolinguistics

¹¹¹ Approach to identity rooted in ethnomethodology and CA, paying attention to 'the situated and reflexive use of categories in everyday and institutional interaction.' (Benwell &Stokoe, 2006)

¹¹² Subcategory of pain-eliciting speech, for more on the concept see Section 3.5 in this thesis.

tales repeatedly. This chapter identifies these factors and unites them into three core sets of influencers, which are also explored in terms of their interplay.

5.1 Research questions

This chapter is first geared towards supplying a definition of professional identity which befits networking and sales contexts. The concept is then investigated in a range of narratives, with an attempt to establish how several narratives delivered by the same speaker over time combine to portray a consistent yet evolving professional identity. The implications of PI construction through CTs for different types of businesses are also explored. This mix of theoretical and pragmatic considerations resulted in the following research questions:

RQ 5.1 How is professional identity conceptualised in the context of business networking?

RQ 5.2 How does a competence tale series delivered over a period of time communicate an evolving professional identity?

RQ 5.3 Are there recognizable macro-tendencies in the frequency and nature of competence tale use? If so, what are the main variables affecting the frequency and the nature of CT use?

5.2 The organization of the chapter

The methodological part (5.3) introduces the data and main analytical tools underlying empirical analysis in this chapter. The theoretical section (5.4) then tracks the developments in the study of professional identity and supplies the definition of the concept. The empirical part (5.5) explores the complex functions of competence

tales through a case study, documenting the process of the assembling, attuning and reworking of a distinct professional identity. Section 5.6 identifies dominant patterns in the use of narrative amongst members that are generalizable in the organizational context. Finally, the conclusion (5.7) discusses the main findings to emerge from the theoretical debate and empirical analyses in this chapter.

5.3 The dataset and methodology

The competence tale dataset was used as the basis for the analysis of general tendencies in the frequency and manner of CT usage. The discourse data underlying the case study come from the primary group and are supported with observations from an ethnographic study I carried out in this group. The discourse data were recorded over a period of 6.5 months, starting in early 2005, and comprise narratives #1, #7 and #14, in Appendix 10.

In respect to methodology, empirical analyses in this chapter are informed by the conceptualization of professional identity delineated below in Section 5.4, again in combination with the approaches to narrative identity outlined in the first narrative chapter, and with ethnographic information gained over two years through observation and unstructured interviews with relevant members. The analytical tool that is of increased significance in this chapter is pronoun use. In line with the understanding of the role of pronouns in CDA and positioning theory, pronoun use is viewed as a powerful positioning tool and identity marker, which is seen as particularly revealing in respect to communicating relational identities.

5.4 Theoretical backdrop: Theorising professional identity

5.4.1 Professional identity in the study of institutional and organizational discourse

In the literature orienting to human resources and career development, professional identity has been a theme of significant interest, especially in the medical and teaching domains. Studies in this tradition tend to conceive of identity as intersubjective, yet continue to have a mostly essentialist underpinning¹¹³. The process of professional identity construction is the core subject of numerous papers in this domain (see e.g., Clarke et. al 2009; Stenberg 2011; Slay and Smith, 2011). This tradition perceives discourse as ancillary rather than central to identity, and professional identity is defined as one's professional self-concept based on attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experiences (see Ibarra, 1999). This view is at odds with the constructionist perspective, and therefore also not adopted in this thesis.

In the organizational domain, Dent and Whitehead (2003) present the core research that has consistently engaged in the discursive construction of professional identity across a variety of institutional sites. Their edited book perceives the concept of managerial and professional identities as intertwined and mutually defining. The editors seem to define professional identity through the organizational superstructure and engage in avid criticism of the current post-structuralist 'measurement culture'¹¹⁴. Key concepts that inform Dent and Whitehead's work are performativity¹¹⁵, the schism between agency and structure, and personal accountability. Professional identity is studied in relation to power

¹¹³ See Douwe et al. 2004, for exception.

¹¹⁴ Society that relies on performance as the primary and potentially only stable value.

¹¹⁵ Performativity is a Foucauldian-inspired account of identity as an effect of discourse (see Benwell and Stokoe, 2006). The subject is situated in, and endlessly produced and reproduced through discourse.

and accountability and is mostly seen as based on performance and extreme self-commodification.

While Dent and Whitehead's publication has certainly paved the way for further empirical research, encompassing large corporate sectors and other institutional sites including academia and medicine, its primary engagement with large ideologies such as feminism, post-structuralism and Marxism somewhat restrict its applied value to political and societal debates. The book, however, contains discussions of professional identity that reach beyond institutional alignment and point towards potential PI definitions that are of relevance to this study. For example, Misztal (pp.19-37) deals with trust as the central aspect of managerial professional identity, while Rosenthal (pp.61-80) discusses professional identity in terms of the autonomy and accountability of the professional. Yet, for most studies of the corporate environment, the relationship between professional identity and power seems to be the defining factor, and the professional is very often enmeshed in the managerial.

Research into professional identity in the discourse domain also exhibits engagement with managerial identities and power. The volume edited by Angouri and Marra (2011) presents recent research on identity construction across a range of professional and institutional settings, deploying mostly CA and CDA-rooted methodologies in conjunction with corpus analysis. In the papers involving the business/organizational discourse site, professional identity is studied primarily in relation to leadership and management. For example, Svennenig (pp. 17-39) analyses the managerial styles of MDs, as based on their responses to meeting reports. His understanding of professional identity is tacit, yet seems to run mostly along the lines of doing power/displaying authority (see Holmes, 2006, for a similar

conceptualisation). In his analysis, Svennenig orients to individual differences in the manager's transactional/relational focus and collectivist (whether corporate or group) vs. individualist orientation in professional identity construction.

In turn, Koller's paper (p. 103-126) highlights the diverse potential of mission statements for positioning employees, conceiving of their professional identity in collectivist terms of group membership. Unlike most researchers focusing on professional identity, Koller supplies an explicit definition of her take on professional identity in the given context. Following Brewer and Gardner (1996, p. 83), she defines professional identity as 'a form of collective identity in that employees may construct their professional selves as derive[d] from [their] membership in larger, more impersonal collectives such as the company they work for.' Taking a similar position to this thesis, Koller operationalizes the dimensions of ethos/credibility. However, she does so to a different end, i.e. to communicate how companies position themselves vis-à-vis their employees and how they position their employees, rather than to define the PI construct itself. Professional identity statements concerning the corporate employee are distilled from the study of transitivity/agency, attribution and modality.

5.4.2 Professional identity in the context of networking and self promotion: the need for an explicit definition

To date, the focus of most organizational and business discourse research that addresses identity has been either on collective identities or managerial identities. Individual professional identities that are not managerial or intrinsically defined by the corporate superstructure have been rarely subjected to research. The research that investigates how individual speakers, rather than corporations, construct their professional self in discourse

appears to use the concept of professional identity loosely. Tacit understanding of the term tends to transpire from the given paper, and differs vastly, depending on the discourse context and the perspective of the respective researcher.

For example, Dyer and Keller-Cohen (2000), who studied the narrative construction of the professional self in academic lectures appear to use the concept of PI as a one-dimensional construct, synonymous with expertise in a particular academic field. Holmes et al. (1999; Holmes 2005; Holmes 2006), who analyse professional and relational identity construction via workplace narratives, do not offer an explicit definition. In this case, the conception of professional identity rests primarily on the dimensions of power and politeness and the implications for gender (congruence or incongruence with gendered assumptions about the female professional). Gender is a common context for the investigation of professional identity, with the foci of individual papers ranging from the relationship between professional identity and managerial style, conflict management style, or PI as the professional's competence (see e.g., Kerfoot, 2003; Thimm et al., 2008; Holmes and Stubbe, 2003; Warren, 2004).

Clearly, professional identity is an elusive and contextually bound concept (Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011) that hinges on the individual research perspective. Yet, it is precisely its elusiveness and the diversity with which it is currently used which dictate the need for the clear qualification of the concept as understood by the researcher in the given context. Failure to do so is a methodological lapse that, in my opinion, results in confused (rather than just eclectic) use of the term.

Despite the obvious diversity and the quantity of research that has targeted professional identity in the business discourse field, there appears to be a lack of prior research that

explicitly defines the understanding of the professional identity construct in a particular context¹¹⁶ and simultaneously examines individual professional identity that is not defined solely by the corporate macro-structure or group membership. This study seeks to address this gap, defining an individual's professional identity for the purpose of this research project as a three-dimensional construct, influenced but not fully determined by group identity. While the definition of the construct in this thesis will not be equally applicable to all contexts, it is intended to benefit professional identity construction in sales or networking scenarios.

5.4.3 Defining the dimensions of professional identity based on the current conception of credibility

Who are we most likely to partner for business, engage with in the buyer-seller situation and refer to our network as a professional in their respective field? A credible person.

[Misner, the CEO of BNI, personal communication in 2009]

This section defines the professional identity construct so as to describe the discourse sites of both organized and non-organized networking, as well as any promotional or sales contexts engaging business partners or buyer-seller relationships. In line with the constructionist take on identity, professional identity is here theorised as produced and reproduced in interaction, and it is perceived as evolving, changing and solidifying over time. In order to account for both changes and internal consistency within professional identity, the fixity and multiplicity of identity are reconciled, rather than seen as rival ontologies of the self (see Edwards and Stokoe, 2004, p. 501-2).

¹¹⁶ see Koller (2011) for exception

Professional identity is seen as interacting with and influenced by, but not as defined or determined by group membership/group identity (e.g., BDN membership, corporate affiliation). Business professionals in the networking context strive primarily to construct their professional selves as credible. As signalled by the opening quote to this section, credibility is a prerequisite to identity definition in this context.

Professional identity is here thus theorized as equivalent to the current concept of source credibility established in communication theory (see McCroskey and Young, 1981; McCroskey and Teven, 1999; Cole and McCroskey, 2003). Following McCroskey and Teven (1999), professional identity is envisioned as a three-dimensional measurable construct, a dynamic compound of competence, trustworthiness and goodwill.

Competence is defined as expertise and intelligence, and knowledge and skills related to performance. Trustworthiness subsumes qualities such as honesty and morality, and is defined as the audience's perception that the speaker is genuine and ethical. Goodwill is conceptualised as intent toward receiver and perceived caring (McCroskey and Young, 1981; McCroskey, 1992; Teven and McCroskey, 1997). Based on McCroskey (1992), goodwill is seen as 'a means of opening communication channels more widely' and comprises three elements: understanding or the degree of sensitivity to another person's communication; empathy which includes acceptance of the other person's views as valid even in the case of personal disagreement; and responsiveness, i.e. the readiness to respond to another person's communication.

5.4.4 Professional identity dimensions in self-branding narratives

The example below serves to document the dynamic interplay of the three dimensions outlined in the above paragraph in the construction of professional identity in the one-minute rhetoric.

1	And I am a man on a mission [...] to track down the top fifty spenders on my products and services
2	in this area. And this week, I'm not going to ask you for any information [...] about a specific pro- er:
3	prospect.
4	And that's because last week I went to an event in Coventry, where I got to meet the senior
5	procurement people from fourteen of the largest local councils, universities and housing associations
6	in the area. And I'm up to there (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts, information and leads
7	that I need to follow up on.
8	What I'm going to say instead is that [...] I've done very well from you guys, and information you've
9	given me over the last few months, I've managed to get seventy four thousand pounds of business out
10	of BNI so far this year, and I think, I am going to clear the hundred thousand pound mark [...] next
11	month.
12	Instead, what I would like to do is, this information that I got has cost me a fair amount of money
13	and a lot investment of time, what have you, I would like to offer that to you free [...]
14	to all the members of Victoria.
15	All you have to do is email me after this meeting and I will get the information to you [...] in the next
16	couple of weeks. Thank you for the business you've given me, I hope I can get some back to you.
17	Thank you.

Example 5.1: PI construction via embedded competence tale

In this example, the speaker was expertly seesawing between expressions of his own competence (lines 4-7) and achievement externalization, offsetting the danger of the group's potentially negative response to overachievement (Hogg and Terry, 2000) by the expression of goodwill, namely, in the acknowledgment of the group's share in his success (8-11) and in sharing the fruits of his own success (12-18). The displays of competence are related to the speaker's business and networking performance. Generic business competence is further enhanced when the speaker glosses his success within the BDN, balancing the amount of business he managed to attract through the network,

and making an impressive, albeit plausible, financial prediction for his performance in the immediate future (lines 9-12).

The speaker constructs the dimension of goodwill, evidently caring for his co-members, by first paying a tribute to the audience for his financial success, and then offering to share the invaluable contacts with his co-members. Reciprocity, evident in the speakers' offer to share the contacts, is partly motivated by self-interest (see the section on chief WOM drivers in the first chapter), but might also be interpreted as a moral choice. The trust dimension is also constructed via the story and its immediate frame.

5.4.5 Exploring the interplay of competence and likeability

It makes intuitive sense that the most effective in constructing a positive professional identity are well-balanced speeches that manage to orient to all three dimensions. Research into the factors that structure the professional identity construct conducted by McCroskey and Teven (1999) involved a large sample of communication source types, i.e. political and public figures as well as interpersonal contacts, and a relatively large participant population (N=783). The research was later replicated in a number of studies resulting in a robust construct of high validity¹¹⁷ which allows for reliable measurements (see Graham, 2009).

The original research tested the association of the three dimensions with the notions of believability and likeability, i.e. notions that are also critical for successful networking. Both believability and likeability, i.e. interpersonal affect, have been seen to develop

¹¹⁷ The construct has been since deployed across a variety of institutional and corporate work environments, as well as in the research of interpersonal relations.

rapidly in the encounter with the given person, i.e. without the necessity for intimate personal engagement (see Casciaro and Sousa Lobo, 2008).

The results clearly showed that source credibility strongly predicts both likability and believability and that the highest impact was achieved when all three elements of competence, trust and goodwill combined. However, each of these three dimensions makes a unique contribution, heightening both likeability and believability. The competence factor was found to be a considerably weaker predictor than both trustworthiness and goodwill for both likeability and believability. This finding seems to run against the popular expectations amongst researchers and business professionals alike. For example, communication research prior to 1997 tended to discount the measure of goodwill altogether (potentially, due to its intangibility), and foreground competence as the most influential dimension in establishing personal credibility.

In the fields of narrative discourse and identity, prior research tended to take a narrow view, not including affective considerations. For example, Dyer and Keller Cohen (2000), who seem to perceive professional identity as a unidimensional construct of competence, include as a successful construction of professional identity a narrative in which an academic highlights another interactant's ignorance to offset his own expertise. Similar examples can be found in Holmes (2006), indicating that the competence factor tends to be generally overvalued, and at times constructed in a way that negates the trust and goodwill dimensions.

In contrast, McCroskey's (2003) research has shown that verbal abusiveness significantly lowers credibility, including cases when it is deployed to construct competence. It has also indicated that verbal abusiveness negatively affects the credibility of the speaker whether

it is directed at a person in the audience or implicates an absent person. Similar conclusions can be found in studies conducted by Meyers (2001) and Banfield et al. (2006). In the discussion of simulated customer reference¹¹⁸, this study has also presented evidence that if the construction of the competence factor negates the goodwill and trust dimensions it has an overall negative effect on the speaker's professional identity.

Yet, business professionals themselves continue to empirically perceive competence as the core element they need to construct in interaction with clients and other stakeholders¹¹⁹. It thus appears desirable to attempt to change this enduring perspective of competence as the independent paradigm for success amongst business professionals, rolling out the McCroskey and Teven's (1999) finding that the competence factor functions only in synchrony with the dimensions of trust and goodwill. The colinearity of the three factors appears to have been further confirmed by unrelated networking study into the interplay of likeability and competence outlined below.

Casciaro and Sousa Lobo (2008; 2005) have examined the impact of likeability¹²⁰ in task-related networks in organizations. In their robust study that involved networks in entrepreneurial, academic and corporate contexts (2008, p.655), the authors found that 'positive and negative sentiment among social actors consistently emerged as an important predictor of task interaction, beyond actors' competence and other structural constraints on the formations of work ties.' The study discounted the extreme case of rampant incompetence¹²¹. In all three research settings, people who were evaluated as liked, and

¹¹⁸ Section 4.6.2.

¹¹⁹ As based on the insight gained from senior sales trainings in multinational corporations such as Microsoft, Autodesk or Aveva, and based also on 2 years of weekly observations of sales representatives (SMEs) in the Sandler Sales training in Birmingham.

¹²⁰ Likeability is defined as generalized positive or negative feelings towards a person.

¹²¹ See also their previous publication *Competent Jerks, Lovable Fools* (2005).

medium-competent were more likely to be sought out as partners for cooperation on a task or project than people who were rated as highly competent but were disliked.

As based on the study above, liking is the catalyst of positive response to competence as a factor influencing the choice to cooperate with the given person¹²². Positive interpersonal affect or liking appears to be mostly connected to the professional identity dimensions of trust and goodwill. In CTs, competence claims were found to be indispensable as the primary means of professional identity construction, serving to define a specific competency, and thus helping to define the service and the target market. Yet, while competence tales provide evidence to document the competence claim, they simultaneously and equally tend to construct the trust and goodwill dimensions.

5.5 Professional identity in the making

5.5.1 Ethnographic background

The following narrative series introduces three competence tales¹²³ that illustrate an individual's professional identity evolution over a period of 6.5 months. At the time of the delivery of the first two stories, the author worked as an insurance broker for a large insurance provider, while the the last narrative in the sequence was delivered about a month after he started his own insurance provision company, involving a group of associates. The key professional identity foci communicated via the narrative sequence involve mostly the speaker's trustworthiness and goodwill, expressed both in relation to his

¹²² This should not be interpreted as a correlation between likeability and competence. Likeability does not influence personal judgement of competence. There is correlation between likeability and the willingness to cooperate and this correlation is stronger than between competence and the willingness to cooperate.

¹²³ #1, #7 and #14, in Appendix 10.

clients (first and third narrative), and towards his fellow members (third narrative). Display of competence is again the thread connecting the stories.

Each story relies on a unique selling proposition (USP)¹²⁴ as the chief marketing strategy (Laskey et al. 1989; Shen, 2012). The speaker is a representative of a professional field that is generally viewed with widespread scepticism (see de Bettignies et. al., 2006; Friedman and Srinivas, 2013). The narrator systematically exploits this negatively stereotyped prototype (Hogg and Abrams, 1993), showing implicit agreement with the general distrust towards his profession, with no attempt to rehabilitate the professional field as such. He leverages the distrust to single out his performance in the increasingly competitive field of insurance provision.

The narratives are given in chronological order. The time elapsed between the first and the second narrative is 4.5 months, and the third narrative followed after 2 months. As the use of prosody is at times seen as relevant to the analysis, stressed items are given in bold throughout this narrative series.

5.5.2 Narrative 1: Communicating competence and goodwill

The reputation of the insurance industry has long suffered from questionable selling processes and common abuse of the agents' reward system (de Bettignies et al., 2006). In the first narrative, the speaker engages in the process of building trust in his own and his company's professional integrity. The first narrative focuses on competence and goodwill,

¹²⁴ USP is defined as 'the factor or consideration presented by a seller as the reason that one product or service is different from and better than that of the competition.' A business can peg its USP on product characteristics, price structure, placement strategy (location and distribution) or promotional strategy. (Small Business Encyclopedia, Entrepreneur.com, 2015) .

presumably the most relevant PI aspects in respect to the public's criticism. In response, Angelo highlights an ethical and respectful approach towards a client.

The opening lines (1-6) represent a conventional introduction to the 60-second speech and serve as an example of a common identity alignment with a company through a person reference (Drew and Sojornen, 1997) in which the use of the first person pronoun 'we' (*that's what we do, we arrange insurance*) indexes Angelo's institutional rather than personal identity. Once the speaker defines the target clientele for the week (line 3-6), he introduces the competence tale with a fairly prototypical structure.

1	Good morning, I am from Insurance Brokers, that's what we do, we arrange [...] insurance primarily
2	for companies and also for [...] individuals. Er [...] what am I looking for this week, I am looking
3	for uh: consultants . Anybody who's a consultant, whether it be a management consultant,
4	or a consultant in any sort of field . Generally these people these days looking for some sort
5	of professional cover [...] to protect themselves. The advice lead , /if people mean to seek out that
6	advice/, so if you know anybody in the consultancy business, please come talk to me.
7	Erm [...] have a story for you this week, we had a guy who we've been dealing with for three months .
8	You know, quite unfortunately, his car broke down [...] on the side of the motorway, left it there,
9	to get to a meeting and it was stolen . He hadn't disclosed /????business/ [...] piece of information
10	for /?/?/, but it was quite serious piece of information
11	and after three months, we'd arranged to get his claim paid .
12	And that's what we do! Even though he's sort of [...] uh: mistakenly given the insurance company
13	wrong information, he didn't do that deliberately, and therefore he got claim paid in the value of forty
14	five thousand pounds.
15	So if you're fed up with your insurance company or your broker, they charging too much money o:r
16	they too slow, call CM and ask for Angelo.

(17.02 2005)

Example 5.2: Angelo's first speech embedding CT¹²⁵

Angelo starts with the situation (line 7) and initial problem (line 8-9), then introduces another problem layer, making the client own the problem (*He hadn't disclosed ... piece of information*) and qualifies the problem in line 10 (*but it was quite serious piece*

¹²⁵ #1 in Appendix 10.

of information). The minimalist solution in line 11 projects competence and is followed by a more elaborate evaluation that sums up the slick and smooth solution as a company standard (*And that's what we do!*), but more interestingly, evaluates the client's action (line 12-13).

In the evaluation, Angelo takes a protective stance towards his client. Even though his client is not amongst the audience, he tries to mitigate the potential face threat, implied by the client's non-disclosure of an important piece of information, by using evaluative lexis to emphasize that the client had done so: *mistakenly* (line 12, marked prosody) and not *deliberately* (line 13). Thus Angelo protects his own professional identity, namely, the dimension of trust, from being implicated by working for a corrupt client. At the same time, Angelo also defines the limits to the goodwill dimension by making it implicitly clear that the client was assisted only because he was mistaken and not deliberate.

In terms of emotional investment, Angelo's speech is relatively neutral, with involvement markers only being found in the problem evaluation, combining a hedge and an evaluative lexical item in *quite serious*. The coda involves an entrenched hyperbolic phrase that is relatively neutral : *if you're fed up with your insurance company or your broker* (the prosody in the delivery of 'fed up' was weak, with marked prosody in the use of personal pronoun and possessive determiner: 'you' and 'your'). Furthermore, the coda does not bear specific relevance to this particular speech, since it is Angelo's closing line, which he had repeatedly used in his previous speeches.

5.5.3 Narrative 2: Cultivating trustworthiness

Angelo appears to work methodically to overcome the main barriers to reaching prospective clients in his industry. The core identity dimension that he communicates

via the second narrative is clearly trustworthiness, since he conveys his and the company's¹²⁶ uncompromising and 'honest' character, which is repeated three times, forming a very clear nexus of his speech: *we tell our clients the truth* (abstract/line 4), *I gave the client the truth* (situation/problem/line 6), *we do tell them the truth* (evaluation/line 10).

1	Angelo from [...] uh: CM Insurance and ah I help you [...] sleep better at night. And [...] I don't use any
2	drugs or any other techniques to do that. Ah: I help you sleep better because I [...] insure your
3	companies' assets and yours, hopefully giving you uh: a good night's sleep.
4	Uh: one of the [...] hopefully unique things about us is we tell our clients the truth . Whether it's good
5	news or bad news.
6	Uh [...] good example yesterday was, I gave ah the client the truth about his premium which he said
7	was not fine in sense of what his budget was,
8	and he was gonna shut the company down .
9	So, we managed to work round that solution, he's not gonna shut the company down today,
10	but we do keep clients- uh we do tell them the truth whether it's good news or bad news. Which
11	is not like every adviser that's out there.
12	Uh:: what I am looking for this morning [...] is ah: contacts into [...] a [...] company called W Plc. They're
13	based in Aston. They make a number of things including telescopic slides. And ah: company turning
14	over about 15 million pounds. If you've got contacts into W Plc, I'd be delighted to hear of them.
15	Particularly if it's the financial director who's Graham E. If you're [...] uh looking for an insurance
16	broker with some get up and go, call CM and ask for Angelo.
	(30.06 2005)

Example 5.3: Angelo's second speech embedding CT¹²⁷

The expression of competence is implicit, i.e. 'allusion to telling' (Georgakopolou, 2009), with only a minimalist backdrop of evidence, which is in fact limited to two evaluative clauses: *he was gonna shut the company/he's not gonna shut the company* (8-9) underlining the core message: *I gave the client the truth* (line 7). The use of an epistemic modal in the problem economically communicates the gravity of the situation: *he was gonna shut the company down* (note the use of emphatic stress). The solution phase

¹²⁶ Note again the identity alignment with the speaker's organization.

¹²⁷ #7 in Appendix 10.

is clearly signalled through the use of corresponding lexis: *we managed to work round that solution* and Angelo's competence is then conveyed via the line *he's not gonna shut the company down today*. Clearly, the communication of competence is ancillary or equal, since the speaker foregrounds the trustworthiness facet.

Angelo's second narrative also communicates a higher degree of emotional investment. This effect is achieved primarily through the use of repetition and prosody. In fact, the degree and patterns of repetition marking this speech are far more pronounced than those within the wider BDN sample. Note the poetic organization of Angelo's speech, with the line of symmetry running through the centre:

1	ah I help you sleep better at night. +
2	And I don't use any drugs or any other techniques to do that.
3	Ah: I help you sleep better because I insure your companies' assets and yours,
4	hopefully giving you uh: a good night's sleep.
5	One of the hopefully unique things about us is we tell our clients the truth .
6	Whether it's good news or bad news.
7	I gave ah the client the truth about his premium
8	... he was gonna shut the company down .
9	... he's not gonna shut the company down today,
10	but we do keep clients- uh we do tell them the truth,
11	whether it's good news or bad news.
12	Which is not like every adviser that's out there.

Example 5.4: Poetic organization of the second narrative

The entrenched metaphor *I help you sleep better*¹²⁸ (line 1 in the Example above) is repeated first in line 3 (verbatim and with the same prosody) coupled with the deontic modal adverb *hopefully*, and reappears, albeit rephrased, in line 4. Interestingly, the unique selling proposition is repeated three times in less than a minute. It is initially delivered,

¹²⁸ The conventional metaphoric phrase opening the speech appears to be a ready prefab specific to the insurance industry. Plentiful use of this metaphor and its variation can be found across the BDN corpus, invariably used by insurance, financial and business advice professionals. Examples from the same target domain can be e.g. found in the memory hook database, Appendix 13.

and clearly labelled as a unique selling proposition (USP) in lines 5 and 6, and then appears for the second time in line 7. The USP is repeated again verbatim in lines 10 and 11, with the only change being in the modality of the claim. There is full commitment to the unique selling proposition in lines 10 and 11 and the confidence in the claim is accentuated by the use of *do*: *we do keep clients- we do tell them the truth* (note again the marked prosody). The degree of commitment to the statement is clearly enabled by the evidential power of the narrative¹²⁹, which revolves around the proposition of trustworthiness. The narrative itself again deploys parallel structures to contrast the problem: *he was gonna shut the company down* (line 8) with the (solution) evaluation: *he's not gonna shut the company down* (line 9).

Potentially, there are numerous reasons for the symmetric and repetitive organization of the speech. One aspect is simply practical or physiological, i.e. the relative time pressure under which novel 60-second messages¹³⁰ are composed. Repetition typically helps the production of a fluent message (see e.g. Tannen, 2007). Repetition equally helps reception: given that in every meeting the audience needs to process about 20 such speeches during approximately 30 minutes, repetition is the central tool enabling retention and recall, and used to induce agreement with the message (Moons et al., 2009 *inter alia*).

The degree of repetition in this presentation is, however, extraordinary and it seems that the retention of and the agreement with the simple core message is its primary implicit goal. Using repetition and symmetry, the speech clearly communicates heightened

¹²⁹ See the first narrative chapter on the evidential potential of narratives.

¹³⁰ Novel BDN messages denote the cases in which speakers change the content of their presentations on a weekly basis. Based on a survey carried out in the primary group, most speakers tend to compose their presentation the night before, or in some cases the morning before the meeting.

involvement, and at times performs an evaluative function. In comparison with the first speech in the series, the increase in involvement is notable.

This narrative communicates honesty at all cost, even in situations when the truth is inconvenient. In line 11 of his second narrative (*which is not like every adviser that's out there*), the speaker again exploits the negatively stereotyped prototype (Grant and Hogg, 2012; Dyer and Keller-Cohen, 2000) towards communicating his unique selling point, clearly positioning himself in the increasingly competitive field of insurance provision.

5.5.4 Narrative 3: Addressing the audience as direct clients through pain narrative

The way people use pronouns, particularly in addressing recipients, has implications for their interpersonal relationships and the way the receivers are positioned.

[Benwell and Stokoe, 2006, p. 115]

The third narrative is the most emotive in the series. Rather than soliciting help in finding on-target referrals, it addresses the audience as clients. One of the key merits of this speech and its embedded story is that it represents an iconic example of a pain-eliciting presentation¹³¹ (see also Section 3.5) that appears relatively frequently across the networking 60 seconds data. While pain-eliciting speech does not necessarily contain narrative evidence (see, for example, the pain scenarios S13, S14 and S15 in the previous chapter), it always focuses on the audience as a direct client. It functions to create

¹³¹ The term has been inspired by the conception of *pain funnel* in Sandler's influential sales methodology (2002, 2005, 2006). The sales methodology is primarily based on uncovering a problem owned by the client and eliciting acute emotional response in the client by first asking general questions related to the identified problem such as: *How long has that been problem? What have you tried to do about that?*, later invoking an emotional response by asking questions such as: *How much do you think that has cost you? Have you given up trying to deal with the problem?* The methodology is based on the premise that buying is primarily an emotional process. Unlike more traditional selling systems, the sales professional first works towards uncovering/creating a specific need/problem in the client. Detailed information on the products/services is supplied only after the need/problem is acutely felt, and all information supplied targets specifically the client's need. Sandler's sales system has lately become one of the mainstream sales methodologies.

an intense emotional response in the hearer, i.e. a perception of a specific pain and resultant conviction that a certain service/product is urgently needed to alleviate the pain/remedy the situation. Pain-eliciting stories and scenarios are recurrent in the wider BDN dataset supporting this chapter, and in the narrative sample, of which they form 11%. The transcript below gives an example of a speech driven towards invoking pain.

All instances of the personal pronoun ‘you’ and ‘your’ were underlined in this speech to highlight the primary focus of the speech, i.e. the orientation towards the audience as a client rather than a WOM agent. Note the repeated co-occurrence of ‘you’ with the deontic modal: ‘need’ which the speaker uses four times, so as to intensify the emotional and relational appeal of his message (Koester, 2006).

1	Do <u>you</u> know how <u>you</u> make an insurance claim, and the insurance company wanna get out of paying
2	it? [<u><n Audience></u> Yes. Yeah!] Unanimous yes! Yeah. What <u>you</u> need in those circumstances
3	are all the various insurances that <u>you</u> might buy commercially by the: [...] property insurance
4	or liability insurance, maybe a travel policy, when <u>you</u> go on holiday. <u>You</u> need somebody, who’s
5	gonna look after these policies, who’s gonna review them for <u>you</u> , who’s gonna make sure [...] that
6	when <u>you</u> put a claim in, perhaps <u>you</u> ’re abroad like a client of mine was recently, the son got very
7	ill, and they needed to be repatriated back to the UK, which was a massive bill, it was about fifty
8	thousand pounds in total. <u>You</u> need a policy that’s gonna look after <u>you</u> in that regard, and that’s
9	when <u>you</u> need to come to someone like me. Because what I’m gonna do, I’m not just gonna arrange
10	the insurance and take a premium from <u>you</u> , I’m actually going to send <u>your</u> policy documents off
11	to a third-party guy, who deals with claims, and he’s gonna give <u>you</u> an analysis of what <u>your</u> policy
12	is, within the fee that I charge <u>you</u> . So it takes away the headache for <u>you</u> [...] of reading sixty-four
13	page documents that people like me send <u>you</u> , thinking, what’s the bloody hell actually covered
14	in this policy. So if that’s a naught for <u>you</u> , if <u>you</u> read policy documents along these lines, and think,
15	that’s boring, come and speak to me, Angelo C, C Associates. If <u>you</u> want an insurance broker with
16	some get up and go, call [...] C Associates and ask for Angelo. (01.09 2005)

Example 5.5: Angelo’s third speech embedding CT¹³²

¹³² #14 in Appendix 10.

The speaker introduces a general problem scenario, incorporating a lexical cluster that often signals scenarios: *do you know how...* (line 1)¹³³, thus addressing the audience directly. At this point the use of direct address is rather conventional, and may be used just for its rhetorical impact. However, the positioning of the audience as his direct clients is quite clear from the quantitative analysis of the pronoun use. The frequency of the use of *you* is 20 instances per 281 words, i.e. 7 %, making ‘*you*’ the most frequent non-functional word in the presentation.

The highly emotional appeal that preceded the embedded narrative was again further intensified by repetition, mostly by the poetic structure of the stanza (lines 4 and 5):

1	<u>You</u> need somebody
2	who’s gonna look after these policies
3	who’s gonna review them for <u>you</u>
4	who’s gonna make sure...

Example 5.6: Poetic structuring of problem and evaluation phases in CT2

This stanza is later mirrored and repeated in the renewed emotional appeal that follows the crisis narrative. *Somebody* + *who* is then replaced by the definite *I*, both the stanzas containing the epistemic modal *gonna*, communicating the future to the audience in no uncertain terms. This repeated usage of *who’s gonna/I’m gonna* reinforces the notion of the hard sell, which is not entirely uncommon in the BDN data, yet the commitment to factual propositions generally tends to be more tentative.

5.5.5 Discussion and the summary of key outcomes

In this narrative series, the speaker methodically developed his professional identity, focusing on the elements of trust and goodwill, i.e. the facets that were, at the beginning of

¹³³ See the previous chapter, Section 4.7, on the concept of problem scenarios, and the dominant discourse markers introducing these.

the case study, identified as most contentious or problematic given the public view of the speaker's profession (Friedman and Srinivas, 2013). Each story in the sequence relied on a unique selling proposition as the chief marketing strategy (Laskey et al. 1989; Shen, 2012). The narrator systematically exploited the negatively stereotyped prototype (Hogg and Abrams, 1993), showing implicit agreement with the general distrust towards his profession, with no attempt to rehabilitate the professional field as such. He leveraged the distrust to single out his performance in the increasingly competitive field of insurance provision. Figure 5.3 shows relevant extracts from the three speeches, in which Angelo uses the popular opinion to his advantage:

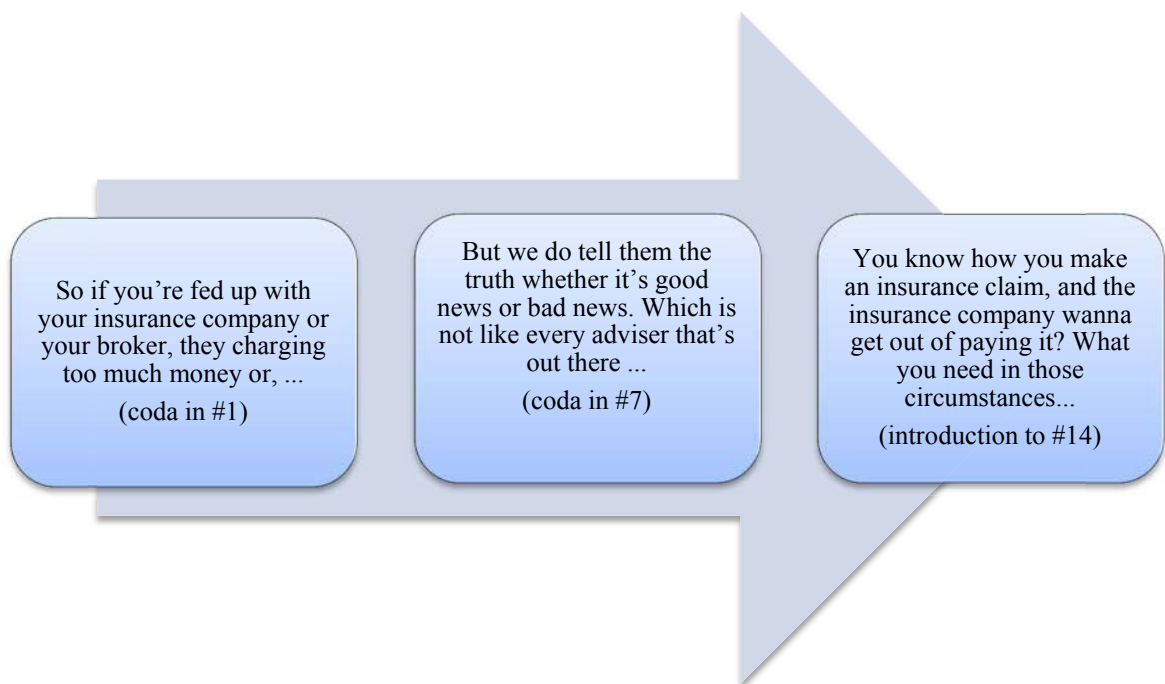


Figure 5.1: Leveraging distrust against the profession to showcase professional identity

The official policy of the researched networking organization presents the prototypical group identity as based on reciprocity (Giver's Gain)¹³⁴. The mutual relationship between the members is thus primarily defined as word-of-mouth agent, a supplier of on-target

¹³⁴ See Section 2.2.1 for reciprocity as key driver of positive word of mouth within organized business networks.

referrals, and direct selling to other members is officially discouraged and perceived as playing a minor role (personal communication with the CEO and respective group leaders, 2007, 2008). Yet, the recordings and ethnographic information clearly show that members often become direct clients. See Chapter 2, Example 2.1, for the responses to an interview on financial returns of the participation in the target network, in which the respondents indicate that a significant proportion of their business comes directly from the chapter members.

The tendency to address co-members as clientele was documented in the third narrative in the series (#14) which contained an intense emotional appeal, designed to create need for the target service. The narrative was delivered about a month after Angelo started up his own company involving associates. It is tempting to suggest that the unusual strength of emotional appeal in #14 and the need to invoke different interactional identities (service provider/client) might be ascribed to the newly-minted entrepreneurial identity (Warren, 2004), and the need to attract a new client base. The audience was addressed as direct clients, in conjunction with the use of an iconic pain-eliciting speech.

In terms of the generic structure of pain narrative, the figure below gives an approximation as based on the third narrative (Example 5.15), along with the key interactional functions achieved in each phase, supported by examples from the transcript.

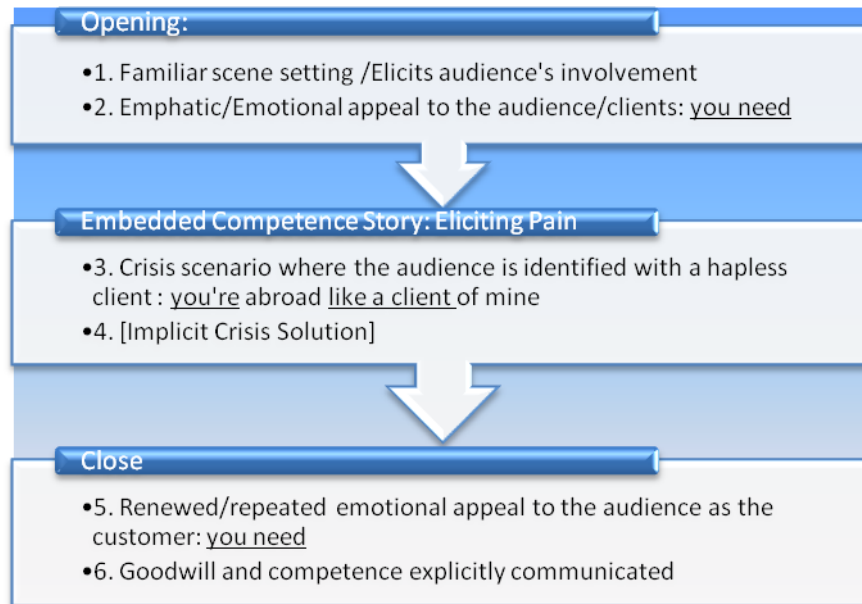


Figure 5.2: Structural pattern of pain speech

As previously noted, the concept of pain elicitation has been adopted from the influential sales methodology by Sandler Sales Training (2002, 2005, 2006), and translated here into the concept of pain master narrative. The figure above points to the content and the function of the opening, outlines the position of the embedded narrative, and then highlights, in the close, the sandwich structure created by the initial and the renewed emotional appeal. Just as in the problem-solution pattern or in the transformation narrative, high-involvement lexis and lexis specific to pain tends to index key stages of the the speech and marks it further as a pain master narrative. As evidenced by Example 5.15, lexical items signalling pain include, for instance, the deontic modal *need*, and the cluster presupposing the existence of pain/ promising remedy: *take headache away from you*.

5.6 Macro-factors influencing the tendency to enlist CTs

We become the stories through which we tell our lives.

[Riessman, 2003, p. 7]

While the competence tale is undeniably a resource shared by the majority of the network's participants, the data points to more frequent and repeated reliance on competence tales as an identity-construction strategy and as a meaning-making strategy in the following cases:

- the profession has a controversial status, lacks credibility and/or involves a high-risk decision on the part of the client (e.g., the insurance industry, and financial and investment services)
- there is a little or no understanding of the professional domain
- the target product/service is not needed in the day-to-day business operation
- the profession lies in the field of mental and/or physical health provision
- the profession lies in the field of business- or self- improvement
- the member is new to the network
- the member introduces a new strand to their current service portfolio.

These factors can be united into three core sets of influencers, which will now be explored in terms of their interplay. In many cases in the dataset, the tendency to repeatedly enlist competence tales cannot be reliably traced to any single factor, as presented by the overlap and synergy of factors summarized under the first two of the following groups:

- 1) *Controversial public opinion of the speaker's profession, low level of public understanding of the target professional domain, target service involving high-risk decisions by the client, target service not essential to everyday*

business operation. The professions that are categorized as such include the insurance industry, financial services, unconventional medicine, general training in personal and professional improvement, such as life coaching, NLP training, ZEN and hypnotherapy, and vaguely defined performance consultancy.¹³⁵ 60% of competence tales were delivered by the representatives of the aforementioned businesses, while these businesses constituted less than 40% of the membership in the studied groups.

2) *Professions in the domain of physical and mental well-being, or involving personal and/or professional improvement.* In Chapter 3, a macro-categorical label of healing narrative has been ascribed to the type of problem-solution narrative pattern, which involves an ailing person, business or organization being restored to physical, mental, functional or financial health. Such narratives inherently contain the *transformation plot* (Bruner, 2003) and a higher degree of cognitive salience and emotional investment. The relative saliency and emotionality tend to increase their tellability, thus offering fruitful ground for professions that focus on physical and mental health. This practice is well illustrated in a narrative series of four competence tales delivered by a homeopath and Bowen therapist over a period of two years (see #4, #18, #22 and #31 in Appendix 10). The healing metaphor extends to the field of improvement in the personal and professional sphere and can, albeit with some danger, be applied to ailing businesses. Healing narrative is a recurrent phenomenon in the 60-second data, and while it can be an effective resource, it is not altogether problem free. If used

¹³⁵ See e.g., #8, #12 in Appendix 10

in a metaphorical sense, the discourse of healing is prone to pathos and clichés¹³⁶, and may thus lack authenticity.

- 3) *New members and members introducing a new strand into their current service portfolio.* As established by Misner (1993), a new member attracts little business from the group and its referential network in the first year.¹³⁷ Unsurprisingly, the sample clearly documents the tendency for new members to rely on competence narratives, with 54% of competence tales delivered either by visitors to the group, or people who belonged to the group for less than a year.

5.7 Conclusion

This chapter has tracked the development of the study of professional identity across disciplines, finding that most organizational and business discourse research that addresses professional identity has so far focused primarily on collective identities or managerial identities. Individual professional identities that are not managerial or intrinsically defined by the corporate superstructure have been rarely subject to research. The research that has investigated how individual speakers construct their professional self in discourse appears to use the concept of professional identity loosely. Tacit understanding of the term tends to transpire from the given paper, and the concept differs vastly, depending on the discourse context and the perspective of the researcher.

The concept of professional identity is indeed contextually bound and hinges on the individual research perspective¹³⁸, yet that is precisely the reason why

¹³⁶ # 26 in Appendix 10.

¹³⁷ See chapter 2 for results of Misner study involving 764 respondents from 42 BDN groups across the USA.

¹³⁸ See Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011.

the construct needs to be qualified as understood by the researcher in the given context. In terms of context, this chapter has defined professional identity so as to befit the discourse sites of both organized and non-organized networking, as well as promotional and sales contexts engaging business partners or buyer-seller relationships. In line with the constructionist take on identity, in this study professional identity is perceived to be produced and reproduced in interaction, and as evolving, changing and solidifying over time. Professional identity has been here theorized as equivalent to the current concept of source credibility¹³⁹ within communication theory, i.e. as a three-dimensional measurable construct subsisting of competence, trustworthiness and goodwill.

The applied section of this chapter has explored the process of assembling and attuning a distinct professional identity through a series of competence tales delivered in networking meetings over an extended period of time. The case study involved an insurance broker, whose profession inheres low credibility, i.e. is generally regarded with a pronounced degree of mistrust. The wary stance held by the public towards the insurance business stems primarily from a lack of trust in the ethicality of the professionals involved in the industry.¹⁴⁰

Through a series of three narratives, the speaker methodically developed his professional identity, focusing on the elements of trust and goodwill, i.e. the facets that are the most contentious in the public view of the profession (Friedman and Srinivas, 2013). Exploiting the negatively stereotyped prototype, each story in the sequel singled the speaker's ethical service out in a sea of corrupt competition. While in this case the narrator utilized

¹³⁹ McCroskey and Teven (1999)

¹⁴⁰ See the study by Brien et al. (2011) on the controversial public stance towards homeopathy, and de Bettignies (2006) on the credibility issues of insurance business.

the negative view of the profession to formulate his unique selling point, other narrative series in the data show that in the case of low confidence in the profession of the speaker, an alternative strategy may involve systematic attempts at subverting the popular view by rehabilitating the whole professional field. This strategy is evidenced in the aforementioned homeopath's narrative series (see #4, #18, #22 and #31 in Appendix 10).

These diverse strategies used in two distinct professional fields appear to be indicative of the interrelationship between the nature of the business activity and the member's tendency to deploy competence tales. At the macro-level, the analysis of the dataset points to more frequent and repeated reliance on CTs as an identity-construction and meaning-making strategy if the member's profession lacks credibility, is vaguely defined or difficult to understand, involves a high-risk decision on the part of the client, and if the target service is not essential to everyday personal and business operations. The professions that are categorized as such include the insurance industry, financial services, unconventional medicine and general training in personal and professional improvement. This study has found that 60% of competence tales were delivered by the representatives of the aforementioned businesses, while these businesses constituted less than 40% of the membership in the studied groups.

Professions in the domain of physical and mental well-being, and professions involving personal and professional improvement are a fruitful site for the subcategory of competence tales which this study has labelled as healing narratives.¹⁴¹ These narratives inhere the transformation plot (Bruner, 2003) and involve a higher potential degree of cognitive salience and emotional investment. The relative saliency and emotionality

¹⁴¹See also Section 3.5 of this thesis.

tends to increase their tellability. The healing metaphor extends to the field of personal and professional development and can be also applied to ailing businesses.

The length of a member's engagement with the network and the duration of his or her business activity also influence the tendency to enlist competence tales. Narrative is a common strategy amongst new members who are in the initial stage of building trust, termed the *information stage* (Child, 2005), as 54% of CTs were delivered either by visitors or people who had belonged to the group for less than a year. The use of narrative in this phase of trust development has been well-documented in a range of institutional contexts, including job interviews¹⁴² and asylum seeker interviews¹⁴³. Unlike these settings, the network is an institutional context which does not normatively require new entrants to pass a narrative test. Nonetheless, a successful narrative seems to represent the ultimate checking mechanism, mediating experience and accelerating inclusion into the networking group.

Despite the power of narrative, it is not an exclusive tool in identity construction. This study subsequently sets out to show that deliberate metaphor can effectively construct various professional, personal and social identities.

¹⁴² See Roberts and Campbell, 2005, Roberts, 2009.

¹⁴³ See Blommaert and Slembrouck, 2000.

CHAPTER 6

Positioning Metaphor as an Instrument of Linguistic and Identity Co-construction in 60 seconds

I believe in tooth, the whole tooth and nothing but the tooth, so help me God.

[US BDN member, dentist]

The opening quote is the body of a speech that was delivered by a new member, and lasted a mere six seconds, i.e. a tenth of the time that is allotted to the self-branding pitch in the network. As a novice in a sizeable group, the dentist banked on the memorability of his message by casting his dedication to dentistry as the chosen profession metaphorically as a mock-serious solemn oath. The speech won him instant recognition, the CEO of the researched organization later recalling his presentation as an obvious deviation from the conservative 60 seconds, yet certainly one of the most minimalist and memorable speeches he had heard. Metaphor and metonymy were used here as resounding positioning strategies, communicating aspects of the speaker's professional identity in no uncertain terms.

In the genre of 60-second speech, metaphor serves a number of communicative goals. Speakers deploy metaphor to evaluate self vis-a-vis competitors¹⁴⁴, or evaluate competitors vis-a-vis self as in the following pain scenario: *how much is [the solicitor] going to cost me, it's like a meter running, it's like a taxi*. Metaphor may add a fun element, may communicate values espoused or rejected, and may communicate the key benefits of the

¹⁴⁴ See Appendix 14a for examples, such as the use of an entrenched metaphor in a tag line by an insurance business: *Above the rest!*

business as in a tag line by a landscaper: *we were raised to play in the dirt*. Metaphor can be used as an involvement strategy increasing message retention. The key function, though, seems to be to supply an identity statement, i.e. to position and differentiate the individual and their business.¹⁴⁵

Metaphor is clearly an identity construction resource that is complementary to narrative, and the two strategies can be used in conjunction, as evidenced by the narrative data in the previous chapters. In 25% of competence tales, entrenched metaphor was deployed to structure the competence claim. Conventional metaphor provides the theme to the narrative, lying at the core of the positioning competence claim, while narrative brings the competence alive, supplying the context in detail, and communicating emotion and evidence. Ultimately, metaphor participates in the construction of a variety of social and professional identities.

This chapter focuses on metaphor in the 60-second rhetoric, and targets metaphor use as a positioning device and as a shorthand way of displaying aspects of professional identities. Rather than focusing on isolated metaphor use in a corpus of tag lines, the chapter examines positioning metaphor dynamics in a series of self-promotional speeches delivered in close succession, the authors of which having been prompted to use an Olympic sports metaphor of their choice. The chapter explores the dynamics of metaphor appropriation in a presentational genre, isolating the dominant tendencies and micro-factors that appear to contribute to the process of metaphor co-construction in a networking meeting.

¹⁴⁵ Deliberate metaphor tends to be deployed mostly in the tag lines that open/close the speech and in the problem scenarios. In the tag lines, metaphor is often used in conjunction with polysemy, homonymy and an array of other rhetoric devices that are based on sound equivalence to help the retention of the one-liner.

It also discusses the potential interplay between metaphor development through interaction and the discursive construction of prototypical professional identity. The current discourse-analytical turn in metaphor research (Cameron and Deignan, 2006; Cameron, 2007; Semino, 2008; Koller, 2009; Low et al., 2010; Steen, 2011; Musolff, 2012; Deignan et al., 2013 *inter alia*) and Cameron's (2007, 2008) conception of the dynamical systems approach serve as the key points of departure for linguistic analyses and the claims concerning linguistic, cognitive and social dimensions of metaphor.

6.1 The dataset and the formulation of research questions

The metaphor that is brought under the analytical lens in this study is deployed primarily as a positioning device and its use is deliberate, i.e. it involves metaphor that was produced intentionally as such (Steen, 2013). The investigation takes the form of a case study, and is informed primarily by linguistic data from a networking meeting in the primary group, in which an Olympic sports metaphor was solicited by the group leader.

The networking meeting was held shortly after London beat Paris to win the right to stage the Olympic Games in 2012, the victory having resulted in the primary networking group holding an informal celebration. In the following meeting, the group leader asked the members to introduce an Olympic sports reference into their 60-seconds (see the transcript of the request below). The request was announced at the beginning of the meeting, giving the group members limited time to come up with a suitable metaphor.

Speaker	Transcript
<Chair>	Now just to make it a bit uh:: I suppose just to keep you all awake as well this morning, I wa- I wanna give you a challenge[...] for the: sixty second slot this morning. 2012. What's 2012, what's happening in 2012?
<Member>	Olympics
<Chair>	Woo::! Yeah [...] there you go, the Olympics. Olympic sports. What I want you to do, in your sixty-second slot, I just want you to introduce anyhow you want, make it as cryptic or as obvious as you want, I just want you to introduce an Olympic sport into your s-sixty-second slot, If you want to- uh [...] liken yourself to an Olympic sport, or just use a word [...] that [...] will make sure that people will be focused, well what is the Olympic sport that they've introduced into their sixty-second slot...

Example 6.1: Group leader soliciting the use of an Olympic sports metaphor

The request to use metaphor was an attempt to revive the waning dynamics of the 60-second part of the meeting and resulted in a series of speeches that deployed a positioning metaphor from the generic SPORTS domain. The challenge took place independently of my presence as a researcher, i.e. I did not in any way help to orchestrate it. In fact, the metaphor challenge predated my interest in researching metaphor and the Olympic data slipped under my radar. Later, I was present at another networking meeting, in which the leader decided to repeat the sports challenge. Unfortunately, I could not record that meeting but it was highly instrumental in bringing positioning metaphor to the forefront of my attention and spurred the decision to explore the discourse dynamics of metaphor use in the self-branding 60-seconds.

Previous and concurrent studies have investigated metaphor discourse dynamics and positioning metaphor in dialogues and multilogues, namely in reconciliation talks and conflict management discussions by (e.g., Cameron, 2007, Cameron et al., 2014; Seu and Cameron, 2013). In comparison, the presentational data explored in in this chapter faces some limitation in respect to its potential to communicate the speakers' identity positions:

- a) Unlike the above mentioned conversational studies, specific metaphor use was in this case study solicited by one of the speakers, i.e. the production of the target deliberate metaphor was not spontaneous.
- b) The prescribed SPORTS metaphor limited the speakers' choice of metaphor to a single predetermined source domain, which may have influenced the positioning potential of individual metaphors, i.e. the naturalness of the professional self-construction.

Whilst the above limiting influences have been factored into the analysis, the data still presents a unique opportunity to analyse positioning metaphor dynamics and metaphor identity in a genre in which neither has been explored before. Under regular meeting circumstances, speakers deliver a rehearsed 60-second speech, and thus the amount of dialogism in real time is limited to random impromptu comments. In this regard, the Olympic speech sequence represents a diversion and an interesting evidential base capturing how speakers influence each others' metaphor choices in real time in what is perceived as an apriori monologic genre. The dataset provides a chance to study the core motivators of individual choices, and explore how the inter-speaker influence shapes individual self-constructions, and ultimately also prototypical professional identity.

The approach to identity throughout this thesis is constructionist, i.e. identity is seen as transient, changeable and subject to the discursive circumstances shaping the particular discourse event.

The research questions raised in this chapter thus revolve around the appropriation and co-construction of positioning metaphor as a textual and semiotic resource at various levels of engagement, from the textual level up to the discussion of identity outcomes.

RQ 6.1 How does the metaphor embedded in self-branding 60 seconds evolve through interaction?

RQ 6.2 What are the main factors influencing whether a positioning metaphor will be further developed in interaction?

RQ 6.3 How does the combined use of positioning metaphor influence construction of professional identity?

6.2 The organization of the chapter

The chapter is divided into the following parts. Section 6.3 is theoretical and charts the key paradigmatic shifts in the accounts of metaphor in the last three decades, thus providing the necessary conceptual backdrop. Part 6.4 introduces the Olympic case used for analysis, detailing the dataset and methodology, and presenting an overview of the Olympic transcripts that are germane to the ensuing discussion, along with a set of initial observations on the communicative outcomes of the metaphors in use. Full transcripts of the Olympic metaphor (OM) speeches are available in Appendix 13.2. Sections 6.5 and 6.6 are firmly grounded in the case study data, and unpack the notion of individual metaphor evolution (appropriation/co-construction) processes, attending first to the local dynamics of metaphor appropriation evidenced in the Olympic case study, then moving beyond the micro-level analysis, tracing dominant groups of systematic metaphors in the sample and discussing their link to aspects of prototypical professional identity. The dominant professional self-construction is discussed in 6.8. Preceding the prototypical professional identity discussion, in section 6.7, co-construction tendencies and their chief motivating factors are discussed and summarised.

6.3 Theoretical backdrop to current conception of metaphor

This section discusses the key directions of metaphor research in the last thirty years, identifying the major developments in the conception of metaphor. It unfolds with the traditional paradigm of focusing on metaphor in language, then moves to the cognitive turn of prioritizing metaphor in thought, and finally, it traces the emergence of the social/discourse analytical shift within the cognitive-scientific paradigm. The last turn addresses the social and functional aspects of metaphor, which is arguably of most interest to applied linguistics research in general, and of most relevance to this study. The overview is cursory, designed to provide the necessary theoretical backdrop to the ensuing metaphor analyses.

6.3.1 Traditional vs. cognitive-scientific paradigm

In ancient rhetoric, metaphor, along with synecdoche, metonymy and irony formed a part of the ‘canon of elocutio’ of style or eloquence. While metaphor was recognized as the master trope, and thus the most powerful means of persuasion, it was treated as a purely linguistic device, a part of the ‘virtue of ornamentation’ which had primarily an aesthetic function (Aristotle, in Rowe, 1997). This conceptualisation continued to influence the way researchers over most of the 20th century viewed metaphor: fundamentally, as a distinct attribute of creative writing and elaborate oratories. Metaphor was perceived as a mere artful distortion of everyday speech. Over the last thirty years, however, research has progressed quite dramatically, with metaphor in thought emerging as a key notion, while drawing under its rubric at least three critical reorientations (Ortony, 1979; Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993; Gibbs, 1994).

The first of these involved a challenge to the presiding conception of metaphor as a purely linguistic phenomenon, arguing for the dominance of thought over language. Metaphor was conceptualised as the main mechanism through which people comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning. As argued in Lakoff and Johnson (2003, p.272), 'Metaphors are fundamentally conceptual in nature; metaphorical language is secondary', i.e. linguistic metaphor is a subsequent vocalization of the cognitive process. In the cognitive linguistic paradigm, people primarily and conventionally think of concepts such as business in terms of concepts of kinship, war, or sports, and produce the corresponding linguistic metaphors as a consequence.

This view of metaphor has not been restricted to the field of cognitive linguistics, and has changed the understanding of metaphor within other social sciences, including the fields of sociology, and organizational and management studies. Metaphor has been, albeit selectively, embraced as the ultimate cognitive device: 'whatever our pedigree or education, our waking thoughts, and possibly our sleeping ones are shaped by metaphor' (Mangham, 1996, p. 13), and has been perceived as a unique resource which integrates culture and social participation, allowing humans to draw mental links and grasp connections between objects and abstract conceptions (Grassi 1976, 1980; Mangham, 1996; Mayhew 1997, inter alia).

A second major shift in perspective, captured by the cognitive-scientific paradigm, has negated the entrenched notion of metaphor as grounded in an objective pre-existing similarity between the literal and the non-literal domains¹⁴⁶, providing an understanding of metaphor based on cross-domain correlations in our experience, and perceived, rather

¹⁴⁶ This approach to metaphor has been termed objectivist, and has for long represented the prevailing view of metaphor in organization theory (see for example, Oswick et al., 2002), but can also still be traced in linguistic research (e.g., Carter, 2004, p. 120).

than grounded, in an objective similarity (e.g. Lakoff and Johnson, 2003; Kövecses, 2002). Conceptual metaphors map the relational information from a source domain, which is typically more concrete, tangible and based on a universally shared experience, onto a more abstract target domain, resulting in a set of correspondences. This complex online cross-domain mapping is believed to be activated whenever we produce or encounter metaphor in language or through other media.

Third, the cognitive turn clearly marks the effort to establish a broader space for metaphor, as a ubiquitous and most often highly conventional conceptual mechanism, against the conception that was previously deeply rooted in the traditional epistemology which holds that metaphor is a rare and mostly novel ornamental feature that tends to be limited to literary texts, that it is devoid of function other than having an aesthetic and persuasive effect, and that it is extraneous to what truly makes the language and society work. Based on abundant empirical evidence, language is strewn with metaphor, with metaphor providing a fundamental structure for language, gesture, and other modes of visual communication (e.g., Gibbs, 2006).

Both the conception and talk about a plethora of common abstract domains, predominantly emotion, morality, thought, society, economics, politics, human relationships, communication, time, life and death or religion, have been perceived by cognitive linguists as being shaped by underlying conceptual metaphors (Kövecses, 2002). Unsurprisingly, conceptual metaphor has been promoted as the major influence in the evolution of etymology, underlying the related meanings of polysemous words and the interpretations of novel extensions of conventional metaphor (Gibbs, 1994, 2006 in Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).

6.3.2 Applied perspective: 'real world' metaphor research and the discourse shift in metaphor theory

It has become increasingly clear that metaphor needs to be explored in terms of the social and discourse context in which it is used, especially where the aim is to address real-world problems.

[Low et al., 2010]

Over the last decade, metaphor research has been placing a renewed focus on the language of metaphors, and applied study of metaphor situated in language, as relative to the genre and situational context (Cameron and Deignan, 2006; Cameron, 2007; Semino, 2008; Koller, 2009; Steen, 2011; Musolff, 2012; Deignan et al., 2013 *inter alia*). This rehabilitation of the position of language within the field of metaphor theory and the related reorientation to communicative outcomes of metaphor use has been labelled the discourse shift or turn (Cameron, 2007). This discourse turn generally involves applying a fine-grained discourse/text analysis to a variety of conversational and institutional data, alternatively using a corpus-based approach, or a combination of both. Thus, rather than being studied as an isolated cognitive superstructure, metaphor is studied as inextricable from the cotext and wider context in which it appears, and as dynamically influencing and being influenced by both.

The discourse turn has not generally disputed the existence of conceptual underpinning, but has challenged the cognitive paradigm in respect to its limited applicability to metaphor analysis in real language. Early on, Cameron and Deignan (2006) argued that it was primarily the linguistic, rather than the conceptual metaphor that needed to be subject to analysis, since linguistic metaphors showed a remarkable phraseological tendency that

could only be explained through the analysis of language per se.¹⁴⁷ This tendency was found to be more pronounced in metaphorical than in literal language, an aspect of which the original cognitive paradigm had failed to account for.

Based on applied analysis of real-world metaphor, Cameron (e.g., 2010; 2009, 2008, 2007) developed a discourse dynamics approach¹⁴⁸, negating the perception of metaphor as a relatively fixed and static entity. Metaphor development is seen as a highly structured evolution process, similar to the one experienced within complex biological systems. While organized, it is also dynamic and fluid and thus neither predictable, nor a result of individual premeditated effort and individual recognition of pre-existing conceptual metaphors. The product of metaphor dynamics in discourse is collective and almost intuitive: it is driven as much by the conceptual underpinning as by the language, its form and its inherent lexicogrammatical requirements.

The reasons why people speak metaphorically are, according to the dynamical systems approach, subsumed under four distinct, yet inter-related, categories: cognitive, linguistic, social (relational/affective), and cultural. The social category here includes the categories of relation and persuasion, while the cultural aspect involves the categories of social norms

¹⁴⁷ Corpus-driven studies of language patterns provide evidence that words are dependent units that do not function separately but share meaning components that cannot be ascribed to a single word or morpheme (Hunston and Francis, 2001). Thus, rather than being selected and combined freely, words tend to be used in preset grammatical structures, with speakers reaching for and combining prefabricated structures (Sinclair, 2004 *inter alia*).

¹⁴⁸ When real-world language use is taken as the site of metaphor study, researchers face methodological issues that have only recently begun to be addressed. Cameron et al. (2010) explore links between theory and empirical investigation, exemplify data analysis, and discuss issues in research design and practice. Particular attention is paid to the processes of metaphor identification, categorisation and labelling, and to the use of corpus linguistic and other computer-assisted methods.

and beliefs that are conventionally encoded in specific metaphorical themes (Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).¹⁴⁹

The current discourse shift, and the related discourse dynamics approach developed by Cameron (e.g. 2010), is inherently attractive to applied ethnographic research like the present study, whose focus lies by definition in the communicative dimension, and whose research goals orient primarily towards the study of behavioural and social patterns. Thus, the methodology in the linguistic analysis in this chapter is largely inspired by Cameron's metaphor-led analysis of discourse dynamics in conversational data (ibid.).

6.4 Background to the Olympic case: the methodology and data

This section discusses the methodology used in the process of metaphor identification and analysis. It also introduces the case study data, presenting abridged transcripts of the speeches in the case study, thus providing quick access to temporal contextualization of individual presentations in the sequence of twelve speeches.

In respect to metaphor identification, a modified version of the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group (2007) was deployed in the identification of indirect metaphor. Direct metaphors, i.e. the source terms in similes [*A is like B*], in hybrid and prototypical metaphors such as [*A would be B/ A is B*], were also identified

¹⁴⁹ The discursive angle, the growing interest in the social and cultural dimensions of metaphor use have been evident in research across linguistic fields both native to metaphor theory and those that do not exclusively focus on metaphor. In CMT, scholars increasingly acknowledge the need for studying metaphor as situated in language, as relative to the genre and the situational context (see e.g., Steen 2011, 2013). In CDA, analytic approaches taking account of the discursive dimension are advocated (Musolff, 2012), suggesting that reliance on models combining cognitive, communicative and social metaphor dimensions will result in unforeseen synergies, transcending the limits of a purely cognitive framework, and surmounting the CMT difficulties in the analysis of empirical discourse data.

and tagged.¹⁵⁰ Direct metaphors pointing to the specific sports domain are highlighted in Figure 6.2. and in the extracts appearing in the text of this chapter.

Systematic metaphors that connect the local level of metaphor use to the discourse level were identified following the method proposed in Cameron (2007, p. 205). Individual metaphors were categorized by the basic meaning of the source term, thus the phrase: *however high you raise the bar, we'll always get over it* was grouped with other metaphorical phrases relating to OVERCOMING LIMITS.¹⁵¹ Systematic metaphors were then identified by bringing together the source terms in one category and choosing an appropriate label. The source domain categorisation is an interpretive process motivated mostly by induction; it is bottom-up analysis with systematic metaphor emerging from the data (Cameron 2007).

In the analytical stage, only the instances perceived as being deliberate use of metaphor were analysed, i.e. usage that appears to have been triggered either by the Olympic task itself or that seems to have been inspired by previous speakers, even though it does not necessarily possess a direct conceptual or semantic link to Olympic sport: *for staff that don't sink but swim*. The situational context in which all the participants were explicitly asked to produce an Olympic reference (*if you want to liken yourself to an Olympic sport*) makes it increasingly likely that the sports metaphor employed in the speeches is deliberate, regardless of its conventionality or lexical form (cf. Steen 2013, 2011, 2008).¹⁵²

¹⁵⁰ See Appendix 13 for the full transcript of Olympic metaphor (OM) speeches and detailed description of metaphor identification.

¹⁵¹ Following Cameron (2007), systematic metaphors appear in SMALL CAPS, so as to distinguish them clearly from conceptual metaphors that are conventionally given in ALL CAPS.

¹⁵² See Figure 6.2 below and Appendix 13 for the full transcript. All instances of linguistic metaphor were tagged in Appendix 13, although this chapter focuses solely on deliberate use. It is neither within the remit

6.4.1 The case study

A total of 23 members participated in the meeting, 19 men and 4 women. The group was ethnically and culturally relatively homogenous; the speakers were all white British, with the exception of one British Indian male (OM8 in Figure 6.2). The first 12 speeches were recorded and transcribed, accounting for 8 male and 4 female speakers (OM2,4,10,11 in Figure 6.2). The ethnographic data that further inform this chapter involve on-site ethnographic observation (including observing the spontaneous evaluation of individual presentations through laughter, comment and applause), a short unstructured interview with 4 of the members, and an online survey.

Figure 6.2 below provides a schematic overview of the Olympic metaphor activity. It classifies individual metaphors according to the dominant aspects of the professional identity expressed via the sports metaphor, whether it be competence, goodwill or trustworthiness. These categories are based on the conceptualisation of professional identity dimensions articulated in the previous chapter, and are given in column 1. At a certain level, these may be interpreted as very general systematic metaphors, i.e. as supercategories to the more specific systematic metaphors. The systematic metaphors that correspond to and connect individual linguistic metaphors in the Olympic speeches are given in column 2; column 3 informs on the sequence in which the presentations were delivered; column 4 provides the abridged transcripts, showing the linguistic metaphors that were used in the speeches; and column 5 relates the nature of the business activity that was aligned with the given sport.

of this chapter to direct the analysis at highly conventionalised, non-deliberate metaphor in the Olympic sample, nor is such an analysis perceived as adding value to the research foci of this study.

In this case, the alignment between the professional identity supercategory and individual metaphors may be a rather forced fit, given the fact that the speakers were explicitly asked to use a metaphor and were presented with a limited pool of metaphor choice. Also, the precise categories of systematic metaphors were difficult to delineate, since no clear-cut boundaries seem to exist and some of the metaphors therefore fit into more than one category. Cameron forewarns researchers adopting systematic metaphor frameworks that this will happen, suggesting that the best approach under the circumstances is that of 'a principled flexibility to the grouping of linguistic metaphors' (2007, p. 206). She maintains that it is not possible to devise a discrete set of categories into which each metaphor could be reliably placed, and concludes that 'there may be nesting of groups within groups. Some metaphors may fit into more than one group, reflecting the indeterminacy of human meaning making' (ibid).

Categorisation is indeed inherently subjective and therefore contestable, as it is in essence a result of an individual interpretive process that works recursively between data and categories. The categorisation was therefore tested in a survey of 22 respondents, resulting in 95 % agreement with the labelling of individual systematic metaphors. Thus the categorisation has been retained.

PI Aspect	Systematic metaphor	Sq OM	Olympic sports metaphor: Abridged transcript documenting core mappings <i>For full transcripts see Appendix XY.</i>	Business Activity
Competence	Outstanding performance (precision)	1	if I was to liken myself to an Olympic sport maybe it'd be <i>archery</i> / because...we... <i>hit the target</i> for our clients ... <i>hit the bull's-eye</i> every time we think <i>beyond</i> print and we <i>deliver beyond</i> expectation!	Printing
		3	we're skilled <i>in the art</i> of visual communication so the nearest sport to us in the Olympics would be the <i>synchronized swimmers</i> . And that's why sign makers sit down like this (sits down holding his nose- visual metaphor)	Signs design
		4	Olympic sport [...] I would have probably said <i>javelin thrower</i> / because we start <i>off with nothing</i> , we <i>aim high</i> , and we always <i>make the mark</i> !	Restoring pictures
		5	maybe I C would also be a <i>javelin thrower</i> / because we're <i>straight to the point</i> ... also we'll <i>aim</i> for the <i>sky</i> and <i>go that extra mile</i> .	Software solutions
		10	so if you're looking for <i>staff that don't sink but swim</i> give me a call at Hart. (laughter L)	Recruitment
	Overcoming limitations/ obstacles	6	Olympic sport [...] I was thinking about steeple uh <i>the steeple jump/steeple chase</i> /...the reason why is, life's not a <i>sprint</i> but I do like to <i>get my leg over</i> once <i>in a while</i> .	Financial advisor
		9	the Olympic sport would be uh <i>pole vault</i> /...because however <i>high</i> you <i>raise the bar</i> , we'll always <i>get over it</i> .	Event organizer
		11	if you know anyone interested in looking at that sort of thing, we guarantee we will <i>help them over the hurdles</i> that they <i>face</i> .	Chartered accountant
		12	I was recently working with a <i>high jumper</i> , because...they had <i>set the bar</i> , I think it was at <i>2 metres 42</i> , and <i>that</i> was their absolute <i>limit</i> . They just could not <i>get any higher</i> than <i>that</i> ... that was a <i>limiting</i> belief. <i>2 metres 42</i> was as <i>far</i> as they could possibly <i>jump</i> ...and <i>working with</i> them I managed to get them to <i>meet</i> , to <i>increase</i> that <i>height</i> in their following <i>practice</i> to <i>2 metres 46</i> ...	NLP trainer
	Speed/ease	2	we're all going to be <i>there</i> to help each other and it's gonna be like a <i>sprint</i>	Solicitor
Strength	8	we're worldwide. We're strong. So we relate ourselves to the <i>power lifting team</i>	Internet solutions	
Goodwill	Helping others perform better	2	It can feel like a <i>marathon</i> since occasionally you can't <i>see the finish line</i> ... I can promise you it's gonna be like a <i>relay race</i> ...we're all going to be <i>there</i> to help each other and it's gonna be like a <i>sprint</i> .	Solicitor
		11	<i>help them over the hurdles</i> that they <i>face</i> /see above – overcoming obstacles	Chartered accountant
		12	<i>high jumper</i> /see above – overcoming obstacles	Life coach
Trust	Stability	7	we're a bit like the <i>ten thousand metres</i> [...] a-as a company. We've been <i>round</i> for ten years... tend to <i>stay</i> with our customers for a long time	Telecom service provision

Figure 6.1: Generic overview of dominant systematic metaphors and corresponding linguistic metaphors in abridged transcripts

Based on the overview presented in Figure 6. 2, a few initial observations may be made:

- 1) *The connection between the sport and the business tends to be in most instances rather arbitrary.*

The Olympic dataset contains some instances in which the sports domain afforded a particularly salient mapping, such as in the case in which an NLP coach/trainer who helps his clients with performance- and confidence- related issues, cast himself in the parallel role of a sports coach, who helps a *high jumper* overcome his *limits/limiting beliefs* (OM12).

In most cases, though, the correspondence between the given sport and the the business seems to be rather general. For example, both speaker 4 and 5, whose professions lie in the provision of DTP and software solutions, use the *javelin thrower* metaphor: *we aim high and always make a mark* (OM4) and *because we're straight to the point... also we'll aim for the sky and go that extra mile* (OM5), both thus delivering a universal performance metaphor.

The lack of a specific link between the business and the positioning metaphor seems easily explained. Firstly, by the limitation of referring to a single source domain of Olympic sports, and secondly, by the fact that the speakers were producing the positioning metaphors in close succession and virtually on their feet. As discussed in detail below, the speakers considerably influenced each others' metaphor choices.

In contrast, the self-positioning metaphors in the wider dataset are produced naturally with no thematic limitation and tend to be designed prior to the meeting, thus giving the speaker an opportunity to embody the nature

of their business, frequently via the use of topic-driven metaphor (Semino, 2008). Topic-driven metaphor can be perceived as having a both literal and metaphorical meaning, exemplified in the following tag line used by a Birmingham printer: *'I can make you look good between the sheets'*, or in another close: *'Licensed to kill'* by pest control providers.

2) ***All dimensions of professional identity appear to be salient, while competence seems to be a shared attribute.***

In the genre of self-branding pitch, speakers typically portray themselves as competent in their professional field, display goodwill towards their customers and clients, and communicate their reliability and consistency in following the principles of ethical behaviour towards their business partners and clients. All three professional dimensions are salient, yet as evidenced by the narrative data in this thesis (Chapter 3-5), it appears that competence tends to be the dominant identity element communicated via the 60-second speech.

Self-positioning metaphor seems to have the potential to invoke multiple identity aspects. In the Olympic dataset, competence might be the shared attribute connecting all positioning metaphors, i.e. PERFORMANCE, PRECISION, OVERCOMING LIMITS, while SPEED/EASE systematic metaphors all broadly communicate competence. Goodwill and competence were portrayed in three metaphors (OM2, 11,12), with goodwill being the main identity aspect. Trust was the key identity outcome in a single instance (OM7), where competence played an ancillary role.

These data, however, need to be interpreted with caution, given the limitations of the Olympics dataset, i.e. the data were not produced naturally but were solicited by one of the members. Professional identity display is thus not the most likely reason for framing individual presentations largely in competence terms. One factor that appears to skew the picture is that the majority of sports are by definition performance-based, and competence may be seen as the main meaning focus of the SPORTS domain in general. More importantly even, it is necessary to account for appropriation tendencies, as discussed below.

3) *Attraction of the ATHLETICS subdomain and factors influencing metaphor choice.*

The Summer Olympic programme 2012 featured 25 sports encompassing 39 disciplines. In their Olympics 60-seconds, most speakers (8) alluded to the disciplines subsumed under one of the 25 sports, i.e. athletics. The remaining 4 choices comprised of synchronized swimming, swimming, archery, and weightlifting. The specific attraction of the athletics domain might be ascribed to the following reasons.

First, the athletics domain seems to provide a particularly rich set of potential correspondences between individual sports and professional competence, thus offering an array of established conventional metaphorical language that relates to business performance. Athletics is also the area of sport that lies at the core of the Olympic games, and is stored as such in public memory, which may have made the dominant choices of running and jumping metaphors more readily available. Repeated use of athletics metaphors by speakers 2, 4, 5 and 6 also

seems to have hijacked the athletics domain, eclipsing the potential use of other sports that traditionally invite business metaphors.

Metaphor is largely fluid and responds to dynamic changes in interaction (e.g., Gibbs and Cameron, 2008; Musolff, 2011). The Olympics speakers appeared to be momentarily primed to favour a previously used metaphor. Larger systematic metaphors that connect the utterance level with the macro-level of the discourse event may constrain the participants' thinking, thus effectively erasing other possibilities of metaphorizing an idea (Cameron, 2007; Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).

The above factors seem to exert a noticeable pull in the case study, and their synergy appears to largely motivate individual metaphor choices and consequent professional self-constructions. The inter-speaker influence evidenced in local appropriation and co-construction tendencies, as well as the other aforementioned factors influencing metaphor choice, will be subject to analysis in the following sections.

6.5 Local dynamics of Olympics metaphor co-construction

Complexities of metaphoric language use (i.e. how people coordinate with each other through metaphor) emerge from self-organizational processes that operate along a range of different timescales, from the millisecond to the evolutionary, and across a range of scales of social group size, from individual and dyad to the speech community.

[Gibbs and Cameron, 2008, p.65]

This study is grounded in a model that understands discourse as inherently reciprocal and dynamic. Discourse, including self-branding presentations, is perceived as a dialogic

activity in which each participant is constantly being influenced by others. It is a dynamic activity with a two-directional chain of causality in which the local dynamics shape the macro-dynamics of the talk, and vice versa (Bakhtin, 1986; Tannen 1989/2007; Cameron, 2009, 2011; Gibbs and Cameron, 2008; Musolff, 2011). This section centres on the local processes that give rise to the larger emergent patterns of metaphor appropriation and co-construction in the genre of 60 seconds.

After its first use, metaphor can be either simply repeated, further developed or dropped (Littlemore and Low, 2006; Cameron, 2007, 2008, 2011 *inter alia*), depending primarily on its previous resonance with the audience. The co-construction tendencies witnessed in the networking Olympics context included metaphor repetition, metaphor redeployment, i.e. the use of metaphor involving deployment of a previously used source domain term to a new target domain, and other instances of adaption and extension of one of the previously introduced metaphors, including relexicalization, explication, and contrast. While the terminology in use (Steen 1992/1994; Cameron, 2007) denotes both intra- and inter-speaker processes, this study focuses mostly on the inter-speaker dynamics of metaphor co-construction.

6.5.1 Echo metaphor: Metaphor repetition, explication and relexicalization

Example 6.2 is a transcript of two speeches delivered in immediate succession and illustrates a case of *echo metaphor*, or metaphor repetition, in which co-construction goes beyond the simple appropriation of the core metaphor, involving also the incorporation of dominant syntactic and lexico-syntactic features. The example below illustrates the parallel structures, and highlights the extent to which the original metaphor was mirrored in its sequence.

OM 4	OM 5
I would have probably said a <i>javelin thrower</i> ?	IC would also be a <i>javelin thrower</i> ?
Because we <i>start off with</i> a what?	Because we're <i>straight to the point</i> .
We <i>start off with nothing</i> .	We're honest and we tell people what we think and also
We <i>aim high</i>	we <i>aim for the sky</i>
and we always <i>make the mark</i>	and <i>go that extra mile</i>

Example 6.2: Echo metaphor's mirror structures

The first of the two speeches in Example 6.2 above, i.e. Olympic metaphor 4 (OM4)¹⁵³, was delivered by the owner of a desktop publishing company. The speaker first delivered a conventional 60-second speech and finished with the *javelin thrower* metaphor. The implicit patterning of the extended metaphor follows the explication structure typical for the Olympics sample: first a core metaphor is delivered, often in the form of a simile or a hybrid *would be* structure, and it is then followed by metaphor explication, with *because* as its dominant discourse marker.

OM4 is organized in a symmetrical pattern based on equivalence¹⁵⁴, here involving predominantly parallelism in the grammatical structure. The speaking position here is the exclusive *we*, i.e. the speaker and her business, and the line structure is organized in the pattern: *because we/we/we/and we*.

The next speech in the sequence, OM5, delivered by an IT consultant, first makes two attempts at incorporating an Olympic metaphor¹⁵⁵: the first is a failed attempt, while the second is a joking reference to the speaker's robust build: *I can see Paul thinking*

¹⁵³ OM 4 – the number denotes the position in the sequence of the 12 speeches.

¹⁵⁴ Hymes (1996, 2003), see Section 3.3.3 for a note on ethnopoetics.

¹⁵⁵ See Appendix 13 for full transcript of OM5 speech.

“*sumo*”, “*judo*”. The speaker then discards the *sumo/judo* metaphor in: *no, no, no, no, no*, to appropriate the metaphor introduced by the previous speaker in OM4: *No, I would agree with Una (OM4) that maybe IC would also be a javelin thrower*. OM5 thus repeats the OM4 core metaphor, and the peripheral metaphoric expression: *we aim high* is re-lexicalized¹⁵⁶ in *we aim for the sky*.

OM5 also deploys the exclusive *we*, signalling a common identity alignment with a company through a person reference (Drew and Sojornen, 1997), typical in business networking and institutional contexts. While the shared use of personal deixis is predictable and does not in itself evidence appropriation in the explication of the core metaphor, the fact that the implicit structure of the explication follows the same patterning as OM 5: *because we/we/we/we/and* – (see Example 6.2 above), communicates the degree to which the OM4 metaphor was appropriated.

However, the extent of appropriation displayed here was exceptional and seemed to have crossed an unspoken boundary, as indicated by the instant protest of the audience: *you copied what she said!*, and OM5’s defensive response: *well, yeah, different words, different words*. The echo metaphor here appears to be largely motivated by the lack of creativity: the speaker seems to have exhausted his creative energy on the two previous metaphors (the failed attempt and the joking reference), and by the temporal proximity of the two speeches. Both influences are discussed in Section 6.7.

¹⁵⁶ Relexicalization denotes use of a semantically close term.

6.5.2 Contrast and redeployment processes

Contrast and redeployment are recurrent forms of metaphor appropriation in the Olympic sample and are here illustrated by Example 6.3 below, which involves contrast as an *intra*-speaker feature and re-deployment as an *inter*-speakers feature.

OM	Transcript
OM 2	...sometimes coming to solicitors can <i>feel</i> like a <i>marathon</i> since occasionally you /?? and you can't <i>see</i> the <i>finish line</i> . If you come to the (company name), I can promise you it's gonna be like a <i>relay race</i> . We're all going to <i>be there</i> to help each other and it's gonna be like a <i>sprint</i>...
OM 6	...steeple chase. The reason why [...] (pauses to look at Salvia) is life is not a sprint but I do like to get my leg over once in a while (laughter XL)

Example 6.3: Contrast (*marathon as a source term*) and redeployment (*sprint as a source term*)

A solicitor (OM2) produced a triple simile, an extended metaphor from the domain of running. She contrasted the negative valence of *marathon*, cast as a long and lonely experience: you *can't see the finish line*, first with the positive valence of *relay race*, cast as a collaborative and less strenuous experience, and then progressively with *sprint*, stressing the speed and the lightness of the movement. OM6 re-applied the domain of running in his *steeplechase* metaphor, and redeployed the source term *sprint* with the generic target domain of life in *life is not a sprint*.

In the explication of the *steeplechase metaphor*, OM6 delivered an arguably funny double-entendre by revitalizing a conventional metaphor *in get my leg over once in a while*. He thus achieved the desired source domain coherence and at the same time communicated the primary slang meaning. Before delivering the explication line, the speaker paused and looked at the female author of the sprint metaphor (OM2), thus putting an additional spin on the line and generating a wave of appreciative laughter from

the predominantly male audience. Sexually-imbued humour appears to be a common bonding strategy practised within the networking groups that were observed, and while such humour is sometimes effective in boosting the generic group cohesion, the effect on the minority female participants was in this case ambivalent.¹⁵⁷

Redeployment occurs when the interlocutor deploys the source domain term used by another interactant, and applies it to a new target domain. In the study of appropriation tendencies in the context of conciliation talks, Cameron (2007) and Gibbs and Cameron (2008) argue that deliberate source term redeployment tends to signal the desire for alignment. While this is also a marked tendency in the presentational context, it appears that redeployment can also be used to challenge one of the previous speakers, as was illustrated by the example above.

The *high jump* metaphor in Example 6.4 below provides another example in which a member of the audience interrupts the speaker, challenging him through developing and redeploying the source term *bar*, from the original *set the bar* in line 1, which was used by OM12 to refer to the obstacles within the domain of physical performance/*high jump*.

¹⁵⁷ As based on the responses to a survey conducted in the primary group. Respondents were asked to rate transcripts of Olympic metaphors on persuasiveness and memorability. See the following chapter for the analysis of the results and Appendix 15 on the survey design. See also Hogg and Terry (2000) for congruent findings on the influence of sociodemographic structure on group identity.

Speaker	Transcript
OM12 they had <i>set the bar</i> , I think it was at [...] <i>2 metres 42</i> , and <i>that</i> was their absolute <i>limit</i> . They just could not <i>get any higher</i> than <i>that</i> . As far as they was concerned [...] that was a limiting belief. <i>2 metres 42</i> was as <i>far</i> as they could possibly <i>jump</i> . I've no idea- I know nothing about high jump. Like I don't know whether if it's high or low. Is it high?
< P >	Yeah, /??/?! (laughter XL)
OM12	I know nothing=
< P >	= [What <i>mental disease</i> ? (laughter XL) > <i>Metal bar, metal bar</i> , that's what <i>caught me up</i>], it's a <i>triangle mental bar</i> ! (laughter XXL)

Example 6.4: Example of development and re-deployment: bar as a source term

OM12's lack of background knowledge of the source domain triggered an interruption from a high-status member of the audience and provided an opportunity for him to tease OM12. The first comment was inaudible, but induced general laughter and prompted OM12 to acknowledge complete ignorance of the field: *I know nothing*. In his response, P juggled the domains of physical and mental fitness (in *mental disease*), transforming the original physical obstacle into a mental one. The instance of redeployment is spontaneous and appears to be primarily motivated by the phonetic proximity, resulting in an eggcorn¹⁵⁸: *metal bar/mental bar* (line 9). P's creativity again provoked appreciative laughter.

6.6 Emergent systematic metaphors: OVERCOMING LIMITS/HELPING

OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITS and PERFORMANCE metaphors

OM6 was a high-ingroup status member, whose speeches often included irreverent humour, as evidenced also by the referral request line from his Olympics speech: *This*

¹⁵⁸ Eggcorn is an idiosyncratic substitution of a word or phrase for a word or words that sound similar or identical in the speaker's dialect. The new phrase introduces a meaning that is different from the original, but plausible in the same context, such as *old-timers' disease* for *Alzheimer's disease* (Peters, 2006).

week what I'm looking for is old fogeys, so basically parents, grandparents, senior employees. His *steeplechase* metaphor was analysed in Example 6.3, and it was the first one to conjure up a visual image of an obstacle, linguistically realised and relexicalized in the subsequent speeches as a *bar/hurdle/limit*. As discussed above, his speech was metaphorical at multiple levels. He introduced a new spin into the task by employing a conventional sexual expression.

OM9 appears to respond to OM6, by delivering an implicit reference to his double-entendre in the choice of a *pole vault* metaphor. The extract documents the local dynamics in which OM9 extended the *steeplechase* metaphor, simultaneously incorporating both the semantic domains of sexual and sports performance.

Speaker/sequence	Transcript
OM6	... <i>steeple chase</i> . The reason why [...] (pauses to look at Salvia) is life is not a <i>sprint</i> but I do like to <i>get my leg over</i> once in a while (laughter XL)
OM9	... the Olympic uh: sport would be uh [...] <i>pole vault</i> . (audience cheering)
UB	(laughs)Why?
OM9	Why? (audience laughing: Yea:h!) I dunno I just like the pole vault. Uh [...] no uh: because uh:: however [...] <i>high you raise the bar, we'll always get over it.</i>

Example 6.5: OVERCOMING LIMITS in the steeplechase and pole vault metaphors

The sexual innuendo was a likely source of inspiration for the *pole vault* metaphor, and it triggered scattered laughter. The speaker abandoned the sexual reference, however, in the explication metaphor that follows, revitalizing a conventional expression from the sports source domain that tends to be commonly used to highlight business performance: *raise the bar* and *get over the bar*, thus relexicalizing OM6's *get my leg over*.

OM9 was first followed by a speaker who introduced an unrelated metaphor. Another speaker with a high group status, OM11, returned to the OVERCOMING LIMITS systematic metaphor and changed the original nexus from surmounting difficulties and overcoming limits into helping others to overcome them. OM11 recast and extended the original metaphor *getting over the bar*, revitalizing a conventional metaphor in *helping* [her clients] *over the hurdles*, thus foregrounding client support while also clearly communicating competence. The next speaker, OM12, replicated and further developed the previously introduced bar structure: *raise the bar /get over the bar* in the opening part of his narrative: *set the bar/get any higher*, combining it with OM11 key element of helping clients overcome obstacles.

Speaker/sequence	Transcript
OM11	...we do quite a lot of management buy-out [...] type of work. Uh: if you know anyone interested in <i>looking at</i> that sort of thing, we <i>guarantee</i> we will <i>help them over the hurdles that they face</i> .
OM12	And talking about the Olympics [...] uh: <i>serendipity*</i> would have it, I was recently working with a <i>high jumper</i> , uhm: because they had the difficulty- <i>they had set the bar</i> , I think it was at [...] <i>2 metres 42</i> , and <i>that</i> was their absolute <i>limit</i> . They just could not <i>get any higher</i> than <i>that</i> . As far as they was concerned [...] that was a <i>limiting</i> belief. <i>2 metres 42</i> was as <i>far</i> as they could possibly <i>jump</i> ...

Example 6.6: HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITS in the hurdles and high jump metaphor

OM12 is an NLP coach/trainer who here casts himself in the parallel role of a sports coach who helps a high jumper overcome his/her *limits*. Enlisting a competence narrative¹⁵⁹ allows him to present the source domain in very fine detail. The personae of the coach and the *high jumper*, the highly specific quantification of the perceived *limit/2 metres 42*,

¹⁵⁹ See Section 3.5 of this thesis for the definition of competence tale.

and the very specific quantification of the increased performance/*increase that height in their following practice to 2 metres 46*, create an unprecedented vividness.

The four presentations given in Examples 6.5 and 6.6 above were embedded in different professional domains, yet they all enlisted the same positioning systematic metaphor. The extent to which individual speakers shared lexis and the measure of semantic closeness varied, as did the core mappings. The systematic metaphor was, however, a clearly recognizable thread connecting the series.

Apart from systematic metaphors denoting the OVERCOMING LIMITS and HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITS, two other major groupings of systematic metaphors emerged from the analysis: PERFORMANCE and HELPING OTHERS PERFORM metaphors. While these metaphor groups have been assigned more general labels, the connection and the influence of the speakers on each other were equally pronounced, as illustrated by the following PERFORMANCE metaphors:

Seq.	Transcript
OM1	<i>Archery... we hit the target for our clients, but we try to hit the bull's-eye every time...</i>
OM3	<i>I would have probably said javelin thrower ...we aim high, and we always make the mark.</i>

Example 6.7: PERFORMANCE metaphor in archery and javelin thrower metaphors

In the Olympics case study, the metaphors of PERFORMANCE/HELPING OTHERS PERFORM and OVERCOMING LIMITATIONS/HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITATIONS were the chief ones to be used in the positioning process, i.e., within the limitations of the data, communicated the prototypical professional identity. Factors that seemed to have caused

convergence towards this groups of metaphors, as well as the tendency to rely extensively on select linguistic metaphors, are explored below.

6.7 Factors motivating metaphor co-construction in 60 seconds and prototypical identity

The metaphor co-construction processes analysed here point to the interactional character of 60-second speeches that are by definition perceived as monologic. In the Olympics context, the key drivers motivating specific metaphor use were identified as: recency effect and the lack of creativity, convergence and high ingroup status (the latter ones can be subsumed under the oscillation towards the group prototype overcategory), and enduring metaphorical concepts. An overview of these influences is given in Figure 6.3, and the factors are explored in detail in the discussion below.

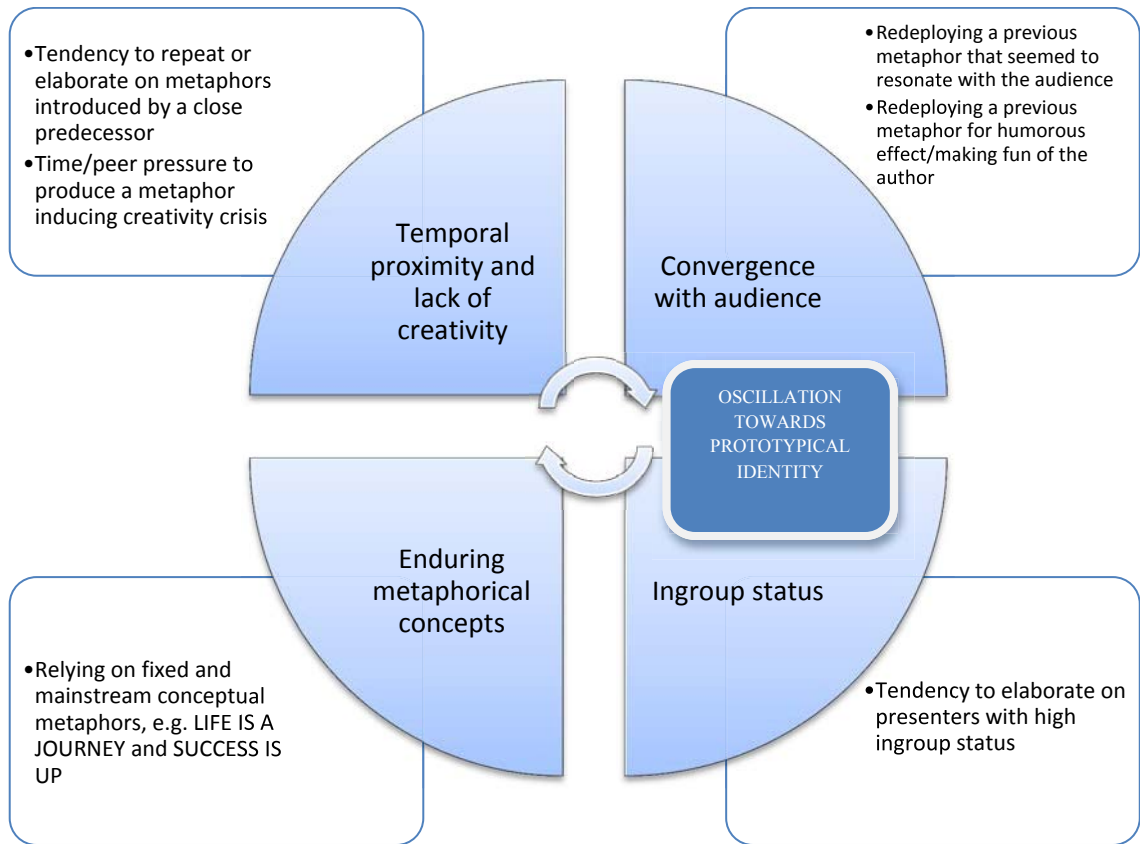


Figure 6.2: Core drivers of co-construction in networking context

6.7.1 Recency effect and temporal creativity crisis

A recency effect combined with creativity crisis may potentially be the most influential factor driving metaphor use in the Olympics dataset, while its dominant position may be partly subscribed to the nature of the Olympics data, i.e. the fact that the speakers were primed to use a positioning metaphor from a specific source domain.

Figure 6.4 below recapitulates the distribution of systematic metaphors in individual presentations, suggesting a local pattern to the use of metaphor, by highlighting the inclination towards co-construction in close succession. The vertical axis gives the sequence of the OM speakers; the horizontal axis lists the six broad systematic

metaphor categories.¹⁶⁰The coordinates thus signal the use of a given systematic metaphor by a given speaker. The gradient scale of blues highlights the temporal proximity of metaphor appropriation; black indicates first use; dark blue represents immediate use of the same systematic metaphor as introduced by the previous speaker; medium blue signals shared systematic metaphor use within two minutes of its use; and light blue signifies a further gap between the speakers of the maximum of four minutes.

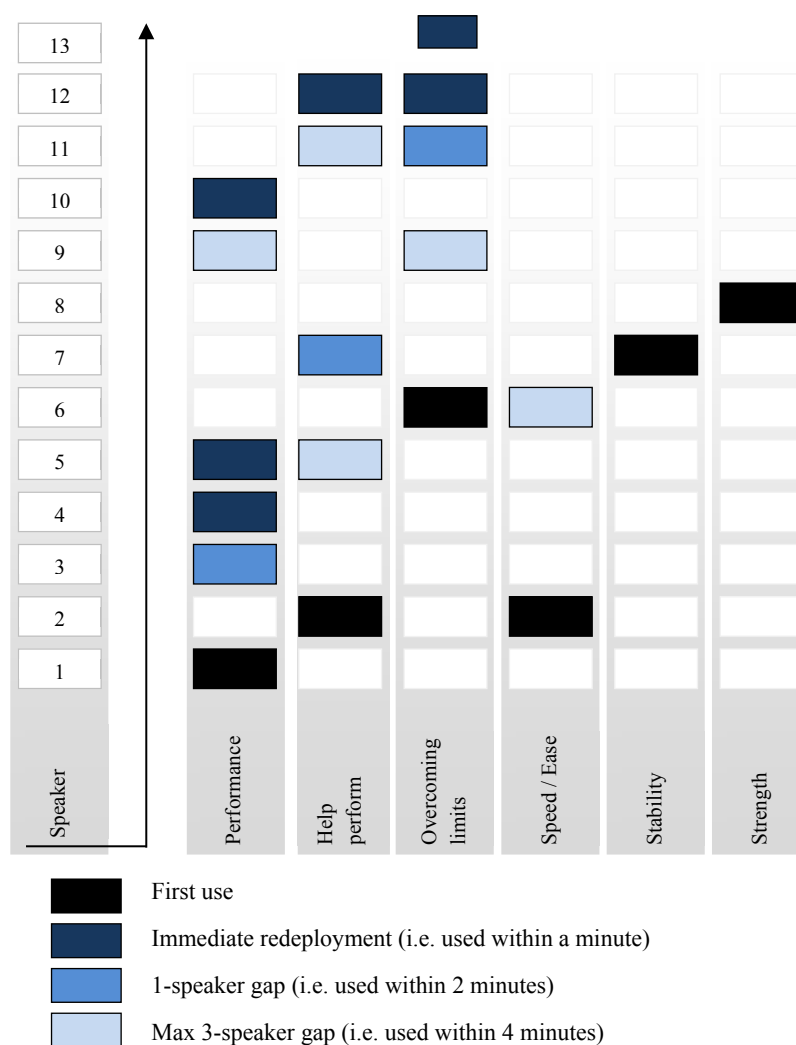


Figure 6.3: Time proximity motivating metaphor appropriation in the Olympic dataset

¹⁶⁰ These are listed in the overview in Figure 6.2. As explained earlier, systematic metaphors were identified by aggregating terms in metaphorical expressions according to their basic/non-metaphorical meaning, and then labels such as BUSINESS AS PERFORMANCE were chosen for individual categories

As indicated by the figure above, speakers seem to be more likely to respond to metaphors introduced either by their immediate predecessors, or delivered shortly before their own speech. Systematic metaphor was shared in 30% of instances immediately, i.e. within the first minute of its use, an additional 15% within 2 minutes, and another 30% within 4 minutes of its use. If the systematic metaphor did not reappear within 4 minutes of its use, it was not used again.

This result lends further support to prior research into metaphor development in interactional situations that identified the recency effect ¹⁶¹ as an important trigger of co-construction (Littlemore and Low 2006; Gibbs and Cameron, 2008). Given that the sports domain offers a limited number of systematic metaphors, and given the pitfalls of categorizing metaphors (Krennmayr, 2011, Cameron, 2007), it is clear that all shared usage of the same systematic categories cannot be subscribed to sole inter-speaker influence.

That the metaphors were mostly spurred by the predecessors' choice was evidenced by the examples discussed previously.¹⁶² These examples have shown the scale of potential appropriation and development, spanning from the choice of the same systematic metaphor, triggered, for instance, by shared ambiguity inherent in the selected lexical item (*get my leg over/pole vault* examples) to the degree of appropriation which involves the micro-levels of syntax and lexical choice, as in the extreme case of *echo metaphor* discussed in 6.5.1. Here, what seemed to have prompted the almost verbatim reproduction was the recency effect, amplified by the lack of creativity, where the spontaneous response to the perceived lack of inspiration was to repeat the most recent stimuli.

¹⁶¹ Recency effect is defined as cognitive bias which results from disproportionate salience of recent stimuli (Littlemore and Low 2006, p. 205).

¹⁶² See subsections 6.5.1, 6.5.2 and 6.6.

6.7.2 Ingroup status and alignment with audience

The relative group status of the individual is the next factor that appeared to have amplified the recency effect in the researched data. Metaphors of four presenters that were seen as the core group members (OM1, OM3, OM6 and OM 11) were always shared and/or further developed within two minutes of use, and seemed to represent the key milestones in the specific evolution of metaphor. (Note the pattern of metaphor choice following the four speeches in Figure 6.3 above). On the contrary, metaphors introduced by members with a lower ingroup status, such as the stability metaphor in OM7¹⁶³ and the strength metaphor in OM8, were the only systematic metaphors not to be reintroduced by other members.

Speaker/sequence	Transcript
OM7	And I guess we- we're a bit like the [,] the <i>ten thousand metres</i> [..] a-as a company. We've been <i>round</i> for ten years. Uh: we tend to <i>stay</i> with our com- with our customers for a long time. That's the best I can think of...
OM8	Now [...] yes the Olympics. We <i>simplify</i> the Internet, yes okay. We're worldwide. We're strong. So we relate ourselves to [...] the <i>power lifting team</i> I suppose. How's that one? Uh: there you go. That's the best I can do, I'm sorry guys.

Example 6.8: Outlier metaphors

The claim that ingroup status influences co-construction tendency makes intuitive sense¹⁶⁴, but since the study involved a single case in the primary group, its generalisability is subject to obvious limitations.

Repetition or co-construction of metaphor in conversations is regarded to be predominantly used for collaborative purposes, i.e. speakers repeat each others' structures to create

¹⁶³ Both OM 7 and OM 8 gave a self-deprecating evaluation of their performance (see Example 6.7). At the time, OM 7 had a pronouncedly low ingroup status, and later was forced to resign from the group, due to the concerns regarding his professional integrity.

¹⁶⁴ See Tannen (1989/2007).

a relationship of convergence, thus enhancing social bonds and creating alignment with the other person (Tannen, 1987/2007; Carter, 2004; Littlemore and Low, 2006 *inter alia*). As in other interactional contexts, co-construction in this research context seemed also to be inspired by seeking alignment with other interactants, namely the audience. In the Olympics episode, co-construction does not necessarily involve an attempt to create accord with the author of the original metaphor, but, rather, seems to be influenced by the positive response of the audience to the original metaphor, such as appreciative laughter as in OM6/OM9, or direct praise from the audience as in OM4/OM5. The speakers tended to rely on a proven concept that expresses shared values.

6.7.3 Enduring metaphorical concepts

The existence or the absence of enduring metaphorical concepts plays an important role in the attraction of individual metaphors, and affects the likelihood that they will be appropriated and further developed (cf. Gibbs and Cameron, 2008). Highly fixed and mainstream conceptual metaphors underlie a host of specific conventional expressions. The universality of the conceptual domain and the availability of ready-made, pre-fabricated metaphorical structures further influence whether a certain metaphor will be chosen for elaboration, even more so in a situation in which the speaker is faced with a limited pool of metaphorical expressions to choose from.

In the researched context, ATHLETICS subdomain represents the oldest and most traditional contemporary Olympic sports domain, which thus naturally seems to underlie conceptualizations of individual performance in terms of running, jumping and hitting a target, providing thus an array of conventional metaphor prefabs. The attraction of this subdomain may be partly ascribed to the combined influence of two mainstream

conceptual metaphors: SUCCESS IS UP and LIFE IS A JOURNEY, along with the inherent correspondences between problems/challenges and physical obstacles to the motion expressed by the latter one. This specific influence is well evidenced by the examples of the linguistic metaphors below:

LIFE IS A JOURNEY and/or SUCCESS IS UP
- <i>aim for the sky</i> and <i>go that extra mile</i> (OM5)
- however <i>high</i> you <i>raise the bar</i> , we'll always <i>get over it</i> (OM9)
- they had <i>set the bar</i> ,..., and that was their <i>absolute limit</i> (OM12)
- can feel like a <i>marathon</i> since you can't <i>see the finish line</i> (OM2)

Example 6.9: The influence of enduring metaphorical concepts on metaphor choice

6.8 Prototypical identity construction via dominant positioning metaphor

Our self-making metaphors need to fit new circumstances, new friends, new enterprises.

[variation on Bruner's narrative quote,
2003,p.10]

The Summer Olympic programme features 39 disciplines, and although the list of Olympic sports involves a number of collective games, such as football and basketball, references to collective enterprise and teamwork were scarce and directed towards client support by professionals, as in the solicitors: *coming to us is gonna be like a relay race*¹⁶⁵. In their

¹⁶⁵ Compare these self-constructions with a team-oriented corporate example of a 60-second presentation from the data which I recorded at a UK university, following major restructuring. A football metaphor was deployed to position staff as members of a privileged/ select *all star* team: *Life in Corporate Services is*

Olympics 60-seconds, most speakers alluded to a competition within the category of individual athletics events.

The specific attraction of the athletics domain might be ascribed to following reasons. First, the athletics domain seems to provide a particularly rich set of potential correspondences between individualist sports/the prowess demanded by these and professional competence, and thus offers an array of established conventional metaphorical language that relates to business performance. Athletics is also the category of competition that seems to lie at the core of Olympic games, and is stored as such in public memory, which may have made the dominant choices of running and jumping metaphors more readily available. Repeated use of athletics metaphors by speakers 2, 4, 5 and 6 also seems to have hijacked the athletics domain, eclipsing the potential use of other sports that traditionally invite business metaphors.

The gravitational pull of individualist sports within the athletics domain might be explained by the synergy of the four factors discussed above. These combined give rise to a one-off professional identity construction that emerged at the confluence of PERFORMANCE and OVERCOMING LIMITS metaphors. These mainstream positioning metaphors deployed in the Olympics data might be seen as rather representative of a prototypical network member, i.e. an owner-manager who aspires to outgrow the small business category.

Yet, the positioning metaphors in the Olympic dataset were all solicited, rather than produced spontaneously, and this would have affected the discursive construction of

exactly the same as life for David Beckham, we work in a goldfish bowl, our every action watched by a crowd of 25,000 students and 6,000 staff. If we don't talk to our colleagues on the pitch, we're more likely to make a mistake and we do it in front of 30,000 spectators, some of whom will call for blood.

identity. Thus, generalizing claims regarding the potential implications for prototypical expression of professional identity can not be seen as warranted. Further study needs to be done, using identical stimuli in another networking group, a study that would also help to develop or refute the line of argument pertaining to the specific attraction of the athletics domain suggested in this study.

6.9 Conclusion

In interactional situations, people tend to deploy each other's syntactic structures (Branigan et al., 2000), their accents tend to become more alike (Giles et al., 1992), and even their movements are highly synchronized, including the coordination of individual gestures and eye movements (Richardson et al., 2007). Conversational synchrony serves many purposes, such as ensuring the smooth and intelligible flow of conversation, and creating alignment between the interactants (Tannen 1989/2007). The use of metaphors is equally coordinated, and metaphors are negotiated and co-constructed across speakers for a number of reasons (Gibbs and Cameron, 2008; Musolff, 2011). Metaphor appropriation is a natural result of the dynamic and dialogic nature of language (Bakhtin, 1986).

The analysis of 12 speeches in which the use of an Olympics sport positioning metaphor was solicited by the group leader, and which were delivered in quick succession in a meeting in the primary group, indicated a high incidence of repetition and elaboration on metaphors introduced by previous speakers. Local metaphor development processes involving repetition, relexicalization, redeployment and contrast that were described in previous studies of metaphor dynamics in interactional genres (cf. Cameron, 2007) were also observed in this study of the presentational 60-second data.

The local level of metaphor use is connected to the discourse level via systematic metaphors, i.e. metaphor supercategories that pertain to a particular group of source terms in the discourse, and that function as a clearly recognizable thread connecting a series of local metaphor use. In the Olympics case study, the metaphors of PERFORMANCE/HELPING OTHERS PERFORM and OVERCOMING LIMITATIONS/HELPING OTHERS OVERCOME LIMITATIONS were the chief ones to be used in the positioning process, i.e. within the limit of the data, communicated the prototypical professional identity. Factors that seemed to have caused convergence towards these metaphors, as well as the tendency to rely extensively on select linguistic metaphors, can be subsumed under the following set of influences:

- 1) The recency effect, defined as the cognitive bias which results from the disproportionate salience of recent stimuli (Littlemore and Low 2006, p. 205), may have potentially been the most influential factor driving metaphor use in the Olympics dataset. Its dominant role may be partly ascribed to the nature of the Olympics data, i.e. the fact that the speakers were primed to use a positioning metaphor from a specific source domain. Speakers seemed to be more likely to respond to metaphors that were introduced either by their immediate predecessors, or delivered shortly before their own speech. Systematic metaphor was shared in 30% of instances immediately, i.e. within the first minute of its use, an additional 15% within 2 minutes, and another 30% within 4 minutes of its use.
- 2) Group status of the speaker, i.e. high status may have increased the likelihood that metaphor would be appropriated and developed. Presenters that were seen as the core group members produced metaphors that were shared within two

minutes of use, and seemed to represent the key milestones in the specific evolution of metaphor.

- 3) Convergence with the audience. As in other interactional contexts, co-construction in this research context seemed to be inspired by seeking alignment with other interactants, namely the audience, by elaborating on metaphor that had been openly appreciated, i.e. rewarded with laughter or explicit praise.
- 4) The universality of the conceptual domain and the ensuing availability of ready-made pre-fabricated metaphorical structures seem to have contributed to whether a certain metaphor was chosen for further elaboration. In the researched context, two mainstream conceptual metaphors that are often deployed in the business domain seem to have been of recognizable influence: SUCCESS IS UP and LIFE IS A JOURNEY along with the inherent correspondences between problems/challenges and physical obstacles to the motion in space.

Co-construction drivers function in synergy and the boundaries of their influence are fuzzy. The micro-motivators jointly contribute to convergence by group members on particular ways of using language, thus increasing group cohesion and shaping and reinforcing prototypical professional self-construction. This study suggests that rather than being an interesting deviation, the appropriation of semiotic resources, including metaphor, is normal and normative.

CHAPTER 7

Key variables affecting BDN metaphor persuasiveness and recall

And so we use rhyme and reason. And lots of metaphor. The question is: does it help?

[Member in an interview, 2007]

This chapter will continue to study positioning metaphor, this time focusing on its persuasion and retention potential in the context of 60-second speeches. For millennia, some scholars ascribed greater persuasive and retention power to metaphor than to either its literal counterparts or other rhetorical figures of speech. Others, however, saw metaphor as mere artful flourish. The increasing recognition of the importance of metaphor over the last three decades has resulted in a proliferation of studies on cognitive and linguistic aspects of metaphor. The conviction that metaphor has the potential to affect and sway personal attitudes to concepts, people and institutions has been on the rise, as manifested not only in a number of experimental studies but also from applied public projects¹⁶⁶. Research which focuses on metaphor and its persuasive effects currently cuts across a variety of domains, including psycholinguistics and cognitive linguistics, pragmatics, communication and consumer behaviour study (Charteris-Black, 2005; Forceville, 2005, 2009, 2010; Ottati et al. 1999, 2010; Sopory & Dillard, 2002, Dillard & Pfau, 2002, *inter alia*).

¹⁶⁶ E.g., applied metaphor projects managed by Joseph Grady (2010) and solicited by the US government.

7.1 Research questions and theoretical background

This chapter targets the persuasive and retention potential of positioning metaphor use in the genre of 60-second speech. The analysis is informed by a variety of approaches spanning the above disciplines and pays specific attention to experimental studies in the field of consumer behaviour. The first set of research questions raised in this chapter simply attempts to ascertain whether deliberate metaphor is perceived to have an overall positive effect, not only on persuasiveness, but also on the memorability of the self-branding message:

RQ 7.1a Is the use of positioning metaphor in the context of a self-branding 60-sec speech perceived as having a positive impact on message persuasion?

RQ 7.1b Is the use of positioning metaphor in the context of a self-branding 60-sec speech perceived as having a positive impact on message retention?

However, finding dichotomous answers to these questions is in itself of limited value and applicability. We need not only to establish whether deliberate metaphor is an effective strategy in the 60-second self-branding speech, but also, if this is demonstrated, to identify what kind of metaphor actually helps the persuasive and retention processes. Based on the primary data analysis, the following three variables emerged as potentially relevant: contextual relevance, metaphor complexity and metaphor novelty (see Figure 7.1 below), and these were thus isolated for investigation in this chapter.

Contextual relevance¹⁶⁷ is here defined as the quality or strength of the perceived connection(s) between the metaphor in use and the business being promoted via the metaphor. Complexity¹⁶⁸ is understood in this study as the relative ease or difficulty with which the audience access the meaning of individual metaphors in the research sample. Novelty is here defined as deviation from the audience's expectations as applied to a metaphor in context, and not based simply on lexical or semantic criteria.

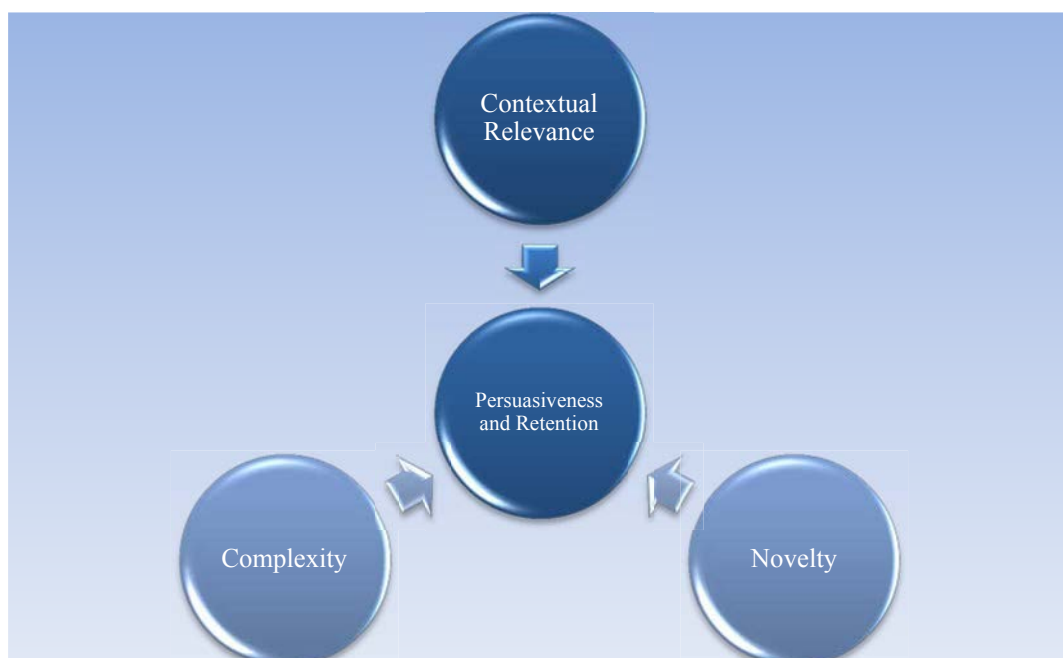


Figure 7.1: Variables examined for potential influence on metaphor persuasiveness and retention

Consequently, a second set of research questions was framed:

¹⁶⁷ In this study contextual relevance is not viewed in terms of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1995/1986, applied to the field of metaphor research in e.g., Tendahl and Gibbs, 2006). The deployment of the term relevance in this metaphor research study is thus coincidental.

¹⁶⁸ The term denotes the respondents' perception of metaphor as easy or difficult to understand. Its use thus coincides with, but is different from conceptualist definitions in respect to the divide between primary and complex metaphors (Grady, 1997).

RQ 7.2a Which factor – contextual relevance, complexity or novelty – is potentially the most effective predictor of metaphor persuasiveness in 60-second speeches?

RQ 7.2b Which factor – contextual relevance, complexity or novelty – is potentially the most effective predictor of metaphor retention in 60-second speeches?

7.2 The dataset and a note on methodology

The analysis in this chapter rests primarily on the results of an online survey¹⁶⁹ to test the effectiveness of individual metaphors in the Olympic dataset of 12+1 presentations, reviewed in the previous chapter. The web-based survey targeted primarily the above variables. The relationship of the three factors to perceptions of persuasion and recall effects will be assessed both quantitatively (as based on the Pearson correlation between the respective variables) and qualitatively (as based on the participants' evaluations of individual metaphors), and further complemented by the participants' answers to open-ended questions in the questionnaire.

7.3 The organization of the chapter

The primary goal of this chapter is to uncover whether the three selected factors are perceived to have a pronounced effect on the persuasiveness and retention of positioning metaphor. The chapter begins by stipulating core hypotheses, while discussing relevant findings from previous empirical studies within the consumer behaviour domain. The central claims are that contextual relevance, comprehension, and novelty seem to

¹⁶⁹ See Appendix 15 for the survey design.

affect metaphor appreciation/persuasiveness and recall, while a relationship-absent claim is predicted for the interplay of complexity and the observed phenomena. Once the hypotheses have been presented, the methodology is discussed, detailing information about the survey design, participants, procedure, measures and data analysis. Subsequently, the generic results are presented and the hypothesized relationships are then tested against the outcomes of a correlational analysis. Finally, both the practical and theoretical implications of the findings are discussed and directions for further study are proposed.

7.4 Background to individual variables and hypotheses

7.4.1 Contextual relevance

The network is primarily a promotional institutional setting in which the code of practice allows one profession per trade per networking group. 30-50 members/owners of various businesses are represented in one group, e.g. an accountant, an auditor, a financial advisor, and a chiropractor per group, with the group only allowing membership to one professional from each field. The participants attempt to promote their businesses through 60-second messages. These messages are designed to explain in specific terms what it is the participants do in their business, and thus function as an attempt to differentiate the speaker's business from other businesses in the group and from other businesses in their profession.

The 60-second slot forms a tough competitive platform for the audience's attention and cognitive resources. As pointed out repeatedly in this thesis, speakers tend to use positioning metaphor in the tag lines, i.e. in the memorable one-liners deployed at either the beginning or the end of their speeches. These often rely on metaphor in combination

with a variety of schemes to achieve a poetic effect or wordplay. Although less frequently, metaphor sometimes combines with other tropes such as irony (see Example 7.1 below). The tag lines clearly vary in terms of their contextual relevance, i.e. the salience with which they communicate the respective profession.

Profession/business activity	Memorable ending/beginning
Insurance	I'm your <i>insulation contractor</i> .
Art	<i>We show your true colours.</i>
Funeral	We are the <i>last ones to let you down.</i>
Pest Control	Licensed to kill!
Website design	<i>Taking your business to the world!</i>
Information Technology	Let us be your <i>backup!</i>

Example 7.1: Positioning tag lines illustrating different degrees of contextual relevance

Contextual relevance is here defined as the perceived quality or strength of the connection(s) between the positioning metaphor in use and the specific profession and also the quality of perceived connection and specific professional competence being promoted via the given metaphor. Contextual relevance tends to be enhanced by using different strategies, namely topic-driven metaphor, as illustrated by the funeral tag line in the above example, extension, and narrative contextualization, in which case the competence narrative tends to be deployed in the body of the presentation to evidence the metaphorical positioning claim.

This chapter hypothesizes that a metaphor that is perceived as more relevant in the given context, i.e. a metaphor that is seen as producing a specific link to a business or specific competence, is likely to be more persuasive. On the other hand, a highly generic positioning metaphor that is not contextualised via narrative extension, or another strategy to produce a connection individuating the profession/competence might be perceived as less relevant and thus be less appreciated.

Example 7.2 below shows two speeches from the dataset that vary regarding the respective degree of their contextual relevance. The archery metaphor (left column) demonstrates a comparably lower degree of contextual relevance than the high jump metaphor (right column) which has been contextualised via a combination of competence narrative and metaphor extension.

Low contextual relevance	High contextual relevance
Printer/archer	NLP trainer/coach to a high jumper
Now if I was to liken myself to uh an Olympic sport maybe it'd be <i>archery</i> , and it's not because I like dressing up in velvet green tights. It's because we not only try and <i>hit the target</i> , for our clients, but we try to <i>hit the bull's-eye</i> every time...	I was recently working with a <i>high jumper</i> , because they had the difficulty- they had <i>set the bar</i> , I think it was at <i>2 metres 42</i> , and <i>that</i> was their absolute <i>limit</i> . They just could not <i>get any higher</i> than <i>that</i> . As far as they was (sic) concerned, that was a <i>limiting</i> belief...

Example 7.2: BDN Olympic speeches illustrating different degrees of contextual relevance

Further examples of narrative contextualization of positioning metaphors can be found in the narrative dataset, including, for instance, narrative 2 in the case study in Chapter 5 and narratives #6, #11 or #21 in Appendix 10. In these cases, entrenched generic metaphor is used as a positioning statement which is then combined with narrative evidence. It is hypothesized here that in such a case even a relatively non-specific metaphor may be perceived as salient and function as an effective positioning tool.

7.4.1.1 Hypotheses formulation

This thesis assumes a strong relationship between contextual relevance and perceptions of retention and persuasion:

Hypothesis 1a There will be a significant and positive relationship between contextual relevance and perceptions of the memorabilibily of the metaphor.

Hypothesis 1b There will be a significant and positive relationship between contextual relevance and perceptions of the persuasiveness of the metaphor.

In a networking context in which the time to process individual utterances is limited, i.e. 20/30 speakers change in quick succession of 60 seconds, and where the measure of involvement is relatively low, it is also predicted that the metaphor will be seen as more contextually relevant if the entailments are highly accessible to the addressee, i.e. they are spelled out through metaphor extension. As suggested above, metaphor extendedness is therefore seen as a potential covariate of contextual relevance as is narrative contextualization. While contextual relevance is quantitatively assessed through a survey, the analysis of metaphor extendedness and of the influence of narrative evidence on this factor is beyond the scope of the current study.

7.4.2 Complexity¹⁷⁰

Research within the consumer behaviour domain mostly indicates that in promotional contexts, messages containing rhetorical figures, including metaphor, incite deeper processing, are more memorable, and evoke a better affective response than promotional messages containing only literal utterances (McQuarrie and Mick 1996; Toncar and Munch 2001, 2003). According to McQuarrie and Mick (ibid.), there is a significant positive relationship between the complexity of a rhetorical figure and its appreciation, and complex rhetorical figures such as metaphor or irony are more deeply appreciated than simple rhetorical figures, such as alliteration or parallelism.

¹⁷⁰ Complexity is in this study understood as the relative ease or difficulty with which the audience access the meaning of individual metaphors in the research sample. The term denotes the respondents' perception of metaphor as easy or difficult to understand. Its use thus coincides with, but is different from conceptualist definitions in respect to the divide between primary and complex metaphors (Grady, 1997).

All rhetorical figures are perceived as a form of artful deviation from expectations, potentially stimulating the hearer to search for the additional meaning. Other researchers (see Mulken et al., 2010) extend this view to propose the same tendency and gradient within the category, thus a complex metaphor, meaning a metaphor that is initially more difficult to understand, should also be more persuasive than a simple metaphor.

In order to define the depth of cognitive processing of a promotional message, Mick (1992) proposed a subjective comprehension framework¹⁷¹ called LSC. This is a four-level structure based on the meanings that the audience generate in response to promoted information. The first two levels are message-based, representing shallow processing in which the meaning the audience assigns to the message is closely aligned with the explicit meaning of the text. The other two levels are receiver-based and indicate deeper levels of comprehension. The meanings listeners generate are subjective interpretations of the explicit message content and may include illogical and personalized inferences. The LSC model suggests that the level or depth of comprehension of a message correlates with the persuasiveness of the message: the deeper the level of processing, the greater the ensuing effect on recall and persuasion.

Many argue that provided a metaphor is understood, deep processing and the investment of increased cognitive effort result in increased confidence in message salience and cognitive pleasure derived from the ability to solve the riddle (see e.g., Berlyne, 1971; Reinsch, 1970, in Sopory and Dillard, 2002; Forceville, 2005 and 2009 in Mulken et al. 2010). Yet, the cognitive reward argument has not been supported by any experimental evidence.

¹⁷¹ Building on an earlier typology proposed in Greenwald (1968).

Within current CBR metaphor research, this ‘stimulated elaboration view’ tends to be linked to two different metaphor-processing theories. Whaley (1991) relies on Gentner’s structure-mapping theory (1982, 1989) to propose that the alignment of relational structures of target and source evokes a rich set of connections in semantic memory. This in turn engenders greater elaboration of the message content enveloped in a given metaphor and ultimately results in greater persuasion.

Another strand of stimulated elaboration view is grounded in Ortony’s (1979) feature-matching view of metaphor, with its proposition of *salience imbalance constraint*, which follows a similar line of argument, albeit via different mechanisms (see Ottati et al., 1999; Sopory and Dillard, 2002). In general, metaphors that are more difficult to understand should induce more elaboration than less complex parallel metaphors.

Based on a variety of views predominant in CBR, the complexity of metaphors should positively correlate with both metaphor persuasiveness and recall. However, in experimental studies the relationship between the appreciation and complexity of metaphor has been shown to be non-linear, following a pattern of an inverted U-curve, i.e. the intervals of extreme overtness and covertness are marked by low appreciation, while the middle interval is marked by appreciation rising in line with increasing complexity (see Philips, 2000; McQuarie and Mick, 2003 in Mulken et al., 2010).

The non-linearity of the relationship between complexity and appreciation has been mostly explained by the existence of a single confounding variable, i.e. comprehension. If a metaphor is too complex and difficult to comprehend, its appreciation will decrease. However, provided that the complexity of the figure does not hinder comprehension, more

complex figures should be generally better appreciated than their less complex counterparts (cf. McQuarrie and Mick, 1992, 1996; Phillips, 2000; Forceville, 2009).

The discussion of metaphor persuasion research seems to imply that covert metaphors trigger deeper processing than overt metaphors and thus will affect persuasion and recall to a greater degree. This view is proposed by Mulken et al. (2010), who carried out a study on the effect of perceived complexity of visual metaphor¹⁷² on metaphor appreciation. In their initial argumentation underlying their hypothesis formulation, they introduced a rendition of a relevance theory core argument¹⁷³ to voice a tacit understanding that cognitive effort equals cognitive effects:

We would expect the more complex metaphors to be preferred: Relevance Theory allows us to predict that the extra cognitive elaboration that they require simply will be rewarded with the extra cognitive effects in the form of humour or aesthetic pleasure. Provided that the invested effort is considered worthwhile, that is, provided that the message is understood, the appreciation of more complex metaphors will go up accordingly.

[Mulken et al., 2010, p. 3421]

Based on this argumentation, the authors predicted that more demanding metaphors would be most appreciated, i.e the relationship between perceived complexity and appreciation

¹⁷² The degree of perceived complexity was in their study operationalized with the help of the semantic differentials 'straightforward – unclear', 'easy to understand – difficult to understand'.

¹⁷³ Relevance theory (RT) is a pragmatic account of utterance interpretation, whether literal or figurative, that was originally proposed in Sperber and Wilson (1995/1986) and has lately been developed through further studies (Carston, 2002; Pilkington, 2000; Sperber & Wilson, 2008; Wilson & Carston, 2006 in Tendahl & Gibbs, 2006). One of the core principles underlying relevance theory is formalized as 'presumption of optimal relevance' (Sperber & Wilson, 1995, p. 70) and states that the speaker by making an utterance implies that the utterance is relevant or worth interpreting. In other words, the utterance will produce cognitive effects worthy of the processing effort required to retrieve the intended meaning. One implication of the relevance theory is the trade-off between the investment of the processing effort and cognitive effects: the addressee attempts to minimize his/her effort while maximizing cognitive effects. An utterance is relevant in a context only if it achieves cognitive effects, and all else being equal, enhanced cognitive effects equate to enhanced relevance.

is a positive one, following an incremental pattern. Yet, as explained by Gibbs and Tendahl (2006) below, relevance theory does not in itself seem to give rise to the prediction that increased cognitive effort equals increased cognitive effects:

There is no systematic relationship between cognitive effort and cognitive effects in metaphor comprehension. Although there may be instances where some metaphors are understood quickly with few cognitive effects inferred, and other cases where metaphors take considerable time to process accompanied by rich cognitive effects, these simple relationships do not explain the wide range of metaphor understanding situations.

[Gibbs and Tendahl, 2006, p. 400]

Gibbs and Tendahl (ibid.) further suggest that the intended meaning communicated via metaphor may be initially grasped relatively easily, yet a metaphor which is a rich resource of an array of entailments may be ultimately more effective in giving rise to cognitive effects than another metaphor in which the intended meaning is difficult to access and which produces fewer semantic pathways between the two domains.

In line with the above reasoning, and also with the lack of empirical support for the CBR presumption that unpacking a challenging metaphor results in cognitive pleasure, this study does not presume the existence of a relationship between perceived complexity and appreciation, as long as the comprehension factor is controlled for.

7.4.2.1 Hypotheses formulation

The following set of hypotheses was thus formulated:

Hypothesis 2a Complexity of the metaphor does not significantly correlate with perceptions of metaphor retention.

Hypothesis 2b Complexity of the metaphor does not significantly correlate with perceptions of enhanced persuasion.

Yet, the study fully embraces the assertion that comprehension is a vital confounding variable. Thus, in order to test the veracity of the propositions above, it is also deemed necessary to control for the potential influence of comprehension. The stimuli that obstruct understanding were therefore removed from the test sample. In addition to the two relationship-absent claims above, the following propositions also appear plausible and worth testing. With context as the primary facilitator of decoding an utterance, we can expect that metaphors that are marked with a high degree of contextual relevance might be understood more easily, i.e.:

Hypothesis 2c Complexity of metaphor is inversely related to contextual relevance.

Even though the context plays a primary role in establishing the relevance and facilitating understanding, in a given situation it appears reasonable to expect a positive relationship between the novelty of the use of the metaphor and its complexity. Metaphors which were perceived as relatively novel or innovative could also be seen as more complex. Most experimental studies carried out in the realm of consumer behaviour research (see Sopory & Dillard, 2002; Mulken et. al., 2010) do not seem to account for this potentially confounding variable. This study analyses both factors, i.e. complexity and novelty, in relation to metaphor appreciation, but also their mutual interplay.

Hypothesis 2d Complexity of metaphor is directly related to novelty.

7.4.3 Novelty

Metaphors establish correspondences or semantic links between disparate conceptual domains and it is predominantly this creative juxtaposition, the semantic distance between the two domains, that causes metaphor to be often more effective than its literal equivalent

(cf. Bowdle and Gentner, 2005; Steen, 2011). Metaphors have the potential to lend specific pragmatic effects to the message, effects that are superior to both literal language and other figures of speech. However, in order for the creative juxtaposition to be perceived, the incongruence between the source domain term and the target domain term needs to be apparent to the audience. Thus, the metaphor needs to be registered and processed as a metaphor, i.e. by comparison, rather than lexical disambiguation.

Arguably, in order to be processed metaphorically, metaphor does not necessarily have to be novel in the semantic sense. Strictly speaking, in novel metaphors the source domain term refers to a specific literal meaning, while a metaphoric meaning has not yet been firmly established, i.e. the source domain term is not polysemous and the alignment between the two terms not entrenched. In his definition of deliberate metaphor, Steen (2010; 2011; 2013) proposes a broader and very plausible view of a metaphorically processed metaphor.

Deliberate metaphor requires some feature which alerts the addressee that it is intended to be realized as a metaphor...a lexical sign, as in simile, or in a form of additional relevant meaning as with the breach of register that then results in wordplay. It may also come in the form of direct linguistic expression of the conceptual source domain which instructs the reader to set up a new, alien referential framework.

[Steen, 2010, p. 58]

This study analyzes a sample of specific metaphors enveloped in 60-second promotional messages, with all of these metaphors being both produced and processed on the fly, i.e. under strict time constraints.

Given this context, it is unsurprising that many of the metaphorical utterances are not necessarily novel in the previously discussed semantic sense. The conception of metaphor novelty is seen here as broader than the semantically-constrained concept

of novelty. It could be more aptly defined as contextual novelty, or, following Mulken et al. (2010), it could be termed deviation from expectations. Apart from involving the sparse occurrences of novel or unconventional metaphor, contextual novelty also includes unusual usage of conventional metaphor and conventional metaphor that is further extended in an unexpected manner.

7.4.3.1 Hypotheses formulation

This study presumes that perceived novelty, i.e. novelty that is not based simply on lexical/semantic criteria, but rather as applied to a metaphor in context, will have a significant impact on metaphor appreciation and likewise on metaphor recall. This assumption is consistent with previous experimental research that tested the potential existence of such relationships. Sopory and Dillard (2002) compiled a comprehensive meta-analysis¹⁷⁴, and the results indicated a consistent and significant relation between metaphor novelty and its impact on persuasion.

However, their applied research methodology raises some concerns in that the relative novelty of metaphorical claims was judged in a relatively crude manner, with the two researchers empirically ascribing three broad categories of novelty and categorizing each study accordingly. In this respect, another research study by Mulken et al. (2010)¹⁷⁵ showed a considerably more robust methodology, and their study also found a significant positive correlation of perceived novelty/deviation from expectations and overall metaphor appreciation.

¹⁷⁴ Their study involved 24 data-based studies carried out between 1983 and 2000.

¹⁷⁵ Their study focuses specifically on visual metaphor.

The following set of hypotheses with regard to metaphor novelty will be tested in this study:

Hypothesis 3a There will be a significant and positive relationship between novelty and perceptions of metaphor retention.

Hypothesis 3b There will be a significant and positive relationship between novelty and perceptions of metaphor persuasiveness.

7.4.4 Perceptions of memorability and persuasiveness

The set of hypotheses that were formulated above communicate the tacit understanding that metaphors that are perceived as more persuasive may also be seen as more memorable. This study thus tests for the presence of the relationship between the perceptions of the two phenomena:

Hypothesis 4 There will be a significant and positive relationship between perceptions of metaphor retention and persuasiveness.

7.5 Methodology

The analysis in this chapter rests primarily on the results of an extensive online survey, testing the subjective effectiveness of individual metaphors in the Olympic dataset that were analysed in detail in the previous chapter. Effectiveness is here defined as the combination of two factors: perceived memorability and persuasiveness.

7.5.1 Participants

A web-based survey was conducted from September to November 2007, two years after the original Olympics meeting. Responses were collected from 22 respondents from two different groups. The first group recruited were ‘insiders’, i.e. 6 primary group members who were present in the original Olympics meeting. They were recruited on the basis that their own speeches were not included in the evaluated dataset, i.e. the survey was not sent to the authors of selected Olympics speeches. The second group of 16 respondents was partly recruited from members of a business focus group who were familiar with the model underlying the target Business Development Network, and partly from amongst the academic staff at the University of Birmingham English Department. The respondents from academia had no prior experience of the BDNs and their 60-second rhetoric. All participants were native speakers of English. In order to secure the statistical significance of the sample and enable quantitative analysis, the responses from the two groups were brought together and collated. The respective identities of respondents as members of *insider* vs. *outgroup* have been retained for the analysis.

7.5.2 Procedure

The survey was administered in October 2007. The participants were contacted by email, told the purpose of the study, and invited to complete an online questionnaire via an embedded URL.¹⁷⁶ The respondents were requested to read the full transcripts of 13 Olympic presentations and evaluate the use of individual sports metaphors against a set of the five criteria previously detailed. The key variables were thus contextual relevance, which was the perceived connection between the source and target domains, i.e. relevance

¹⁷⁶ The online questionnaire was hosted by the website *SurveyMonkey* <http://www.surveymonkey.com>, and the questionnaire is reproduced in full in Appendix 15.

of the sports metaphor in use to the business in question, complexity, which was the cognitive effort required to process a given metaphor, contextual novelty of a given metaphor, and perceptions of memorability and persuasiveness. Each variable was measured by a 12-item questionnaire and the scale adopted was 3 - 4 points, as detailed below in the following subsection. The survey contained a set of 8 complementary open-ended questions, also described below. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches was utilized in an effort to maximize the generalizability of the findings.

7.5.3 Measures

Individual variables were measured predominantly on 3-point semantic differential scales. The decision for a 3-point scale was pragmatic and motivated by an attempt to enhance the speed, ease, and confidence with which the respondents answered individual questions. As evident from the description of the individual variables scaling below, a bipolar scaling method was used for the complexity, novelty and persuasion variables, while a unipolar scale was used for contextual relevance and retention. Contextual relevance, i.e. the perceived connection between the metaphor in use and the profession, was measured on a 3-point semantic differential scale ranging from 1 (*creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly*) to 3 (*appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business.*)

The degree of complexity was operationalized with the help of the semantic differentials *difficult to understand - fairly overt* on a 3-point scale¹⁷⁷. Novelty was measured on a 4-point scale ranging from *very creative* to *cliché*, which was adapted in the analysis to a 3-point scale by merging *very creative* and *fairly creative* into 1 *creative*. The perception of memorability was measured on a 3-point scale, anchored by *significant increase in memorability* to *no effect on overall retention*. The perception of persuasiveness was measured on a 3-point scale ranging from *enhances the overall persuasiveness* to *lowers the overall persuasiveness*. The survey contained a set of complementary, and mostly open-ended questions. These requested additional comments on individual presentations, and centred on the overall appreciation and memorability of individual metaphors. They therefore included the following questions: *Which metaphor did you appreciate most/least and why? Which speaker are you most likely/least likely to identify with and why? Which are the factors which in your opinion influence the effectiveness of metaphor in a 60-second presentation?*

7.6 Data Analysis

7.6.1 RQs1: basic statistical analysis

Simple statistical analysis was carried out to answer the first set of research questions. The overall effect of each metaphor on retention and persuasion was analysed using two basic measures. A weighted arithmetic mean was used to reflect the responses from the entire set (Table 7.1). The mode was deployed as a secondary measure and modes were calculated separately for the insider and outsider group to enable discussion of differences

¹⁷⁷ See Mulken et al. (2010) and McQuarrie and Mick(1996,1999) for a similar operationalization of this measure.

in the responses collected from these groups and to control for potential external factors that may have influenced the respondents (Table 7.2). For the sake of comprehensive analysis, an outlier metaphor was retained for the initial part of investigation, which set out to answer the first set of RQs (the outlier metaphor is highlighted in the figure below). As it was consistently marked as incomprehensible, it was removed from the sample in the ensuing correlational analysis to test hypotheses 1-4 in order to control for the confounding variable of comprehension. The outlier metaphor is treated in greater detail in the discussion section.

Metaphor	Variable	$\bar{X}_w = \frac{\sum wx}{\sum w}$	Overall effect of metaphor on variable
Archery	Memory	2,227	Slightly positive
	Persuasion	1,909	None
Marathon	Memory	2,045	Positive
	Persuasion	1,636	Positive
Outlier metaphor	Memory	2,857	None
	Persuasion	2,895	Negative
Synchr. Swimming	Memory	2,143	Positive
	Persuasion	1,636	Positive
Javelin thrower 1	Memory	2,409	Positive
	Persuasion	1,864	None
Javelin thrower 2	Memory	2,400	Slightly positive
	Persuasion	2,238	Slightly negative
Steeple chase	Memory	1,714	Highly positive
	Persuasion	2,143	None
10,000 m	Memory	2,455	Slightly positive
	Persuasion	2,045	None
Powerlifting	Memory	2,632	Slightly positive
	Persuasion	2,381	Slightly negative
Pole vault	Memory	1,762	Positive
	Persuasion	1,381	Positive
Swim	Memory	1,864	Positive
	Persuasion	1,409	Positive

Hurdles	Memory	2,095	Positive
	Persuasion	1,476	Positive
High jump	Memory	1,250	Highly positive
	Persuasion	1,100	Highly positive

Table 7.1: Overall effect of positioning metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on weighted arithmetic mean

Variable	Numerical value	Semantic value
Memory	<1;1.5>	Highly positive effect
	2	Positive effect
	2.5	Slightly positive effect
	3	No effect
Persuasion	1	Highly positive effect
	1.5	Positive effect
	2	No effect
	2.5	Slightly negative effect
	3	Negative effect

Legend to numerical and semantic values

The numerical results in Table 7.1 and Table 7.2 were aligned with the above 4 and 5-point differential semantic scales. Adjustments to the original semantic scales were made to make the analysis more accessible to the reader and the scales were refined so that they better reflect the real value distribution. The strength value given in Table 7.2 below (columns 4 and 7) informs on the relative strength of mode (e.g. 93% of respondents from the out-group evaluated the outlier metaphor as having no impact on memory and as having a negative impact on persuasion.)

Metaphor	Variable	Mode1	Strength	Overall effect	Mode2	Strength	Overall effect
Archery	Memory	3	0.5	None	2	0.83	Positive
	Persuasion	2	0.56	None	1	0.5	Highly positive
Marathon	Memory	2	0.5	Positive	2	0.5	Positive
	Persuasion	1	0.5	Highly positive	1	0.67	Highly positive
Outlier: Nondescript	Memory	3	0.93	None	3	0.83	None
	Persuasion	3	0.93	Negative	3	0.83	Negative
Synchr. Swimming	Memory	2	0.53	Positive	2	1	Positive
	Persuasion	1,5	0.88	Positive	1	0.67	Highly positive
Javelin thrower 1	Memory	2	0.56	Positive	2	0.67	Positive
	Persuasion	2	0.56	None	2	0.67	None
Javelin thrower 2	Memory	3	0.6	None	3	0.5	None
	Persuasion	3	0.53	Negative	2	0.67	None
Steeple chase	Memory	1,5	0.8	Highly positive	1,5	1	Highly positive
	Persuasion	2	0.46	None	2	0.5	None
10,000 m	Memory	2	0.56	Positive	3	0.83	None
	Persuasion	1	0.37	Highly positive	3	0.67	Negative
Powerlifting	Memory	2	0.53	Positive	3	1	None
	Persuasion	2,5	0.4	Slightly negative	3	0.83	Negative
Pole vault	Memory	2	0.47	Positive	1	0.83	Highly positive
	Persuasion	1	0.67	Highly positive	1	0.67	Highly positive
Swim	Memory	1	0.44	Highly positive	1	0.5	Highly positive
	Persuasion	1	0.63	Highly positive	1,5	0.5	Positive
Hurdles	Memory	2	0.6	Positive	2	0.67	Positive
	Persuasion	1	0.67	Highly positive	2	0.67	Highly positive
High jump	Memory	1	0.86	Highly	1	0.67	Highly positive

				positive			
	Persuasion	1	1	Highly positive	1	0.83	Highly positive
Mode1 – based on the responses from the out-group (16 respondents)							
Mode2 – based on the responses from the insiders (6 respondents)							
Strength – relative strength of mode (proportion of respondents)							
Overall effect – effect of metaphor on variable							

Table 7.2: Overall effect of metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on mode

7.6.2 RQs 2 and hypotheses 1-4: Correlational analysis

The Pearson correlation was used to test the set of hypotheses 1-4 and to answer the second set of research questions since this coefficient is the most common statistical means of measuring the degree of correlation between two variables. It is sensitive only to linear relationships between two variables, which may exist even if one is a nonlinear function of the other. The Pearson correlation coefficient reaches values within the interval $<1; -1>$. The values between 1 and -1 determine the degree of dependence, values approaching 0 indicate the absence of dependence between variables, $+1$ represents the case of a perfect positive/rising linear relationship, and -1 represents a perfect negative/inverse linear relationship.

A two-tailed significance test was used to determine the statistical significance of the results. The two-tailed test is a more reliable alternative to the common one-tailed statistical test and is used to calculate the likelihood that the observed dependence between two variables may have occurred by chance. Findings are seen as statistically significant if this likelihood is lower than 5%, and as highly significant if it is less than 1%. In other words, based on general statistical conventions, correlations are perceived as significant at $p < 0.05$ and highly significant at $p < 0.01$ (Huck, 2007). Table 7.3 below contains

the correlational results. The results are marked with one asterisk (*) for significant correlations at $p < 0.05$ and with two asterisks (**) if the significance is very high at $p < 0.01$.

Variable		V1	V2	V3	V4	V5
V1: Relevance	Pearson correlation	1	-0.040	0.538	0.685*	0.897**
	Significance (2-tailed)	.	0.902	0.071	0.014	0.000
V2: Complexity	Pearson correlation		1	0.582*	0.218	0.053
	Significance (2-tailed)		.	0.047	0.497	0.870
V3: Novelty	Pearson correlation			1	0.585*	0.621*
	Significance (2-tailed)			.	0.046	0.031
V4: Retention	Pearson correlation				1	0.751**
	Significance (2-tailed)				.	0.005
V5: Persuasion	Pearson correlation					1
	Significance (2-tailed)					.
* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)						
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)						
N=12 (N is the number of claims)						

Table 7.3: Pearson correlations among observed variables

7.7 Results

7.7.1 The impact of positioning metaphor on perceived persuasion

Based on the statistical analysis summarised in Table 7.1 and Table 7.2, positioning metaphors tended to be seen as having a positive effect on the persuasiveness of the promotional message in which they were enveloped. The results based on the calculation of the weighted arithmetic mean indicated that metaphor had a positive impact on persuasiveness in 6 instances out of 13 (46%), while no effect was observed in 4 instances (31%). In addition, 2 instances (15%) in which the outcome was marginally negative in 2 instances, while in 1 instance the use of metaphor was detrimental to the persuasiveness and credibility of the speaker and his message. The results based

on the calculation of outgroup and ingroup modes rendered quantitatively similar conclusions. Both the ingroup and the outgroup population evaluated 6 instances of use as having a highly positive impact and 1 as having a positive impact, i.e. 7 metaphors (54%) were ascribed with having a persuasive effect. In both groups, 3 metaphors (23%) were seen as possessing a no effect and 3 metaphors were seen as negative (23%). The out-group subjects perceived 1 metaphor as being only marginally negative and 2 as negative while the in-group subjects evaluated 3 metaphors as negative. See Table 7.4 below for a summary.

Measure	Positive impact	No effect	Negative impact
Mean	46%	31%	23%
Mode 1	54%	23%	23%
Mode 2	54%	23%	23%

Table 7.4: Summary of perceived impact on persuasion

While these numbers appear to signal very strong agreement between the ingroup and outgroup evaluations of metaphor impact on persuasion, they do not imply consistent evaluations of individual metaphors across the board. On the whole, the figures indicate 80% agreement between the modes calculated for outgroup and ingroup in relation to both metaphor persuasiveness and retention with only three instances in which the ingroup and outgroup assessments differed considerably. Note the differences in the evaluations of archery, 10,000m and powerlifting metaphors (Table 7.5 below).

Metaphor	Variable	Mode1	Resp	Overall effect	Mode2	Resp	Overall effect
Archery	Memory	3	50%	None	2	83%	Positive
	Persuasion	2	56%	None	1	50%	Highly positive
10,000 m	Memory	2	56%	Positive	3	83%	None
	Persuasion	1	37%	Highly positive	3	67%	Negative
Powerlifting	Memory	2	53%	Positive	3	100%	None
	Persuasion	2,5	40%	slightly Negative	3	83%	Negative

Table 7.5: Overall effect of positioning metaphors on perceived retention and persuasion based on mode – selected metaphors

The key factor motivating this divergence appears to be perceived ingroup status. In this sense, mode 1, which is based on the outgroup evaluations, reflects the assessment of the individual metaphors without the bias of entrenched expectations. In contrast, in the three cases, it seems that the ingroup members might have been significantly influenced by the relative status of the member producing the metaphor. The archery metaphor, which repeatedly received scathing criticism in the open-ended questions amongst the outgroup survey participants, was delivered by a high status member, who was respected as an original, engaging and eloquent speaker as well as a highly influential and professional member.

This entrenched view seemed to have influenced the ingroup respondents, who evaluated the metaphor as having a highly positive impact on persuasion and positive impact on retention. This assessment is in stark contrast with the outgroup, whose members generally considered the metaphor to have a null effect in either aspect. The speaker's perceived in-group status seemed to have played an equally important role in skewing the ingroup evaluation of 10,000 m and powerlifting metaphors. The 10,000 m speaker had a very low group profile and was eventually forced to leave the group, following his low

performance and unprofessional conduct. The author of the powerlifting metaphor was generally perceived as a poor orator. Ingroup status thus appears to be a confounding factor that influenced the ingroup evaluators in these three cases.

7.7.2 The impact of positioning metaphor on perceived memorability

Based on the statistical analysis summarised in Table 7.1 and Table 7.2, positioning metaphors were largely seen as having a positive effect on the perceived memorability of the promotional message. The results based on the calculation of the weighted arithmetic mean indicated that metaphor had, in varying degree, positively influenced perceptions of message retention in 12 out of 13 instances, while a null effect was observed only in a single instance. 2 metaphors were evaluated as having a highly positive impact on recall (15%), 6 were on average assessed as positively impacting retention (46%), while 2 were seen as only marginally positive (15%). The results based on the calculation of outgroup and ingroup modes rendered similar results.

According to the mainstream outgroup opinion (Mode 1), 3 (23%) metaphors were perceived as having a highly positive and 7 (54%) as having a positive impact on retention. 3 (23%) metaphors were assumed to have a null effect. Based on the ingroup evaluation (Mode 2), 4 (31%) metaphors were judged to impact retention to a great degree, 5 (38%) were seen as having a positive impact and 4 (31%) were assessed as having a null effect (see Table 7.6 for a summary of the combined results).

Measure	Positive impact	No effect
Mean	92%	8%
Mode 1	77%	23%
Mode 2	69%	31%

Table 7.6: Summary of perceived impact on retention

As raised in the preceding section, there were 3 instances of significant divergence in mainstream opinions between the outgroup and the ingroup. Apart from these and one instance in which a metaphor evaluated as positive by the outgroup was rated as highly positive by the ingroup, there was full agreement on mainstream evaluations from both groups.

7.7.3 Contextual relevance

The first set of hypotheses predicted a significant and positive relationship between contextual relevance of a metaphor and its effect on perceived metaphor retention and persuasiveness. The results of the Pearson correlation supported the hypotheses by indicating a strong positive relationship between the predictor and criterion variables. A very strong and highly significant relationship was found between contextual relevance and the perception of metaphor persuasiveness ($r=0.897$ at $p=0.000$). Both hypotheses 1 a and 1 b were thus confirmed. Table 7.3 contains the correlational analysis results, and these findings were further complemented by the qualitative component, i.e. the respondents' answers to specific questions on metaphor appreciation and recall. This is illustrated by the examples below, which point to the element of contextual relevance as to the requisite quality of effective positioning metaphor. The answers also illustrate the importance of clarity, i.e. the comprehension variable.

SQ: ‘Which are the factors that in your opinion influence the effectiveness of metaphor in a 60-second presentation?’

Some of the respondents’ answers:

- *There has to be absolute clarity in the links between the metaphor, the business and the point that you are attempting to make. If not it confuses and muddles the presentation and distracts from it. The metaphor also needs to be well understood in popular culture or again the audience will not be able to make the links.*
- *The link between the sport and the business needs to be strong and well articulated.*
- *Has to be relevant; in a lot of the cases read, the metaphors did not appear to be thought out and so they did not correspond with the presenter’s business.*
- *Parallel needs to be drawn closely, details picked out.*
- *Link to the business, clarity, at the centre of the presentation.*

7.7.4 Complexity

Hypotheses 2a and 2b claimed the absence of any positive or negative relationship between perceptions of metaphor complexity and retention and persuasiveness as long as the comprehension variable was controlled for. Results of the Pearson correlation indicated weak or no association between perceived complexity and criterion variables ($r=0.218$, $r=0.053$ for *retention* and *persuasiveness* respectively), but the statistical significance of both figures was insufficient to confirm the absence of a significant linear relationship between the predictor and criterion variables ($p_{\text{retention}}=0.497$, $p_{\text{persuasion}}=0.870$).

The second set of hypotheses was thus neither confirmed nor refuted. Table 7.8 below contains the correlational analysis results. As raised in the previous section, respondents' comments and answers to open-ended questions further advocate the importance of the comprehension variable. Based on the evaluation from both groups, one metaphor which was perceived as incomprehensible was removed from the data set as an outlier. The transcript of the metaphor and its overall evaluation is given below.

Business: Golf course simulation centre				
Source domain: Nondescript/Diving				
Uh it seems pretty impressive, otherwise it would have been dead easy if golf was in the Olympics, but [laughter], and it's clearly not. Morning everyone. Ivan from Living Golf, uh:: where you can play pretty much any of the top 50 courses in the world uh: this week uh:: looking for we've had a couple of schools in recently during the day and it's worked uh: very very well, uh: so just uh: any leads into [...] uh either a school teacher that can get into the school or or probably more specifically the sports school's coordinator [...] uh within that school. Uhm [2s] and that's that's primarily what I am looking for this week. Uhm [...] oh, the Olympics [smirks] uh uh [3s] the only thing I can do cryp-cryptic one that can do is [...] uh:: <i>half in /rudy out piked/</i> followed by uh:: <i>double twisting Miller</i> , and if you can work that out then uh that's the sport!				
Contextual relevance	Perceived novelty	Perceived complexity	Effect on retention	Effect on persuasion
No link to business¹	Very creative¹	Difficult to understand¹	None¹	Lowers persuasiveness¹
0.91²	0.78²	0.95²	0.91²	0.91²
¹ The evaluation of outlier metaphor by respondents from both groups (combined mode)				
² The strength of mode (proportion of sample population with the mode opinion; 1 = 100%)				

Table 7.7: Transcript of and statistics on the outlier metaphor

7.7.5 The relationship between contextual relevance and complexity

Hypothesis 2c predicted that the perceptions of complexity of the metaphor would be inversely related to contextual relevance. No, or negligible, negative relationship was found between the two variables ($r=-0.040$). However, the statistical significance

of the finding was again insufficient either to confirm or refute the hypothesis ($p=0.902$). Table 7.3 above contains the results of correlational analysis.

7.7.6 The relationship between novelty and complexity

Hypothesis 2d predicted a significant positive relationship between perceptions of novelty and complexity of metaphor. A strong positive relationship was found between the two variables ($r=0.582$, $p=0.047$) and Hypothesis 2d was thus confirmed. Table 7.3 contains the results of correlational analysis.

7.7.7 Novelty

The third set of hypotheses predicted a significant and positive relationship between metaphor novelty and their perceived effects on persuasion and retention. Results of two Pearson correlations supported both hypotheses by showing a statistically significant positive relationship between the predictor and criterion variables. A strong and significant relationship was found between metaphor novelty and both variables, with the perceived effect on retention at $r=0.585$, $p=0.046$ and persuasiveness at $r=0.621$, $p=0.031$. Hypotheses 3a and 3b were thus confirmed. Table 7.3 above contains the results of the correlational analysis.

These findings were further complemented by the qualitative component, namely, the respondents' comments on individual metaphors and their answers to the specific questions on metaphor appreciation and recall. As an example, see the commentary on the archery and javelin thrower metaphors below. These illustrate a generic tendency of respondents in both the in-group and out-group to respond negatively to perceived clichés.

Comments on OM1 (archery):

- *This metaphor of archery and hitting the target is too much of a cliché and because it has been used so many times before diminishes its power.*
- *I'd describe this as 'cheesy' – although archery may not be a cliché, promising to hit targets (without evidence supporting this) certainly is.*

Comments on OM4 (javelin throwing):

- *About as corny as the archery one.*
- *Far too cheesy, aiming high, making the mark.*
- *Clichéd, so not memorable.*

The lack of originality was, in fact, the most common reason for criticism, both in terms of low appreciation and low evaluations of memorability, as illustrated by the respondents' answers given below.

SQ: 'Which metaphor did you appreciate the least and why/ can you remember the least and why?'

- *Archery – cliché.*
- *Dreadful stuff to do with 'raising the bar' – a dire corporate cliché!*
- *Second javelin thrower – copied.*
- *Archery and the card design far too obvious and corny.*
- *Some of the javelin ones – clichéd.*
- *Anybody who talks about 'raising the bar' or 'going the extra mile' or any of that utterly infuriating business talk which just makes me want not to buy anything from them ever at all.*
- *Power lifting. Not very inspired, cliché.*

- *None of this would help to focus my attention in a positive way. I would be waiting for the very next cliché and not paying any attention to what they are saying.*

On the other hand, metaphors that were high on perceived novelty were appreciated. This is evident not only from the correlational results, but also from the answers to the question:

SQ: *Which are the factors that in your opinion influence the effectiveness of metaphor in a 60-second presentation?*

- *Fun factor, ability to play with words.*
- *Unusualness, humour.*

7.7.8 Perceptions of memorability and persuasiveness

The fourth hypothesis predicted an existing relation between perceptions of memorability and the perceived effect of the metaphor on persuasion. A significant and very strong positive relationship was found between both variables ($r=0.751$, $p=0.005$) and Hypothesis 4 was thus confirmed. Table 7.3 above contains the results of correlational analysis.

7.7.9 Key predictors of perceived metaphor persuasiveness and memorability

Research questions 2a and 2b asked which of the analysed variables, i.e. contextual relevance, complexity or novelty, would serve as a greater predictor of metaphor persuasiveness and memorability. The results of the Pearson correlations point to contextual relevance as the most significant factor influencing perceptions of both metaphor persuasiveness and memorability. The figures for correlation between contextual relevance and metaphor effect on persuasion ($r=0.897$, $p=0.000$) represent the strongest

and statistically most significant relationship amongst the analysed patterns of correlation. The relationship between contextual relevance and perceived memorability was also very strong and significant, though not equally pronounced as in the case of its perceived effect on persuasion ($r=0.685$, $p=0.014$). The importance of the contextual relevance variable was further strengthened through respondents' answers to specific questions on metaphor appreciation and recall.

7.8 Discussion and conclusions

The main goal of the current chapter was to explore how positioning metaphors might influence the persuasiveness and retention of the message in which they are enveloped, and, if a positive influence was demonstrated, which of the three variables that were considered in this study was the most effective in predicting increased persuasiveness and retention. The brief answer here is that, overall, metaphors seem to increase persuasion of the message, and that the metaphors which were perceived as most contextually relevant, i.e. those which supplied the most specific and apt connections between the source domain term and the promoted profession, were judged by participants to be the most successful in terms of their combined effect on the perception of persuasion and memorability. Novelty was also found to be a significant predictor of metaphor effectiveness, while complexity was not seen as influencing either metaphor persuasiveness or memorability.

In terms of the general influence of positioning metaphor, there was deemed to be a positive overall impact on both message persuasiveness and memorability. Approximately half of the metaphorical messages were evaluated by the respondents as enhancing persuasion ($x_w=46\%$; $\text{mod}(x)=54\%$), while less than a quarter were judged to be

either marginally harmful or harmful to overall message persuasiveness ($x_w=23\%$; $\text{mod}(x)=23\%$). These findings are in agreement with the research from other promotional contexts (cf. Sopory and Dillard, 2002).¹⁷⁸

In respect to the variables researched for their potential to affect persuasiveness and memorability, the results of correlational analysis indicate that the impact on both measures might be maximized if the metaphor is highly contextually relevant, and if it is comprehensible while high on novelty. More precisely, while contextual relevance appears to be the key predictor of metaphor effectiveness, the lack of novelty appears to be a limiting factor. The cases of minimal novelty, in which metaphors were perceived as corporate clichés, generated highly negative responses, having a detrimental effect on perceptions of both persuasiveness and memorability.

Regarding contextual relevance as the greatest predictor of metaphor effectiveness, the hypothesized relationship appeared to be particularly strong between metaphor relevance and its effect on persuasion. The metaphors that produced a clear and specific link to the promoted business or business competence were viewed as more relevant and were thus better appreciated than highly generic equivalents that did not clearly individuate the profession. In this respect, it is believed that narrative contextualization and metaphor extendedness might be important factors in improving perceived metaphor relevance and consequently affecting persuasion.

In the case of the complexity variable, prior experimental studies have advanced the claim that it positively correlates with both metaphor persuasiveness and recall as long as the metaphor is comprehensible (Philips, 2000; McQuarie and Mick, 2003 in Mulken

¹⁷⁸ In their study comparing the effect of metaphor vs. literal messages, Sopory and Dillard (ibid.) found that metaphorical messages were more persuasive than their literal counterparts by roughly 6%.

et al., 2010). In accord with previous research, this study has indeed identified metaphor comprehension as a confounding factor that may seriously limit message appreciation. Yet, in contrast to these studies, in this study no correlation was found between complexity and the perceptions of persuasion and memorability. It may be tempting to advance a relationship-absent claim, suggesting that as long as the comprehension variable is controlled for, metaphor complexity does not seem to have a significant effect on perceptions of persuasiveness and memorability. However, the statistical significance of the correlational figures was not as strong as to confirm the hypothesized lack of relationship.

In terms of the relationship between complexity and metaphor appreciation, previous studies (Mulken et al., 2010; 2014) have observed clear non-linearity (inverted U-curve), ascribing it mostly to the influence of the comprehension factor. Presumably, once the comprehension variable is controlled for, a correlational study testing solely for the existence of a linear relationship ought to be sufficient to prove the relationship-absent hypothesis formulated in this study. Based on the qualitative data available in this study and on the argumentation of relevance theory, it seems that in the context where low-involvement promotional messages are produced, metaphor appreciation will decrease as the metaphor becomes overly complex.¹⁷⁹

In respect to the interplay between novelty and complexity of metaphor, a strong and significant relationship was confirmed between the two variables. This finding

¹⁷⁹ In their study of three different types of visual metaphor used in advertising, Mulken and her colleagues (2010) found a negative correlation between the two variables and reached a similar conclusion in explaining their findings. They argued that audiences are in this context not motivated to go beyond a certain level of interpretive complexity. Under the circumstances in which cognitive effects are limited simply to understanding a sales pitch, highly complex metaphor is likely to render the message laboured and artificial. In any case, further study would be necessary in order to build a conclusive argument on the role of metaphor complexity in the context of BDN promotional messages.

is perhaps to be expected in a context in which an underlying metaphor as conventional as BUSINESS IS SPORTS was solicited. This, along with the time constraints under which the speakers found themselves while producing metaphorical claims, induced a tendency to rely on conventionalised metaphor and generic clichés delivered in a one-liner, often unsupported by contextualization mechanisms such as narrative and/or creative extension. Unconventional usage per se tended to be perceived as more complex, especially when the metaphor was not enveloped in a rich context (e.g., synchronised swimming metaphor or nondescript sports metaphor/diving).

Although the results presented here represent a synthesis of data available within the researched context and previous research, they should be viewed as a platform from which to conduct further research rather than a fully-fledged study on metaphor-persuasion and metaphor-retention relationships. Like in the majority of the prior studies, retention and persuasion measures were here replaced by the proxies of perceived memorability and persuasion. Further study that directly measures metaphor effect on persuasion and retention is required to establish the hypothesized positive relationship between persuasion and retention, as well as the positive relationships between contextual relevance, perceived novelty and the two phenomena.

The size of the metaphor sample and the situational constraints under which it was produced may pose further constraints as to the generalizability of the study to the organisational level. The fact that the size of the sample population was relatively small might be seen as a more serious limitation, albeit one that can be remedied in future research through a modification of the current survey and its wider distribution. It would be most effective to target primarily respondents who have prior unmediated experience

of the organized networking format and associated discourse practices, i.e. either existing members or visitors.

However, recruiting sufficient sample populations from the target community remains challenging for the following reasons. First, a survey containing numerous transcripts is by definition relatively time-consuming despite its simple design. It took the respondents between 20-30 minutes to complete the current version. While willing to complete short surveys informing on the network's demographics, the participants are unlikely to invest their time into a linguistic survey without understanding the potential business benefits of such a study. Secondly, from an organisational perspective, the target organization would need to be persuaded to allow the email distribution of such questionnaires amongst its members, as such practice is against its current code of practice.

CHAPTER 8

Conclusions and recommendations

The main goal of the current study was to determine the central features of narrative and deliberate metaphor use in self-promotional business networking speeches. The question posed at the beginning of the study was directed towards an evaluation of the effect of these features on the construction of the speakers' professional identities and on the elicitation of on-target referrals. The central question was divided into three sub-questions to address the use of narrative and deliberate metaphor in the genre of the 60-second self-marketing speeches:

- 4) *What are the prominent structural and lexical characteristics that mark the deployment of these strategies in this context?*
- 5) *What are the core interactional goals that motivate the deployment of these strategies?*
- 6) *How effective are these strategies in achieving these interactional goals and what are the variables that appear to increase their effectiveness?*

These RQs motivated a multi-method approach to analysis, establishing a triple nexus between structure, professional and group identities, and the achievement vs non-achievement of core interactional goals via the selected strategy. Despite the clear threads connecting the central themes of narrative and metaphor, their diverse character dictated different analytical foci and modes of analysis. These foci were the subject of individual research sub-questions and hypotheses, which will now be readdressed, in the sequence as they appear in the body of the thesis, discussing the main implications

of the findings rendered in the course of the research and identifying the main contributions this study has made to the respective fields.

Chapter 2 is an exception, since it had an important context-setting function, mapping out the social, business and marketing dimensions of this primarily linguistic study, and addressing the questions that have been most frequently raised by academic professionals and business practitioners during the research process underlying this study. It was designed to help further the understanding of the importance of research into the networking rhetoric and discourse practices of small businesses, establishing the importance of organized word of mouth for these businesses and providing the understanding of the mechanics of word of mouth marketing. Questions raised in Chapter 2 do not immediately tie in with the central RQ and are thus not individually readdressed in the conclusion.

The last section will center on general recommendation for practice in the target organization: basic guidelines for the use of these strategies and general observations that may help improve the effectiveness of the self-branding 60-second slot.

8.1 Narrative in 60-second speeches

The conception that selling is based primarily on the buyer's emotional decision has been widely promoted and is supported with ample evidence from neuromarketing and CBR research (cf. Zurawicki, 2010; Lindstrom, 2010; Suomala et al., 2013; Karmarkar, 2011). Current sales methodologies, whether they target common salesfolk or senior sales executives, and regardless of their methodological background and research robustness,

therefore share a focus on identifying or generating the need for the product or service (cf. Sandler Sales System; JAWS; TAS; Value Selling; Situational Sales Negotiation).

In promotional and advertising discourse, the consumer imperative necessitates by default the continual development of a problem, emotionally perceived as pain or need (e.g., Sandler et al., 2007 *inter alia*), which is resolved through the offered product or service. Advertising and marketing messages per se thus often operate on the problem-solution premise. The findings of this thesis show that the vast majority of narratives embedded in the self-branding 60 seconds can be broadly characterized as involving a business client in a problem scenario while evidencing the professional's competence in delivering a successful solution. These stories were labelled as competence tales and have been firstly explored with the aim of establishing their generic fingerprint.

RQ3.1/3.2: Are the stories that communicate competence marked by a prototypical generic structure? If so, what structural commonalities do they share?

Structural analysis of the dataset¹⁸⁰ has shown that the structural makeup of competence narrative is characterized by a high degree of generic predictability, converging towards a conflation of the problem-solution pattern and elements of the Labovian structure, as seen in Chapter 3. The problem-solution generic pattern navigates a large proportion of the narratives in the BDN data: 88% contain a problem scenario, while 82% communicate both the problem and solution. These speeches are often structured into three main segments. The first part, equivalent to the Labovian abstract, involves the definition of the professional's competence in a general context. In the second section, the competence is evidenced in a specific context through a narrative involving a problem-solution pattern. The last segment, which roughly corresponds to the Labovian

¹⁸⁰ 250 speeches/32 narratives embedded in the BDN 60-second slot.

coda, reinforces the competence statement in a context that involves the audience or their contact network.

The findings suggest that while the abstract is an optional element in the structure, present in 35% of the narrative sample, the second stage, involving a problem-solution pattern, structured 82% of the sample, with 42% of all the competence tales fully conforming to the prototypical structure of situation – problem – solution – evaluation. The remaining narratives departed from the model mostly in terms of variation in the sequential organization of the narrative and/or pattern repetition. Marked tendencies amongst these included alternative positioning of the evaluation phase, which often followed or was embedded in the problem phase. A further significant alteration to the pattern involved cases where the solution was only implicitly communicated. The final step, equivalent to a coda, appears to be the only obligatory element in the competence tales in the sample. This might be explained by the coda forging a strong connection between the competence evidence in the narrative and the here and now, highlighting the relevance and applied potential of the competence tale for the audience and their reference network.

RQ 3.3: Are there prominent lexical features intrinsic to CTs which index individual stages in the structural pattern?

Apart from the predictable occurrence of problem-solution lexis in the problem and solution phases (explored in prior research by Hoey 1983/1994; Holmes and Stubbe 2003; and Koester, 2006), the analysis revealed other features that were not only prominent in the competence tales, but appeared to bear structural implications. In comparison with the non-narrative dataset, speakers exhibited a pronounced tendency towards deployment of high-involvement lexis, such as hyperbole, intensifiers and quantifiers, parallelism,

modality and reported speech. A correlation was established between the use of hyperbole and other forms of evaluative language in the CTs, corroborating the findings of previous research that these strategies tend to work in synergy (see, for example, Mick and McQuarrie, 1996; Goodwin and Goodwin, 2002; Koester, 2006; McCarthy and Carter, 2004). A close correlation was found in the use of hyperbole, quantifiers, intensifiers and parallelism. The use of hyperbole was explored in most detail due to its higher incidence within the data.

The data show that hyperbole was in most cases used to index the urgency of the initial client's problem (36% of total distribution, with exclusively negative polarity) and then to communicate the client's response to the solution proffered by the narrator in the evaluation (28%, with positive polarity). The coda, which often serves as a summary of the speaker's competence in the general scenario, or defines the prospective clientele by the problem or need they own, involved frequent hyperbolic use (20%, with predictable respective polarity). The data demonstrated a clear tendency towards the compound use of heightened involvement and evaluative language, and, particularly noteworthy, there was a marked tendency to qualify the problem in emphatic terms (with 93% of problems marked in this way), expressed either inherently in the problem definition, or when the competence tale involved a separate problem evaluation stage.

High involvement was often signalled through the use of reported speech (RS), which again mostly indexed the problem or problem evaluation, and, less frequently, the evaluation phase. The prominence (42% of narratives involved at least one RS locution) and the functional implications of RS usage in competence tales warranted further attention and were, thus, further investigated in Chapter 4. The data suggests that

apart from signalling structural salience, reported speech was found to be a key resource to support professional identity claims, i.e. statements of competence. Its usage in the competence tales was, indeed, seen to be one of the most prominent implicit self-promotion strategies available to the narrator.

RQ 4.1 Which are the most prominent interactional functions of RS in competence tales and how do they effect competence claims?

An analysis of the RS dataset indicated three core functions: evidential, involvement and face-threat mitigation. Through their synergy, reported speech seems to have a catalytic effect on the accessibility of a competence story, on the degree to which it is perceived as a gateway to the naked experience, and the solidity of the given identity construction. Most RS usage (62%) involved a client's voice and was deployed either to evaluate the problem, or evaluate the successful solution, thus allowing the absent client to directly endorse the speaker. The deployment of the client's voice seems to remove the face-threat of direct responsibility for the given claim, enabling the speaker a dramatic conveyance of the problem scenario and emphatic praise of their own performance, thus magnifying the evidential potential of competence tales.

The evidential function has been identified in this research as the core interactional outcome of RS deployment in competence tales, thus confirming previous findings in other institutional contexts (Galatolo, 2007, *inter alia*). In regard to the evidentiality of reported speech claims, this research indicates the existence of a progressive cline of client involvement in the competence claim, spanning from a subtle hint of client satisfaction to the direct endorsement of the speaker by the client. While there are clearly a number of factors influencing the resulting evidential and endorsement force of the statement,

the form of reported speech deployed in the competence tale, and the phase in the structural makeup of the CTs involving reported speech appear to be the two most prominent factors. The degree of client involvement seems to increase with the use of direct discourse and appears to be more intense if the client voice is appropriated in the solution and/or performance evaluation.

The current findings add to a growing body of literature on the effect of the direct form of reported speech on the perceived authenticity of the claim, with similar results reported across a variety of other interactional contexts (Galatolo, 2007; Holt and Clift, 2007; Lucy, 1993; Wooffitt, 1992, 2007) This is, however, the first such study targeting marketing and organizational contexts.

RQ 4.2 What are the tendencies in RS usage in the non-narrative sample?

RQ 4.3 Are there similarities in its usage in competence tales and non-narrative data?

It was found that while reported speech is not tied only to CTs, it appears to be almost exclusively used either in narratives (40% of all instances) or in problem scenarios (close to 60%). Problem scenarios were defined in this study as generally accessible situations that involve a potential problem. Unlike narratives, problem scenarios are universal situations with neither a specific spatial nor temporal location indexing a particular event.

Both competence tales and problem scenarios were used primarily to elicit on-target referrals through the clear definition of a specific problem that can be resolved through the service offered by the speaker, and were thus found to have both functional and structural commonalities. While competence tales express a problem or a need owned by an existing client, scenarios tend to locate a problem or a need owned by a prospective

client. In both cases RS was predominantly used to index the problem or need evaluation, again mostly deploying the client's voice to phrase the problem situation.

RQ 4.4 Is there a recognizable tendency to locate competence tales in a particular time frame?

RQ 4.5 If so, what motivates the specific temporal location of CTs?

The investigation of the temporal context of competence tales in this thesis showed that 91% of narratives contained an explicit time reference in the orientation/situation or the abstract expressed via an adverb of time, thus indicating the potential salience of the specific time frame as significantly contributing to the tellability of the 60-second small story (Ochs and Capps, 2001; Norrick, 2005). Based on the analysis of temporal deixis (time adverbs, tense, aspect), a competence tale appears to be legitimate and tellable if the time is specifically defined in the story as temporally proximate, i.e. the story represents a recent or an ongoing event which is directly connected with the here and now of the referential world.

The analysis in Chapter 4 has shown that competence tales are not firmly grounded in the past, thus lending further support to the findings contesting the linearity and the primacy of past temporal framing (see, e.g. Georgakopolou, 2007, p.13), and evidencing the view of the importance of temporal indexing in narratives. The findings suggest that time indeed plays a role beyond a mere orientation device, further supporting the recent conception of time as a dynamic, shifting and socially-constructed concept (e.g. Baynham, 2003), and as a dimension which contributes towards 'mak[ing] narrative events concrete, mak[ing] them take on flesh, and caus[ing] blood to flow in their veins' (Georgakopolou, 2007, p.13).

Existing studies in the temporal and spatial indexing of narratives have mostly focused on ordinary talk, and none has specifically targeted a marketing institutional domain, let alone a networking context. In this sense, this study has extended research in the domain of the temporal location of small stories, contributing an empirical analysis of institutional data. This study has not only highlighted the necessity of a specific temporal frame for the subgenre of competence narrative, but also seems to have defined it as meeting the relevance requirement only if tied strongly to the moment of relating the narrative. Despite the nexus between time and space, the study limits itself to the specifics of temporal location as the data did not exhibit any tendency towards specific spatial location.

The apparently normative temporal proximity of competence tales is likely to be driven by recognition that the primary interest of the audience lies in the current potential of the member. An account of recent or current success with a client who represents the desired target segment generally appears more relevant than a story which is not temporally indexed. It may thus lead to higher involvement, preparing the ground for requests for referrals into similar target market.

8.1.1 Construction of professional identity via a series of narratives

RQ 5.1 How is professional identity conceptualised in the context of business networking?

Most organizational and business discourse research that addresses professional identity has so far focused primarily on collective identities or managerial identities. Individual professional identities that are not managerial nor intrinsically defined by the corporate superstructure have been rarely subject to research. The research that has investigated how

individual speakers construct their professional self in discourse appears to use the concept of professional identity loosely. Tacit understanding of the term tends to transpire from the given paper, and differs vastly, depending on the discourse context and the perspective of the researcher.

The concept of professional identity is indeed contextually bound and hinges on the individual research perspective¹⁸¹, yet that is precisely the reason why the construct needs to be clearly defined by the researcher in the given context. In terms of context, this study has defined professional identity so as to befit the discourse sites of both organized and non-organized networking, as well as promotional and sales contexts engaging business partners or buyer-seller relationships. Following the largely independent research traditions of applied linguistics and sociology, professional identity has thus been here theorized as equivalent to the current concept of source credibility¹⁸² established in communication theory, i.e. as a three-dimensional measurable construct subsisting of competence, trustworthiness and goodwill. In line with the constructionist take on identity, professional identity is perceived in this study as produced and reproduced in interaction, and as evolving, changing and solidifying over time.

This study suggests that while the competence claim is essential to professional identity construction in the competence tales, the best results seem to be achieved only if all three dimensions are constructed over time. Repeated use of CTs in the 60-seconds appears to enable the professional to deliver concrete evidence of various competencies, while gradually developing the elements of trust and goodwill in equal proportion, as documented by the longitudinal case studies given in Chapter 5. The conclusions

¹⁸¹ See Bargiela-Chiappini, 2011.

¹⁸² McCroskey and Teven (1999)

of narrative analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 indicate that overreliance on a construction of competence which negates either the trust or goodwill dimension will negatively impact the resulting professional identity.

RQ 5.2 How does a competence tale series delivered over a period of time communicate evolving professional identity?

The findings of the longitudinal study suggest that by embedding competence tales repeatedly in the 60-seconds, business professionals can effectively develop diverse aspects of their professional identities, contributing to a complex and up-to-date, yet consistent projection of their professional identities. Turning competence tales into a repetitive practice may greatly enhance the awareness of the professional's core business and competencies and communicate the primary benefits of their service. This process was illustrated by means of a case study, which observed the assembling, attuning and reworking of a distinct professional identity through a series of competence tales delivered over an extended period of time.

The case study focused on an insurance broker, i.e. a representative of a profession with well-documented¹⁸³ credibility issues, stemming primarily from the lack of trust in the business ethics of the service providers. In a series of three narratives, the speaker methodically developed his professional identity, centring on the elements of trust and goodwill, i.e. facets that are the most contentious in the public view of the profession. Exploiting the negatively stereotyped prototype, each story in the sequel singled the speaker's ethical service out in a sea of corrupt competition. While in this case the narrator utilized the negative view of the profession to formulate his unique selling point, other narrative series in the data show that in the case of low confidence in the profession of the

¹⁸³ See Friedman and Srinivas (2013) on the credibility issues of insurance business.

speaker, an alternative strategy may involve systematic attempts at subverting the popular view by rehabilitating the whole professional field.

In a nutshell, the case study analysis sought to capture the gradually emerging professional in the narrator and observe the process of identity evolution over time, demonstrating the full potential of competence tales, as they in turn contribute to the construction of all three professional identity dimensions and complex aspects of personal and social identities.

RQ 5.3 Are there recognizable macro-tendencies in the frequency and nature of CT use? If so, what are the main variables affecting the frequency and the nature of CT use?

The analysis of the dataset and supporting ethnographic information revealed a set of variables that may increase the likelihood that a competence tale would be enlisted, as well as influence the strategy and chief professional identity foci that would be communicated via the competence tale. This study has identified the occupational field and the length of engagement in the network as the primary moderating factors. Established members with high ingroup status seemed to rely on competence tales less often than new members of the network, i.e. visitors and new members who were in the information stage of building trust delivered 54% of competence tales.

In respect to the claim that professional field is a relevant criterion, the following sub-factors seemed to exert a noticeable pull. First, competence tales tended to be used more frequently in businesses that involve high-risk decisions for the client and are not essential to everyday personal and business operations, such as investment advice. Second, it appears that competence tales are more often enlisted

by the representatives of occupations which may have a low or controversial status, or in an occupation where the core business activity and its outcomes are obscure, intangible and difficult to measure. In other words, competence tales appear to be the central evidential and meaning-making mechanism for businesses generally perceived with a degree of suspicion or uncertainty.

The professions that were categorized as such include the insurance industry, financial services, unconventional medicine and general training in personal and professional improvement. This study has found that 60% of competence tales were delivered by the representatives of the aforementioned businesses, while these businesses represented roughly 40% of the membership in the studied groups.

This study has also shown that professions in the domain of physical and mental well-being, and professions involving personal and professional improvement are a fruitful site for the subcategory of competence tales labelled in this study as healing narratives. These narratives inhere the transformation plot (Bruner, 2003) and involve a higher potential degree of cognitive salience and emotional investment. The healing metaphor extends to the field of personal and professional development and can be also applied to ailing businesses.

8.2 Positioning metaphor in the self-branding 60-seconds

The thesis examined positioning metaphor usage in a case study, exploring two specific areas: first, the dynamics of metaphor appropriation and its potential role in influencing constructions of social and professional identities and second, the determiners of effective use of metaphor usage in the organized networking context.

8.2.1 Metaphor dynamics and potential implications for construction of identity

The study focused on the the dynamics of metaphor appropriation in a presentational genre, isolating the dominant tendencies and micro-factors that appear to contribute to the process of metaphor co-construction in a networking meeting. It also discussed the potential interplay between metaphor development through interaction and the discursive construction of group identity. Previous and concurrent studies have investigated metaphor discourse dynamics and positioning metaphor in dialogues and multilogues, namely in reconciliation talks and conflict management discussions.¹⁸⁴

In comparison, the presentational data explored in this thesis could be seen as inhering some limitation in respect to its potential to communicate the speakers' natural identity positions. Unlike the above mentioned conversational studies, specific metaphor use was in this case study solicited by one of the speakers, i.e. the production of the target deliberate metaphor was not spontaneous. Also, the prescribed SPORTS metaphor limited the speakers' choice to a single predetermined source domain, which may have further influenced the positioning potential of individual metaphors, i.e. the naturalness of the professional self-construction. These limiting influences were considered in the analysis.

The data presented a unique opportunity to analyse positioning metaphor dynamics and metaphor identity in a genre where neither had been explored before. Under regular circumstances, speakers deliver a rehearsed 60-second speech, and thus the amount of dialogism in real time is limited to random impromptu comments. In this regard, the Olympic speech sequence represented a diversion and an interesting evidential base

¹⁸⁴ See e.g. Seu and Cameron, 2013.

capturing how speakers influence each others' metaphor choices in real time in what is perceived as an apriori monologic genre. The dataset provided a chance to study the core motivators of individual choices, and explore how the inter-speaker influence shapes individual self-constructions, and potentially also collective/group identity.

RQs 6.1/6.2 How does the metaphor embedded in self-branding 60 seconds evolve through interaction? What are the factors influencing whether a positioning metaphor will be further developed in interaction?

Given the nature of the data, it may be rather predictable that the most identifiable tendency detected in the sample was the recency effect, i.e. the inclination towards co-construction in close succession. In the context where speakers were under pressure to produce a specific metaphor, the recency effect has been found to be further amplified by a momentary lack of creativity. A marked local pattern of use emerged, in which the speakers were most likely to respond, elaborate on, or challenge metaphors that were introduced either by their immediate or close predecessors.

Systematic metaphor was shared in 30% of instances immediately, i.e. within the first minute of its use, in an additional 15% within 2 minutes, and in 30% within 4 minutes of its use. If the systematic metaphor did not reappear within 4 minutes of its use, it was not used again. This finding is consistent with the results observed in earlier studies that described the recency effect¹⁸⁵ as having considerable influence in the local dynamics of metaphor use (e.g. Littlemore and Low, 2006; Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).

Another variable that has been found to affect metaphor co-usage in the networking presentational context was the speakers' tendency to create alignment by deploying

¹⁸⁵ Recency effect is defined as cognitive bias that results from disproportionate salience of recent stimuli (Gibbs and Cameron, 2008).

a metaphor that had been well-received by the audience, i.e. systematic metaphors that seemed to hold attraction for the the audience were more likely to be taken on and developed in subsequent speeches. Previous research indicates that co-construction in dialogic interactional contexts is used predominantly to create accord with the author (Tannen, 1987/2007; Carter, 2004; Littlemore and Low, 2006 *inter alia*). The results of the present study suggest that in presentational contexts, speakers seek to enhance social bonds and create alignment primarily with their audience.

Although the current study is based on a small sample of participants, it suggests that high in-group status may be another predictor of metaphor appropriation and development. The core members' choice of systematic metaphor was either taken on immediately or within two minutes of its use. On the contrary, metaphors deployed by unpopular members were not reintroduced in subsequent speeches.

The existence of enduring metaphorical concepts has also been found to play a role in the attraction of individual metaphors. In the researched context, positioning metaphors seemed to be influenced by the combination of two mainstream conceptual metaphors that are often deployed in the business domain: SUCCESS IS UP and LIFE IS A JOURNEY along with the inherent correspondences between problems/challenges and physical obstacles to the motion in space. This influence can be illustrated by the repetitive reliance on *overcoming hurdles* and *raising the bar* linguistic metaphors.

RQ 6.3 How does the combined use of positioning metaphor influence construction of professional identity?

Although the list of Olympic sports involves a number of collective games, such as football and basketball, references to collective enterprise and teamwork were scarce and

directed towards client support by professional as in the solicitors: *coming to us is gonna be like a relay race*.

The gravitational pull of individualist sports within the athletics domain might be explained by the synergy of the factors discussed in the summary of RQ 6.2. above. These influences combined give rise to a one-off professional identity construction that emerged at the confluence of PERFORMANCE and OVERCOMING LIMITS metaphors. The mainstream positioning metaphor deployed in the Olympics data might be seen as rather representative of a prototypical network member, i.e. an owner-manager who aspires to outgrow the small business category.

Yet, the positioning metaphors in the Olympic dataset were solicited, rather than produced spontaneously, which would almost certainly have affected the discursive construction of identity. Thus, making claims on implications for prototypical expression of professional identity would be unwarranted. Further study needs to be done, using identical stimuli in another networking group, a study that would also help to develop or refute the line of argument pertaining to the specific attraction of the athletics domain suggested in this study.

8.2.2 The perceived effects of positioning metaphor on the persuasiveness and memorability of 60-second speeches.

Apart from exploring the co-construction tendencies in metaphor evolution, and their impact on social identity, this study set out to identify and evaluate the key predictors of positioning metaphor effectiveness in 60-second self-branding speeches delivered in the context of business networks. Metaphor effectiveness has been conceptualised in this

study as the combined perceptions of metaphor persuasiveness and memorability. In regard to metaphor analysis in the present study, the study of potential metaphor impact on persuasion in 60-second rhetoric is seen as having the widest implications for metaphor research and applied outcomes for communication practices in the network.

In contrast to most of the prior research into metaphor persuasiveness and recall, this study was not experimental in design, but deployed authentic stimuli. Previous research tended to rely either on prefabricated structures designed by researchers (e.g., Toncar and Munch, 2003; Stella and Adams, 2008), or on assorted metaphors collected from a variety of sources, produced by different authors across various settings over a period of time¹⁸⁶ (Sopory and Dillard, 2002; Mothersbough et al. 2002). In that sense, this study is unique by examining positioning metaphors that were all produced in interaction in the same environment, in close succession, and in response to the same stimuli, i.e. all metaphors shared the same source domain¹⁸⁷.

The survey undertaken to inform this research was designed to evaluate the role of three variables that were initially identified as potentially influential: contextual relevance, complexity, and novelty. Contextual relevance¹⁸⁸ was here defined as the quality or strength of the perceived connection(s) between the metaphor in use and the business being promoted via the metaphor. Complexity¹⁸⁹ was here understood as the relative ease or

¹⁸⁶ Often, researched metaphors do not share the same source domain.

¹⁸⁷ The dataset underlying the exploration of deliberate metaphor influence on the effectiveness of the networking promotional message was the transcribed BDN Olympics meeting, involving 13 60-second speeches.

¹⁸⁸ Contextual relevance is in this study not understood in terms of relevance theory (Sperber and Wilson, 1995/1986, applied to the field of metaphor research in e.g., Tendahl and Gibbs, 2006). The deployment of the term relevance in a metaphor research study is thus coincidental.

¹⁸⁹ The term denotes the respondents' perception of metaphor as easy or difficult to understand. Its use thus coincides with, but is different from conceptualist definitions in respect to the divide between primary and complex metaphors (Grady, 1997).

difficulty with which the audience access the meaning of individual metaphors in the research sample. Novelty was here defined as deviation from the respondent's expectations, and rather than being based simply on lexical or semantic criteria, it was seen as applied to a metaphor in context.

RQ 7.1a/b Is the use of positioning metaphor in the context of a self-branding 60-sec speech perceived as having a positive impact on message persuasion and retention?

The findings of the current study imply that positioning metaphor has significant potential to influence the persuasiveness and perceived memorability of the promotional message in which the metaphor is enveloped. The findings indicated that metaphor had a positive impact on persuasiveness in 46% of the cases, while no effect was observed in 31% of the cases. In 15% of the cases, the outcome was marginally negative, while in 8% the use of metaphor was seen as detrimental to the persuasiveness and credibility of the speaker and his message. Positioning metaphors were also largely seen as having a positive effect on the memorability of the promotional message, with the results indicating that metaphor had been viewed as positively influencing message retention in 61% of the cases.

RQ 7.2a/b Which of the studied factors is potentially the most effective predictor of persuasiveness and memorability in 60-second speeches?

In respect to the variables researched in this study for their potential to affect persuasiveness and memorability, the results of correlational analysis indicate that the impact on both measures is maximized if the metaphor is highly contextually relevant, and if it is comprehensible while high on perceived novelty. Contextual relevance appeared to be the greatest predictor of metaphor effectiveness, and the hypothesized relationship seemed to be particularly strong between metaphor relevance and its effect on persuasion.

The metaphors that were viewed as producing a clear and specific link to the promoted business or business competence were viewed as more relevant and were thus better appreciated than highly generic equivalents that did not clearly individuate the profession. In this respect, it is believed that narrative contextualization and metaphor extendedness might be important factors in improving perceived metaphor relevance and consequently affecting persuasion.

Lack of novelty has been identified in this study as a potential limiting factor in that the cases of minimal novelty, in which metaphors were perceived as corporate clichés, generated highly negative responses and were viewed as having a detrimental effect on both persuasiveness and memorability. In respect to metaphor complexity, no correlation was found between complexity and perceptions of either persuasion or memorability.

Other supplementary or confounding factors that emerged from the study, apart from the aforementioned interplay between contextual relevance, metaphor extension, and narrative contextualization, involved the interplay between complexity and comprehension, and the relationship between complexity and novelty. In accord with previous research, this study has identified metaphor comprehension as a confounding factor that may significantly limit message appreciation. In respect to the interplay between novelty and the complexity of metaphor, a strong and significant positive relationship was confirmed between the two variables.

Like in most of the previous research, retention and persuasion measures were replaced by the proxies of perceived memorability and persuasiveness. This fact somewhat constrains the potential of retention and persuasion findings made in this study. Further research that

directly measures metaphor effect on these phenomena is required to further establish the hypothesized positive relationship between persuasion and retention, as well as the positive relationships between contextual relevance, novelty, recall and persuasion.

Future research, both within and outside the business networking context of the 60-second rhetoric, should also involve a wider range of potential factors and deploy a combination of robust quantitative and qualitative analyses. A further study could assess a set of variables that emerged in this study a-posteriori, i.e. narrative contextualization, metaphor extendedness, the number of metaphors, and their position within the message, as influences on both persuasion and message recall.

8.3 Recommendations for practice

The 60-second networking speech serves as the major entry point in establishing awareness of the core business activities the professional is engaged in, initially answering the question of competence, and determining how quickly the member can enter an established contact sphere, or create a new contact sphere. Two thirds of the members in the studied groups did not seem to leverage the full informational and persuasive potential of the self-branding 60-second speech: they either recycled their generic speech, delivering it with minimal or no variation; or otherwise employed ineffective management of the discourse strategies available to them, specifically narrative and metaphor. The following recommendations that have emerged from this study may improve current practice.

This thesis seems to suggest that competence statements lie at the core of the networking narrative since competence-communicating stories represented 88% of all narratives in this

context. While competence appears to be the central professional identity dimension communicated via narrative, it is advised that competence should not be constructed at the expense of the other dimensions of professional identity. The data underlying this study indicate that the critical elements of goodwill and trust tend to be undermined when competence constructions showcase the lack of intellect or professional ability of the client involved in the story to contrast with the narrator's competence.

The problem-solution pattern emerged from the data as a central structuring mechanism, present in 82% of the stories. The following generic structure, including detail and examples, may thus be adopted as a template in training material for network participants:

- d) *Competence defined in a general scenario*
- e) *Competence evidenced in a specific scenario:*
 - a. Situation
 - b. Problem/+ Problem evaluation
 - c. Solution
 - d. Evaluation
- f) *Competence reinforced in a general scenario/Coda*

It is recommended that in the problem-solution pattern which typically structures the competence statement, the solution phase is explicitly and vividly communicated with relevant detail. The findings seem to suggest that statements in which competence is merely alluded to, or implied through a problem scenario, do not substantially raise the level of general awareness of what the person does or can do. In contrast to other

promotional contexts, such as print and TV advertising (cf. Benwell & Stokoe, 2006), assertion might in this context be more powerful than implication and pre-supposition.

Although communicating the solution implicitly allows the speaker to make a fast transition from a specific experience involving an individual client to directly involving the audience and their contacts, an explicit solution, i.e. a clearly-defined competence, might be more effective in terms of educating the co-members vis-a-vis the speaker's core business activities and desired clientele, as well as in raising the speaker's profile.

Likewise, it is recommended that the competence statement includes a problem evaluation, in which, through gauging the problem consequences for the troubled client, the speaker conveys the sense of immediate need, pain and/or distress. Equally, the presence of a solution evaluation conveying positive emotive implications for the client may enhance the persuasive potential of the competence statement.

The study has found that 60% of competence tales were delivered by people whose service portfolio is unclear, the profession is intangible, involves high risk for the client, and/or has a controversial status. It seems that competence tales may be the most effective credibility-constructing linguistic resource to help establish these members within the group. Thus, the professions that might reap particular benefit from CT deployment in the process of self-branding appear to be the insurance industry, financial services, unconventional medicine and general training in personal and professional development.

In regard to metaphor use, as in other promotional contexts (e.g., Dillard & Shen, 2013), metaphor has been judged to increase the persuasion potential of the 60-second speech. In order to enhance persuasion via metaphor use, it is advisable that the speakers use

contextually relevant metaphors that are also perceived as relatively novel in the given context, while not overly complex, i.e. comprehensible.

Speakers are recommended to use relevant and specific metaphors that produce a clear and strong link to the promoted business. These were identified in the study as being significantly more persuasive and memorable than generic metaphors that did not clearly individuate the profession. The findings also seem to suggest that the speaker may benefit from the use of contextualizing narrative and metaphor extension, using a core underlying metaphor to structure the whole 60-second speech.

The specific context of use, and the particular combination of a largely conventional metaphor with other resources¹⁹⁰ produces the desired creative/original effect and forges a strong contextual link to the business. In contrast to the above examples, creative use of an entrenched metaphor/idiomatic phrase tends to be appreciated, e.g. the wordplay involving the use of *let you down* in the literal, rather than the entrenched metaphorical sense, in a tag line of funeral service: '*We are the last ones to let you down.*'¹⁹¹

Metaphor is an identity construction resource that is complementary to narrative, and the two strategies can be used in conjunction, as evidenced by the narrative data in chapters 3-5.¹⁹² In 25% of competence tales, entrenched metaphor is deployed to structure the competence claim. Conventional metaphor provides the theme to the narrative, lying at the core of the positioning competence claim, while narrative brings the competence alive, supplying the context in detail, communicating emotion and evidence.

¹⁹⁰ In accord with previous studies in other promotional contexts, the data seem to suggest that the use of deliberate metaphor is most effective if combined with narrative and also with schemes and other tropes.

¹⁹¹ The printer's tag line opening this thesis serves as another example involving literal use, polysemy and reference to a background metaphor.

¹⁹² In roughly 25% of the narrative data, entrenched metaphor is deployed to structure the competence claim.

It is suggested that the potential of the 60-second resource could be significantly increased, if the self-branding speech was complemented by a similarly minimalist and cost-effective online presence. It appears that members might increase their referrability by uploading their generic 60-second speech into a shared digital space, or, alternatively, present its textual form, entering a brief communication of their core business activities, their portfolio, and target clientele into a dynamic online database.

In synchrony with updating their offline 60-second speech, key aspects of the respective businesses, such as target customers, could be updated online on a regular basis. It appears that blanket implementation of such measures might reduce the length of the initial period of trust-building, resulting in a faster return on investment for the new member. Further benefits would include increased retention of the central messages, resulting in higher referrability of both new and established members, and more effective establishment of contact spheres.

REFERENCES

- Abrams, D. and Hogg, M. A. (1990). Social identification, self categorization and social influence. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 1, 195-228.
- Alessandra, T., Misner, I., Lyons, D. (2012). Room full of referrals...and how to network for them. *Master the art of networking*. Paradigm Publishing USA.
- Anderson, A. R. and Warren, L. (2011). The entrepreneur as hero and jester: Enacting the entrepreneurial discourse. *International Small Business Journal*, 29(6), 589-609.
- Andeweg, Bas., & Jong, Jaap. de (2004). *De eerste minuten. Attentum, docilem en benevolum in d einleiding van toespraken*. Dissertation Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen. Den Haag: Sdu Uitgevers.
- Angouri, J. and Marra, M. (2011). 'Ok one last thing for today then': Constructing corporate identities in meeting talk. In Angouri, J. and Marra, M., (eds.). *Constructing Identities at Work*. London: Palgrave.
- Antaki, C., and Widdicombe, S. (1998). *Identities in talk*. London: Sage.
- Arndt, J. (1967). Role of product-related conversations in the diffusion of a new product. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 4 (1), 91-295.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). *The dialogic imagination*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Bakhtin, M. (1986). *Speech genres and other late essays*. Austin: University of Texas Press Slavic Series (8).
- Balter, D. and Butman, J. (2006). *The new art of word-of-mouth marketing*. [Online] Grapevine. Available from: <http://www.diesel-ebooks.com> [Accessed: 20 June 2009]
- Bamberg, M. (2004). Talk, small stories, and adolescent identities. *Human Development*, 47, 366-369.
- Bamberg, M. (2006). Stories: Big or small. Why do we care? *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 139-147.
- Bamberg, M. (2008a). Twice-told tales: Small story analysis and the process of identity formation. In Sugiman, T. et al. (eds.) *Meaning in action*. New York: Springer.
- Bamberg, M. (2008b). *Agency, master narrative, positioning*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.clarku.edu/~mbamberg/Encyclopedia_Entries.htm [Accessed 05 January 2010]
- Bamberg, M. (2009). Sequencing events in time or sequencing events in storytelling. From cognition to discourse – with frogs paving the way. In Guo, J. et. al. (eds.)

- Crosslinguistic approaches to the psychology of language*. New York: Taylor and Francis group.
- Bamberg, M. (2012). Narrative analysis. In H. Cooper (eds.). *APA handbook of research methods in psychology*. Washington, DC: APA Press.
- Bamberg, M., and Georgakopolou, A. (2008). Small stories as a new perspective in narrative and identity analysis. *Text & Talk*, 28(3), 377-396.
- Bamberg, M., De Fina, A., and Schiffrin, D. (2011). Discourse and identity construction. In Schwartz, S., Luyckx, K. & Vignoles, V. (eds.). *Handbook of identity theory and research*. Berlin/New York: Springer Verlag.
- Bamford, J. (2008). Telling a convincing story: a corpus assisted analysis of business presentations. In A. Martelli, V. Pulcini (Eds.), *Investigating English with corpora. Studies in Honour of Maria Teresa Prat*. Monza: Polimetrica International Scientific Publisher.
- Banfield, S. R. et al. (2006). The Effect of teacher misbehaviors on teacher credibility and affect for the teacher. *Communication Education*, 55(1), 63-72.
- Bargiela-Chiappini, F. (2011). Foreword. In Angouri, J. and Marra, M., (eds.). *Constructing identities at work*. London: Palgrave.
- BBC Birmingham (2005). *Tornado hits Birmingham*. [Online]. Available from: http://www.bbc.co.uk/birmingham/content/articles/2005/07/28/tornado_feature.shtml [Accessed 20 February 2010]
- Bell, S. E. (2006). Becoming a mother after DES: intensive mothering in spite of it all. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Benwell, B. and Stokoe, E. (2006). *Discourse and identity*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Berger, J. A. and Iyengar, R. (2012). How interest shapes word of mouth over different channels. Available from: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2013141> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2013141> [Accessed: 19th June 2013]. Zurawicki, Leon (2010) *Neuromarketing: Exploring the Brain of the Consumer*. New York: Springer-Verlag.
- Berk-Seligson, S. (2009). *Coerced confessions. The discourse of bilingual police interrogations*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.
- Berlyne, D. (1971). *Aesthetics and psychobiology*. New York: Appleton.
- Berry, D. (2008). *Journalism, ethics and society*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd. p. 28.
- Bex, T. (1996). *Variety in written English. Texts in society: Societies in texts*. London: Routledge.

- Bhatia, V. K. (2010). Interdiscursivity in professional communication. *Discourse and Communication*, 21(1), p. 32-50.
- Blair, A. (2011). Information overload's 2300-year-old history. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Blazkova, H. (2011). Telling tales of professional competence: Narrative in 60-second business networking speeches. *Journal of Business Communication*, 48(4).
- Blazkova, H. (2012). Metaphor as an instrument of linguistic and social identity co-construction. In Herrera-Soler, H. and White, M. (eds.) *Metaphor and Mills. Figurative language in business and economics. Applications of Cognitive Linguistics*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Blommaert, J., & Slembrouck, S., (2000). Data formulation as text and context: The (aesth)etics of analysing asylum seekers' narratives. *LPI Working Papers* [Online], 2:1-37. Available from <http://bank.rug.ac.be/lpi/> [Accessed 20 October 2009]
- Blommaert, J. (2006). Applied ethnopoetics. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 181-190.
- BNI (2009). *BNI Surveys*. [Online] Available from: www.bni.com/Surveys [Accessed: 15 March 2009]
- BNI (2009). <http://www.bni.com> [Accessed 25 March 2009]
- BNI Europe (2009). <http://www.bni-europe.com/uk/what-bni-means.php> [Accessed 30 March 2009]
- BNI official website. About Us/Why join? [Online] <http://www.bni.com/AboutUs/WhyJoin/tabid/56/Default.aspx>. [Accessed September 1st 2008]
- BNI Statistics (2015). <http://www.illinoisbni.com/eventdetails.php?eventId=76936> [Accessed 25 July 2015]
- Bowdle, B. F., and Gentner, D. (2005). The career of metaphor. *Psychological Review*, 112(1), 193-216.
- Branigan, H.P., Pickering, M.J., & Cleland, A.A. (2000). Syntactic coordination in dialogue. *Cognition*, 75, 13-25.
- Brewer, M. B., & Gardner, W. (1996). Who is this "we"? Levels of collective identity and self representations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 71(7), 83-93.
- Brewer, S. (2001). *BNI Study*. MA Dissertation. Florida: Saint Thomas University.
- Brockmeier, J and Carbaugh, A. (2001). *Narrative and identity: Studies in autobiography, self and culture*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

- Brown, J. J., & Reingen, P. H. (1987). Social ties and word-of-mouth referral behaviour. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 14, 350-362. [Online] Available from: Chicago Journals. <http://www.journals.uchicago.edu> [Accessed: 30 March 2009]
- Bruner, J. (1990). *Acts of meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bruner, J. (2003). Self-making narratives. In: Fivush, R. and Haden, C.A. (eds.), *Autobiographical memory and the construction of a narrative self*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Bruner, J. S. (1991). The narrative construction of reality. *Critical Inquiry*, 18, 1-21.
- Bruner, J.S. (1986). *Actual minds, possible worlds*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Bucholtz, M and Hall, K. (2005). Identity and interaction: a sociocultural linguistic approach. *Discourse Studies*, 7, 585-614.
- Buttle, F. A. (1998). Word of mouth: Understanding and managing referral marketing. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 6, 241-254. [Online] Available from: <http://www.citeulike.org> [Accessed 4 April 2009]
- Cameron, L. (2003). *Metaphor in educational discourse*. London: Continuum.
- Cameron, L. (2007). Patterns of metaphor use in reconciliation talk. *Discourse and Society*, 18, 197-222.
- Cameron, L. (2008). Metaphor shifting in the dynamics of talk. In Zannoto, M. S., Cameron L., & Cavalcanti, M. C. (eds.) *Confronting metaphor in use: an applied linguistic approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing.
- Cameron, L., & Deignan, A. (2006). The emergence of metaphor in discourse. *Applied Linguistics*, 27(4), 671-690.
- Cameron, L. (2009). The discourse dynamics approach to metaphor and metaphor-led discourse analysis. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 24(2). p. 63-89.
- Cameron, L., & Maslen, R. (2010). *Metaphor analysis: Research practice in applied linguistics, social sciences and the humanities*. *Studies in Applied Linguistics*. London: Equinox.
- Cameron, L., Pelosi, A., Moraes, F., & Heloisa, P. (2014). Metaphorizing violence in the UK and Brazil: a contrastive discourse dynamics study. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 29(1). 23-43.
- Carl, W. J. (2006). What's all the buzz about: Everyday communication and the relational basis of word-of-mouth and buzz marketing practices. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19 (4), 601-634.

- Carl, W. J. (2008). The role of disclosure in organized word-of-mouth marketing programs. *Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14(3), 225-241. [Online] Available from: <http://www.citeulike.org> [Accessed 12 March 2009]
- Carston, R. (2002). *Thoughts and utterances: The pragmatics of explicit communication*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Carter, M., & McCarthy, M. (2004). Talking, Creating: Interactional Language, Creativity, and Context. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 25(4), 162-188.
- Carter, R. (2004). *Language and common talk: The art of creativity*. London: Routledge.
- Casciaro, T., & Sousa Lobo, M. (2005). Competent jerks, lovable fools and the formation of social networks. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Charles, M. (1994). *Layered negotiations in business: Interdependencies between discourse and the business relationship*. Unpublished PHD Thesis. UK: University of Birmingham.
- Charlett, D., Garland, R. & Marr, N. (1995). How damaging is negative word of mouth? *Marketing Bulletin*, 6, 42-50. [Online] Available from: www.emeraldinsight.com [Accessed 2 June 2009]
- Charteris-Black, J. (2005). Politicians and rhetoric. *The persuasive power of metaphor*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Chaston, I. (2014). *Small Business Marketing*. 2nd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Cheung, C. M. K., Thadani, D. R. (2012). The impact of electronic word-of mouth communication: A literature analysis and integrative model. *Decision Support Systems*, 54(1), 461-470.
- Child, J. (2005). *Organization: contemporary principles and practice*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Chouliaraki, L. and Fairclough, N. (1999). Discourse in late modernity: Rethinking Critical Discourse Analysis. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Christopher, A. A. (2013). Rhetorical strategies in advertising: The rise and fall pattern. *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2(4), 162-188.
- Claridge, C. (2011). *Hyperbole in English. A corpus-based study of exaggeration*. New York: CUP.
- Clarke, C. A., Brown, A. D., & Hailey, V. H. (2009). Working identities? Antagonistic Discursive Resources and Managerial Identity. *Human Relations*, 62(3), 323-352.
- Clemons, R. (2009). *Why advertising is failing on the Internet*. [Online] Available from: techcrunch.com [Accessed 3 July 2009]

- Cole, J. G., & McCroskey, J. C. (2003). The association of perceived communication apprehension, shyness, and verbal aggression with perceptions of source credibility and affect in organizational and interpersonal contexts. *Communication Quarterly*, 51, 101-110.
- Connelly, F. M. & Clandinin, D. J. (1999). *Shaping a professional identity: stories of educational practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Cornelissen, J. (2006). Metaphor and the dynamics of knowledge in organization theory: A case study of the organizational identity metaphor. *Journal of Management Studies*, 43 (4), 684-709.
- Cornelissen, J. P. (2002). On the organizational identity metaphor. *British Journal of Management*, 13, 259-268.
- Cortazzi, M. (2001). Narrative analysis in ethnography. In Atkinson, R., et al. (eds.) *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.
- Corts, D.P., & Meyers, K. (2002). Conceptual clusters in figurative language production. *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*, 31(4), 391- 408.
- Corts, D.P., & Pollio, H. R. (1999). Spontaneous production of figurative language and gesture in college lectures. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 14(2), 81-100.
- Coulmas, F. (1986). Reported speech: Some general issues. In F. Coulmas, ed., *Direct and Indirect Speech*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Coulthard, M., & Johnson, A. eds (2010). *Routledge handbook of Forensic Linguistics*. Oxford: Routledge.
- Davies, B., & Harré, R. (1990). Positioning: The discursive production of selves. *Journal for the Theory of Social Behavior*, 20, 43-63.
- DeFina, A. (2003). Crossing borders: Time, space and disorientation in narrative. *Narrative Inquiry*, 13(2), 367-392.
- DeFina, A., Schiffrin, D., & Bamberg, M. (2007). *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Deetz, S. (1992). *Democracy in an age of corporate colonization: Developments in communication and the politics of everyday life*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Dellarocas, C., Fan, M. & Wood, C. (2004). Self-Interest, reciprocity, and participation in online reputation systems. *Center for e-Business@MIT*. [Online] Available from: <http://ebusiness.mit.edu> [Accessed 12 March 2009]
- Dent, M., & Whitehead, S. (2003). *Managing professional identities. Knowledge, performativity and the new professional*. Routledge Studies in Business Organizations and Networks. London: Routledge.

- Deignan, A., Littlemore, J., & Semino, E. (2013). *Figurative language, genre and register*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Diaz, C. (2010). Building brand loyalty via social media marketing. *Marketing 2.0 Conference*, Paris.
- Dichter, E. (1966). How word-of-mouth advertising works. *Harvard Business Review*, 44(6), 147-160.
- Dijksterhuis, A., & Bargh, J.A. (2001). The perception-behavior expressway: Automatic effects of social perception on social behavior. *Advances in experimental social psychology*, 33, 1-40.
- Dillard, J. P., & Shen, L. (Eds.) (2013). *The persuasion handbook: Developments in theory and practice*, 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dillard, J. P., Shen, L., & Vail, R. G. (2007). Does perceived message effectiveness cause persuasion or vice versa? 17 consistent answers. *Human Communication Research*, 33, 467-488.
- Douwe, B., Meijer, P. C. & Verloop, N. (2004). Reconsidering research on teachers' professional identity. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 20, 107-128.
- Drew, P., & Heritage, J. (1992). *Talk at Work: Interaction in Institutional Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Dyer, J., & Keller-Cohen, D. (2000). The Discursive Construction of Professional Self through Narratives of Personal Experience. *Discourse Studies*, 2(3), 283-304.
- East, R., Vanhuele, M., & Wright, M (2008). *Consumer Behaviour: Applications in Marketing*. London: Sage.
- Edwards, D. (1997). Structure and function in the analysis of everyday narratives. *Journal of Narrative Life and History*, 7 (1-4), 139-46.
- Edwards, D., & Stokoe, E.H. (2004). Discursive psychology, focus group interviews, and participants' categories. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 22, 499-507.
- Engel, J., Kegerreis, R., & Blackwell, R. (1969). Word of mouth communication by the innovator. *Journal of Marketing*, 33, 15-19.
- Erhard, N. (2007). *Moral Habitat: Ethos and Agency for the Sake of Earth*. New York: State University of New York Press.
- Fairclough, N (1992). *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Fasulo, A., & Zuccermaglio, C. (2008). Narratives in the workplace: Facts, fictions and canonicity. *Text and Talk*, 28 (3), 351-376.

- Fay, B., (2015). Let's rethink how advertising works. [Online] Available from: <http://createsend.com/t/j-33CA5287CE344AEB>. [Accessed 20th July 2015]
- Feick, L., Price, L.L., & Higie, R.A. (1986). People who use people: the other side of opinion leadership. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 13(3), 301-305.
- Feldman, S.P., & Spencer, M.C., (1965). The effect of personal influence in the selection of consumer services. *Marketing and Economic Development*.
- File, K.M., Cermak, D.S.P., & Prince, R.A. (1994). Word-of-mouth effects in professional services buyer behaviour. *The Service Industries Journal*, 14(3), 301.
- Fiske, S. T. (2002). Five core social motives, plus or minus five. In Spencer, S.J., Fein, S. and Zanna, M.P. (eds.) *Motivated social perception: The Ontario Symposium Vol. 9.*, Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Fiske, S. T. and Taylor, S. E. (1991). *Social cognition* (2nd edition). New York: Mc Graw and Hill.
- Forceville, C. (2005). Addressing an audience: time, place, and genre in Peter Van Straaten's calendar cartoons. *Humor*, 18(3), 247-278.
- Forceville, C. (2009). Relevanz und Prägnanz: Kunst als Kommunikation (Martina Plümacher, Trans.). *Zeitschrift für Semiotik*, 31(1-2), 31-63.
- Fraser, B. (2009). Topic Orientation Markers. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(5), p. 892-898.
- Freeman, M. (2006). Life "on holiday"? In defense of big stories. *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), 131-138.
- Friedman, S., & Srinivas, V. (2013). *Meeting the retirement challenge: New approaches and solutions for the financial services industry*. Deloitte Center for Financial Services.
- Galatolo, R. (2007). Active voicing in court. In Holt, E. and Clift, R. (eds.). *Reporting talk: Reported speech in interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gatignon, H. & Robertson, T.S. (1986). An exchange theory model of interpersonal communication. In Lutz, R.J. (ed.) *Advances in Consumer Research. Association for Consumer Research*.
- Geanakopulos, J., Pearce, D. & Stacchetti, E. (1989). Psychological games and sequential rationality. *Games and Economic Behavior*. (1), p. 60-79.
- Gentner, D. (1982). Are scientific analogies metaphors? In Miall, D. (ed.) *Metaphor: Problems and perspectives*. Brighton, UK: Harvester Press, p. 106-132.
- Gentner, D. (1989). The mechanisms of analogical learning. In Vosniadou, S. and Ortony, A. (eds.) *Similarity and analogical reasoning*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Gentner, D., & Bowdle, B. F. (2001). Convention, form and figurative language processing. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 16(3&4).
- Georgakopolou, A. (2002). Narrative and identity management: Discourse and social identities in a tale of tomorrow. *Research on Language and Social Interaction*, 35 (40), p. 427-451.
- Georgakopolou, A. (2003). Plotting the “right place” and the “right time”. Place and time as interactional resources in narrative. *Narrative Inquiry*, 13(2), 413-432.
- Georgakopolou, A. (2006). Thinking big with small stories in narrative and identity analysis, *Narrative Inquiry*, 16(1), p. 122-30.
- Gibbs, R. (2006). *Embodiment and cognitive science*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R., & Cameron, L. (2008). The social-cognitive dynamics of metaphor performance. *Cognitive System Research*, 9., 64-75.
- Gibbs, R. W. (1994). *The poetics of mind: Figurative thought, language, and understanding*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gibbs, R. W. (2002). A new look at literal meaning in understanding what speakers say and implicate. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 34, 457-486.
- Gibbs, R., & Tendahl, M. (2006). Cognitive effort and effects in metaphor comprehension: relevance theory and psycholinguistics. *Mind and Language*, 21, 379-403.
- Giles, H., Coupland, N., & Coupland, J. (1992). Accommodation theory: Communication, context and consequences. In Giles, H. Coupland, J. and Coupland, N. (eds.). *Contexts of accommodation*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Gioia, D.A., Schultz, M., & Corley, K. G. (2002). On celebrating the organizational identity metaphor: a rejoinder to Cornelissen. *British Journal of Management*, 13, 269-275.
- Giora, R. (2003). *On our mind: Salience, context and figurative language*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Giora, R. (2008). Is metaphor unique? In Gibbs, R. (ed.) *The Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Glucksberg, S. (2008). How metaphors create categories – quickly. In Gibbs, R. (ed.) *Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Glucksberg, S., & Keysar, B. (1990). Understanding metaphorical comparisons: Beyond similarity. *Psychological Review*. 97. p. 3-18.
- Godes, D., & Mayzlin D. (2004). Using online conversations to study WOM communication. *Marketing Science*, 23(4)., 545-60.
- Goffman, E. (1981). *Forms of talk*. Oxford, UK: Basil Blackwell.

- Gombeski, W.R. (1988). Evaluating promotional strategy effectiveness for a health care organization. *Journal of Business Research*. 17. p, 81-90.
- Goodman, J. (1999). Basic facts on customer complaint behavior and the impact of service on the bottom line. *Competitive Advantage*. (June):1-5. [Online] Available from: www.newtoncomputing.com/zips/basicfacts.pdf [Accessed 4 June 2009]
- Goss, D. (2015). *Small business and society*. New York: Routledge.
- Grady, J. (2010a). Metaphor in communicating public interest issues. *8th International Conference on Researching and Applying Metaphor*. VU University Amsterdam.
- Grady, J. (2010b). How metaphors can save the world. *8th International Conference on Researching and Applying Metaphor*. VU University Amsterdam.
- Graham, E. (2009). Measure of source credibility. Rubin, R. B. et al. (eds). *Communication Research Measures II: A Sourcebook*. *Routledge Communication Series*. New York: Routledge.
- Granovetter, M. (1973). The strength of weak ties. *American Journal of Sociology*, 78(6), 1360-1380.
- Grant, F., & Hogg, M. A. (2012). Self-uncertainty, social identity prominence and group identification. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 48, 538-542.
- Grassi (1976/1980). *Rhetoric as philosophy: the Humanist tradition*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP.
- Greenwald, A.G. (1968). Cognitive learning, cognitive responses to persuasion and attitude change. *Psychological Foundations of Attitudes*. New York. Academic Press.
- Grice, H. P. (1975). Logic and conversation. In: Cole, P. and Morgan, J. (eds.) *Syntax and Semantics, Vol. 3: Speech Acts*. New York: Academic Press.
- Gunthner, S. (1999). Polyphony and the 'layering of voices' in reported dialogues: An analysis of the use of prosodic devices in everyday reported speech. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 31, 685 -708.
- Halliday, M.A. K. & Matthiessen, C. (2013). *An introduction to functional grammar* (3rd ed.). Oxon: Routledge.
- Harre, R. & Moghaddam, F. (2003). *The self and others: Positioning individuals and groups in personal, political and cultural contexts*. Westport, CT: Praeger.
- Hart, C. W. L., Heskett, J. L., & Sasser, W.E. (1990). The profitable art of service recovery. *Harvard Business Review*, 68, 148-156. [Online] Available from: hbr.harvardbusiness.org/1990/07/the-profitable-art-of-service-recovery/ar/1 [Accessed 13 June 2009]

- Hasan, R. (1985). The structure of a text. In M.A.K. Halliday and R. Hasan, *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-Semiotic Perspective*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haugtvedt, C. P., & Wegener, D. T. (1994). Message order effects in persuasion: An attitude strength perspective. *The Journal of Consumer Research*, 21(1), 205-218.
- Heatherington, T. (2014). Social Networking Beyond BNI Meetings. The importance of integrating online social marketing. [Online] Available from: <http://successnet.czcommunity.com/art-of-networking/networking-beyond-the-breakfast-table/6964/>.
- Hennig-Thurau, T. (2004). Electronic word-of-mouth via consumer-opinion platforms: What motivates consumers to articulate themselves on the Internet? *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 18, 38-52. [Online] Available from: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com> [Accessed 21 June 2009]
- Herzberg, F., Mausner, B., & Bloch- Snyderman, B., (1959/1993). *The motivation to work*. New Brunswick, New Jersey.
- Hickmann, M. (1993). The boundaries of reported speech in narrative discourse: Some developmental aspects. In Lucy, J. (ed.). *Reflexive Language: Reported Speech and Metapragmatics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 63-90.
- Hoey, M. (1983). *On the surface of discourse*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Hogg, M. A. (2006). Social identity theory. In Burke, P. J. (ed.) *Contemporary social psychological theories*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Hogg, M. A. (2010). Influence and leadership. In Fiske, S.T., Gilbert, D.T. and Lindzey, G. (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology*. 5th edition. New York: Wiley.
- Hogg, M. A. and Abrams, D. (eds.) (1993). *Group motivation: Social psychological perspectives*. London: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Hogg, M. A., & Cooper, J. (Eds.) (2007). *The Sage handbook of social psychology: concise student edition*. London: Sage.
- Hogg, M. A., Terry, D. J., & White, K. M. (1995). A tale of two theories: A critical comparison of identity theory with social identity theory. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. 58. p. 255-269.
- Hogg, M.A., Terry, D.J. (2000). Social identity and self-categorization processes in organizational contexts. *Academy of Management Review*. 25(1). 121-140.
- Holmes (2006a). Workplace narrative, professional identity and relational practice. In De Fina, A., Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.) *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Holmes (2006b). *Gendered talk at work: constructing gender identity through workplace discourse*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Holmes, J. (2000). Doing collegiality and and keeping control at work: Small talk in governments departments. In Coupland, J. (eds.) *Small Talk*. London: Longman.
- Holmes, J. (2005). Story-telling at work: a complex discursive resource for integrating personal, professional and social identities. *Discourse Studies*, 7. p. 671-700. [Online] Available from: <http://dis.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/7/6/671> [Accessed 28 January 2010]
- Holmes, J. (2006). Workplace narratives, professional identity and relational practice. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Holmes, J., Stubbe, M., & Vine, B. (1999). Constructing Professional Identity: “Doing Power” in Policy Units. In Sarangi, S. and Roberts, C. (eds.) *Talk, Work and Institutional Order. Discourse in Medical, Mediation and Management Settings*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Holt, E., & Clift, R. (2007). *Reporting Talk: Reported speech in interaction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Huck, S., W. (2007). *Reading statistics and research (5th Edition)*. London: Allyn and Bacon.
- Huhmann, B. A, & Albinsson, P. (2012). Does rhetoric impact advertising eeffectiveness with liking controlled? *European Journal of Marketing*, (46) 11/12, 1476 -1500.
- Hunston, S. & Francis, G. (2001). *Pattern grammar: a corpus-driven approach to the lexical grammar of English*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Hymes, D. (1996). *Ethnography, linguistics, narrative inequality: Toward an understanding of voice*. London: Taylor and Francis.
- Hymes, D. (2003). *Now I know only so much: essays in ethnopoetics*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Ibarra, H. (1999). Provisional selves: Experimenting with image and identity in professional adaptation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*. 44. p. 764-91.
- Jaffe, F. (1988). Metaphors and memory: A study in persuasion. *Doctoral Dissertation, Northwestern University, 1988. Dissertation Abstracts International*, 49, 2311.
- Jakobson, R. (1960). Closing statements: Linguistics and poetics. In Sebeok, T.A. (ed.) *Style in Language*. Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Johnson, G. C. (2006). The discursive construction of teacher identities in research interview. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Johnson, G., Scholes, K. , & Whittington R. (2005). *Exploring corporate strategy*. 7th edition, Prentice Hall.
- Karmarkar, U. R. (2011). Note on neuromarketing. *Harvard Business Review*.
- Kast, B. (2008). *iKeynote-Representation, rhetoric and visual communication by Steve Jobs in his keynote at Macworld*. University of Salzburg, Department of History.
- Katz, E., & Lazarsfeld, P. F. (1955). *Personal influence: The part played by people in the flow of mass communication*. Glencoe. IL: Free Press.
- Keller Fay TalkTrack, (2015). *Cracking the code on the value of social media and word of mouth marketing*. [Online] Available from: <http://createsend.com/t/j-B04D55CF399CA152>. [Accessed 20th July 2015]
- KellerFay TalkTrack® (2014a). *Debunking the myth on negative WOM*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.kellerfay.com/news/newsletter-archive/> [Accessed: 6th May 2015].
- KellerFay TalkTrack® (2014b). *The gender gap in consumer conversations*. [Online] Available from: <http://createsend.com/t/j-563CADCC4AE217C7> [Accessed 20th July 2015]
- Keller, K. L. (2000). The brand report card. *Harvard Business Review*. 78, 147-154.
- Keller, K. L.(2003). Brand synthesis: The multidimensionality of consumer knowledge. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 29, 595-600.
- Kempton, W. (1980). The rhythmic basis of interactional microsynchrony. In Ritchie Kay, M. (ed.) *The relationship of verbal and nonverbal communication*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Kerfoot, D. (2003). Managing the ‘professional’ man. In Dent, M. and Whitehead, S. (eds.) *Managing professional identities. Knowledge, performativity and the new professional*. Routledge Studies in Business Organizations and Networks. London: Routledge.
- Kiesling, S. (2006). Hegemonic identity-making in narrative. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Kimmel, A.J., & Kitchen, P.J. (2014). WOM and social media: Presaging future directions for research and practice. *Journal of Marketing Communications, Special Issue Word of Mouth and Social Media*, 20 (1-2).
- Koester, A. (2000). The role of idioms in negotiating workplace encounters. In Trappes-Lomax, H. (ed.), *Changes in Applied Linguistics*. BAAL/Clevedon: Multilingual Matters. p. 169-183.
- Koester, A. (2006) *Investigating Workplace Discourse*. London: Routledge.

- Koller, V. (2011). Hard-working, team-oriented individuals': Constructing professional identities in corporate mission statements. In Angouri, J. & Marra, M. (eds.). *Constructing Identities at Work*. Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Koller, V. (2009). Brand images: multimodal metaphor in corporate branding messages. In Forceville, Ch. & Urios-Aparisi, E. (Eds.), *Multimodal metaphor. Applications of Cognitive Linguistics (11)*. Berlin: De Gruyter.
- Korobov, N. (2011). Gendering desire in speed-dating interactions. *Discourse Studies*, 13(4), 461-485.
- Kotler, P. (1967). *Marketing management: analysis, planning and control*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kotler, P. and Bloom, P. H. (1984). *Marketing Professional Services*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Kövecses, Z. (2002). *Metaphor: A practical introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Krennmayr, T. (2011). *Metaphors in Newspapers*. LOT Dissertation Series, vol. 276. Utrecht.
- Krennmayr, T., Bowdle, B., Mulder, & Steen, G.J., (2014). Economic competition is like auto racing: building metaphorical schemas when reading text. *Metaphor Soc. World*, 4 (1), 65-89.
- Kristeva, J. (1980). *Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Labov, W. (1972). *Language in the inner city*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Labov, W., & Fanshel, D. (1977). *Therapeutic discourse*. New York: Academic Press.
- Labov, W., & Waletzky, J. (1997/1967). Narrative analysis: Oral versions of personal experience. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, 3-39.
- Lakoff, G. (1993). The contemporary theory of metaphor. In Ortony, A. (ed.). *Metaphor and Thought* (2nd ed.) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lakoff, G., & Johnson, M. (2003/1980). *Metaphors we live by*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Laskey, H. A., Day, E., & Crask, M. R. (1989). Typology of main message strategies for television commercials. *Journal of Advertising*, 18(1), 36-41.
- Lehtonen, M. (2011). Communicating competence through PechaKucha presentations. *Journal of Business Communication*. Volume 48(4).
- Liberman, M., & Pullum, G. K. (2006). *Far from the madding gerund and other dispatches from language log*. Wilsonville, OR: William, James and Co.

- Lindström, M. (2010). *Buyology: Truth and lies about why we buy*. New York: Broadway Books.
- Littlemore, J. (2012). The use of verbal and gestural metaphor in explanations of management theory. In Herrera-Soler, H. and White, M. (eds.) *Metaphor and Mills. Figurative language in business and economics. Applications of Cognitive Linguistics*. Berlin/Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
- Littlemore, J., & Low, G. (2006). *Figurative thinking and foreign language learning*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Litvin, S. W., Goldsmith, R. E., & Pan, B. (2008). Electronic word-of-mouth in hospitality and tourism management. *Tourism Management*, 29(3), 458-468.
- Low, G. (1999). Validating metaphor research projects. In: Low, G., and Cameron, L. (eds.) *Researching and Applying Metaphor*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Low, G. (2003). Validating metaphoric models in applied linguistics. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 18(4), 239 -254.
- Low, G., Todd, Z., Deignan, A., & Cameron, L. (2010). *Researching and applying metaphor in the real world*. Human Cognitive Processing (26). Amsterdam: John Benjamin.
- Lyotard, J. F. (1984). *The postmodern condition*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Mangham, I. L. (1996). Some consequences of taking Graham Morgan seriously. In Grant, D. and Oswick, C. (eds.) *Metaphor in Organizations*. London: Sage.
- Mangold, G. W. (1987). Use of commercial sources of information in the purchase of professional services: What the literature tells us. *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, 3(1/2), 5-17.
- Marra, M., & Holmes, J. (2004). Workplace narratives and business reports: Issues of definition. *Text*, 24(1), 59-78.
- Mattson, D., & Seidman, B. (2012). *Sandler success principles: 11 Insights that will change the way you think and sell*. Beverly Hills, CA: Pegasus Media World.
- Mautner, G. (2010). *Language and the market society. Critical reflections on discourse and dominance*. New York: Routledge.
- Mayhew, L. H. (1997). *The new public*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mayzlin, D. (2006). Promotional chat on the Internet. *Marketing Science*, 25(2), 155-163.
- McCarthy, P., Hatcher, C. (2002). *Presentation skills. The essential guide for students*. Sage Publications. Australia.

- McAdams, D. P., Josselson, R., & Lieblich, A. (2006). Introduction. In McAdams, D. P., Josselson, R. and Lieblich, A. (eds.). *Identity and Story*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (1994). *Language as Discourse*. London: Longman.
- McCarthy, M., & Carter, R. (2004). "There's million of them": Hyperbole in everyday conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36, 149-184.
- McConnell-Ginet, S. (2000). Breaking through the "Glass Ceiling": Can linguistic awareness help? In Holmes, J. (ed.) *Gendered speech in social context: Perspectives from gown to town*. Wellington: Victoria Universtiy Press.
- McCroskey, J. C. (1998). *An introduction to communication in the classroom*. Acton, MA: Tapestry Press.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Teven, J. J. (1999). Goodwill: A re-eximantion of the construct and its measurement. *Communication Monographs*, 66, 90-103.
- McCroskey, J. C., & Young, T. J. (1981). Ethos and credibility: The construct and its measurement after three decades. *The Central States Speech Journal*, 32, 24-34.
- McPherson, J.M., Smith-Lovin, L., & Cook, J. (2001). Birds of a feather: Homophily in social networks. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 27, 415-44.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (1992). On resonance: a critical pluralistic inquiry into advertising rhetoric. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19, 180-197.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (1996). Figures of rhetoric in advertising language. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 22, 424-438.
- McQuarrie, E. F., & Mick, D. G. (2003). The contribution of semiotic and rhetorical perspectives to the explanation of visual persuasion in advertising. In Scott, L. M., Batra, R. (eds.) *Persuasive Imagery, A Consumer Response Perspective*. NJ and London: Lawrence Erlbaum, Mahwah..
- Meyers, S. A. (2001). Perceived instructor credibility and verbal aggressiveness in the college classroom. *Communication Research Reports*, 18, 354-364.
- Miller, F. E. (2014). *No sweat elevator speech! How to craft your elevator speech, floor by floor, with no sweat*. St. Louis: Fred Co.
- Mio, J. S. (1996). Metaphor, politics, and persuasion. In Mio, J. S. and Katz, A. N. (eds.) *Metaphor: Implications and applications*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Mishler, E. G. (2006). Narrative and identity: the double arrow of time. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Mishler, E.G. (1999). *Storylines: Craftartists' narratives of identity*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- Misner (2010, 2012, 2014). *Personal communication*.
- Misner, I. (1993). *Business Development Networks: An Exploratory Study of Key Variables Contributing to Their Impact on Business Community*. PhD Thesis, University of Southern California.
- Misner, I. (2008). *29 Per Cent Solution: 52 Weekly Networking Success Strategies*. Austin: Greenleaf Book Group.
- Misztal, B. A. (2003). Trusting the professional: a managerial discourse for uncertain times. In Dent, M. and Whitehead, S. (eds.) *Managing Professional Identities. Knowledge, performativity and the new professional*. Routledge Studies in Business Organizations and Networks. London: Routledge.
- Moissinac, L., & Bamberg, M. (2005). "It's weird, I was so mad": Developing discursive identity defenses in conversational "Small" stories of adolescent boys. *Texas Speech Communication Journal*, 29(2), 142-156.
- Moita-Lopes, L. P. (2006). On being white, heterosexual and male in Brazilian school: multiple positionings in oral narratives. In De Fina, A. and Schiffrin, D. and Bamberg, M. (eds.). *Discourse and Identity. Studies in Interactional Sociolinguistics 23*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Moons, W. G., Mackie, D., & Garcia-Marques, T. (2009). The impact of repetition-induced familiarity on agreement with weak and strong arguments. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 96 (1), 32-44.
- Mothersbough, D. L., Huhman, B. A., & Franke, G. R. (2002). Combinatory and separative effects of rhetorical figures on consumers' effort and focus in ad processing. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 28, 589-602.
- Mulken, M. Hooft, A., & Nederstigt, U. (2014). Finding the tipping point: Visual metaphor and conceptual complexity in advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 333-343.
- Mullen, B., & Copper, C. (1994). The relation between group cohesiveness and performance: An integration. *Psychological Bulletin*, 115, 210-227.
- Murray, K. B. (1991). A test of services marketing theory: Consumer information acquisition activities. *Journal of Marketing*, 55, 10-25. [Online] Available from: www.emeraldinsight.com [Accessed 18 July 2009]
- Musolff, A. (2006). Metaphor scenarios in public discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 23-38.
- Musolff, A. (2012). The study of metaphor as part of Critical Discourse Analysis, *Critical Discourse Studies*, 9, 301-310.
- Musolff, A. (2011). Metaphor in political dialogue. *Language and Dialogue*, 1(2), 191-206.

- Norrick, N. R. (2004). Discussion note: Hyperbole, extreme case formulation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 36, 1727-1739.
- Norrick, N. R. (2005). The dark side of tellability. *Narrative Inquiry*, 15, 323-343.
- Norrick, N. R. (2009). Pragmatic markers: introduction. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(5), 863-865.
- Nyer, P. U., & Gopinath, M. (2005). Effects of complaining vs. negative word-of-mouth on subsequent changes in satisfaction: The role of public commitment. *Psychology & Marketing*, 22(12), 937-953. [Online] Available from: www.emeraldinsight.com [Accessed 12 June 2009]
- Ochs, E., & Capps, L. (2001). *Living narrative*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University press.
- O'Donnell, A. (2014). 'The contribution of networking to small firm marketing', *Journal of Small Business Management*, 52 (1), 164-187.
- Oetting, M., Niesytto, M., Sievert, J. and Dost, F. (2010). Positive word-of-mouth is more effective than negative. Because it sticks!. *TRND Research Report*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.trnd.com/company> [Accessed: 25th May 2015].
- Ortony, A. (1979). *Metaphor and thought*. Cambridge University Press.
- Oswick C, and Robertson, M (2007). Personal branding and identity: A textual analysis. In Pullen, A. N., Beech, A. and Sims, D. (Ed.), *Exploring identity: concepts and methods*. London: Palgrave. p.26-43
- Oswick C, Robertson, M. , & Jones, P. (2005). From brands to personal branding: The manufacture of faux management identities. *Journal of Critical Postmodern Organizational Science*, 5 (5), 1-14.
- Oswick, C., Keenoy, T. and Grant, D. (2002). Metaphor and analogical reasoning in organization theory: beyond orthodoxy. *Academy of Management Review*, 27(1), 294-303.
- Ottati, V. C., & Renstrom, R. A. (2010). Metaphor and persuasive communication: A multifunctional approach. *Social and Personal Psychology Compass*, 4(9), 738-794.
- Ottati, V., Rhoads, S., & Graesser, A. C. (1999). The effect of metaphor on processing style in a persuasion task: A motivational resonance model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 688-697.
- Pagliarini, R. (2013). *How to write an elevator pitch*. [Online] Available from: <http://www.businessknowhow.com/money/elevator.htm>. [Accessed: 6th May 2014].
- Peters, M. (2006). Word watch. The eggcorn: Lend me your ear. *Psychology Today*, 39(2), 18. [Online]. Available from:

- <http://psychologytoday.com/articles/pto-20060214-000002.html>. [Accessed 6th August 2010]
- Phillips, B. (2000). The impact of verbal anchoring on consumer response to image ads. *Journal of Advertising*, 29, 15-24.
- Pilkington, A. (2000). *Poetic effects: A relevance theory perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Planken, B. (2010). *The changing landscape of business communication: Developments and directions in research*. Keynote speech. GABC and ABC Convention. Antwerp.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative knowing and the human sciences*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Pomerantz, A. (1986). Extreme case formulations: A way of legitimizing claims. *Human Studies*, 9 (2-3), 219-229.
- Poncini, G. (2004). *Discursive strategies in multicultural business meetings*. Bern: Peter Lang.
- Pragglejaz Group (2007). A practical and flexible method for identifying metaphorically used words in discourse. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 22(1), 1-39.
- Price, L., Feick, L., & Guskey, A. (1995). Everyday market helping behavior. *Journal of Public Policy and Marketing*, 14 (2), 255-266. [Online] Available from: www.emeraldinsight.com [Accessed 9 March 2009]
- Rabin, M. (1993). Incorporating fairness into game theory and economics. *The American Economic Review. American Economic Association*, 83(5), 1281-1302. [Online] Available from: www.jstor.com [Accessed 5 May 2009]
- Reinsch, N. L. (1970). *An investigation of the effects of the metaphor and simile in persuasive discourse*. Unpublished master's thesis. Central Michigan University. Mt. Pleasant.
- Reynolds, M. (2013). *Personal branding with social media*. eBookIt.com
- Richards, J. I., & Curran, C. M. (2002). *Oracles on advertising: Searching for a definition*, 31(2), 62-77.
- Richardson, D., Dale, R., & Kirkham, N. Z. (2007). The art of conversation is coordination: common ground and the coupling of eye movements during dialogue. *Psychological Science*, 18, 407-413.
- Richins M. L. (1987). A multivariate analysis of responses to dissatisfaction. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 15(3), 24-31. [Online] Available from: www.springerlink.com [Accessed 6 April 2009]

- Richins, M. L. (1983). Negative word-of-mouth by dissatisfied consumers: A pilot study. *Journal of Marketing*, 47, p. 68-78.
- Ricoeur, P. (1984). *Time and narrative (Temps et récit)*. Translated by Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984.
- Riessman, C. K. (2003). Performing identities in illness narrative: Masculinity and multiple sclerosis. *Qualitative Research*, 3 (1), p. 5-33.
- Roberts, C. (2009). "Taking ownership": language and ethnicity in the job interview. *Displaying Competence*. 2nd International Workshop on Discourse in Organizations. Ghent.
- Roberts, C., & Campbell R. (2005). Fitting stories into boxes: rhetorical and textual constraints on candidates' performances in British job interviews. *Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 2, 45-73.
- Rosen, E. (2009). *Was your father a thief?* [Blog entry] Available from: <http://anatomyofbuzz.blogspot.com/2009/05/was-your-father-thief.html> [Accessed 13 July 2009].
- Rosen, E. (2009a). *Interview with Emanuel Rosen*. [Online] Available from: http://www.avantmarketer.com/index/live/interview/emanuel_rosen_on_viral_marketing_page_iii [Accessed 13 July 2009].
- Rosen, E. (2009b). *The Anatomy of buzz revisited*. [Online] Available from: randomhouse.com [Accessed 3 July 2009].
- Rosen, H. (1988). The autobiographical impulse. In Tannen, D. (ed.) *Linguistics in context: Connecting observation and understanding*. Norwood, NJ: Ablex.
- Rosenthal, M.M. (2003). Medical professional autonomy in an era of accountability and regulation: voices of doctors under siege. In Dent, M. and Whitehead, S. (eds.) *Managing Professional Identities. Knowledge, performativity and the new professional*. Routledge Studies in Business Organizations and Networks. London: Routledge.
- Rosnow, R. L., & Robinson, E. J. (1967). *Experiments in Persuasion*. New York: Academic Press.
- Rowe, G. O. (1997). Style. In Porter, S. E. (ed.) *Handbook of classical rhetoric in the hellenistic period: 330BC-AD400*. New York: Brill.
- Rozin, P., & Royzman, E. (2001). Negativity bias, negativity dominance, and contagion. *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 5 (4), 296- 308. [Online] Available from: <http://psr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/5/4/296> [Accessed 13.07.2009].
- Sacks, H., Schegloff, E.A., & Jefferson, G. (1974). A simplest systematic for the organization of turn-taking in conversation. *Language*, 50, 696-735.

- Salzberger, T., & Koller, M. (2005). Cognitive dissonance: Reconsidering an important and well-established phenomenon in consumer behaviour research. *ANZMAC 2005 Conference: Consumer Behaviour*. [Online] Available from: <http://smib.vuw.ac.nz:8081/www/anzmac2005/cd-site/pdfs/3-Consumer-Beh/3-Salzberger.pdf> on 10.07.2009 [Accessed 12 July 2009].
- Sander, P., & Haley, J. (2013). *LinkedIn for dummies*. 2nd Edition. Personal branding for dummies bundle. Wiley.
- Sandler (2002, 2005, 2006). *Sandler President's Club Training*. Washington: Sandler Sales Systems Inc.
- Sandler, D. H (2007). *You can't teach a kid to ride a bike at a seminar*. 4th edition. New Jersey: Bay Head Publication.
- Schegloff, E. (1997). Narrative analysis: Thirty years later. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, 7, 97-105.
- Scheuer, J. (2001). *The Sound Bite Society: How Television Helps the Right and Hurts the Left*. Psychology Press.
- Schiffrin, D. (1996). Narrative as self-portrait: Sociolinguistic construction of identity. *Language in Society*, 25, 167-263.
- Searle, J. (1979). Metaphor. In: Ortony, A. (eds.) *Metaphor and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- See-To, E. W. K., & Ho, K. K. W. (2014). Value co-creation and purchase intention in social network sites: The role of electronic Word-of-Mouth and trust – A theoretical analysis. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 31, 182-189.
- Semino, E. (2008). *Metaphor in discourse*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Seu, I. B., & Cameron, L. (2013). Empathic mutual positioning in conflict transformation and reconciliation. *Peace and Conflict: Journal of Peace Psychology*, 19(3), 266–280.
- Shaw, E. (2006). Small Firm Networking: An Insight into Contents and Motivating Factors. *International Small Business Journal*, 24(1). 5-29.
- Shen, F. (2012). Informational/transformational appeals in political advertising: An analysis of the advertising strategies of 2010 U.S. gubernatorial campaigns. *Journal of Nonprofit and Public Sector Marketing*, 24(1), 43-64.
- Shockley, K., Santana, M.V., & Fowler, C. A. (2003). Mutual interpersonal postural constraints are involved in cooperative conversation. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 29(2), 326-332.

- Silverman, G. (2005). Word of Mouth: The oldest, newest marketing medium. In Kimmel, A. J. (ed.) *Marketing Communication: New Approaches, Technologies and Styles*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Silverstein, M., & Urban, G. (eds.) (1996). *Natural histories of discourse*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Simpson, M., J. Padmore, N. Taylor, & J. Frecknall-Hughes (2006). Marketing in small and medium sized enterprises, 12(6), 361-387.
- Sinclair, J. (2004). *Trust the text: language, corpus and discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Sjodin, T. (2012). *Small message, big impact. The elevator speech effect*. NJ: Wiley.
- Slay, H. S., & Smith, D. A. (2011). Professional identity construction: using narrative to understand the negotiation of professional and stigmatized cultural identities. *Human Relations*, 64(1), 85-107.
- Sopory, P., & Dillard, J., P. (2002). The persuasive effects of metaphor: a meta-analysis. *Human Communication Research*, 28(3), 382-419.
- Sopory, P., & Dillard, J. P. (2002). Figurative comparison and persuasion. In Dillard, J. P. & Pfau, M. W. (eds.), *The persuasion handbook: Developments in theory and practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Spencer-Oatey, H., & Ying, J. (1998). Relational management in Chinese-British business meetings. In S. Hunston (Ed.): *Language at Work*. Multilingual Matters.
- Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (1995). *Relevance: communication and cognition*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sperber, D., & Wilson, D. (2008). A deflationary theory of metaphor. In: Gibbs, R. (ed.) *Cambridge Handbook of Metaphor and Thought*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Steen, G. J. (1994). *Understanding metaphor in literature*. London: Longman.
- Steen, G. J. (2008). The paradox of metaphor: Why we need a three-dimensional model for metaphor. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 23(4), 213-241.
- Steen, G.J., et al. (2010). *A method for linguistic metaphor identification: From MIP to MIPVU*. Amsterdam: John Benjamin Publishing.
- Steen, G.J. (2010). When is metaphor deliberate? In Johannesson, N. L., Alm-Arvius, C. and Minugh, P. J. (eds.). *Selected papers from the Stockholm 2008 Metaphor Festival* (Stockholm Studies in English). Stockholm: University of Stockholm.
- Steen, G.J. (2011). The contemporary theory of metaphor – now new and improved! *Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, 9(1), 26-64.
- Steen, G.J., (2013). Deliberate metaphor affords conscious metaphorical cognition. *Journal of Cognitive Semiotics* 5 (1-2), p. 179-197.

- Stella, J.R., & Adam, S. (2008). Re inquiry into the influence of simple and complex tropes in the advertising context. *The Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 16(2), 163-172.
- Stenberg, K. (2011). *Working with identities promoting student teachers professional development*. University of Helsinki: Faculty of Behavioural Sciences, Department of Teacher Education. Helsinki.
- Stern, B. (1994). A revised model for advertising: Multiple dimensions of the source, the message, and the recipient. *Journal of Advertising*, 23(2), 5-16. [Online] Available from: <http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing-advertising/advertising/450254-1.html> [Accessed 1 June 2009]
- Stubbs, M. (1986). A matter of prolonged fieldwork: notes toward a modal grammar of English. *Applied Linguistics*, 7 (1), 1-25.
- Suomala, J., Palokangas, L. , Leminen, S., Westerlund, M., Heinonen, J., & Numminen, J. (2012). Neuromarketing: Understanding Customers' Subconscious Responses to Marketing. *Technology Innovation Management Review*. p.12-21.
- Svennevig, J. (2011). Leadership style in managers' feedback in meetings. In Angouri, J. and Marra, M., (eds.). *Constructing Identities at Work*. London: Palgrave.
- Sweeney, J., Hausknecht, D., & Soutar, G., (2000). Cognitive dissonance after purchase: A multidimensional scale. *Psychology and Marketing*. 17(5). p. 369-385.
- Sweeney, J., Soutar, G., & Johnson, L., (1996). Are satisfaction and dissonance the same construct? A preliminary analysis. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*. 9. p., 138-143.
- Tajfel, H. (1972). Social categorization (English translation of "La catégorisation sociale") In Moscovici, S. (ed.) *Introduction a la psychologie sociale*. 1. p. 272-302.
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. C. (1979). An integrative theory of inter-group conflict. In Austin, W. G. & Worchel, S. (eds.) *The social psychology of intergroup relations*. Monterey, CA: Brooks-Cole. pp. 33-47.
- Tannen, D. (2007). *Talking voices: Repetition, dialogue and imagery in conversational discourse*. 2nd Edition. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Tannen, D. (2008). We've never been close, we're very different. *Narrative Inquiry*, 18(2), 206-29.
- Technical Assistance Research Programmes (1979). *Consumer complaint handling in America: Summary of findings and recommendations*. U.S. Office of Consumer Affairs Washington DC.
- Tendahl, M. and Gibbs, R.W. (2008). Complementary perspectives on metaphor: Cognitive linguistics and relevance theory. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 40, 1823-1864.

- Terry, W. S. (2005). Serial Position Effects in Recall of Television Commercials. *Journal of General Psychology*, 132(2), 151-163.
- Teven, J. J., and McCroskey, J. C. (1997). The relationship of perceived teacher caring with student learning and teacher evaluation. *Communication Education*, 46, 1-9.
- Thaler, R. (1988). The ultimatum game. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2(4), 195.
- Thimm, C., Koch, S. C. , & Schey, S. (2003). Communicating gendered professional identity: Competence, cooperation, and conflict in the workplace. In Holmes, J. and Meyerhoff, M. *The Handbook of Language and Gender*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Thompson, C. J., Rindfleisch, A., and Arsel, Z., (2006). Emotional branding and the strategic value of the Doppelgänger brand image. *Journal of Marketing*, 70(1), 50-64.
- Toncar, M. and Munch, J. (2001). Consumer responses to tropes in print advertising. *Journal of Advertising*. 30(1), 55-66.
- Toncar, M. and Munch, J. (2003). The Influence of simple and complex tropes on believability, importance and memory. *Journal of Marketing Theory and Practice*, 1(4), 39-53.
- Toolan, M. J. (2001). *Narrative: A critical linguistic introduction*. London: Routledge.
- Turner, J. C. et al. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell.
- Turner, J. C., Hogg, M. A., Oakes, P. J., Reicher, S. D., & Wetherell, M. S. (1987). *Rediscovering the social group: A self-categorization theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- UK. Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (2014). Small business, big support confirmed by prime Minister. In: *Using Industrial Strategy to help the UK economy and business compete and grow. Reducing the impact of regulation on business, Business and enterprise* [Online] Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/small-business-big-support-confirmed-by-prime-minister>. [Accessed: 14 September 2014].
- Vallas, L. (2015). Personal branding and identity norms in the popular business press: Enterprise culture in an age of precarity. *Organization Studies*, 36(3), 293-319.
- Van der Houwen, F. (2012). The effect of genre on reporting speech: conversations and newspaper articles. *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics*. (1), 101-130.
- VanMulken, M., Le Pair, R., & Forceville, Ch. (2010). The impact of perceived complexity, deviation and comprehension on the appreciation of visual metaphor

in advertising across three European countries. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 42, 3418-3430.

- Veldeman, C., Van Praet, E., & Merchant, P. (2015). Social media adoption in business-to-business: IT and industrial companies compared. *International Journal of Business Communication*.
- Voloshinov, V. N. (1971). Reported speech. In Matejka, L. and Pomorska, K. (eds.) *Readings in Russian Poetics: Formalist and structuralist views*.
- Warren, L. (2004). Negotiating entrepreneurial identity: Communities of practice and changing discourse. *The International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 5 (1), 25-35.
- Wellmon, Ch. (2012). Why Google Isn't Making Us Stupid...or Smart. *Hedgehog Review*, (14)1.
- Whaley, B. (1991). *Toward a comprehensive model of analogy in persuasion: A test of the persuasive roles of analogy*. Doctoral dissertation. Purdue University. Dissertation Abstracts International 53, 20.
- Wilson, D., & Carston, R. (2006). Metaphor, relevance and the 'emergent property' issue. *Mind and Language*, 21, 406-433.
- Witt, P. (2004). Entrepreneurs' Networks and the success of Start-Ups. *Entrepreneurship and Regional Development*, 16, 391-412.
- Wojnicki, A., & Godes, D. (2008). *Word-of-Mouth as self-enhancement* (working paper) [Online] Available from: papers.ssrn.com
- Wooffitt, R. (2005). *Conversation Analysis and Discourse Analysis: A comparative and critical introduction*. London: Sage.
- Yang, C.C., Chen, H., & Honga, K. (2003). Visualization of large category map for Internet browsing. *Decision Support Systems*, 35 (1), 89-102.

Sales methodologies

- JAWS (2014). Just Another Way of Selling. London Management Consultants. Established in 1983. London. <http://www.london-management.com/>
- Leads to Pipeline to Win (2015). Research-based insights to help align sales, marketing and training. Situational Sales Negotiation. win.corporatevisions.com
- Sandler Training (2015). www.sandler.com
- TAS (2010). Target Account Selling. The TAS Group. Smart Sales Transformation. Seattle. <http://content.thetasgroup.com/>
- Value Selling Associates (2014). Value Selling Framework Workshop for Sales People. Rancho Santa Fe, CA. <http://valueselling.com/>



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

***GENERATING WORD-OF-MOUTH VIA ORGANIZED
BUSINESS NETWORKS: THE ROLE OF NARRATIVE AND
METAPHOR IN 60-SECOND SELF-MARKETING SPEECHES***

by

HANA BLAZKOVA

A thesis submitted to
The University of Birmingham
for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Volume II

Department of English Language and Applied Linguistics
College of Arts and Humanities
The University of Birmingham
July 2015

Table of contents

1	Models documenting the dynamics of the service industry in the US	331
2	Number of referrals by years of membership	333
3	BNI meeting agenda	335
4	BNI leadership team	336
5	Results of the BNI online surveys worldwide scale	338
6	Official BNI presentation templates/60-second presentation template	343
7	Official BNI presentation templates/10-minute presentation checklist	344
8	Interview questions on the BNI membership motivation	346
9	Transcripts referred to in Chapter 2	347
9.1	Appeal to the reciprocity and sense of belonging drivers/elite group identity	347
9.1.1	Reciprocity driver/ declaration of the Giver's Gain	347
9.1.2	Elite group identity	347
10	Narrative transcripts referred to in Chapters 3-5	349
11	Key terminology in narrative chapters (Chapter 3- Chapter 5)	371
12	Scenario transcripts referred to in Chapter	372
13	Metaphor transcripts referred to in Chapters 5 and 6	382
13.1	Transcript 1: Soliciting a sports metaphor	382
13.2	Transcript 2: Olympic sports metaphor series	383
14	Output from the database of BNI memory hooks	382
15	Survey design copy	412

APPENDICES

1 Models documenting the dynamics of the service industry in the US

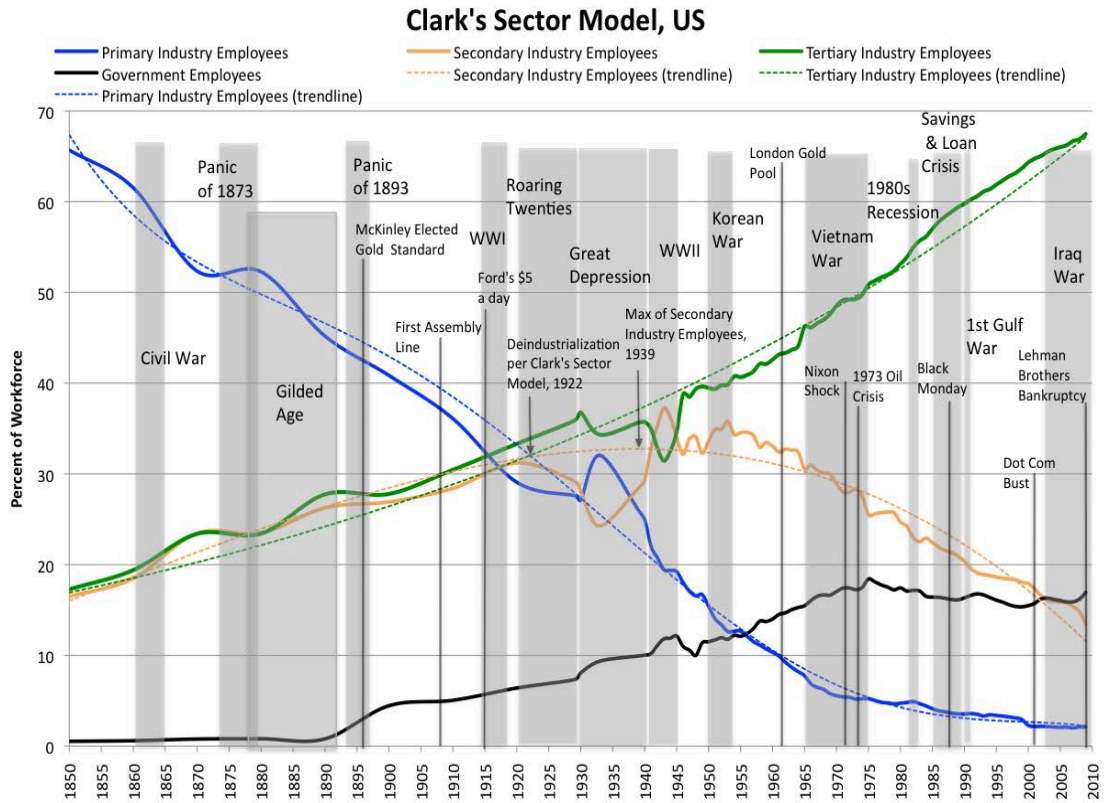


Fig. 1: Clark's 193 Sector Model (1850-2010) highlighting key political and economic influences

Retrieved from: <http://www.63alfred.com/whomakesit/index.htm> [Accessed November, 2014]

¹⁹³ Clark's model is used to document the process of deindustrialization and describe an economy undergoing technological change.

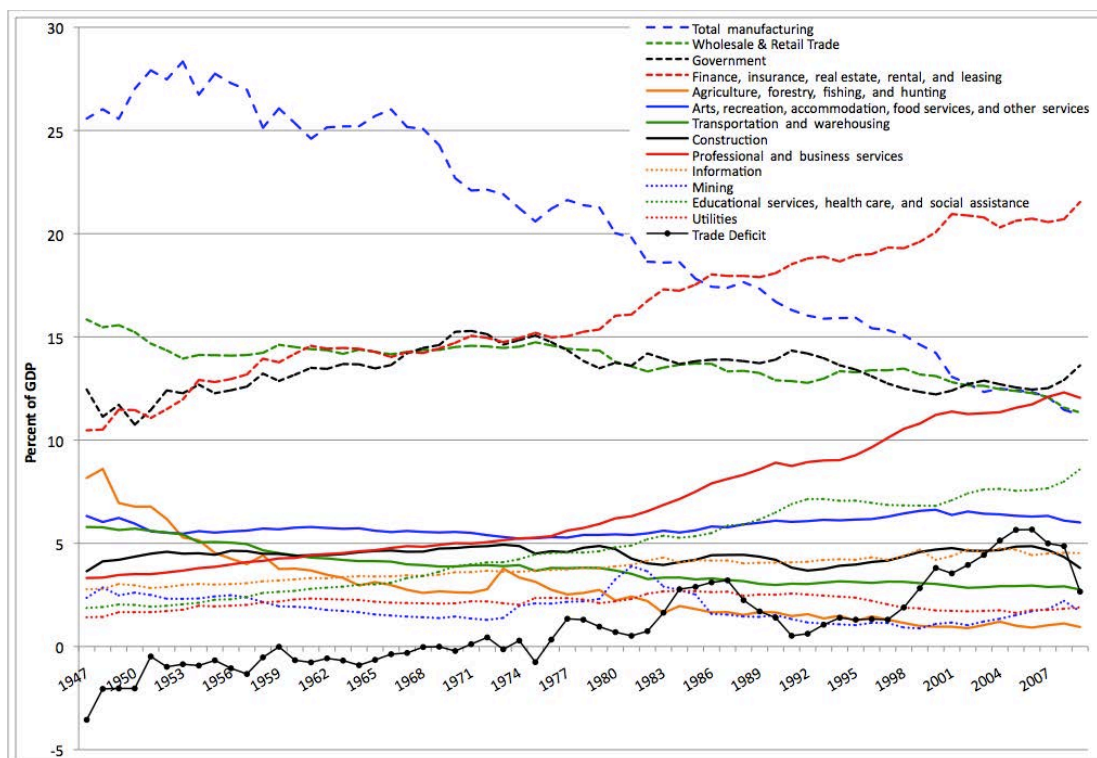


Fig. 2: Sectors of US economy (1947 – 2009)

Retrieved from: <http://www.63alfred.com/whomakesit/index.htm> [Accessed November, 2014]

Based on the following resources:

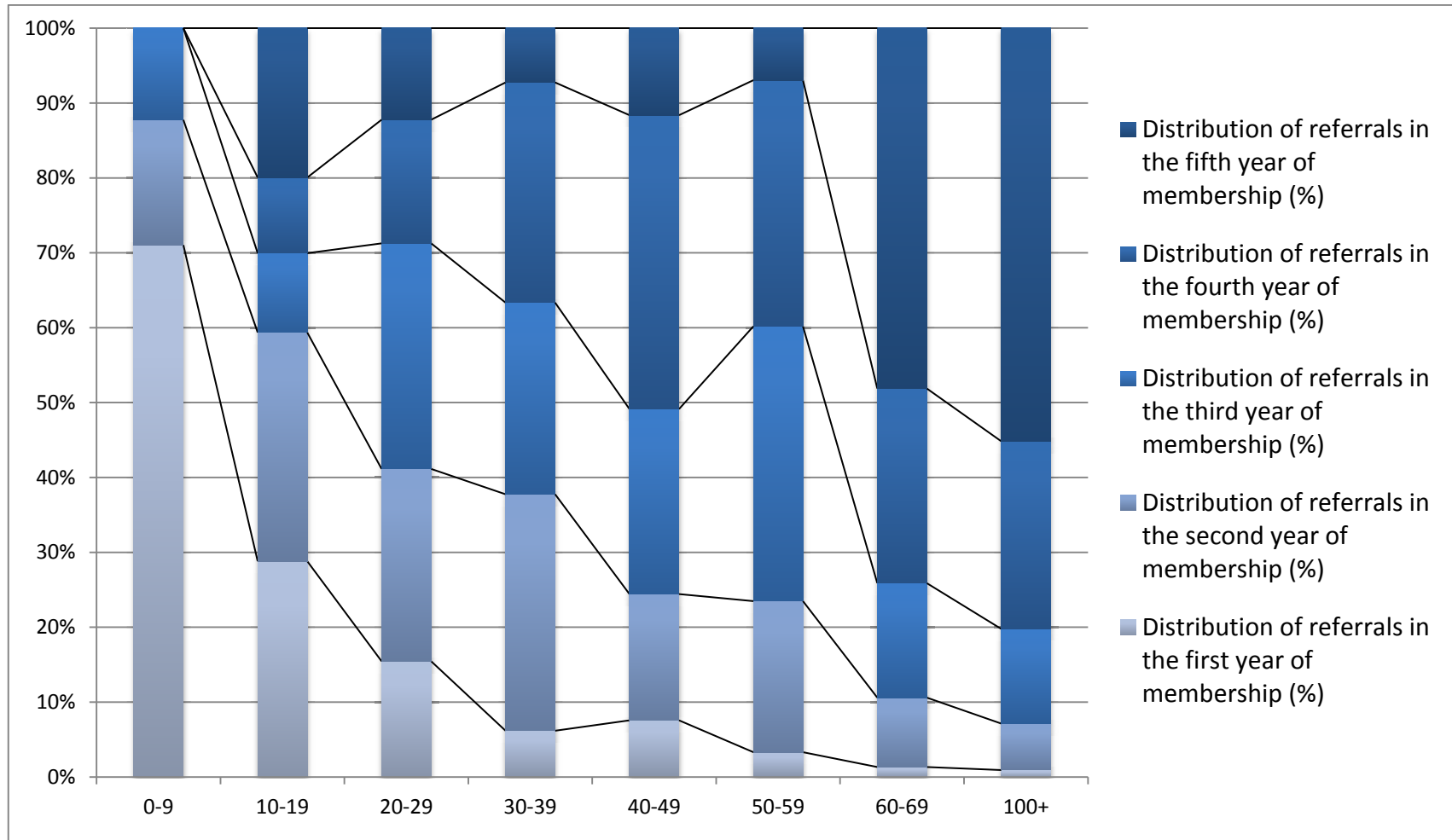
1. Economic Report of the President: 2011 Report Spreadsheet Tables, B-12. Gross domestic product (GDP) by industry, value added, in current dollars and as a percentage of GDP, 1979-2009, U.S. Government Printing Office
[<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/eop/2011/xls/ERP-2011-table12.xls>] (11/25/2011)
2. Economic Report of the President: 2003 Report Spreadsheet Tables, B-12. Gross domestic product by industry, 1959-2001, U.S. Government Printing Office
[<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/usbudget/fy04/sheets/b12.xls>] (11/25/2011)
3. Value Added by Industry in Current Dollars, Quantity Indexes by Industry, and Price Indexes by Industry, 1947-1997; Value Added by Industry, Gross Output by Industry, Intermediate Inputs by Industry, and the Components of Value Added by Industry, 1987-1997, Gross-Domestic-Product-(GDP)-by-Industry Data, Bureau of Economic Analysis, U.S. Department of Commerce,
[http://www.bea.gov/industry/xls/GDPbyInd_VA_NAICS_1947-1997.xls] (11/25/2011)
4. MERCHANDISE IMPORTS, EXPORTS, AND TRADE BALANCE: 1790-2006 (percent of GDP) [<http://www.econdataus.com/tradeall.html>] (11/27/2011)

2 Number of referrals by years of membership

Number of referrals by years of membership								
Number of referrals	0-9	10-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	100+
Distribution of referrals in year 1 (%)	57,4	23,1	10,1	3,4	2,6	1,9	1,1	0,4
Distribution of referrals in year 2 (%)	13,5	24,5	16,8	17,4	5,8	11,6	7,7	2,7
Distribution of referrals in year 3 (%)	9,9	8,5	19,7	14,1	8,5	21,1	12,7	5,5
Distribution of referrals in year 4 (%)	0	8,1	10,8	16,2	13,5	18,9	21,6	10,9
Distribution of referrals in year 5 (%)	0	16	8	4	4	4	40	24

Tab. 1: Distribution of of refferals (0 100) by years of membership (1 5) mongst the BNI population

Appendix 2: Number of referrals by years of membership



Tab. 2: Distribution of of referrals (0 100) by years of membership (1 5) mongst the BNI population

3 BNI meeting agenda

Description: BNI meetings follow a fixed format detailed below, the format is identical across the BNI groups worldwide. Individual BNI groups are termed chapters and their meetings are chaired by the Chapter Director or President of the Chapter.

1. Open networking
2. Official welcome, introduce leadership team
3. Purpose and overview of BNI
4. Networking Education
5. Announce Business Network "Leaders" at the beginning of each month
6. Pass business cards (All)
7. Welcome any new BNI members to the organisation and/or induct new members
8. Members introduce themselves and give 60-second presentation
9. Welcome visitors to BNI and have members introduce them (visitors give 60-second presentation)
10. Membership Coordinator's Report
11. Membership Committee Report
12. Announce rota of speakers for next six weeks and introduces this week's speaker(s)
13. Speaker(s) gives 10-12 minute presentation
14. Pass referrals
15. Treasurer's Report
16. Announcements and reminders
17. Door prize draw: for members bringing visitors or referrals
18. Close meeting
19. Conduct new member orientation
20. Conduct visitor orientations

4 BNI leadership team

Description: Each group/chapter within the BNI appoints a leadership team (LT). The text below details individual roles within the team along with their job description.

President/Chapter Director:

- Runs meetings according to BNI agenda & policies
- Supervises LT and Visitor Hosts
- Communicates between BNI Regional Office and Chapter (group) members
- Lists Chapter's meeting date & time in local newspaper community calendar
- Is responsible for new member orientation

Vice-President:

- Runs meetings in the absence of Chapter Director
- Maintains attendance and referral records (i.e. the value of the business generated via network)
- Chairs the membership committee
- Enters VP Report, PALMS data & any other VP responsibility on the Chapter website

Secretary/Treasurer:

- Reports speaker rotation each week to Chapter
- Introduces weekly speaker
- Sends Regional Office monthly dues report with new & renewal applications
- Uses the Chapter website to confirm all due dates of members & enters all information of visitors to chapter
- Advises visitors on becoming a member
- Collects breakfast dues
- Maintain chapter finance
- Reports dropped members via report forms to the regional office

Membership Committee: (ca 2 to 4 members)

- Screen & interviewing potential new members
- Check category classifications for conflicts
- Evaluate participation & attendance of existing members
- Evaluate complaints about members (with Director's assistance)
- Monitor Chapter growth

Visitor Hosts: (ca 2 members in a Chapter with 30 members)

- Arrive early to set up visitor's table
- Welcome visitors & follow up
- Introduce visitors to other members
- Conduct visitor orientation at end of meeting
- Set-up and take down brochure table individual members

Education Coordinator:

- Selects weekly networking tip typically following the BNI theme to present to members
- Coordinates chapter library

Appendix 4: BNI leadership team

- Meet with the chapter president to learn about the Chapter's specific long and short term goals and objectives.

Event Coordinator:

- Helps increase members' referral business by promoting events & activities outside of the normal BNI meeting
- Coordinates arrangements for chapter social events, i.e. outdoor and indoor seasonal events.
- Reports to the president and assists the Treasurer

5 Results of the BNI online surveys worldwide scale

A) Where does most of your business come from (what is the primary source)?

Advertising (all forms)	11.8%
Public Relations	4.7%
Networking/Referrals	70.7%
Cold Calling	11.0%
Total Votes: 8245	

B) What % of your business comes from "word-of-mouth" or "referrals"?

None	3.3%
1-10%	5.2%
11-20%	4.1%
21-30%	5.2%
31-40%	5.0%
41-50%	5.6%
51-60%	6.5%
61-70%	6.8%
71-80%	13.1%
81-90%	16.1%
91-99%	13.2%
100%	14.5%
Total Votes: 7205	

C) Where does most of your business come from (what is the primary source)?

Advertising (all forms)	11.8%
Public Relations	4.7%
Networking/Referrals	70.7%
Cold Calling	11.0%
Total Votes: 8245	

D) Approximately what % of your referrals turn into new business?

10% or Less	16.0%
11-20%	5.7%
21-30%	8.3%
31-40%	8.5%
41-50%	8.5%
51-60%	8.9%
61-70%	7.9%
71-80%	13.7%
81-90%	10.8%
91-100%	9.3%
Total Votes: 3536	

E) Have you ever taken a college course that covered the subject of networking or word-of-mouth marketing?

Yes	12.3%
No	85.7%
Total Votes: 4933	

F) How many business/networking groups do you currently belong to (such as a Chamber of Commerce, service club, professional association, and of course BNI).

None	20.1%
One	25.6%
Two	23.1%
Three	16.2%
Four	7.0%
Five or More	7.0%
Total Votes: 8458	

G) If you are currently a member of a networking organization, such as BNI, how long have you been involved?

Less than one (1) year	45.7%
Longer than one (1) year	16.3%
Longer than two (2) years	10.6%
Longer than three (3) years	10.5%
Longer than five (5) years	15.2%
Total Votes: 3121	

H) Has networking played a role in your success?

Yes	88.4%
No	9.5%
Total Votes: 465	

I) What is the most important trait or characteristic of a good networker?

Follows up on referrals	21.9%
Has a positive attitude	9.0%

Appendix 5: Results of the BNI online surveys worldwide scale

Is enthusiastic	0.5%
Is trustworthy	11.3%
Is a good listener	9.0%
Networks always	5.0%
Thanks people	0.8%
Enjoys helping others	15.8%
Is sincere	2.6%
Works their network effectively	22.2%
Total Votes: 379	

J) What do you feel is your greatest weakness in networking?

Approaching someone for the first time	23.7%
Continuing conversation after a few minutes	13.3%
Knowing how to gracefully close conversation	13.0%
Being unable to turn relationships into business opportunities	28.3%
Using a follow up system	18.8%
Total Votes: 346	

K) Which of the following is most important to you when referring business to others?

Knowing a person's character	49.3%
Knowing a person's level of competency	28.7%
Knowing a person's success	2.7%
Using their product or service myself first	16.6%
Total Votes: 1328	

L) How have you developed your networking skills?

Reading books or articles	14.4%
Taking seminars or classes	7.5%
Being mentored by someone	6.9%
Working on my own	19.9%
Participating in networking group(s)	48.4%
Total Votes: 306	

6 Official BNI presentation templates/60-second presentation template

***Description:** BNI template available to the BNI members as core educational material helping the members structure their weekly one-minute.*

Timing	Topic
10 secs	<p>Name and Profession</p> <p>Paint yourself in glorious Technicolor! Don't necessarily tell your colleagues your actual profession – use a teaser such as “I help MDs sleep at night”. Make people ask ... ”How do you do that?” This provides the opportunity to develop your storyline.</p> <p>Be remembered. Be recalled. Be referred!</p>
15 secs	<p>USPs</p> <p>Outline your Unique Selling Points (USP)- what differentiates you from your competitors.</p>
20 secs	<p>What to listen for/ How to respond</p> <p>Tell your colleagues what to listen for when in day to day dealings with their clients; eg a comment such as “I’m working harder than ever before, but making less profit” could be highlighting the need for some professional consultancy support.</p> <p>Tell your colleagues how to respond. For example – “I know someone who specialises in helping businesses look for better ways of doing things. Here is his business card – may I get him to call you?”</p>
10 secs	<p>Target clients</p> <p>Be specific – very specific. Name organisations or businesses you wish to speak with. Name names of the people, or their positions, whom you wish to speak with. The more specific, the better.</p>
5 secs	<p>NMH: Finish with your Name and Memory Hook. Make this as memorable as possible.</p>

7 Official BNI presentation templates/10-minute presentation checklist

***Description:** BNI template available to the BNI members as core educational material helping them to structure their regular 10-minute presentations.*

Remember, by presenting a 10-minute session you are looking to:

- Fire up all of the members into going out and getting some quality referrals for you and your business
- Develop understanding of your business and what you want for the future
- Generate interest and create impact to help colleagues remember what you said.

Questions to Ask BEFORE and AFTER	Yes	No	Improvement Ideas
Have I kept it to 8 or 9 minutes to allow time for questioning?			
Does it better acquaint everyone with what I do and how?			
Have I developed on parts of my previous '60 seconds' content that could be explained further?			
Does it let everyone know what I want from them?			
Does it let people know who are my best customers or customer types?			
Have I given an example of what I have delivered or done for existing customers or clients?			
Have I included the benefits of what I offer; and provided people with an easy way to introduce my business to others they speak to?			
Do my props or visuals help people remember me, and what I do?			
Have I included some names of organisations or circumstances in which I would like to work? (Including any new doors I would like to open).			
Have I given specific examples of referrals that would work well for me, for example, types of business, size, location, etc?			
Have I explained what I do when I get a referral, for example, what happens next?			

Appendix 7: Official BNI presentation templates/10-minute presentation checklist

Have I ensured that everyone knows the quality of my work?			
Does my '10-minutes' help the other chapter members to generate quality referrals for me?			

8 Interview questions on the BNI membership motivation

Description: responses were collected in September 2007 in the primary group BNI Victoria. The group had 34 members at the time, 20 were interviewed.

Going back over past 2 months, which members in the group have you recommended?
(names)

Can you remember the actual situations in which you recommended them?

Was it coincidental that you recommended these members rather than the others
in the network?

Do you exert the same effort trying to find referrals for all your fellow participants?

Do you tend to recommend some members more frequently? Why?

Are you selective in recommending your fellow members? How?

Do your business partners tend to rely on you to recommend a good service to them?

How important is it for you to be perceived by your business partners and your friends
as a good source of expert advice, and as a hub company?

Why did you choose to join this particular chapter rather than any other you have had
a chance to visit?

How would you rate this chapter in comparison with other groups you have had
a chance to visit?

Why do you recommend your fellow members? Is it primarily to get business
in return? Are there any other reasons?

9 Transcripts referred to in Chapter 2

9.1 Appeal to the reciprocity and sense of belonging drivers/elite group identity

Description: the first extract is an example of prototypical opening of the BNI meeting with the proclamation of the reciprocity principle as the key driver behind the existence of the BNI network. Recorded in the primary group.

The ensuing 6 transcripts document the tendency of group leaders to appeal to the sense of belonging WOM driver by promoting the exclusive status of the given BNI group. These extracts were recorded in four different BNI groups in the Birmingham area and represent the opening statements of six different group leaders. The extracts were recorded mostly during 2005. I intentionally included two transcripts from the primary group (one recorded in 2005, the second in 2007) to further highlight that the tendency towards promoting the sense of group exclusivity is consistent over time and under different leadership (see Grant and Hogg, 2012).

9.1.1 Reciprocity driver/ declaration of the Giver's Gain

< n CB >..., the purpose of BNI, is to actually help you to find business, because if you give me business, then I'll give you business, Giver's Gain, that's the philosophy [...] of BNI. And those that members-, those who are members of this chapter, certainly find that is the case. So you visitors, I'm sure you'll find that if you want to be able to share in that philosophy, and actually share in the literally millions of pounds worth of business that have been generated, then please ask any- any member, or [...] certainly our membership coordinator...

[Recorded 01.09. 2005]

9.1.2 Elite group identity

< n RP> Good morning and welcome to BNI Victoria Chapter, the-, the most fantastic and greatest chapter of BNI in the whole of the UK, I think members would agree with me. (audience cheering and clapping: Hey!)

[Recorded 17.02 2005]

< n PDT > morning, morning, morning [...] mo::rning. **Welcome [...] to BNI Victoria, the best BNI chapter in the world!** Nice to see you all. Nice to see you RP. Looking very cool today, mate.

[Recorded 22.04 2007]

< n CB> Welcome to Victoria Chapter of (the network name), Business Network International, and very special warm welcome again [...] to our visitors, erm that are amongst us. I'm sure, you'll enjoy the meeting, erm [...] erm this morning as much

we enjoy [...] you actually erm being with us. My name is CB and **I have the privilege of being the chapter director of this fantastic chapter, and isn't it a great chapter, chapter members?** (audience cheering **Yeah!**) Yeah, that's fantastic, that's what I like to hear,...

[Recorded 05.11 2005]

< n MR> ... and welcome to BNI Metro chapter, the up and coming chapter of the West Midlands, and I think everybody agrees, best BNI chapter in the world. <(n Audience)
Ye::s!

[Recorded 09.03 2005]

< n DS> Welcome to [...] Phillips BNI. For the members who are here, we **know that this is the world's leading BNI chapter.**

[Recorded 18.02 2005]

< n NH> Good morning everybody! And a very warm welcome [...] **to the fantastic Sunrise [...] BNI Chapter!**

[Recorded 09.12 2005]

10 Narrative transcripts referred to in Chapters 3-5

***Description:** Full transcripts of 32 speeches embedding a narrative. These examples were delivered by 23 speakers between 2005 and 2007 in 14 meetings in two BNI groups in the Birmingham area (in the primary BNI Victoria and in the BNI Hagley). The sample contains 28 competence tales; successful solution is explicitly communicated in 23 narratives.*

MEETING 1/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-02-17

1 < n AC > Good morning, I am from an insurance brokers, that's what we do, we arrange [...] insurance primarily for companies and also for [...] individuals. Er [...] what am I looking for this week, I am looking for uh: **consultants**. Anybody who's a consultant, whether it be a **management** consultant, or a consultant in **any** sort of **field**. Generally these people these days looking for some sort of professional cover [...] to protect themselves. The **advice lead**, /if people mean to seek out that advice/, so if you know anybody in the consultancy business, please come talk to me.

Competence tale:

Situation: Erm [...] have a story for you this week, we had a guy who we've been dealing with for three **months**.

Problem: You know, quite unfortunately, his his car broke down [...] on the side of the motorway, left it there, to get to a meeting and it was **stolen**.

Problem: He hadn't disclosed /????business/ [...] piece of information for /?/?/, but it was quite serious piece of information,

Solution: and after three months, we'd arranged to **get his claim paid**.

Evaluation: And that's what we do! Even though he's sort of [...] uh: **mistakenly** given the insurance company wrong information, he didn't do that deliberately, and therefore he got claim paid in the value of forty five thousand pounds.

Coda: So if you're **fed up** with your **insurance** company or your **broker**, they charging too much money o::r they too slow, call C M and ask for A.

MEETING 2/BNI VICTORIA 2005-02-24

2 < n LE > Good morning, my name's LE, and company is **PSS**. Apparently, uh: [...] I'm still a **product sourcer**, I source products, from China, from Britain, from East Europe.

Competence tale:

Situation: **Two things** that I am doing at the moment, just to go and say, how /??/?/ products.

Problem: **A glass cylinder** [...] was what I was [...] given,

Solution: and I found it in **three** days.

Problem evaluation: He told me that he couldn't get it in Britain, he was thinking that it's going to be Eastern Europe, if not China,

Solution: and we found it **in the Midlands**,

Evaluation: and he's **delighted**.

Task/Problem: A second one is bread basket or linen basket, this sort of big things [...] that you[...] put it on and then push round,

Solution: and I've got fifty of those [...] being made up.

Coda: **And people** come to me with things that they can't find [...] o:r the price is high and I go **find** this. And if I succeed, am I going to charge it? Am I not. Depends [...] how good the deal is. So[...] if you know that people've got [...] profit issues, tell them [...] **not to be sorry**, pick up the phone and call Lawrie.

3 < n JF > Good morning everybody, my name is JF from the AHA, **otherwise known as** [pauses for the audience]

< n Audience > [(chimes in) **aha!**]

< n JF > [(giggling) mmm, good!]

Competence defined: **We're amazing**, [(slowly, emphatically) and so are you!](laughter M). We run [...][(more laughter S) incredible [...])] achievement programmes.

Competence tale embedded in a story:

Frame: This week, yesterday, we were in /??/, in /??/?/ [...] university in /??/?/. And we were talking to them about **how we** [...] **help people** to set and achieve **massive** goals, that enable them to make a **huge step up**. **And when we came** to the end of our presentation, we said to them, **Look!** You **don't** have to **believe us**, just speak to somebody, in your business, we know, who came on one of our programmes.

Situation: And [...] one of the members of the audience [...] **said** [...] **I know who that person is, he works for me, he's in-, in my team**.

Problem: **And when** he went on your programme in Scotland in in October, erm, he was /??/?/.

Solution: **And I don't know** what you did with him,

Evaluation: but when he came back, he was **absolutely** transformed. And he has made him **such an impact** in the business, it's only that you /fished/ **his brain out** and you put something else in. It's **absolutely** magical.

Coda: So if you want to make **a huge step up**, talk to me, I'm JF, AHA, **otherwise known as** [pauses for the audience]

< n Audience > [(chimes in) **aha!**] (Scattered laughter).

MEETING 3/BNI VICTORIA 2005-03-10

#4 < n JC > **This-this** week,

Competence tale:

Situation: I want just talk about one, one of my patients who [...] **I could** treat her on/???,

Problem: I've got actually no- no hope of curing it. [(laughter: XXL) /???/ Just coming in and /???/. This lady)], she's got erm m- muscular dystrophy, **she's** got **all** sorts of things including cancer, she's got inoperate- inoperable brain tumour

Problem Evaluation: **so OK, I'm not going to cure** [...]

Solution/Evaluation: but **I helped** her no end, yeah? One of the things, I helped her with **recently**, erm- she wasn't normally /???/ two, maybe three times in one day because she got **older** /???/OK, it was **a big deal** to her because she spent all day **sat in a wheelchair**.

Evaluation: Erm [...] so if I can help with little things like that? **Great!** Then I can help with lot of [...] er- emotional stuff and [...]

Coda: and [...] so if you – you know somebody who's **really really ill**, a::nd [...] it doesn't come in, homeopathy's **just** [...] for little[...] minor things, yeah? Sometimes **it can help serious illnesses** but **often** it can help to somebody who 's really ill, it can help with the **emotional side** [...] help all sorts of things. So if you know anyone who's **really** ill, send him in my direction. Yeah?

5 < n DU > Good morning **everyone**, DU from **YL**, from solicitors in Birmingham and Black Country. Erm, /???/ ask you if you can /???/ about old people **but I'll carry on** (laughter XL). [(In response to one of the previous presentations about the features of a car) Talk about intelligent [...] warning systems [...]] [(laughter L). /????/ very well. /???/)]

Competence tale:

Situation: Had a client] recently who says [...] er, I've got an an old old old mum, who needs to sort out her tax and erm [...] avoid kep- paying care fees as she goes into a home. But it's alright, we've got it sorted, we're gonna put the house in my name.

Problem: Well, **firstly**, it doesn't say tax and firstly it doesn't say care fees. So she **was a bit** [...] kind of [...] distraught when she realized that,

Projected solution: but I said **don't worry**, we'll sort it out for you. Erm, and working this one might BF with [...] you know [...] financial advice, we can sort that problem out, no problem.

Coda: **So if you know** anyone who's got elderly parents or grandparents, who just need to talk to somebody, to make sure that they, they erm [...] (covered) their estate well, so they're protected for the children, then just give me a call. That's erm [...] DU from YL on 63333233.

MEETING 4/BNI VICTORIA 2005-06-30

6 < n TM > [(Reacting to R passing him the voice recorder, sarcastically)Thank you so much! Uh: excuse me (laughter L) It's just that we haven't seen each other)], I'm afraid, having been away for a few days. Uh: who are we? TM from DGPCSurv-, hang on I'll just [(laughter M) take my glasses, I can't be bothered.] I'm e- eleven hours **behind time** I do apologize. Uh TM from DGPCS. What do we do? We do anything [...] in respect to the surveying pra- uh:: profession to do with **property** whether it's residential, industrial or commercial.

Competence defined: And the special features we offer are **attention** to detail and going **that extra mile**.

Competence proven/ Competence tale:

Situation: Very briefly, [...] last night [...] after work [...]

Solution pre-empting problem: I went round to somebody's property [...] because I **completed** on Friday.

Potential problem/problem prevented: If I hadn't gone round the completion would not have **gone through**.

Coda: We will **always** go that extra mile to help people solve the problems.

To listen for, anybody who is having anything done- considering done with property **buying, selling [..] leasing**, problems with their builders, legal issues with boundaries, anything to do with property, that is what we deal with. What I'm looking for [..] is **introduction** into multi-outlet commercial [.] people, such as we are already to- starting to work for people like [..] Business Post, uh: Tops Tiles, Bright Future's Group and so on. **Any leads** into those sort of companies uh:, in respect to their **commercial aspirations** please give us a call. That's TM at DGPC Surveyors, back on this planet. Thank you.

7 < n AC > Good morning everyone.

< n Audience > = Good morning!

< n PDT > [Good morning.

< n AC > AC from [..] uh: CM Insurance and ah I help you [..] **sleep better** at night. And [..] I don't use any **drugs** or any other techniques to do that. Ah: I help you **sleep better** because I [..] insure your companies' assets and yours, hopefully giving you uh: a good night sleep.

Competence defined: Uh: one of the [.] hopefully unique things about us is we tell our clients the **truth**. Whether it's good news or bad news.

Competence tale:

Situation: Uh [..] good example yesterday was, I gave ah the client the truth about its premium

Problem: which he said was fine in sense of what his budget was, and he was gonna **shut the company down**.

Solution: So, we managed to work round that solution, he's not gonna shut the company down today, *Evaluation/Coda:* but we do keep clients- uh we always **do** tell them the truth whether it's good news or bad news. Which is not like every adviser that's out there.

Uh:: what I am looking for this morning [..] is ah: contacts into [.] a [.] company called W Plc. They're based in Aston. They make a number of things including tele copic [..]telescopic, sorry, slides. And ah: company turning over about 15 million pounds. If you've got contacts into W Plc, I'd be delighted to hear of them. Particularly if it's the financial director who's GE. If you're [.] uh looking for an insurance broker with some get up and go, call CM and ask for A.

MEETING 5/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-07-14

8 < n DM > Good morning again, DM, [from] OP. I-I- I speak most weeks about, how people can **optimize** their profit,

Competence defined: and one of the things that I focus on is [...] **time**. **Who do you know**, who has difficulty, **assessing**, how long it takes to do things. In other words, when you're producing a quotation, or **tendering** for some work, or pricing a product or service, you just **really** don't know, with any deg-degree of accuracy, how much you should be charging.

Competence tale:

Situation: I am working with a client now down in in Merthyr Tydfil in South Wales [...] erm-

Problem: and it is quite **unbelievable**, the areas that this particular business is missing out on [...] in terms of **costing** [...] their particular service.

Implied solution/coda: So **who do you know**, who's **having difficulty**, they may not realize, they're having **difficulty**, but they are not making as much money as what the quotations say they're making. So who do you know, that could appreciate some help there? So optimal profit you wish to see, make an appointment with DM. Thank you.

#9 < n RP > Good morning all, er my name's RP from H bank, and I am a commercial banking manager based in Southern Coldfield. Erm [...] I look after a portfolio of businesses, it can be anything from service manufacturing or retail industry. Er /all as a ?? member/, I am always trying to think of an **easy way** for for people to pass referrals, and Una reminded me of a [...]good one for, for me, when she phoned me, at the end of last week, which was she was out with a customer, and [...] they gave her **a cheque** and it was a **non H cheque** (followed by a sharp incredulous intake of breath by somebody in the audience). Know, I know, I didn't think there were [(laughter L) such things], but apparently there are. Er, and so she said to them you know how, how did they get along with their bank, and unfortunately, [...] or fortunately for me, they were not having **a good time** with them. So [...] she phoned me and said [...] **could we** [...] could we do some business? And that's an ideal referral for me, if you just ask the question, if someone passed you a Lloyd's cheque or a Barclays cheque, or [...] any

of the other banks [...] how're they getting along with their bank at the moment. If they're **not** having a good time, then please pass them my card. That's RP,[from] H.

MEETING 6/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-07-21

10 < n PDT > Hello everybody. I am not looking for any referrals this week (M makes a screeching sound using a little device, teasing PDT). It's actually true, I'm afraid. (M makes another screeching sound twice, laughter in response to the funny sound) But our business is! I'm going away [...] on holiday tomorrow. [...] to Morocco.

< n Audience > [(cheering) **yay!**]

Competence defined: Erm, anyway[...] I was thinking about what makes our business a little bit different to [...] other printers. And you know, I think it might be [...] that we've got [...] quite a lot of technical knowledge.

Competence tale:

Situation: I actually er, advised an **agency**,

Problem: /?/?/ they had branding issues,

Solution: did some **branding** for a company on [...] advised on how to do their branding and what the Pantone references [...] mean. Pantone references are the colours. | < n M > (in a condescending tone of voice) Technical job? |

< n PDT > = What it means when [(M makes a screeching sound with the device) it's printed in one colour], or [(laughter M in response to M's remark and the funny sound) a four- colour process.]

Evaluation/Coda: Anyway, makes a lot-, because I have a five-years experience of actually printing on a press [...] myself. And that means that when I'm talking to somebody about print [...] I know what I am talking about. [...] Shit. [...]Oh. [(laughter XL) Oh (laughing) rewind! Erm, (laughter XL) Anyway, you can just tell them that we can make them] look good on paper.

11 < n LE >My name is LE, the company's **PSS**,

Competence defined: and I am your gateway to China.

Competence tale:

Situation: **An example of what I do** is I am having a meeting with somebody later on this morning,

Problem: and /a consultant [...] was aware/ of how his business is going, and if there's a graph, it's going like this (raises his hand and signals a steep downward progression). He asked me to give him a call, because he was getting difficulty, he makes /??/ props.

Evaluation: And the words were: "I am getting **slaughtered** by the Chinese". And **those** are music to my ears.

Solution (projected): On the basis, you can't beat them. Join them! If you got something which is stopping you making profit, **change what you** do. I'm gonna help him get value in order to keep [...] his business going, his profits going, and if we need to change his business model, that's what I do.

Coda: I source products from China, Far East, Eastern Europe, or even the UK, to make sure people can get the right product at the right price. So, if you come across people who've got product issues, tell them don't be sorry [...] pick up the phone[...] and call L.

MEETING 7/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-08-18

12 < n DM > Good morning, I'm [...] DM management consultant with [...] OP. Spend the most of his time at the moment down in the South Wales, **would love** to do some more business in **the Midlands**! So what do we do? We help people save **time**! Erm [...] whether it's put in in the normal business process /???/ or additional [...] support processes.

Competence defined: I'm- we help people develop accounting systems for those people that don't like SAGE and such like things, erm [...] so any-anything to do with erm [...] **time**, anything to do **with cost**.

Competence tale:

Situation: I'm coming back from a client in Merthyr Tydfil,

Problem: who's got **no idea**, how much he should be charging for his services,

Solution: we've now worked with him,

Evaluation: and he's now **very very** significantly, erm [...] /??/ improved his bottom line.

Coda: Other other other things include looking at quality, a quality of services, the quality of goods. Anything along those lines. Particular companies I'm looking for, **anyone** [...] **seriously** [...] who's interested in improving the profits. Doesn't that mean **most** people? So **why** are we struggling for referrals when I'm looking for people that want to make [...] more money. DM, management consultant, thank you.

13 < n BD > Good morning! My name's BD, and **my company's** called SN! And **we make** every kind of sign, you can imagine.

Competence tale:

Situation: **And in the last** week, we've had our first calls from businesses, based in **Birmingham's** [...] very own tornado alley (laughter S)

Problem: And these are **the businesses**, whose **premises** were **devastated** by the-[...] the recent tornado. *Solution (Present action):* And **we've been** to visit the tornado office, and **we've spoken** to the tornado manager! [(laughter S) **Really!**]

Problem specified: There's going to be a lot of businesses there that need to [...] **rebuild**, and they will need some **new signs**. And they're all going through the process of putting together their insurance claims at the moment.

Projected solution: And talking to the manager there, we're looking to put together some kind of a deal, which **may involve** some government money [...] as well [...] **to help fund** [...] the **rebuilding** and **resigning** of these premises.

Coda: So, if you know a business [...] based in that area [...] that was / affected/ by it, please let me have their details. Our advice is [...] come to SN, we are the living proof [...] that every tornado has a silver lining.

MEETING 8/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-09-01

#14 < n AC > **Good morning** everyone.

< n PDT > AC, morning!

< n AC > Good morning, Paul, thank you very much, AC from [...] CA

└ < n PDT > (jokingly deferential) Woo::┘ Thank you, thank you [(laughter S)].

Generic scenario/ You-oriented: **Do you know** [...] how [...] you make an insurance claim, and the-] (aside- thanks guys), do know how you make an insurance claim, and the insurance company wanna **get out of paying it?**

< n S/Audience > Yes. Yeah.

< n AC > └ Unanimous yes. Yeah. What you **need** in those circumstances are all the **various** insurances that you might buy commercially by the: [...] property insurance or liability insurance, maybe a travel policy, when you go on holiday. **You need** somebody, who's gonna **look after** these policies, who's gonna **review** them for you, who's gonna **make sure** [...] that when you put a claim in,

Competence tale:

Situation: perhaps you're **abroad** like a client of mine was recently,

Problem: the son **got very ill**, and they needed to be **repatriated** back to the UK,

Problem evaluation: which was a **massive** bill, it was about fifty thousand pounds in total.

Solution: You need a policy that's gonna **look after you** in that regard, and that's when you need to come to someone **like me**. Because what I'm gonna do, I'm not just going to **arrange** the insurance and take a premium from you, I'm actually going to **send** your policy documents off to a third-party guy, who **deals** with claims, and he's gonna give you an analysis of what your policy is, **within the fee** that I charge you. So it **takes away the headache for you** [...] of reading **sixty-four page documents** that people like me send you, thinking, what the bloody hell's actually covered in this policy.

Coda: **So if that's a nought** for you, if you read policy documents along these lines, and think, that's boring, come and speak to me, AC, CA. If you want an insurance broker with some **get up and go**, call [...] CA and ask for AC.

#15 < n DF > Good morning everyone. My name's DF D&F Construction. We're- [...] cheers. (thanking Mark who hands him the recorder) We're builders, shop fitters and maintenance.

Competence tale:

Situation: We're [...] **getting** quite big, we started in January,

Problem: we've had it sort of [...] really really rough at first,

Solution: but we've just signed a first million-pound contract. [...] last week.

└ < n Audience > (clapping and cheering) Whoo::

< n DM : > └ /???(followed by laughter M)┘

< n DM > I haven't got it yet. (laughter M). A::nd another one for quarter of million, erm::, all on Friday.

Evaluation: Which shows you, people can tell quality service, people care,

└ < n PDT > Stop showing off!< n Audience > = Yea::h!. ┘ [(laughterXL)

< n DM > *Coda:* **Another side that we do** is maintenance, this is a side that I'd like to push [...] is the **maintenance** where we offer /free/ good service, looking after people's apartments [...] refurbishing them for them, once the tenants have gone out. **If anybody knows**

a connection for [...] erm, Jackson's [...] letting agency, or Maguire's [...] letting agency, give us a bell. Thanks very much.

#16 < n *L/Substitute2* > Hello everybody, I'm L [...] from HR, and I am standing in for Vicky today, she's at /??/?/ [...] sunning herself, so erm [...] **just I was having a look** actually [...]at the- [...] the [...] er Victoria Chapter list here, and it says that HR deals with erm, [...] clerical [...] customer service and accounting staff recruitment, which we do. So, you've got your admin and your secretarial staff, good customer service staff and [...] all aspects of sort of accounting staff, like the-, you've got well-trained, erm, fully qualified accounting staff down to your admin, erm [...] accounting staff. **But also**, erm [...] we do sales staff as well. Telesales staff, field sales staff, erm [...] we've [...] got current vacancies for buyers, we've got a few buyers on our books as well. **So don't just focus** on your normal sort of admin customer service staff, we can actually help in other areas. Erm, [...] so just to let you know that. I'm the Permanent Recruitment manager, so I deal with permanent recruitment, Vicky does [...] temps, as well, so she can get a temp out to you in twenty minutes, erm[...] so that's us. **Now I asked in the office** [...] yesterday, does anybody want erm [...] some leads into a company. I don't know if (female name) was winding me up, because she's asked me to stand up and ask for [**Firkin's** Head Office.(time keeper clinking a glass to signal that the minute is up) (laughter M)

<n *PDT* >Sorry, what was that ?

<n *L/Substitute2* > **Firkins**.

< n *PDT* > Pardon?

< n *L/Substitute2* > **Firkins!**[(laughter XL)

<n *PDT* > Crikey! (another eruption of laughter XL)

< n *L/Substitute2*> **Apparently,**] apparently, they're in West Bromwich, and they do cakes, etcetera.

└ < n *Audience* > Yea::h

< n *PDT* >└Very good, very good Firkins' cakes. ┘

n *L/Substitute2*> So if anybody knows the Firkins Head Office] (laughter S) or anybody in the work from Firkins in West Bromwich, I'd like to know. Thank you very much.

MEETING 9/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-11-30

17 < n IW > Good morning! [<n Audience > Good morning I.] My name is IW and the company is RE, Birmingham Solihull. And **our business is** corporate recognition, we help companies to promote their image. To do this, we use a vast array of promotional items, from badges to pens, coasters, to mouse mats. Literally any item, clothings, ceramics that you can have your brand on it, we can supply it for you. Erm [...] erm what I'd I like to ask is anyone that hasn't picked up a brochure, erm, if you'd like to collect that at the end of the day, I would appreciate.

Story in which competence is implied/Absence of the problem-solution pattern:

Abstract: I'd just like to talk briefly **about badges**, having said that.

Orientation: Erm, I've just supplied the Birmingham Children's Hospital, and they actually have a [...] missionary type of hospital out in Malawi.

Complicating action: And [...] when the staff's out there, we asked how they would like to be [...] have their morale raised [...]

Resolution: they actually said, those **nice badges** [...] they would like to have. And therefore we're currently supplying badges out to Malawi.

Evaluation: Erm, which is nice.

Coda: So Matt, thank you very much for trying to put me out of business (referring to the earlier educational slot delivered by Matt about techniques that help to remember people's names) but [...] people still will have badges. (laughter M) So if you're looking for a name to remember, **remember** the name to remember. That's RE, thank you.

18 < n Jeremy > Hello, I'm JC, I'm homeopath and Bowen therapist. *Competence tale:*

Situation: And, people think about homeopathy and [...] the Bowen technique are kind of minor little ni- niddle and that just sends me quickly to the way I work with a charity called FW. I've been working with them for about three months. And they work with people with serious life-limiting or life-threatening diseases. And **I've been** [...] **treating** a few people, I'll talk about- tell you maybe a bit about one of the ladies, I've been treat- treating,

Problem: who's got, got [...] **cancer**. The **cancer's been treated** by conventional means, but [...] the problem she [...] got afterwards, where [...] she couldn't sleep, generally

sleeping about two hours a day, and the problem, she'd [...] for the last [...] twenty five years, was **migraines** every week. That's nothing to do with the cancer.

Problem evaluation: Just the problem that was causing a lot of misery.

Solution: So [...] **very quickly**, we got her so she could **sleep better**, and [...] she doesn't get her **migraines** any more. And the cancer's been sorted out by the [...] **conventional means**.

Evaluation: So [...] hopefully, she's doing fine, and [...] she's very **very happy**.

Coda: So, if anyone knows anybody with [...] serious [...] life-threatening illnesses, **don't just say**, oh, we can't send them to homeopath. I might be able to help them in ways that you might no- not [...] imagine. I'm JC, and I can improve your health, which is more important than your wealth.

MEETING 10/BNI VICTORIA 2006-03-23

19 < n SM > Good morning. SM from I. We're the chapter's businesses er :: **telecom** specialist.

Specific competence: Erm [...] pushing (lost in somebody's coughing) /??/?/voice overs at the moment, it's been around for some time but we've now got it working [...] and we've got some really happy customers.

Competence tale:

Situation: **Went** to company called SE yesterday, they're a [...] **not a big company** but they import media from all of-, from China, er: a lot stuff from the Far East, UAE.

Problem: erm: and according, they had a **huge** phone bill, and they got **ten** people but their phone bill was about six thousand pounds a month.

Solution: Er: [...] they've got on the voice over /??/?/, they've come to less than four hundred.

Evaluation: Er: there are fantastic saves.

Coda: So, I'm looking for anybody, who [...] has a-any business which don't - [...] which makes [...] international calls. Though, it saves money on ordinary calls but international calls savings are (immense). So anybody [...] you're dealing with, an importer, a [...] distributor, that imports goods from the Far East or [...] or Europe, then please refer them to us. SM from I.

20 < n BD > Good morning! My name's **BD**, and my company's called **SN**, and **we make** any kind of sign you can imagine.

Story in which competence is implied/Absence of the problem-solution pattern:

Abstract: **And I am** a man on a mission [...] **to track** down the **top fifty spenders** on my products and services in this area. And **this week**, I'm not going to ask you for any information [...] about a specific prospect.

Orientation: And that's because last week I went to an event in Coventry,

Complicating action: where I got to meet the **senior procurement people** from **fourteen** of the **largest** local councils, **universities** and housing associations in the area.

Evaluation/Resolution: And I'm up to **there** (pauses and points to his neck) with contacts, information and **leads** that I need to follow up on.

Coda: What I'm going to say **instead** is that [...] **I've done** very well from you guys, and information **you've given me** over the last few months, I've managed to get **seventy four** thousand pounds of business out of BNI so far this year, and I think, I am going to clear the **hundred** thousand pound mark [...] next month. Instead, what I would like to do is, this information that I got has cost me **a fair** amount of money and a lot investment of time, what have you, I would like to offer that to you **free** [...] to all the members of Victoria. All you have to do is email me after this meeting and I will get the information to you [...] in the next couple of weeks. **Thank you** for the business you've given me, I hope I can get some back to you. Thank you.

21 < n MC > Good morning again, my name's MC from BNLPTA and I am a drug dealer! (laughter S) It's interesting how when we **take drugs**, and I'm talking about **legal prescribed** drugs here, thank you very much, what you were not thinking about. When you take a drug [...] it doesn't actually **affect** you, all it is is a **messenger** [...] to tell your **brain**, what to do, what chemicals, neurochemicals, and hormones it needs to release. So e-it **works** incredibly well, with people who suffer from chronic pain, that are taking a lot of painkillers [...] to manage them. So if you know anyone who suffers from any chronic or serious debilitating pain, get him to give me a call. I guarantee with **hypnosis**, I can reduce or get rid of that pain completely.

Competence tale:

Abstract: And talking about pain, one of my pains this week has been customer service. I've seem to have noticed that customer service of the most companies I deal with hit rock bottom. So now I'm a **man on a mission** [...] to increase customer service.

Situation: And [...] as my research went shopping on Saturday, I would like any [...] introductions into training managers of companies such as **Apple**,

Problem: because the App- have you been in the **Apple store**? Customer service is absolutely **shocking!** They ignored me for about twenty five minutes. And **Ikea** [...] they were awful too [...] Marks and Spencers [...] HMV,

Projected solution/Coda: if you know anyone with training managers in these major [...] erm [...]shopping centres and organizations, please get them to get in touch with me, because I really do need to improve their customer service. [...]

< n B> Maybe it's just you. [(laughter L)

< n MC > =How can it be B?]

< n B> = Put some clothes on you! [(laughter XL)

< n MC > = (feigned incredulity) What I /did I? /make it again? Shite.] (chuckles)
I thought I had clothes on. How can it be me, I'm such a personable bloke! (laughter XL)
That's MC, BNLPTA, thank you very much.

MEETING 11/ BNI VICTORIA 2007-09-23

22 < n JC > Hello, I'm JC, homeopath, and Bowen therapist, erm:.

Competence tale:

Abstract/Situation: a **succ-success story**, I'd like- [...] I was particularly pleased about this week, is a- [...] a young lad, who I've been **treating** and I've been treating about six months, **really nice young lad**,

Problem: the trouble is, he's, he keeps- he used to keep losing his temper and getting excluded f-from school for beating other kids up, [(laughter M)

Solution: now-, now after, after about six months of treatment,

Evaluation: this, this, **this** (audience continues laughing SM and commenting on the techniques of possible treatment) kid] is- is totally transformed, yeah, when, I'd [
< n Dave> /?????/ was beating the head off another kid (Comment followed by more laughter, JC laughs as well)] and erm [...], and I'm really pleased, cause it'll save a lot of kids from

getting beaten up, [(laughter M) and it will save him from a life of- of crime and God knows what], so it's pretty important.

Coda: So if you know any kids with behavioural problems, whether they're labelled **ADD**, that's attention d-deficit disorder, or maybe OCD, oppositional [...] (sharp intake of breath) conflict d-disorder, or [...] **NLB** /which of course stands for naughty little bastards [(laughter XL – continuing till the end of JC's presentation) [(JC laughing) then se-, send, send] them in my direction, and I can help them, is not the same as drugging kids. I'm JC, I can improve your kids' health that is more important than your wealth.]

23/ Failure educational

< n GM > Good morning everyone, **GM** from /???L's/ Insurance Brokers.

Hopefully, you'll know that we provide [...] comprehensive risk solutions to small business and multi-million turnover clients but [...] this week I just want to ask you a couple of questions.

Abstract: Can anybody just, everybody put their hand up today, if [...] they've ever had a client [...] go [...] bust [...] or into liquidation /?on them/. (Two people raise their hands). And have, e-erm: [...] again put your hands up **if you know of any client** or friend or contact has ever told you, they've had a client go [...] go bust /on them / sometime. (Majority of the audience raise their hands) Well, it says quite a lot, doesn't it [...] on that side.

Problem: I've recently had **a large client**, part of a- a European group [...] go into liquidation, you know, I very nearly had a bad debt myself on that.

Implied solution/Coda: And **trust me**, credit insurance [...] is [...] **the cheapest** it's ever been. And **anybody** who sits there, and just sits there thinking, I've never had a bad debt, you **must** think about it. So [...] when you're out there talking to people on that side, and somebody says to you, I've had a bad debt [...] please think about credit insurance, I'd like to talk to people about it, it's **a lot cheaper** than you think, and it's **a lot better** to have your business moving forward [...] than just [...] sit there, and your head in the sand, and wait till your business goes down the tubes. So it's G from /?LIB, your risk in safe hands.

24 < n PH> Well thank you very much C! (to the previous speaker – a female substitute for C, who is a male) [(laughter M) Good morning everybody], I'm PH, and er I'm from the Chamber of Commerce [...] and Business Link. Er: we help starting up businesses and /???.

Competence quasi narrative:

Abstract: Erm, **this week** er sh-should work about [...] er: your **energy** [...] bills and how you can **cut** the **cost** of of energy. Because [...] er: we all spend a lot of money,

Situation: you know, at home, I sat down the other day and /??/ I was looking for- at at the the bills recently

Problem: and they're certainly going up by /??/.

Solution: But you **can do** some- you **can do** some things to reduce the energy bills and the [...] Chamber Utilities Team recommend cut the bill by about thirty percent. **And that's** with some [...] simple energy efficiency: [...] erm, erm measures that you can take.

Coda: We can help you in terms of an er: **energy audit**. We can do it **free**, erm, and then we can also help er: with interest -free loan, in terms, to implement some of the changes that you (wanted) to make. **So** if you want to cut your **energy bills**, or help to [...] er protect **the environment**, then, er: give me a call. That's Paul Hannah from Business Link. **Sometimes**, you need to work on your business, and not just in your business.

25 < n D> I'll be quick. (clears his throat) IT is the game, and the name. I represent Interactive IT, we are a- [...] a **technology company** based down in the Jewellery Quarter, erm for several years now, we've been providing the needs of small, medium and large businesses. Erm, **technology** touches everybody's life, [...] erm, **hardware, software, communications**.

Educational/competence narrative:

Abstract: One of the things, that I would say [...] is we partnered a-a couple of people recently [...] erm with regards to new business, so we partnered **P**, erm [...] P and I [company name] went in to see a customer. And that **synergy of components** actually was very successful with-.

Last week as well with a marketing agency, looked at a deal, to service their clients.

So [...] when you think about [...] **I**, think about a partner that can help a business move forward on many many **fronts**. Technology [...] is about reaching out. So the **web**, communications [...] but not forget our core support. Thank you very much. DE.

26 < n SP > (walking to the front) Hope the sixty seconds doesn't start, till you actually get out to the front (laughter S) My name is SP, erm from M, I am a [...] consultant, a trainer and a **coach**.

Competence: I help people [...] to be the- the best and beat **the rest**.

Competence tale:

Situation: A success story of mine is a business owner, **who** [...] I've been working with for seven years, and had quite a wide **range** [...] of different aspects of her company.

Problem: **And** she needed some **direction** and help focusing. Erm, **and** she also had some health problems, which were getting in the way of her working effectively.

Solution: So **what did** I do? We worked **together**, to find **the best aspects** of her business and narrowed it down. We **helped** [...] to- working together, by promoting it and finding a niche. We also identified what her **strengths** were, and what her **weaknesses** were and **outsourced** some of the skills and jobs to other people.

Evaluation: What is the outcome? She has better confidence, she has **more** clarity about where she is going, erm she has **more** profitable, erm [...] contracts, an-and increased turnover, and **also** she has less stress, and her health improved.

Coda: So the **referrals**, I'm looking for < (time keeper signalling 60 sec are over) > are business owners, who need some sense of direction. Erm [...] next week, I'm going to talk about a new package that I'm putting forward for [...] businesses. So, if you're **fed up** with fish and chips, have **caviar** coaching with SP. (laughter M)

MEETING 12/ BNI HAGLEY 2005-09-08

27 < n PW > Good morning everybody! PW.

Specific competence: I help company directors, or managing directors sleep at night! I'm a freelance financial controller.

Competence tale:

Situation: I've just finished a new project, with a new client /????/ in Shrewsbury. Now I was called in by [...] the Operations Director of Chartered Accountants.

Problem: And he says, P, the problem is that all my background is auditing.

Problem evaluation: Now, we know about auditors. They /do/ by double entry (audience sniggering) What? They cannot control cash, because they've got no experience in it, and they cannot provide management information!

Solution: So he's called me in

Evaluation: and this is what he says [...] in his return reference, he's given me [2s] I found Paul to be highly effective and focused [1.5s] I was very impressed by the way he delivered the job. Most unusually for the /??/?/ consultant, he was simply concerned with achieving our goals. And not with trying to create more work for himself. As Operations Director, it's my job to /?????/.

Coda: And those are sort of Managing Directors, I want to deal with. [2s] More than 20 employees [2s] and using their auditors to control their businesses. Thank you.

28 < n NR > my name's NR, my business is NRR. Erm I [...] I am an executive and search [...] executive er search consultant, er finding senior managers to make businesses [...] tick and improve!

Competence tale:

Situation: Erm, this last week, I've been, I was interviewing an individual yesterday in fact.

Problem: Erm [...] and [...] I found that my interview was actually more about career counselling... (incomplete – poor voice quality)

29 < n Substitute > JL standing for P /??/?/ today. Erm [...] I'm gonna tell you a story. (laughter S)

Competence tale:

Situation/Abstract: It was my mum's seventieth birthday last week [...](audience emphatically sighs)

Problem: And I haven't got a clue what to buy her. She plays golf, but she's got plenty of balls, (laughter M), she's got [...] lot's of pair of drawers, lots of T-shirts, I couldn't buy her anything for golf. She's got [...] more handbags than you can /??/?/ (the audience chuckles) and she's got shoes that fill the wardrobe.

Solution (decision process): So [...] I was raking my brain, what on Earth can I get her for her birthday that she'd really enjoy. And one thing that came to me was that [...] we never ever had our family pictured together. Me, my sister, my mother. And my sister recently got married last year, and I've got a partner, so I thought what a great [...] present to give my mum. Go and get your family portrait taken.

Evaluation: And it wasn't only just getting the portrait taken, but we had an absolutely fantastic time with P /??/ in his studio. He was brilliant! He had us on the floor, off the floor [...](chuckle), standing, sitting, lying [...] laughing, joking, absolutely fantastic!

Coda: So [...] P's looking for anyone else that you know, that might want to have some family portraits /????/. So that's what he's looking for this week. PP, photographer extraordinaire.

30 < n MD > Good morning everybody. [_{<n Audience > Good morning.}] I am MD from CCL, we're a marketing and communications agency.

Abstract: A::nd [...] what I want to talk to you about today is [...] we /get on a lot of the / bad business from [...] marketing managers,

Competence tale: Atypical structure:

Situation/problem evaluation: there's this marketing manager who's [...] basically **fed up** with their agency,

Problem/Failure: they're either **not** delivering, they're **not** creative enough, they're **not** hitting budget or time scales,

Failure contrasted with success: and basically, we've kept one of our largest clients for **fifteen years**, because of the fact that we're able to **hit** [...] all of those requirements.

Analysis/evaluation/competence definition: And one of the reasons we're able to take those requirements, is we invest a lot of time in getting to know our clients' **business**, understanding their **competitors**, understanding what their business objectives are, and then creating a **plan** and the **communication tools** to make that **happen**.

Coda: So, and there's a lot of marketing managers out there, I'm sure all of you know a marketing manager in /????/. So if they're [...] fed up with their current agency, tell them to give me a call, we're CCL, we're an agency that thinks [...] creates [...]and then gets busy making it happen.

MEETING 13/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-01-13

31 < n JC > I am not- [...] I wouldn't wouldn't wouldn't magically make people happy, normally I say, I could probably make people a little less miserable. (laughter S) OK? What I think that can make people miserable, are little niggling long-drained problems [...] coming back again [...] like nodulosis. Yeah? Nodulosis, cold sores, that kind of thing. Yeah? It can really be a pain. And some people are getting these things again again and again. I- maybe [...] might not be able to get rid of it really quickly, but I can stop it coming back again. Often, you would take erm [...] one or two-week treatment and then [...] none of these /???irritating/ problems will be back again.

Competence tale:

Situation/problem: Now /???/a cold sore, a baby, a son,

Solution: I gave him two months treatment

Evaluation: and he hasn't had a cold sore six years so a big baby,

Coda: in problems niggling problems, I am JC, I can improve your health, which is more important than your wealth.

MEETING 14/ BNI VICTORIA 2005-11-30

32 < n LE > Good morning. (< n Audience> Good morning, L.) My name's LE, the company's PSS

Working anecdote:¹⁹⁴

and I just have to say, DM's lamp doesn't work. I know that, because my wife borrowed it a bit before, and she rubbed it three times. And she said it doesn't work! I said, how do you know that? She said, cause you're still here! (laughter L).

Problem scenario:

This, this may be a great surprise for you, but I have a problem in talking to people. And, I- I- I- I know it comes as a real shock to you, but I do. And this is because people don't trust me (smirking and laughter S. /I'd go along to people, if I don't know them/, they don't feel comfortable [...] opening up. And I-, obviously I feel frustrated about that. You know, I am not worth trusting all, but they don't! (laughter M) They don't know me

¹⁹⁴ 'Workplace anecdotes can be classified as strictly-speaking dispensable in the context of transactional workplace talk such as meetings. They cannot be regarded as an intrinsic component of the business at hand; they are not required accountings (cf. Heath 1986; Polanyi 1985, p.20). In other words, workplace anecdotes are essentially digressions from the business talk which constitutes the core of workplace interaction.' (Holmes 2005, p. 167).

for /the matter/. And this is my difficulty, if I go to a manufacturer [...] they don't feel comfortable talking to me. What they'll do, they'll get me to [...] find a product, and I'll get the price, /they say that's really good/, then they'll go to their incumbent [...] and get their incumbent to get as close to that as they can. Which is not really fair. But what I need [...] a people who deal with manufacturers, who are prepared to say, well, have a chat with this fellow, he's worthwhile having a talk to, and he's honest, and he'll be fair. Because that's what people need, they need to go and have an introduction. If I call somebody, they don't know me xxx, they won't trust me, and they won't talk to me openly. They'll just use me as a leverage against their incumbent, which isn't fair for the incumbent. So if you know any organization who distribute, who manufacture [...] why not give them a chance and say [...] well this guy [...] could be good. And it's only by referral that I get a chance to go and talk to them. Because if I just door-knock them, they won't ever [...] seriously talk to me. It's bizarre. But that's how it goes. So if you know anybody who [...] 's got profit issues or product issues, tell them don't be sorry, pick up the phone [...] and call L.

0

Note: The speech below is not a narrative, it is included in the Appendix because JC's case study in the second narrative chapter specifically refers to this presentation.

< n JC >I'm JC, homeopath and Bowen therapist. And being on second, I did not really have have time to prepare my speech today [(laughter XXL). So /??/, so, this-this week, I'll just ask [...] just ask for people who've got knackered necks and buggered backs, (lingering laughter) my normal standard]. Because that- that's my [...] my kind of bread and butter so if anyone knows anyone, knackered necks or buggered backs [...] or even knackered knees that maybe. Send them in my direction, I can almost certainly help them. Thank you!

11 Key terminology in narrative chapters (Chapter 3- Chapter 5)

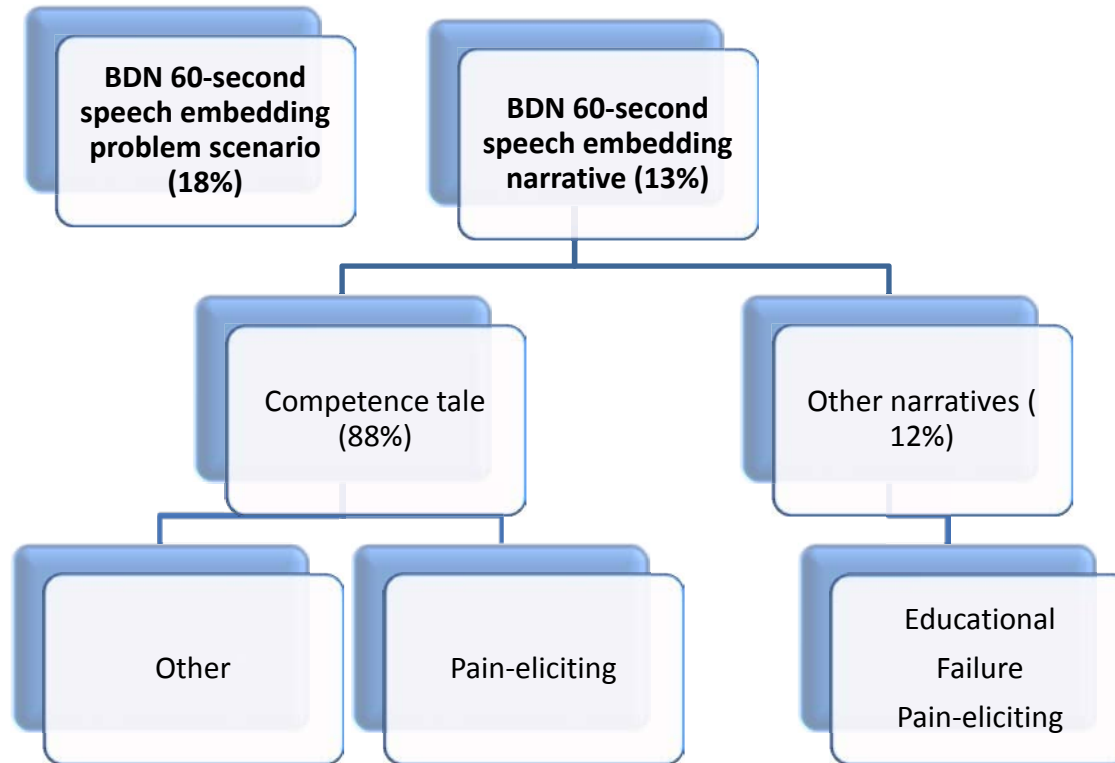


Fig. 3: BDN 60-second speeches classification in relation to narratives and scenarios

12 Scenario transcripts referred to in Chapter

***Description:** Full transcripts of 15 speeches embedding a scenario containing RS. These examples were delivered by 13 speakers in the duration of 2005 in 5 meetings in the primary group BNI Victoria.*

S1 < n *LE* > My name's **LE** and the company's [...] **PSS**, and I do what it says **on the tin**. I help companies [...] **find** products if they are either **too** busy to or can't find for themselves. Enabling them to be able to get **more** products **or** [...] sell more profitably to their clients. Three things specific **about me**. I never sell to any competing company to any of my clients, I don't charge for looking and I quote delivered [...] all [...] duty, **shipping** and everything else included. **Half** my stuff comes from the UK which is [...] surprising [...] where people think they want from Far East but actually you can get some really good deals over here.

Problem scenarios:

Things to listen out for that really mean they're the ideal people for me is: I can't find something, people can buy cheaper than I can make, I've just been let down on quality, I wanna create a new product but I don't have the time or if only I could go and find **this product here** my customer would buy, but I just don't know where to look. Something which [...] I've been looking [...] ah: and found over the past week have been **arms** [...] with ah: lamps on the top that you sort of clamp onto the desk. And the marketplace interesting is where **undertakers** and people who do **autopsies**, where you have this light you want to go and **shine** proper light on the body (timekeeper signals time) and doing all those [...] and they've got loads of bulbs (laughter S), 15 watt ones which [...] I'm trying to find a use for. I've got hundreds of them. So if you've got profit issues and profit issues don't be sorry pick up the phone and call L.

S2 < n *BC* > Erm, good morning everybody, I am BC and [...](smiling) I'm standing in for **P** again! <n *Audience* >Again! /???/=

= I dunno. Yeah, do you know how I said that [...] couple of weeks that you'll never see me **for months!**

< n *Audience* > Yea:h! (Laughter M)

I was wrong! (laughs)

<n PDT>We prefer you B!(laughter L)

(BC chuckles: And-) [...] and imagine- imagine my surprise when I found out I got homework. (<n S/Audience >A::h) Right. And I- I did this very seriously, quite, I actually [...] did it properly. (Audience feigns being impressed and appreciative: A::h). It's crap (laughter L) but it's- [...] anyway! Right.

Problem scenario:

You know how many small businesses are really successful at what they do [...] but, they're always telling me [...] when they start to expand, they find themselves struggling to cope [...] with all of the **extra** things, that they need to **know** about or **do**, that's **finance** [...] **legislation, marketing**, business to business. [...] (clicks his tongue) What I do- what I do at BC, is I actually **help** them [...] **structure their plan** for growth, their expansion, and often bring in [...] experts **to advise** them [...] on very specialist matters. Erm, **part of this** [...] is offering Chamber membership. Chamber membership actually offers a wide range of services and benefits [...] to **assist** [...] businesses with with free le- free legal **helpline, marketing** advice, business to business [...] networking directory, and also [...] (smirking) the Chamber Link prestige magazine. (< n S/Audience >A::h!)

So if you feel that you're in this, and you need some support, some help to help your business grow, give me a call, and I'll sort out the- the membership people will come and talk to you. Thanks very much.

S 3 < n *Salvia* > Good morning everybody, SA from YL Solicitors.

Problem scenario:

One of the main barriers, why people don't like to come to see **solicitors**, is because of **the costs**. How much is this going **to cost me**? It's like **a meter** running [...] erm, it's like a taxi. How much is /???/ gonna cost me, how much is /???/ gonna cost me. Crickey [...] have I got the money? (< n *David McKee*> in agreement: Mhm.)

What we do for clients, is that we **agree a fee** [...] **upfront**. If you want a **divorce**, if you want to buy a **house**, or if you want a will, **we agree fee** with the clients, and then [...] **that takes the pain** away, and we get on with nitty-gritty, and **the main issues** of the case. So [...] if you got any issues, give me a call, we're gonna agree fee, and we'll get down to the work. Thanks very much.

S4 < n RW > Good **morning!** RW from WSFY. And [...] I **remove** [...] the secretary's worst nightmare, and I'm not talking about her glasses. Erm [...] she **no longer** has to go down into a gloomy basement to [...] find a single sheet of paper. What we do is [...] come into an organization, **grab** the paperwork, **scan it**, and put it onto a shiny CD. Er [...] and the CD can then be very quickly accessed from **your computer**. Erm [...] what we believe our USPs are, are **reliability** [...] and high quality.

Problem scenario:

So [...] in terms of what to- to listen out for, erm [...] somebody saying I've lost a piece of paper spent about thirty minutes trying to find it, and **gave up**. Or [...] you're on the phone to somebody and they say [...] oh wait a minute, I'll just see if I can find a piece of paper, rustle, rustle, rustle, two minutes later still not found it, sorry I'll get back to you later. Erm, so if you're aware of people that have got lots of paper, can't find the piece, they want, then that would be an ideal referral for us. Erm, in terms of **specifics**, I am on- [...] finish off the Ds. So there's the the- these are commercial estate agents. Donaldson's, Douglas [...] Dove [...] Drivers Jonas, DT-DTZ, and Dunger [...] and Co. So if anybody knows anybody in those organizations, that would be great. **We scan for you**, our most reliable crew.

S5 <n RG> Good morning ladies and gentlemen (<n S/Audience> Hello) Er [...] my fourth time visiting, I am joining the group, er when I come back from a holiday in two weeks' time. Name RG, the company's BMSIPO. Erm, we offer alternative investment opportunities. Why are we different? We hold our client's hand throughout the whole process. We have totally a bespoke product, erm [...] and we only work on one to one basis. We work purely on referrals. We've seen a massive return for our investors over the last six years over in Southern Spain, and we now have back/??? /in Cyprus.

Scenario:

Do you know anybody who says [...] I would love to own a holiday home. I'd love to build a property portfolio. [...] I'm concerned about my retirement and my pension? Please give him my card. We're aiming at a hundred percent return on investments. I am looking for people who [...] are looking to [...] learn about the opportunities of investing overseas, erm [...] with the added benefit of owning a second or third [...] property at

home. For overseas investments, you thought were a dream, call BMS, and we will welcome you to our team.

S 6 < n MC > Good morning. Again! (referring to the educational slot that he delivered earlier). I don't know why I bother with these educational slots, all you use them is to take the mickey (laughter M, MC laughs)

<n S/Audience > No! Because we listen to you!

< n Matt > Well, yeah, at least you listen. My name's MC, the BNLPTA. And **quite simply**, if you want to be better at what you do, you really need to speak to me. **Today**, I'm plugging – I have-, if you want to find out how to better in exactly what I do, **what better way**, than to book on an Introduction to NLP for Business seminar, the eighteenth of February, next year. If you know anyone, who's interested in that [...] then speak to me afterwards, and I'll sort you out some information, and **also**, you know that- **you probably know** either friends or family that are saying about their new year's resolution already. **Next year** I'm going to lose weight. **Next year**, I'm gonna quit smoking. **Next year**, I'm going to get myself organized. Yeah? Well [...] why not buy them, for Christmas, **a gift voucher** [...] from me? For **a session**, to **help them** keep their new year's resolutions. And therefore, they won't have any excuses any longer. So [...] my name is for Matt Caulfield, BNLPTA, and it's not what you think. Thank you very much.

S 7 < n R > *Problem scenarios:*

Um: **so what** [...] **what sort of thing should you listen for in terms of trying to find us a** [...] **ah: a referral**, uh someone that says, I lost a piece of paper and spends 30 minutes looking for it, well we [...] hear that all the time. Uh: wait a minute, you're on the phone with somebody, wait a minute I'll see if I can find the right file, and about five minutes later, no sorry can't find it we'll discuss that later. **Or you know how** you, you walk into [...] an office, and it's just- not your office, of course, and it's just covered with paperwork. [(< n DM > in agreement: Mhm. Mhm.) There's papers everywhere [...] and you think how on earth does this person stay organized. Erm [...] and y-you **also know how** that [...] even in your own immaculate office, sometimes you're going to the filing cabinet, and you **can't find** the piece of paper that you're looking for. Sometimes happens, doesn't it? Well, **we've got** a solution to that.

Erm, [...] which is that **we collect** all the paperwork, scan it, and deliver you back a shiny little CD, which you put onto your computer, and you've got [...] all your paperwork [...] there in front of you, easily found. So there's- there's all sorts of benefits. So you've got the **space-saving** [...] you've got [...] erm information portability, you can put all the information on your laptop, you've got **a back up**, so if there's a bar on anything, you can have a CD off-site, erm [...] you've got concurrent accessibility, so lots of people can look at their paperwork at the same time, **quickly** find stuff, I've already mentioned. You can **eliminate** potential fraud, fraud often occurs through paperwork systems, and there's **no degradation**, so whereas paperwork over time degrades [...] obviously the CD doesn't. **So** [...] **we scan for you**, erm [...] we're looking for [...] this week **accountants again**, so if anybody knows a good accountant, that might be interested in this, please let me know. We scan for you, a most reliable crew. Thank you.

S 8 < n *CB* > Good morning. My name is CB and wh- what I do I actually make people immortal. Because I'm sure we'd all love to [laughter] live forever and I actually immortalize people, through the art of [.] photography. Now what makes *my* photography different is that I don't just look to aim [.] to [.] capture the person but I try and capture the personality of the inand- of the individual, which can sometimes be a difficult thing. And that's actually what I am looking for help with. Looking for direct referrals, especially into nurseries, because I'll just show you the type of ah: thing that I actually do. That's the type of photography that I do. [showing a photograph of a child]

PDT: ooh

Nursery photography.

Problem scenario:

Now [..] I- if you hear anyone who says well the pictures that I get from *my* nursery they're the same every year. You might just as well take the picture and just transpose the head and it looks the same. But if you (laughter L want to capture the personality), if you want to capture the personality of your child, that's what I am actually offering [.] to nurseries.

Which is different from what other photographers are doing. So if you hear of anyone that would *love* to have the personality of their child captured, then please:: give me a call.

Love to get to ah talk to the [...] owners of the nursery that would love to have something that's different. So for snappy service in 2005 pick up the phone and just call C.

S 9 < n V > Good morning everybody my name's V um: I'm from a company HR. And uh we specialize in uh recruitment of office based staff, so in a way you could say that we were a matchmaker, because I actually match people uh to jobs. What makes us different is our temporary division we have a 20-minute response time, so if somebody goes sick or you need cover [...] um I'll let you know in 20 minutes if we've got a suitable applicant. On the permanent side we get back to you [...] erm in 24 hours with uh: CVs.

Problem scenario:

Um:: things to listen for are [...] people just basically slagging their staff off {A/L: oh shit [laughter]} so they're always late, they don't put things through on Friday, just basically useless . So anything like that any companies that you hear people [...] ah moan about the staff at lease, let me know.

Uh: this week I'm looking for leads [...] uh back on Hallford Drive again and in Perry Barr. And the three companies that I don't know if- I think they've just recently ah: moved there. There's Parcellforce that's now got a (), Kappa Recycling which is K A double P A and:: a company called Pharma Seal. So if anybody's got any leads into those companies on Hallford Industri- or any other companies on Hallford ah: Park then please let me know. So for staff that're all committed and smart, give me a call I'm V from H!

S 10 < n JP > Good morning everyone, my name's JP my firm is called F. And I help keep people keep their balance [polite laughter]. Our firm [...] is [...] manned by [...] accountants from uh: the big six firms, that have chosen to provide a more *personal service*, that you're unable to do [...] if you work for one of the big [...] accountants. Our unique selling points: we don't sell you what you don't need. So often people come to us [...] believing uh:: they need one service from an accountant? We are quite happy to speak to people and guide them in the right direction.

Scenario:

What to listen for: so many things, uh I'm starting a new business, I'm looking to sell my business, I'm looking to purchase a new business, any of those phrases please think of us. Please hand those people my card.

I am looking particularly for an introduction into a firm called *Baker and Finnemore*. Which is a manufacturing business based in Newhall Street just round the corner from us. Quite a large concern. Um: the:: *finance* director uh an introduction to him would be wonderful for us. So I am JP, [from] F, keeping you in balance.

S 11 < n *JC* > Hello I'm JC and I: distribute dodgy-looking w-white pills and [laughter] and touch people and get paid for it [laughter]. My- my USP is I combine two very gentle but very effective health treatments. Homeopathy and the Bowen technique and uh:: I would love to kind of get get more involved in treating people on behalf of *companies*.

Problem scenario:

So if you know anyone who's always saying, my staff are a bunch of idle useless unreliable bastards who never do enough work, then [...] maybe they m- might have a health problem [laughter]. So uh:: so if- yeah so if you know anyone like that, my name's JC and I can improve your *staff's health*, which may improve *your wealth*. Thank you.

S 12 < n *L* > **Problem scenario:**

This, this may be a great surprise for you, but I have a problem in talking to people. And, I- I- I- I know it comes as a real shock to you, but I do. And this is because people don't trust me (smirking and laughter S. /I'd go along to people, if I don't know them/, they don't feel comfortable [...] opening up. And I-, obviously I feel frustrated about that. You know, I am not worth trusting all, but they don't! (laughter M) They don't know me for /the matter/. And this is my difficulty, if I go to a manufacturer [...] they don't feel comfortable talking to me. What they'll do, they'll get me to [...] find a product, and I'll get the price, /they say that's really good/, then they'll go to their incumbent [...] and get their incumbent to get as close to that as they can. Which is not really fair.

But what I need [...] a people who deal with manufacturers, who are prepared to say, well, have a chat with this fellow, he's worthwhile having a talk to, and he's honest, and he'll be fair. Because that's what people need, they need to go and have an introduction. If I call somebody, they don't know me xxx, they won't trust me, and they won't talk to me

openly. They'll just use me as a leverage against their incumbent, which isn't fair for the incumbent. So if you know any organization who distribute, who manufacture [...] why not give them a chance and say [...] well this guy [...] could be good. And it's only by referral that I get a chance to go and talk to them. Because if I just door-knock them, they won't ever [...] seriously talk to me. It's bizarre. But that's how it goes. So if you know anybody who [...] 's got profit issues or product issues, tell them don't be sorry, pick up the phone [...] and call L.

S 13 < n *Substitute*> Good morning, P from PC but today [...] I'm MR from IC. (< n *PDT*> Oh, a:h; < n >My mind, you've lost a lot weight recently! (laughter XL) It's being married now, you know, I've found the exercise.) **Anyway.** We digress.

Problem scenario:

You know how, you're running around, making your business grow, and you always forget something. Most people run out of the office, they've got the car keys and their mobile phone, they leave the diary, leave their file facts, leave the appointments notes [...] get to the appointment, thinking /blimey ??/what am I gonna do? I don't know **who** I'm talking to, who I **need to meet** with, or exact directions. Happens to everybody. So what they do, they phone **back to the office**, and go, what was that person, I was meeting? **So** [...] **what I do** [...] is provide solutions [...] to enable you **to have** [...] all that information on here [...] links in with your office, you can have your email, you can have your contact database, and you can **find out**, what's going on, and what **you need to do**, so you're not chasing your- (< n *S/Audience* >: /??/) That's the words. Not chasing /tail / around the country. **So if you wanna learn**, how to work harder (2s) and not smarter, don't talk to us. That's M (chuckles) from IC. (laughter S) [Meeting 3: 2005-09-01]

S 14 < n *BF*> Morning everybody, BF, MP.[..]Morning everybody!

< n *Audience*> Good morning! (laughter, someone applauds)

< n *BF*> (referring to the education slot on motivation delivered by MC just before the sixty-second slot) Motivation, it's all about motivation, it's not much of it here today. Uh: [...] BF,[from] MP, we're based locally in Brindleyplace, although w- we are a national company, we've got about 1500 advisers [...] Uh as independent financial advisers who

cover areas such as mortgages, investments, pensions and insurance [...] products, life insurance, income protection, critical illness, that type of [...] really [...] really exciting stuff.

Problem scenario:

Uh [...] areas we are still massively busy, and especially as M said this morning, you wake up this morning, you open the curtains and you think, oh: my: God, I could really not do with, this overseas property purchase.

Obviously we've got RG in the group who specializes in overseas property. We- we get involved obviously to help raise the money [...] to purchase additional property both in this country [...] and abroad, so remortgaging [...] both to save money on your current mortgage, if you're just paying the lender standard variable rate, why you're doing that, because y- you're wasting money basically. Uh: [...] but what about raising some money on your current property to buy some additional property, most people in the room who own property have made money on property, so if you own two properties as opposed to owning one property, you'd have probably made more money [...] than you have. It's not [...] rocket science, it's p- p- pretty, you know, it's pretty common sense. And most people understand property. So it's an area we're still busy with, and there's almost a culture change in this country, which we'll see that [...] perpetuate moving forward. So anybody you know wants to buy property, anybody you know i-in this country, abroad, or possibly just remortgage their own property, or just review that, (if they haven't reviewed it for a while), uh: get them to give [...] me a call. So if you wanna be a winner not just a wisher, make sure you call [...] BF (chuckles).

S 15 < n DM > Good morning. DM from OP a- and I'm a *genie*. I hear you say "what does a genie do?". A genie grants you three wishes. "I wish I could save time on all my key processes I spend far too much time on them.". Now I can grant you that wish. "I wish I could reduce my costs [...] of running my business.". Now I can grant you *that* wish. "I wish I could improve the *quality* of my products and services [...] without [...] sacrificing cost.". Now I can help you- I can grant that wish also. Now [...] in terms of what to listen for, if you hear people say "I am working harder and harder and harder and I am making *less* profit.". Again (somebody) mentioned it earlier, it's all of it turnover and not profit. That's not good. P-people set up businesses to *make profit*. Uh: target clients specifically this time, if you know organizations where the *customer services department's* falling

apart. Yeah? *Bad* customer services department's-, if you know the Operations Manager or the person responsible for *customer service department*, please let me know. Large or small organizations. So, if optimal profit you wish to see, make an appointment with DM. Thank you.

13 Metaphor transcripts referred to in Chapters 5 and 6

Description:

Full transcripts of 13 speeches embedding a deliberate sports metaphor. All of these examples were delivered in a single meeting, recorded 2006-11-05 in the primary group BNI Victoria. The usage of sports metaphor was solicited by the group leader as evident from the first transcript in this section, documenting the opening of the meeting by the chair, and detailing the task that the speakers were given, as well as the rationale for doing so. The decision to request that the members implement a deliberate thematic metaphor in their conventional 60-seconds was spontaneous and in no way prompted by the researcher. Metaphor identification in the transcripts was unilateral, following the Metaphor Identification Procedure (MIP) by the Pragglejaz Group (2007). In addition to linguistic metaphor identified by MIP, direct metaphor, i.e. the source terms in similes [A is like B], hybrid and prototypical metaphors such as [A would be B/ A is B] were also tagged (italicised).

Transcription conventions specific to metaphorically used words:

Italics lexical unit marked as metaphorical (e.g., you can't *see* the *finish line*)

Bold+italics source domain term in A is ***B*** or A is like ***B*** formula (e.g., it's gonna be like a ***relay race***)

Shading deliberate sports or related metaphor

Resources used for metaphor identification:

Macmillan English Dictionary Online – a regularly updated version of the 2002 edition (Rundell and Fox, 2002), based on a systematically processed contemporary corpus of 220 million words. Macmillan “offers unique treatment of metaphor” – i.e., the dictionary includes notes specifically addressing the issue of metaphor. The 2002 edition was used in MIP guidelines (see Pragglejaz Group, 2007).

The dictionary is available from <http://www.macmillandictionary.com>.

13.1 Transcript 1: Soliciting a sports metaphor

< n C >The next part of the meeting is the sixty second slot, an opportunity for us to stand up, to reeducate other chapter members on who we are, what we're about and how we can help others to grow their uh:: business. It's an opportunity here, this is for the benefit of the visitors, for the chapter members and an- an- an any substitutes first to stand up and to give their sixty second slot, and then visitors we'll get you to uh: stand up after once you've seen how it's actually done. Now just to make it a bit uh:: I suppose just

to keep you all awake as well this morning, I wa- I wanna give you a challenge[.] for the: sixty second slot this morning. 2012. What's 2012, what's happening in 2012?

< n *PDT* > Olympics

< n *C* > Woo::! Yeah [.] there you go, the Olympics. Olympic sports. What I want you to do, in your sixty-second slot, I just want you to introduce anyhow you want, make it as cryptic or as obvious as you want, I just want you to introduce an Olympic sport into your s-sixty-second slot, Yeah? You think that's uh: easy?

< n *PDT* > = Yeah! =

< n *C* > = just use any sport =

< n *PDT* > = Liken yourself to an Olympic sport?

< n *C* > If you want to- uh [.] liken yourself to an Olympic sport, or just use a word [.] that [.] will make sure that people will be focused, well what is the Olympic sport that they've introduced into their sixty-second slot? [...] Okay? [...] Now everyone's thinking, oh please don't start with me, (laughter M) [please don't start with me]. Give me time to think about it.

< n *L* > Paul?

< n *C* > Exactly, since it was P who (laughter M) [even thought about the idea] shall we start off with mister PDT ?

< n *S/A* > Hey!

< n *C* > Okay, and then, oh, we-we're recording uh this as well, so no pressure, okay? So if you'd like to (referring to the recording device) pass the:: little doobrie firkin around =

13.2 Transcript 2: Olympic sports metaphor series

OM 1 < n *P* > Well morning everybody, now you all know that I do *loads of* fantastic printing but you know somebody, some people buy Christmas cards *around* Christmas time, and uh, we've just uh:: started to print [..] some Christmas cards here [.] for a client, and he's designed his own Christmas card, you can *use* somebody like D to do it, and it's much [..] more [.] fun [.] than buying them *off the shelf*. So this is a client that we've actually done some work for, and I just thought I might let you have a look at it, and maybe you might want to think about designing your Christmas cards [..] to send them

out [...] to your clients. Very personal, and something that people keep, something a little bit [...] different [...] for your business. I think that's not a bad idea so I'll let anybody to have a look at that. I won't pass it around but anybody can come and have a look at that when they want to. Now if I was to liken myself to uh an Olympic sport maybe it'd be [...] **archery**, and it's not because I like dressing up in velvet [...] green [...] tights. It's because [...] we [...] not only try and **hit the target**, for our clients, but we try to **hit the bull's-eye every time**. At DP we [...] **think beyond print** and we **deliver [...] beyond expectation!**

OM 2 < n SA > Good morning everybody. My name's SA and I am a [...] solicitor at YLS. Uh:: [...] sometimes coming to solicitors can feel **like a marathon** since occasionally you [...] /??/ and you can't **see the finish line**. If you come to Young & Lee Solicitors I can promise you it's gonna be **like a relay race**. We're all going to be *there* to help each other and it's gonna be **like a sprint**. So, by all means, if you've got legal issues, come and *see me* [...] SA at YLS. Thank you.

< n PDT > Oh, impressive!

< n C > *Deep brainwork!* (laughter L)

OM 3 < n I > Uh: it seems *pretty* impressive, otherwise it would have been *dead* easy, if golf was *in* the Olympics, but (laughs), and it's clearly not an /inch of ?/. Morning everyone! I from LG, uh:: where you can play *pretty* much any of the *top* 50 courses in the world [...] uh [...] uh: this week uh:: looking for [...] we've had a couple of schools in recently during the day and it's worked uh: very very well, uh: so just uh: any *leads into* [...] uh either a school teacher that can get *into* the school or- or probably more specifically the sports school's coordinator [...] uh within that school. Uhm [2s] and that's that's primarily what I am looking for this week. Uhm [1s] oh, the Olympics (smirks) uh uh [3s] the only thing I can do cryp-cryptic one that can do is [...] uh:: **/half in rudy out piked?/ followed by uh:: *double twisting Miller***, and if you can work that out then uh that's the sport (smirks) (Puzzled /scattered laughter).

OM 4 < n BD > Good morning, my name's BD and my company's called SN and this morning [...] I am proud [...] to announce [...] the issue of our first [...] newsletter [...] on the subject [...] of the Disability Discrimination Act which has been designed [...]

by *Artichoke**. Uh it's a very *dry* subject. Uh but if you know someone who works for an organization providing a service to the public and this could be cinemas, shopping centres, museums, art galleries, council offices, what have you, then they need to be very interested *in* this newsletter because there's three *key* facts in it. The first is that there's over a million people in this country who suffer *from* a serious [...] visual impairment. Secondly, people who provide such a service have had an obligation [...] to *accommodate* their needs [...] *placed on* them *in* October last year. Most of them have ignored it. So the third *key* fact people need to know [...] is that regularly *up* and *down* the country [...], people are being sued for an average of 28,000 pounds and we can put in a system of tactile and Braille signs for a lot less than that. As for an Olympic sport, well I guess we're skilled *in* the art of visual communication, so the *nearest* sport *to* us in the Olympics would be the *synchronized swimmers*. And that's why sign makers sit down like this (sits down holding his nose- -visual metaphor – followed by laughter XL)

*personalization

OM 5 < n *Una* > Oh crikey right [...] (laughs) I don't know, a few more seconds, right? (laughter M) Good morning, my name's UB and the company's called ME. We process and print films, we also *restore* old photographs. What I am looking for this week is still uh:: a *lead into* Wednesbury Art Gallery. So if any of you *have got* any contacts there, let me know. Uhm, Olympic sport [...] I would have probably said *javelin thrower*? [...] Because we start *off* with [...] a what? (laughs)...we start *off* with [...] *nothing, we aim high, and we always make the mark!* (The audience with appreciation: Wow! Hey!)

OM 6 < n *M* > Thank you very much. Morning everyone.

< n *A* > Morning.

< n *M* > I'm uhm [...] On the theme of the Olympics, I've just got my new Capital One [...] Union Jack credit card. Impressive. Everyone else I show it to thinks *sad*, but but anyway I am sort of [...] sovereignistic as you can *see from* a UK *point of view*. The- the- the reason why this actually compares to our business is that [...] IC also [...] help you [...] as a business look after your money. Uhm: the reason being is that we provide accounting solutions such as Sage and uh: Pegasus *that will make sure* that they do the work, *manage* your cashflow and effectively *look after* your business. New version of Sage is out, version 12, which

is *having* a bit of an *impact on* [...] on the market and a lot of people are *seeing* a lot of benefits *from* it. So [...] what I am looking for is people specifically that like to find out a little bit more. Uh what sort of Olympic sport [...] uh would I be uh and I can *see* [...] Paul's thinking [...] *sumo* [...] *judo*. No no no no no! No, I would agree with Una that maybe Interactive Control *would also be a javelin thrower*. Because [...] uh [...] we're *straight to the point*, we're honest and we tell people what we think which I think is very important in business. And also *we'll aim for the sky* and uh [...] *go that extra mile*.

< n PDT > You *copied* what she said!

< n MR > Well yeah, different words, different words. So for IT problems don't *pay the toll*, call MR from Interactive Control.

OM 7 < n BF > Morning everybody.

< n SA and PDT > [Morning.

< n BF > [Hello P.] BF,[from] MP. We are a firm of financial advisers, independent financial advisers, based locally at Brindley Place. We've got 1500 advisers over the country so we're fairly [...] well *spread* geographically. We get involved in areas such as mortgages, pensions, investments and insurance *based* products. This week what I'm looking for is old fogeys (someone smirks). So basically [...] parents, grandparents, senior employees, friends of the family, anybody you know who is *about* [...] to retire or has just retired. Uhm: some great products on the market investment products and also pension *based* products. So anybody you know who's thinking about buying [...] an annuity [...] tell them [...] stop! Don't buy the annuity. It is one off decision you can't [...] *reverse* that. Once you bought it, tough. That's the end of it. It will *die** with you. You die, in most cases it'll *die* it won't even *pass* to your widow. Or certainly your estate. So if you're interested in that, anybody who knows anybody who's *about* to retire and you'd rather inherit the money than [...] an insurance company [...] let me know and we can do something about it. Olympic sport [...] I *was thinking about steeple* uh *the steeple jump*= (Audience responds with puzzlement)

< n PDT > = What? =

< n SA > [What?

< n BF > **Steeple chase** even (laughter L)

< n PDT > **Steeple jump**

< n BF > **[Steeple chase.]Steeple chase.** The reason why [...] is **life's not a sprint** (looks at SA) [2s] but I do like to **get my leg over once in a while**(laughter XXL)

OM 8 < n n S > (laughing) *Follow* that! My [na-

< n C > [/?/]

< n S > Can I speak now?

< n C > Yes, sorry S.

< n S > I don't want to *turn* this into a **marathon** (laughs and looks at SA) Uh: name's SM, company's I. We've been TWF for the last ten years. We uh:: specialize in providing telecommunication solutions for business. It can be a telephone system [...] big or small. We also provide least cost routing. We're uh: only use *first-line carriers*. We do a *full* analysis of calls and we do some mobile phones. Wha- what I am looking for [...] is any company with more than one office really at the moment. *Voice over IP* is what people are looking at. It's a- it's the big *move forward*. Uh: it means you've got free calls between [...] between offices [...] or from individuals who work from home. So I am looking for small businesses that maybe one, two, three, four, five [...] branch offices, or four or five people who work from home [...] who want to save money. Uhm:: god uhm: what am I going to think of? And I guess we- we're a bit like the [...] the **ten thousand metres** [...] a-as a company. We've been *round* for ten years. Uh: we tend to *stay* with our com- with our customers for a long time. That's the best I can think of, so SM, [from] I.

OM 9 < n MP > Hi everyone.

< n C > Good morning!

< n MP > [MP,] the company- my company is [...]WSI we simplify the Internet. Now [...] yes the Olympics. We *simplify* the Internet, yes okay. We're worldwide. We're strong. So we relate ourselves to [...] the **power lifting team** I suppose. How's that one? Uh: there you go. That's the best I can do, I'm sorry guys.

< n C > No don't be sorry/???

(The audience assuming the above is the end of M's presentation claps/hesitant applause)

< n M > OK! (scattered/surprised laughter) Uh:: t-two things I wanna talk about really [...] this week [laughter] One, one is, B's just *touched on* it, the legislation that's just been *passed* [...] on Disability [...] Act. If you've got a website, it affects you as well so [...]

for for all the good reasons that B [...] B has mentioned. And secondly [...] is that the leadership [...] uh team had a meeting last week and we decided we're gonna upgrade the [...] current BNI Victoria chapter website. So if you have any ideas, you've got any suggestions, please email me and we'll *put those into the pot* [...] when we uh: start [...] re-cutting it. Okay? So if you [...] hear of a *broken* website, please call me and I'll *put* it right. Thanks.

OM 10 < n *PM* > Uh good morning, my name's PM from uh IED. Uhm:: for the last week [...] I'll be asking for [...] anybody who's going to KBB, which is Kitchens, Bedrooms and Bathrooms [2s] exciting show. Uh: [clears his throat] so if you were- it's at the end of January at the NEC. So if you come across any marketing manager [...] who's in a complete panic because he's left it too late and if you give them mark- my card I'd be g- grateful. The Olympic uh: sport would be uh [...] **pole vault**.

< n *Audience* > Yea:h (laughter)

< n *U* > (laughing):Why?

< n *P* > Why?

< n *U* > [(laughing) Yea:h]

< n *P* > I dunno I just like the pole vault. Uhm [...] no uh: because uh:: **however [...] high you were raised the bar, we'll always get over it.**

OM 11 < n *V* > Uh: good morning, my name's V. I am from a company called HR and we're *based out* in Great Barr. And we [...] like to [...] *synchronize* our candidates [...] with our clients. We have a strong team of females [...] that work in our office, uh:: who will *pull* together [...] uh and literally we *cover anything* from office juniors to secretaries and PAs. Uh:: this week I'm looking for *leads into* uh: two companies in Erdington. First one is called Shell Gas and the second one is called Hastingwood Security. So if anybody's got any leads into those uh much appreciated. Uh: so if you're looking for **staff that don't sink but swim** [...] *give me a call at H.* (laughter L)

OM 12 < n *JP* > Good morning everyone, my name is JP. I am a director of F. We are a firm of chartered accountants *based* here in the city centre. We deal with all aspects of accountancy, we're registered auditors, we deal with all of the taxes, business

and personal and we deal with all forms of corporate finance work. What I am looking for this morning are [...] uh individuals, employees, managers, working in companies [...] who [...] are looking [...] for the opportunity to [...] buy [...] that business. Either [...] there are directors retiring, shareholders selling out and these guys are looking at taking over the business [...] for themselves. We do quite a lot of management buy-out [...] type work. Uh: if you know anyone interested in looking at that sort of thing, **we guarantee we will help them over the hurdles that they face.** Thank you.

OM 13 < n *MC* > Morning, my name's *MC*, the BNLPTA. And talking about the Olympics [...] uh: *serendipity* would have it, I was recently working with a **high jumper**, uhm: because they had the difficulty- they had *set the bar*, I think it was at [...] *2 metres 42*, and *that* was their absolute *limit*. They just could not *get any higher than that*. As far as they was concerned [...] that was a limiting belief. *2 metres 42* was as *far* as they could possibly *jump*. I've no idea- I know nothing about high jump. Like I don't know whether if it's high or low. Is it high?

< n *PDT* > Yeah, /??/!=

< n *MC* > = I know nothing=

< n *PDT* > = [What *mental disease*? (laughter XL)]

< n *PDT* > *Metal bar, metal bar*, that's what *caught me up*], it's a *triangle mental bar!* (laughter XXL)

< n *MC* > It's scary, isn't it? Especially when you have to do that scissor thing. Anyway I *stray off* the subject as I often do. Uh:: and working with them I managed to get them to *meet* uh:: to *increase* that *height* [...] in [...] their following *practice* to *2 metres 46*. Doesn't *sound* a lot but it means they managed to increase their capability. So if you know someone who's *stuck in* their *ways* and wants to increase their capability but doesn't think they can, then just get them to *get in touch* with me.

My name is *MC*, BNLPTA. It's not what you think. Thank you very much.

14 Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Description: The table below contains entries from a dynamic online database to which the BNI members were asked to contribute the memorable endings (termed memory hooks) as based on their profession. These are typically one liners, often based on a synergy effect gleaned from the combined use of schemes and tropes.

Occupational Field	Memory Hook
Accounting	Let us crunch your numbers!
Accounting	We make life less taxing.
Accounting	Maintaining our client's financial health
Accounting	Sit back, relax and leave the number crunching to us.
Accounting	Your bottom line is my top priority.
Accounting	I dig for deductions
Accounting	We do books so you can do business.
Accounting	Insulation contractor
Accounting	Doing business by the book
Advertising	We rescue clients from anonymity.
Advertising	Creating works of heart.
Art	Let me turn your home into a work of art.
Art	We show your true colours.
Art	Your place our palette.
Automotive	We don't just meet by accident.
Automotive	If you need some wheels, come see me for the deals!
Automotive	We take the dent out of accident.
Business	Vision without action is daydreaming. Action without vision is a nightmare.
Business	Coaching is not just for athletes anymore
Business	Harness the winds of success
Business	Helping business owners unleash their full potential
Business	Your link to achievement
Business	When cold checks make you hot under your collar.
Business	I am really just a farmer...I grow people and businesses
Cleaning	The horse of a different color
Coach	Performance in a world of promises
Computer	Business solutions one key stroke at a time.
Computer	Creating web sites with curb appeal for builders and architects
Computer	It's not just a website, it's a digital employee!

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Computer	Taking your business to the world
Computer	We bring the world to you
Computer	We speak geek!
Computer	The cure for what fails you.
Computer	Placing your business one click away from your customers.
Dentist	No smile left behind
Dentist	We cater to cowards
Electrician	Putting power into your hands
Electrician	We have the power to make things better
Electrician	Keeping you turned on.
Employment	For the temporary relief of your labour pains.
Environmental	Breathing air is not an option, breathing clean air is.
Environmental	Either be a filter or get a filter!
Environmental	The source of the best water on earth may be your faucet.
Environmental	We can do anything with water, but walk on it.
Financial	Providing the best customer solutions, you can bank on it!
Financial	Where your banker is a partner in your business
Financial	You can bank on me to get the job done!
Financial	Check me out! I'm a credit to my profession!
Financial	Before I invest your money, I invest in you!
Financial	Doctors save lives, I save lifestyles
Financial	Giving you peace of mind amidst the chaos of life!
Financial	Guides for the journey
Financial	I'm the Corvette of financial planning – plans custom built to get you there fast
Financial	Investment advice you can bank on!
Financial	Laying the foundation for your retirement!
Financial	Taking the weeds out of your financial needs.
Financial	We work with millionaires and millionaires in training.
Financial	Your financial architect, building your dreams into reality.
Financial	Your financial guide to higher ground.
Financial	Your financial journey is important. That's why it demands one of life's most serious choices – the guide that will lead you.
Financial	If you don't want to retire, that's your business. If you do want to retire, that's my business.
Financial	Mortgage loans with your best interest in mind!
Financial	My prime interest is you.
Financial	Your interest is in our best interest

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Financial	Because your interest rates at the top of my list.
Financial	Financing your dreams without the nightmares!
Financial	I have a great interest in your future
Financial	I have your best interest in mind.
Financial	I take the moan out of loan
Financial	If you have an interest I've got a rate for you!
Financial	The first woman to save a guy \$8,000.
Financial	We do more than just close loans, we open doors
Financial	Where your interest is my interest
Financial	Your next step to a better future
Financial	Not for profit, not for charity, but for service.
Financial	Where you buy your home is your business...How you finance it is mine!
Financial	Financing dreams, without the nightmare
Financial	We help your dreams blossom into reality!
Food/Beverage	Whisking away your dinner dilemma
Food/Beverage	When we cater an event, the only thing we overlook is the city
Funeral	Creating meaning events that celebrate life
Funeral	We are the last ones to let you down
Gifts	Gratitude comes in all sizes...so do our gift baskets.
Gifts	It's a great day for a chocolate affair
Gifts	Your Wish Is Our Command
Gifts	We add a touch of glass!
Gifts	Where the plastic is fantastic
Gifts	Helping you preserve your memories and still enjoy life!
Gifts	Memory keeping at its best.
Graphic Design	Building your business, is our business.
Graphic Design	Graphics commemorating the uniqueness and dignity
Graphic Design	Super without the ficial.
Graphic Design	Where good design is clearly illustrated.
Health and Wellness	We germinate ideas for your business promotion
Health and Wellness	Your health is your most valuable asset
Health	If you want to feel bad, that is your business; if you want to feel good it is mine.

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

and Wellness	
Health and Wellness	Feeling is Believing
Health and Wellness	If you don't take care of your body, where are you going to live?
Health and Wellness	If you ignore your health, it will go away.
Health and Wellness	It's easier to stay well then get well
Health and Wellness	Live now, Age later!
Health and Wellness	We are living too short and dying too long.
Health and Wellness	Wealth without health is worthless
Health and Wellness	What is your health worth?
Health and Wellness	Aromatherapy. It makes good sense!
Health and Wellness	I will remedy what ails you!
Health and Wellness	Turn your aches into aaahhs!!
Health and Wellness	Everybody needs to be kneaded!
Health and Wellness	Helping put back what life has taken out
Health and Wellness	Helping you build a healthy foundation.
Health and Wellness	I love what I do and you will too!
Health and Wellness	Taking care of yourself isn't self-indulgence, it's self-preservation.
Health and Wellness	Where if everyone could have a massage once a month, we would have a peaceful planet.
Health and Wellness	Yo's knows your woes!
Health	If your sick and tired or being sick and tired call us

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

and Wellness	
Health and Wellness	Making the world a healthier place one life at a time.
Health and wellness	I help you keep your buns of steel from turning to rust.
Health and Wellness	Call me today for a new you tomorrow!
Health and Wellness	Changing faces one face at a time
Health and Wellness	How old you are is your business, how young you look is mine!
Health and Wellness	If a woman doesn't take the time, time will take the woman!
Health and Wellness	If I could turn back time....
Health and Wellness	I'm your personal fountain of youth
Health and Wellness	Put your best face forward.
Health and Wellness	The age you are is your business, the age you look is mine.
Chiropractic	A traditional hands-on approach to keeping your spine off your nerves
Chiropractic	Getting you back to health naturally!!
Chiropractic	Getting you back to optimal health!
Chiropractic	If your bent call Dr. Brent
Chiropractic	Optimal spine equals optimal health!
Chiropractic	We get on your nerves
Chiropractic	We'll break our backs fixing yours!
Chiropractic	I do my best work behind your back.
Chiropractic	When you want to feel fine, keep your spine aligned
Chiropractic	Changing the world, one spine at a time
Chiropractic	Chiropractic – Saving lives one spine at a time!
Chiropractic	When your spine is in line, you will feel fine!
Insurance	Helping clients secure tomorrow today
Insurance	Tracy Tran insurance company will give you peace of mind
Insurance	All your protection under one roof
Insurance	The pathway to affordable insurance
Insurance	Above the rest!

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Insurance	If you live in it or drive it we want to insure it.
Insurance	Helping you protect those you love
Insurance	We provide life after death
Insurance	Your life is my business
Insurance	From bloomers to thongs, I have what it takes to cover any assets!
Insurance	Get proper coverage now so you don't pay later.
Insurance	If you can see it and touch it – I've got you covered!
Insurance	If you don't know insurance, you should know your insurance agent.
Insurance	Our best salespeople are our customers
Insurance	Real People. Real Answers. Real Quick.
Insurance	State Farm is big on small business
Insurance	We pay cash for your crash.
Insurance	We take the rash out of crash
Insurance	We treat you like a person, not like a policy.
Insurance	Your agent for life and more
Insurance	Your key to protection.
Insurance	Yours for life
Insurance	We pay, you decide
Insurance	Your future is my business
Insurance	Help me help your business.
Interior	Tough on dirt. Gentle on carpet
Interior	We don't cut corners, we clean them
Interior	We bring the showroom to you
Interior	I'd like to floor you!
Interior	Some decisions are better made at home.
Interior	We bring the showroom to you.
Interior	We will floor you with our service.
Interior	If you care what it looks like in the end, call us in the beginning.
Interior	From floor to ceiling I've got you covered!
Interior	Honesty and integrity are the foundation upon which we build.
Interior	Making your decorating dreams come true, one room at a time!
Interior	Turning your work spaces into spaces that work.
Interior	Designing with your needs in mind.
Interior	Making your house a beautiful place to call home
Interior	We don't follow the trends...We set them
Interior	You never get a second chance to make a first impression
Interior	We not only stand behind our work, we stand on it

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Jewellery	Nature creates diamonds, I bring them to life
Jewellery	Adding a little sparkle to your life
Landscaping	Let us give your bushes a brazilian
Landscaping	Landscaping that grows with you
Landscaping	We were raised to play in the dirt
Landscaping	We really dig being in your yard
Landscaping	We water your world
Landscaping	We're in to trees
Legal	If you need someone mean, call my team
Legal	Personal attention for personal matters
Legal	Our clients make money the old fashioned way – they inherit it
Legal	My goal is justice, but I'll settle for victory
Legal	Providing advice for life
Legal	The estate planner for mortals
Legal	Don't let your personnel problems become your personal problem
Legal	We make the fine print clear.
Legal	When it's time to die, im your guy
Legal	From cuts and knicks, to sticks and bricks, we want to be your lawyer
Legal	Making “Equal Justice under Law” a reality. In today’s legal system, you can get only as much justice as you can afford.
Legal	Providing protection and peace of mind for over 30 years.
Legal	We help people protect their family and their assets.
Legal	If you don't know your rights, you don't have any.
Legal	Before your deed use your heed!
Legal	Estate planning to die for
Marketing	Truth produces trust
Marketing	Our goal is helping you exceed yours
Marketing	Tap into the flow of your business.
Marketing	Bringing promotions to a whole new realm
Marketing	Casually dressing the world
Marketing	Keeping your name on the tip of their tonge
Marketing	If you want marketing you need Clear Focus
Medical	For your whole body, your whole family, your whole life.
Medical	If you ignore your health it will go away
Medical	If you wear out your body where are you going to live
Medical	Your home for health.
Medical	True health is true wealth.

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Medical	If you want to see like a hawk and look like a movie star, see me.
Medical	Better hearing begins here
Medical	Let us help you deal with the issues in your tissues.
Mortgage	There is no substitute for experience!
Mortgage	I may not tell you what you want to hear but I will tell you what you need to hear
Non Profit	Helping kids focus on what they can do, not what they can't do
Organizing	Clearing clutter can transform your life
Organizing	For the journey from busy to effective
Funeral services	To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die.
Web design	web design – helping you increase your net profit
IT	Taking business from brick and mortar to click and order
Personal Services	Can't get there? We can!
Personal Services	We've got connections!
Pest Control	If you've tried the rest, call The Best in Pest.
Pest Control	Licensed to kill
Pest Control	The natural choice
Photography	We shoot your family so you don't have to
Photography	Creating memories in a flash
Photography	Capturing you
Photography	I aim to please
Photography	Precious lives. Priceless images
Photography	Preserving Memories Forever
Photography	Where fine portraiture is not expensive... it's priceless
Photography	Where you are the star
Photography	For the moments in your life
Photography	I paint with light
Printing	Today's treasured moments are brief. We make them last forever.
Printing	We turn moments into memories
Printing	Printing is more than just ink on paper!
Printing	The right printer. The right people.
Printing	Create. Duplicate. Deliver
Printing	Exploring possibilities, discovering excellence
Printing	Making you look good on everything
Printing	Quality in print and price

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Printing	We make your business look good on paper.
Printing	We specialize in impossible deadlines!
Printing	Where quality is a standard, not an extra
Printing	Your image is our business
Real Estate	If we can't get it, you don't need it.
Real Estate	We ink what you think, except money.
Real Estate	For a smooth closing, take the scenic route.
Real Estate	We don't work from 9 to 5 – We work from start to finish!
Real Estate	I can move you
Real Estate	You don't know what you got 'til we're gone.
Real Estate	Bringing your dreams home
Real Estate	Buy or sell, I'll serve you well
Real Estate	Focused on results
Real Estate	Give me a call...It's your move!
Real Estate	I help buy homes not just houses!!
Real Estate	Let me help you tame the market!
Real Estate	People with vision helping people with dreams
Real Estate	Rated #1 by an independent lab
Real Estate	Serves you right
Real Estate	Starr real estate helping you find your way home
Real Estate	The home team ...where you don't just get a house, you find a place to call home.
Real Estate	Let us manage your rental property, so you can better manage your time.
Real Estate	Committed to excellence-A+
Real Estate	A good referral for me is anybody who wants to live indoors!
Real Estate	Building life long relationships one home at a time
Real Estate	Everything we touch turns to sold
Real Estate	Making real estate real easy
Real Estate	The certified new home specialist
Security	We are the commercial specialist with a commercial heart
Security	We see the value in your property.
Security	We protect what matters most
Security	Your counter-crime agency
Security	Don't let your security be an alarming business
Signs	They are watching..... We are they
Signs	We are there when you aren't
Signs	A business with no sign, is a sign of no business!
Signs	Helping you improve your image

Appendix 14a: Output from the database of BNI memory hooks

Telecom	Making your company as unique as your signature
Telecom	Our signs bring you more dollar signs
Telecom	Big enough to serve you, but small enough to care
Telecom	The Lord of the ring.
Telecom	Keep in touch so you don't miss much.
Telecom	We've got people talking
Telecom	At Birch, you're barking up the savings tree!
Telecom	Are you in?
Telecom	Can your customers hear you now?
Trades	NuVox communications, because business is on the line
Trades	The frisky friendly company
Trades	We prevent, diagnose, and treat hearth problems.
Trades	If your pipes don't flow you know where to go
Trades	For roofs that stand the test of time.
Trades	Remember to call Bob the builder
Trades	Good fences make good neighbors.
Trades	First aid for your home
Trades	Life is worth fixing
Trades	Many jobs are too big but no job is too small.
Trades	Genesis – first in heting and air
Trades	We will heat you up, cool you down, get you cooking, and keep you flowin
Trades	Where a flush always beats a full house!
Trades	We'll cover your ass-ets!
Trades	If you think you are buying perfection why not order a home inspection.
Trades	My accuracy is your peace of mind
Travel	New creations.....The first thing we build is trust
Travel	More than a handyman, I am TheHandyGentleman (.com)
Travel	90% of all accidents happen in the home.....so travel
Travel	The only agency devoted to helping our clients forget what day of the week it is.
Travel	Creating vacations one client at a time
Travel	Cruz the net...but without a travel agent you're on your own.
Web Design	Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments and places that take our breath away.
Web Design	Where we go to great lengths so you can too.

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Classification	Notes	Hook																	
Accounting		Let	us	crunch	your	numbers!													
Accounting	taxing is not met according to MIP	We	make	life	less	taxing.													
Accounting	financial indicates how to interpret 'health'	Maintaining	our	client's	financial	health													
Accounting		Sit	back,	relax	and	leave	the	number	crunching	to	us.								
Accounting		Your	bottom	line	is	my	top	priority.											
Accounting		I	dig	for	deductions														
Accounting	books=metonymy	We	do	books	so	you	can	do	business.										
Accounting		Insulation	contractor																
Accounting		Doing	business	by	the	book													
Advertising		We	rescue	clients	from	anonymity.													
Advertising	heart= metonymy	Creating	works	of	heart.														
Art		Let	me	turn	your	home	into	a	work	of	art.								
Art		We	show	your	PRAVDA	colours.													
Art		Your	place	our	palette.														
Automotive		We	don't	just	meet	by	accident.												
Automotive	wheels = metonymy	If	you	need	some	wheels,	come	see	me	for	the	deals!							
Automotive		We	take	the	dent	out	of	accident.											
Business	vision = sight + imagination as metonymy	Vision	without	action	is	daydreaming.	Action	without	vision	is	a	nightmare.							
Business	clear focus on the double meaning	Coaching	is	not	just	for	athletes	anymore											
Business		Harness	the	winds	of	success													
Business	unleash only met according to Longman, not Macmillan	Helping	business	owners	unleash	their	full	potential											
Business		Your	link	to	achievement														
Business		When	cold	checks	make	you	hot	under	your	collar.									
Business	farmer = direct metaphor	I	am	really	just	a	farmer...	I	grow	people	and	businesses							
Cleaning	?	The	horse	of	a	different	color												
Coach		Performance	in	a	world	of	promises												
Computer	keystroke is metonymy	Business	solutions	one	keystroke	at	a	time.											

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Computer	curb appeal not in the dictionary, wikipedia says: "Curb appeal is attractiveness of the exterior of a residential or commercial property"; curb then has a link with builders and architects..	Creating	web	sites	with	curb	appeal	for	builders	and	architects							
Computer	website as employee, 'digital' as domain marker	It's	not	just	a	website,	it's	a	digital	employee!								
Computer		Taking	your	business	to	the	world											
Computer		We	bring	the	world	to	you											
Computer	geek is metonymy	We	speak	geek!														
Computer		The	cure	for	what	fails	you.											
Computer	click is metonymy	Placing	your	business	one	click	away	from	your	customers.								
Dentist	smile is metonymy	No	smile	left	behind													
Dentist		We	cater	to	cowards													
Electrician	power both literal and figurative	Putting	power	into	your	hands												
Electrician	power both literal and figurative	We	have	the	power	to	make	things	better									
Electrician		Keeping	you	turned	on.													
Employment		For	the	temporary	relief	of	your	labour	pains.									
Environmental		Breathing	air	is	not	an	option,	breathing	clean	air	is.							
Environmental	direct met?	Either	be	a	filter	or	get	a	filter!									
Environmental	but also reference to the literal source	The	source	of	the	best	water	on	earth	may	be	your	faucet.					
Environmental		We	can	do	anything	with	water,	but	walk	on	it.							
Financial	bank on is phrasal verb, so not m, but clearly reference to 'bank' (as verb or noun)	Providing	the	best	customer	solutions,	you	can	bank	on	it!							
Financial		Where	your	banker	is	a	partner	in	your	business								
Financial	bank on is phrasal verb, so not m, but clearly reference to 'bank' (as verb	You	can	bank	on	me	to	get	the	job	done!							

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

	or noun)																	
Financial		Check	me	out!	I'm	a	credit	to	my	profession!								
Financial		Before	I	invest	your	money,	I	invest	in	you!								
Financial		Doctors	save	lives,	I	save	lifestyles											
Financial		Giving	you	peace	of	mind	amidst	the	chaos	of	life!							
Financial		Guides	for	the	journey													
Financial	corvette direct met;	I'm	the	Corvette	of	financial	planning	-	plans	custom	built	to	get	you	there	fast		
Financial		Investment	advice	you	can	bank	on!											
Financial		Laying	the	foundation	for	your	retirement!											
Financial		Taking	the	weeds	out	of	your	financial	needs.									
Financial		We	work	with	millionaires	and	millionaires	in	training.									
Financial	financial is domain indicator	Your	financial	architect,	building	your	dreams	into	reality.									
Financial	financial is domain indicator	Your	financial	guide	to	higher	ground.											
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	Mortgage	loans	with	your	best	interest	in	mind!									
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	My	prime	interest	is	you.												
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	Your	interest	is	in	our	best	interest										
Financial	playing with noun vs verb, not met (rates/rate's) / playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one	Because	your	interest	rates	at	the	top	of	my	list.							

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

	another																	
Financial		Financing	your	dreams	without	the	nightmares!											
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	I	have	a	great	interest	in	your	future									
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	I	have	your	best	interest	in	mind.										
Financial	moan is metonymy?	I	take	the	moan	out	of	loan										
Financial	interest is countable here, whereas money sense is uncountable	If	you	have	an	interest	I've	got	a	rate	for	you!						
Financial		The	first	woman	to	save	a	guy	\$8,000.									
Financial		We	do	more	than	just	close	loans,	we	open	doors							
Financial	playing around with senses of interest, not sure whether both are metaphorically related to one another	Where	your	interest	is	my	interest											
Financial		Your	next	step	to	a	better	future										
Financial		Not	for	profit,	not	for	charity,	but	for	service.								
Financial		Where	you	buy	your	home	is	your	business...How	you	finance	it	is	mine!				
Financial		Financing	dreams,	without	the	nightmare												
Financial	dreams is WIDLII	We	help	your	dreams	blossom	into	reality!										
Food/Beverage	whisking is WIDLII: both Macmillan sense 1 and sense 2 are involved?	Whisking	away	your	dinner	dilemma												
Food/Beverage	wordplay: literal meaning is intended, while figurative meaning would cause problems	When	we	cater	an	event,	the	only	thing	we	overlook	is	the	city				

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Funeral	personification	Creating	meaning	events	that	celebrate	life										
Funeral	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	We	are	the	last	ones	to	let	you	down							
Gifts	do is implicit met for 'come in all sizes'; come still met, sizes is literal in second part of sentence	Gratitude	comes	in	all	sizes...	so	do	our	gift	baskets.						
Gifts		It's	a	great	day	for	a	chocolate	affair								
Gifts		Your	Wish	Is	Our	Command											
Gifts		We	add	a	touch	of	glass!										
Gifts		Where	the	plastic	is	fantastic											
Gifts		Helping	you	preserve	your	memories	and	still	enjoy	life!							
Gifts		Memory	keeping	at	its	best.											
Graphic Design		Building	your	business,	is	our	business.										
Graphic Design		Graphics	commemorating	the	uniqueness	and	dignity										
Graphic Design		Super	without	the	ficial.												
Graphic Design	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	Where	good	design	is	clearly	illustrated.										
Health and Wellness	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	We	germinate	ideas	for	your	business	promotion									
Health and Wellness		Your	health	is	your	most	valuable	asset									
Health and Wellness		Feeling	is	Believing													
Health and Wellness	body as house?	If	you	don't	take	care	of	your	body,	where	are	you	going	to	live?		
Health and Wellness	go away is met, but also possible personification for 'health'	If	you	ignore	your	health,	it	will	go	away.							
Health and Wellness		It's	easier	to	stay	well	then	get	well								
Health and Wellness		Live	now,	Age	later!												
Health and Wellness		We	are	living	too	short	and	dying	too	long.							
Health and Wellness		Wealth	without	health	is	worthless											
Health and Wellness	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	What	is	your	health	worth?											
Health and Wellness	sense probably metaphorical, referring to multiple senses	Aromatherapy	It	makes	good	sense!											

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

	of the noun																
Health and Wellness		I	will	remedy	what	ails	you!										
Health and Wellness		Turn	your	aches	into	aaahhs!!											
Health and Wellness	homonymy, double entendre	Everybody	needs	to	be	kneaded!											
Health and Wellness	personification	Helping	put	back	what	life	has	taken	out								
Health and Wellness	adjective healthy indicates how to interpret foundation	Helping	you	build	a	healthy	foundation.										
Health and Wellness		I	love	what	I	do	and	you	will	too!							
Health and Wellness		Taking	care	of	yourself	isn't	self-indulgence,	it's	self-preservation								
Health and Wellness		Where	if	everyone	could	have	a	massage	once	a	month,	we	would	have	a	peaceful	planet.
Health and Wellness		Yo's	knows	your	woes!												
Health and Wellness		If	your	sick	and	tired	or	being	sick	and	tired	call	us				
Health and Wellness		Making	the	world	a	healthier	place	one	life	at	a	time.					
Health and wellness		I	help	you	keep	your	buns	of	steel	from	turning	to	rust.				
Health and Wellness		Call	me	today	for	a	new	you	tomorrow!								
Health and Wellness		Changing	faces	one	face	at	a	time									
Health and Wellness		How	old	you	are	is	your	business,	how	young	you	look	is	mine!			
Health and Wellness	second 'take' is personification	If	a	woman	doesn't	take	the	time,	time	will	take	the	woman!				
Health and Wellness		If	I	could	turn	back	time....										
Health and Wellness	fountain of xxx is phrase, construction is 'XYZ'	I'm	your	personal	fountain	of	youth										
Health and Wellness		Put	your	best	face	forward.											
Health and Wellness		The	age	you	are	is	your	business,	the	age	you	look	is	mine.			
Chiropractic	literally off your nerves and also in terms of worried feelings	A	traditional	hands-on	approach	to	keeping	your	spine	off	your	nerves					
Chiropractic		Getting	you	back	to	health	naturally!!										
Chiropractic		Getting	you	back	to	optimal	health!										
Chiropractic		If	your	bent	call	Dr.	Brent										
Chiropractic		Optimal	spine	equals	optimal	health!											

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Chiropractic	literal meaning is intended, becomes 'funny' because there is also a non-literal meaning to 'get on someone's nerves'	We	get	on	your	nerves											
Chiropractic	break you back is phrase	We'll	break	our	backs	fixing	yours!										
Chiropractic	doing sth behinds someone's back is phrase, but here literally behind someone's back is meant	I	do	my	best	work	behind	your	back.								
Chiropractic		When	you	want	to	feel	fine,	keep	your	spine	aligned						
Chiropractic		Changing	the	world,	one	spine	at	a	time								
Chiropractic		Chiropractic	-	Saving	lives	one	spine	at	a	time!							
Chiropractic		When	your	spine	is	in	line,	you	will	feel	fine!						
Insurance		Helping	clients	secure	tomorrow	today											
Insurance		Tracy	Tran	insurance	company	will	give	you	peace	of	mind						
Insurance	roof is metonymy	All	your	protection	under	one	roof										
Insurance		The	pathway	to	affordable	insurance											
Insurance		Above	the	rest!													
Insurance		If	you	live	in	it	or	drive	it	we	want	to	insure	it.			
Insurance		Helping	you	protect	those	you	love										
Insurance		We	provide	life	after	death											
Insurance		Your	life	is	my	business											
Insurance		From	bloomers	to	thongs,	I	have	what	it	takes	to	cover	any	assets!			
Insurance		Get	proper	coverage	now	so	you	don't	pay	later.							
Insurance		If	you	can	see	it	and	touch	it	-	I've	got	you	covered!			
Insurance		If	you	don't	know	insurance,	you	should	know	your	insurance	agent.					
Insurance		Our	best	salespeople	are	our	customers										
Insurance		Real	People.	Real	Answers.	Real	Quick.										
Insurance	small is WIDLII, both macmillan sense 1 and 2	State	Farm	is	big	on	small	business									
Insurance		We	pay	cash	for	your	crash.										
Insurance		We	take	the	rash	out	of	crash									
Insurance		We	treat	you	like	a	person,	not	like	a	policy.						
Insurance		Your	agent	for	life	and	more										
Insurance		Your	key	to	protection.												
Insurance		Yours	for	life													
Insurance		We	pay,	you	decide												
Insurance		Your	future	is	my	business											

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Insurance		Help	me	help	your	business.												
Interior		Tough	on	dirt.	Gentle	on	carpet											
Interior	cut corners is phrase, but literal corners are intended here	We	don't	cut	corners,	we	clean	them										
Interior		We	bring	the	showroom	to	you											
Interior		I'd	like	to	floor	you!												
Interior		Some	decisions	are	better	made	at	home.										
Interior		We	bring	the	showroom	to	you.											
Interior		We	will	floor	you	with	our	service.										
Interior		If	you	care	what	it	looks	like	in	the	end,	call	us	in	the	beginning.		
Interior		From	floor	to	ceiling	I've	got	you	covered!									
Interior		Honesty	and	integrity	are	the	foundation	upon	which	we	build.							
Interior	dream is WIDLII	Making	your	decorating	dreams	come	true,	one	room	at	a	time!						
Interior		Turning	your	work	spaces	into	spaces	that	work.									
Interior		Designing	with	your	needs	in	mind.											
Interior		Making	your	house	a	beautiful	place	to	call	home								
Interior		We	don't	follow	the	trends...We	set	them										
Interior		You	never	get	a	second	chance	to	make	a	first	impression						
Interior		We	not	only	stand	behind	our	work,	we	stand	on	it						
Jewellery		Nature	creates	diamonds,	I	bring	them	to	life									
Jewellery		Adding	a	little	sparkle	to	your	life										
Landscaping	Brazilian refers to brazilian wax, in that sense met	Let	us	give	your	bushes	a	brazilian										
Landscaping		Landscaping	that	grows	with	you												
Landscaping		We	were	raised	to	play	in	the	dirt									
Landscaping	dig refers to macmillan sense 1 and 3, but I don't think there is a metaphorical relation between the two	We	really	dig	being	in	your	yard										
Landscaping		We	water	your	world													
Landscaping	into as one preposition: movement into the trees and being into sth as a phrase	We're	in	to	trees													
Legal		If	you	need	someone	mean,	call	my	team									
Legal		Personal	attention	for	personal	matters												
Legal		Our	clients	make	money	the	old	fashioned	way	-	they	inherit	it					
Legal		My	goal	is	justice,	but	I'll	settle	for	victory								
Legal		Providing	advice	for	life													
Legal		The	estate	planner	for	mortals												

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Legal		Don't	let	your	personnel	problems	become	your	personal	problem							
Legal		We	make	the	fine	print	clear.										
Legal		When	it's	time	to	die,	im	your	guy								
Legal		From	cuts	and	knicks,	to	sticks	and	bricks,	we	want	to	be	your	lawyer		
Legal		Providing	protection	and	peace	of	mind	for	over	30	years.						
Legal		We	help	people	protect	their	family	and	their	assets.							
Legal		If	you	don't	know	your	rights,	you	don't	have	any.						
Legal		Before	your	deed	use	your	heed!										
Legal	die for sth is phrase	Estate	planning	to	die	for											
Marketing		Truth	produces	trust													
Marketing	yours is implicit, referring back to 'our goal'	Our	goal	is	helping	you	exceed	yours									
Marketing		Tap	into	the	flow	of	your	business.									
Marketing		Bringing	promotions	to	a	whole	new	realm									
Marketing		Casually	dressing	the	world												
Marketing	tip of the tongue is phrase	Keeping	your	name	on	the	tip	of	their	tongue							
Marketing		If	you	want	marketing	you	need	Clear	Focus								
Medical		For	your	whole	body,	your	whole	family,	your	whole	life.						
Medical	go away is met, but also possible personification for 'health'	If	you	ignore	your	health,	it	will	go	away.							
Medical		If	you	wear	out	your	body	where	are	you	going	to	live				
Medical		Your	home	for	health.												
Medical		PRAVDA	health	is	PRAVDA	wealth.											
Medical	similes; last 'see' is met	If	you	want	to	see	like	a	hawk	and	look	like	a	movie	star,	see	me.
Medical		Better	hearing	begins	here												
Medical		Let	us	help	you	deal	with	the	issues	in	your	tissues.					
Mortgage		There	is	no	substitute	for	experience!										
Non Profit		Helping	kids	focus	on	what	they	can	do,	not	what	they	can't	do			
Organizing		Clearing	clutter	can	transform	your	life										
Organizing		For	the	journey	from	busy	to	effective									
Web design	plays with noun vs adjective sense of 'net'	web	design	-	helping	you	increase	your	net	profit							
IT		Taking	business	from	brick	and	mortar	to	click	and	order						
Personal Services		Can't	get	there?	We	can!											
Personal Services		We've	got	connections!													
Pest Control		If	you've	tried	the	rest,	call	The	Best	in	Pest.						
Pest Control		Licenced	to	kill													

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Pest Control	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	The	natural	chioce															
Photography	to' is implicit for met used 'shoot'	We	shoot	your	family	so	you	don't	have	to									
Photography	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	Creating	memories	in	a	flash													
Photography		Capturing	you																
Photography		I	aim	to	please														
Photography		Precisious	lives.	Priceless	images														
Photography		Preserving	Memories	Forever															
Photography		Where	fine	portraiture	is	not	expensive...	it's	priceless										
Photography		Where	you	are	the	star													
Photography		For	the	moments	in	your	life												
Photography		I	paint	with	light														
Printing		Todays	treasured	moments	are	brief.	We	make	them	last	forever.								
Printing		We	turn	moments	into	memories													
Printing		Printing	is	more	than	just	ink	on	paper!										
Printing		The	right	printer.	The	right	people.												
Printing		Create.	Duplicate.	Deliver															
Printing		Exploring	possibilities,	discovering	excellence														
Printing	on both literal and figurative	Making	you	look	good	on	everything												
Printing		Quality	in	print	and	price													
Printing	on paper' literal meaning intended, otherwise not positive for businesses	We	make	your	business	look	good	on	paper.										
Printing		We	specialize	in	impossible	deadlines!													
Printing		Where	quality	is	a	standard,	not	an	extra										
Printing	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	Your	image	is	our	business													
Real Estate		If	we	can't	get	it,	you	don't	need	it.									
Real Estate		We	ink	what	you	think,	except	money.											
Real Estate		For	a	smooth	closing,	take	the	scenic	route.										
Real Estate		We	don't	work	from	9	to	5	-	We	work	from	start	to	finish!				
Real Estate	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	I	can	move	you														
Real Estate		You	don't	know	what	you	got	'til	we're	gone.									
Real Estate		Bringing	your	dreams	home														

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Real Estate		Buy	or	sell,	I'll	serve	you	well										
Real Estate		Focused	on	results														
Real Estate	both change in place where you live/work and sth that you do to achieve an aim	Give	me	a	call...It's	your	move!											
Real Estate		I	help	buy	homes	not	just	houses!!										
Real Estate		Let	me	help	you	tame	the	market!										
Real Estate		People	with	vision	helping	people	with	dreams										
Real Estate		Rated	#1	by	an	independent	lab											
Real Estate		Serves	you	right														
Real Estate		Starr	real	estate	helping	you	find	your	way	home								
Real Estate		The	home	team	...where	you	don't	just	get	a	house,	you	find	a	place	to	call	
Real Estate		Let	us	manage	your	rental	property,	so	you	can	better	manage	your	time.				
Real Estate		Committed	to	excellence-A+														
Real Estate		A	good	referral	for	me	is	anybody	who	wants	to	live	indoors!					
Real Estate		Building	life	long	relationships	one	home	at	a	time								
Real Estate		Everything	we	touch	turns	to	sold											
Real Estate		Making	real	estate	real	easy												
Real Estate		The	certified	new	home	specialist												
Security		We	are	the	commercial	specialist	with	a	commercial	heart								
Security	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here	We	see	the	value	in	your	property.										
Security		We	protect	what	matters	most												
Security		Your	counter-crime	agency														
Security	alarming plays with adjective vs noun (alarm)	Don't	let	your	security	be	an	alarming	business									
Signs		They	are	watching.....	We	are	they											
Signs		We	are	there	when	you	aren't											
Signs		A	business	with	no	sign,	is	a	sign	of	no	business!						
Signs	both literal and figurative meaning are intended here?	Helping	you	improve	your	image												
Telecom		Making	your	company	as	unique	as	your	signature									
Telecom		Our	signs	bring	you	more	dollar	signs										
Telecom		Big	enough	to	serve	you,	but	small	enough	to	care							
Telecom	ring is bell sound, no relationship between bell sound and jewellery	The	Lord	of	the	ring.												

Appendix 14b: BNI memory hooks analyzed for metaphor (MIPVU method)

Telecom		Keep	in	touch	so	you	don't	miss	much.								
Telecom		We've	got	people	talking												
Telecom		At	Birch,	you're	barking	up	the	savings	tree!								
Telecom		Are	you	in?													
Telecom		Can	your	customers	hear	you	now?										
Trades		NuVox	communications	because	business	is	on	the	line								
Trades		The	frisky	friendly	company												
Trades		We	prevent,	diagnose,	and	treat	hearth	problems.									
Trades		If	your	pipes	don't	flow	you	know	where	to	go						
Trades		For	roofs	that	stand	the	test	of	time.								
Trades		Remember	to	call	Bob	the	builder										
Trades		Good	fences	make	good	neighbors.											
Trades		First	aid	for	your	home											
Trades		Life	is	worth	fixing												
Trades		Many	jobs	are	too	big	but	no	job	is	too	small.					
Trades		Genesis	-	first	in	heting	and	air									
Trades	mets probably also refer to literal meanings	We	will	heat	you	up,	cool	you	down,	get	you	cooking,	and	keep	you	flowin	
Trades	Not sure about the mets here.; clearly cards game terms are involved	Where	a	flush	always	beats	a	full	house!								
Trades		We'll	cover	your	ass-ets!												
Trades		If	you	think	you	are	buying	perfection	why	not	order	a	home	inspection.			
Trades		My	accuracy	is	your	peace	of	mind									
Travel		New	creations.....The	first	thing	we	build	is	trust								
Travel		More	than	a	handyman,	I	am	TheHandyGentleman	(.com)								
Travel		90%	of	all	accidents	happen	in	the	home.....so	travel							
Travel		The	only	agency	devoted	to	helping	our	clients	forget	what	day	of	the	week	it	is.
Travel		Creating	vacations	one	client	at	a	time									
Travel		Cruz	the	net...	but	without	a	travel	agent	you're	on	your	own.				
Web Design	can is implicit met	Where	we	go	to	great	lengths	so	you	can	too.						
Web Design		We	won't	hit	you	but	we	will	get	you	hits.						
Writing Services		Your	sure	bet	for	the	Internet										
Window Cleaning		The	only	business	that	goes	up	and	down	everyday!							
Writing Services		A	style	for	every	point	of	view									

15 Survey design copy

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

1. INTRODUCTION

The corporate logo and the name of the Greek goddess personifying victory, Nike, is an excellent example of a metaphor used as a highly effective branding tool. This questionnaire focuses on the context of a business networking organization, and presents thirteen 60-second speeches in which the speakers attempt to position their business as an Olympic sport. Please read the transcripts and evaluate the use of individual sports metaphors against a set of five criteria. The criteria in question are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and resulting persuasion.

The software used to collate responses to this questionnaire provides for confidentiality of replies, however if you would be prepared to be contacted to participate further there is an option to indicate this and provide contact details in the final section.

Responses to the survey will be used collectively to inform a research project on persuasive strategies predominant in short business presentations.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

2. ARCHERY METAPHOR

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

< Paul > Well morning everybody, now you all know that I do loads of fantastic printing but you know somebody, some people buy Christmas cards around Christmas time, and uh, we've just uh: started to print [...] some Christmas cards here [...] for a client, and he's designed his own Christmas card, you can use somebody like Dave to do it, and it's much [...] more [...] fun [...] than buying them off the shelf. So this is a client that we've actually done some work for, and I just thought I might let you have a look at it, and maybe you might want to think about designing your Christmas cards [...] to send them out [...] to your clients. Very personal, and something that people keep, something a little bit [...] different [...] for your business. I think that's not a bad idea so I'll let anybody to have look at that. I won't pass it around but anybody can come and have a look at that when they want to. Now if I was to liken myself to uh an Olympic sport maybe it'd be [...] archery, and it's not because I like dressing up in velvet [...] green [...] tights. It's because [...] we [...] not only try and hit the target, for our clients, but we try to hit the bull's-eye every time.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

3. MARATHON, SPRINT AND RELAY RACE

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

< Salvia > Good morning everybody. My name's Salvia Akram and I am a [...] solicitor at Young & Lee Solicitors. Uh: sometimes coming to solicitors can can feel like a marathon since occasionally you, and you can't see the finish line. If you come to Young & Lee Solicitors I can promise you it's gonna be like a relay race. We're all going to be there to help each other and it's gonna be like a sprint. So, by all means, if you've got legal issues, come and see me [...] Salvia Akram at Young & Lee Solicitors. Thank you.
you.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative Fairly creative Conventional Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning Challenging Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. ? SPORTS METAPHOR

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

< Ivan > Uh it seems pretty impressive, otherwise it would have been dead easy if golf was in the *Olympics*, but [laughs], and it's clearly not an (inch of). Morning everyone. Ivan from Living Golf, uh: where you can play pretty much any of the top 50 courses in the world [1s] um [1s] uh: this week uh: looking for we've had a couple of schools in recently during the day and it's worked uh: very very well, uh: so just uh: any leads into [...] uh either a school teacher that can get into the school or or probably more specifically the sports school's coordinator [...] uh within that school. Uhm [2s] and that's that's primarily what I am looking for this week. Uhm [1s] oh, the Olympics [smirks] uh uh [3s] the only thing I can do cryp-cryptic one that can do is [...] uh: {[ac] half in (rudy out piked)} followed by uh: double twisting Miller, and if you can work that out then uh that's the sport.

1. Originality
How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

Very creative Fairly creative Conventional Cliché

2. Complexity
How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

Difficult to grasp intended meaning Challenging Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection
How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business

Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement

Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory
How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

It makes the presentation highly memorable

It helps to increase the retention

It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. SYNCHRONIZED SWIMMING

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Bill> Good morning, my name's Bill Dunphy and my company's called *Signs Now and this morning* [...] I am proud [...] to announce [...] the issue of our first [...] newsletter [...] on the subject [...] of the Disability Discrimination Act which has been designed [...] by Artichoke. Uh it's a very dry subject. Uh but if you know someone who works for an organization providing a service to the public and this could be cinemas, shopping centres, museums, art galleries, council offices, what have you, then they need to be very interested in this newsletter because there's three key facts in it. The first is that there's over a million people in this country who suffer from a serious [...] visual impairment. Secondly, people who provide such a service have had an obligation [...] to accommodate their needs [...] placed on them in October last year. Most of them have ignored it. So the third key fact people need to know [...] is that regularly up and down the country [...], people are being sued for an average of 28,000 pounds and we can put in a system of tactile and Braille signs for a lot less than that. As for an Olympic sport, well I guess we're skilled in the art of visual communication, so the nearest sport to us in the Olympics would be the synchronized swimmers. And that's why sign makers sit down like this. [sits down holding his nose]

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative Fairly creative Conventional Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning Challenging Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

6. JAVELIN THROWER 1

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Una > Oh crikey right [laughs] I don't know, a few more seconds, right? [laughter] Good morning, my name's Una Brown and the company's called Monochrome Express. We process and print films, we also restore old photographs. What I am looking for this week is still uh: a lead into Wensbury Art Gallery. So if any of you have got any contacts there, let me know. Uhm, Olympic sport [...] I would have probably said javelin thrower? [...] Because we start off with [...] a what? [laughter]... we start off with [...] nothing, we aim high, and we *always* make the mark.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
 Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
 Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
 It helps to increase the retention
 It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
 Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
 Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

7. JAVELIN THROWER 2

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Mark >	Thank you very much. Morning everyone. I'm uhm on the theme of the Olympics I've just got my new Capital One [...] Union Jack credit card. Impressive. Everyone else I show it to thinks "sad", but but anyway I am sort of [...] sovereignistic as you can see from a UK point of view. The the the reason why this actually compares to our business is that [...] interactive control <i>also</i> [...] help you [...] as a business look after your money. Uhm: the reason being is that we provide accounting solutions such as <i>Sage</i> and uh: <i>Pegasus</i> that will make sure that they do the work, manage your cashflow and effectively look after your business. New version of Sage is out, version 12, which is having a bit of an impact on [...] on the market and a lot of people are seeing a lot of benefits from it. So [...] what I am looking for is people specifically that like to find out a little bit more. Uh what sort of <i>Olympic sport</i> [...] uh would I be uh and I can see [...] Paul's thinking "sumo" "judo". No no no no no. No, I would agree with Una that maybe Interactive Control would also be a javelin thrower. <i>Because</i> [...] uh [...] we're straight to the point, we're honest and we tell people what we think which I think is very important in business. <i>And also</i> we'll aim for the sky and uh [...] go that extra mile.
<Paul DT>	You copied what she said!
<Mark>	Well yeah, different words, different words. So for IT problems don't pay the toll, call Mark Roberts from Interactive Control.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

8. STEEPLE JUMP/ STEEPLE CHASE

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Bryan> Morning everybody.
 <A> = *Morning*
 <Bryan> = Hello Paul. Bryan Fisher, Milfield Partnership. We are a firm of financial advisers, *independent* financial advisers, based locally at Brindley Place. We've got 1500 advisers over the country so we're fairly [.] well spread geographically. We get involved in areas such as mortgages, pensions, investments and insurance based products. This week what I'm looking for is *old* fogeys [someone smirks]. So basically [.] parents, grandparents, senior employees, friends of the family, anybody you know who is *about* [.] to retire or has just retired. Uhm: some great products on the market investment products and also *pension* based products. So anybody you know who's thinking about buying [.] an *annuity* [1s] tell them [..] "*stop*". Don't buy the annuity. It is one off decision you can't [.] reverse that. Once you bought it tough. ([ac] That's the end of it. It will die with you. You die, in most cases it'll die it won't even pass to your widow). Or certainly your estate. So if you're interested in that, anybody who knows anybody who's *about* to retire and you'd rather inherit the money than [.] an insurance company [.] let me know and we can do something about it. Olympic sport [..] I was thinking about steeple uh the steeple jump [general puzzlement]

<Paul DT> What?
 <S/A> = what?
 <Bryan> Steeple chase even
 [laughter]
 <Paul DT> Steeple jump
 <Bryan> = Steeple chase. Steeple chase. The reason why [..] is business's not a sprint [2s] but I do like to get my leg over once in a while.
 [laughter]

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative Fairly creative Conventional Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning Challenging Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

9. TEN THOUSAND METRES

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Steve>	([laughing] follow that!) My na- =
<Clive>	=(?)=
<Steve>	Can I speak now?
<Clive>	Yes, sorry Steve.
<Steve>	I don't want to turn this into marathon [laughs] Uh: name's Steve Mitra, company's Interlinks. We've been TWF for the last ten years. We uh: specialize in providing telecommunication solutions for business. It can be a telephone system [...] big or small. We also provide lease cost routing. We're uh: only use first-line carriers. We do a full analysis of calls and we do some mobile phones. Wha- what I am looking for [...] is any company with more than one office really at the moment. Voice over IP is what people are looking at. It's a- it's the big move forward. Uh: it means you've got free calls between [...] between offices [...] or from individuals who work from home. So I am looking for small businesses that maybe one, two, three, four, five [...] branch offices, or four or five people who work from home [...] who want to save money. Uhm: god uhm: what am I going to think of? And I guess we- we're a bit like the [...] the ten thousand metres [...] a-as a company. We've been round for ten years. Uh: we tend to stay with our com- with our customers for a long time. That's the best I can think of, so Steve Mitra, Interlink. XXXXXX

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

10. POWERLIFTING

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Mal>	Hi everyone
<Clive>	==good morning
<Mal>	== Mal Purewal, the company- my company is [...] {[ac] WSI we simplify the Internet}. Now [1s] yes the Olympics. We simplify the Internet, yes okay. We're worldwide. We're strong. So we relate ourselves to [...] the power lifting team I s'pose. How's that one? {[p] Uh: there you go). That's the best I can do, I'm sorry guys.
<Mal>	No don't be sorry ()
	[(X-X-X-X-X) okay]
	[scattered/surprised laughter]
<Mal>	Uh: t-two things I wanna talk about really [...] this week [laughter] One, one is, Bill's just touched on it, the legislation that's just been passed [...] on Disability [...] Act. If you've got a website, it affects you as well so [...] for all the good reasons that Bill [...] Bill has mentioned. And <i>secondly</i> [...] is that the leadership [...] uh team had a meeting last week and we decided we're gonna <i>upgrade</i> the [...] current BNI Victoria chapter website. So if you have any ideas, you've got any suggestions, please email me and we'll put those into the pot [...] when we uh: start [...] recutting it. Okay? So if you [...] hear of a broken website, please call me and I'll put it right. Thanks. XXXXXX

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
 Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
 Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

11. POLE VAULT

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Paul>	Uh good morning, my name's Paul Moore from uh Icon Exhibitions and Display. Uhm:: for the last week [...] I'll be asking for [...] anybody who's going to KBB, which is Kitchens, Bedrooms and Bathrooms [2s] exciting show. Uh: [clears his throat] so if you were- it's at the end of January at the NEC. So if you come across any marketing manager [...] who's in a complete panic because he's left it too late and if you give them mark- my card I'd be g- grateful. The Olympic uh: sport would be uh [...] pole vault.
<A>	Yeah
<Una>	[(laughing) Why?]
<Paul>	==Why?
<Una>	== [(laughing) Yeah:h]
<Paul>	[(p)[ac] I dunno I just like the pole vault). Uhm [...] no uh: because uh: however [...] high you were raised the bar, we'll always get over it.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
 Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
 Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
 It helps to increase the retention
 It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

12. TEAM/ SWIM

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Vicky> Uh: good morning, my name's Vicky. I am from a company called Hart Recruitment and we're based out in Great Barr. And we [.] like to [.] synchronize our candidates [.] with our clients. We have a strong team of females [..] that work in our office, uh: who will pull together [..] uh and literally we cover anything from office juniors to secretaries and PAs. Uh: this week I'm looking for leads into uh: two companies in Erdington. First one is called *Shell Gas* and the second one is called *Hastingwood Security*. So if anybody's got any leads into those uh much appreciated. Uh: so if you're looking for staff that don't sink but swim [hesitation] give me a call at Hart.
[laughter]

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
 Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
 Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
 It helps to increase the retention
 It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

13. HURDLES

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Jean> Good morning everyone, my name is Jean Powell. I am a Director of Feltons. We are a firm of chartered accountants based here in the city centre. We deal with all aspects of accountancy, we're registered auditors, we deal with all of the taxes, business and personal and we deal with all forms of corporate finance work. What I am looking for this morning are [...] uh individuals, employees, managers, working in companies [...] who [...] are looking [...] for the *opportunity* to [...] buy [...] that business. Either [...] there are directors retiring, shareholders selling out and these guys are looking at taking over the business [...] for themselves. We do quite a lot of management buy-out [...] type work. Uh: if you know anyone interested in looking at that sort of thing, we guarantee we will help them over the hurdles that they face. Thank you.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative
 Fairly creative
 Conventional
 Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning
 Challenging
 Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
 Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
 Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
 It helps to increase the retention
 It has no effect on the overall retention

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

14. HIGH JUMP

Please read the transcript and evaluate the use of sports metaphor against a set of five criteria. These are originality, complexity, relevance of the metaphor in use, its effect on memory and persuasion.

<Matt> Morning, my name's Matt Caulfield, the Birmingham NLP Training Academy. And talking about the Olympics [...] uh: serendipity would have it, I was recently working with a high jumper, uh: because they had the difficulty- they had set the bar, I think it was at [...] 2 metres 42, and that was their absolute limit. They just could not get any higher than that. As far as they was concerned [...] that was a *limiting belief*: 2 metres 42 was as far as they could possibly jump. I've no idea- ([ac] I know nothing about high jump. Like I don't know whether if it's high or low). Is it high?

<Paul DT> Yeah, ()

<Matt> I know nothing

<Paul DT> ()

[laughter]

<Paul DT> What mental disease?

[laughter]

<Paul DT> Metal bar, metal bar, that's what caught me up, it's a triangle *mental bar*.
[laughter]

<Matt> It's scary, isn't it? Especially when you have to do that scissor thing. Anyway I stray off the subject as I often do. Uh:: and working with them I managed to get them to meet uh: to increase that height [...] in [...] their following practice to 2 metres 46. Doesn't sound a lot but it means they managed to *increase their capability*. So if you know someone who's stuck in their ways and wants to increase their capability but doesn't think they *can*, then just get them to get in touch with me. My name is Matthew Caulfield, Birmingham NLP Training Academy. It's not *what you think*. Thank you very much.

1. Originality

How original and/ or creative is the use of the metaphor in this extract?

- Very creative Fairly creative Conventional Cliché

2. Complexity

How difficult is it to understand this metaphor? How covert/ overt is the metaphor in use?

- Difficult to grasp intended meaning Challenging Fairly overt

3. Contextual Relevance/ Connection

How relevant is the metaphor in use to the business activity/ situation which it should represent?

- Appears to have been chosen randomly, does not paint any pictures which would reflect the nature or the key values of the speaker's business
- Creates a clear link between the sport and business activity, creates a more vivid picture than if the speaker used a simple statement
- Creates a very good awareness of the business in question, positions the business clearly

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

4. Effect on Memory

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the retention of the 60-sec slot?

- It makes the presentation highly memorable
- It helps to increase the retention
- It has no effect on the overall retention

5. Overall Persuasiveness

How would you rate this metaphor in terms of its effect on the overall persuasiveness of the 60-sec slot?

- Enhances the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and the credibility of the speaker
- Has neither a positive nor negative effect on the overall persuasiveness of the presentation
- Lowers the overall persuasiveness of the presentation and negatively impacts on the credibility of the speaker

6. Please take the opportunity to provide any other comments you think would be relevant.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

15. CORE VALUES

This is a summary of core values, presenters appear to subscribe to when comparing their business to an Olympic sport.

Value/Unique selling point (USP)	USP expressed via sports metaphor	Number of references in the sample
Overcoming obstacles/limits	steeple chase pole vault hurdles high jump	4
Teamwork/Customer care and support	relay race hurdles nondescript team sport	3
Outstanding performance	javelin thrower (2x)	2
Perfection in service	archery synchronized swimming	2
Speed and ease of delivery	sprint	1
Reliability and stability	10 000 m race	1

Figure 1: Core values addressed in positioning individual businesses

1. Do you agree with this interpretation of core values?

Yes

No

2. If you answered 'No' to the last question, please specify which metaphors you see differently. What are the core values which in your opinion these metaphors represent?

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

16. OVERALL RATING

1. Which metaphor did you appreciate most? Why?

2. Which metaphor can you remember best? Why?

3. Which metaphor did you appreciate least? Why?

4. Which speaker are you most likely to identify with based on the core values s/ he promoted via metaphor?

5. Which speaker are you least likely to identify with based on the core values s/ he promoted via metaphor?

6. Factors Influencing Effectiveness

Are there any other factors which in your opinion influence the effectiveness of metaphor in a presentation? Effective in this context implies that the use of metaphor increases the level of attention and/ or enhances the overall persuasiveness.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

17. INTEREST IN OUTCOMES

1. Are you interested in learning the outcomes of this questionnaire?

Yes No

2. If you answered 'Yes' to the last question, which option would you prefer?

I would prefer to have the general outcomes of this study presented to me in one of the BNI meetings

I would like the findings to be sent to my email address

Email address

3. If you answered 'No' to the last question, please specify why.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

18. FURTHER PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

1. Can I approach you in the future for your view on other facets of communication within the BNI Victoria, on the degree of your own involvement, and on the overall group dynamics?

Yes

No

2. If you answered 'No' to the last question, please specify the reasons.

Olympics Metaphor as a Positioning Device in the BNI 60-sec

19. THANK YOU

Your input is very valuable and important to the research on the use of metaphor in the business community. Thank you very much for your time in participating in this survey.