

GEORGE RIDPATH'S USE OF EVALUATIVE ADJECTIVES AS MANIPULATIVE AND PERSUASIVE STRATEGIES DURING THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION (1710-1713)¹

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ABSTRACT. *This paper analyses evaluative adjectives in George Ridpath's political writings during the War of the Spanish Succession (1710-1713), in a corpus which comprises two journals, four years and 291 numbers, with the purpose of examining how this author used language as a weapon to shape and manipulate Great Britain's public opinion during the Stuart period. For that, I have employed Wilson's approach to Political Discourse Analysis (2001) and van Dijk's polarisation (1999) as well as Allan and Burridge's understanding of euphemism and dysphemism (1991). The results permit to value Ridpath's contribution as a very influential but controversial pamphleteer who wrote about the War of the Spanish Succession within Great Britain's context.*

Keywords: Political persuasion, political manipulation, evaluative adjectives, George Ridpath, *The Observer*, *The Flying Post*.

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EL USO DE ADJETIVOS EVALUATIVOS COMO ESTRATEGIAS DE MANIPULACIÓN Y PERSUASIÓN POR PARTE DE GEORGE RIDPATH DURANTE LA GUERRA DE SUCESIÓN ESPAÑOLA (1710-1713)

RESUMEN. *El presente trabajo estudia los adjetivos evaluativos en los escritos políticos de George Ridpath durante la Guerra de Sucesión Española (1710-1713), en un corpus que abarca dos periódicos, cuatro años y 291 números, con el objetivo de analizar cómo el autor utiliza la lengua como arma para modelar y manipular a la opinión pública de Gran Bretaña durante el periodo Estuardo. Para ello he empleado el enfoque de Wilson del Análisis del Discurso Político (2001) y la polarización de van Dijk (1999), así como los conceptos de eufemismo y disfemismo de Allan y Burridge (1991). Los resultados permiten valorar la contribución de Ridpath como panfletista influyente y polémico que escribió sobre la Guerra de Sucesión Española desde el punto de vista británico.*

Palabras clave: Persuasión política, manipulación política, adjetivos evaluativos, George Ridpath, *The Observer*, *The Flying Post*.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The press is an essential weapon politicians use for ideological persuasion and manipulation, as it is a way to establish particular values and reference models for the public opinion as well as to reproduce dominant ideologies and social conceptions; thence, its relevance within politics. Considering that political communication is a breeding ground for persuasion devices of verbal manipulation, I have analysed evaluative adjectives in George Ridpath's political writings during the War of the Spanish Succession, concretely during the Peace Campaign (1710-1713), with the purpose of examining how this author used language as a weapon to shape and manipulate Great Britain's public opinion during the Stuart period.

The choice of this period is not fortuitous, since the spreading of ideas and information relied heavily on pamphlets, periodicals and newspapers during the late Stuart period (1702-1714) and both Whigs and Tories and the Ministry itself recognised the press as an organ of political influence (cf. López Campillo 2009; Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo 2011: 44). George Ridpath is not casual either because, despite contributing to the great political debates of the reign of Queen Anne (Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo 2011: 47) and being one of the best

pens in England (Swift 1824: 297), he has never received the attention which he deserves (McLeod and McLeod 1979: 194).

The corpus of investigation comprises two journals, four years and 291 numbers, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Corpus of investigation.

Journal	<i>The Observer</i>			<i>The Flying Post; or, the Post-Master</i>		
Year	1710	1711	1712	1711	1712	1713
Numbers	40	51	35	13	66	86
	126			165		

The selection of the corpus is not unintentional: whilst attention has been paid to persuasion in Great Britain's political writings during the late Stuart period (Barker 2000; Black 2001) and to the War of the Spanish Succession (Müllenbrock 1997; Losa Serrano and López Campillo 2007; López Campillo 2009, 2010), George Ridpath's use of language as a polemical political journalist has only been the object of two recent minor publications (Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo 2011; Sánchez Ruiz and López Cirugeda 2015). Therefore, this study aims to complement their research focusing, however, on evaluative adjectives as a key persuasive strategy to verbally attack the enemy and manipulate readers through their contribution to emphasis and appraisal of emotions.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is framed within Wilson's approach (2001) to *Political Discourse Analysis*, which studies public political manifestations and interventions as interesting phenomena and the strategic use of linguistic devices to influence the receiver in different ways, that is, persuasion through language. However, it must be noticed that analysing language in use requires employing several tools and disciplines to cover all aspects of human behaviour when communicating. In addition, classifying verbal devices under particular theoretical criteria or approaches may be difficult due to the fuzzy boundaries that arise when diverse factors like context or speakers' characteristics encounter. Thus, different linguistic areas (mainly semantics and pragmatics) must be combined with others, such as cognition, sociology and even cognitive linguistics and sociolinguistics (Alonso and Hyde 2002: 9).

For the analysis, evaluative adjectives were classified as follows. First, I decided to divide them into positive and negative adjectives so as to relate them to other

resources like van Dijk's concept of *polarisation*² (1999: 95) or dysphemism. I also divided them according to the year when they appeared in order to observe the more or less critical chronological progression and see if the most turbulent years of the Peace Campaign have a direct influence on the usage of certain adjectives or even of a greater number of negative ones. Furthermore, my categorisation did not just reflect the adjective but the collocation of adjective and noun, which permits to draw conclusions about the most praised or criticised aspects and, thus, about George Ridpath's own views and the sentiment of the public opinion of that time. Finally, I must state that classifying some of the mentioned collocations was difficult due to the fuzzy boundaries of the semantic nature of certain adjectives. When this problem arose, the context was essential to determine if it was a positive or a negative adjective/collocation.

3. GEORGE RIDPATH, THE JOURNALS AND THE WAR OF THE SPANISH SUCCESSION

As Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo (2011: 45) state, there has been no other previous stage in the history of Great Britain as polemical as the reign of Anne Stuart (1702-1714), where issues both of national and international importance like the monarchy, the Church and foreign policy were at stake and, thus, party activity was unusually intense. Moreover, the emergence of public opinion was favoured due to the less-severe censorship and political control of the press, the expiry of the *Licensing Act* in 1695 – ceasing state censorship of the press and contributing to a great increase in political propaganda – and the expansion of new social centres such as coffee and chocolate houses and clubs where ideas were discussed and spread. During the Peace Campaign (1710-1713) – mainly supported by the Tories, as they were in favour of the peace, contrary to the Whigs, who were for the war –, propaganda was at their disposal more than ever to shape public opinion in accordance with their interests and vision of the war. Moreover, Spain was the key for the mentioned campaign because, whereas the Whigs thought that there should be *No peace without Spain*, the Tories opted for the opposite: *Peace without Spain* (Losa Serrano and López Campillo 2007: 176).

Regarding the author, George Ridpath (1660?-1726) was a prominent and radical Whig and Scottish journalist during the Stuart period; born and educated

² Van Dijk (1999: 95) defines the *polarisation* of – or mental representations about – ingroups and outgroups by the opposition between *us* and *them*. This means that groups constitute an ideological image of themselves and others in a way where *us* are represented positively (*positive self-representation*) and *them* are negatively (*negative other-representation*).

in Berwickshire until he went to Edinburgh University. His anti-Catholic and Presbyterian views led him to actively participate in the burning of the pope in effigy and to be accused of threatening to burn the provost's house. For those actions, he was imprisoned for five weeks before moving to London to write for a living (Ridpath 1694: 52-56). He was also charged with being the author of three libels in *The Observer* and was found guilty for two of them. In an attempt to escape the authorities, in 1713, he went to Scotland and, then, to Holland. He returned to England after 1714 when George I occupied the throne and was made a patentee for serving the commissioners of the customs in Scotland (McLeod and McLeod 1979: 193-194). Ridpath was decisive towards Great Britain's public opinion because, even though many electors were committed either to the Tory or Whig side, the persuasion of the press was thought to make some citizens shift sides. Nevertheless, those swing voters supported the Tories and only preferred the Whigs when the succession seemed to be in danger (Speck 1970: 114). In 1707, he succeeded John Tutchin in editing *The Observer*; but Ridpath also conducted the Whig journal *The Flying Post; or, the Post-Master* (hereafter *The Flying Post*) and contributed to *The Medley* in 1712 (Wilson 1830: 253, 283). In 1714, Daniel Defoe – Ridpath's rival – came to Hurt's assistance in *The Flying Post*, cutting off the contact between Ridpath and this journal, being thereafter called by him *The Sham Flying Post* (Lee 1869: 230-236). According to *The Daily Post*, 7 February 1726, Ridpath died on 5 February, the same day as his enemy, Abel Roper.

About the journals, *The Observer* was a twice weekly political journal founded in 1702 by John Tutchin. Its main aim was to denounce the fraud and abuse within the government of London in 1702 (cf. Auchter 2001: 253-255); nonetheless, when Ridpath ran the journal, its goal was to inform about Parliament resolutions and to accuse the government's pacifist faction of their Jacobite and *Frenchified* trends (López Campillo 2010: 155). One of its most outstanding characteristics, both in Tutchin's and Ridpath's times, was its peculiar Platonic-style dialogued structure by two interlocutors: Roger, an ordinary countryman though talented at voicing his own peers' opinion; and his master, a cultivated gentleman who calls himself *the Observer*, and who clearly represents Ridpath's opinions about both national and international affairs. In the middle of the Peace Campaign, *The Observer* was the only Whig journal to form opinion and was essential when the peace-war debate was intense (López Campillo 2010: 155). Swift (1711) described this journal as the best representing the opposition to the government and Müllenbrock (1997) claimed it was the most important strictly political Whig organ.

The Flying Post: or, the Post-Master was founded in 1695 but it was called *The Flying Post from Paris and Amsterdam* at first. It published three numbers a week and was edited by Ridpath since 1697; however, in 1713, due to Ridpath's legal problems, it was sometimes edited by Stephen Whatley. The main difference regarding the previous journal is that it does not have a dialogued structure, but it explicitly addressed some questions to *The Observer*. *The Flying Post* was a cornerstone for the Whigs, especially during the last years of the Stuart period, when Ridpath attacked the Tory peace and upheld the Hanoverian cause (Holmes 1987: 31).

4. ANALYSIS OF EVALUATIVE ADJECTIVES

Ridpath not only used figurative language to attack his adversaries or denounce injustices within the political field, but also employed other resources, like evaluative adjectives and the emotionally loaded language of patriotism which characterised his political writings (Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo 2011: 60-61). Thus, adjectives play a key role within verbal attack and readers' manipulation, since they favour emphasis and relate emotional value to nouns and, so, abound in the corpus. Within them, *evaluative adjectives*, which imply appraisal towards the norm or ideology, be them affective, *evaluative*, axiological³ or non-axiological (Kerbrat-Orecchioni 1997: 84), are more frequent. This resource is directly linked to metaphor insofar as figurative language is composed by adjectives, be them *lexicalised metaphors* or metaphorical units; and to euphemism and dysphemism⁴, because they usually appear in the form of adjectives.

The analysis has been performed by first dividing adjectives into positive and negative to compare them to other linguistic resources. Then, they were classified by journal so as to establish quantitative and qualitative differences and convergences. Finally, they were categorised by years in order to observe the chronological evolution of ideas and topics. Before the detailed analysis, Table 2 provides a general overview of the number of adjectives analysed.

³ Those adjectives are applied to an object and involve a value judgment; hence their use for describing social reality and remarking the positive and negative aspects of political measures (Sánchez 2009: 4).

⁴ Crespo Fernández (2008: 96), following Allan and Burrige (1991: 96), defines these two concepts in the following terms: euphemism is the "semantic or formal process by which the taboo is stripped of its most explicit or obscene overtones" and dysphemism is "the process whereby the most pejorative traits of the taboo are highlighted with an offensive aim to the addressee or to the concept itself".

Table 2. Number of adjectives analysed.

Journal	Year	Positive adjectives	Negative adjectives	Total
<i>The Observer</i>	1710	230	382	612
<i>The Observer</i>	1711	406	509	915
<i>The Flying Post</i>		94	32	126
<i>The Observer</i>	1712	315	315	630
<i>The Flying Post</i>		611	359	970
<i>The Flying Post</i>	1713	885	610	1495
Total		2541	2207	4748

4.1. POSITIVE ADJECTIVES IN THE OBSERVATOR

In 1710, Ridpath's use of adjectives reveals the exaltation not only of God but also of the monarchy; in fact, those who are Republican and Antimonarchical are criticised. The author also describes the behaviour and beliefs the subjects of the realm should have like being faithful, good, honest, loyal and prudent. This is linked to the emotionally loaded language of patriotism so typical in Ridpath's political writings, as they are described as *true Britons* (60⁵), *true Churchmen* (23) and politicians. As a matter of fact, the idea of patriotism is reinforced when Ridpath supports both the Queen and the military world, especially in a war context where moral support is essential to keep the population's spirit. However, this kind of adjectives remarking the army and their officers are brave and have high moral standards and that the country has important alliances with other factions and countries are also used for the opposite purpose, that is, to make a dent in the enemies' spirits. Bond to this sense of patriotism, Ridpath alludes to the relevance of the Union and refers to state documents like the Constitution or the Law as treasures; in this vein, he also pinpoints the importance of an appropriate person's accessing to the throne and the government's methods, which should be effectual, infallible and proper.

Mystical aspects also appear through reference to the sacred texts of different religions, especially the Bible. With them and, so, moral standards, Ridpath aims to persuade the public opinion by appealing to the universal fear of supernatural and divine powers, since Britain's future, especially the political one, was believed to depend on learned, gracious and just divine Providence.

⁵ In every example, this indicates the number of the journal in which it appears.

The recurrence and frequency of several key adjectives subliminally stress two issues, such as boosting the morale of the citizens in times of war and praising the monarchy, especially through *glorious*, or the state and government; and instilling the right morals by clearly stating the difference between good and evil, on the other hand directly related to religion. Another persuasive technique linked to evaluative adjectives is providing the text with more accuracy and *false* objectivity⁶ by describing Ridpath's own opinions in the words of those considered eminent, learned or wise. Finally, in this first year of the Peace Campaign (1710), evaluative adjectives also serve two purposes: justifying the war and convincing the reader that the war would last until Great Britain could get a "safe and honourable Peace" (91).

In 1711, the monarchy and some members of the clergy are again praised for their integrity, sense of justice, right beliefs, actions and attitudes. The measures and precautions of the government are proper, effectual and laudable; judges are competent, equitable and disinterested, laws are laudable and advocates, wise; ministers, counsellors and noble lords or dukes are considered honourable, right and uncorrupted, or even wise and brave. These previous examples contribute to persuade the reader to trust their government in times of war and insecurity.

As in 1710, some positive adjectives are used to praise the enemies' or the opposite faction's intelligence; however, they are ironical, which boosts their function, especially to highlight their falsehood or ability to break the law. His old enemy, Abel Roper, is also criticised by using irony when he refers to him as *wise* Abel. On the other hand, Ridpath's words are reminiscent of patriotism by remarking how brave the army is – especially officers, many of whom are considered brave and learned too – instilling courage to the population through the stupendous victories, successful war and even what are called "heroic actions" (23). As a matter of fact, patriots – be them countrymen, princes or soldiers – are thought to be the best, bravest and best qualified men in the world. Other monarchical aspects are magnified such as "the glorious auspices of the Queen" (15) or of William as well as the nation. *Great* – both in its positive and superlative degree – contributes to this last purpose and so acclaim generals, princes, the Church of England and the formidable allies. Furthermore, some members of particular families, especially the House of Hanover, are believed to be illustrious.

Another common aspect in 1710 is the author's aim to establish ethic and moral standards and publicly show how a good, dutiful and loyal subject – and, thus, a

⁶ As happens with the use of statistics and figures, particular evaluative adjectives focus the attention on concrete aspects or make certain opinions credible. Van Dijk (2009: 341) called this argumentation strategy *the number game*.

patriot and a nation defender – should behave even to the extent of becoming a “commendable example” (34) or “exemplary subject” (49 and 56). In this vein of the right ethical code, Ridpath insists on supporting the measures of a government ensuring justice and looking for a “just and lasting peace” (71). Ridpath was in favour of the war at first, in consonance with the ruling government; however, his – and the government’s – views on the subject change during the course of the Peace Campaign. The beginning of that change starts with the words the author employs, especially in December 1711, when a longing for peace is observed, but not at any cost, “a good, honourable, lasting, safe, advantageous peace” (60, 96, 99 and 100) though.

As in the previous year, Ridpath tries to persuade the reader by appealing to the public opinion’s feelings through adjectives linked to *family*, *affection* and the sense of justice. Personification also contributes to this aim since those adjectives attribute human features to objects, abstract names or countries and so appeal to feelings. Conceptual metaphors also appear in the form of positive adjectives; then, the author writes about the “flourishing and peaceable nation” (7) and “flourishing Ministry” (10). Through this source domain (*spring*), the author relates politics to an aspect of life which triggers a favourable action in the reader and suggests that the situation will progressively improve until it reaches its peak.

In 1711, positive adjectives are also employed to credit some authors or concrete journals as well as to show satisfaction with the opinions expressed in their own journal or their objectivity. Ironical positive adjectives are also used to criticise authors like Daniel Defoe or Abel Roper and journals, particularly *The Examiner*, so as to remark what they lack.

In 1712, the exaltation of political leaders and the monarchy is repeated. Politicians are praised for their honesty, wisdom and courage as well as their audacious manner of ruling and utmost endeavours – in fact, the government offers effectual guarantees and security – and cunning alliances. Monarchs are described as gracious, great and wise and holders of undoubted authority; and the House of Hanover as illustrious and serene.

Another frequent topic is *recommending* the reader the way a dutiful, obedient, faithful, honest, humble and loyal subject should behave to be excellent and exemplary. For that, religion plays a key role, in this case, choosing the right one: Protestantism against Catholicism. Another topic bond to exemplary behaviour is patriotism, which again is present in this year by remarking British army’s audacious affronts, fair battles, unparalleled victories and greatest generals, who are in fact called “noble heroes” (22).

There are some metaphoric adjectives announcing the ending of the war and, so, suggesting positivity and hope; for example, those expressions referring to the

light at the end of the tunnel. When used metaphorically, light delivers a positive message because it is identified with life and human survival (Lakoff and Turner 1989: 58). Divine justice also rules human life as it is presented as just and even an authority. *Just* is also applied to the desired peace and the understandable detestation and indignation that the long war has caused. That is why Ridpath constantly alludes to the “amicable end of the war” (28) and noblest negotiations to obtain a general, good, safe, honourable, lasting and speedy peace.

In this year, adjectives also serve to credit sources and authors and give objectivity. This journal trusts the ablest penmen and praises audacious pamphleteers as well as the gracious answers of the queen; parliamentary authors are even compared to sacred ones. Again, he appeals to *wise* Abel Roper ironically to emphasise his lack of wisdom. The power of words is revealed by the choice of words of the author: “mighty discourse” (45) or “mighty talk” (31).

4.2. POSITIVE ADJECTIVES IN THE FLYING POST

In 1711 the imminent conclusion of the war brings optimism in the country; this is revealed through the agreeable news and the ample forms of negotiations to obtain a firm, safe and lasting peace within good conditions. Patriotism appears again to eulogise the dear and glorious country and their faithful subjects, the honourable and learned society and the pious and qualified persons, who are humbly acknowledged too, especially the military sector for their utmost expeditions and vigorous campaigns, alluding again to the characteristics a good subject may have. Acclaims are also addressed to the ecclesiastic judicature and the faithful and loyal Church as well as to the expeditious and unanimous electors (persuasion during the elections). Moreover, succession is again a concern and Ridpath explicitly shows his preference towards the illustrious family and protestant line of Hanover.

In 1712, the prospect of a future peace reflects again on the acceptable and agreeable news in the country, the grounded hope of an imminent great change implying a happy conclusion and a wise and honourable end. However, the army’s involvement in the war and their training is justified by saying they were necessary; in fact, it was a defensive, indispensable, just, lawful and unavoidable war (3312) because of the “just and necessary motives” (3277). Ridpath insists on the audacious attempts to obtain a consistent, durable, glorious, advantageous, lasting, necessary, honourable, sure, speedy and general peace through continual and consistent conferences where negotiations are performed in an amicable manner, with inviolable firmness and solemn assurances and fair dealings and equal and impartial frankness as well as equitable conditions for both sides are guaranteed.

The adjective *extraordinary* deserves to be mentioned apart since it appears seventeen times applied to different but related topics: first the assemblies and

conferences to obtain the peace; then, the people involved in the negotiation process and the efforts on the preparations; and finally the money that this implies. Moreover, peace would include other benefits like a desired security, good time and health, a healthful city and better foreign affairs relationships, particularly with the French and the Spaniards. *Protestant* is also a very frequent adjective since it is the religion supported by Ridpath for the nation and the government along with the succession and monarchs.

Patriotism is repeated by offering hope to the public opinion be that in the battle field or in the searching for peace. Through the metaphor and personification “immortal fleur-de-lis” (3288), Great Britain is symbolised as an immortal nation; but it is also presented as a mighty and fruitful kingdom with mighty esteem. The important role of the formidable army – considered the “reputed best troops in the world” (3308) and magnificent due to their considerable number of bodies of troops and convoys – is also highlighted by describing them as brave, valiant and courageous or even heroes or “Godlike heroes” (3292). The enemy is called formidable and powerful, implicitly reinforcing the country’s strength when beating them.

Ridpath continues to show the society right morals; then, subjects should be courteous, honest, honourable, prudent, worthy and faithful inhabitants, obedient and humble servants as well as have good decorum and good discipline or perform decent rites.

Supporting sources and authors through positive adjectives is also repeated in 1712. Then information is objective when it is excerpted from certain papers, and sources are more faithful when they are bond to religion or “sacred pages” (3246). *The Observer* also nourished with letters from readers; thus, they are more relevant and reliable when they are called civil, suitable and true. Moreover, some of them self-describe as humble, which moves the public opinion by alluding to the *pathos* propounded by López Eire and de Santiago Guervós (2000: 71), and so makes them more credible.

In 1713, the early, vigorous and necessary preparations for a negotiation of peace which is about to conclude the war result in positivity and “agreeable sentiments” (3403) reflected on the hope of an advantageous peace and great and infinite advantages for Great Britain. News items from different countries are agreeable and there are good expectations about the frequent conferences and glorious toils desiring good understanding, safe and honourable terms, a solemn treaty and a speedy, universal and lasting peace. However, war is justified when describing it as a just, honourable, even glorious, and necessary war.

Both the steady and irreproachable government and the army are praised for their appropriate behaviour. The former are acclaimed for their laudable conduct and

care, and ruling with the best, effectual, legal and proper methods, wise and happy measures and sufficient precautions or even their exemplary punishments. They are also in charge of guaranteeing the army's safe return home. The latter, directly bond to the patriotic feeling since British citizens have a deepest sense of gratitude towards their army and dutifully acknowledge them, are lauded for their acceptable and noble service. Ordinary citizens are also eulogised when they are illustrious and true patriots or true lovers of their native country, whose honour will be immortal and indelible; brave defenders of the national constitution and brave and honest men.

In relation to human virtues, again Ridpath insists on how good subjects should be: able, disinterested, faithful, humble, honest, loyal, dutiful, obedient and worthy persons. They should also have a distinguishing character; decent, laudable conduct and care, good discipline and disposition – to the extent of a “profoundest submission” (3396) – and behave in an exemplary manner. Monarchs, among whom the glorious King William and excellent, serene, potent and gracious Queen Anne are distinguished, should be known for their incomparable wisdom and infinite goodness. Some bishops are believed to be excellent and good; and pastors, pious, learned and assiduous. Religion is relevant in this time along with a superior and unlimited power because they control life with their divine and admirable lessons and ensure a divine protection. Again Ridpath clearly shows he is in favour of the glorious, honest and good Protestants and the venerable Church of England. Religion is linked to politics and the author stands for a protestant heir, particularly of the House of Hanover, for the succession.

Finally, dignifying sources and authors, and even their messages, through adjectives is also repeated. Then, some of those who write letters to the journal to be published are honest and provide glorious declarations or testimonies, gracious answers, considerable reflections, nice descriptions, good remarks, memorable instances, and concluding and solid arguments.

4.3. *NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES IN THE OBSERVATOR*

This kind of adjectives is closely related to dysphemism since they are mainly used to offend, especially political, religious and, even, personal enemies. Ridpath not only criticises Antimonarchical principles but also the absolute, unlimited and arbitrary power of Popish, tyrannical kings and countries, which originate slavish doctrines or principles. In 1710, both negative evaluative and hyperbolic adjectives⁷

⁷ Cascón Martín (2006: 44) defines hyperbolic adjectives as those which have an intensifying sense and, so, convey superlative meaning. Bugnot (2006: 22) affirms that hyperbolic formulas, including hyperbolic adjectives, are one of the most effective resources to comply with the appellative function and, thus, the persuasive one.

are employed to determine evil moral and ethical standards, be them linked to religion or witchcraft; to the disaffected, fluctuating and impudent people, who are mainly the opposite faction, the French, the Jacobites and the Papists; to the pretender which neither the government nor Ridpath support; to the dichotomy of good and evil, and to the cruelty and malice of some “fellows” of the opposite faction who are even compared to “brutish Nero” (67).

The author insists on some adjectives like *seditionous* to clearly establish moral standards through what is not considered right (linked to van Dijk's polarisation 2009: 135) and which are frequently applied to the enemies, the Catholic Church or priests, the opposite faction, the Jews and the rebels as well as enemy preachers like Sacheverell. Furthermore, again resorting to polarisation, Ridpath's use of adjectives is intended to establish that his own ideas are the right and moral ones, contrary to those of his enemies, which would be unjust, malicious and immoral or even unnatural. Therefore, evaluative adjectives and polarisation merge with two persuasive aims: first, to remark the wrong character of those who do not think the same as Ridpath or neither support the current government nor the British nation; and, second, to praise those who do have the same beliefs as he and support the government and the nation. Moreover, they also reinforce Ridpath's dual vision of good and evil, strongly linked to morals derived from religion. Then, Spaniards are considered bigotted and *Frenchified*; the French, perfidious or even “mortal enemies” (60); and the faction, rampant, hateful, silly virulent and wicked. The dysphemistic sense of some of the previous adjectives must be noted as their main aim is to insult and offend. Papists and *nonjurors*⁸ are treated as insane or ill – thus combining the metaphorical and dysphemistic sense –, Papists and the High Church are said to be murderers and Papists alone are stated to be inquisitors, the false and wrong successors, usurpers and tyrants. Negative other-representation also reinforces patriotism through adjectives like traitorous and treasonable, especially in times of war, which are applied mainly to incendiaries, the Jews, the faction, libels and the Spanish troops.

Political beliefs are also belittled, especially the Jacobite faction and Tories, who are considered rank⁹. In fact, by describing some speeches as Jacobite and treasonable

⁸ Gaskoin (1917: 394) distinguishes between *nonjurors* and *non-abjurors*. The former rejected the oaths of allegiance and abjuration imposed under William III and George I; the latter scrupled to take only the oaths of 1701 and 1714, thus, the ones involved in this research.

⁹ This example is also a cross-sensory metaphor or synesthesia which could be classified into the lexical ones too, since both in the Spanish and English cultures being suspicious or negative is defined as *stinking* or *malodorous*. In this vein, Ibarretxe Antuñano (1999) propounds different conceptual metaphors linked to smell such as DISLIKEABLE FEELINGS SMELL, which is clearly dysphemistic.

ones, the author likens the first idea to the second. Negative adjectives are also employed to discredit sources and authors, becoming sometimes defamation.

Obviously, war is a constant topic in this corpus and is both dealt with through positive and negative adjectives. In 1710, Ridpath's main concern is not to achieve a disadvantageous peace or an unacceptable one although he recognises the need to stop war due to its numerous consequences such as having been bloody¹⁰ and expensive.

In 1711, negative adjectives are also employed as a dysphemistic resource to criticise mean and fallacious politicians. Political parties are also mentioned: Whigs are accused of being purblind and the Tories, of being drunken and swearing as well as "hair-brained incendiaries" (33). Both the loyalty of religious men and politicians is questioned since the adjectives *traitorous*, *treacherous* and *treasonable* are applied to them. This originates rebellious and seditious practices, principles and riots, especially among "short-sighted mortals" (31) and an "unthinking mob" (29).

The adjective *Popish*, which is dysphemistically used, deserves to be mentioned apart due to its frequency. Then, some causes and plots are described with this adjective; but also people like the High-Church faction, bishops, princes and the pretender and successor the Catholics support. Papists are linked to "arbitrary principles" (23) and, thus, with tyrannical governments; but they are also compared to Jacobites and Republicans. Within religious issues, Ridpath disapproves of those who have an "inconstant faith" (83), Antimonarchical or Republican principles (4, 10, 11 and 23) or hold "apocryphal views" (89). Sánchez Ruiz and López Cirugeda (2015) found that Ridpath described Catholics as *atheists* with the dysphemistic purpose of offending them and, at the same time, remark their contribution to the desecration of the Church. On the contrary, those who profess a religion zealously are also "attacked" to exemplify the negative aspects of excess. Catholics, apart from being related to burlesque, are accused for their "abominable hypocrisy and ingratitude" (19) as well as gross fallacies, falsehood and thoughts, pernicious principles and "corrupted seed" (23).

As in 1710, power is conceived negatively, especially absolute monarchies ruled by despotic power and odious bigoted and tyrannical methods, which originate arbitrary and oppressive measures and principles, all the more since they are bond to the Pope and his slavish doctrines. The government is also criticised because of their awkward tools for ruling, their manifest and gross scandals or indecent and tumultuous manners, but also their illegal executions and administration as well

¹⁰ This adjective – bloody – constitutes a lexicalised metaphor employed in both journals, especially in *The Observer*. Its use has a double interpretation: the literal one, which emphasises the great amount of blood spilled in the battles fought in the name of war; and the lexicalised one, where this adjective is used to show rejection of the consequences of war, particularly, of the high mortality rate.

as their ineffectual laws. Again, the consequences of the bloody, cruel, desolating, destructive, long, unjust and expensive war are mentioned to appeal to the reader's *pathos* with a persuasive aim, that is, to suggest its immediate ending.

Hyperbolic adjectives not only show Britons' desperate and dreadful situation after the war but also reinforce positive self-representation regarding Ridpath's beliefs when he compares the faction (*them*) with the author's own ideology (*us*). Thus, *they* are barbarous, destructive and even monstrous. A dramatic tone is manifest when describing the fatal divisions, loss and effects provoked by the war as well as the *Sacheverellite* tumults and horrid assassinations.

As in the previous year, in 1711, the press and authors belonging to the opposite faction are attributed with having a scandalous and unaccountable behaviour and writing scandalous advertisements, groundless calumnies, despicable arguments, evil works and scandalous and villainous libels. The opinions of the press – especially *The Review* and *The Examiner*; which is considered impatient, arrogant, malicious and ill-grounded – are considered mere subjective comments and so sources are somehow discredited, which reinforces Ridpath's own credibility as well as that of his journal through positive self-representation. Not only those journals are criticised, but also the authors, some of whom are called ignorant, impertinent, pitiful or silly scribblers, incorrigible libellers, venomous or villainous slanderers, strict dissenters, vain-glorious or verbose authors. Two of the most criticised writers are: his archenemy, Abel Roper; and the polemical preacher, Henry Sacheverell, accused of being an arch-incendiary, the author of fiery sermons – which points religion as the origin of the war – and the source of the so-called “fatal *Sacheverellite* tumults” (29). Even though Ridpath clearly stands for the peace, the preliminaries of the negotiations are judged to be captious and obscure and the treaty, felonious and passive. The detrimental effect of language is shown through expressions like malicious reflections, villainous expression, reflection or suggestions; as well as their force exemplified by “strong and forcible expressions” (97) or “strongest and weighty objections” (42).

In 1712, exorbitant, absolute and uncontrollable power, especially of the Emperor, reappears. This leads to barbarous and cruel manners, troublesome pride and uncommon zeal and makes leaders be faithless, haughty and lofty tyrants. Governments are then accused of false representation, foolish reasoning and ill practices; and their inability to accept reality, to obtain the peace or to deal with the economic situation is questioned.

As usual, Ridpath criticises those who do not have political or religious beliefs or are against the author's ones, such as schismatical and Antimonarchical Republicans, Popish pretenders, Jacobites and Papists, and occasional prayers and Christians. As a matter of fact, he admits that, due to “religious differences” (6), there has been a “religious war” (45).

Succession worries the author in all the years analysed, but concretely the *wrong* successor who is referred to as an “apparent heir” (57) and sick and spurious pretender (50). Within the legal field, advocates are depicted as clamorous and judges as ill. Metaphors, dysphemism and adjectives merge to compare doctors to certain symptoms of illnesses (“pocky doctors”, 20).

Once again, the *perpetual* and *bellish* war and its *ill* consequences are shown in the journal, by using a combination of metaphorical, metonymic and hyperbolic adjectives, to justify even more the need of its conclusion. Some of them are the bloody battles, the cruel sufferings, poor widows, terrible mortification and outcry, unhappy divisions, and above all a considerable loss of lives and a vast loss of blood. The war also provoked changes in mankind, since it made them inhumane and fleecing. Moreover, Ridpath reflects the population’s sentiments towards the future with expressions like “sad fate” (50), “impotent rage” (56) or “unspeakable grief” (59). On the other hand, the irreconcilable and sworn enemy is presented as deadly and described as a “dull slow-paced beast” (20); by comparing humans to beasts, their human condition is denied through a dysphemistic conceptual metaphor: ENEMY IS A BEAST, which even has animal characteristics like being pestilent, raging and rampant¹¹. Considering this, their elimination is implicitly justified; in fact, it is thought to be necessary to guarantee a general peace and social order.

Social convulsion, as in previous years, instigates a popular revolutionary spirit and betrayal reflected on collocations like “turbulent fellows” (15), “barbarous treachery” (18), seditious, treasonable and traitorous practices, but especially, “traitorous authors” (41 and 50), “traitorous libellers” (31 and 59) and “treasonable pamphlets” (6). In this vein of discrediting sources, some authors are branded brainless, infamous, slavish flatterers and even “prostituted scribblers” (51)¹²; they are accused of having empty or ridiculous arguments, “false stories” (15), ill news or opinions, impertinent or insolent queries or reflections and “manifest blunders” (22); and they are also charged with perjury, calumny and libelling. Journals are also criticised both in general (“villainous papers”, 54) and particularly, as *The Examiner* is informed to be false and scandalous.

¹¹ The analogy man-beast is an effectual resource to belittle and insult. Kövecses (2002: 122-125) propounds the following conceptualisation: violent human behaviour is animal behaviour, being an unequivocal source for offensive language within the semantic field of animals.

¹² Not only Ridpath uses this powerful dysphemistic metaphor as a means of verbal attack, but also Defoe admitted that *The Review* had been his prostitute and accused other writers of having prostituted their pens (López Campillo 2010: 38, 251).

4.4. NEGATIVE ADJECTIVES IN THE FLYING POST

In 1711, despite the optimism owing to the imminent conclusion of the war, it is still remembered as a bloody, cruel, dangerous and long war carried out by sick soldiers and imprudent fellows, which has left a vast disproportion around the whole country. The government is also blamed since they executed harsh measures causing grievous complaints. Furthermore, as stated before, one of the main causes of the war is Catholicism and the monarchs who profess them.

Adjectives are also used in 1711 to discredit sources and authors. Thus, some magazines are considered to be defective, some journals are accused of writing false news, scandalous reflections, seditious libels or tedious discourses, or reproducing “Papist groundless reports” (3087).

In 1712, the consequences of a continual, extravagant, tedious and heavy war are revealed. One of the most fruitful metaphoric adjectives is *bloody* which represents the considerable loss of lives and describes war as a “bloody action” (3248) and “bloody battles” (3300) which sow the seeds of cruelty as well as “cursed, damned, fanatical plots” (3300) and “dangerous conspiracies” (3283). Other consequences are related to economic issues like the great, prodigious, vast and unnecessary expenses, extraordinary taxes or exorbitant fines which cause great complaints and great disorders.

Moreover, war also brings deep hatred or absolute aversion, especially towards the execrable opposite faction – accused of being an “angry *Frenchified* party” (3259) –, and the political parties involved. For Great Britain, there are three enemy countries. The *ashamed* France, where Ministers are considered imprudent, the King – Lewis *Le Grand* – is called foolish, the upper class is sick and people, insolent. Rome is also criticised through a harsh, dysphemistic metaphorical personification as it is branded a “bloody whore” (3292). Finally, the Emperor is deemed to be a “jealous Emperor” (3243) surrounded by “jealous Imperial Ministers” (3259). Among the deplorable, insolent and cruel enemies, insolent Jacobites and Papists are included. The former are also considered rampant and superstitious and are composed of different social strata: Earls, emissaries, libellers, justices or simple mobs.

Unpopularity due to their repeated mistakes or irregular practices hangs over political measures and performances. Then, the British government is reported to have had an anxious precaution and a bad and chimerical council and to have been formed by inconsistent politicians with a restless and warlike temper pursuing chimerical projects or impracticable designs. Regarding war, they are blamed for a precipitate retreat, severe orders and a ridiculous defence. Furthermore, monarchs are criticised for their wrongdoing. Hyperbolic adjectives are employed to highlight destruction and cruelty during the war; thus, there have been barbarous murders, practices and treatment, brutish indignity and destructive creatures.

Once again, human behaviour is compared to religious forces or characters through hyperbolic dysphemistic adjectives. So, immorality is called *devilish*, and those involved in the war, *evil*. Furthermore, malice, beliefs and morality merge in the adjective *villainous*, to describe the scandalous charges and crimes during war as well as the conflict itself. Exorbitant power, especially among absolute and haughty monarchs, along with their “ardent thirst” (3288) of boundless ambition – both of which imply arbitrary power and governments, strict mandates and even tyrants –, and the dehumanisation derived from war are also mentioned here.

In line with *The Observer*; in this journal, Ridpath also shows his opinion regarding those who lack morals or, at least, the right ones and do not have the same political or religious beliefs. In fact, he affirms that principles and truth are dead while society has ill behaviour and discipline. Distemper is considered to be infectious. And, by means of a lexicalised metaphor “dirtying fingers” (3295), the author symbolises participating in a war with a tangible and visible action. He also denounces politicians’ dishonest favours owing to being frail and corruptible men. On the contrary, lower gentry, citizens and commonalty are also criticised for being rascally rogues, mad men or ravenous creatures; this last example shows the connection with animals as a dysphemistic source of offence.

Even though, in 1712, political measures and decisions in relation to the negotiation of peace are praised, some political proposals are considered to be dangerous and ruinous or likely to provoke dangerous consequences. Then some agreements like the Barrier Treaty of the cessation of arms could be harmful. And the negotiations by “impatient confederates” (3228) are described as doubtful because they could lead to a false, treacherous, dishonourable and disadvantageous peace.

Religion is also present in this year and again faithless people, infidels and atheists and occasional prayers are criticised. Catholicism is likened to atheism and idolatrous slavery and is considered the origin of the war. The author clearly shows his aversion to Catholic monarchs and insolent Jacobites and Papists. Catholicism is also described as an abomination full of superstitions. Both gentlemen and mobs profess it; and they are associated to Jacobites, Rome and French Cantons.

Discrediting sources or authors is also frequent in 1712. Then, some journals are accused of publishing false reports or stories, malicious lies and scandalous paragraphs as well as exhausted news. Some of the letters received are scorned when being called fawning, suspicious and insolent. Authors are also considered infamous and profligate scribblers or scandalous libellers; in fact, as seen above, through a dysphemistic expression, some of them are judged as “infamous prostitutes” (3288). Finally in this regard, *The Examiner* is the most criticised journal by being called scurrilous and unhappy.

In 1713, criticism hangs over four particular groups: the enemy, the government, the monarchy and society in general. The first one is accused of an abominable and unaccountable conduct, outrageous manners and a shameful and insolent behaviour. Particularly, the power of France is described as dangerous and the French are considered haughty; the Spaniards are known by the inexpressible ravages of a weak and defenceless Empire. The present animosities and great aversion towards the enemy are manifest insofar as they are called hellish and infallible devils and compared to hideous creatures. Second, the main concern about the government is their dreadful, exorbitant and oppressive power together with their insatiable ambition leading to anarchical proceedings, hostile manners, violent methods or resolutions, in short, an arbitrary government ruled by illegal proceedings or scandalous abusing. The expression "deplorable slavery" (3379) is employed to highlight the hard, arbitrary and unfortunate oppressions caused by the slavish doctrine of Catholics. The government's gross ignorance along with unfortunate and corrupt statesmen and brainless tools led to unsuccessful endeavours or vain projects. Third, monarchs are sometimes considered weak together with their managements. Nobility is also criticised when mentioning immoderate gentlemen, poor cavaliers and inconsolable dukes. Finally, in relation to society in general, it is composed of apprehensive, sober, ill-minded and evil people as well as miserable creatures having stupid ignorance and malicious designs. Youth is the main target, since youngsters are considered to be unthinking and wild unbridled.

Even though an absolute, indispensable necessity of war justified it, its destructive effects, irreparable loss and unavoidable, pernicious and serious consequences are mentioned in the journal with the aim of persuading into the conclusion of war. Then, the cruel, fatal, continual and expensive war revealed barbarous, brutish and inhuman treatment reflected on barbarous cruelties, persecutions, punishments and threats leading to cruel deaths, a vast expense of blood and treasure, monstrous impieties and violent methods. The war also left several traces like a country in bad, calamitous, deplorable, desperate, lamentable and miserable conditions; and, so, inhabited by poor and afflicted people. Patriotism is uncovered through polarisation when Ridpath alludes to the army's suffering symbolised by impossible tasks, incredible hardship, insuperable and insurmountable difficulties, inexpressible miseries and pressures and unjust and violent persecutions.

This desire of a conclusion of the war materialises in negotiations of peace. At first, reunions, though secret, are positive since a speedy, inestimable peace is regarded. However, the process was not smooth because some amendments or proposals are considered dangerous and postures, idle and ill; thus, the peace is also described as dangerous, invaluable, uncertain, tricking and dishonourable and even empty. In fact, not only propositions are judged as disloyal, silly and

foolish, but also the fatal treaty and the scurrilous treatment. Patriotism is again underlying when the author affirms that signing the previous conditions and such an ignominious treaty will be a “dishonourable capitulation” (3373) for the country.

In 1713, Ridpath also shows his concerns about a precarious succession from his viewpoint. Therefore, it would be fatal if an absolute stranger, a bigoted Papist prince or a “detestable and ridiculous Popish Protestant pretender” (3329) ascended the throne. It is also noted in this matter that there are “dangerous seducers” (3363) with false and specious pretences.

As in previous years, social convulsion and treason are visible, even among ministers, the press, treasonable, traitorous and virulent enemies and the faction with treacherous plots. In the street, there are notable alterations, seditious riots and rebellious tumults provoked by a turbulent temper and a revengeful humour. Religion is a controversial issue too, especially those confronting the author's and government's beliefs. As Crespo-Fernández and López Campillo (2011: 47) stated, Ridpath's aversion towards Catholics was publicly known since it was considered a false and criminal doctrine. For the author, Catholics are “heretical men” (3329b), undutiful and ungrateful sons of the Church – which bonds this idea to the succession problem – who believe in impious idolatry and are compared to evil faith, perjury and dissimulation. Papists or Popish are described as bigoted, ignorant, perfidious, silly and loathsome while they are also associated with insolent Jacobites and their prophecies or plots, the tyrannical faction and even Royal Houses such as that of Savoy. Ultimately, they are considered to be the main cause of the war.

Finally, discrediting sources or authors through negative adjectives is also present in 1713. For instance, the journals supporting the opposite faction are accused of not being appropriate since the Latin copies they reproduce are imperfect and their discourses, passionate and injurious. Their speeches and letters are pathetic, the historians they trust, unfaithful; and they employ the worst instances to demonstrate their arguments. *The Examiner* is considered to be ambiguous and false, its reports, malicious, scandalous and groundless; and its arguments, blasphemous, cursory and seditious. Conceptual metaphors, better said, metonymies, serve to remark the “execrable tongues” (3329) and “ungrateful mouths” (3329) of the libellers, pitiful writers and greasy debauched scribblers from the opposite faction.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS

Before drawing the conclusions from the previous analysis, Table 3 summarises all the topics dealt with in both journals during the four years analysed:

Table 3. Topics excerpted from the analysis of evaluative adjectives.

Polarity	Topic	<i>The Observer</i>			<i>The Flying Post</i>		
		1710	1711	1712	1711	1712	1713
Positive	Allies		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Clergy		✓		✓		✓
	Crediting sources/authors		✓	✓		✓	✓
	God	✓					
	Government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Justice	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Monarchy	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Morals	✓	✓			✓	✓
	Patriotism	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Peace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Religion	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Security			✓		✓	✓
	Subjects' behaviour	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Succession	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Trade and taxes			✓		✓	✓
	Transition			✓		✓	✓
War	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Negative	Antimonarchical principles/people	✓	✓	✓			
	Catholics	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Discrediting sources/authors	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Enemies	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Evil morals	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	French	✓				✓	✓
	Government	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Jacobites	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Jews	✓	✓				
	Opposite faction	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Papists/Popish	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Peace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Power	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Pretender/succession	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Republicanism	✓	✓	✓			✓
	Security					✓	✓
	Spaniards	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
	Taxes					✓	✓
	Treason	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Tumults and rebellion	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
War (and its consequences)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

The above table shows Ridpath's main concerns –and the government's and monarchs' ones and even the sentiment of the public opinion– as well as the most praised or criticised aspects during those years. His words were decisive towards the British public opinion, especially in times of elections, since –although many electors were committed to the Tory or Whig side– the persuasion of the press was believed to make some citizens shift sides. This demonstrates that means of communication are a forum of reproduction of ideology and social legitimisation at politicians' or political interests' disposal to spread political and religious beliefs and establish particular values and reference models for the public opinion.

Adjectives have proven to be a key lexical resource for persuasion and manipulation not only because they contribute to emphasis and relate emotions to nouns, but also because they can be combined with other rhetorical strategies to be more effective. Therefore, the division into positive and negative ones permits their relation to van Dijk's (1999: 95) polarisation and so the positive self-representation of the political leaders and the negative other-representation of the opposition. But adjectives, hyperbolic ones included, are also directly linked to figurative language, especially personification and metaphor, and are a fruitful source of dysphemism when they are used to offend or insult; both employed to attack Ridpath's adversaries or to denounce injustices within the political field.

Regarding the Peace Campaign quantitative data are revealing. In the analysed numbers of *The Observer* –except in 1712, when the war is about to end– there are much more negative adjectives than positive ones, thus, announcing this was a critical period concerning political and religious ideologies. For its part, *The Flying Post* shows the opposite since, regardless of the year, it presents more positive adjectives, particularly in the last year, close to the peace. There is, then, a difference between both journals: whereas the former is basically critical, the latter is more informative and deals with topics in connection with Ridpath's opinions and political visions; thence the great number of positive adjectives.

Finally, Ridpath's use of adjectives about war changes in consonance with his opinions at that moment and the ruling government since he is in favour of it at first and then against. However, in 1713, when the peace was signed and the public opinion was really aware of an impending treaty of it, the number of positive adjectives significantly increases. Therefore, this confirms the hypothesis that the most turbulent years of the Peace Campaign have a direct influence on the usage of certain adjectives and even of a greater number of negative ones.

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