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Telling Tales: a dual analysis of the newspaper reporting of historical child sexual abuse in Irish Industrial Schools.

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1. Introduction

Over the last twenty years, the Irish people were confronted with a series of scandalous revelations about clergy and religious in Ireland; starting with the discovery that Eamonn Casey, while Bishop of Kerry, had fathered a child, through the scandals of child sexual abuse by priests and brothers to the present day investigation into religious-run industrial schools. All of these events have been covered in great detail by the Irish media. This article examines one specific dimension of media coverage of those events – the representation of the Industrial Schools run by the Irish Christian Brothers, and the Brothers themselves.

When complaints came to light about the Industrial Schools, the Government of the day issued a formal apology to residents and set up the Laffoy Commission to investigate what had happened historically. The Irish Christian Brothers commissioned the authors of this paper to prepare an analysis of how the issue was covered in the mass media, for presentation to the Laffoy Commission. This present paper focuses on the research methodologies employed and the subsequent similarities and differences in the analytical findings.

One of us (Breen) is a media sociologist who specialises in quantitative analysis of media content. He has published several articles and book chapters dealing with media issues, focusing on the area of framing and representation (Breen, 2004; Breen and Devereux, 2003; Devereux and Breen, 2003; Breen, 1997). Much of his research uses content analysis as a way of providing an empirical description of content. The other (O'Keeffe) is an applied linguist, specialising in corpus-based research. Her research involves looking at empirical language in use across large collections of spoken and written texts in electronic form with the aid of analytical software (see O'Keeffe 2002, O'Keeffe and Farr 2003, Farr and O'Keeffe 2002, McCarthy and O'Keeffe 2003, O'Keeffe 2004). The 'Laffoy papers' were presented as two separate but interrelated pieces of research. In this article we revisit them from a methodological perspective, in an effort to draw as much connection as possible between traditional content and the linguistic analysis of corpora. Our aim is to assist researchers by developing a considered joint approach to the analysis of textual content

Media audiences worldwide use media content to meet a number of needs, including that of surveying their total environment; people rely on the media to keep them informed about issues of significance which otherwise might not come to light. This surveillance function is ultimately dependent on the integrity of the press. Cohen (1963) puts it succinctly: 'the press...may not be successful in telling people what to think but it is stunningly successful in telling them what to think about'. It is important, therefore, to ascertain the accuracy of such reporting. The press are influential and it is vital that media reports and accounts are examined carefully. This is especially true in relation to the reporting of child sexual abuse in recent years (Forst and Blomquist, 1991; Jenkins; Kitzinger 1995; Franklin and Horwath 1996; McDevitt 1996; Goddard and Saunders 2000; Best 2003a; Best 2003b; Kitzinger 2004).

2. Theoretical Perspectives

2.1 Content Analysis

Content analysis is defined by Iyengar (1991) as 'a systematic effort to classify textual material.' Part of our research used a content analysis method dealing with press reportage of the Christian Brothers' Industrial Schools. It is clear that most Irish people have little direct experience of such schools, although clearly a great many Irish people, especially males, have had direct experience of the Christian Brothers, being past pupils of their ordinary schools, both primary and secondary. For this reason, most people rely on newspapers, television and other media news sources for their understanding and conceptualisation of Industrial Schools. It is important, therefore, to ascertain the accuracy of such reporting. The press are indeed influential and we need to examine their reports carefully.

In the research literature on mass communication, content analysis is used with a fourfold intention. Firstly, to track content over time, determining various trends and repeating patterns as they occur in media content. Secondly, it is used to highlight those latent and manifest dimensions of content which are salient to the research. Thirdly, it allows the researcher to make determinations based on empirical data about the political, social and economic orientations of media organisations. Finally, it allows the researcher to make inferences about the ideological frames which shape and direct media content. These frames represent a critical dimension to our understanding of the influences of media content on audiences.

Entmann (1993: 51) points out that the concept of framing is related to understanding how a communicative text exerts power, specifically how influence is exerted on human consciousness by a given text. Framing, says Entmann, is selecting '*some aspects of a perceived reality in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation*

and/or treatment recommendation.' He cites the Cold War as an example of how frames follow Gamson's (1992) understanding of diagnosis, evaluation and description, by the fourfold process of defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting remedies. In the Cold War frame certain civil wars were defined as a problem, deemed to be caused by communist rebels, judged to be examples of atheistic aggression, and solved by US military support for the opposing side.

Various approaches to framing analysis have been taken by different scholars. Iyengar (1991) looked at collective outcomes, public policy debates and historical trends. Mendelsohn (1993) evaluated the framing of politicians in the 1988 Canadian election as either nationalists, or potential prime ministers. Iyengar and Simon (1993) evaluated Gulf crisis news stories in terms of military vs. diplomatic frames. Maher (1996) examined environmental and pollution issues in the context of a population growth frame as opposed to a greedy developer frame. Warren (1997) suggests a threefold approach to the issue: the event itself, in this case the newspaper report; the context of its production, the 'what', 'why', and 'how'; and the values that lie behind its production, such as truth, balance, and objectivity. Breen (1997, 2000) used valence, prominence, story size, legality and deviance evaluation in an analysis of religious journalism stories. Ashley and Olsen (1998) looked at *The New York Times* and *Newsweek* coverage of the women's movement, and discovered both pro- and anti- frames in both. Philo (1995, 1999) has examined issues such as selectivity, naming, and deviance across a variety of journalistic subjects, including mental illness, labour issues, war coverage and ethnic minorities. McLeod and Detenber (1999) examined media portraits of anarchist protest using various frames. Andsager (2000) examined the abortion debate evaluating media use of 'pro-life' and 'pro-choice' frames. Part of our research sought to establish what frames were being used and what representations were being presented to the mass public on the conjoined topic of the Christian Brothers and the Industrial Schools.

2.2 Corpus Linguistics

Aijmer and Altenberg (1991: 1) describe corpus linguistics (CL) as 'the study of language on the basis of text corpora'. CL has developed rapidly since the 60s largely due to the advent of computers and especially their capacity to store and process large amounts of data. This has facilitated the systematic analysis of vast amounts of language and in turn this has meant that descriptions (and prescriptions) about the English language have frequently been contradicted by corpus linguists who work with representative samples of naturally-occurring language (Holmes 1988, Baynham 1991, Boxer and Pickering 1995, Kettermann 1995, Baynham 1996, Carter 1998, Hughes and McCarthy 1998, and McCarthy 1998).

Essentially a *corpus* is 'a large and principled collection of naturalised [computerised] texts' in spoken or written form (after Biber et al 1998: 4) which is available for analysis using corpus software packages (for further definitions see Renouf 1997, Sinclair 1997, Tognini-Bonelli 2001). Some debate exists as to whether CL is a theory or a method (see Tognini-Bonelli 2001) or indeed whether it is a new or separate branch of linguistics. As Kennedy (1998) notes corpus-based research derives evidence from texts and so it differs from other approaches to language which depend on introspection for evidence. In this paper, we will use a corpus-based methodology in which CL will be used as a *methodological tool* in tandem with another methodological tool (in this case, content analysis) in the empirical analysis of a corpus of newspaper texts.

Increasingly, CL is being applied to contexts and domains outside of the study of language itself where the *use* of language is the focus of empirical study in a given context. Among the many fields where CL is being adopted to complement other methodological tools such as discourse analysis, conversation analysis include contexts such as courtrooms (including forensic linguistics), the workplace, the classroom and educational contexts (see Farr 2002, Farr 2003,

O’Keeffe and Farr 2003, Walsh 2002), political discourse, advertising and the media (Carter and McCarthy 2002, Charteris-Black 2004.). In all of these cases CL offers a useful approach to the study of language, allowing for the quantification of recurring linguistic features to substantiate qualitative and intuitive insights. In the area of language and the media there have been a growing number of studies which draw on this approach. Coperías Aguilar and Besó (1999) conduct a corpus-based lexical study of Sinn Féin and UUP websites and they show systematic politicisation of language in the data. Gregori Signes complements a conversation analysis methodology by using a corpus in her study of American talkshows (see Gregori Signes 1999, 2000, 2002). O’Keeffe looks at the discourse of an Irish radio phone-in programme using CL in tandem with CA and DA (O’Keeffe, 2002). McCarthy and O’Keeffe (2003) compare the use of vocatives in radio interactions and casual conversation while O’Keeffe (2004) uses a corpus-based methodology to examine vague language as a marker of shared knowledge in radio phone-in discourse. Carter and McCarthy (2002) show how conversation analysis and corpus linguistics can complement each other in their dual analysis of Tony Blair interview data from British radio while O’Keeffe, K.J. examines a corpus of Irish newspapers (see O’Keeffe, K.J. 2002).

3. *Applying the Methodologies*

3.1 Content Analysis

The ‘texts’ for analysis are those stories about the Christian Brothers’ Industrial Schools as reported in the Irish media between 1998 and 2000. While the stories are a sample of all news stories in the Irish media, they are a complete subset of a particular type, specifically those that mention the Irish Christian Brothers. For the purpose of this research, analysis has been limited to that subset as supplied to the researchers by the Communications Office of the Christian Brothers. The full set of stories is available to any researcher on

request. The criterion for selection was reference to the Christian Brothers, and the dataset is a comprehensive set of stories drawn from the national and regional press.

A word count was taken for each story to establish story length. Each story also contained an identifier 'slug' and a date which counted for two additional words. Each story was also coded for origin and date in a year/month format. After the dataset was generated in this fashion, the 575 stories were checked to ascertain the frequency of each individual media source. Because of the low frequency of some sources, all sources with fewer than five stories were coded into a single block representing regional newspapers for the most part¹. Three magazines were excluded from the dataset at this point on the basis of their lack of representation.² The same applied to two stories from television agencies.³ Some of the newspapers categorized as 'regional' were recoded as 'tabloid'.⁴ In the subsequent analysis, all articles from the *Star*, the *People*, and the *Mirror* were recoded as 'tabloid'.

Each article was evaluated according to the following set of frames:

Responsibility Frame: Insofar as responsibility for abuse was alluded to, where was the responsibility focused: individual Brothers, several Brothers, the individual Industrial School, the Irish Christian Brothers, the Church, the State.

¹ Avondhu, City Tribune, Clonmel Nationalist, Connaught Tribune, Donegal Press, Dublin People, Evening Echo, Galway Advertiser, Ireland's Own, Irish Family, Irish Medical News, Irish News, Irish World, Kilkenny Nationalist, Kilkenny People, Kingdom, Laois Nationalist, Leinster Express, Leitrim Observer, Limerick Echo, Limerick Leader, Limerick Post, Longford Leader, Magpie, Mayo News, Meath Chronicle, Munster Express, Nenagh Guardian, New Ross Standard, Observer, Offaly Independent, Offaly Express, SouthSide People, Tuam Herald, Tullamore Tribune, TV Now, Waterford News and Star, Weekender, Westmeath Examiner, Wexford Echo, Wexford People.

² Hotpress (2 stories); Film (1 story); Phoenix (4 stories)

³ RTE and TV3 (1 story each)..

⁴ The Sun, The People.

Abuse Frame: Where abuse was specified, either proven or alleged, what was the highest level of abuse mentioned, i.e., strict discipline, hunger, corporal punishment, sexual abuse, death?

Abuser Frame: Did the article refer to a single Brothers, 2-5 Brothers, 6-10 Brothers, or > 10 Brothers?

Survivor Frame: Did the article refer to a single survivor, 2-5 survivors, 6-10 survivors, or > 10 survivors?

Source Frame: What was the primary source of the article: a named individual, an unnamed individual, a group, a media report, the Christian Brothers, or other?

Valence: In addition each article was coded as to how positive or negative it was towards the Irish Christian Brothers on a scale of 2 to -2 where 2 means very positive, 1 means positive, 0 means neutral, -1 means negative and -2 means very negative.

History: Articles were also coded for an historical dimension, with 1 = Yes and 0 = No. The term historical dimension refers to whether or not any effort was made to view the Industrial Schools as a product of their times.

Outcome: Finally, each article was coded in terms of its perceived overall desired outcome, with nine potential outcomes identified (0= No outcome specified; 1= Don't disturb the past; 2= Compensation as primary; 3 = Punishment of abusers as primary; 4 = Support for survivors as primary; 5 = Establish the Truth as Primary; 6 = Multiple; 7 = Other; 8=Justice; 9=Child Protection).

Coding guidelines were to be further clarified if this initial coding experience gave a low level of intercoder reliability. Intercoder reliability is a measure used to see how well different coders agree, and is regarded as measure of the effectiveness of the coding schema. A random set of twenty

stories was distributed to three coders who were asked to analyse them according to the schema above. The results for intercoder reliability using Scott's pi were within acceptable levels, $p > .08$. These values indicate an acceptable level of correlation, which substantiated the reliability of the coding schema.

Once coded, the dataset was examined to identify those stories in which the Christian Brothers were entirely peripheral to the text. Most of these stories were those which pertained to the establishment or work of the Laffoy Commission in which the Christian Brothers were mentioned in passing. Some 108 such stories were then excluded from the database, leaving 458 stories for analysis. As mentioned above, the source for the stories were recoded, identifying national daily titles and national Sunday titles individually, with tabloid newspapers and regional newspapers identified as separate sub-groups.

3.2 Corpus Linguistics

This strand of the study draws on three batches of newspaper texts which have been divided for analysis into three corpora:

Table 1: Three corpora used for corpus-based analysis

Corpus	Description	Word count
All CB	All Irish newspaper coverage of the Irish Christian Brothers in relation to child abuse and Industrial Schools from 1998 to 2000 (as detailed above) taken from Irish national to regional press. Mostly comprising news reports but also including some editorials and letters.	322,873
<i>Irish Times</i> Non-CB (IT NCB)	43 newspaper reports from the <i>Irish Times</i> on child abuse between 1998 and 2000. The only restrictions on the selection of these articles were that 1) they do not involve abuse within religious orders 2) that they refer to male abuse only (so as to improve comparability)	20,223
<i>Irish Times</i> CB (IT CB)	43 newspaper reports from the <i>Irish Times</i> between 1998 and 2000 separated from the <i>All CB</i> corpus. 43 articles about the Christian Brothers were chosen randomly to parallel the number of texts found in the same paper in the same period dealing with non-religious child abuse	28,532

The *All CB* corpus represents a totality of coverage within Ireland across different newspapers and different genres (e.g. news reports, editorials and letters). The *Irish Times Non-CB* (hereafter *IT NCB*) was formed by using keywords to search the *Irish Times* archives⁵ in the period 1998 to 2000. This search yielded 43 articles referring to male non-religious child abuse. A comparative sub-corpus, the *Irish Times CB* (henceforth *IT CB*), was then generated from the larger *All CB* corpus by the random selection of 43 *Irish Times* articles on to the Christian Brothers. The *Irish Times* was chosen as a source of data because this paper is seen as the 'paper of record' in Ireland. It was felt that this source therefore carries greatest societal expectation of objectivity. Most of the corpus-based analysis focuses on the smaller *Irish Times*

⁵ Available at <http://www.ireland.com>

comparative corpora while the *All CB* corpus is mostly used as a reference corpus for comparison.

Using these three databases in electronic form, *Wordsmith Tools* software (Scott 1998) was used to generate stance-related lexico-grammatical data across the corpora. The main function used in the analysis was that of concordancing. A concordance search can be done on any word or phrase in a text or group of texts. It will generate all instances of the search word (referred to as the *node* word), with the node word in the centre of the screen or page. This allows for the analysis of collocation (how words co-occur for example *high building* but *tall person*) and colligation (patterns of how words co-occur grammatically) in context. Table 2 gives an extract from the concordance line for the word *child* in the *All CB* data, where the concordance sample has been sorted (i) one to the left (1L) of the node word, followed by (ii) two to the left of the node (2L):

Table 2: Sample from concordance line of *child* from *All CB* corpus, sorted 1L, 2L

1	ved were, and it was accepted because a child doesn't have the critical apparatus
2	w about the system it could have been a child in the last century or a child in
3	with the civil authorities in cases of child abuse. In this case we will be ful
4	been responsible for countless cases of child abuse, many of which are the subje
5	consistently tried to cover up cases of child abuse. The investigators include a
6	ng that Bishop Murphy ignored claims of child abuse at an industrial school. The
7	the Bishop of Kerry, ignored claims of child abuse at an industrial school whic
8	been nowhere to go with a complaint of child sex abuse. She characterised child
9	p specifically to receive complaints of child sex and other abuse. The office ha
10	nding of the causes and complexities of child sexual abuse. In that, they have u
11	ing our courts having been convicted of child abuse and that he has searched the
12	ad been convicted on multiple counts of child abuse and she felt a stain on her
13	at in or around 1967, the Department of Child and Family Psychiatry at the Mater
14	obably not known that the Department of Child and Family Psychiatry in the Mater
15	entially life-threatening. The evil of child abuse is rooted in human sinfulness

The linguistic analysis centred on the scrutiny of *objectivity* or lack of it. To measure this, the corpora were analysed in terms of the *stance*. Stance is marked linguistically in a number of ways and these are extensively documented in Biber et al (1999), a grammar of English based on a corpus of 44 million words spoken and written language (The Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English). Biber et al (1999) identify the following markers of stance.

Lexical markers

Biber et al (1999: 968) tell us that 'the existence of a stance is inferred from the use of an evaluative lexical item, usually an adjective, main verb or noun'. Extract 1 illustrates some basic lexical choices made by the writer which mark stance (italics and bold added by the present authors as is the case hereafter in extracts unless otherwise stated):

Extract 1

*Inmates include **pervert padres** such as Ivan Payne and Eugene Greene who were **banged up** for carrying out **horrific** sexual abuse on **innocent young** children. [All CB]*

The keyword function of the *Wordsmith Tools* software was used to generate the words of greatest 'keyness' for analysis. This is done automatically by comparing the data with a larger reference corpus. These words are not necessarily the most frequent words, but the most 'unusually frequent' words (Scott 1988).

Grammatical markers

Grammatical stance devices include two distinct linguistic components, one presenting the stance and the other presenting the proposition that is framed by that stance (Biber et al 1999) for example:

Extract 2

The proposition is in square brackets [...] and the stance modifiers are marked in italics and bold script:

*[There is] **clearly** [a desire for the nation to beat its breast publicly over past sins, and this does indeed remain a most important exercise] [ALL CB]*

The following grammatical structures are identified by Biber et al (1999) as loci of stance and we will look at these comparatively in the datasets.

Stance adverbials

Biber et al (1999: 969) include the following forms in this category: comment clauses (you just have to try and accept it, *I guess*);

adverbial clauses (*as one might expect*);

prepositional phrases (*in actual fact*);

hedges (he's *kind of* talked himself into it)

adverbs and adverb phrases (this study will focus on the latter category for the most part in looking at stance adverbials e.g. *unfortunately*)

Extract 3

Unfortunately, given the Brother's evasive responses to the question of whether the order will open up its archives to independent scrutiny, this "mystery" of the good Brothers may never be resolved. [All CB]

Stance complement clauses

According to Biber et al (1999: 966) 'the main clause verb or adjectival predicate can express speaker stance with respect to the proposition in the complement clause'. An example from the data is given below:

Extract 4

*After all, **there can be little doubt** that religious orders and government departments have also worked to protect what they see as their own legitimate interests. [All CB]*

Complement clauses controlled by nouns can also index writer stance (Biber et al 1999: 969), for example *The likelihood* that...; *The fear* that... and *The possibility* that.... or:

Extract 5

*Christy Parker tells the tragic and lonely story of a sexually abused youngster. **The tragedy** that has spanned 21 years of Derek Power's life began in late 1976, when his nine-year-old brother, Tony, developed a brain tumour. [ALL CB]*

Concordance searches of *that* were generated to identify complement clauses marked for stance.

Modals and semi-modals

Modal verbs modify meaning and stance. These verbs (*can, could, may, might, shall, should, will, would* and *must*) are chosen by the user and can therefore index a writer's stance for the purposes of the current study. An example from the data illustrates this:

Extract 6

*...public outrage **will** pass and life **will** return to normal. This **should** not be allowed to happen, nor is it likely to happen. And next week's programme and the one to follow the week after, **will** undoubtedly twist and torment our hearts and minds still further... [ALL CB]*

Semi-modals (see Biber et al 1999: 484) also have modal meaning, but differ in grammatical characteristics. Semi-modal items including: *had to; need to; appear, seem* and *tend* were examined in the data.

Stance noun + preposition phrase

The noun plus prepositional phrase combination can also be used to frame propositions (see Biber et al 1999: 978). Take for example: *He and his team, including Valerie Hanley, exposed **the evil** [of the past] [All CB]*. The framing noun is marked in bold and the preposition phrase is in square brackets.

Premodifying stance adverbs

Biber et al (1999: 970) also identify pre-modifying stance adverbs as markers of stance:

Extract 7

*Like all boys in industrial schools he had a number, his was 12,874 and his was one of the **deeply** harrowing stories in the first installment [sic] of the new RTE documentary series, States of Fear. [ALL CB]*

Speech reporting

In addition to the categories identified by Biber et al above, the authors also identified the area of speech reporting as important to the analysis of stance. The following areas of speech reporting will be focused on:

Reported speech density

Writers can choose whether to report speech directly or indirectly. Indeed, the decision to represent speech in a text precedes this syntactic choice. Reporting speech through direct quotation makes for more vivid representation in the text, which in the context of child abuse victims can make for harrowing reading. Since the decision to use this device is within the gift of the writer, the frequency of its use is of salience in the current comparative study of stance. We will therefore compare the density and distribution of direct quotation across the data.

Stance reporting structures

Direct speech in writing can be introduced by a reporting clause which contains a reporting verb. However, the unmarked reporting verb forms, for example, *said*, *says*, and *tell*, are not always used by a writer. 'Descriptive quote

words' (after Wallace 1977) that can be used instead of neutral verbs *say* and *tell*. Wallace (1977) refers to descriptive quote words as reporting verbs that display a speaker's attitudinal stance towards the statement being reported. The extracts below show examples of these of how the choice of reporting structure adds to illocutionary force to the quotation:

Extract 8

*Then the brother took the boy's presents, a bag of sugar and a pot of jam, broke them and poured them over his head. "You'll never eat sugar and jam again, you pup," the brother **cursed**. "He was some bastard," Kelly **remembers bitterly**. [All CB]*

4. Findings

In this section we will briefly summarise the key findings of the CA and CL analyses.

4.1 Content analysis

The stories were not uniformly distributed. Ten percent of all the stories occurred in one month, May 1999, marking the commentary that occurred with the broadcasting of the *States of Fear* documentary. The length of the stories also varied considerably. The shortest story was 19 words, the longest 3,612, with the mean being about 550 words.

The primary frames in use were the individual Industrial School, or the Irish Christian Brothers. The individual Brother was used as a frame in about 14 percent of the cases. It should be noted that all three of these frames were used whether the person or persons involved were Brothers, former Brothers, or had spent some time in training with the Brothers without ever being professed.

With respect to the nature of abuse, the type of abuse was not specified or entirely absent in 20 percent of the articles. 60 percent of the articles focused

on sexual abuse, with about 8 percent of articles referring to the death of a pupil or pupils at the schools. When describing the alleged abuser, the story specified abuse by a single Brother in less than 20 percent of cases, with most references being to unspecified numbers of Brothers engaged in abuse. When describing survivors, single individuals were specified in 20 percent of stories, more than 10 individuals in about 15 percent of stories, with most references being to unspecified numbers of survivors.

In terms of sources, a named individual occurred as a source in about 10 percent of stories, the Christian Brothers in about 6 percent of stories, with the source unspecified in about 60 percent of stories. The 'media content' source, which occurred in about 24 percent of stories, refers to those stories where a television documentary such as *States of Fear* or *Stolen Lives* is used as a primary source.

On average stories were negative, as in the following extract taken from the Irish Times (04.10.99).

Catholic Church must confront its past of child sexual abuse and confess guilt

The Catholic Church has to confront its recent history; it must confess its guilt for abuses of power and trust, writes Breifne Walker

IN A VERY perceptive recent article in this newspaper Jim Duffy suggested that the besetting sin of the Catholic Church in Ireland was arrogance. He is right. Memories of the arrogance of clerical power are at the root of the present alienation from the Church.

Jim Daffy was generous in his comments on the many priests and religious men and women who served their people in a life-giving way.

Earlier this year, the RTE television series *States of Fear* confronted the Catholic Church and civil society in Ireland with case-histories of the treatment experienced by young children in orphanages and industrial schools.

It was shocking to hear that children already damaged were beaten and abused in buildings adorned with the symbols of a religion rooted in God's infinite love, and to hear that some or most of the agents of violence and fear were priests, brothers and sisters ...

In the content analysis 18 percent of stories were classified as very negative, 43 percent as negative, 20 percent as neutral, 14 percent as positive and 5 percent as very positive.

Less than 4 percent of all stories referred to an historical dimension of the industrial schools or tried to locate the schools in an historical or cultural context.

Articles in the stories in Sunday newspapers tended to be longer and more negative, with *Ireland on Sunday*, the *Sunday Tribune* and the *Sunday World* having the same level of negativity as the tabloid newspapers in general.

In terms of attribution of responsibility, there was little difference across the categories, but articles indicating the responsibility of individual Brothers, several Brothers, or the individual Industrial School were significantly longer than articles indicating the responsibility of the Irish Christian Brothers, the Church or the State. If, however, the positive articles are excluded from this analysis (most of which were direct responses by the Christian Brothers themselves), then the level of negativity rises for the Irish Christian Brothers category in the responsibility variable to match the other three categories that directly involve the Brothers.

In terms of specific abuses, the one story dealing with hunger was longer than any other. There were also 36 stories which mention death as an outcome in Industrial Schools in the hands of the Christian Brothers. The context of these articles implied that it was the direct action of a Brother or Brothers which led to the death of pupils.

There was little difference in the length of stories when examined in light of the number of persons alleged to be abusers, with story length varying from 350 to 580 words. On the other hand, the valence of such stories indicates a significant increase in negativity depending on the number of abusers referred to, with stories alleging 10 or more abusers being almost twice as negative as any other category.

Analysis of sources indicated that grouped sources (i.e. where several survivors are named or alluded to) and media sources (specifically those articles that rely on *States of Fear* and similar documentaries) received twice as much coverage on average as did the typical rebuttal statement of fact made by the Irish Christian Brothers. Those same 22 stories citing the Christian Brothers as a primary source have a positive valence of 0.68. The remaining 121 stories which cite a source have an average negative valence of – 0.76.

Child protection outcomes, punishment outcomes, compensation outcomes and truth outcomes all tended to have longer stories than any other categories. Of these four categories, child protection and punishment stories were the most negative, with truth outcomes being the most positive. This is explained in part by the Christian Brothers own publicly-stated agenda of pursuing the truth outcome, which is evident in their own press releases and adds to the positive valence score of this category.

Stories framed in terms of Brothers, whether singly, in groups, in schools or as a congregation were significantly more negative than stories framed in terms of the Church or the State. Stories which had a media source were significantly more negative than stories from an unnamed individual, which are themselves more negative than stories from the Christian Brothers.

- The greater the number of Christian Brothers indicated as involved in abuse, the more negative the coverage.
- The greater the number of Christian Brothers indicated as involved in abuse, the greater the level of abuse alleged.
- The greater the level of abuse alleged, the more negative the coverage.
- The numbers alleged to be abused is correlated with the alleged number of abusers, i.e., the higher the one, the higher the other.

- The number alleged to be abused is correlated with the level of alleged abuse, i.e., the higher the one, the higher the other.

Discussion

The first thing that comes to light is that the data is overwhelmingly negative. Most reports on the Brothers are deemed negative because of the data involved, i.e., the suggested abuse, physical and sexual, of children entrusted into their care by the State.

The dataset seems to be driven to a significant degree by the publication of documentaries such as *States of Fear* and similar works. This documentary was seen as a turning point in Irish society by many, as this extract from *The Sunday Business Post* (29.11.99) illustrates:

In the television series *States of Fear*, Raftery and O'Sullivan gave people who had been vilely treated an opportunity to be accepted and believed.

By showing the extent of state involvement and support, they comprehensively demolished the myth that the industrial schools were orphanages supported by charity. They did us a great service in forcing us to face an Ireland so callously indifferent to the fate of the children of the poor.

For many people who were abused physically, sexually or psychologically in these schools, *States of Fear* was a hugely important turning-point in their lives. For some Mary Raftery has become a hero. It is difficult for many of these people to hear any criticism of *Suffer the Little Children* [the book which was a sequel to the show] without feeling that they are once again being disbelieved or even abused.

Many of the commentators, both journalists and others, refer to these as established fact, although there has been considerable debate in the press as to the accuracy of some elements of the documentaries, specifically in relation to the death of pupils, as well a robust contention from the Irish Christian Brothers as to the one-sided presentation of the documentaries.

Most of the media coverage is framed in terms of the Irish Christian Brothers as a Congregation or the individual Industrial Schools. As mentioned earlier, little distinction is made as to whether a person charged is a current

member of the Congregation, a former member of the Congregation, a former novice or postulant with the Congregation, or simply a past pupil of one of the Congregation's schools. Some media commentators call for such measures as disbanding of the Congregation in the light of the abuse information to hand.

Hard numbers are both lacking and incorrectly used. References are to be found in the media content to 'hundreds of brothers' about to be charged, and 'countless' victims. The phrase 'up to' in terms of potential arrests is frequently employed. Accurate data seem to be quite rare. This is important because as the numbers of allegations increase, the level of negativity also rises.

The daily and Sunday tabloids are more negative about the Irish Christian Brothers than their broadsheet counterparts.

Those articles, which specify the Brothers, individually or collectively, are longer and more negative on average than those that specify the Church or the State.

These findings cannot report, of course, on what is not present in the coverage, other than the one variable that was coded from the content, that of historicity. Less than 4 percent of stories deal with the historical and cultural dimensions of the Industrial Schools. No social comparison or analysis is offered in these stories as to the state of Irish society at the time, nor is there any comparative data provided as to the level of funding compared, for example, with the average working-man's wage at the time. Such material may or may not have a balancing effect on the view presented of the Industrial Schools.

4.2 Corpus linguistics

The original study conducted a very indepth lexico-grammatical analysis of the data. Here we summarise the main findings.

Lexical markers

The word 'abuse' was one of the words of greatest 'keyness' and we will present the findings here by way of exemplar. Its frequency of occurrence is more or less the same in the three corpora, but on closer examination of concordance lines, we find that it is subject to variation in how it is modified and nuanced by means of its collocates (the words that co-occur with it). Table 3 summarises all its collocates across the data.

Table 3: Breakdown collocates of *abuse*

Corpus	Total occurrences	Total with Marked Premodifiers	%	Collocates used
<i>IT NCB</i>	123	5	4	<i>Gross; systematic; suffered</i>
<i>IT CB</i>	190	16	8	<i>Horrendous; appalling litany of; harrowing stories of; criminal sexual; perverted; very serious sexual; spiritual; suffered</i>
<i>All CB</i>	2,198	21	13	<i>tragedy of; consistent; heap abuse upon; horrific; appalling; flow of; violent culture and age of; legacy of; systematic pattern of; systematic regime of sins of; degrading and horrific; criminal; lifting the lid on years of; perverted; shocking; spiritual; suffered</i>

The finding from the IT data show that the writers of the articles on Christian Brother abuse stories (*IT CB*) lexically marked the key word *abuse* up to twice more frequently and with strongly negative lexical choices that they did in the same paper when writing about domestic abuse cases (*IT NCB*).

Stance adverbials

A concordance search for all -ly suffixes was conducted, excluding the word '*sexually*'. The *IT NCB* and *IT CB* corpora yielded 231 and 369 hits respectively⁶. All non-stance adverbs and names ending in -ly and so on were eliminated. The *IT CB* was found to have almost three times more stance adverbials than the *IT NCB* data.

Of note also is the fact that all of the stance adverbs used in the *IT NCB* articles are either from direct or indirect speech reports. That is, there is no instance of a writer of a domestic abuse story expressing stance directly. In contrast, we find that only four of the 16 occurrences of stance adverbs in the *IT CB* articles are of this nature. Instead the majority are used to express the writer's stance, for example, '*Shamefully*, however, the Catholic Church continues to show no interest in restitution' (*IT CB*). This shows a difference in the manner and degree to which *Irish Times* writers have chosen to editorialise when reporting on child abuse in relation to the Christian Brothers. It suggests that the extent to which they express opinion, at a lexico-grammatical level rather than solely report information or fact, is greater in the *IT CB* and *All CB* data.

Stance complement clauses

By searching for all of the occurrences of *that* in the *IT CB* and *IT NCB* corpora and isolating the complement clauses that contained stance markers, we again find that the *IT CB* data contain almost double the number of stance markers. Biber et al (1999: 660-661) tells us that *that* complement clauses 'are commonly used to report the speech, thoughts, attitudes or emotions of human beings'. In the case of the *IT CB* corpus, we have found that the majority of

⁶ Because there were over 4,000 hits in the *All CB* data, 300 -ly tokens were randomly chosen for comparison, where 300 is the average of the *IT NCB* and *IT CB* total number of hits.

stance complement clauses relate to speech, thoughts, attitudes and emotions in general as opposed to individual cases whereas 95 percent of IT NCB uses of stance complement clauses referred to individual cases of abuse.

Modals and semi-modals

The most notable result in the area of modals and semi-modals was the variation in the distribution of *will* which occurred far less frequently in the non Christian brothers articles (14.5 times less). On closer scrutiny the discrepancy in frequency was explained by the tendency of *IT CB* writers to focus on implications. For example, implications and change within the Christian Brothers

Extract 9

*...future trusts and future trustees **will** carry on the ethos of the order. They **will** understand the form of Catholic education the order has designed and continue to help it flourish. [IT CB]*

Most notable is the lack of future implications, for individuals or society, indexed in the reporting of non-religious and domestic sex abuse in the *IT NCB* articles which report contemporary child abuse in the same period.

Stance noun + preposition phrase

Quantitative results show that there is double the amount of attitudinal framing of prepositional phrases by nouns in the *IT CB* articles compared with the same number of *IT NCB* articles. This again indexes a greater degree of writer stance when writing about child abuse in the context of the Christian Brothers in the same paper.

Premodifying stance adverbs + adjective or noun

We found that the *IT CB* corpus contained almost double the instances of premodifying stance adverbs compared to the *IT NCB* data. An analysis of the contexts in which these premodifications occur shows that 100 percent of the *IT NCB* instances occurred in the context of individual legal cases compared with 21.5% in the *IT CB* data, where 78.5% of the premodified stance adverbs are used to add meaning in articles which deal with child abuse in Industrial Schools in a general social context in contemporary Ireland.

Here again we find evidence of the specificity of focus in the reporting of non-religious child abuse compared with the broader societal scrutiny given to the Irish Christian Brothers cases.

Speech reporting

Reported speech density

The number of direct quotations was measured across the data and the results were normalised to quotes per 1,000 words. No significant quantitative difference was observed across the data. However, analysis of the sources of the quotes showed that the distribution of quotation sources differed substantially. The *IT NCB* results show a concentration of sources in the domain of the court case, namely, quotes from the victim's evidence/accounts; courtroom quotations from legal representatives; judges and accused abusers. Overall in the *IT NCB* data, it is what the victims say in court that is most quoted. In contrast, in the *IT CB* data, it is what the Christian Brothers say in the public domain by way of apology and public comment that is most quoted, followed by the reporting of what politicians and Government officials say. Quotation from victims ranks behind these. In the *IT CB* data we find a wider source base, with quotations from the representatives of the Irish Catholic Church; victims of abuse associations and interest groups. This is consistent with the patterns found elsewhere in this study which point to the 'individualisation' of reporting in non-

Christian Brothers abuse articles compared with the more generic reporting in the Christian Brothers articles.

Stance reporting structures

The core unmarked (that is, neutral) reporting verbs, *tell* and *say*, were found to be 50 percent more frequent in the *IT NCB* articles. Correspondingly when we collated all other reporting verbs we found that the *IT CB* data had 42.5 percent more tokens.

Table 4 - Profile of all reporting verbs used across the corpora

<i>IT NCB</i>	<i>IT CB</i>
Acknowledged; added; admitted; agreed; alleged; argued; asked; believed; called for; claimed; commented; concluded; denied; described; emphasised; indicated; insisted; instructed; noted; pointed out; recounted; remembered; replied; revealed; submitted; urged; warned	accused; acknowledged; added; admitted; alleged; apologised; appealed; argued; asked; believed; called for; claimed; concluded; criticised; declared; denied; described; (it) emerged (that); explained; expressed; indicated; insisted; intimated; instructed; learned; maintained; mentioned; noted; pointed out; promised; recalled; recounted; referred; related; remembered; reminded; replied; responded; rumoured; sensed; shouted; stated; stressed; submitted; suggested; warned
Total: 27	Total: 47

This analysis has limited itself to reporting verbs ending –ed (i.e. regular verbs), simply because of the large data sample (over 7,000 occurrences of words ending in -ed were surveyed in concordance lines to arrive at the results in Table 4), but even from these data it is obvious that the lexical range and choice differs substantially in the data. Most notably, the *IT CB* and the *All CB* reporting verbs show a higher proportion of attitudinal or stance verbs, for example, *rumoured; shouted; warned; stressed* and so on. These words are

marked, in the sense of not being neutral, in that they carry more information for the reader and add greater force to what is reported.

5. Discussion

In this paper we have brought together the findings of two studies of media coverage of child sexual abuse, each drawing on methodologies from different disciplines. Content analysis is a powerful descriptive instrument. By using a system of coding, the results yield a detailed profile of patterned recurrence at the level of content and theme. Corpus linguistics equally looks at recurring patterns, but at a very local level of language and text. The dual approach makes for a thorough analysis of the concerted use of language in the reporting of child abuse cases, from thematic frame to lexical choice. CL alone would have provided us with a detailed analysis of how stance is nuanced by lexico-grammatical choice, but the diachronic dimension of CA enhances the findings as it allows for the charting of distribution, density and nature of coverage, as well as type of sources that lie behind the language used. The dual approach goes behind the language and the text to dissect the nature of coverage from the perspective of how it has encoded information into frames. This is done rigorously using a coding system and inter-rater reliability procedures. In this analysis the aggregate quantitatively findings from CA inform us as to the correlations between level of negativity and source (e.g. tabloid versus broadsheet, Sunday versus daily), content and length. It has the sensitivity to link valance with, for example, number of Christian Brothers mentioned in an article and it also identifies a lack of historicity in the coverage under scrutiny. The use of CA provides strong empirical data for analysis and is a very useful mechanism for making comparative observations about the reality of coverage.

Corpus linguistics on the other hand operates at the level of text and by using coverage of non-Christian Brothers abuse cases as a baseline for

comparison, we were able to compare the same papers' coverage of two types of abuse – institutional and domestic, at the level of word and grammar, i.e. lexico-grammar. At every stage of the detailed analysis that we conducted, the data pointed to at least double the level of writer attitudinal marking when writing about Christian Brother (i.e. institutional) abuse. Whereas the content analysis study brought to light the lack of historicity in the coverage of Christian Brothers related abuse stories, the corpus linguistic analysis found, through lexico-grammatical analysis, that it was non-existent in the coverage of domestic abuse stories which were for the most part records of yesterday's court case with hardly any editorialising or lexico-grammatical nuancing on the part of the writer.

We argue that these two methodologies applied to the same data offer a very powerful dual approach to the total coverage matrix, from frame to lexis. The strength in combining CA and CL in such an analysis is that they allow the analyst to approach the data from two angles. While CA looks at the 'coverage' as a totality *received*, CL looks at 'texts' as a totality *produced*. By looking at texts from the perspective of how they have been produced and received, we can see the causal link between *encoding* and *decoding* of language in the context of child sex abuse reporting. In the CL analysis, at every level of lexico-grammatical analysis, we found that the language of Christian Brothers related stories (in the paper of record alone) encoded the negative personal attitude (or stance) of the writer at least twice as often than when they reported in the same paper on domestic abuse in Ireland. Not surprisingly, the content analysis, based on reader encoding, picked up a strikingly negative valance throughout. This synergy of two disparate methodologies from two distinct fields offers many future possibilities for the study of media coverage (spoken and written) relating to sex crimes. With the combine approach to media texts, we have a more sensitive and holistic instrument of analysis.

To conclude on the findings relating to the language of reporting child sex abuse in this Irish context, we have found, not surprisingly, that author stance is rarely neutral, even in a paper of record. However, the degree of subjective

nuancing varied considerably, as noted above. In this study we have found that in order to examine the language of sex crimes properly, we must look beyond the lexis. Stance is subtly encoded by authors, and the lexico-grammatical level is the site where this became most apparent to us. We argue that in order to measure the extent of this nuancing in news reports, it is best to use a comparative baseline in the tradition of Conversation Analysis (after Schegloff 1986, 1972, 1979). Here, we sought to explore the nature of coverage in the case of Irish Christian Brothers as abusers (or accused abusers) and our baseline for comparison was with Irish non-church abusers (or accused abusers). This gave us a reference point from which we could calibrate stance and allowed for quantitative measuring of how writers' nuanced their sex crime reporting.

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