

NEWS PRESS RELEASES IN DIGITAL ENVIRONMENTS

A contrastive genre and corpus-based approach to promoting inclusiveness within two LGBT+ organizations

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Abstract – Press releases as a genre can be seen as a pre-formulation device for news reports, highlighting the relationship emerging between press release writers and journalists (Jacobs 1999). Within genre studies (Swales 1990; Bhatia 1993), company press releases have been shown to exhibit a set of standard moves and strategies (McLaren, Gurau 2005), which reveal their hybrid nature resulting from the tension between informative and promotional goals (Catenaccio 2008). However, the status of the press release as a genre has been questioned due to a continuous variation in stage combinations and communicative purposes (Lassen 2006). Digital technologies have also challenged the textual structure and the participation framework of the genre (Catenaccio 2008). This paper concentrates on non-profit organizations and examines the language and features of a pilot corpus of online news press releases retrieved from the webpages of a British LGBT+ charity (*Stonewall*) and of its closest Italian counterpart, the Italian LGBT+ organization *Arcigay*. From a genre perspective, the results suggest recourse to the same (recursive) rhetorical moves, which serve informative purposes and, crucially, are primarily promotional and persuasive in nature. Additionally, based on the corpus-informed analysis, investigation into the collocational patterns of selected top lexical keywords for each corpus (*vis-à-vis EnTenTen20 and ItTenTen20*), as well as their concordances, showed that both organizations presented themselves as cohesive and committed communities promoting inclusiveness, and supporting LGBT+ people and communities, which are discursively framed as threatened by homo-bi-transphobic violence.

Keywords: corpus linguistics; genre analysis; inclusiveness; LGBT+ organizations; news press releases.

1. Introduction

News press releases are brief documents that are similar to news stories. They present newsworthy information issued by companies or organizations and are primarily intended for journalists, who will then turn them into actual news stories (Catenaccio 2008, p. 11). They serve as a tool to promote the group's image and reputation. Although they have been studied in the field of

public relations since the beginning of the 20th century, not many scholars have analyzed press releases from a linguistic perspective. One notable exception is Geert Jacobs (1999), also one of the first scholars who identified the linguistic and pragmatic features of press releases. Based on research in participation frameworks in oral conversation (Goffman 1981; Levinson 1988) and in the news (Bell 1991), Jacobs showed how press releases are designed, produced, and released by formal organizations in order to provide journalists with content in their own news reporting. Within this communicative exchange, journalists serve as both addressees and intermediaries between organizations themselves and newspaper readers, who are the final recipients of the message. The press release itself represents a tacit sign of agreement between the institutional parties (Jacobs 1999, pp. 63-64) – i.e., the organizations and the media.

Because both parties are aware of the goals and constraints on their permissible contributions when they design the information to be released, press releases can be seen as a form of institutional discourse (Drew, Heritage 1992, pp. 3, 22). Due to the journalists' shift from receivers in the initial utterance event into producers in the next utterance event (Jacobs 1999, p. 74), press releases are also understood as a form of "projected discourse." Third, press releases are "pre-formulation devices" (Jacobs 1999, p. 75), in that they are designed and formulated to meet both the formal and content requirements of news reporting. In other words, the way press releases are formulated anticipates how news reports are produced and released, with meta-pragmatic features of pre-formulation, including third-person self-references, self-quotations, and explicit semi-performatives (Jacobs 1999).

Taking another perspective on press releases, Pander-Maat (2007) concentrated on promotional language, with special attention to evaluative adjectives, intensifying adjectives, and property-specifying adjectives. More recently, corpus-driven approaches have used lexical bundles in order to compare and contrast press releases and news reports in terms of register and pragmatic functions (de Cock, Granger 2021).

Although the earliest linguistic and pragmatic analyses of press releases have emphasised the relationship between the writers and journalists, further research has highlighted that this bond has been challenged by the introduction and development of the Internet, where these texts are now published in the form of news press releases. McLaren and Gurau (2005, p. 13) argued, for instance, that in web press releases, the role of the addressee has been progressively taken over by stakeholders: press release writers have gradually gained more freedom as to what to write since they "have the possibility to publish directly on their websites" (Lassen 2006, p. 508), thus "[bypassing] journalistic intervention in reaching the public" (Catenaccio 2008, p. 15). Accordingly, companies and organizations have been

increasingly referring to “earlier press releases” vis-à-vis “news releases” on their websites, in that the gradual disappearance of journalists as intermediaries has resulted in the publication of releases that are similar to news reports and address the wider public (Scott 2007).

Press releases have also been explored across different domains, for instance, releases in biotechnology (McLaren, Gurau, 2005; Lassen 2006), business releases announcing products or services (Catenaccio 2008), releases for institutions such as the European Court of Justice (Tessuto 2021), and museum communication (Lazzeretti 2014; Lazzeretti, Bondi 2012). Working within genre analysis (Bhatia 1993; Paltridge 1997; Swales 1990, 2004), researchers have identified typical core and peripheral moves within this conventionalized genre, which combines informative, promotional, and persuasive purposes (de Cock, Granger 2021, p. 692). Press releases are therefore characterized as “multipurpose” (de Cock, Granger, 2021, p. 692) or “hybrid” texts (Catenaccio 2008; McLaren, Gurau 2005), which blur boundaries between discourses (Catenaccio 2008, pp. 11-12). Reflecting on this hybrid aspect, Lassen (2006) further questioned the status of press releases as a stable genre: due to a certain degree of variation in textual staging, as well as to the convergence and achievement of multiple rhetorical objects (a term used to refer to genre communicative functions), press releases should be seen as genres on the basis of the sole textual form and not in terms of contents and rhetorical objectives. In Lassen’s (2006) words, “[the] press release is not a genre, but rather a media-channel used as a vehicle to carry a variety of rhetorical objectives, and hence a variety of genres” (p. 507).

Since, to the best of my knowledge, linguistic research on press releases has been conducted to explore mainly data from companies or institutions rather than non-profit organizations or charities, this study concentrated on two LGBT+ organizations. Such a choice is grounded in my initial assumption that structural and linguistic patterns found in the issued press releases might depart from the standard features of corporate press releases as a result of their focus on activism and social issues, rather than on profiting from their work and initiatives. The following complementary research questions are therefore addressed:

- Which rhetorical moves are used by LGBT+ organizations in the news press releases published on their websites?
- Which communicative functions are achieved?
- Is there a correlation between textual staging and the way LGBT+ organizations present themselves?

The choice of LGBT+ organizations is also grounded in the lack of studies exploring the linguistic and discursive representation of LGBT+ people and

communities within organizations supporting them, which may contribute to further develop longitudinal and cross-generic research within existing research analysing the press, in order to explore to what extent journalists align themselves with LGBT+ organizations when reporting news involving them. Questions here are:

- How are LGBT+ people and communities discursively represented in the news press releases under scrutiny?
- How do the LGBT+ organizations under investigation discursively present themselves?

2. Data and methodology

2.1. Data

This study is based on the *LGBT+ News Press Release Corpus* (henceforth *LGBT+_NR Corpus*) – a comparable, bilingual corpus that brings together the 2018-2020 news releases of the British LGBT+ charity *Stonewall*¹ and its closest Italian counterpart, *Arcigay – Associazione LGBTI Italiana*,² or the main Italian non-profit LGBTI organization. Criteria adopted to identify the organizations and the time frame include the availability of news releases on their websites, a certain homogeneity and uniformity in terms of number of texts and tokens for English and Italian, and the possibility to replicate the analysis. The British module, *LGBT+.En*, comprises texts from the news subdirectories media releases³ and media statements,⁴ the Italian module, *LGBT+.It*, comprises texts from the Comunicati (‘press releases’). The texts selected for collection were primarily designed to keep users updated with the latest news and events involving the organizations themselves and the LGBT+ communities. All web pages have been manually downloaded and saved as .txt files using AntFileConverter⁵ and then edited with NotePad++⁶ and cleaned and formatted for whitespace, characters, HTML, links, duplicates, and other. Table 1 provides a breakdown of the corpus.

¹ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/> (27.4.2023).

² <https://www.arcigay.it/> (27.4.2023).

³ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/media-statements> (27.4.2023).

⁴ <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/media-releases-0> (27.4.2023).

⁵ <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antfileconverter/> (27.4.2023).

⁶ <https://notepad-plus-plus.org/> (27.4.2023).

LGBT+ NR CORPUS			
MODULES	YEAR	TEXTS	TOKENS
<i>LGBT+.En</i> UK component	2018	36	22,727
	2019	47	18,958
	2020	22	9,826
	TOTAL	105	51,511
<i>LGBT+-.It</i> Italian component	2018	46	16,193
	2019	58	21,292
	2020	46	16,042
	TOTAL	150	53,527

Table 1
The LBGT+_NR Corpus.

I could observe that the texts range from announcements of forthcoming and past events or initiatives to position statements or viewpoints towards specific issues, reports following surveys, news reports, and combinations of these genres. Overall, the data suggests that Stonewall releases announcements and statements with few reports, while Arcigay issues a considerable number of texts that merge features of news reports and position statements or viewpoints.

2.2. Methodology

The research question of this study is twofold. On the macro-pragmatic level, I want to identify the purpose(s) and structure of press releases on the web pages of LGBT+ charities and organizations. On the micro-pragmatic level, I am interested in the lexical (re-)presentation of LGBT+ people, charities and organizations across English and Italian. In this context, combining the tools of genre analysis and corpus-assisted discourse studies seems to be an appropriate approach.

2.2.1. Genre-based analysis

Due to the variability in the types of texts contained in the corpus, a randomized sample of texts has been selected from each module: on average, 36 texts for *LGBT+.En*, i.e. minimally 1 text per each month of years 2018, 2019, 2020 – in this case, for each year, minimally 6 releases and 6 statements; and 36 texts for *LGBT+-.It*, i.e. minimally 1 text per each month of years 2018, 2019, 2020. Close reading of each and every text has enabled me to identify generic moves and, therefore, explore whether Stonewall and Arcigay shape their texts following a fixed and conventionalized structure, and if variability of rhetorical and communicative purposes affects the textual

staging of the texts. Working along the lines of recent genre-based studies, including more recent developments (e.g. Wang, Flowerdew 2016), I can therefore discuss the different ways in which the organizations present themselves. For reasons of space, I provide the overall structuring of the genre and then restrict discussion to core and frequent rhetorical moves observed in the corpus.

2.2.2. Corpus-informed (discourse) analysis

Corpus-driven and corpus-based methods (Tognini-Bonelli 2001) are used to explore the discursive representations of LGBT+ communities and people, as well as the discursive self-presentation of Stonewall and Arcigay.

From a quantitative point of view, lists of lexical keywords of the British and Italian sub-corpora have been calculated using the online software *SketchEngine* (Kilgariff *et al.* 2014)⁷ and the *EnTenTen20* and the *ItTenTen20* respectively as reference corpora.⁸ Keyword observation is a methodological procedure widely used in discourse studies. These are not only words occurring in a corpus that are “statistically significantly more frequently than would be expected by chance when compared to a corpus which is larger or of equal size” (Baker *et al.* 2006). In fact, keywords identify the “aboutness” of the texts and corpora under scrutiny, i.e. what texts of the corpora are about (Phillips 1989). From a discourse perspective, as Baker *et al.* argue, keywords “help to act as signposts for discourse, ideology or argumentation” (2011, p. 67). To rephrase, research in corpus linguistics and discourse analysis has proven that, due to their nature as both unusually frequent and topical words in a corpus, keywords can be used to identify salient discourses in a corpus. In this analysis, keywords have served as a tool to pinpoint prevalent themes and discourses around LGBT+ people and communities within the two organizations supporting them. Due to space limits, this study concentrates on the top 15 lexical keywords returned in the English and Italian keyword lists. Collocations of keywords referring to the organizations or to LGBT+ people, communities, or related issues have then been explored.

Collocations do not simply represent frequent and strong lexical patterns around specific words. In discourse studies, collocates “give us the most salient and obvious lexical patterns surrounding a subject, from which a number of discourses can be obtained”, since frequently collocating words provide evidence “that the discourses surrounding them are particularly powerful - the strength of collocation implies that these are concepts which have been linked in the minds of people and have been used [repeatedly]”

⁷ <https://www.sketchengine.eu/> (23.4.2023).

⁸ <https://www.sketchengine.eu/documentation/tenten-corpora/> (20.6.2023).

(Baker 2006, p. 112). In procedural terms, collocations have been calculated using the corpus software *AntConc 4.2.0* (Anthony 2022) adopting multiple statistical association measures – these include MI, MI3, MI2, Dice and LogDice, which favor rare or less rare collocates occurring almost exclusively in the company of specific search words (Brezina 2018, p. 70). Although these statistical measures are targeted towards different forms of mutual attraction between words, their combination has been adopted due to the very similar results obtained with each test. Due to space reasons, Section 3.2. shows the strongest collocations according to their likelihood value.

In the final analytical stage, preliminary analysis of lexical keywords in their concordances and collocational patterns (Sinclair 2003, 2004) is carried out in order to identify recurrent discursive strategies and corroborate the findings that emerge from the analysis of keywords and collocations.

3. Results

3.1. Genre-based analysis

Both modules seem to show the same (sometimes) recursive and nonlinear, rhetorical moves: Heading and Subheading, Announcement, Summary, Details Account, Comment, Standpoint, Justification, Call for Action, Statement of Commitment, and Contact details.

Headings are topic-giving. That is, they describe the issues or events that follow. This move is generally written selecting key or specific information that might be appealing for the targeted reader. The *Announcement* represents the pragmatic strategy through which events, results, or initiatives are announced within the release. It may combine with a brief *Summary* of content in the *Subheading*, to further orient users through the text, or be incorporated in the Heading. Importantly, these moves are cannot be observed in isolation. Example (1), from *LGBT+.En*, is a case in point. It shows overlap of Subheading, Announcement and Summary, with repetition and expansion of content across the resulting incorporation and the Details Account move.

- (1) Stonewall announces Top Global Employers [HEADING - ANNOUNCEMENT]
17 companies commended by Stonewall for efforts to create inclusive global workplaces [SUBHEADING/ANNOUNCEMENT/SUMMARY]
Stonewall, Europe's leading lesbian, gay, by and trans equality charity, today (Monday 21 September 2020 announced its 17 Top Employers for 2020. [DETAILS ACCOUNT] [*LGBT+.En*/21Sept2020]

Announcements, however, are not necessarily signaled by the word *announce*. Besides being incorporated in other rhetorical moves, announcements may be implicit, as in example (2), where the submission of the text of the Law against homo-bi-transphobia to the Italian Parliament⁹ and the position of the organization constitute the objects being announced in the document.

- (2) OMOBITRANSFOBIA, DEPOSITATO IL TESTO UNIFICATO. ARCIGAY: “PROPOSTA MIGLIORABILE, INSERIRE DIVIETO TEORIE RIPARATIVE” [HEADING/ANNOUNCEMENT/STANDPOINT]
 Bologna, 1 luglio 2020 – “Il deposito del testo di legge unificato contro l’omobittransfobia in Commissione Giustizia alla Camera segna l’inizio di un nuovo tentativo di colmare il ritardo nella battaglia contro le discriminazioni legate all’orientamento sessuale e all’identità di genere che sconta il nostro Paese. [SUMMARY]¹⁰ [LGBT+.It/1Jul2020]

Other texts, however, do not provide the same amount of incorporated information shown in examples (1) and (2). Headings may, in fact, highlight a particular fact, despite dealing with more aspects in the rest of the document. This pattern appears to be more frequent in the Italian module.

The example reported in Figure 1 highlights an episode of homophobia involving an employee, while the entire document represents a socio-political reflection on the importance of discussing and finding effective solutions to workplace discrimination within parliamentary debates. The interest in the discriminatory event in the heading and in the position towards the issue in the subheading suggest that the release was likely written primarily to appeal to readers’ emotions – in particular, indignation – and directly address institutions. In other words, overlooking more informative content in the heading of the document is due to the prevailing persuasive function served by the text.

⁹ The law against homo-bi-transphobia, also known as “Legge Zan,” was proposed in Italy by the Deputy Alessandro Zan. Although it was approved by the Chamber of Deputies on November 5, 2020, this law did not pass in the Senate. See <https://www.senato.it/service/PDF/PDFServer/DF/356433.pdf> for more reference to the text of the law in the Italian language.

¹⁰ ‘HOMO-BI-TRANSPHOBIA, SUBMITTED THE UNIFIED TEXT OF THE LAW. ARCIGAY: “IMPROVABLE, PROHIBITION OF THEORIES ON CONVERSION THERAPIES TO BE INCLUDED”
 Bologna, July 10, 2020 – “The submission of the unified text of the law against homo-bi-transphobia to the Justice Commission of the Chamber of Deputies marks the beginning of a new attempt to make up for the delay in the fight against discriminations based on sexual orientation and gender identity in our Country.” [My translation]



Figure 1
Heading and subheading in a news release from Arcigay.¹¹

Although some releases devote specific paragraphs to providing the *Details* of the event, initiative, or results, in other texts this account is missing, or is incorporated within the *Comments* of the CEOs or of other people speaking on behalf of the organizations, as can be seen in example (3). The excerpt reports the decision of the Italian Region Friuli Venezia Giulia not to adhere to an initiative for non-discrimination. This is told through the words of Arcigay’s CEO, who negatively comments this decision.

- (3) “Per quanto prevedibile, [COMMENT]
l’uscita della Regione Friuli Venezia Giulia dalla Rete Nazionale delle Pubbliche Amministrazioni Anti Discriminazioni per orientamento sessuale e identità di genere (Rete Re.a.dy), [DETAILS ACCOUNT]
è un fatto grave e carico di ripercussioni negative”: così Gabriele Piazzoni, segretario nazionale di Arcigay. [COMMENT/STANDPOINT]
Che prosegue: “La Rete, infatti, non comporta oneri significativi per le istituzioni aderenti ma di contro dà la possibilità di attingere a un bacino di buone pratiche in uso nei Comuni e nelle Regioni del nostro Paese per prevenire e contrastare la discriminazione delle persone lgbti. [DETAILS ACCOUNT]
Rinunciare a questa possibilità non solo è un atto politicamente miope e denso di ripercussioni negative per la cittadinanza, ma smaschera, semmai ce ne fosse bisogno, il furore omotransfobico della parte politica che occupa ora i

¹¹ <https://www.arcigay.it/comunicati/omofobia-insultato-e-licenziato-perche-gay/> (27.4.2023).
‘Homophobia, insulted and fired because he is gay – Arcigay: ‘IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO CREATE JOBS IF WE DO NOT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DISCRIMINATION OF WORKERS.’ [My translation]

ruoli di governo di quel territorio. [COMMENT] [LGBT+.It/31May2018]¹²

A rhetorical move featured in nearly all the texts examined in this study is the comment. In fact, most of the news press releases present one or more sections where the organization's CEO, or other people speaking on behalf of it or other organizations, comment on the events being reported, thus expressing their standpoint, i.e. their point of view regarding those events. This move often converges into the comment. Example (4) shows how the comment of the CEO served as a tool to provide the viewpoint of the organization. More specifically, the comment provides a negative evaluation of work carried out by UK Government to reform the Gender Recognition Act.

- (4) Nancy Kelley, Stonewall, Chief Executive said: 'Today, the UK Government has fallen far short on its promise to reform the Gender Recognition Act, and has missed a key opportunity to progress LGBT equality. (...)' [STANDPOINT/COMMENT] [LGBT+.En/22Sep2020]

News press releases may also concentrate on justifying a certain initiative or action. *Justification* is a rhetorical move through which the organization explains the importance of what is being announced or reported, as illustrated in example (5).

- (5) The Roundtable is another important event in a wider series put together by Stonewall as part of its ongoing commitment to becoming a more BAME-inclusive organization. In the past year, the charity has hosted its second Diaspora Showcase, strengthened its partnership with UK Black Pride and run a free community role model programme for BAME/POC LGBT young people. [JUSTIFICATION] [LGBT.En/24Feb2020]

The selected texts, if dealing with issues or negative events involving LGBT+ people and communities, also display a *Call for Action* and a *Statement of Commitment*. The former is a linguistic and pragmatic invitation or urge to take appropriate action to solve the problem. This entreaty is mainly addressed to institutions or wider audiences who should become more aware of specific issues (examples 6 and 7). The latter is often complementary, and

¹² 'As far as foreseeable, the refusal of the Region Friuli-Venezia Giulia to join the National Network of Public Administrations Against Discriminations based on sexual orientations and gender identity (Network Re.a.dy) represents a serious matter with negative consequences,' says Gabriele Piazzoni, National Secretary of Arcigay. He continues: 'Institutions joining the Network do not have any significant burdens; on the contrary, they can adopt a range of good practices used in municipalities and regions of our country to prevent and contrast the discrimination of LGBTI people. Not only is such refusal a politically 'myopic' political action with negative consequences for citizenship, but it also reveals, if anyone was still unaware, the homo-transphobic 'fury' of some politicians covering governmental roles in that territory (...).' [My translation]

it signals the effort taken by the organization to support the communities and the people they address (example 6).

- (6) To all *our* supporters and everyone who cares about equality, this fight is far from over. We urge you to call or write to your MP, the Minister for Women and Equalities and the Prime Minister. Tell them why we can't take a massive step back for trans people and echo Section 28. Talk to them about why reform of the GRA is simply about legally recognising trans people as who they are and treating them with dignity and respect. [CALL FOR ACTION]
Stonewall will continue to work with you, with trans communities and trans-led organizations, until each and every one of us is accepted without exception. [STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT]
Take action for trans equality! [CALL FOR ACTION] [LGBT+.En/22July2020]
- (7) Il *nostro* appello è affinché la Camera dei deputati faccia presto e bene nell'approvazione di una legge efficace contro omotransfobia e misoginia, senza cedere all'ostruzionismo e ai continui tentativi di indebolimento del testo in discussione. [CALL FOR ACTION] [LGBT+.It/3Nov2020]¹³

Finally, some texts also provide *Contact Details* to allow readers to get in touch with the organization either to report any struggle or to join in.

It is important to note that the moves described in this section do not appear according to a fixed order. Rather, they are organized recursively, as argued Catenaccio (Catenaccio 2008). Also, we cannot distinguish between core and peripheral moves, since no single move appears to be mandatory in the texts under scrutiny.

3.2. Corpus-informed analysis

Table 3 shows the most significant lexical keywords found in *LGBT+.En* and *LGBT+.It*.

<i>LGBT+.EN</i>			<i>LGBT+.IT</i>		
KEYWORD	FREQUENCY (N. TOKENS)	KEYNESS SCORE	KEYWORD	FREQUENCY (N. TOKENS)	KEYNESS SCORE
<i>Stonewall</i>	574	4109,78	<i>Arcigay</i>	709	4001,92
<i>lgbt</i>	660	1612,28	<i>Piazzoni</i>	312	3480,44
<i>trans</i>	395	1050,72	<i>lgbti</i>	339	3228,67
<i>lgbt-inclusive</i>	51	874,709	<i>omotransfobia</i>	174	1925,73
<i>bame</i> ¹⁴	59	756,123	<i>Pride</i>	200	651,745
<i>anti-lgbt</i>	42	642,126	<i>misoginia</i>	34	296,843

¹³ 'We appeal to the Chamber of Deputies for approving, as soon as possible, an efficient law against homo-transphobia and misogyny, without surrendering to obstructionism and continuous attempts at weakening the text of the law under discussion.' [My translation]

¹⁴ The term that is used as an acronym to refer to Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) communities.

<i>bi</i>	151	482,171	<i>Arcifesta</i>	24	290,114
<i>teampride</i>	26	453,996	<i>omo-bi-transfobia</i>	23	276,868
<i>Pinsent</i>	21	330,441	<i>transfobia</i>	26	256,065
<i>non-binary</i>	24	303,672	<i>omobitransfobia</i>	20	240,934
<i>equality</i>	247	218,82	<i>Zan</i>	27	233,969
<i>biphobic</i>	12	207,492	<i>omofobia</i>	58	229,192
<i>homophobic</i>	26	205,712	<i>coming</i>	41	212,704
<i>lesbian</i>	109	202,571	<i>sostienici</i>	17	202,365
<i>transphobic</i>	12	180,365	<i>omogenitoriali</i>	17	188,367

Table 2
Top15 lexical keywords.

The most frequent keywords are the names *Stonewall* in *LGBT+.En*, *Arcigay* and *Piazzoni* (Arcigay’s secretary, who speaks on behalf of the organization, as in example 3) in *LGBT+.It*.

Other keywords in *LGBT+.En* mainly refer to sexual and gender identities, such as *LGBT(QI)*, *trans*, *bi(sexual)*, *non-binary*, and *lesbian*. Keywords denoting reactions to such identities are also present, e.g. *biphobic*. In a slightly different manner, the top 15 keywords in *LGBT+.It* include lexical items describing issues and problems faced by the LGBT+ communities, and, therefore, reaction to LGBT+ identities, as suggested by words such as *omo-bi-transfobia* ‘homo-bi-transphobia’ and *misoginia* ‘misogyny’.

Both modules show frequent lexical keywords related to Pride movements and initiatives, suggesting that this is a strongly reported and discussed topic within both organizations. Examples are *Teampride* in *LGBT+.En.*, and *Pride* and *Arcifesta* in *LGBT+.It*.

In addition, some differences emerge from both corpora. First, I would like to mention a relatively more inclusive and intersectional approach towards LGBT+ identities in the British corpus, as suggested by the strong presence of words referring to a wide range of minorities, including trans, non-binary and black communities. In the Italian corpus, however, although there is a strong presence of terms collectively referring to LGBT+ people and communities (e.g., *omo-bi-transfobia* is a word in which lexical items referred to homosexual, bisexual, and transsexual identities co-occur together), special emphasis is put on issues involving homosexual communities, as suggested by the word *coming* (i.e. coming out and publicly revealing one’s identity) and *omogenitoriali* ‘same-sex parents, adj.’. One reason behind this pattern might be that, unlike British Governments, the Italian Parliament has never approved legislation authorizing same-sex couples to have or adopt children, so the issue is still strongly discussed within Arcigay and Italian national politics. Second, it emerges that in the Italian corpus, keywords mainly refer to problematic issues experienced by

LGBT+ communities, suggesting that they are discursively framed as threatened and challenged by forms of homo-bi-transphobic violence or intolerance. Evidence for this comes from discussion of the data in Tables 4 and 5, which show the most frequent collocates of the top lexical keywords related to LGBT+ identities and LGBT+ organizations in *LGBT+.En* and *LGBT+.It*.

KEYWORDS COLLOCATIONS IN <i>LGBT+.EN</i>	
WORD	COLLOCATE (LIKELIHOOD)
<i>Stonewall</i>	<i>said</i> (154.871), <i>statement</i> (99286), <i>Chief</i> (67.614), <i>executive</i> (58.357), <i>people</i> (19.670), <i>welcomes</i> (16.997), <i>report</i> (15.963)
<i>LGBT</i>	<i>people</i> (149.273), <i>anti</i> (58.937), <i>equality</i> (41.868), <i>foundation</i> (41.607), <i>trans</i> (41.237), <i>students</i> (34.729), <i>bame</i> (29.547), <i>inclusive</i> (23.429)
<i>trans</i>	<i>people</i> (229.346), <i>lesbian</i> (109.906), <i>gay</i> (94.920), <i>bi</i> (81.553), <i>equality</i> (64.783), <i>allies</i> (44.208), <i>lgbt</i> (41.269), <i>programme</i> (40.848), <i>young</i> (22.813), <i>support</i> (22.294), <i>communities</i> (16.238)
<i>bame</i>	<i>lgbt</i> (29.591), <i>black</i> (19.485), <i>face</i> (18.147), <i>ethnic</i> (17.706), <i>Asian</i> (16.374), <i>together</i> (16.344), <i>minority</i> (15.809), <i>unwelcome</i> (14.123), <i>people</i> (13.903), <i>communities</i> (13.757)
<i>bi</i>	<i>lesbian</i> (263.250), <i>gay</i> (257.722), <i>trans</i> (81.646), <i>people</i> (52.807), <i>erasure</i> (27.097), <i>biphobia</i> (23.609), <i>equality</i> (18.848)
<i>non-binary</i>	<i>people</i> (29.265), <i>gender</i> (17.942), <i>trans</i> (11.897), <i>as</i> (11.555), <i>including</i> (9.569), <i>not</i> (9.122)
<i>lesbian</i>	<i>gay</i> (5.394), <i>bi</i> (4.944), <i>trans</i> (2.923), <i>and</i> (1.736), <i>people</i> (2.052), <i>equality</i> (2.576)

Table 3
Keywords collocations in *LGBT+.En*.

KEYWORDS COLLOCATIONS IN <i>LGBT+.It</i>	
WORD	COLLOCATE (LIKELIHOOD)
<i>Arcigay</i>	<i>prosegue</i> ‘continues’ (39.712), <i>rete</i> ‘network’ (32.353), <i>mobilizzazione</i> ‘mobilization’ (31.523), <i>campagna</i> ‘campaign’ (29.177), <i>lancia</i> ‘launches’ (3.110)
<i>Piazzoni</i>	<i>conclude</i> ‘concludes’ (262.641), <i>commenta</i> ‘comments’ (192.923), <i>dichiara</i> ‘declares’ (129.552), <i>prosegue</i> ‘continues’ (32.625)
<i>LGBTI</i>	<i>persone</i> ‘people’ (348.180), <i>movimento</i> ‘movement’ (100.439), <i>associazioni</i> ‘associations/ organizations’ (81.562), <i>diritti</i> ‘rights’ (59.664), <i>comunità</i> ‘communities’ (49.812), <i>visibilità</i> ‘visibility’ (37.586), <i>(nei) confronti</i> ‘towards’ (23.387)

Table 4
Keywords collocations in *LGBT+.It*.

The collocates of the keywords *Stonewall*, *Arcigay* and its National Secretary (*Gabriele*) *Piazzoni* provide evidence of the use of the meta-pragmatic features identified by Jacobs (1999). Most of these are, in fact, third person self-reference verbs (e.g., *said*, *prosegue* ‘continues’, *commenta* ‘comments’, *dichiara* ‘declares’ and semi-performative (e.g., *welcomes* and *lancia* ‘launches’). Self-reference, however, is not the sole linguistic-pragmatic resource employed by *Stonewall* and *Arcigay*, but also the pronoun *we* and its related forms, through which they discursively frame themselves as large communities and promote inclusiveness, as also evidenced in quotes (6) and (7) previously.

The discursive self-construction of *Stonewall* and *Arcigay* as two organizations promoting inclusiveness is strongly suggested by their collocates – respectively *welcomes* and *rete* ‘network’ – as well as lexical items in *LGBT+.En* collocating with words referring to identities: *inclusive* with *LGBT*; *support* with *trans*; *together* with *bame*; *including* with *non-binary*. Closer analysis of the concordance lines further confirms such findings. Specifically, the instances of *LGBT-inclusive* (19 occurrences) refer to inclusive employers, suggestions for inclusive practices that should be socially adopted, and *Stonewall*’s initiatives of commitment towards inclusiveness, as exemplified in the following extended concordance lines (Figure 2). The same is true for *support* (28 occurrences) in the context of *trans*, and the word *together* with *bame* (6 occurrences), as shown in Figures 3 and 4.

I congratulate them all.’ More than 400 employers were in contention to get a coveted spot in this year’s Top 100	<i>LGBT inclusive</i>	employers list. The top 10 employers were a diverse mix of organizations, with representation from both the public and
Stonewall reveals Britain’s best employers for trans and non-binary staff as it releases its annual list of Top 100	<i>LGBT-inclusive</i>	employers. Stonewall’s annual review has this year, for the first time ever, marked employers specifically on trans
and school corridors. ‘It’s now essential the Government invests in training and resources to support teachers to consistently deliver	<i>LGBT-inclusive</i>	teaching. ‘We look forward to working with Government and our network of School Champions and Children and Young
will give young people what they need to make informed decisions. Stonewall Cymru will continue to campaign for high-quality,	<i>LGBT-inclusive,</i>	RSE to ensure that LGBT young people are equipped to make safe, healthy decision about their wellbeing.’
PROJECT LAUNCH LGBT WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP Two leading LGBT charities – The Rainbow Project and Stonewall – have launched a partnership to support	<i>LGBT-inclusive</i>	employers in Northern Ireland. The new initiative builds on an employers’ programme established five years ago by The

Figure 2
Extended concordance lines of *LGBT-inclusive (LGBT+.En)*.

trans discrimination where they find it. People can: Join Stonewall’s ‘Come Out for Trans Equality’ campaign to show their	<i>support</i>	for trans people, especially on social media. Encourage friends, family and colleagues to join the campaign. Visit the Come
and Nic Bullen, co-chairs of Stonewall’s Bi Staff Network Group said: ‘The movement is a welcome show of	<i>support</i>	of trans equality. #BWithTheT ‘Today’s open letter from the bi community is another powerful demonstration that we as
s open letter from the bi community is another powerful demonstration that we as a community are united in our	<i>support</i>	of trans equality. At times when the discourse is so fractured, when our hard won rights are under threat,
their support and make sport a comfortable and accepting environment for all lesbian, gay, bi and trans people. The more	<i>support</i>	there is, the easier it will be for athletes to be open about their sexuality. ‘Sports governing bodies also
or customer in the last year. But the sheer diversity of our launch partners show there is a wealth of	<i>support</i>	for trans people at the most senior levels of British industrial and cultural life. With that kind of commitment

Figure 3
Extended concordance lines of *support* in the context of *trans (LGBT+.En)*.

'Part of building a more inclusive culture is creating spaces where BAME LGBT people can come	<i>together</i>	and celebrate who they are, free from discrimination and abuse.
we get closer and closer to a world where everyone can be accepted without exception.' BAME LGBT talent come	<i>together</i>	for special Stonewall showcase Event celebrates unique experiences of being BAME and LGBT Activists, performers, poets and writers share

Figure 4

Extended concordance lines of *together* in the context of *bame (LGBT+.En)*.

Similar patterns cannot be observed in *LGBT+.It*. However, nouns such as *movimento* 'movement', *mobilizzazione* 'mobilization', *rete* 'network' (examples 8 and 9) and *comunità* 'community/communities' certainly suggest that Arcigay discursively presents itself as a cohesive organization.

- (8) [...] domani per il quinto weekend dell'Onda Pride, la grande *mobilizzazione* e dell'orgoglio arcobaleno organizzata da Arcigay *in rete con le altre associazioni del movimento LGBTI*. [*LGBT+.It/22Jun2018*]¹⁵
- (9) Oggi è un giorno tristissimo, in cui *tutto il movimento LGBTI* e più in generale tutte le persone che hanno a cuore la battaglia per i diritti civili perdono una compagna importante e carissima [*LGBT+.It/28Sep2019*]¹⁶

Through the discursive strategies outlined above, Stonewall and Arcigay present themselves as trustworthy organizations supporting identities and communities that face several challenges in their lives, as also signalled in the keyword lists. The strongest collocates of words referring to identities featuring as keywords in each module, and of their concordance lines, appear to point to the same view.

In *LGBT+.En*, the phrase *LGBT people* (100 occurrences) mostly co-occurs with the verbs *face* (14 occurrences), and *feel* (12 occurrences). The first verb is followed or preceded by the words such as *discrimination*, *exclusion*, *inequality*, as shown in the following extended concordance lines (Figure 5).

health and social care staff want to deliver the best possible care, as this	<i>face</i>	<i>discrimination</i> . As a result, one in seven LGBT people (14 per cent) avoid
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¹⁵'[...] tomorrow for the fifth weekend of Onda Pride, the great mobilisation of rainbow pride organised by Arcigay *within a network of other organizations of the LGBTI movement*.' [My translation]

¹⁶'Today is a very sad day, in which the *entire LGBTI movement* and more generally all the people who care about the battle for civil rights lose an important and dearest companion.' [My translation]

report shows, many LGBT people still		seeking healthcare for fear of discrimination, which
dangerous precedent which could be used by others to justify even more discrimination at a time when LGBT people still	<i>face</i>	<i>exclusion, abuse and discrimination</i> every day, despite that being against the law. ‘This is a backward step for equality
come a long way. But the fight for true equality is far from over. We know that LGBT people still	<i>face</i>	significant <i>challenges</i> , including the rising levels of <i>hate crime</i> . That’s why we’re still fighting for a world
five (61 per cent) reported having episodes of anxiety. ‘And it’s no wonder this is the case: LGBT people still	<i>face</i>	<i>routine discrimination</i> in all areas of their lives. The Government’s annual hate crime report revealed a 32 per cent

Figure 5

Extended concordance lines of *face* in the context of *LGBT people (LGBT+.En)*.

Most concordance lines for *LGBT+ people* in the context of the verb *feel* show references to the role played by initiatives promoted by Stonewall to support and include LGBT+ people and communities, as can be observed in examples (10) and (11).

- (10) The conference tackles best practice in supporting LGBT staff and creating an environment where *LGBT people* at all levels *feel comfortable* to be visible role models. [*LGBT+.En/26Apr2018*]
- (11) Stonewall, the UK’s leading charity for lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality, has released new research that finds a group of ‘hesitant allies’ among the British public who want to help *LGBT people feel included* in sport. [*LGBT+.En/28Nov2018*]

The same discursive strategies may be found in the context of *trans people* (127 occurrences) and *bame* (25 occurrences) *LGBT people*, who are discursively represented as both facing discrimination and receiving benefits from Stonewall’s initiatives, as in the examples (12) to (14).

- (12) [...] It’s only by working together that we can create a world where all young lesbian, gay, bi and *trans people* are accepted without exception”. [*LGBT+.En/27Apr2018*]
- (13) These waves of support for trans equality come at a crucial time, when *trans people* are *facing* high levels of *harassment* and *discrimination*. [*LGBT+.En/25Mar2019*]
- (14) We know from our research that *bame LGBT people* can *feel unwelcome* and *excluded* from both the *bame* and LGBT communities, which is why events like this are so important. [*LGBT+.En/06Sep2018*]

In general, other collocates of keywords related to LGBT+ identities in *LGBT+.En* include lexical items referring to other identities, suggesting a collective use of these words to convey and promote inclusiveness. In other words, all challenges and beneficial initiatives promoted by Stonewall are experienced by LGBT+ people and communities as large, diversified and cohesive communities. Example (15) illustrates this point.

- (15) ‘We know *trans* and *non-binary* people face high levels of abuse and discrimination in their day-to-day lives. [...] With that kind of commitment and hard work we can create workplaces – and a world – where all lesbian, gay, bi and trans people are accepted without exception.’ [*LGBT+.En*/18Apr2018]

In addition, words such as *biphobia* and *erasure*, which collocate and co-occur with words referring to bisexuality, contribute to a representation of some LGBT+ identities as marginalized and needing visibility (example 16).

- (16) ‘We know there is a real need for young people to learn more about the issues bi people face. This can help us start to tackle the lack of understanding there is about bisexuality, which in turn will help to stop the damaging bi-erasure and biphobia that young bi people experience. [*LGBT+.En*/30Apr2018]

Similar discourses are also found in *LGBT+.It.*, in extended concordance lines in the context of *LGBTI*, whose collocates are *persone* [people] (133 occurrences) and *comunità* ‘community/communities’ (19 occurrences). Most refer to problems of discrimination and violence faced by LGBTI people and communities (example 17), and to the need to improve their lives or giving them visibility – also through initiatives promoted by Arcigay or organizations cooperating with it (example 18).

- (17) Ancora una volta attraversiamo lo stivale con l’onda del nostro orgoglio [...] che oggi più che mai si trova a dover reagire all’avanzate delle forze neofasciste e di chi pratica *l’oppressione*, delle *persone LGBTI* ma anche dei migranti, dei poveri e di chi non si allinea a una cultura dominante. [*LGBT+.It*/29Jun2018]¹⁷
- (18) L’idea del progetto è di [...] *promuovere* la *visibilità*, il *benessere* e *l’integrazione* nella *comunità LGBTI* favorendo il dialogo intergenerazionale e percorsi abitativi adatti. [*LGBT+.It*/25Jan2019]¹⁸

¹⁷ ‘Once again we cross our Country with our pride wave, that today, more than ever, has to react against the rising neo-fascism and those practising *oppression* towards *LGBTI people*, migrants, poor people, and those not aligning with the dominant culture (...)’ [My translation]

¹⁸ ‘The idea of the project is to (...) *promote visibility*, *well-being* and *integration* in the *LGBTI community* by boosting intergenerational dialogue and suitable housing paths (...)’ [My translation]

The discourse of oppression is further reinforced by references to homo-bi-transphobic violence, as also suggested by the keywords. Most of these concordance lines mainly refer to the debate on the introduction of a law against homo-bi-transphobic violence and the role played by it in the fight against LGBT+ people and communities' oppression (example 19).

- (19) Nelle passate settimane – riprende Piazzoni – si è avviato nel nostro Parlamento l'iter per la discussione di una *legge contro l'omotransfobia*: questa risoluzione può rappresentare un contributo importante e concreto [...] [*LGBT+.En/27Dec2019*]¹⁹

4. Conclusions

This paper has examined news press releases from websites of two LGBT+ organizations, namely Stonewall and Arcigay Italia, from a cross-cultural perspective, using the tools of corpus linguistics and genre analysis, to explore how these organizations present themselves and represent the communities supported.

From a genre perspective, the identification and analysis of the rhetorical moves in the selected texts has proven that the two organizations achieve informative, promotional, and persuasive functions, in line with previous linguistic studies on press releases within the corporate and institutional fields. However, especially in the releases written by Arcigay, there are more comments than details, which are removed or summarized briefly within the comments of the Secretary, who makes intertextual references to the events he discusses. In such terms, promotional and persuasive communicative purposes are stronger than the informative dimension. In addition, the organizations under scrutiny adopt common and conventionalized strategies for textual staging. Where present, they are not fixed, or may even be omitted. Importantly, the texts are mainly addressed to the general public – i.e. mainly readers experiencing or disagreeing with homo-bi-transphobic forms of discrimination – and not to journalists – which might explain why regular and linear strategies of textual staging cannot be found, intended to be later re-told in the form of a news report. In conclusion, the results of the corpus-informed analysis reveal that Stonewall and Arcigay discursively present themselves as cohesive organizations promoting inclusiveness for all LGBT+ people and communities, which are discursively

¹⁹ ‘In the past weeks – Piazzoni continues – our Parliament started to discuss a law against homo-transphobia: this resolution can represent an important and concrete contribution (...)’ [My translation]

framed as threatened and continuously challenged by discrimination and homo-bi-transphobic violence.

This research is not without limits. Future research might, in fact, adopt or integrate the tools of multimodal and critical discourse analysis (Kress, van Leeuwen 2001; van Leeuwen 2008) to further explore how LGBT+ people and communities are discursively represented as social actors through different semiotic resources. Such an integration might serve as a tool to further explore whether journalists reporting on LGBT+ issues and people align with LGBT+ organizations in terms of the discursive strategies adopted to represent them. In addition, while the corpus under analysis is somewhat limited and not fully representative of news press releases from non-profit organizations or LGBT+ organizations, the research conducted here provides a starting point for further linguistic research into releases from more organizations, in different non-profit sectors.

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