Original Article

Weinstein's Scandal: Contrastive Study on Intensification in American and Spanish Opinion Columns

Conchi Hernández-Guerra [iD]

Abstract
The aim of this paper is to make a qualitative analysis of the intensifiers used in the Spanish and American opinion columns. The topic chosen has been Weinstein's scandal and the publications during next weeks by different sources. The method followed will be Albelda Marco (2014) in which she divides intensifiers into lexical, semantical and expressions. Euphemisms will also be considered due to the relationship it has in the corpus with intensification. Conclusions try to explain the uneven number of examples in both nations and the reasons.

Keywords
opinion, columns, intensification, contrastive, study

Introduction

Harvey Weinstein's trial has been one of the most mass media events in the last decades, not only for the relevance of the character himself and the seriousness of the accusations, but also, and consequently, because of the worldwide repercussion in the national and international media. The reason for his prosecution is also a keystone currently and has reopened a sensitive topic. Every single country has contributed different viewpoints and perspectives to the case. As expected, the cultural background is reflected in the bias and relevant points highlighted.

University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain

Corresponding Author:
Conchi Hernández-Guerra, c/ Pérez del Toro, 1, 35004 Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Spain.
Email: conchi.hernandez@ulpgc.es

This event took place in Hollywood. One of the most remarkable moguls, thanks to whom lots of Oscars and money had been earned, was accused of perpetrating sexual abuse to different actresses during decades. Many questions, comments and interpretations have arisen from different agents. The purpose of this paper is to analyse those personal viewpoints and the degree of intensification provided in the media of the United States and Spain in order to conclude whether there are remarkable differences or not.

The choice of these two countries is not accidental. The first one is where these events happened so the implication should be high, while the second is an overseas country without a close relationship with the events. For this, opinions should be more detached and objective a priori.

Aim

As stated above, a contrastive analysis of intensification in the opinion columns is the aim of the paper. The choice of the corpus has not been unintentionally. On the contrary, firstly, opinion columns provide a personal impromptu to the well-known piece of news. As the name itself indicates, they give the subjective opinion or personal viewpoint of the facts named. Secondly, the study of intensification in both countries will reveal facts and details on the different cultural backgrounds, critical layers and perception of each country on the pieces of news analysed.

Stating differently, the purpose of this paper is to make a discursive analysis of the intensification used in these opinion articles. That is, to what extent authors are dispassionate or involved in the events portrayed. By the use of intensification, events can be exaggerated and manipulated.

We shall also include the use of euphemisms. This element, considered an intensifier for some scholars, also plays a part in this research as a tool used by the journalists in order to be ironic. That is, in order to avoid offensive descriptions, wit is the resource used.

Literature

Opinion Columns

Opinion columns have been the object of study from a linguistic perspective on many occasions. The reason is the nature of the opinion columns themselves. Broadly speaking, there are several classifications related to the different news in a newspaper. Accordingly, Bell (1991) classifies them into hard news, soft news and editorials. The main difference is that the first one focuses on the news themselves and, consequently, they must be as objective as possible. Secondly, soft news includes style or fashion. Thirdly, editorials include opinion columns and all sort of argumentative publications. By them, authors feel free to express their opinion about an event. As Ikmi and Adnan (2020, 110) states:

> News texts serve to report an event, while opinion texts aim at delivering an opinion (which tends to be more subjective) on an event or issue. Having distinct text

characteristics and functions, therefore, opinion texts might have different linguistic features as well as different verb choices.

Another revealing aspect in the opinion columns is the authorship of those texts. They may be journalists or writers with no working relation with the newspaper but whose opinion is considered to be approved by the readers of the media (Babapour & Kuhi, 2018; Greenberg, 2000). Previous studies have shown that readers enjoy reading a "reliable" voice that speaks about the events in first person rather than a list of details of what happened (Fowler, 1991, p. 221). Furthermore, opinion columns tend to obtain and strengthen much of the readers' knowledge and beliefs (Van Dijk, 1988).

Persuasion is another of the purposes of these columns and the strategies to fulfill it have also been of interest to the researchers. Related to this, Connor says about these publications that they are: "some of the most adequate examples of persuasive writings in all countries, setting standards for written persuasion" (1996, p. 144). Díaz Rojo (2009, p. 208) provides some more information when he states:

The personal column, also called an opinion column or an entertaining style article, is an opinion genre characterized by the predominance of the creative, the imaginative and the personal, the ideological self, impressionism, subjectivity, aesthetic pleasure, literary beauty, provocative intention, intimacy and emotionality. Its purpose is to judge, assess, evaluate and interpret reality through explicit persuasion, without renouncing passion, from the personal perspective, the experiences and the biographical experience of the columnist, who is usually a writer or journalist of literary fame or with an ethos (character, mood) that facilitates the reader's identification with the text. (my translation)

This author undertakes a study with Spanish newspapers but states that the biggest difference with the States is that in Spain the opinion columns are less frequent. In any case, in Spain they are more personal and subjective while in the States explanations are expected (Casals Carro, 2000; Díaz Rojo, 2009). Related to this, some other studies have been undertaken under the umbrella of the opinion columns in English and Spanish. So, we have Pérez-Hernández (2016), who has drawn her study on a cross-cultural gender analysis. Also, Marín-Arresse (2007) has studied the commitment and subjectivity in opinion columns written in Spanish and English newspapers.

In all the examples found, we have noticed no distinction between British and American newspapers, so the language itself is what is considered. That is, the aspects studied have a wider scope than the one proposed here. As stated before, we have based or study on a specific piece of news in order to narrow the data and expressing the opinion on a specific topic worldwide known. The personal approach is a core element in our research.

With reference to the literature published on contrastive analysis some examples can be reviewed. Just to cite two, Dafouz-Milne (2008) investigated the opinion columns of two elite newspapers: The Spanish El País and the British The Times. In this case, they studied the metadiscourse. The results revealed that the Spanish writers applied more

textual metadiscourse elements and the British writers deployed more interpersonal markers.

> The second example has been provided by Noorian and Biria (2010). They examined the role of interpersonal metadiscourse in opinion articles written by American and Iranian EFL journalists in two elite newspapers in the United States and Iran, The New York Times and Tehran Times. The findings indicated that the differences were not so straight-forward as in the previous example but there were significant differences concerning the occurrences of interpersonal markers, particularly in the case of commentaries. (Babapour & Kuhi, 2018)

Intensification

Intensification is produced when there is a reinforcement in the expression (Renkema, 2001). Zhiber and Korotina (2019, p. 71) also quotes Beltrama and Bochnak (2015) when he says that "intensification helps highlight what is being said and is related to the basic human need to make an impact to the interlocutor." Zhiber bases his study on the different layers of intensification in spoken and written British and American English. The written expression is analysed in the news. With this study he reached two conclusions. On one hand, the decline in intensification is higher as the formality of the register increases; and, secondly, that an overuse of intensifying adverbs negatively affects the credibility of a legal argument.

Speaking about intensification is closely linked to speaking about evidential and epistemic markers. "Whereas epistemicity involves the speaker's or writer's evaluation, judgment and degree of commitment attached to the truth-value of a piece of information, evidentiality involves the speaker's or writer's assertion of the source and kind of evidence at their disposal." (González et al., 2017, p. 68) Evidential markers signal the source of the information. So, in a way, the speaker detaches himself from the information given; on the other hand, the epistemic value is the degree of certainty of the speaker with regard to the message (Sanromán Vilas, 2020). These features are usually found in the lexis and semantics, but not only. The context and other expressions must be considered.

Taken both as elements of intensification, there have been long discussions about the pertinence of including epistemicity and evidentiality as one set or, on the contrary, contrasting them due to the fact that one expresses opinion and the other, facts. Indeed, Palmer stated:

> Epistemic modality and evidential modality are concerned with the speaker's attitude to the truth-value or factual status of the proposition and may thus be described as 'propositional modality'. The basic difference between epistemic modality and evidential modality is that with epistemic modality speakers make judgments about the factual status of the proposition, whereas with evidential modality they indicate what the evidence is that they have for it. (Palmer, 2001, p. 24)

This distinction is useful assuming that we want to prove the intentionality of the author and make a distinction between fact and opinion (i.e., Alonso Almeida & Álvarez Gil, 2019, among many others).

The study of intensification is always interesting for several reasons. One could be for what it reveals about the culture in a country. Another attractiveness is that intensification can also be analysed from different perspectives and all of them complement each other. As a demonstration, Zhiber and Korotina (2019), for instance, states that "intensifying adverbs […] possess grammatical properties, although are insufficiently defined unless we describe their functional significance" (70). For this, every perspective needs its classification (Albelda Marco, 2014).

But, interestingly, researchers have dedicated more pages to attenuation than to intensification (Albelda Marco 2011, 2012; Cabedo Nebot, 2018; Samper-Hernández, 2013, among others). It seems much more popular in this genre trying not to overreact the opinion but to mitigate the information provided. The large number of examples of linguistic attenuation in the written texts found state this assertion. Just to cite a few examples, Samper-Hernández (2013) distinguishes the attenuation between *modus,* how it is said; and *dictum,* what it is said. Her study was done with an academic corpus. She distinguishes between attenuation and politeness. Cabedo Nebot (2018) categorizes attenuation in three types of mitigators: bushes (soften the propositional content), hedges (deny the speech act), and shields (establish a distance between the sender and the message). The study of mitigators has been the topic of long research for decades. It is remarkable Torrrent's linguistic attenuation study in Spoken Spanish (2013), just to name some recent examples.

In this paper we shall base our research following Albelda Marco's classification on lexical, semantic and expressions (2014). To do this, we have done a table based on Briz Gómez (1998) that later was supported by Mancera Rueda (2009) and finally improved by Albelda Marco (2014). This table shows the examples in our corpus of nouns, adjectives plus nouns, verbs, and examples of exaggeration, repetition, and others like metaphors.

Euphemisms

Euphemisms, as discourse analysts recognize, is a recurrent tool in order to veil the truth and "camouflage the reality", replacing rude words by neutral ones (Shemshurenko & Shafigullina, 2015). For this, the study of this resource has been widely used to analyse socio-political articles and its relationship with political correctness. The authors named above define euphemism as the "language phenomenon that is permitted by norms of verbal behaviour, socially acceptable and used for replacing forbidden, improper and incorrect words, or a taboo." (2) Related to this, Crespo Fernández (2008) wrote an interesting paper on the use of euphemisms and dysphemisms in sex-related terms and taboos along the recent centuries. In her conclusions, metaphors related to food and animals are widely used.

Also, euphemisms have traditionally been familiar to politics and politicians. This is a very common resource to avoid conflicts, confrontations, and to soften the bad news or to mask unpleasant concepts. As Ryabova (2013, p. 36) states

> The language of politicians […] must consist to a large extent of euphemisms, rhetorical repression of the actual problems, empty words, nebulous half-statements, stereotyped expressions and common places. Euphemisms are periphrastic manipulation on the lexical level and is motivated by an assumption that a change of name can also impact new and different qualities to a thing or to a person; hence euphemism is a sort of semantic camouflage […] or/and an instrument of ideological framing.

Researchers have shown the proliferation in the use of euphemisms as a dominating process in modern communication. Ryabova (2013, p. 39) distinguishes six functions of euphemisms that can be summarized as follows: 1. Change words with terrifying connotations (*departure* instead of *death*); 2. Replace words with unpleasant repulsive meaning (*insect* instead of *louse*); 3. Things considered impolite (*sleep together* instead of *sexual intercourse*); 4. Avoid using the direct name (*not very clever* instead of *silly*); 5. To camouflage the truth (*collateral damage* instead of *killed people*); and 6. To elevate unskilled jobs (*model* for someone who shows clothes). At a basic level, euphemisms can serve positive ends as a polite approach for unpleasant things to say but it is also a way of covering the meaning it signifies and, consequently, avoid the knowledge of the moral implications (Lukas & Fyke 2014, 554).

We are dealing in this paper with euphemisms referring to sexual scandals and some literature has been published on this. Firstly, Lucas & Fyke (2014) made a comprehensive study on the euphemisms used on Penn State's sexual abuse scandal and the limits with ethics. In this case the authors perform an analysis of two clusters: those reported by the eye-witnesses, and the other by the key leaders during the (in)action in the course of the subsequent events. They state that "when unethical action already has occurred, euphemism provides a shield to protect individuals from the psychological consequences of those actions." (555)

Secondly, Crespo Fernández (2008) presents a research based on the euphemistic and dysphemistic use of sexual metaphorization within the frame of the well-known Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) initiated by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). She concludes that "CMT is of paramount importance in euphemistic and dysphemistic use and interpretation, given that cognitive representation affects evasive and abusive referent manipulation in a remarkable way". (108) The examples she provides, as said above, are sex-related and demonstrates how sex reference can be related to hostility and dominance and so, the metaphors will be concepts about war (*sex is war, sex is horse-riding*) but when violence is not highlighted but the idea of "a work", business-related concepts are used (*did the business, work on*).

She concludes that in the examples she provides women are considered as inferiors as sex is reduced to an exchange.

Data

We have chosen twenty articles published online from October 2017 to December 2018 in the United States and Spain, ten from each country. They have been chosen from different sources in order to avoid the same political bias. In the primary sources found at the end of the paper references are given.
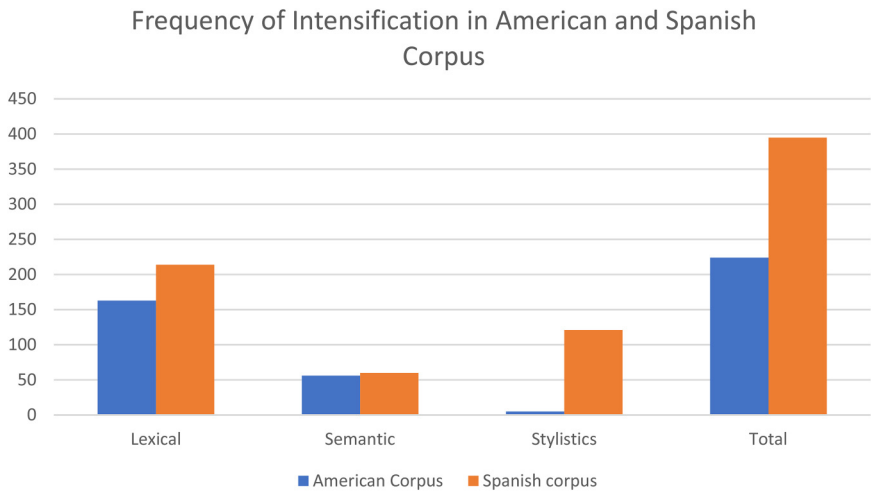
Frequency of Intensification in American and Spanish Corpus

Figure 1. Comparison between both data.

Next, a table with a summary of the factual information of the articles is provided.

American Opinion Columns

Table 1. Data of the American Opinion Columns.

#	No. Of words	Author	Source	Summary
1	1.641	Editorial Board	*The New York Times*	Extensive account of the issue during last decades. It shows the evolution from the first popular complaints that were not taken seriously, and the steps taken in the most remarkable companies. They also give some clues about how to change the culture.

Table 1. Continued.

#	No. Of words	Author	Source	Summary
2	839	Nicholas Kristof	*The New York Times*	It focuses on how men can be part of a solution. He asked different women what they thought was the solution and the answers are quoted literally. They can be summarized in having more empathy with women and not patronize the problem.
3	3.390	Jodi Kantor and Megan Twohey	*The New York Times*	Intensification is reflected in the direct quotations. That is, victims' opinions on Weinstein. This is a resource to state the general vision of this character avoiding the first person and, consequently, the personal opinion. They also name the large number of employees that speak well of him. What these journalists do is to name several examples in which women complain about Weinstein's misconduct. Not taken in isolation but a fact that grew constantly.
4	1.364	Magtthew Belloni	*The Hollywood Reporter*	This focuses on Weinsteińs lawyer and all the expositions to the public opinion reported. Shortly, he takes the pain out of the complaints by questioning the veracity of the charges.
5	762	Eriq Gardner	*The Hollywood Reporter*	The author entitles his paper with a euphemism stated by Weinstein about the claims. He declares that it was a "commercial sex act" and the paper is a reflection on what can be considered sex trafficking given the lawyers' consideration that the difference of opinions may lead to a misinterpretation of the intention.
6	1.247	Tatiana Siegel	*The Hollywood Reporter*	Paper six is entitled "Harvey Weinstein Criminal Case may be Crumbling, Experts Say" and reflects all the weak points of the accusations. For instance, one of the accusers sent him caring messages after the facts she alleges.
7	1.731	Rochelle Dornatt	*Hasting*	Paper seven is surprisingly entitled "Thank you, Harvey Weinstein".

Table 1. Continued.

#	No. Of words	Author	Source	Summary
			Women's Law Journal	Despite the title, she mentions all the unfair situations women have overcome in relevant jobs until quite recently. She considers this case a turning point in the women's employment rights.
8	747	Michelle Threadgould	*CNN*	This summarizes the mistreatment that she and other women have suffered at work. She doesn't question the allegations. On the contrary, she agrees and recognizes that this has happened during last decades.
9	633	Liam Miller	*The Loyalist*	He wonders why this was not demanded earlier but offers a detailed summary of the allegations. He condemns hypocrisy and that famous women don't speak up these cases.
10	755	Christian Schneider	*USA Today*	"Men are complicit in the Harvey Weinstein Scandal as Enablers and Abusers." The title is as straight as the content of the paper. He accuses Weinstein as much as the men who kept silent and describes in a coarse way this behavior.

Spanish Opinion Columns

Table 2. Data of the Spanish Opinion Columns.

#	No. of words	Author	Source	Summary
1	1.283	Vargas Llosa	*El País*	He makes several contrasts along the lines. He then delves into the debate on whether being famous and having a brilliant career aggravates or mitigates his private life. He ends his article by recalling the disadvantage that women have historically had compared to men and that, in some parts of the world, they continue to have.
2	995	Hernández Barral	*El Español*	He makes a stark account of what the film industry hides for those who want to stand

Table 2. Continued.

#	No. of words	Author	Source	Summary
				out. It emphasizes that it has always existed and not only in this art.
3	2.114	Noaín	*El Periódico*	Extensive summary of the different phases of the public life of this tycoon with a large number of quotes from the victims themselves where the crimes that are attributed to him as seen by them are recounted first-hand.
4	842	Ayuso	*El País*	It makes a brief summary of the facts where the ironic tone of the defendant himself does not stop highlighting. His tone is moderate.
5	509	Cañas	*El País*	It is the shortest text in the corpus, but no less interesting. It highlights the nightmare that the dream factory hides for many women and how we let ourselves be blinded by superficial glamor.
6	890	Serra	*El País*	Harassment has always existed and not only in the cinema and coined the term "Weinstein effect" for chain complaints.
7	681	Polisi	*Expansión*	It exposes the importance of the #MeToo movement to prosecute Weinstein and the difficulties that the judges have had in some cases, and the oversight of others.
8	1.294	Parkas	*Playground*	The progress we have in Spain in terms of laws stands out, but how backward we are at the level of reporting this particular case in the media with respect to the United States, where one in three articles when the scandal broke out was dedicated to this topic.
9	1.287	Borraz	*El Diario*	It relates a list of cases similar to the one at hand in the recent history of the United States and Spain. Under the idea that the exception is the complaint, he emphasizes that it is much more frequent than what has been in the media for centuries.
10	1.564	Martí	*Esquire*	It offers a counterpoint when it questions the veracity of the complaints and raises the reasons why it has not been done before.

Method

This research has been carried out in several steps. Firstly, several readings of the articles published in popular online American and Spanish newspapers. Secondly, the different intensifiers have been extracted and divided into three main groups: semantical, lexical and expressions. This last one covers examples of repetition, metaphors,

hyperboles and so on. With this we want to highlight the main resources and frequency in the use of intensification in a well-known event that happened during decades. After that, a statistical method has been followed to reveal the degree of intensification the authors use in their articles. Thirdly, examples have been analysed from a metatextual perspective. And, finally, a discussion comparing both corpus is offered.

Results

Next tables reflect the results of the number of examples seen in every category after several readings of the articles.

American Opinion Columns

Table 3. Statistical Results of the American Newspapers.

Paper	N. words	%	Lexical	Semantic	Stylistics	Total	%
1	1641	12,51%	39	7	1	47	2.86%
2	839	6,40%	12	5	1	18	2.14%
3	3390	25,86%	24	6	-	30	0.88%
4	1364	10,40%	26	3	1	30	2.19%
5	762	5,81%	13	4	-	17	2.23%
6	1247	9,51%	13	4	-	17	1.36%
7	1731	13,20%	14	9	1	24	1.38%
8	747	5,69%	5	3	1	9	1.20%
9	633	4,82%	11	4	-	15	2.36%
10	755	5,75%	6	11	-	17	2.25%
	13.109		**163**	**56**	**5**	**224**	

Spanish Opinion Columns

Table 4. Statistical Results of the Spanish Newspapers.

Paper	N. words	%	Lexical	Semantic	Stylistics	Total	%
1	1.283	11,19%	30	13	34	77	19,49%
2	995	8,68%	20	2	13	35	8,86%
3	2.114	18,44%	26	8	12	46	11,64%
4	844	7,36%	2	-	4	6	1,51%
5	509	4,44%	3	-	3	6	1,51%
6	890	7,76%	13	2	5	20	5,06%
7	681	5,94%	8	-	1	9	2,27%
8	1.294	11,29%	43	13	21	77	19,49%
9	1.287	11,22%	37	12	13	62	15,69%
10	1.564	13,64%	32	10	15	57	14,43%
	11.461		**214**	**60**	**121**	**395**	

If we compare the results of both tables, we come to the following result:

As we can see, the number of examples in each of the categories is higher in the Spanish press than in the American: lexical examples, 163 versus 214; Semantic examples, 56 examples versus 60; Stylistics, 5 versus 121. Being this last group the most significantly different.

Discussion

As said, being the number of words used in both corpora relatively similar, it is quite remarkable the difference in frequency of intensifiers between both. It also deserves some comments due to the different singularities they own.

American Corpus

Formality and plain description of the facts are the constant characteristics. The intention of not showing bias towards any of the characters is clearly demonstrated in the lack of personal approach and evidentiality. On the contrary, intensification is mostly seen in the repetition of the facts themselves to show constancy in the offences perpetrated, and the use of euphemisms with two purposes: to mitigate the importance of the criminal offence, and to show some degree of irony in the interpretation of some actants.

Lexical limits and the context are clue in this corpus. The term "rape" is descriptive and without any degree of intensification if we are simply considering the sexual crime, but could be considered an intensifier if we mean the act defined as being considered by some groups consensual. Presumption of innocence is difficult to defend in Weinstein due to the extended number of victims that accuse him of the same acts during several decades, so the reporters do not question the facts so much as avoiding the development of evidence-based analysis of the issue. As papers are normally focused on the limits that judges discuss on consensual sex and offences, reporters play with the appropriate words to describe the facts and their opinions. Even in text six we find the term "unethically" in order to avoid the illegal content of the action. Another example could be the expression "decades of sexual harassment". The term is neutral, but it also expresses the continuity in time of a crime that may have affected countless women.

The line that divides a term from being apparently neutral to intensified in some contexts is very thin. The first problem faced was to decide whether a term like "sexual abuse" could be considered in one or the other category. When we face texts that deal with Weinstein' prosecution it is unavoidable to name these terms as representing the accusation. Said once in isolation they could not be considered intensifying but repeated several times in the same text creates an atmosphere of bombing over the idea and, consequently, intensify it.

Another example related to this is the word "harassment". In itself, it does not reflect intensity, but the big number of examples and the adjectives it accompanies ("sexual

harassment", "constant harassment", "sex-based harassment", "harassment complaints", "workplace harassment", among others) permeate the situation that, as being constant, reflect intensification. Having said this, it must be stated that the common attitude in the authors analysed is to use mitigating descriptors like "inappropriate behaviour", "grave misconduct", "unwanted sexual conduct" and "sexual office games", among others.

The number of semantic examples is even shorter. When talking about actions the authors show themselves more reluctant to use straightforward verbs. So, we have examples like "forcibly performed oral sex", "perpetrating non-consensual sexual acts", "to scorce sexual favours", "sexually exploited", "forced her to perform oral sex", "groped", "grabbed and fondled", with others as surprising as "to overcome sexual obstacles".

Examples of intensifying expressions are scarce. The repetition of a structure is used twice, in "let's not forget; let's even not forget" and "personal account after personal account of abuses"; in other example, the repetition of the same grammatical category is used: "passionately, eloquently and something tearfully".

Contrary to what could be expected, euphemisms are a resource often used. Indeed, almost every single paper makes use of euphemisms at least once. In most of the cases, they are even named between inverted commas to make reference to the original words. So, we have examples like "unwanted sexual attention", "unwanted physical contact", "unwelcome advances", "serve at the pleasure of the member", "harmless flirtation" to refer to the criminal offence. The contrast between the seriousness of the facts and the description by some of the commentators is relevant. Other group could include "attempt at humour" and "excusing mentality" and "unethically" try to excuse the acts due to lack of knowledge.

Furthermore, if we compare the percentage in the number of words in every text from the total and the number of examples of intensifies found in each one we can see that there doesn't exist a relationship between them. That is, the more literature dedicated to the topic does not imply the higher use of intensification in the expression. Indeed, we see that text three, for instance, is the longest in extension but, strikingly, the lesser in the use of intensifiers. On the contrary, text nine is the shortest but at the same time, one of the texts with a bigger number of examples.

Spanish Corpus

Reporters take advantage of the topic to demand other similar situations related to the issue addressed to show the extension of the abuses committed during decades. Weinstein is just the pretext to talk about a wider topic that has affected women during decades. So, intensification is expressed not only to refer to Weinstein but to deal with other different characters similar or not to him. This can be one of the explanations why the Spanish corpus contains so many examples of intensification in contrast to the American. This event is taken as the pretext to state a report or

claim on the endless list of sexual abuses or genre discrimination perpetrated during decades.

Lexical and semantic examples are descriptive and based on the use of straight adjectives and substantives and also images and metaphors that reflect intense scenes. So, we have lexical and semantic examples like "monster", "sexual predator", "volcanic character", "libidinous macho", "cruel nightmare", "horrific crime" are just some descriptive examples.

Expressions are widely used and with a strong meaning. They are so numerous that a classification can be established. So, we have expressions that reflect actions, like "lift the lead off the fetid sewer", "unleash a war"; we also have expressions that express a state, like "covered with a patina of morbid and ruggedness" or "public storm"; others contain religious connotations: "fall to hell", "throw the first stone". Contrast is also used in expressions like "tragic and glamourous", "disgusting and opulent", "victims and executioners", "bad, very wicked and good, very innocent". This also contrasts with euphemisms, very scarce in this corpus, like "bad behaviour".

Secondly, intensification is also used quoting the victims themselves. In fact, there is not only use but overuse of literal quotations. When the victims are the protagonists, they use terms with an important intensifying load as they relate traumatic events. Even though these examples are not expressed by the authors it affects to the overall tone of the text.

To sum up, the uneven number of examples found in both corpora may be due to several reasons: firstly, Spanish journalists make use of their emotions to define their opinion while Americans try to keep objectivity. Whether due to being the scandal in their own country or not, Americans prefer to be more conservative and objective, whereas Spanish consider the problem out of their frontiers and may feel freer to state their personal opinion openly. Secondly, Americans substitute these strong expressions with the repetition of the same idea, so intensification must be considered in-text. Seemingly, the higher number of euphemisms in American's also winks at the general consideration of the matter.

Conclusions

One conclusion of this paper is the importance of developing a deeper study on the use of intensification as a resource when dealing with opinions and not only mitigation, as has been traditionally performed. Another conclusion is the need of including the repetition of the same term or idea as a resource to express intensification, not being considered thus far. As we have seen, in many examples it is not the use of different resources but the emphasis on the facts what indicates enhancement.

The fact that the events happened in the States does not imply a higher load of intensification in the reports. On the contrary, American papers have been more objective and conservative than the Spanish, preferring the use of euphemisms as a tool to

express intensification. The Spanish, on their behalf, have overused the examples of intensifiers as they have taken the topic as the starting point to demand other examples of sexual harassment in the recent past.

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ORCID iD

Conchi Hernández-Guerra https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9073-1736

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