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The Falklands/Malvinas 25 years on: a comparative analysis of constructions of heroism on Argentinean and British television

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This paper examines constructions of war heroism within the context of the commemoration in 2007 on Argentinean and British television of the 25th anniversary of the end of the Falklands War. In order to do this, it combines two analytic frameworks: synchronic-diachronic analysis (Pardo 2006, 2008, forthcoming) and revisionist face-work/politeness analysis (e.g. Bravo 1999). The origins of both frameworks, especially the synchronic-diachronic analysis, lie in Latin America/Spanish linguistic scholarship. Methodologically, therefore, our analysis moves beyond traditional examination of non-Western contexts and cultures through Western analytic/theoretical models. The results reveal several differences in the discursive construction of heroic selves within mass mediated commemorative practices in Argentina and the United Kingdom. Thus, while Argentinean constructions generally coincide with a 'modern' notion of heroism, which highlights individualism and extra-ordinariness, British ones generally coincide with a 'postmodern' notion of the ordinary, 'banal' hero. Both sets, however, incorporate some elements, respectively, of 'postmodern' and 'modern' heroism. This suggests a gradual (post)modern heroism in the corpus rather than a binary (modern–postmodern) construction.

Keywords: British and Argentinean TV – synchronic-diachronic analysis; face-work analysis; Falkland's war; collective memory; Discursive Construction of War Heroes

1. Introduction

This paper examines constructions of war heroism within the context of the commemoration in 2007 on Argentinean and British television of the 25th anniversary of the end of the Falklands War. Two analytic frameworks are adopted: synchronic-diachronic analysis (Pardo 2006, 2008, forthcoming) and face-work analysis. The former has its origins in Latin America and the latter, although of Western origin, has undergone considerable revision from within other cultures/ languages, including Latin-American/Spanish. These two frameworks are applied to the British *and* the Argentinean materials. This is particularly important given the dearth of discourse studies published in English that are informed by *non*-Anglo theories and methods (see Shi-xu 2008 for a similar position in an Asian context). In our view, use of this synchronic-diachronic framework in particular not only brings

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2 *Laura Pardo and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus*

to bear a novel approach in the broad field of (critical) discourse studies but also, and crucially, facilitates an essentially Latin American cultural, contextual, theoretical and methodological perspective.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 2 provides a review of the literature on war and mediated (television) commemoration. This constitutes the basis on which Section 3 reviews pertinent aspects of the coverage of the Falklands War and of its 25th anniversary on Argentinean and British television. Section 4 describes the data and frameworks used in this study. Sections 5 and 6 discuss the findings of our synchronic–diachronic and face-work analyses, respectively. The paper concludes in Section 7 with a number of theoretical, methodological and empirical reflections on our emic analytic perspective and on the specific constructions of heroism identified as salient in Argentinean and British commemorative programming.

2. Commemoration, television and war

The West is said to have experienced two 'memory booms' in its recent history (Winter 2006). The first (1890s–1950s) revolved around the memorialisation of the victims of the First World War and was crucial to the construction of national identities. The second (1960s/1970s–present day) started with remembrances of the Second World War and the Holocaust and continued with the 1989 revolutions in Eastern Europe.

The second memory boom (within which the commemorative data examined in this paper sits) is characterised not only by constant re-visiting of twentieth century wars and catastrophes but also by live broadcasting of anniversary and memorial events on television simultaneously across implicated countries. A clear example of the saturation of commemorative culture within this second memory boom was extensive televisual commemoration in 2005 of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War (VE and VJ Day), the death of Hitler and the bombing of Hiroshima. Two further defining features of television's commemorative practices during this second memory boom are marked use of film (archive) footage and oral testimony. This, in the case of memorialised wars, is generated not only by veterans and their relatives but also by journalists and other news workers (Hoskins & O'Loughlin 2010).[1]

It is noteworthy that of all the twentieth century wars so extensively commemorated in the West, only the 50th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima was duly commemorated by the Argentinean media. Though not entirely irrelevant to this Latin American country's life, European events are not usually seen as worth marking in Argentina, possibly because of historical and geographical reasons. In contrast, a number of local events are singled out for remembrance and at times marked by observing national holidays on their anniversary. Examples include the beginning and end of the last military dictatorship, of the beginning of the Falklands War ('Malvinas Day'), notorious crimes, aviation accidents, and tragedies such as the Cro-Magnon disco fire which claimed 194 lives in 2004. Collective views on some of these events, moreover, have changed over time. Once marked as a celebratory occasion, Columbus Day, for instance, has taken on a negative connotation and become a symbol of colonialism. Argentinean collective memory appears to be, then, primarily a local phenomenon.

The kind of scholarly inquiry that these two approaches to the 'phenomenon' of collective memory, in the West and in Latin America (Argentina), have triggered is, expectedly, also different. In the West, the popularisation of war memory and the

obsession with the traumas and triumphs of twentieth century conflicts and catastrophes has triggered considerable academic inquiry (Doane 1990, Mellancamp 1990, Winter 1995, Sturken 1997, Wood 1999, Wertsch 2002, Hoskins 2004, Cottle 2006, Meyers et al. 2007). Within this growing body of scholarly work, however, comparatively few studies have solely focused on the role of television as an agent of commemoration. This is surprising given not only the medium's key role in the emergence of the second memory boom but also its proven influence in the construction of cultural memories (McDonald 2006). The latter is largely enabled by television's ability to mix and match the past and present and to draw upon powerful 'media templates' (Kitzinger 2000), which strategically combine images, music, video, phrases, peoples, places and events to 'aid' interpretation of unfolding events and their subsequent reflexive memorialisation and commemoration (cf. Hoskins & O'Loughlin 2010).

In Argentina, collective memory has been approached principally by disciplines other than linguistics/discourse analysis (e.g. Sábato 1995; Varela 2000; Guelerman 2001; Vezzetti 1998, 2002; Martins 2003; Sarlo 2005). A few non-Latin American commentators, too, have concerned themselves with Argentinean memory and history (Huyssen 2004; Baron 2007). Discourse approaches to the study of collective memory and commemoration have only recently begun to develop in Argentina (e.g. Bietti 2009; Vitale 2007). A notable exception here is Forster's (2002) work on heroes. Although this author does not set out to examine (war) memory as a phenomenon, his work critically explores the changes that the figure of the hero has undergone since Ancient Greece to the present time.

Forster's definition of the modern hero is that of 'the autonomous self, transformed into maker of his/her own destiny by triumphing over the joint force of the Gods and of nature' (2002: 76–77). Contemporary or postmodern heroes, in turn, represent the triumph of nihilism: they become such simply by surviving daily routine. The emergence of this hero, for Forster (2002: 72), owes to one of the many shifts that characterise postmodernity, specifically the 'substitution of the tragedy of history with the extenuating enumeration of the minutia of life'. Forster continues:

> the scenes of normality, the endless family stories, the details of banal, common, human lives…[have] displac[ed] those [tragic/modern hero] stories which have become unexplainable and unintelligible for contemporary men and women (Forster 2002: 184).

Forster's characterisation of the 'modern' and the 'postmodern' hero informs our analysis. Before examining how these hero constructions are embedded into their respective socio-cultural contexts, a brief contextualisation of the media coverage of the Malvinas/Falklands war and of its 25th anniversary by the Argentinean and British media is next provided.

3. Reporting and commemorating the Falklands War

The unfolding Falklands War was less than 'ideally' reported by the British media, some commentators regarding it as 'the worst reported war since the Crimea' (Harris 1983: 56). Among the reasons that have been advanced for this, two are particularly worth considering. Firstly, and borrowing the words of Press Association photographer Cleaver, the 1982 Falklands War 'wasn't a news war, it's as simple as that. It was in the wrong place' (cited in Morrison & Tumber 1988: 121). Secondly, the

British armed forces were reluctant to allow on-site journalist coverage (cf. Adams 1986) and this reduced the number and variety of war reports of the Falklands War. There was also strong official control over media coverage, the British government only allowing access to the Falklands Islands to certain journalists, whose reports were subsequently 'cleared' by a military censor (Knightley 2003; Cottle 2006). Unsurprisingly, most print media's reporting of government actions on and during the Falklands War was sympathetic towards the government. Although popular newspapers like *The Sun* and *The Star* denounced the invasion, broadsheets were largely supportive of Thatcher's policies.[2]

For Argentina, 'the Malvinas war was the first major event that took place in a scenario almost completely dominated by the media' (Sarlo 1977: 2). Although the 1978 FIFA World Cup coincided with the introduction of satellite and colour television in the country, 'the Malvinas War might well claim the honour of having depended almost entirely for its symbolic protection on the mass media and, to state it plainly, on the huge television manipulation of the fighting incidents' (Sarlo 1977: 2). Just as their British counterparts, most Argentinean citizens saw for the first time images of the South Atlantic on television, where warships, aircraft and soldiers were preparing for war. Government-controlled television concealed information from its audience, portraying a picture of Argentinean military success while the British forces were getting ready for the final attack. Thus, television images of the Argentinean surrender took many Argentineans by surprise. On the Argentinean side, too, conscripted teenage soldiers were sent to the front with insufficient training and lacking the necessary economic or military resources to fight a war triggered by the *de facto* government's need of popular support. The campaign was accompanied by the nationalist discourse of the media, the explosive government–media combination resulting in the loss of another young generation.[3] It is little wonder that the Falklands War remains a highly sensitive topic in contemporary Argentina.

As regards commemorative material of the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War on British and Argentinean television, this exhibited more differences than similarities, which we summarise next (cf. Lorenzo-Dus & Pardo 2009 for details). Firstly, in both countries, footage consisted of a combination of (extended) news reports, documentaries and live coverage of the anniversary acts proper. The latter, however, was more salient on the British than the Argentinean side. Within the documentary materials, British and Argentinean footage included regular oral testimonies by a considerable range of social actors: war veterans, retired and serving military personnel, relatives of war casualties, Falklands islanders, journalists and public figures. In the British footage, the most frequently portrayed social actors were the war veterans and the journalists, especially those who had also covered the 1982 conflict and could thus claim eye-witness status (cf. Hoskins & O'Loughlin 2010). In the Argentinean footage, war veterans and the relatives of war casualties featured most frequently. Their testimonies were clearly elicited through interviewing, though interviewers and their questions were often edited out of the footage.

Secondly, a number of templates (frames of reference) were invoked in, especially, the news reports of both media. British news reports relied considerably on the 'Second Gulf War' template, the most recent war involving the UK at the time of the Falklands 25th anniversary. No such war frames of reference were used in the Argentinean footage, possibly because its territorial disputes (with neighbouring Chile) have never escalated into armed conflict.

Thirdly, the Falklands War was noticeably 'sanitised' in the British footage and 'aestheticised' in the Argentinean one. Visual sanitisation has been identified as a feature of war reporting in the British media (cf. Hoskins 2004). The British footage, for example, included current/archive commentary about casualties and the issue of death in general but hardly any corpses or coffins were shown. The Argentinean footage, in contrast, included numerous still photographs of dead soldiers' clothing and letters, as well as highly-charged emotional complaints and testimonies by war veterans. These stressed hunger, lack of resources, lack of recognition and mistreatment by their fellow country people, and their humiliating return to the mainland (with their faces and bodies covered to conceal the difference between the reality and the media portrayal of their return).

Fourthly, and crucially for the present study, different 'semantic-discursive' categories (see Section 4.2) were used in the British and the Argentinean footage to refer to those who fought in the Falklands War. Differences in the markedness of, in particular, the category 'hero', which was considerably more salient in the Argentinean than the British materials, led to our decision to conduct a case study of constructions of heroism. In what follows, we describe the methodology that we used in this case study.

4. Methodology

4.1. Data

From the reference corpus described above (comprising approximately 12 hours of commemorative footage of Argentinean and British television), we selected for the purposes of our case study two full programmes, one from Argentinean television and another from British television (total duration was approximately four hours). The Argentinean programme was the documentary *Héroes de Malvinas a 25 años* (Malvinas Heroes 25 years on). It was produced by and broadcast on 'Canal 9', a multi-media private channel, strongly associated with right-wing political ideology and, hence, with nationalism. The documentary provided a chain of personal testimonies by 16 Falklands veterans and two relatives of soldiers who perished in the war. The 16 'hero' testimonies were evenly split into high-rank and low-rank military. The British programme, *Commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Falklands War,* was shown on BBC1. It provided a mixture of live and recorded footage. The former included live interviews with veterans and other social actors attending the commemorative acts marking the 25th anniversary of the war. The latter consisted of contemporary (i.e., 2007) and archive (i.e., 1982) documentary-style footage. Contemporary footage consisted of interviews with Falkland islanders, war veterans, casualties' relatives and with journalists, including those who covered the original event. Parts of this footage were thematically oriented to the war, others to its 25th commemoration. Archive footage consisted of war reports and interviews with military, Falklands' islanders and high level politicians at the time. Contemporary and archive footage dealing with the war were interspersed into the live footage of the 2007 commemorative acts. Altogether, the British programme contained 22 testimonies. Three were by relatives of military who lost their lives during the war, five by journalists who reported the war and the remaining 15 were by war veterans of various military ranks. These war veteran testimonies were elicited through a variety of interviewing techniques. The majority, though, were constructed as 'casual chats' between journalists and veterans.

6   *Laura Pardo and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus*

For reasons of space, in the analytic sections of this paper we focus on a number of illustrative examples from two extended segments within these programmes, to which we refer as Text A and Text B. Text A (Argentinean corpus) consists of intertwined testimonies by war veterans Villegas and Tries. Text B (British corpus) comprises a 'casual' chat between a journalist (J1) and a war veteran (soldier PR) filmed on the Falklands Islands, during which they (re-)live a series of war experiences, including the lead-up to a bloody battle on mount Two Sisters.

4.2. Analytic frameworks

Within our critical discourse approach to the study of heroism within mass-mediated commemoration of past wars, this case study adopts an innovative analytic framework developed by Pardo (2006, 2008, forthcoming); the linguistic method of synchronic-diachronic category analysis (synchronic-diachronic, henceforth). This method accounts both for the categories required by any basic theory (Glaser and Strauss 1967) and for the linguistic properties through which such categories materialise in a given text (textual practice). It distinguishes between grammatical and semantic-discursive categories. The former (speaker, actor/s, verb 1, verb 2, pragmatic operator, time and place) are common to all languages. They do not vary across discourse genres and appear in every text. The latter, although presupposing grammatical structure, are closely related to the lexicon and therefore may vary within texts or even utterances. They are text-specific and permit inductive (text-based) inquiry into speaker-constructed representations of social categories. Both grammatical and semantic-discursive categories serve to construct discursive representations and need to be jointly considered. The synchronic–diachronic method owes its name to the fact that it enables analysis of specific linguistic resources within a given utterance (i.e. synchronically within utterances) but also of individual grammatical and semantic-discursive categories across utterances (i.e., diachronically in the text).

We complement our synchronic-diachronic analysis with an analysis of face-work that incorporates revisionist approaches by Latin American and Spanish scholarship to the Anglo notions of face and politeness.[4] Specifically, we draw upon Bravo's (1999, 2002) re-examination of the Anglo-centric notions of 'positive' and 'negative' face, which this author replaces with two broader categories: *autonomy* and *affiliation*. The former refers to the self's need to be perceived by others as different from the group. The latter refers to the self's need to belong to, and be perceived as part of, a group. Although the *autonomy* and *affiliation* categories are universal, their contents are determined by particular societies and cultures. Thus, for example, while autonomy is generally established in Anglo-Saxon cultures through negative face, amongst Peninsular Spanish and Argentinean Spanish speakers it is mainly established through the open expression of one's positive attributes and of one's originality/individuality.

Spencer-Oatey (2000) proposes two interrelated aspects of face that we fruitfully apply to our analysis of face-work in a public, mass-mediated context: quality and social identity face. Quality face is associated with our 'desire for people to evaluate us positively in terms of our personal qualities; e.g. our competence, abilities, appearance, etc'. Because of this, quality face 'is closely associated with a sense of personal self-esteem' (Spencer-Oatey 2000: 540). It is also very similar to Brown and Levinson's (1987) notion of positive face. Social identity face, in turn, is associated with our 'desire for people to acknowledge and uphold our social identities or roles,

e.g. as group leader, valued customer, close friend'. This is why social identity face is 'closely associated with our sense of public worth' (Spencer-Oatey 2000: 540).

5. War heroes 25 years on: a linguistic method of synchronic-diachronic category analysis

The results of our synchronic-diachronic analysis reveal that the Argentinean and British corpora rely principally on one, shared, semantic/discursive category: war. In Text A, there is only one speaker talking to an unseen journalist/interviewer and therefore not discursively present as an actor. Other actors are mentioned, however, and the grammatical category 'space' appears as independent from that of the 'war'. Following the order in which they are introduced by the speaker/protagonist, the following categories are revealed in Text A[5]:

TIME	V3	PLACE	V1	WAR	S/P	PRAG. OP.	ACTOR	V2

In Text B, two speakers appear on screen and can be heard: the journalist (J1) and war veteran PR. Since their interaction is perceived by the audience as a whole, however, we analyse it here as one text (instead of two). As the categories used by both speakers are similar, they naturally come together in our synchronic-diachronic analysis. The categories in Text B are schematically presented below:

PRAG. OP.	S/P1 (PR)	V1	S/P2 (J)	V2	TIME	WAR	V3

The above synchronic differences between the Argentinean and British texts reflect both their peculiarities and the word order rules of their respective languages. For instance, the sentence position of the 'space' and 'time' categories varies in English and Spanish and explicit reference to the subject is not required in Spanish. The 'space' category, apparently absent in Text B, has in fact been subsumed under the semantic-discursive category 'war'.

In order to shed further light into the various ways in which the category 'war' manifests itself in the data, both texts need to be read diachronically, too. Doing so reveals a number of subcategories. In Text A, these are: *military life*, *battle*, *precariousnes*s, *heroism*, *family* and *everyday life*, as illustrated in Table 1. These

Table 1. Semantic/discursive sub-categories in Text A (diachronic analysis).

WAR					
Military life	Battle	Precariousness	Hero	Family	Everyday life
a Professional Soldier this [war] Heads this Group Sergeant	two bright tracers tracers shot shoot shoot	didn't even have a Band-Aid didn't have anything at all	a hero or a fool pain was unbearable	my family my old woman sisters partner a little girl my little girl	a barbecue what barbecue

nouns might be replaced by others. Yet, they are consistently used through the text (allowing for internal variation), bear relation to the speaker's own lexicon and serve to bring together other components of the semantic nodes to which they belong.

The semantic/discursive subcategories listed in Table 1 show how 'war' is discursively constructed by the speaker/protagonist of this text: Sergeant Villegas. For him, war means practicing his profession, showing leadership and facing battle even in precarious situations. War also provides an opportunity to be recognised as a hero through dying in combat. The link between heroism and death, which is very strong throughout Text A and the Argentinean documentary in general, conforms to the nationalist, irrational discourse of the military in Argentina, '*que hace culto del coraje, de la muerte y del heroismo*' ('which raises bravery, death and heroism to a cult status'; cf. Vezzetti 2002: 96).

Villegas' *family* will value him as a hero, just as they have enabled him both to feel and to make them feel a range of emotions and to share *everyday* companionship. The latter is part of his 'doing being ordinary' (see Section 6), as opposed to 'doing being heroic'. It is illustrated by Villegas' references to preparing a Sunday barbecue– a mundane activity in Argentina that involves friends and family and of which everyone, even the poor, can partake. Everyday life is, however, the only subcategory in Text A that points to a sense of 'ordinariness'. The other subcategories highlight extraordinary aspects of Villegas existence and help provide a justification of 'exceptional heroism', which is further brought into focus by the contrast with the '*everyday life*' subcategory.

Villegas' heroism resonates with the kind of modern heroism that was born out of the Argentinean military elites' need to fuse, in epic style, two wars. One war (the so-called dirty war) was fought against a domestic 'enemy' (the guerrilla) and resulted in the imposition of State terrorism. The other war was fought against an external enemy (the British) over the Falklands and was constructed as a war of '*redención y de recuperación de la integridad total de la Patria*' ('redemption and recuperation of the total integrity of the Homeland'; Vezzetti 2002: 94–95). As for the occasional construction of the 'everyday hero' in Text A, this can be interpreted in terms of a lack of recognition by Argentinean society of its war veterans as modern heroes and their subsequent search for recognition also through 'ordinary', 'human' constructions of their trauma.

In Text B, the '*war*' category comprises three subcategories: *space–weather, battle* and *ordinary existence* (cf. Table 2). The latter, though, also present in the Argentinean documentary, is much more prevalent here.

The '*space*' category has been grammaticalised in Text B. It refers only to the Falklands islands as recalled by the speakers; hence its semantic/discursive strength. The '*battle*' category subsumes the everyday aspects of war, the friendship and camaraderie among fellow soldiers. In this context the British narrative mentions 'trenches', 'some sort of snack or cup of tea', 'a hot brew', 'getting your kit ready', 'sleeping' and 'cooking'. This contrasts with Text A, which links daily life to family and friends ('my old woman', 'my partner', 'my little girl', 'barbecue').

The extraordinary or heroic is mostly absent from Text B. There is only one reference to actual combat ('bayonets ... fierce often hand-to-hand fighting') yet this actually corresponds to the journalist. It is also the journalist who introduces the *space* and *weather* category when describing the rugged terrain, the cold temperatures, the winds and the sea. In contrast, PR mainly takes up the *ordinary being* category, through references to fellowship. An interesting counterpoint

Table 2. Semantic/discursive categories in the British text (interviewer's questions in italics, Peter Robinson's answers in Roman font type).

WAR		
Space and Weather	*''Ordinary being''*	*The Battle*
(seeing) a bit more	After	in four five commando
from a trip to the Falkland	half way across the island (.)	Two Sisters (.) in the
islands	a good flame	broken (.) jagged rocks
where	*Chicken pasta and*	the Argentineans
It (was) in this inhospitable	*mushrooms?*	the order
terrain,	Why not? Best	bayonets (.)
with the South Atlantic winter	that's alright	They
. . . that the marines themselves in	These things about my icy	San Carlos
on the high-ground overlooking	soaking feet	of fierce
San Carlos water	How	hand-to-hand fighting
ashore	with that	they
our command post	Here	the mountain and Stanley
in the hill there	*a routine(.)*	in sight
forward here	*the idea that*	*this (.)*
a good field of fire from any	*It*	*this (.)*
threat which	*stuff on and basically what*	*this (.)*
from that way	*a wet pair of socks*	*that*
of the wind	*Them*	*a good bond (.)*
about 18 inches of soil above	*your waistband or your armpit*	*the job]*
just over the hill	*and*	
in the temperatures	*that*	
	them	
	your wet stuff	
	back on	
	That	
	not nice	

develops, therefore, in Text B, whereby it is the journalist who stresses the heroic deeds of the British troops and the war veteran who states that one has simply performed one's duty, perhaps implying that heroism is part of one's way of life as a soldier (cf. Section 6). PR's narrative of the everyday (routine-centred), based on a professional approach to his war-related activities, is what makes him a postmodern hero.

6. Face-work and the discursive construction of war heroes

Our face-work analysis reveals that heroic constructions in the British and the Argentinean corpus revolve around two axes: collectivism-individualism (6.1) and ordinariness-extraordinariness (6.2). We discuss these below by means of, as in Section 5, illustrative examples from Text A and Text B.

6.1. The lonelgroup hero

In the British corpus, war veterans' testimonies tend to highlight team work and a strong spirit of military (marines) camaraderie. Social identity face claims within the war hero self-construction in the British data, then, are frequently realised through collective actions ('we-actions'). This is the case even regarding individual actions

('I-actions') (cf. our synchronic-diachronic analysis of PR's construction of the grammaticalised category *speaker* in Section 5). As an example, consider (1) from Text B:

(1)

PR: [to J1] bear in mind *you*'d have about 18 inches of soil above *you* to give *you* any protection and this is where *we* spent *our* time (.) *we* had *our* fire trench in the front here and when *you* weren't doing anything, *you* were either a [ei] making improvements to *your* trench or *you* were getting your kit ready or *you* were just sleeping and cooking

In (1), PR positions himself as the animator of a collectively authored ('guys', 'troop') view, in which the principal is also systematically either a 'we' or a generic 'you'.[6] Use of these pronominal forms (italicised in (1)) pervades throughout PR's testimony. Only on three occasions, in fact, does PR use the first-person singular pronominal form. On two of these occasions, PR's 'I-ness' belongs to the storyrealm (the documentary as a discourse enclave), rather than to the taleworld (the narrative within the storyrealm) of him as a war hero[7]: '(to J1) I'll show you (.) this is my trench'; (to J1) 'I'll let you do the honours'. The third instance coincides with the only occurrence of direct speech in PR's taleworld. Therein PR rationalises entering combat as follows:

(2)

PR: *you* just say to *yourself* (.) right (.) *we*'ve gotta do this (.) not I gotta do this (.) *we* gotta do this (.) and *you*'re always looking after each other and the rest of *your* guys and *your* troop and they're looking after *you* (.) *you* know that (.) and it's a good bond. (.) and *you* just get on and *you* do the job [...]

In the course of his direct speech above, PR explicitly negates the value of individual agency ('not I gotta do this') and equally explicitly asserts the value of collectivism ('*we* gotta do this') and of camaraderie (e.g. '*you*'re always looking after each other... and it's a good bond'). The fighting activities to which such strongly asserted 'we-actions' refer are vaguely constructed as 'this' and 'the job'. This is interesting, given the level of detail with which 'ordinary' war activities (e.g., preparing trenches, cooking, sleeping and so forth) are described in (1) and elsewhere in PR's testimony within Text B. PR's vagueness in (2) possibly seeks to mitigate any extra-ordinariness in his narrative (see 6.1.2). By doing so, too, it contributes to down-playing the 'ugly side' of war, to sanitising war memory (cf. Section 2).

Unlike in the British materials, being a war hero is often constructed by the war veterans in the Argentinean footage through strongly asserted individualism (or I-ness). As an illustration, consider examples (3)–(6) from Text A:

(3)

Villegas: '*el milico de profesión soy yo ... A la cabeza del grupo voy yo*'. ('The professional "military" here it's me ... I am the one to lead the group')

(4)

V: '... *entonces le digo a Tries que estaba atrás mío, Tries estate atento que voy a hacer un cambio de posición*' ('... then I tell Tries who was behind me, Tries, be on the alert that I am about to change positions')

(5)

V: 'Tries vení, mirá no vayas a pensar que me pongo en héroe, ni en estúpido, esto que te voy a decir está pensado, este, quiero que le avises a mi familia, y le contés que yo quedé acá' ('Tries, come over here, look, don't think that I'm trying to be neither a hero nor a fool, I have given thought to what I am about to tell you, I mean, I want you to notify my family, to tell them that I stayed behind')

(6)

V: '...*de qué asado me hablas Tries? dejate de joder, pegame un tiro que ya no aguanto más*' ('what barbecue are you talking about Tries? Stop fucking about, shoot me now that I can no longer bear this').

In the above examples, Villegas positions himself as the 'animator' of individually 'authored' views embedded within war activities and experiences in which his individual character ('principal') is fore-grounded. Villegas partly justifies his individuality on grounds of his senior military rank: he is, after all, the (only) professional soldier and therefore the group leader. Such a strong sense of individual agency conforms to the face-work category of *autonomy*; the content of which in Argentinean Spanish centrally includes the notions of self-esteem and self-affirmation.

Autonomy, moreover, is combined in Villegas' testimony with a strong sense of *affiliation*. The latter is evident in his use of a number of strategies that highlight the value of interpersonal closeness. In (3), for example, sergeant Villegas uses the colloquial and 'self-deprecating' term '*milico*', possibly to minimise rank differences with lower-rank soldier Tries. Villegas also uses direct speech, often positioning himself as giving direct orders (worded through imperatives) to Tries. This may be seen to reinforce Villegas' *autonomy* through self-assertion of his higher military rank. However, most of Villegas' imperatives belong to its accentuated variant: '*vení*' (versus non-accentuated *ven*), '*mirá*' (versus *mira*), '*contés*' (versus *cuentes*), '*dejate*' (versus *déjate*) and '*pegame*' (versus *pégame*).

It is important in this respect to remember that what in Brown and Levinson's (1987) model would be seen as an unmitigated, bold on record, face-threatening act (use of the imperative) is not necessarily perceived as such by Argentineans, especially when use of the imperative is contextually appropriate, as it is in the military context being depicted in Villegas testimony. Rather, Villegas' accentuated imperatives constitute an attempt on his part to do *affiliation*, i.e., to establish and maintain interpersonal rapport with his taleworld co-principal Tries. Thus, Villegas constructs himself as someone who, despite military hierarchies, is interpersonally close to Tries. This is perhaps most clearly illustrated in (7):

(7)

V: '*Decile a mi vieja que la quise mucho, a mis hermanas, y a mi mujer que me perdone porque no me había casado, todavía, ya tenía una nena, y a la nena mía*' ('Tell my old woman (mum; term of endearment) that I loved her very much, (tell) my sisters, and (tell) my wife that she must forgive me because I hadn't yet married (her) but I already had a girl/sweetheart, and (tell) my girl/sweetheart...')

In (7), Villegas' use of direct speech and the accentuated imperative overlaps with his discursively engaging in painful self-disclosure: self-disclosure being one of the communicative features of interpersonal closeness (cf. Derlega et al. 1993).

Villegas' order to Tries in (7), too, is an example of 'claims to social identity face' (cf. Spencer-Oatey 2000) based on non-military roles in the Argentinean corpus. The specific social identities invoked by Villegas are family-related: being a son, a brother and a partner. Importantly, these positive social identity face claims are interrelated to 'quality face claims' (cf. Spencer-Oatey 2000), specifically to his being a loving person. The latter is discursively realised through explicit lexis (e.g. '*la quise mucho*') and use of colloquial terms of endearment to refer to his loved ones ('*mi vieja*', '*la nena mía*').

In terms of face-work, then, Villegas' testimony draws upon a culturally (Argentina) and contextually (military) sanctioned sense of *autonomy*. Embedded within it, we find another equally culturally and contextually appropriate value: *affiliation*. His social identity face as a war hero, furthermore, resembles that found in other non Anglo-Saxon cultures and contexts. Jaworski and Galasinski (1998) specifically examined the discursive processes whereby Lech Walesa, former leader of the Polish Trade Union Solidarity and subsequently Poland's president, discursively constructed his identity during the 1995 Polish presidential campaign. This analysis revealed Walesa's use of three self-constructions which together epitomised an image deeply embedded within Polish nineteenth century literature and pre-World War II Polish history: 'the Romantic tradition of a lone Pole fighting for the good of his country' (ibid.:540: Jaworski and Galasinski 1998). In Argentina, the 'romantic hero', of which Text A is representative, was especially prevalent in the discourse of the guerrilla (in 1977), which was influenced by the charismatic Che Guevara (cf. Vezzetti 2002).[8] Paradoxically, therefore, two political enemies, the Argentinean guerrilla and the Argentinean military (on this occasion, the Falklands' veterans), coincide in their discourses of war heroism.

6.2. The (extra)ordinary hero

In this section, we focus on a complementary aspect of the war hero self-construction, namely its foregrounding of either ordinary (British material) or extraordinary (Argentinean material) activities/experiences. In the British material, the collective actions of the war veterans are frequently constructed as normal or, following's Sacks (1984) terms, 'ordinary'. According to Sacks:

> in ordinary conversation, people, in reporting on some event, report what we might see to be, not what happened, but the ordinariness of what happened. The reports do not so much give attributes of the scene, activity, participants, but announce the event's ordinariness, its usualness (Sacks 1984: 414).

This, Sacks argues, is not because these reports necessarily correspond to ordinary people but because:

> Whatever you may think about what it is to be an ordinary person in the world, an initial shift is not to think of 'an ordinary person' as some person, but as somebody having as one's job, as one's constant preoccupation, doing 'being ordinary' (Sacks 1984: 414).

PR's testimony in Text B is a case in point. His war experiences surely qualify as those which, if not leaving PR at a loss for words (given that he has agreed to provide such words in front of the cameras), would surely lead to disclosing extra-ordinary

narrative details. Instead, and as shown in (8) below, PR relays a range of mundane activities (cf. Section 5 '*ordinary being*' semantic category).

(8)

> PR: we had our fire trench in the front here and when you weren't doing anything, you were either a [ei] making improvements to your trench or you were getting your kit ready or you were just sleeping and cooking [. . .] we would normally try to have some sort of snack or cup of tea or something like that (.)

In (8) PR adapts every-day, mundane *non*-war activities to a war context. He and his marines' battalion are reported to be 'sleeping and cooking', 'try[ing] to have some sort of snack or cup of tea or something like that'; 'making improvements to your trench', 'getting [their] kit ready', and so forth. Admittedly, not all war experiences are of physical combat. Non-combat time is, indeed, part of deployed military and, hence, a 'legitimate' activity to be reported by PR. Yet, the extra-ordinary purpose of this ordinary activity is largely omitted from his testimony. Thus, we hear in (8) about PR's team 'getting [their] kit ready' but not about the obvious reason for doing so: combat. We hear about the ordinary tasks on which they spent their time, too, 'when [they] weren't doing anything', the latter avoiding an explicit reference to combat.

This emphasis on mundane, run-of-the-mill (war) experiences is further constructed in PR's taleworld through 'the ordinary cast of mind'. This entails discursively normalising one's experiences via a range of mitigating expressions, such as 'nothing much' and 'just' (Sacks 1984: 424). In PR's testimony, these mitigating expressions are often placed in the discursive vicinity of a limited number of potentially extra-ordinary activities, which are in any case implied rather than explicitly asserted.

PR's constructions in Text B clearly resonate with Sacks' observation that 'it is really remarkable to see people's efforts to achieve the "nothing happened" sense of really catastrophic events' (1984: 419). They also prompt the question: Why? After all, the experiences of a war veteran are far from ordinary, especially if, as in the case of those examined in our corpus, they have been selected to be part of mediated commemorative texts. War veterans like PR fought in bloody battles, saw fellow British military killed, and possibly killed Argentinean soldiers in combat. Yet, by and large, these are not the experiences remembered in and through the British commemorative footage. Sacks' answer to the question of why perform the ordinary cast of mind goes as follows: 'ventures outside of being ordinary have unknown virtues and unknown costs' (Sacks 1984: 418). In other words, the potential level of self-face threat involved into 'making your life an epic' (Sacks 1984: 419) is not inconsiderable. It includes, amongst other things, 'people figure[ing] that there is something odd about you; that you are pretentious. You might find them jealous of you. You might lose friends' (Sacks 1984: 418).

Sacks (1984: 418) concedes that doing being ordinary is culturally-sensitive when he states that cultural considerations are 'manifestly important'. However, he further argues that one 'could perfectly well remove the Puritan constraint' from it, that is, its cultural (Anglo) specificity and 'the ordinary cast of mind would nonetheless be there to preserve the way we go about doing "being ordinary"' (Sacks 1984: 418). Looking at the Argentinean war veterans' testimonies, Sacks seems to have underrated the role of culture.

14   *Laura Pardo and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus*

Indeed, frequently in Text A, Villegas foregrounds extra-ordinary events via a number of discursive strategies which, in parallel to Sacks' term, we might term 'the extra-ordinary cast of mind'. In clear contradistinction to tea-making, sleeping and kit preparation, for instance, his testimony talks in much detail of near-death and gruesome combat experiences. Instead of talking of his just 'doing his job', he talks of dying for others, for one's homeland and for God. He also makes explicit, continuous reference to extra-ordinary, war-specific activities, ranging from being shot in the abdomen to being eight kilometres away from a village and thus not having anything with which to treat one's injury. Furthermore, these activities are vividly dramatised through direct speech and 'fresh talk' (Goffman 1981), both of which convey a sense of authenticity. They are also accompanied by explicit description of emotions, including extreme pain, sadness (voice breaking, crying) and hopes and desires (e.g. '*y . . . bueno . . . me quebré. Y empecé a llorar porque yo siempre anhele; yo siempre soñé con encontrarme*' ('and . . . well . . . [I] broke down. And [I] started to cry because I had always longed for, dreamt of meeting with'). In Text A, which is representative of the Argentinean materials, extra-ordinariness constitutes the axis around which modern heroism is constructed.

7. Conclusions

The British and the Argentinean war hero constructions in our corpus are, in Forster's (2002: 77) terms, 'fabricated figures by a spectacle industry that needs, day after day, to create those archetypes that may satisfy the lack of substantial ideals of an anesthetised, direction-less humanity'. In that sense, they are both modern constructions. As to what these archetypes may be, though, our analysis has revealed a preference for 'modern' hero constructions in the case of the Argentinean corpus (the lone hero willing to die for his country) and for 'contemporary/postmodern' hero constructions in the case of the British corpus (the hero as someone who merely does his 'job/duty' as part of team work). At the same time, however, our analysis has also found occasional ordinary constructions in the Argentinean materials and extra-ordinary ones (by the journalist) in the British programme. Modernity *and* postmodernity, therefore, coexist in two contemporary (early twenty-first century), similarly mediated (through the mass medium of television) but culturally different (Argentinean–British) commemorative discourses of war. Rather than conceiving of modernity and postmodernity in binary/dichotomous West–non-West terms, then, we believe that what our data shows is a gradual continuum of (post-)modern heroism. While exhibiting different trends at times, the various discursive constructions of war heroism in the corpus coexist temporally and in their mediation.

Dichotomous theoretical or methodological categories may be considered without reference to the dialectic relation they bear to the social milieu. Yet, cultural and discursive representations such as the ones examined in this paper are inextricably linked to the social groups with which they originate, as well as to particular circumstances of time and place. In addition, the discourses and representations deemed characteristic of a particular historical stage may coexist with others that apparently belong to different periods (Pardo 2001). Thus, for instance, Lech Walesa's discourse resembles both present-day Argentinean war veterans' and that of the early Argentinean Peronism. The cultural and discursive features of the Argentinean and British materials show that timelines and generalisations are not particularly helpful. When it comes to concepts such as modernity/

postmodernity, heroism, the 'ordinary' and so forth, any conclusions should be limited to the cases studied through the rigorous application of ethnographic methods.

There are, of course, other contingent factors that bear upon constructions of heroism in our data. Not least of these are the ideological orientations of media outlets and the implications of what we consider to be a complex inter-relationship between media producers and media consumers. These are issues that need to be taken up elsewhere; as, for example, Santander (2010) does in this special issue. They are also issues that underscore the importance of our tailored methodological approach to interpreting our corpus. Specifically, we have applied a Latin American theoretical and methodological model to British and Latin American data, complementing it also with theoretical approaches of Anglo-Saxon origin but which have undergone revision within (among other) Latin American cultures. This is unusual given the continual widespread application of Anglo-Saxon theories to cases studies outside the Anglo-Saxon world. It is also invaluable because our eclectic approach affords a much needed complementary cultural perspective in the study of the discursive manifestations of social representations.

Notes

1. Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2010) argue, in fact, the existence of a third memory boom, which challenges, rather than replaces, the still ongoing secondary memory boom. Unlike the latter, this third memory boom is not formed upon a sense that past events must not be forgotten. Instead, it is 'characterised by the immediate, perhaps hasty, marking and memorialising including as part of the politics of memory of the 21st century, notably in legitimising or de-legitimising of ongoing warfare and those with a "long tail" (as with Iraq)'.
2. There was some critical positioning within the latter; a case in point being cartoonist Steve Bell's work on the newspaper *The Guardian* (cf. Dobbs et al. 1996).
3. State terrorism had already claimed 30,000 mostly young victims, known as the 'disappeared'.
4. Following on closely from the work of Goffman, and in particular his notion of face as 'the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself (sic) by the line others assume he (sic) has taken during a particular contact' (1967: 5), Brown and Levinson (1987) formulated their highly influential Politeness Theory. Therein, face is seen as consisting of two 'wants' that interactants attribute to one another, and that every member of society knows that every other member desires: 'positive' and 'negative' face wants. Positive face wants refer to an individual's desire to feel liked, respected or admired. Negative face wants refer to individuals' desire to remain free from imposition.
5. V1/V2/V3: Verb 1/2/3. S/P: . . . PRAG. OP: Pragmatic operator.
6. The terms animator, author and principal are used here in the sense of Goffman's (1981) participation framework, specifically his tripartite classification of the traditional concept of 'speaker', which he replaces with that of the 'production role' and divides into: animator, author and principal.
7. Taleworld and storyrealm are used here in the sense of Young (1986).
8. Marxism (to which Guevara broadly ascribed), incidentally, was opposed to such a romantic tradition of heroism.

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16 *Laura Pardo and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus*

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18   *Laura Pardo and Nuria Lorenzo-Dus*

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