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XXVI CICLO

**DIACHRONIC EVOLUTION  
OF EXHIBITION PRESS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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## **Abstract (in English)**

The dissertation focuses on diachronic variation in a professional genre which has gained growing importance over time in the field of museum public relations: exhibition press announcements (EPAs). Keeping a middle ground between media and art discourse, EPAs are written for journalists in charge of reviews, although, once they are published on museum websites, they are also able to reach general audience.

For the purposes of this research a new corpus was compiled, the EPA Diacorpus, made up of 300 thousand words (tokens) and comprising 378 EPAs dating from 1950 to 2009, half issued by American and half by British museums.

The data processing consisted of different stages, from computer-based to manual analysis of the texts. In order to become acquainted with the data and aware of the types of research questions that could prove worthy of investigation, a preliminary analysis was carried out. In view of the related findings, it was stipulated to concentrate the exploration of the EPA Diacorpus on two main linguistic aspects: diachronic lexical variation and diachronic structural variation.

The lexical analysis allowed to report a number of lexical trends reflective of changes in the way exhibitions are organized and artists are selected. A significant phenomenon is the shift from one-item to multi-item exhibitions: the decline of the word *picture* in its singular form, rather than in its plural, typically pre-modified by a determiner (*the, this*), in parallel to the increase of other plural nouns identifying art works to put on display (*images, works, objects*) leads us to that conclusion. Moreover, something has changed in the way artists are selected for exhibitions: they do not have to be *famous* – another declining word –, nor *great* or *known*, since the latter adjectives preferably refer to their work, but they definitely must have an acknowledged *career*, a noun showing a clear pattern of growth across decades. Young artists, conversely, have fewer advantages in the art scene, as reflected by the lexical choice of EPAs, where less than 30 occurrences can be ascribed to the semantic field of youth. Art subjects may change, and *portraits* – an increasing item – may be more intriguing for our times, but a *landscape* is still a must for any exhibition, as well as *drawings* and *paintings*, to mention some lockwords of the corpus. The analysis also highlighted a preference for more vivid descriptions, not filtered by distancing verbs: the decline of the forms *shown* and *shows* can be interpreted in these terms.

Coming to the structure analysis, while contemporary EPAs show a more consistent scheme, the one provided by earlier texts is varied. Yet a prototypical structure comprised of three main moves may be already highlighted in the 1950s: a brief announcement of the exhibition, an

explanatory section on the topic, and some pieces of information specific for the press members, soliciting their response, although in a very implicit way. Starting from the 1980s two promotional moves have been highlighted: one establishing credentials for the exhibition by stating its credits, such as organization, curatorship and sponsorship, and one providing technical information for visitors (opening hours, free or charged admission, how to buy tickets, collateral events, etc...).

## **Abstract (in Italian)**

La tesi è incentrata sulla variazione diacronica di un genere professionale che ha acquisito crescente importanza nelle pubbliche relazioni museali, i comunicati stampa di mostra. A metà strada fra discorso giornalistico e artistico, questi comunicati sono indirizzati alla stampa specializzata, ma una volta pubblicati sul sito web di un museo possono raggiungere anche i non addetti ai lavori.

Per lo scopo di questa ricerca è stato costituito un corpus di 300 mila parole - EPA Diacorpus - che comprende 378 comunicati stampa pubblicati dal 1950 al 2009 da musei inglesi e americani.

L'analisi ha affiancato metodologie quantitative e qualitative. In prima battuta, per prendere coscienza dei dati e delle potenzialità insite nella ricerca è stata svolta un'analisi preliminare del corpus, in base alla quale si è deciso successivamente di concentrarsi su due aspetti linguistici: la variazione lessicale e la variazione strutturale.

L'analisi della variazione lessicale ha permesso di riconoscere tendenze che riflettono anche cambiamenti di ordine culturale, per esempio nel modo in cui si allestiscono le mostre e si scelgono gli artisti. Un fenomeno significativo è il passaggio da allestimenti incentrati su una sola opera alle grandi mostre: il declino del sostantivo *picture* nella forma al singolare, tipicamente preceduto da determinativi (*the, this*), e non al plurale, che invece è in crescita così come altri sostantivi riferiti a oggetti in mostra (*images, works, objects*), porta in questa direzione. Inoltre, qualcosa è cambiato nella selezione degli artisti: non devono essere famosi (*famous* è un aggettivo in calo nel corpus), né grandi o conosciuti (*great* e *known* sono stabili ma riferiti piuttosto alle opere), ma devono avere una carriera accertata, come mostra il profilo in crescita del sostantivo *career*. Di contro, gli artisti giovani hanno minori chance di affermarsi: le espressioni riconducibili alla categoria semantica della giovinezza sono meno di 30 in tutto il corpus. I soggetti in mostra possono cambiare e i ritratti hanno guadagnato maggior consenso (*portraits* è in crescita), ma un panorama è un classico per qualsiasi allestimento, così come disegni e dipinti, per citare alcune parole costanti del corpus (*landscape, drawings, paintings*). L'analisi ha anche evidenziato una graduale preferenza per descrizioni dirette, senza la mediazione di verbi distanziatori, così come lascia interpretare il declino di *shown* e *shows*.

Venendo all'analisi strutturale è possibile notare come i comunicati stampa più recenti abbiano una struttura più definita e ricorrente rispetto a quelli degli anni cinquanta e sessanta. È comunque possibile riconoscere sin dagli albori del genere una struttura prototipica in tre mosse: un breve annuncio della mostra, un corpo centrale di spiegazione dei contenuti e un appendice finale

con informazioni per i giornalisti, mirate a sollecitarne il riscontro, sia pure in forma implicita. A partire dagli anni ottanta lo schema si arricchisce di due mosse promozionali: una mirata a segnalare le credenziali della mostra (organizzazione, curatela, sponsor) e una mirata a fornire informazioni tecniche per i visitatori (orari di apertura, modalità di ingresso – libero o a pagamento -, eventi collaterali, etc.).

## **Key to Abbreviations**

ANC	American National Corpus
BE06	British English 2006
BNC	British National Corpus
BROWN	Brown University Standard Corpus of present-Day American English
CADS	Corpus-Assisted Discourse Studies
CARS	Creating a Research Space
CCL	Computer Corpus Linguistics
COBUILD	Collins Birmingham University International Language Database
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
COHA	Corpus of Historical American English
CV	Coefficient of Variance
FLOB	Freiburg-LOB Corpus of British English
FROWN	Freiburg-Brown Corpus
GSP	Generic Structure Potential
GL	General Language
EPA	Exhibition Press Announcements
ESP	English for Specific Purposes
EST	English for Science and Technology
HCME	Hypermedia Computer-Mediated Environment
IAE	International Art English
IAL	International Art Language
IPR	Institute of Public Relations
LOB	Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English
LSP	Language for Special/Specific Purposes
NR	New Rhetoric
RA	Research Article
RCV1	Reuters Corpus, Volume 1
RNC-1	Rostock Historical Newspaper Corpus
SS	Schematic Structure
SFL	Systemic Functional Linguistics
STTR	Standardized Type/Token Ratio
TIME	Time Magazine Corpus

TTR	Type/Token Ratio
UPC	Uppsala Press Corpus
ZEN	Zurich English Newspaper Corpus

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## **1. Introduction**

The present work shows the results of a corpus-based diachronic study on the language and the structure of a professional textual genre which has gained growing importance over time in the field of museum public relations: exhibition press announcements (EPAs).

EPAs are press releases issued by a museum in order to announce an up-coming exhibition and are meant for a restricted category of journalists, those in charge of arts reporting and criticism.

They belong to the press materials periodically released by a museum, which range from announcements of seasonal programs – i.e. texts which summarize the main events scheduled in the year – to single exhibition announcements, devoted to one display in particular; from ordinary news about the museum, such as announcements of artist talks, presentations of films or books, accomplishments, awards, new appointments, philanthropic events, to crises responses released in order to protect the image of the institution.

Contemporary EPAs are generally characterized by short paragraphs and a simple layout (see Fig. 1.1). They often provide an attention-grabbing image below the headline and include contact details and background information on the museum.

Despite their undoubted affiliation to the textual genre of press releases, it would be limiting to present EPAs as a mere subgenre of this category. The high level of creativity characterizing EPAs, both in terms of lexical choices and structure, their strong promotional intent, often realized through a massive use of evaluative language and emotional linguistic features, their capacity to address media people as well as the lay public through their e-dimension (Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012), encourage readers to consider them as a genre worth of interest *per se*, sharing its own peculiar features, as well as its own rules.

EPAs can be comprised under Ravelli's wide definition of 'texts in museums' (2006:2), i.e. written explanatory texts which function as communication tools between the institutions and their audiences, and have become crucial especially in consequence of the development of thematic exhibitions characterized by strong educational goals and aiming to appeal to a wide range of visitors (McManus 2000, Schiele 1995, Jacobi/Poli 1995): a phenomenon that can be dated back to the 1940s and is still ongoing. Moreover, they can be considered prime examples of what scholars have been alternatively calling 'artwriting' (Carrier 1987), 'artspeak' (Atkins 1990, Harris 2003), 'art talk' and 'artworld discourse' (Irvine 2004–2009).

EPAs are a little researched topic, yet their evolution over time is a current and high-relevant issue for museum professionals. There are at least two main aspects related to this genre that still need to be fully explicated: the first has to do with its evolution – or maybe we should say its

survival – in view of the advent of new public relations practices already adopted by museums, such as social media, community relations and web communication; the second concerns the origin and reasons of its strong promotional features, which have only been investigated from a synchronic perspective so far (Lazzeretti 2010; Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012).

# MEDIEVAL Beasts

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Unknown  
*Creatures from the Ends of the Earth from Wonders of the World* (detail)  
Thérouanne (?), after 1277  
Tempera colors, pen and ink, gold leaf, and gold paint on  
parchment bound between pasteboard covered  
with paneled calf  
23.3 x 16.4 cm (9 3/16 x 6 7/16 in.)  
The J. Paul Getty Museum, Ms. Ludwig XV 4, fol. 119  
83.MR.174.119

THE GETTY PRESENTS MEDIEVAL ANIMALS,  
CREATURES AND BEASTS  
IN AN EXHIBITION OF MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE  
MUSEUM'S COLLECTION

## *Medieval Beasts*

At the J. Paul Getty Museum, the Getty Center, May 1, 2007–July 29, 2007

LOS ANGELES—Lions and tigers and bears—oh my! And those are only some of the animals—real and imaginary—that audiences of all ages will encounter when they enter the world of *Medieval Beasts* at the J. Paul Getty Museum, Getty Center from May 1, 2007 – July 29, 2007.

This new exhibition of animal images, culled from the Museum's permanent collection, features many of the museum's most popular illuminated manuscripts, such as its two bestiaries, and some books and leaves rarely displayed, including a lively manuscript of Aesop's fables.

The 23 images chosen for *Medieval Beasts* are divided into three sections: Animals in Daily Life, Symbolic Creatures, and Fantastic Beasts. The exhibition includes a special children's educational activity, Beastly Riddles. Families can pick up Beastly Riddle cards, printed in both English and Spanish, and use them to solve riddles and identify medieval animals in the exhibition.

*Medieval Beasts* complements the Getty Museum's Summer Premiere Presentation, *Oudry's Painted Menagerie* (May 1, 2007–September 2, 2007), which unveils for the first time in 150 years two life-size Oudry paintings, *Rhinoceros* and *Lion*.

-more-



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Communications Department

1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 403  
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www.getty.edu

Figure 1.1 – Front page of an EPA issued by the J. Paul Getty Museum in 2007

With regard to the influence of new technologies and media on EPAs, it has to be pointed out that over the last few decades, long-established public relations practices, based on traditional tools, such as press releases and press conferences, have given way to a new paradigm, that places a higher value on web communication and social media, such as Twitter, Facebook and many others (Grunig 2009). These new media require also new writing skills and, in particular, a great ability to synthesize information which challenge the traditional ways of communicating with audiences. As well known by its users, Twitter allows to send very short messages – no more than 140 characters – (see Marwick/Boyd 2010); for Facebook there is no strict rule, but conciseness is however preferable, because users are generally confused and upset by seemingly endless messages (see Kaplan/Haelein 2010). Moreover, when mobile devices are used and text display is limited to a smaller screen, synthesis is an inevitable consequence. In contrast, an EPA generally covers at least two pages or even more and is generally associated with an in-depth presentation of the exhibition. It is interpreted by practitioners as a textual space where description and evaluation can take place at ease, a story can be told (for instance, the artist's biography), and long quotations can be reported, if needed. So the questions to be addressed are: are EPAs threatened by new forms of communication? How do they face the adaptive change posed by the Internet and new technologies? Are they evolving or dissolving?

Scholars have tried to identify the factors involved in genre change, looking at how variables associated with the various participants and contextual factors interact causing a given genre to change. As pointed out by Yates and Orlikowski (1992) in their study on genres typical of organizational communication, such as the memorandum and the proposal, a reciprocal relationship exists between the changing textual features of a genre and concomitant rules for use that are determined by people responding to a changing and demographic climate: “empirical research is needed to investigate the various social, economic, and technological factors that occasion the production, reproduction, or modification of different genres in different socio-historical contexts” (1992: 320). For instance, with the appearance of the typewriter, there emerged conventions such as underlining, subheads, and the use of all capital letters to facilitate readability (Yates/Orlikowski 1992). According to Garzone (2012) the most radical transformations experienced by genres are indeed those induced by the spread of new technologies, mostly associated with Computer- and Web-Mediated Communication, which have opened up new, unexpected and virtually boundless discursive and social spaces, determining profound changes in existing genres as well as the rise of brand new genres. While for many genres, as for EPAs, a second life has begun on the web, many new genres have been born that are native to the web, such as emails, blogs, social networks, and

have unprecedented peculiarities in terms of mode of discourse (e.g. Askehave/Ellerup Nielsen 2004; Garzone 2007) and unexpected influences upon pre-existing genres. Given this scenario, the evolution of a genre like EPAs seems particularly worthy of investigation.

As for the second point – promotionality in EPAs –, it has to be noted that much has changed in the way these texts are received and used by recipients in the last decades. As press releases in general, EPAs were once sent exclusively to media people – by hand, mail, fax and e-mail – and did not reach the wider public directly. They were meant as a professional support for the work of journalists at newspapers, magazines, radio stations, television stations and networks, who could subsequently decide whether to use them or not in their articles or speeches. Nowadays press releases – and also EPAs – are placed on websites, with the consequence that journalistic intervention, also known as “gatekeeping”, can be completely bypassed in reaching audiences. Addressing directly the general public, which becomes “a ratified participant in the process of press release fruition” (Catenaccio 2008:15), e-releases can be used by corporations and institutions as direct marketing tools (see Strobbe/Jacobs 2005, Catenaccio 2008). Online EPAs, for instance, can become a source of information for tourists planning a visit to the museum, encourage advance booking, boost e-commerce and merchandising. There is so much potential in spreading online EPAs that nowadays many companies provide services of direct e-mailing of text and image press releases to databases of art professionals as well as lay people.<sup>1</sup>

There is evidence that the e-dimension of press releases has been changing their use and language, justifying the shift towards a more promotional tone in comparison with traditional paper press releases (Strobbe / Jacobs 2005). Moreover, the internet has ignited an even stronger competition among press releases, not only within crowded journalists’ e-mail inboxes, which are still their most proper destination, but also on the web, where they can be selectively accessed.

This daily struggle for attention, combined with the communicative purposes typical of the genre – the launch of a new art exhibition and the aim at arousing the interest of potential reviewers – has influenced EPAs as well, both in terms of lexical choices and textual structure. Reading a contemporary EPA, one could even gain the impression that journalists – and, indirectly, potential visitors – are addressed as ‘customers’ to be conquered within a very competitive market. Previous studies addressing promotional features in EPAs (Lazzeretti 2010; Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012) have shown an overwhelming use of adjectives, nouns and other linguistic patterns that express positive

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<sup>1</sup> A significant example of this kind of service in the field of art is the international network *e-flux* ([www.e-flux.com](http://www.e-flux.com)), which reaches more than 50.000 visual art professionals on a daily basis through its website, e-mail list and special projects. Its news digest – e-flux announcements – distributes information on contemporary art exhibitions, publications and symposia all around the world.

evaluation of the exhibition, often insisting on concepts of novelty, exclusiveness, uniqueness, and quality of the featured events; the inclusion of emotionally charged words, that trigger a reaction from the audience, in order to excite curiosity around the featured artists or their artworks, and therefore create news value, especially in the headlines of EPAs; the insertion of quotations and narrative sections aiming at providing journalists with suggestions and stories they can use; the recurring mention of a catalogue accompanying the exhibition on sale at bookshops. All these elements can contribute to classify contemporary EPAs among those professional genres that, according to Bhatia (2004: 90), are “designed to serve informative purposes”, but “invariably focus on only positive aspects and incorporate persuasive and sometimes even promotional elements”.

Although press releases in general are openly disregarded by journalists, who often complain that they are badly written or too enthusiastic and self-celebratory, previous studies carried out in this field show that media people actually depend on the “information subsidies” provided by press releases (Gandy 1982: 61), as they cannot cover all newsworthy events in person. This turns out to be true for art journalists who necessarily rely on EPAs when writing about an exhibition they did not manage to visit. A golden rule is that you cannot review an exhibition before seeing it with your own eyes; nonetheless, many critics base their journalistic evaluation on press materials and interviews previously arranged, often as a consequence of their busy agenda or their physical distance from the exhibiting venue. Promotional language may therefore survive in their subsequent coverage, generating “free publicity” (Pander Maat 2007: 63). There is also evidence that “promotional language is dealt with differently in different sectors of the press” and that “special interest media are apparently quite willing to recycle promotional elements” (Pander Maat 2007: 93). Probably art magazines and newspapers art sections belong to these categories sharing a more tolerant approach towards promotionally dressed up press releases, but in order to make claims in this sense a thorough ethnography-based process analysis should be needed. As suggested by Catenaccio, Cotter, De Smedt et al. (2011: 1848) “detailed empirical evidence for the journalistic use of source media” – the “news transmutation process” – could be explored with the help of current technology, “by tracking electronically and/or ethnographically shifts and changes in the text as it develops (locally and globally) towards its final version for publication or presentation”.

However, once it has been ascertained that promotionality is a main feature of contemporary EPAs, a question arises: have promotional features characterized EPAs since their very first origin, or have they been more recently introduced as a consequence of external factors?

Starting from these two main research questions – the evolution of the genre in view of the advent of new public relations practices and the origin and reasons of its strong promotional

features – a diachronic study on EPAs was carried out in order to find out how the genre has changed over time, what direction it is taking and what professional challenges lie ahead. An *ad hoc* corpus was compiled, the EPA Diacorpus, made up of 300 thousand words (tokens) and including 378 EPAs, half issued by American museums and half by British museums, dating from 1950 to 2009, while corpus linguistics and genre-analysis methodologies were used in order to explore its content.

The diachronic evolution of EPAs can be put in relation to the great social and cultural changes taking place over the last decades of the past century, and especially with the advent of new technologies, new public relations practices and transition towards a more market-oriented concept of museum. Before starting the analysis, the relevant situational context – museums and public relations – needs therefore to be briefly outlined in the following section (1.1).

1683	Oxford	Opening of the Ashmolean Museum
1734	Rome	Opening of the Capitoline Museum
1759	London	Opening of the British Museum
1768	London	Establishment of the Royal Academy of Arts
1785	Madrid	Opening of the Prado Museum
1793	Paris	Opening of the Louvre Museum
1824	London	Opening of the National Gallery
1836	Munich	Opening of the Alte Pinakothek
1846	Washington	Establishment of the Smithsonian Institution
1852	London	Opening of the Victoria and Albert Museum
1852	St. Petersburg	Opening of the Hermitage Museum
1870	New York	Opening of the Metropolitan Museum of Art
1879	London	Opening of the National Gallery of British Art (Tate Gallery)
1929	New York	Opening of the Museum of Modern Art
1931	New York	Opening of the Whitney Museum of American Art
1935	New York	Opening of the Frick Collection housed in the former Henry Clay Frick House
1939	New York	Opening of the Guggenheim Foundation's first museum, 'The Museum of Non-Objective Painting'
1954	Los Angeles	Opening of the J. Paul Getty Museum
1959	New York	Opening of the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum designed by Frank Lloyd Wright
1964	Chicago	Opening of the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art

Tab. 1.1 – Timeline of the most important modern museums in Western Europe and in the United States

## **1.1 The situational context: museums and public relations**

The development of a textual genre such as EPAs is strictly related to the innovations faced by museums from the post-war period up to now and to the gradual introduction of public relations strategies in their management.

After World War II, in Europe particularly, many art treasures which had been removed for safety reasons had to be recovered and redisplayed; buildings also had to be refurbished. This reconstruction provided an opportunity for a new approach towards museums, to be seen as institutions not only serving scholars but a lay public as well (Lewis 2012). Curators in the larger museums began to work together with a team of scientists, conservators, designers, educators and even marketing managers to promote the museum and its work.

In the post-war phase, therefore, a new awareness arose regarding the crucial function played by public relations in contributing to the overall success of the museum, from raising the media profile, managing their relationships with stakeholders, to attracting new audiences and regular attendees.

While the first public museums in history were established in Western Europe, as shown by Tab. 1.1, providing a timeline of the most important modern museums set up from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards, the origins of museum public relations can be principally traced back to the United States, which has a tradition in this field. In the United States the birth of modern public relations is credited to pioneers like Ivy Lee, a former Wall Street reporter, who became a public relations counsellor for the Pennsylvania Railroad and the Rockefeller family in 1904, and Edward L. Bernays, who began to work in 1917 for the war's publicity front and over the years represented hundreds of clients in all major fields of business. Bernays is also credited with coining the term "public relations counsel" in his first book on the subject, *Crystallizing Public Opinion*, originally published in 1923.

In Europe the growth of public relations became evident in the late 1940s and throughout the 1950s and 1960s, especially in the United Kingdom, where local governmental authorities were giving serious consideration to public communications. It was local government officials who were most responsible for founding the Institute of Public Relations (IPR) in the UK in 1948, the first organization of professional practitioners.

Although relatively little research addresses the field of museum public relations and more in instructional, rather than theoretical terms (see however Adams 1983, McLean 1997, Schoen 2005, Kotler et al. 2008, Gürel / Kavak 2010), we may assume that the development of a public relations segment specifically meant for museums started in the US and subsequently spread in Western Europe. As pointed out by McLean (2012: 42), “marketing was introduced to American museums at roughly the same period as to UK museums [...]. Nevertheless American museums have led the field in adopting marketing techniques and innovating with marketing practice”. At an earlier stage, the adoption of public relations practices brought about some concern among museum administrators, who feared that these may compromise a museum’s authentic mission: according to Finn (1984:59), the first time public relations specialists worked with museums was on “major exhibitions – particularly those sponsored by corporations that hope[d] to achieve public relations benefits” (1984:59). At the time, such commercial aspects sounded ill suited to museums strictly committed to cultural and educational aims. However, Finn (1984) states that major exhibitions appeal to the media (and also sponsors) independently from public relations and simply because they are interesting and newsworthy.

Bearing in mind that public relations have become an integral part of museum operations and press officers play a very important part in the public relations work conducted by museums (Kotler et al. 2008), further evidence of the anticipating role played by American museums in this field may be obtained from exploring the EPA Diacorpus, compiled for the present study. The collected documents, dating back to the 1950s onwards and issued by nine different American and British museums, show that in American museums professional press officers were already employed and mentioned by their names on EPAs since the 1950s, while in British museums personal press contact is not provided before the end of the 1960s. At the New York Museum of Modern Arts, for instance, Elizabeth Shaw appears as “publicity director” since 1955; at the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, a public relations consultant, Peter Pollack, is mentioned with regularity from 1961 onwards. Conversely, EPAs belonging to the London Victoria and Albert Museum report on the headlines that they are issued by a “Department of Public Relations” only from 1968 onwards; at the London National Gallery the name of a press officer, Phyllis Rowlands, is mentioned on EPAs from 1975 onwards, while at the London Royal Academy a curator was dealing with the press in the early 1970s, Nicholas Usherwood, and a professional press officer – Griselda Hamilton Baillie – was appointed only afterwards.

The 1950s were also crucial for the development of the textual genre of EPAs in consideration of the “growing specialization in professional profiles” employed in the media (Facchinetti et al. 2012: 103). From the half of the century “more and more domains were covered

by experts in their fields” (ibid. 103). Thus editors began, for instance, to hire an art expert, so as a fashion expert or a royal correspondent, in coincidence with the expansion of special sections in the newspapers. In this period EPAs were delivered by post or even by hand. In absence of a professional in charge of public relations, museum directors were used to writing EPAs.

After World War II museums became an educational facility, a source of leisure activity, and a medium of communication. As a result, they also found a new popularity and attracted an increasing number of visitors. Statistics give an indication of the increase in the number of museums and in museum visiting. In the United States, of 8,200 museums reported for 1988, 75 percent had been founded since 1950 and 40 percent since 1970. In the 1970s nearly 350 million visits per year were made to American museums; in 1988 the recorded figure was 566 million. One of the oldest established museums in Europe – the British Museum – regularly attracted more than 3 million visits a year (Lewis 2012).

Despite governments, particularly in Europe, acknowledging their contribution to museums, these have been much influenced by changing policies in public sector finance. In the second half of twentieth century the contribution of public funds to museums has remained static or has fallen, so that museums’ governing bodies and directors have had to seek funding from alternative sources. The need for marketing and fund-raising expertise, therefore, has been increasingly accentuated and the organization of “blockbuster exhibitions” has become central for the financial support art museums (Alexander and Alexander 2008). These events are not only capable of attracting visitors and increasing admission income and museum shop sales, but they also allow for cross marketing to increase tourism citywide. For instance, the 1996 Cezanne retrospective exhibition at the Philadelphia Museum of Art attracted more than half a million people in three months (Alexander and Alexander 2008: 44).

Another reflection of the changed financial situation has been the introduction of admission charges. According to Lewis (2012) in 1984 none of the British national museums charged an entry fee, while ten years later almost half were doing so. The number of American museums charging fees for admission increased over a similar period from 32 percent to 55 percent. As pointed out by McFelter (2007), in August 2006, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York created a case when it announced a 33 percent increase — from \$15 to \$20 per adult visitor — to bring the Met’s recommended entry fee in line with those at other New York museums, most notably the Museum of Modern Art’s \$20 charge.

The opportunity of charging admission is under debate not only in the United States, but also in Britain, where free museums are a great tradition. On one hand, museum theorists argue that

admission fees may be the single biggest obstacle preventing museums from fulfilling their missions as educational institutions:

“If they remain oriented toward their paying customers, museums will never become the town square that we are so fond of talking about. Drop the charges. I have reluctantly but unequivocally come to the conclusion that general admission charges are the single greatest impediment to making our museums truly and fully accessible”  
(Heumann Gurian 2006).

On the other hand, an influential British art journalist, Jonathan Jones, recently wrote on the Guardian website : “charging for entry cannot be a taboo. [...] Charging for entry is a better remedy than selling paintings, closing galleries or sacking staff. Might it even give visitors a keener sense of the value of some of the greatest experiences it is possible to have?”<sup>2</sup>.

With increasing economic importance and shrinking sources of income, public relations has grown in importance for museums. According to McLean (2012), “the most significant threats to museums come from central and local government” (221). Museums are becoming more dependent on wealthy benefactors and public subsidy to generate income since the current political climate lacks long-term vision and policy cohesion. In this time of “financial stringency,” governments also take a lead role in encouraging museums to market themselves (McLean 2012: 37).

In such a context, EPAs have a great potential, as they build relationships first with the media and, consequently, with the public, who can become “more involved in the choice and interpretation of exhibit topics” (Karp et al. 1992: 182).

The use of new technologies by museums took off during the 1990s and grew rapidly during that decade. The fax, primarily used in the 1980s by businesses and government agencies, in the 1990s became more common among the general public and museums as well. During the 1980s and the 1990s EPAs were mostly sent to the media via fax. A few years later the Internet made its breakthrough, and museums began e-mailing and sending documents and scanned images. The development of websites gave rise to the terms ‘museum without walls’, ‘post-museum’ and ‘virtual museum’ (Hooper-Greenhill 2000: 152–153). New technologies allowed museums to present more fluid and wide-ranging communications focused on particular events and conversations. On the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/artanddesign/jonathanjonesblog/2011/jul/21/museums-charging-admission-entry-fees>.

web these include online access to collections and databases; online exhibitions (text, image, audiovisual); virtual exhibitions (including 360-degree room views); virtual museums, the use of real and imaginary exhibition and gallery spaces; downloadable and streamed multimedia content (audio, video, podcasts); interactive gallery maps; dedicated sites, games and play spaces for children and young people; personalized spaces – creating own favourites and tagging objects; use of social media (blogs, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, YouTube), and shopping online (exhibition tickets, merchandise). Virtual press rooms have also been created, allowing art journalists to access on line press materials selectively – and EPAs among them –, wherever and whenever they need them, without even calling the press officer. Although placed in specific press areas within museum websites and therefore apparently still reserved to a well defined professional category – journalists – EPAs have been turned into public documents and internet has rapidly changed their use and language.

Indeed, over the last few decades, conventional public relations strategies, based on mere press coverage, have been challenged by social media, community relations, and corporate relations (Grunig, 2009). Nevertheless, media outreach remains a basic component of any museum public relations strategy (Kotler et al. 2008; Rentschler/Hede, 2007). Media releases, sometimes sent many months in advance, and media previews are still perceived by museums as useful tools for influencing the media's opinion about their exhibitions (Genoways/Ireland, 2003), but also for driving public opinion and, hopefully, attendance.

## **1.2 Research directions**

The present study is based on a diachronic corpus comprised of 378 EPAs, half issued by American museums and half by British museums. The collected EPAs are evenly distributed across six decades: 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000. The corpus has been explored in quantitative and qualitative terms following corpus linguistics and genre-analysis methodologies.

The enquiry addresses the following research questions:

- How has the genre changed in order to face the challenge posed by new technologies and by Internet in particular?
- Are EPAs threatened by new approaches used in contemporary public relations, such as social media networks? Are they going to be replaced or will be able to survive?

- Have promotional features characterized the genre of EPAs since its earlier expressions or have they been more recently introduced as a consequence of external factors, such as new technologies, development of marketing, economical variables, globalization?
- What lexical variation can be identified in EPAs from the 1950s up to now?
- Is it possible to identify patterns of sharp growth, decline or stability in the frequencies of lexical items across the decades?
- Has there been any lexical change reflecting socio-cultural change, for instance in the way exhibitions are organized, artists and subjects are selected?
- What structural variation can be identified in EPAs from the 1950s up to now?
- As the corpus is divided into two equal sub-sections, American and British, is it possible to highlight differences between the two in terms of diachronic variation?

### **1.3 Outline of contents**

With regard to the organization of the thesis, the first part prepares the groundwork for the study, while the second goes deeper into the analysis. Since the methods applied in the study combine genre analysis and corpus linguistics, chapter 2–4 aim at introducing both methodologies extensively. Chapter 2 provides general information on genre theory, the development of written discourse analysis, the different approaches to genre and recent developments in this field. Chapter 3 and 4 discuss the development of corpus linguistics methodologies, with special attention to diachronic studies. The relevant domains of EPAs, to be associated with professional discourse and in particular with media and art discourses, are presented in chapter 5. The design of the corpus, as well as the methods applied in the analysis, are presented in chapter 6 and 7. In chapters 8 and 9 the main analysis is carried out: the EPA Diacorpus is explored with regard to lexical and structural variation respectively. Conclusions are eventually drawn in chapter 10.

## **2. Theoretical background: genre analysis**

The analysis carried out in this dissertation is based on the frameworks of genre analysis, a methodology which can be regarded as the result of a gradual development in written discourse analysis. Genre analysis is traditionally addressed from three different perspectives: the English for Specific Purposes (ESP), the Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) and the New Rhetoric (NR). This study follows in particular the ESP approach. Nonetheless, the three perspectives are considered as complementary rather than contradictory in terms of analytical applications in this study.

First an overview of the historical evolution of written discourse analysis and thus also of genre theory will be provided; secondly, the different approaches to genre and genre analysis will be presented, explaining how they can be applied in the present work.

### **2.1 Historical development of written discourse analysis**

Following Bhatia (2004), it is possible to divide the historical development of written discourse analysis into three distinct, yet overlapping phases. The first focuses on the textualisation of lexico-grammatical resources, the second on the regularities of organisation, while the third highlights contextualisation of discourse. Each of them will be discussed in turn.

#### ***2.1.1 First phase: textualisation of lexico-grammar***

In this phase language description primarily involved the surface level of language, i.e. scholars focused on statistically relevant features of lexico-grammar used in a particular subset of texts associated with a particular discipline. A seminal publication in this sense is Halliday, McIntosh and Strevens (1964), which introduces the concept of register analysis and presents the description of language varieties used in particular disciplines or occupations, based on statistical differences in lexis and syntax: “Language varies as its function varies; it differs in different situations. The name given to a variety of a language distinguished according to its use is register” (Halliday/McIntosh/Strevens 1964: 87).

Pointing to the need to direct English teaching to meet the emerging requirements of “an institutional kind”, mention is made of “English for civil servants; for policemen; for officials of the law; for dispensers and nurses; for specialists in agriculture; for engineers and fitters”

(Halliday/McIntosh/Strevens 1964: 189). To cater for these special needs for English, linguistic analyses of the “registers” associated with each have to be carried out:

“Every one of these specialized needs requires, before it can be met by appropriate teaching materials, detailed studies of restricted languages and special registers carried out on the basis of large samples of the language used by the particular persons concerned. It is perfectly possible to find out just what English is used in the operation of power stations in India: once this has been observed, recorded and analysed, a teaching course to impart such language behaviour can at last be devised with confidence and certainty.” (Halliday/McIntosh/Strevens 1964: 190)

One of the first studies exploring frequently occurring language patterns was the work of Barber (1962) on research articles, entitled “Some memorable characteristics of modern scientific prose”.

Among the aims of the study were to identify recurring lexico-grammatical features and common modal verbs that were particular to scientific prose. For this purpose, a genre-based corpus study was carried out. In the literature there is common agreement on the importance of Barber’s (1962) contribution to the description of language. It is still widely seen as influential, especially in regard to English for Specific Purposes (ESP). Although its intentions were mostly pedagogic, the paper clearly shows the distinctive use of lexis and syntax in scientific textbooks, demonstrating that the progressive verb forms are very rarely used in scientific writing.

Since computational methods were not fully developed at that time, the analytical findings of these early studies were limited to a few relevant features of the selected texts rather than considering the corpus in its entirety. Gustaffson (1975), for instance, focused on one syntactic feature of legal discourse, i.e. binomials and multinomials. Similarly did Swales and Bhatia (1983) in their study on nominalization in legal discourse.

The interest in specialized fields and texts, as well as the focus on the surface level description (and thus on the description of recurring lexical items and grammatical structures) served well the purpose of ESP studies (Bhatia 2004: 5). In English language teaching, in fact, these studies gave rise to the view that there are important differences among languages associated to different professional contexts; for instance, between the English of commerce and the one of engineering. Regarding to ESP this idea has developed into English courses for specific groups of learners. Most of the work at this time was devoted to English for Science and Technology (EST), but there were studies in other fields too, such as the analysis of doctor-patient communication by

Bruton, Candlin and Leather (1976). In short, the motto of ESP at that time was: ‘Tell me what you need English for and I will tell you the English that you need’ (Hutchinson/Water 1987: 8).

A common criticism of register analysis is that it is purely descriptive and not explanatory: it tells us the relative frequency of linguistic forms, but not the special functions these forms have in the specific register and what purpose their marked presence or absence may serve (Bhatia 1993:6).

These studies commonly referred to as register studies were “useful in the sense that they provide empirical evidence to confirm or disprove some of the intuitive and impressionistic statements we all tend to make about the high or low incidence of certain syntactic features of variety of languages”. However, “they tell us nothing [...] to what purpose such features are markedly present or absent in a particular variety” (Bhatia 1993: 6).

Nonetheless, even in this first phase, some scholars tried to go beyond the surface level of language and developed an interest on the functional value of lexico-grammatical features. Swales’ (1974) work on the function of *-en* particles in chemistry texts is one of the most representative and striking examples of this development. His investigation demonstrates that *-en* particles occupy a central role in scientific discourse, as they fulfil specific rhetorical functions. The following text (Swales 1974: 18) provides an example of the use of *-en* particles:

A *given* bottle contains a compound which upon analysis is shown to contain 0.600 gram-atom of phosphorous and 1.500 gram-atom of oxygen.

Since attribution is an important convention in science, *-en* particles signal that the writer is introducing a generalization, preventing unnecessary and irrelevant inquiries regarding the detail of the experiment.

Another development in this first phase of written discourse analysis involved the investigation of discourse organization.

Scholars such as Brown and Yule (1983), van Dijk (1985), Beaugrande and Dressler (1981) focused on developing a relationship between the choice of lexico-grammar and specific forms of discourse organization. Cohesion and coherence were of particular interest as well as the macro-structures and information structures of discourse. Brown and Yule (1983), for instance, analysed small local units at the level of phrase or clause, exploring how information is packaged within them. A range of forms, intonational and syntactic, were examined in order to determine the information status as “given” or “new”. For instance, in the following example, the expression italicised has been identified as referring to a “given” entity:

Mary got some beer out of the car  
The *beer* was warm  
(Brown/Yule 1983: 170)

Another significant departure from the surface-level description of language and register analysis was provided by Coulthard (1977), who, following Hymes (1972), introduced the concepts of ethnography of communication, speech community and speech styles. According to Coulthard (1977), the concept of style may seem very close to that of register, but there is a crucial difference: “registers are mainly defined and recognized by topic and context-specific lexis – the register of sermons is the language used in giving sermons; styles, however, as the rules of alternation emphasize, are not mechanically connected to particular situations – speaker may choose among styles and their choices have *social meaning*” (Coulthard 1977: 40).

A common characteristic of the studies belonging to the phase of textualisation of lexico-grammar is to extend the scope of analysis from clause-level units to larger rhetorical structure, anticipating the next phase of development.

### **2.1.2 Second phase: organisation of discourse**

The analysis of larger stretches of discourse encouraged analysts to study the specific contexts associated to the texts and to identify more global structures in various discourse types. Scholars began to focus on the identification of discourse patterns and on the regularities of organization in discourse: for instance in terms of problem-solution structures, as in Hoey (1983), rhetorical structures, as in Widdowson (1973), or schematic structures, as in van Dijk (1988). This research direction opened the way to the ESP approach to genre, to be dealt in section 2.2.1.

This second phase can be subdivided into three different developments (Bhatia 2004: 9). The first was concerned primarily with the structure of specialised discourse; the second investigated more general patterns of organisation; the third focused on the macro-structure and the correlating communicative purpose(s) of academic or professional genres.

Establishing a relation between discourse structures and communicative purposes was a crucial step in the development of genre analysis: scholars engaged in this direction, such as John Swales and Vijay Bhatia, interpreted regularities in the structures of textual genres not simply in terms of schematic patterns but as “moves” functional to the needs of professional or academic communities. The approach of analysing texts as genres opened possibilities to investigate how and why members of an academic or professional community produce genres. In contrast to text-

linguistics and the focus on lexico-grammatical features, genre theory allowed “a thicker description of language” (Bhatia 1993: 39- 40), taking into account socio-cultural as well as psychological factors (Bhatia 1993: 16).

Genre theory as a means of written discourse analysis emerged in the 1990s and soon became a fashionable field of research (Bhatia 2004: 9-10). Studies performed in the 1990s mainly concerned academic (Swales 1990) and professional genres, in particular legal and business genres (Bhatia 1993). Even though the interest in genre was constantly growing, different frameworks for genre analysis were established.

During this phase, a seminal definition of genre was provided by Swales (1981, 1986, 1990):

“Genre is a recognizable communicative event characterized by a set of communicative purpose(s) identified and mutually understood by the members of the professional or academic community in which it regularly occurs. Most often it is highly structured and conventionalized with constraints on allowable contributions in terms of their intent, positioning, form and functional value. These constraints, however, are often exploited by the expert members of the discourse community to achieve private intentions within the framework of socially recognized purpose(s)”. (quoted in Bhatia 1993: 13)

Swales’ (1990) well-known and influential analysis of research article introductions, which he called CARS (Creating a Research Space), provided a fundamental framework for genre-analysis. In analyzing research article (RA) introductions, Swales (1990) first identifies the typical “moves” authors make within the introduction:

Move 1: Establishing a territory

Step 1: Claiming centrality and/or

Step 2: Making topic generalisation(s) and/or

Step 3: Reviewing items of previous research

Move 2: Establishing a niche

Step 1: A Counter-claiming or

Step 1: B Indicating a gap or

Step 1: C Question-raising or

Step 1: D Continuing a tradition

Move 3: Occupying the niche

Step 1: A Outlining a purpose or

- Step 1: B Announcing present research
  - Step 2: Announcing principal findings
  - Step 3: Indicating research article structure
- (Swales 1990: 141)

Swales and Feak (2000) have defined a “move” as a “bounded communicative act that is designed to achieve one main communicative objective” within the larger communicative objective of the genre (35). Swales (1990) identifies three main moves for RA introductions: ‘establishing a territory’ (move 1), ‘establishing a niche’ (move 2), ‘occupying the niche’ (move 3) (141). Within each of these moves, Swales identifies a range of possible ‘steps’ authors can take, such as “claiming centrality” and “reviewing items of previous research” in move 1 and “counter-claiming” or “indicating a gap” in move 2. From there, Swales examines steps more specifically by analyzing text-patterning and lexico-grammatical features within different steps. In analyzing step 3 (reviewing items of previous research) within move 1 (establishing a territory), for instance, Swales looks at patterns of citation, noting patterns in which authors either name the researcher being cited in their citing sentence or reference the researcher in parenthesis at the end of the sentence or in end notes. Moving from text-patterning to lexico-grammatical features, Swales then identifies the frequency of ‘reporting verbs’ (such as *show*, *establish*, *claim*, etc.) that authors use “to introduce previous researchers and their findings” (150).

It has also to be ascribed to this phase the identification of an influential analytical framework for analyzing unfamiliar genres, Bhatia’s seven steps (1993: 22-36), which is reproduced below:

1. Placing the given genre text in a situational context.
  2. Surveying existing literature.
  3. Refining the situational/ contextual analysis.
  4. Selecting and analysing corpus.
  5. Studying the institutional context.
  6. Levels of linguistic analysis
    - Level 1 – the quantitative analyses of lexico – grammatical features.
    - Level 2 – the analyses of text – patterning or textualisation.
    - Level 3 – the analyses of structural interpretation of genres.
  7. Specialist information genre analysis.
- (Bhatia 1993: 22-36)

The first step involves placing a given genre-text in its situational context. Step two involves surveying the existing research on the genre. With the genre identified and contextualized, step three involves refining the researcher's understanding of the genre's discourse community. This includes identifying the writers and readers who use the genre and determining their goals and relationships to one another, as well as the material conditions in which they function — in short, identifying the “reality” which the genre represents. Step four involves the researcher collecting a corpus of the genre. Step five introduces an ethnographic dimension, with Bhatia (1993) recommending that the researcher conduct an ethnography of the institutional context in which the genre takes place in order to gain “naturalistic” insight into the conditions in which members of a discourse community use the genre. Step six moves from context to text and involves the decision regarding which level of linguistic analysis to explore: lexico-grammatical features (for example, quantitative/statistical study of tenses, clauses, and other syntactic properties, including stylistic analysis), text-patterning (for example, the patterns in which language is used in a particular genre, such as how and why noun phrases and nominalizations are used in different genres), and structural interpretation (for example, the structural ‘moves’ a genre utilizes to achieve its goals, such as the three-move CARS structure of research article introductions as described by Swales 1990). In the final step, Bhatia advises researchers to seek a specialist informant from the research site to verify findings.

This general approach to genre analysis within ESP - from identifying purpose to analyzing a genre's rhetorical moves and how these moves are carried out textually and linguistically - and the research that has emerged from it has contributed greatly to our knowledge of discipline-specific genres, notably research articles as well as what Swales has called “occluded genres” that operate behind the scenes of research articles (genres such as conference abstracts, submission letters, review letters, etc.). Such knowledge has enabled graduate-level non-native speakers of English to gain access to and participate in academic and professional discourse communities.

### ***2.1.3 Third phase: contextualisation of discourse***

So far, it has been demonstrated that the focus of written discourse analysis shifted from lexico-grammatical features of texts to the patterns of discourse organisation. In recent years, the focus has been on the context of discourse (Bhatia 2004: 11). Whereas some researchers continued

with the tradition of genre analysis and expanded the approach, in the sense that they raised issues such as the hybridisation, dynamism and constellations of genres (Bazermann 1994, Berkenkotter/Hucking 1995), others moved towards a multi-perspective view towards genre (Bhatia 2004).

Instead of focusing on “simplified and idealized genres”, Bhatia (2004: XIV) pointed out that genres should be regarded as dynamic and sometimes hybrid in nature. There is a considerable gap between the idealized genres (mainly covered by the literature on genre) and the genres used in the real world (*ibid.*). In order to bridge this gap, Bhatia (2004) advocates another view of genre, which moves towards a multi-perspective and multidimensional genre concept.

Bhatia (2004) suggests “a multi-perspective four-space model of discourse analysis”, as illustrated in the diagram below:

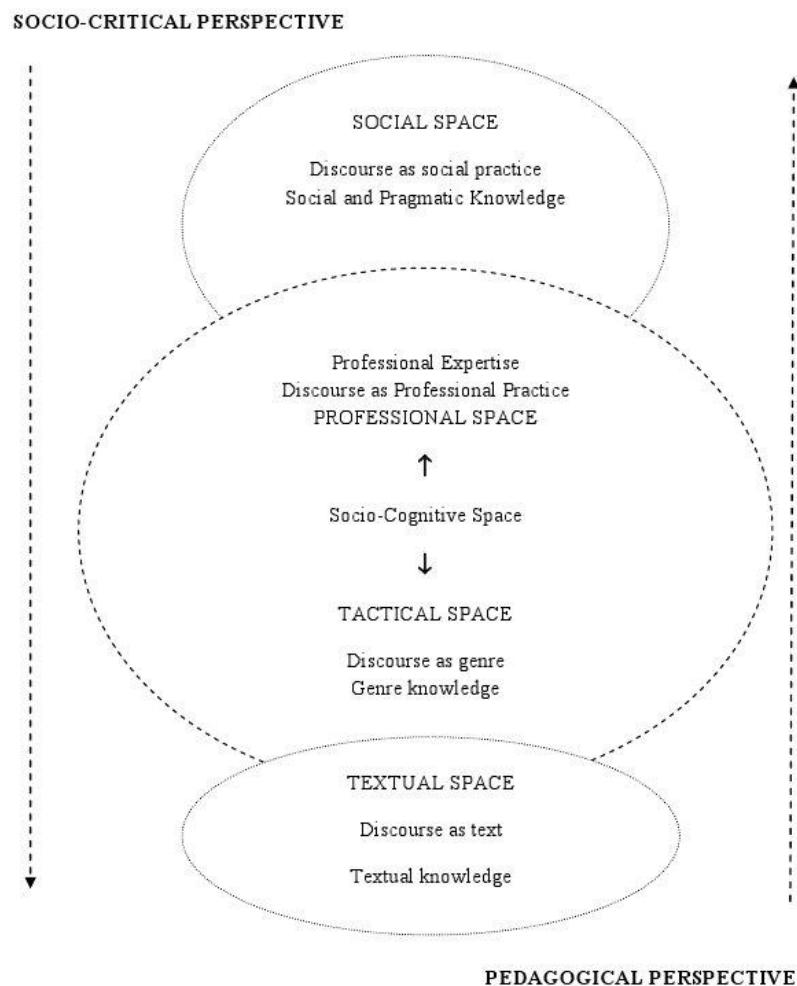


Figure 2.1 - A multi-perspective four-space model of discourse analysis (Bhatia 2004: 19)

For Bhatia (2004: 19) genre theory should take into account not only the surface-level properties of discourse, i.e. the *textual space*, corresponding to the first oval in the diagram, but also the socio-cognitive factors that influence the construction, interpretation and analysis of genres. These are determined by the institutional or professional context in which the text is constructed, interpreted and exploited by experts in order to achieve specific goals (*tactical space* and *professional space*, identified by the middle oval in the diagram). The interaction with the context can be taken even further, widening the perspective to a broader *social space* (identified by the upper part of the diagram). One can investigate, for instance, “the changing identities of the participants, the social structures or professional relationships the genre are likely to maintain or change, and the advantages or disadvantages such genres are likely to bring to a particular set of readers” (2004: 20). The four-space model indicates two main directions for the analysis of written discourse, namely a pedagogic and a socio-critical perspective. Thus Bhatia encourages a third view, which look at discourse essentially as a genre within socio-cognitive space, but does not ignore textual features of language use, that is a generic perspective (2004:21).

The socio-cognitive factors have traditionally been neglected (Bhatia 2004: 112), since the main focus was on the analysis of linguistic factors, text-internal factors such as contextual features (e.g. audience, attitude, social distance, background), textual features (e.g. text patterns) or intertextual features (e.g. surrounding texts). These text-internal features were used (mainly by the genre analysts themselves) to access genres. It has been suggested that members of a specific discipline tend to use text-external factors such as discursive practices (e.g. common modes of communication) and procedures (who does what at what stage and by which means) as well as knowledge regarding the disciplinary culture (professional goals and conventions) to approach specific genres. Therefore, discursive practices, discursive procedures and disciplinary culture should be ascribed greater value.

In the multi-perspective model of genre suggested by Bhatia (2004), generic competence and professional expertise play a very significant role. It is important to understand how professional experts become experts. Professional expertise is developed slowly but gradually “in different ways and at different stages” (Bhatia 2004: 147). Broadly speaking, Bhatia (2004: 146) differentiates three elements that contribute to professional expertise: professional practice, disciplinary knowledge and discursive competence. The latter also includes generic competence (the competence of mastering genres in order to function within a discourse community) (Bhatia 2004: 145). These three key elements contribute to form professional expertise.

As far as genre analysis in the multi-perspective model is concerned, it can be said that genre is investigated in a four-part framework for analysis, involving: textual space (lexico-

grammatical features, their textualisation, discourse patterns); socio-cognitive space, also referred to as tactical space (professional practices, discursive practices); socio-critical concerns (ideology and power); and ethnographic concerns (beliefs, attitudes and social structure) (Bhatia 2004: 160-163). This model of genre and genre analysis is insightful as it draws from different perspectives. By moving towards a multi-perspective view of genre and genre analysis we are more likely to find increasing flexibility, fluidity and tentativeness in our understanding of generic integrity. This may be a consequence of blurred boundaries between genres increasing tendencies toward mixing and embedding of genres, and a natural inclination on the part of expert users of language for innovation and creativity in their construction as well as consumption of genres in real-life contexts (Bhatia 2004: 181).

In this section of the study the developments of written discourse analysis were mentioned, from textualisation to organization and contextualization. Next a description of different approaches adopted in genre analysis will be provided: the ESP approach, the Systemic Functional approach, and the New Rhetoric approach.

## **2.2 Approaches to genre analysis**

Hyon (1996) has classified the approaches to genre analysis into three pathways, which highlight the origins of the diverse genre frameworks: the Systemic Functional approach, the New Rhetoric approach and the English for Specific Purposes approach. While Hyon classifies the approaches to genre in terms of scholarly traditions, Flowerdew (2002) argues that genre theories can be broadly distinguished as primarily linguistic or non-linguistic in their orientation. According to Flowerdew (2002), a primarily linguistic approach focuses on textual features and the rhetorical realisation of a text's social purpose, while a non-linguistic approach focuses more on the situational context and the attitudes and behaviours of a discourse community: "the linguistic approach looks to the situational context to interpret the linguistic and discourse structures, whereas the New Rhetoric may look to the text to interpret the situational context" (Flowerdew 2002: 91–92). Flowerdew's distinction is useful for signalling not only a researcher's theoretical orientation but also the researcher's primary focus as foregrounding either text or context, depending on the researcher's purpose. The first approach to be introduced in the following section will be the Systemic Functional approach.

### ***2.2.1 The Systemic Functional approach***

Also referred to as the Australian Systemic Functional approach or simply the Australian School or Sydney School (Bhatia 2004: 10; Hyon 1996: 696), it is mainly based on the work of Systemic Functional linguists from Sydney in Australia, such as Michael Halliday, Ruqaiya Hasan and James R. Martin. This approach to genre is an extension of register theory, which is concerned with the contextual variables of field (institutional activity), tenor (social interaction) and mode (medium of communication). Field refers to what is happening in a specific situation, whereas tenor is linked to the participants, and their roles and relationships in the situation. Mode describes the language that is used in more detail, and the channel of communication and function of language in a specific context (Halliday/Martin 1993: 32-33). In Martin's (1992) view, field, tenor and mode together form register (Martin 1992: 495, Halliday/Martin 1993: 33). Register is "a semantic concept" that describes "a configuration of meanings that are typically associated with a particular situational configuration of field, mode and tenor" (Halliday/Hasan 1989: 38-39). These contextual features influence the patterns of texts, such as text structures and lexico-grammatical patterns of a particular text, because, as Whittaker and Rojo (1999) pointed out, speakers or writers of a particular language know the recognized ways to get things done using the language in a specific situation, then they are more likely to make choices in the lexico-grammar of the language. So for Systemic Functional linguists the relationship between texts and contexts is predictable. Genres are defined as 'staged, goal-oriented social processes that people engage in as members of their culture' (Martin 1984: 25), which are realized through the register variables of field, tenor and mode.

Systemic functional linguists developed practical schemes for categorizing texts in a particular environment of context, such as Hasan's Generic Structure Potential (GSP) and Martin's Schematic Structure (SS). According to the GSP approach (Hasan 1978), texts can be categorized into a particular genre on the basis of the occurrence of obligatory and optional elements. The ordering and the recursion of these elements have to be taken into account as well. The fundamentals of this model are succinctly summarized in the following quotation:

" ...associated with each genre of text –i.e. type of discourse– is a generalised structural formula, which permits an array of actual structures. Each complete text must be a realisation of a structure from such an array. The generic membership of the text is determined by reference to the structural formula to which the actual structure can be shown to belong. A text will be perceived as incomplete if only a part of some recognizable actual structure is realized in it; and the generic provenance of a text will

remain undetermined, if the part so realized is not even recognizable as belonging to some distinct actual structure.” (Hasan 1978: 229)

In his SS framework, which can be considered as a further evolution of the GSP, Martin (1992) suggests a three-level procedure of text analysis, based on genre, register and language. These are rearranged in hierarchical series, linked by realization: choices in genre are realised by those in register and these, in turn, by choices in language itself. As Martin (1985: 251) pointed out, genre “represents at an abstract level the verbal strategies used to accomplish social purposes of many kinds”. These strategies can be thought of in terms of stages through which language users move in order to realize a genre, and it is here that the concept of schematic structures comes in. A schematic structure is the expression of purpose or the goal of the social activity. Texts therefore reflect the generic cultural choices of the society where the texts appear (Martin 1992). In a more recent definition given by Martin, finally genres are seen as “configurations of meaning that are recurrently phased together to enact social practices” (Martin 2002: 269).

### ***2.2.2 The New Rhetoric approach***

Also referred to as (North American) New Rhetoric studies, the American School or simply New Rhetoric, this approach explores the socio-contextual aspects of genre, the action a particular genre aims to accomplish, and how these aspects might change through time (Paltridge 1997). Genre studies in the New Rhetoric focus less on features of the text and more on relations between text and context often by employing ethnographic research or case study methods. Among the scholars representing the New Rhetoric are Bazerman (1994), Freedman and Medway (1994), Bizzell (1992), Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) and, in particular, Miller (1984, 1994).

In her fundamental 1984 essay, ‘Genre as social action’, Miller highlights five main features of genre as social action: 1) Genre refers to a conventional category of discourse based in large scale typification of rhetorical meaningful action; 2) As a meaningful action, genre is interpretable by means of rules which occur at relatively high levels of the hierarchy; 3) Genre is a form at one particular level that is a fusion of lower level forms and characteristic substance; 4) Genre serves as the substance of forms at higher levels; and 5) A genre is a rhetorical means for mediating private intentions and social exigence (Miller 1994:37). Consequently, genre lies in the middle ground between the individual and society and analysing genres, we can explain the social process in which writing by individuals is influenced. This point is particularly relevant for the present study, where

EPAs are examined in conjunction with social and cultural factors which may influence their writing.

Moreover, Miller argues for an open principle of genre classification based on rhetorical practice, rather than a closed one based solely on structure, substance, or aim, as “genres change, evolve and decay” (1994:36) and do not lend themselves to any taxonomy.

Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) share the dynamic view of genre with Miller; they also point out that, although professional genres constitute social structures in professional, institutional, and organisational contexts, every author of a professional genre also has an individual structure as the result of creativity, freedom and individual intention and strategies. Although authors are free to use their own writing style, they have to comply with the constraints imposed by the community for a particular genre. In Berkenkotter and Huckin’s definition:

“Genre are the media through which scholars and scientists communicate with their peers. Genres are intimately linked to a discipline’s methodology, and they package information in ways that conform to a discipline’s norm, values, and ideology. Understanding the genres of written communication in one’s field is, therefore, essential to professional success”. (Berkenkotter/Huckin 1995: 1)

Berkenkotter and Huckin developed a framework for genre study based on five principles. In first place genres are dynamic, in the sense that they develop in response to recurring situations and change over time when the discourse community and its members’ perceptions of the world change as well. Secondly, genres are ‘situated’ in a discourse community: in order to gain the knowledge of a genre, one has to participate in the communicative activities of its relevant professional community. Genre knowledge, “rather than being explicitly taught, is transmitted through enculturation as apprentices become socialized to the ways of speaking in particular disciplinary communities” (Berkenkotter/Huckin, 1995:7). As a third principle, “what constitutes true genre knowledge is not just a knowledge of formal conventions but a knowledge of appropriate topics and relevant details as well” (Berkenkotter/Huckin, 1995:15). Genre knowledge, therefore, involves both form and content. The fourth principle deals with the duality of structure performed by genres: on one hand they identify a formal model, on the other they shape the professional and institutional community to which they belong. Fifth and last principle, called ‘community ownership’, states that genres also carry the values of a discourse community, mediated by norms and conventions.

Some New Rhetoric scholars (Bazerman 1994) have made use of ethnographic methods such as interviews and observations in order to investigate genres. Among them is Yates and Orlikowski's (1992) study, which provide a diachronic analysis of the memo and the business report. Yates and Orlikowski (1992) suggest that genres evolve over time in mutual interaction with institutional practices and individual actions. Moreover, "genres emerge within a particular socio-historical context and are reinforced over time as a situation recurs [...] these genres, in turn, shape the future response to a similar situation." (Yates/Orlikowski 1992: 305).

Since genres are seen as social action, ethnographic methods enable researchers to retrieve information regarding socio-contextual aspects such as the attitude of community members towards specific genres (Hyon 1996: 698).

In general terms, New Rhetoric scholars mainly explore genres in terms of social functions and their contexts rather than text structure or form, thus describing genres, their roles and context (Hyon 1996: 703).

### ***2.2.3 The ESP approach***

Referred to as the British ESP School (Bhatia 2004: 10), it is represented by the works of Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993), which has been already outlined in section 2.1.2. Genre analysis studies in this tradition have typically focused on patterns of rhetorical organization and genre-specific language features. In the ESP perspective, discourse structures are usually described in terms of moves, and an important role is given to communicative purpose. The tradition of ESP research describes the language and discourse features of specific genres, applying the information acquired in ESP teaching materials.

According to Bhatia (1997), genres serve the goals of specific discourse communities, tending to establish relatively stable structural forms and even constraining the use of lexicogrammatical resources in expressing these forms. It is the writer's communicative purpose that determines the formal characteristics, such as grammatical and lexical choices, of a genre text (Dudley-Evans 1994: 219). It is therefore the communicative purpose of a genre that allows it to be differentiated from other genres (*ibid.*). As previously mentioned, Swales (1990: 58) defined genre as "a class of communicative events, the members of which share some set of communicative purposes"; moreover, "these purposes are recognised by the expert members of the parent discourse community, and therefore constitute the rationale for the genre" (1990: 58). The role of communicative purpose as a quick method for assigning genre membership was later revised by

Askehave and Swales (2001), suggesting that purpose should not be a criterion for the immediate identification of genre, but a resulting discovery of the process of analysis itself.

The notion of ‘discourse community’ is linked by Swales (1990: 24-27) to six features: a set of common public goals; established mechanisms of intercommunication; information and feedback through a participatory mechanism; one or more genres to further the community’s aims; specific lexis; membership includes both ‘apprentices’ and experts with suitable degree of relevant expertise.

Working in the direction established by Swales, Bhatia (1993, 2004) combined language analysis with the exploration of the socio-cognitive and cultural factors contributing to genre construction, interpretation, use and exploitation. He also shifted from a predominantly pedagogic perspective towards professional and institutional settings: the real worlds of written discourse. Bhatia’s (2004) concept of genre deviates from established boundaries and limits, and takes into account mixing and embedding of genres. Generic integrity is not static but developing in concordance with a particular generic event. Bhatia’s studies (1993, 2004) bridge the gap between the New Rhetoric and Systemic Functional Linguistics schools of genre studies, on the base of a multidimensional approach for analysis of academic, professional and institutional discourse.

Bhatia (2004:23) summarized some of the common ground of genre studies as follows.

1. Genres are recognizable communicative events, characterized by a set of communicative purposes identified and mutually understood by members of the professional or academic community in which they regularly occur.
2. Genres are highly structured and conventionalised constructs, with constraints on allowable contributions not only in terms of the intentions one would like to give expression to and the shape they often take, but also in terms of the lexico-grammatical resources one can employ to give discoursal values to such formal features.
3. Established members of a particular professional community will have a much greater knowledge and understanding of the use and exploitation of genres than those who are apprentices, new members or outsiders.
4. Although genres are viewed as conventionalised constructs, expert members of the disciplinary and professional communities often exploit generic resources to express not only ‘private’ but also organizational intentions within the constructs of ‘socially recognized communicative purposes’.

5. Genres are reflections of disciplinary and organizational cultures, and in that sense, they focus on social actions embedded within disciplinary, professional and other institutional practices.

6. All disciplinary and professional genres have integrity of their own, which is often identified with reference to a combination of textual, discursive and contextual factors.

Based on the understanding of the three approaches to genre theory, Bhatia (2004) put forward a comprehensive definition of genre:

“Genre essentially refers to language use in a conventionalised communicative setting in order to give expression to a specific set of communicative goals of a disciplinary or social institution, which give rise to stable structural forms by imposing constraints on the use of lexico-grammatical as well as discursal resources”. (Bhatia 2004: 23)

Bhatia’s (2004) multidimensional approach to real world discourse informs the present study in many ways, as it provides a framework for the examination of a genre – in this case EPAs - by addressing textual, socio-cognitive and social factors. Moreover, Bhatia’s model allows different analytical perspectives to be applied at the same time: from textual analysis to ethnographic exploration, to socio-historical research. The genre of EPAs can be approached in terms of reflection of a discursive practice in a specific professional community, but also as genre in action, grounded in the experience of experts members of that community and shaped by their ever-changing goals. In particular, Bhatia (1993, 2004) provides a framework based on a series of steps, which served as a basis for this study, although attempts were made in order to incorporate stimuli from Systemic Functional Linguistics and New Rhetoric genre studies. For instance, in the analytical process, special emphasis was placed on linguistic choices influenced by the economic and social system of the writers, as required by SFL, and on the definition of the values shared by professional communities participating in the genre of EPAs, as typical of NR. To a broader extent, a multi-perspective analysis was carried out, in order to provide a narrowly detailed account of the evolution of EPAs over time.

It has to be noted that a similar synthesis among these approaches is also pursued by genre analysts who focus on the process through which genres are generated and how they change over time (see Garzone et al. 2012). About three decades after the emergence of genre analysis, this perspective represents one of its most interesting developments and is particularly relevant for the

underlying study. As it implies a diachronic approach to genre analysis, we will deal with that more specifically in chapter 4 of this thesis, devoted to modern diachronic linguistics.

### **2.3 Summary**

In this chapter the development of written discourse analysis was outlined, explaining the shift of interest from text linguistic to discourse organisation, to contextualisation of discourse and, eventually, towards a multi-perspective approach to genre. The different approaches to genre were also introduced, placing special emphasis on the ESP approach and Bhatia's (1993, 2004) multi-dimensional model for analyzing genres, as they serve as frameworks for this dissertation.

Genre analysis as introduced by Bhatia (1993) involves working with corpora. The convergence of genre and corpora has proven to be insightful, especially in the field of ESP. The next chapter is therefore dedicated to genre corpus-based studies.

### **3. Theoretical background: corpus studies**

Following McEnery et al. 2006 (4) the term ‘corpus’ in modern linguistics can be defined as “a collection of sampled texts, written or spoken, in machine-readable form which may be annotated with various forms of linguistic information”. Despite the differing opinions, there is an increasing consensus on four main qualities for corpora: 1) they have to be *machine-readable*; 2) they have to include *authentic texts*, which can be 3) *sampled* in order to be 4) *representative* of a particular language or language variety (McEnery et al. 2006: 5).

Advantages of using electronic corpora are, in the first place, the speed of processing data; secondly, the ease of manipulating data accurately and consistently; thirdly, the possibility to avoid human bias in the analysis and, lastly, the possibility to enrich the corpus texts with various metadata (annotation). Given the prominence of computers in corpus linguistics it comes as no surprise that this methodology<sup>1</sup> has been also named *computer corpus linguistics* (CCL), as suggested by Leech 1992: 106.

As the present dissertation is based on a multiple diachronic corpus, which is a further and more complex development of the basic idea of corpus, the history of corpus linguistics methodologies has to be previously outlined. This chapter aims therefore at explaining how corpus linguistics works and at presenting the most relevant issues in the field.

#### **3.1 Research on corpora: origin and issues**

Although the term corpus linguistics appeared only in the early 1980s, research on corpora dates back to the pre-Chomskyan period – 1940s; as McEnery et al. 2006 pointed out, at that time linguists “would have used shoeboxes filled with paper slips rather than computers as a means of data storage”, nonetheless their methodology was already corpus-based, in the sense that it was empirical and based on observed data. In the late 1950s the corpus methodology was severely criticized because of the alleged “skewedness” of corpora (Chomsky 1962): at that time, as a matter of fact, corpora were paper-based and too small to be representative. Afterwards, with new developments in technology and with the aid of more powerful computers, exploiting massive corpora became possible.

The first modern corpus, the Brown Corpus, was built in the early 1960s. It was prepared at Brown University in the United States by W. Nelson Francis and consists of one million words of

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<sup>1</sup> In this study we maintain that corpus linguistics is a methodology with a wide range of applications across many areas of linguistics, although it has been argued that it ‘goes well beyond this methodological role’ (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 1)

American English (see Francis/Kucera 1979). In the late 1970s the Lancaster-Oslo/Bergen Corpus of British English (LOB) appeared, mirroring the Brown with regard to British English (see Johansson, Leech, and Goodluck 1978; Johansson 1986). Since then, corpus methodology has become very popular, especially in the last decades, with a great impact on linguistics and language teaching.

Texts collected in LOB and Brown are divided into the following categories: A. Press: reportage; B. Press: editorials; C. Press: reviews; D. Religion; E. Skills, trades and hobbies; F. Popular lore; G. Belles lettres, biography, and essays; H. Miscellaneous; J. Learned and scientific writing; K. General fiction; L. Mystery and detective fiction; M. Science fiction; N. Adventure and western fiction; P. Romance and love story; R. Humour. However, LOB and Brown consist of text samples, not full texts, and so are not genre-oriented.

At the beginning of the 1990s, FLOB (the Freiburg version of LOB) and Frown (the Freiburg version of Brown), i.e. replicas matching their predecessors closely, both as regards size and composition, were compiled at the University of Freiburg under the supervision of Christian Mair (see Hundt/Sand/Siemund 1998; Hundt/Sand/Skandera 1999). The texts used for these two corpora were published in 1991 and 1992 respectively, approximately thirty years later than those found in LOB and Brown. When the two new corpora were submitted for international distribution, it was thus possible to make computer-based comparative studies of texts published at a thirty-year interval. The British branch of the Brown family is continuing to grow: in late 2007 at Lancaster University began the collection of British English 2006 (BE06), a one million word corpus of mid-2000s written, published British English. Text collection was completed in May 2008 (Baker 2009).

Parallel to the growth of corpus linguistics has been a shift to increasingly larger corpora, such as the British National Corpus (BNC) and the American National Corpus (ANC).

The BNC comprises 100 million words organized in more than 4000 written texts and transcripts of speech in modern British English. It is designed to represent as wide a range of modern British English as possible. The written section (90 per cent) includes, among many other types of text, samples from regional and national newspapers, specialist periodicals and journals for all ages and interests, academic books and unpublished letters and memoranda, as well as school and university essays. The spoken section (10 per cent) includes 863 transcripts of informal conversations collected in all kind of different contexts, from formal business or government meetings to radio shows. The American National Corpus is an American match for the BNC, as it contains at least 100 million words, comparable across genres with the BNC.

In the 1990s the groundbreaking work by John Sinclair marked a milestone in corpus linguistics. Sinclair and his group developed the Cobuild project (an acronym for Collins

Birmingham University International Language Database), also known as the Bank of English. A large corpus of contemporary English (mainly British, but American and Australian data are also included) was gathered from spoken and written sources, and each word in turn was studied for its lexical, grammatical, semantic, stylistic and pragmatic features. The information was entered into a database from which the Cobuild dictionaries and other publications were edited. Teaching materials based on the outcome of the project were also developed (Sinclair 1987).

The main aim of the Cobuild project was to provide a more realistic description of the English language. As far as teaching of English is concerned, Sinclair (1997) suggested to present only real-life examples in the classroom, as invented examples could often be improbable and not mirror actual usage. According to Sinclair (1997: 34), language teachers should also make use of their intuition about language and about how words are combined: “co-selection tends to undermine the notion of word-meaning [...]”; hence, it should be placed at the forefront of attention. Rather than learning and teaching endless lists of vocabulary, space should be allocated for the teaching of multi-word units (Sinclair 1997: 35). Another advice to teachers who wish to extract teaching materials from corpora is to ‘teach by meaning’. A traditional dictionary “cheerfully represents words as often having several discrete meanings, but gives no help whatever as to how in practice the language user distinguishes among them” (Sinclair 1990: 7). Grammar, on the other hand, provides “clear-cut rules”, while the nature of language is “to enjoy great flexibility and innovation” (Sinclair 1990: 6). Relating meaning and form is one possible way to improve the learning process (Sinclair 1997: 35).

The Cobuild project highlighted the fact that more data could be compiled and analysed with the aid of new technology. In the following years, numerous dictionaries such as the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary of Current English (Hornby 1989) and grammar books such as the Collins Cobuild English Grammar (Sinclair 1990) (both based on corpus studies) were published.

A further development in the evolution of English language corpora was the compilation of dynamic, open-ended, modern diachronic corpora, as in the case of unbroken, chronological data flow of newspaper text. The advent of the Web also contributed to the birth of ‘cyber-corpora’, as instances of language use were extracted from there and then processed (Renouf 2007a).

The World Wide Web is seen as an important resource for contemporary corpus linguistics, both as a source of data in itself and as a location of text archives and corpora. In particular, the ‘GRID’ technology – a set of new hardware able to support corpus linguists in storing, processing and sharing data – allows researchers to create, process and share web-based corpora in a cooperative way (Renouf 2007a). Although attractive for many researchers (Kilgarriff/Grefenstette 2003, Fletcher 2004, Smarr/Grow 2002), the World Wide Web has some disadvantages: Lew

(2009) argues that it is ‘noisy’ (i.e. containing typos) and poorly balanced (containing a high prevalence of spam and texts about technology and the internet); as a consequence, according to Lew (2009) the web should not replace existing models of corpus creation and use.

The historical development of English language corpora across the last 25 years is summarized in the following figure:

↓1960s onwards: the one-million word (or less) Small Corpus

- standard
- general and specialised
- sampled
- multi-modal<sup>2</sup>, multi-dimensional<sup>3</sup>

↓ 1980s onwards: the multi-million word Large Corpus

- standard
- general and specialised
- sampled
- multi-modal, multi-dimensional

↓ 1990s onwards: the ‘Modern Diachronic’ Corpus

- dynamic, open-ended, chronological data flow

↓ 1998 onwards: the Web as corpus

- web texts as source of linguistic information

↓ 2005 onwards:

- the Grid pathway to distributed corpora
- consolidation of existing corpus types

Figure 3.1: Stages in English language corpus evolution (Renouf 2007a)

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<sup>2</sup> By multimodal it is here meant a corpus that targets the recording and annotation of different communication modalities such as speech and written texts.

<sup>3</sup> Multi-purpose corpora allow the study of language from different points of view, such as historical variation, multidimensionality, multi-linguality, etc.

The following table (Tab. 3.1) enlists the most important English language general corpora, which served as a source for scholarly research from the 1960s onward.

<b>Corpus</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Brown University Standard Corpus of present-Day American English	BROWN	Written American English	1961	1 million words	Kucera and Francis 1967
Lancaster-Oslo-Bergen Corpus of British English	LOB	Written British English	1961	1 million words	Johansson, Leech and Goodluck 1978
Freiburg-Brown Corpus	FROWN	Written American English	1991	1 million words	Hundt, Sand and Skandera 1999
Freiburg-Lob Corpus	FLOB	Written British English	1991	1 million words	Hundt, Sand and Siemund 1998
British English 2006	BE06	Written British English	2006	1 million words	Baker 2009
Bank of English	COBUILD	British, American and Australian written and spoken data	from 1990 onwards	450 million words	Sinclair 1987
British National Corpus	BNC	Written (90%) and spoken transcripts (10%) British English	1960-1993	100 million words	Burnard and Aston 1998
American National Corpus	ANC	Written (90%) and spoken transcripts (10%) American English	from 1990 onwards	22 million words	Fillmore et al. 1998

Tab. 3.1 – Major British and American general corpora (from 1961 onwards)

### **3.2 Corpus-based vs. corpus-driven approaches**

A distinction among scholars arose in the 1990s between corpus-based and corpus-driven approach.

The corpus-based approach starts with a pre-existing theory which is validated using corpus data, while the corpus-driven approach relies holistically on the text as the sole source of knowledge, in order to avoid any bias due to the analyst's assumptions or expectations. In the corpus-based approach it is also said that corpora are used to 'expound, test or exemplify theories and descriptions that were formulated before large corpora became available to inform language study' (Tognini-Bonelli 2001: 65). The corpus-driven approach, on the other hand, is committed to 'the integrity of data as a whole' (*ibid.*:84) and 'theoretical statements are fully consistent with, and reflect directly, the evidence provided by the corpus' (*ibid.*: 85). Corpus-based linguists are therefore accused by corpus-driven linguists of not being strictly committed to corpus data and to discard inconvenient evidence by means of annotating a corpus. The corpus-driven linguists, in fact, have strong objections to corpus annotation. Baker (2011: 85) summarizes the distinction in the following terms:

"A corpus-based approach generally uses a corpus to investigate predetermined hypotheses or linguistic categories (often as a supplement to other forms of analysis). The corpus-driven approach starts from a 'naïve' position, using methods like frequency lists or keywords to drive the analysis in ways that could not be predicted in advance".

As pointed out by McEnery et al. (2006: 11) the distinction between these two approaches 'is in reality fuzzy'. The methodology applied in this dissertation will therefore combine elements of both, following Sinclair's advice:

"I am advocating that we should trust the text. We should be open to what it may tell us. We should not impose our ideas on it, except perhaps just to get started. We should only apply loose and flexible frameworks until we see what the preliminary results are in order to accommodate the new information that will come from the text. We should expect that we will encounter unusual phenomena; we should accept that a large part of our linguistic behaviour is subliminal, and therefore we may find a lot of surprises. We should search for models that are specifically appropriate to the study of texts and discourse". (Sinclair 1992: 25)

### **3.2 General corpora vs. specialised corpora**

Depending on the aim of the activity of corpus creation, the corpus can be general, providing a good selection of the language for a variety of purposes, or specific, focusing on a particular research goal (Sinclair 1990: 13-14). This distinction is particularly relevant for this study, as the corpus compiled *ad hoc* for this study includes only a specific kind of texts, EPAs, and explore a specific discourse domain, which can be mainly identified in art discourse.

A large general corpus aims to be representative of a whole language; therefore, it usually amounts to several million words, selected from both written and spoken texts, covering general language (GL). On the other hand, specialised corpora can comprise between ten thousand and several hundred thousand words (Bowker/Pearson 2002: 48), covering the language for specific purposes (LSP). It is common practice to use general reference corpora and special purpose corpora together for a comparison, in order to determine how the specialised corpus differs from the general one (Bowker/Pearson 2002: 12).

Specific purpose corpora are used to make observations about a specific research field and turned out to be very useful in ESP studies, as “a sort of natural development in this field” (Gavioli 2005: 56). One of the first ESP studies based on a specialised corpus was that conducted by Barber in 1962, which has been already referred to in chapter 2. Barber’s corpus comprised around 23,000 words, based on three research articles from the fields of astronomy, chemistry and engineering.

Corpora specialized in art discourse are very rare; only recently, in 2012, a relevant resource has been loaded into the online corpus query tool Sketch Engine (Kilgariff et al. 2004): the e-flux corpus, a web corpus of English art news digests, consisting of 9,538 art press releases issued from March 1998 to May 2012 and collected from the website e-flux.com, a powerful New York-based subscriber network for art-world professionals. The e-flux corpus has been the basis of a much debated article by David Levine and Alix Rule on International Art English (IAE) appeared on the online journal Triple Canopy<sup>4</sup>, to be surveyed in chapter 5. Despite the period selection, which limits the exploration of art press releases to a contemporary perspective, the e-flux corpus is a huge resource for contemporary international art discourse, totalling about five million words.

If corpora devoted to art discourse are still in their infancy, major collections representative of media discourse - a further language field related to EPAs - are however available, allowing scholars to go back in the past and widen the analysis to a diachronic perspective. Unfortunately, neither EPAs, nor press releases in general, are comprised in these corpora. Therefore, any

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<sup>4</sup> [http://canopycanopycanopy.com/issues/16/contents/international\\_art\\_english](http://canopycanopycanopy.com/issues/16/contents/international_art_english)

comparison between the specialized corpus collected for this study – the EPA Diacorpus - and a reference general corpus has to be carried out on the basis of a wider common ground, which is, namely, media discourse.

Keeping in mind that “comparison of a specialized corpus with a general reference corpus helps understanding and interpreting specificity (Gavioli 2005: 67)”, the choice of a reference corpus for the present study has been directed to the best known corpora devoted to media discourse, outlined by the following table (Tab. 3.2):

<b>Corpus</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Language</b>	<b>Period</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Types of text</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Rostock Historical Newspaper Corpus	RNC-1	British English	1700-2000	600,000 words	Newspaper articles	Schneider 2000
Zurich English Newspaper Corpus	ZEN	British English	1661-1791	1,6 million words	Newspaper articles	Lehmann et al. 2006
Time Magazine Corpus	TIME	American English	1923-present	100 million words	Journal articles	Davies 2007
Uppsala Press Corpus	UPC	British English	1994	276,000 words	Newspaper articles	Axelsson 1998
Reuters Corpus, Volume 1	RCV1	British English	August 20, 1996 -August 19, 1997	90 million words	News stories	Lewis et al. 2004

Tab. 3.2 - Major British and American corpora specialized in media discourse

The major corpora specialized in media discourse are the Rostock Newspaper Corpus and the ZEN Corpus.

The Rostock Historical Newspaper Corpus (Schneider 2000) is a collection of English newspapers from 1700 to the present in 30-year intervals. An average span of 30 years was chosen because it can be taken to roughly represent one generation, and newspaper language - as well as language in general - is not likely to change much faster than from one generation to another. The corpus is made up of three distinct corpus-lines, namely two popular lines (down- and mid-market

papers) and one quality line (up-market papers). Each corpus-line and period is represented by a 20,000 word sample (de Haan 1992) taken from two newspapers, yielding a total corpus size of 600,000 words.

The ZEN – Zurich English Newspaper Corpus (Lehmann et al. 2006) covers early English newspapers published between 1661 and 1791. Including a wide variety of (mainly) London newspapers, from the early issues of the *London Gazette* up to the period of the first publication of *The Times*, the ZEN Corpus mirrors the extraordinary diversification of newspapers in the 18th century. It consists of 349 complete newspaper issues, selected in 10-year intervals from 1661 onwards, containing 1,6 million words that were keyed in manually. The Zen Corpus covers most of the text-classes available (foreign news, home news, shipping news, crime, births, weddings, death notices, lost and found, proclamations, advertisements). It excludes lists of names, lists of stocks, and poetry. It is a corpus specifically designed for linguists who want to study the history of the English language.

Among corpora specialized in media texts the TIME Magazine Corpus, the Uppsala Press Corpus and the Reuters Corpus are also to be mentioned.

The TIME magazine corpus (Davies 2007) is made up of roughly 100 million words and 275,000 articles taken from the American periodical TIME Magazine (1923 to the present). Freely available on line, it is the largest diachronic corpus of 20th century American English and due to its size allows for accurate analysis of linguistic change across the decades.

The Uppsala Press Corpus (UPC) contains material from English up-market as well as mid-market and down-market newspapers printed in 1994. It consists of about 276.000 words (Axelsson 1998: 226-249).

In 2000 the global news agency Reuters, headquartered in London, made available a large collection of Reuters news stories for use in research and development of natural language processing, information retrieval, and machine learning systems. This corpus, known as the Reuters Corpus, Volume 1, or RCV1, consists of over 800,000 newswire stories that have been manually coded using three category sets, totalling about 90 million words. However, RCV1 as distributed is simply “a collection of newswire stories, not a test collection. It includes known errors in category assignment, provides lists of category descriptions that are not consistent with the categories assigned to articles, and lacks essential documentation on the intended semantics of category assignment” (Lewis et al. 2004: 362).

It is also worth noticing that general corpora have a newspaper component. For instance, the BNC, comprising 100 million words from 1980 to 1993, contains 16 million words from popular

magazines and 11 million from newspapers. Newspaper texts are also included in other existing corpora, such as LOB and Brown and FLOB and Frown.

Two further general corpora can also be of interest for this dissertation, because they can be used to accurately track and study recent changes in the language: the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the Corpus of Historical American English (COHA). Both were created by Mark Davies of Brigham Young University.

COCA (Davies 2008) is made up of 450 million words, from 1990 onwards, equally divided among spoken, fiction, popular magazines, newspapers, and academic texts. It is updated regularly and is freely available online. Although balanced in all its components, COCA provides a very significant media section, with 86 million words from nearly 100 different popular magazines and a good mix between specific domains (news, health, home and gardening, women, financial, religion, sports, etc). A few examples are *Time*, *Men's Health*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Fortune*, *Christian Century*, *Sports Illustrated*, etc. It also contains 82 million words from ten newspapers from across the United States, including: *USA Today*, *New York Times*, *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, etc. In most cases, there is a good mix between different sections of the newspaper, such as local news, opinion, sports, financial, etc.

COHA (Davies 2010) is composed of more than 400 million words of text in more than 100,000 individual texts dating from 1810 to 2009. It embeds the resources of COCA for the period 1990 onwards and in addition provides a series of historical resources from magazines, newspapers, fiction and non-fiction.

From the 1990s many newspapers have online archives which are searchable. British national newspapers, in particular, are also available on CD-ROM. The availability of these materials has allowed research projects such as SiBol 93 and SiBol 05, two corpora named after the universities of Siena and Bologna working on the project. The first contains around 100 million words (about 27 million from the Guardian; 34 million from the Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph; 39 million from the Times and Sunday Times), the second contains about 145 million words (41 million from the Guardian; 37 million from the Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph; 67 million from the Times and Sunday Times). Among recent diachronic studies carried out on SiBol 93 and SiBol 2005 are Partington (2010, 2012), Clark (2010), Duguid (2010) and Marchi (2010).

Given the overview of corpora specialized in media discourse displayed so far, it may be concluded that the TIME magazine corpus, as well as COCA and COHA, could be ideal reference corpora for the present work, as they comprise the time period covered by the underlying study (1950 - 2009), although they are representative only of the language of American media. Moreover, they allow a compared analysis of linguistic change across the decades.

### 3.3 Exploiting corpora

How can corpora be used in language studies? Following McEnery 2006 (80-121), seven are the main areas in linguistics which have used corpus data: 1) lexicographic and lexical studies; 2) grammatical studies, 3) register variation and genre analysis, 4) dialect studies and language varieties, 5) contrastive and translation studies, 6) diachronic studies and language change, 7) language learning and teaching, 8) semantics, 9) pragmatics, 10) sociolinguistics, 11) discourse analysis, 12) stylistics and literary studies and 13) forensic linguistics.

For the present study the most relevant areas of corpus application are those of 1) lexical studies, 2) genre analysis, 6) diachronic studies and language change, and 11) discourse analysis.

Corpora are invaluable resources for lexicographic and lexical studies due to their machine-readable nature, which allows to extract typical examples of the usage of a lexical item from a large body of text in a few seconds. Moreover, corpora provide information on frequency, collocation and keyness of items (Baker 2006), to be gained with the aid of specific computer software (also known as corpus analysis tools) applied to computer corpora, i.e. corpora already saved in electronic form.

Collocational meaning plays a very important role in corpus-based lexical studies. As suggested by Sinclair (2003: 117), “a corpus enables us to see words grouping together to make special meanings that relate not so much to their dictionary meanings as to the reasons why they were chosen together. This kind of meaning is called semantic prosody”. Regarded by Louw (2000: 57) as “a form of meaning which is established through the proximity of a consistent series of collocates”, semantic prosody expresses the speaker/writer attitude and evaluation. The most prosodies are negative, as in the cases of *set in* and *happen* analysed by Sinclair (1987, 1991), while few of them bear an affectively positive meaning. According to Sinclair (1996, 1998) and Stubbs (2001c), semantic prosody is a further level of abstraction of the relationship between lexical unites: collocation (the relationship between a node and individual words), colligation (the relationship between a node and grammatical categories), semantic preference (semantic sets of collocates) and semantic prosody (affective meanings of a given node with its typical collocates).

The idea of semantic prosody as “the spreading of connotational colouring beyond single word boundaries” (Partington 1998: 68) has to be regarded as crucial in the analysis of EPAs, where specific features of the language are intentionally selected and combined with the aim of triggering a positive reaction and drawing curiosity in the readers

The corpus-based approach is also well suited for genre studies. As pointed out in chapter 2, genre analysis as introduced by Swales (1990) and Bhatia (1993, 2004) involves working with corpora. The convergence of genre studies and corpus linguistics has proven to be insightful

especially in reference to typical features of genres, such as the generic structure, but also in reference to lexis.

According to McEnery et al. 2006 (96), “diachronic study is perhaps one of the few areas which can be only investigated using corpus data”, in consideration that modern intuitions cannot fully explain the language used hundred or even tens of years before. Research in this direction can be carried out only by collecting empirical historical data and compiling properly composed diachronic corpora. On this issue will be focused the next chapter of the thesis, specifically devoted to diachronic studies.

Last but not least, corpora (and specialized corpora in particular) can be useful for discourse analysis, as they allow to combine a quantitative and a qualitative approach to textual analysis. This is what is often referred to as corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS). The essential tenets of this framework have been described, among others, by Stubbs (1996, 2001) and Partington (1998, 2004, 2009). This methodology is characterized by “a constant movement back and forth between data in the form of concordances, collocations and clusters on the one hand and, on the other, the contextual information (i.e. the actual texts) retrievable by the software” (Haarman/Lombardo 2009:8).

### **3.4 Summary**

As particularly relevant for the underlying study, in the present chapter corpus linguistics methodologies have been introduced. Starting from a definition of the term corpus itself, as used in modern linguistics, the history of this methodology has been briefly reviewed, explaining why corpus linguists use computers to manipulate and exploit data. Following this is a distinction between general and specialized corpora: with regard to the latter, an overview of corpora specialized in the relevant domains of this study - art discourse and media discourse - has been provided. Finally, the corpus-driven vs. corpus-based debate has been considered.

The following chapter will shift our focus to language change and diachronic studies, which, in a sense, have always been corpus-based (Bauer 2002:109). This field determines its reliance on empirical historical data and requires properly composed diachronic corpora, as the one compiled for this thesis. An overview of this type of language studies will be provided, focusing on relevant issues and methods.

## **4. Theoretical background: diachronic studies**

The present work is based on a diachronic corpus and can be therefore situated among diachronic corpus-based studies; hence a preliminary introduction of modern diachronic linguistics, related issues and methods, has necessarily to be provided in order to complete the overview of the theoretical background underlying this study.

### **4.1 Modern diachronic linguistics**

The idea to create a diachronic corpus was raised in 1982 by Sinclair (Johansson 1982), who first had a vision of language as a changing flow, which the computer would ‘monitor’ across time. Hunston (2002:16) defines it as “a corpus of texts from different periods of time [...] used to trace the development of aspects of a language over time”. Similarly, Baker (2006) points out that a diachronic corpus is “built in order to be representative of a language or language variety over a particular period of time, making it possible for researchers to trace linguistics changes within it”; he also stresses that “discourses are not static, and one way of investigating their development and change is to use a diachronic corpus” (Baker 2006: 29). Yet, as noted by Hilpert and Gries (2009), most corpora consist of texts that vary along the parameter of time and even the BNC contains texts from different decades, so “in the end, what makes a corpus a diachronic corpus is its use for comparisons over time” (Hilpert/Gries 2009: 400).

When addressing diachronic studies two fundamental theoretical distinction have to be previously introduced. The first is with regard to the difference between *historical* and *diachronic* (Renouf 2002). Historical linguists use the term diachronic to describe their study in a collective sense, since as a body of scholars they study the whole realm of text across time, even though in principle each individual investigation could be focused synchronically in the past. To modern diachronic linguists, diachronic is used in contrast to synchronic, while diachronic can also mean ‘across time’ to both historical and modern corpus linguists. This second view is also adopted in the present study.

A second distinction has to be drawn between static or dynamic diachronic corpora. Sample corpora are static, whereas monitor corpora, that are maintained, are dynamic. The study of language change may be therefore carried out across a significant period in two parallel finite corpora, or in an open-ended, unbroken flow of data. In the case of the underlying work, the EPA Diacorpus, collected *ad hoc*, was born as a static one, covering a limited time-span (1950 - 2009),

but could be easily maintained to become a dynamic one, since contemporary EPAs are published on line and are easy to retrieve.

The most important static corpus for the diachronic study of English is the Helsinki corpus, produced by the English Department of the University of Helsinki starting from 1984 and directed by Matti Rissanen and Ossi Ihäläinen (see Kytö/Rissanen 1988; Rissanen/Kytö/Palander-Collin 1993). The corpus contains a diachronic part covering the period from c. 750 to c. 1700 and a dialect part based on transcripts of interviews with speakers of British rural dialects from the 1970's.

Among static diachronic corpora we can also mention the parallel corpora Brown and Frown, LOB and FLOB, which allow to compare texts published at thirty-year interval, the RNC-1 and the ZEN (see chapter 3). Beside them is the chronologically-ordered corpus of text samples of historical English register reaching into the 20th century, known as the ARCHER Corpus (Universities of Arizona, Southern California, Uppsala and Freiburg): it is a multi-genre corpus of British and American English covering the period 1650-1999, first constructed by Douglas Biber and Edward Finegan in the 1990s (see Biber et al. 1994). Eight are the genres of texts comprised by the Archer: drama, fiction, sermons, journal or diaries, medicine, news, science and letters.

Modern diachronic linguists typically compare text across time-frames of ten to thirty years. Rissanen (2000) has referred to the longer time-frame as ‘long diachrony’; Kytö, Rudanko and Smitterberg (2000) have talked of the shorter time-frame in terms of ‘short-term change in diachrony’; while Mair (1997) has dubbed this shorter time-span ‘brachychrony’.

As pointed out by Renouf (2007a) the period extending from 1900 to today, which is also relevant for this study, is characterized by a terminological lacuna: the term ‘Late Modern English’ would normally seem appropriate, but may recall something much earlier to the historical linguist. “In fact, corpus linguists refer to this nameless period as anything from ‘modern’ to ‘present-day’ to ‘current’ to ‘20th century’ and ‘21st century’” (Renouf 2007a: 38). In this study we will address the collected texts, dating from 1950 to 2009, as belonging to 20th century English.

Jones (1989:279) referred to the Late Modern English period as the ‘Cinderella’ of English historical linguistic study. According to Beal et al. (2012), the reason for this neglect is that “scholars could not observe within this period the kind of sweeping structural changes that they were accustomed to studying (Beal et al. 2012: 201)”. Bloomfield and Newmark (1963) argued that any changes in the language that had occurred between the eighteenth and the mid 20th century were “due to matters of style and rhetoric . . . rather than to differences in phonology, grammar or vocabulary”, going on to claim that “historical or diachronic linguistics, as such, is traditionally less concerned with such stylistic and rhetorical changes of fashion than with phonological, grammatical and lexical changes” (1963: 288). The tendency to disregard anything not viewed as structural

continued even in the 1990s: Freeborn (1992: 180) claims that “the linguistic changes that have taken place from the 18th century to the present day are relatively few”.

According to De Smet (2005) a further reason for neglecting the period beyond the 17<sup>th</sup> century is the fact that the most important electronic corpus for the study of the history of English, the Helsinki Corpus, takes its final cut-off point in 1710: a surprising aspect, in view of the easier accessibility of data related to the Late Modern English period, which is a very well-documented one. Nonetheless, once the 21st century dawned, the 19th century was no longer the ‘last’ century, and even the 20th century could be the subject of historical linguistic study (Mair 2006). Publications from the 21st century bear witness to a growing interest in the Late Modern English period as a whole, from the first international conference on Late Modern English organized by Charles Jones in Edinburgh in 2001 onwards (see Beal et al. 2012). Consequently, more recent corpora have begun to fill the gap between Early Modern English and the present day: for instance, the Lampeter Corpus, which covers the transition from Early to Late Modern English (Siemund/Claridge 1997); the fore-mentioned ARCHER Corpus, which covers the entire period from Late Modern to Present-Day English (Biber et al. 1994); the Corpus of Late Modern English Prose, representative of the latter half of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries (Denison 1994); and more could be added to this list.

Renouf (2007a) enumerates several motivations for the development of modern diachronic corpora: the awareness that language is a changing phenomenon; the belief that language change can in principle be observed in corpus data; the curiosity about innovation, variation and change in grammar and lexis. Moreover, special interest may be placed on neologistic assimilation, lexical productivity and creativity, and on the structure of the lexicon at the level of hapax legomena. One may also investigate the power of collocation to identify change in word use, in word sense and in meaning relationships between words. Given the scope of this work, which is to highlight the diachronic evolution of EPAs over time linking linguistic change to social and cultural change, many of these aspects are relevant, if not even all.

## **4.2 Compiling a diachronic corpus**

When compiling a diachronic corpus, the period to be covered is obviously the most relevant aspect – there must be systematic chronological coverage of the period or of the end-points of the period to ensure that there is adequate data on which to base studies on language change.

Rissanen (1992) has described the difficulties involved in the compilation of a diachronic corpus to ensure adequate chronological, regional, socio-linguistic and generic coverage. Careful construction of the corpus is indeed necessary, if reliable comparative data is to be obtained.

The texts contained in the Helsinki Corpus, for instance, are coded according to 25 different parameters: not only the author's age and gender, but also the date of the manuscript, whether it is dialect, whether the text was intended to be private (e.g. a letter), and whether the writer and the addressee had equal social standing. Because of the coding, computer searches can be thus directed at predefined parameters.

Rissanen (1992:187) pointed out that although in theory it is possible to focus only on texts fulfilling particular parameters, e.g. private letters written by middle-aged wives to their husbands between 1500 and 1640, it is not always possible to code all the parameters with accuracy. It turns out that:

"By definition, compiling a corpus means an endless series of compromises. Just as a corpus will never reliably reflect all the language in its varieties and modes of existence, so, too, parameter coding can never hope to give a complete and valid description of the samples". (Rissanen 1992: 188)

Rissanen has reminded compilers of diachronic corpora of the desirability of adequate coverage of genre, geographical region, gender, age, sociolinguistic background, and level of education of the persons who originally spoke or wrote the texts. However, it is often difficult to achieve such coverage.

As to be explained in chapter 6 of the thesis, devoted to materials and corpus design, in the case of the diachronic corpus compiled *ad hoc* for this study it was stipulated to concentrate on written texts belonging to the same genre (EPAs), evenly issued by Anglo-American museums and written by a coherent professional community – museum press officers and museum professionals at large – in a definite time-period, from 1950 to 2009. Moreover, in order to carry out a systematic diachronic study, EPAs were chosen to represent periods at ten-year intervals.

### **4.3 Approaches to diachronic change**

According to Baker (2011), "corpus approaches to diachronic change are still in their infancy (and have often only compared two time periods), and it is only recently, with the

development of multiple sets of comparable reference corpora, that we can start to trace lexical change over time” (2011:66). Similarly, Partington (2012) defines modern diachronic corpus-assisted discourse studies (MD-CADS) as a nascent discipline, characterised by the novelty of methodologies and topics: “It employs large corpora of a parallel structure and content from different moments of contemporary time in order to track changes in modern language usage but also social, cultural and political changes over modern times, as reflected in language” (2012: 51).

Two major approaches to diachronic analysis can be recognized among scholarly linguistic research: the first focuses on lexical variation over time, and therefore on change at the level of vocabulary, while the second takes into account the evolution of genres and aims at identifying change at the level of generic structure. Both approaches will be surveyed in the following subsections.

#### ***4.3.1 Lexical variation***

Particularly relevant for the first approach is how to identify lexical variation, hence methodological issues are crucial.

Baker’s studies (2010, 2011) carried out across multiple corpora are particularly relevant in these terms. Baker (2011) investigated four equal-sized reference corpora of written British English from 1931, 1961, 1991, and 2006, in search of patterns of vocabulary change and stability. He also considered several methods to identify variation over time and categorized words as showing sharp frequency increases, or decreases, or remaining stable. He called the latter “lockwords”, because they are “relatively static in terms of frequency” (Baker 2011: 66) and “appear to be ‘locked’ in place” (*ibid.* 73). Finally, he reported on a number of trends relating to language (specifically British English) and culture change, including a tendency for written language to become less verbose, more informal and personal. In a previous study, Baker (2010) carried out a corpus-based comparison of gendered terms (male and female pronouns, gender-related nouns, and terms of address) across the same four corpora, finding out that while there had been reductions in some gender stereotypes, others were maintained: males, in particular, were referred to more often than females. Both studies show the value of using corpus methods in order to investigate change in the frequency and context of use of specific items of language over time.

As pointed out by Gabrielatos et al. (2012: 153) a relevant feature of diachronic studies is “the time-span they cover, which may range from a few years to centuries” and “may vary simply to suit particular research objectives”. Particularly crucial is also “the number of time points examined

within a given time-span”, related to the notion of ‘granularity’ of the analysis (Davies 2010: 448). Granularity is obtained by dividing the number of sampling points by the time length of the corpus, expressed in a specified reference time unit, such as years or decades. “The higher the resulting figure, the higher the granularity of analysis — and the higher the accuracy and usefulness of the results” (Gabrielatos et al. 2012: 153 ). In the case of the corpus used for the underlying study – the EPA Diacorpus – we have 6 sampling points – one for each decade, from 1950 to 2009 – to be divided by a 59 year span, resulting in a granularity of 0.10. To compare studies in this respect, Leech and Smith (2009) worked on three corpora that were thirty years apart from one another, covering approximately 65 years and resulting in a granularity of about 0.05, while Millar (2009) examined a 84 year time-span (1923–2006) using annual intervals — thus creating 84 sampling points, and a granularity of 1 (i.e. twenty times higher). According to Gabrielatos et al. (2012: 154), “diachronic corpus studies of low granularity run the risk of leaving unrevealed patterns that may be worth further investigation”.

Lexical change can be calculated statistically or identified impressionistically, for example, through the examination of graphical representations. The frequencies of a given form can be observed at different intervals in order to see whether it became more or less common, or whether it remained relatively stable over time. Yet, it is not so easy to distinguish between a real trend and an accidental fluctuation in the data. Hilpert and Gries (2009: 386) claim that “there are insights to be gained from exploratory statistical techniques, which may reveal phenomena that are not observable through mere eyeballing of frequency data”. They refer in particular to bottom-up and data-driven approaches, involving the use of rank-order correlations or more sophisticated cluster analysis. Hilpert and Gries (2009) also point out the lack of agreed upon standards in the interpretation of diachronic variation and the need for analytical tools to be shared by scholars. As more diachronic studies are carried out, there is therefore an urge for effective measures to identify change and stability over time.

The measure adopted in the present study to quantify the strength of lexical variation is the CV (coefficient of variance), as proposed by Paul Baker (2010, 2011), to be extensively explained in chapter 7 of this thesis.

#### ***4.3.2 Structural variation***

As pointed out by Berkenkotter (2008a), genre is a cultural construct used to organize communication in society, hence it is crucial to study its evolutionary dynamics in order to get at a better understanding of genre as such.

In view of this tenet, a fruitful area of diachronic linguistics research is that focused on the rapid diversification and evolutions of textual genres produced by sweeping changes in communicative practices, patterns and technologies: a phenomenon of ‘generification’, to use John Swales’ definition (2004: 4-6), which involves the evolution of existing genres, their diversification into a variety of sub-genres, and the emergence of totally new ones” (Garzone 2012: 21).

Aiming at systematizing the main factors that have contributed to determining the rapid process of genre change, Garzone (2012: 21–40) identifies four change-inducing factors: (1) interdiscursivity, i.e. the appropriation of semiotic resources across different professional genres, practices and cultures (Bhatia 2010), which determines forms of contamination; (2) imposition of conventions in certain professional areas, such as, for instance, the gatekeeping action exerted by international journals on the genre of the scientific research article; (3) broad cultural, ethical and societal changes, which have determined the emergence of new genres, such as, for instance, Social Responsibility Reports; (4) spread of new technologies. The latter factor is perceived by Garzone (2012) as the most powerful in determining change: as a matter of fact, Computer- and Web-Mediated-Communication has revolutionised our basic notions about communication, to the point that while “for many genres now there exists a multimodal ‘double’ resulting from their migration to the web”, many others are “native to the web and have unprecedented peculiarities in terms of mode of discourse” (Garzone 2012: 34).

The Hypermedia Computer-Mediated Environment (HCME: cf. Hoffman/Novak 1996) is characterised by an inherent multimodality, as it gives simultaneous access to the use of a number of technologies, images, sounds, animation, films, which can be combined. Moreover, genres comprised under the label of HCME can be accessed simultaneously by a global audience. According to Garzone (2012) the property of HCME that has had the deepest impact on genre change is hypertextuality, which is the basic characteristic of Web texts. Among its consequences are the fragmentation of text into graphically separated sections and the activation of different reading modes, as the reader can navigate the site and actively construct his/her own reading path (Askehave and Ellerup Nielsen 2004, 2005). Further, more recent web applications involve users in a dynamic participation, as that provided by new web genres such as weblogs and social networks.

Genre analysts interested in the diachronic evolution of genres need therefore to take into account all these new notions and criteria when exploring the pervasive impact that new technologies have had on communication in the contemporary world.

With regard to the present study, the most relevant change-inducing factors are indeed (1) interdiscursivity, as EPAs keep a middle ground among media, art and promotional discourses; (2) conventions, as EPAs are shaped by the relevant professional communities involved in their use, i.e.

art journalists and museum professionals; and (4) spread of new technologies, as EPAs are now published also online and can benefit from their e-dimension in terms of spread. However, multimodality, hypertextuality and interactivity are less involved in the analysis of EPAs carried out in this thesis, since documents were accessed in a ‘frozen’ format, i.e. on paper or PDF, an electronic format which provides a series of pages in a sequence and exactly reproduces the aspect of a printed – and therefore static – document (see Garzone 2012: 34-35).

#### **4.4 Diachronic studies applied to specialized discourse**

Although diachronic studies can increase our understanding of specialized languages, those in the area of languages for specific purposes are still rare, maybe because they require “the kind of multifaceted analysis” (Dossena/Fitzmaurice 2006: 9) which takes into account many different levels, from linguistic investigation to observation of professional practices, socio-cultural features, semantic and pragmatic values.

The present literature survey will take into account diachronic studies related to the relevant domains of the underlying study, and namely media and art discourse.

Modern diachronic studies especially devoted to the latter are hard to be found: among them we could barely mention Paltridge et al. (2012), focused on the macrostructures of doctoral theses in the visual and performing arts, although the relevant discourse domain here is academic rather than art writing. Thus, this study has a point of interest because the conclusion is that innovation in the genre of doctoral theses in the visual arts is mostly associated with breaking the rules of conventional doctoral writing practices and typical move structure, so that a certain degree of creativity seems to characterize even a well consolidated and conventional genre like PhD theses, when artistic subjects are involved.

Diachronic studies in the field of media discourse are relatively more widespread. Nonetheless, the only diachronic linguistic analysis of press releases that I am aware of is Resche (2003), on the evolution of press releases issued by the US Federal Reserve, which is however written in the perspective of English for the economics. Resche (2003) argues for the stability of this genre over time but highlights an increasing urge for transparency from 2000 onward, as a response to a need of disambiguation expressed by journalists and, indirectly, by the lay public, which is however challenged by an overly complex language typical of the genre.

Among scholars involved in modern diachrony applied to media discourse are Hundt and Mair (1999), who, in their tracking of changes in newspaper prose between 1960 and 1990, noted a greater use of contractions, and first- and second-person pronouns, where these oral features were

adopted in an attempt to appeal to a wider reading audience. Partington (2010 ed., 2012) and Duguid (2010) have also been working on British broadsheet newspapers, as collected in the SiBol 1993 and SiBol 2005 corpora. Duguid (2010) has pointed out that the language of newspapers has changed over time in terms of an increasingly more conversational and informal style, along with a notable increase in a particular kind of evaluative and promotional language, as a result of a proportional increase in soft news, supplements and reviews. Duguid (2010) also highlighted an increasing lack of specificity in the language of the news and a shift towards a style of writing which could be described as ‘vague’.

Among studies on English 20th century media discourse are also Bauer (1994) and (Westin) 2002, both focused on newspaper editorials, while Renouf (2007b) has dealt with lexical coinages used by English newspapers journalists between 1989 and 2005.

Comparing the construction of relative clauses between two newspapers, The Times and The Daily Mail, Bauer (1994) noted that in the latter there are many more human antecedents, being the most obvious reason that people were discussed more in The Daily Mail than in The Times. He also argues that English is changing for the better, while “many lay people writing about language change appear to assume that [...] change is decay, is going to the dogs” (Bauer 1994: 172).

Among Westin’s findings (2002) related to the analysis of the editorials of three London quality papers – The Times, The Daily Telegraph and The Guardian – two points stand out: the tendency towards greater stylistic informality and the trend towards increased information density coupled with more precise lexical choice. Also noticeable, but less central is the decrease of narrative elements in the editorials. More particularly, Westin (2002) related the decreasing frequency of vagueness markers, such as private verbs (*think, believe*, etc.) and adverbial amplifiers (*absolutely, enormously*, etc.), to the growth of lexical precision and information density. Besides, the vocabulary used by editorials became more varied and specific, the sentences became shorter and the instances of subordination fewer: a result which Westin (2002) puts in relation to the authors’ increasing striving for reader-friendliness or of their striving for information density.

Within her study of selected neologisms appeared in English broadsheet newspapers, Renouf’s (2007b) focused on the notion of lexical productivity and creativity in journalism: “employed for the purposes of achieving certain stylistic effects”, they can be also used to convey “a sense of authorial learnedness, sophistication, distancing and so on” (ibi. 7-8). She also states that “vogue terms, fore-grounded by real-world events for whatever reasons, will be in the front line for exploitation” (ibi. 8). Also central is the idea that words have a life-cycle consisting of “birth or re-birth”, peaks, upward and downward paths, until they reach a stable level of use (ibi. 23). Further, Renouf (ibi.23) observes that “not all words are equally destined for success”, as their

fortunes may be inhibited by several factors; this is the case, for instance, of terms borrowed metaphorically from scientific domains, foreign or classical terms, and, to a broader extent, ambiguous terms.

Widening the perspective to historical discourse analysis, an useful account of the language of English journalism and its development from the seventeenth century to the present day is offered by Conboy 2010, who focuses especially on the emerging of a “tabloid culture” in the twentieth century, while Jucker 2005 shows how technological innovations led to language change at the discourse level in the past century, with specific regard to the disintegration of the prototypical format of news-reporting – the traditional inverted pyramid – in shorter units (jigsaw-journalism).

As already pointed out for studies on Early Modern English in general, also those on media discourse related to that period are more frequent. Fries (2006), for instance, explored the genre of obituaries in the ZEN corpus (covering early English newspapers published between 1661 and 1791); Brownlees (2006) and Jucker (2009) investigated newspapers, pamphlets and scientific writings in Early Modern Britain. Changes in news form, structure and content occurred through the centuries and still ongoing were also investigated by Facchinetto et al. (2012): Brownlees (in Facchinetto et al. 2012: 5-48) focuses on the first steps of news reporting, between 1620, when pamphlets began to be regularly published, and 1665, when the first England's newspaper, *The Oxford Gazette*, was founded; Fries (ibid. 49-90) covers the following century (1665-1675), which saw an unprecedented rise in news publications in Great Britain; Bös (ibid. 91-144) analysed the period 1760-1960, when social and economic changes, as well as technological innovations contributed to making the news writing landscape more complex, while Facchinetto (ibid. 145-196) focuses on the last fifty years of news reporting, from the 1960s up to the present time, that sees mainstream news reporting challenged by social networks.

The results highlighted by the studies above mentioned, and in particular by Westin (2002) and Renouf (2007b), are worthy of a comparison with those to be provided by the present thesis.

## **4.5 Summary**

In this chapter the notion of modern diachronic linguistics has been introduced, surveying the most relevant corpora that have been compiled so far, allowing scholars to carry out linguistic diachronic studies. Next, two major approaches adopted by scholars engaged in diachronic studies have been briefly outlined: on the one hand, the analysis can focus on change at the level of vocabulary; on the other, a diachronic perspective may be adopted in exploring the historical evolution of genres and therefore change at the level of structure. Eventually, anticipating the topic of the following chapter, which is devoted to the relevant discourse domains of the present study, a survey of diachronic studies devoted to specialized discourse has been provided.

## 5. Relevant domains: media, promotional and art discourse

As previously mentioned in chapter 1, EPAs can be interpreted as a particular type of press releases, or even as a sub-genre within the main category of press releases. It has also been pointed out that press releases show a typical mix of informative and promotional purposes (Jacobs 1999, Catenaccio 2008), which makes them prime examples of what Bhatia (2004: 90) and Fairclough (1992:207) call ‘hybrid genres’, resulted from a process of colonization and invasion of integrity of one genre by another. In view of this complexity, Jacobs (1999a) suggests that the background of any study on press releases should necessarily be open to a broad research area (1999a: 1).

Following the ESP approach to genre and assuming therefore that communicative purpose is a genre determinant, EPAs have to be considered as the result of the combination of different discourse types: on the one hand, media discourse, which is mainly informative, on the other promotional discourse, which is characterized by a persuasive intent. Moreover, for their content specifically related to art in its many aspects, EPAs involve a third domain, art discourse, whose main communicative purpose is descriptive and evaluative.

An attempt to graphically represent the collocation of EPAs among these different, yet overlapping fields, is provided by figure 5.1 below. Each relevant domain – media discourse, promotional discourse and art discourse – will be outlined and dealt in turn in the following sections.

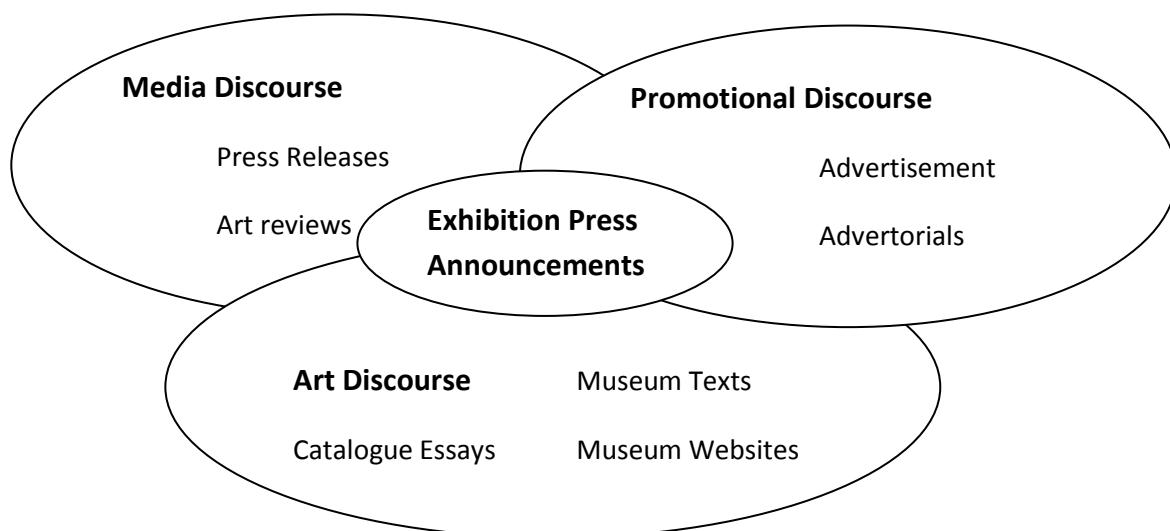


Figure 5.1 – Collocation of EPAs among relevant discourse domains and related genres

## **5.1 Media discourse**

Media (or news) discourse, to be intended in the broadest sense of all statements produced by the media professional community, is one of the most prominent research area in linguistics and in discourse analysis. Several different approaches and frameworks for analyzing news discourse have developed over the years enabling media researchers to follow specific directions. In her study on evaluation in news discourse, Bednarek (2006: 13-14) provides a useful summary of the main research directions emerged so far, which can be used as a means for orientation. Eight major approaches to media language are outlined:

- (a) the critical approach. The importance of the context, the social and historical settings of the text, and the intertextual/ interdiscursive dimension are emphasized. The notions of ideology, power, hierarchy, and gender, together with sociological variables, are all seen as relevant for an interpretation or explanation of text. Gender issues, issues of racism, media discourses, political discourses, organizational discourses, or dimensions of identity research are very prominent (e.g. Hodge 1979, Trew 1979, Fairclough 1988, 1995a, 1995b, Fowler 1991, Talbot 1995, van Dijk 1988a, 1988b, White 1998, Weiss/Wodak 2003, Caldas-Coulthard 2003, Koller 2004, Gabrielatos/Baker 2008, Conboy 2013).
- (b) the narrative/pragmatic/stylistic approach. Concerned with the structure and language of news discourse, it involves pragmatic analyses, discussions of perspective, genre status, style and register (e.g. Crystal/Davy 1969, Verschueren 1985, Carter 1988, Bell 1991, Almeida 1992, Ljung 1997, White 1997, 1998, Jacobs 1999a, Ungerer 2004, Ketteman 2013).
- (c) the corpus-based approach. Studies on media discourse are carried out with the aid of corpora (e.g. Short et al. 1999, Schneider, K. 1999, Schneider, D. 1999, Schneider, K. 2000, Minugh 2000, Ljung 2002, Ni 2003, Biber 2003, Clark 2007).
- (d) the practice-focused approach. It focuses on news-making practices (e.g. Bell 1991, Paganoni 2009, Landert/Jucker 2011).
- (e) the diachronic approach. Studies in this direction deal with the historical evolution of media discourse (see chapter 4 of this thesis for references).
- (f) the socio-linguistic approach. The context and in particular the social background of news discourse are investigated (e.g. Bell 1991, Jucker 1992, Cotter 2010).
- (g) the cognitive approach: analyses of the relations between cognitive processes, conceptual metaphor, social meaning, and discourse (e.g. van Dijk 1988a, 1988b, Schwarz-Friesel/Kromminga 2013).

- (h) the conversationalist approach. The methods of conversation analysis are adapted to research on media discourse (e.g. Clayman 1990, Greatbatch 1998, Clayman/Heritage 2002, Heritage/Clayman 2010, Patrona 2012).

The present study combines many of these approaches: the diachronic and the corpus-based approaches are the most evident, as the analysis is carried out on a historical corpus of EPAs, but also the pragmatic and the socio-linguistic approaches are involved, since the aim of this work is to relate the historical evolution of the genre to its professional, cultural and social context. In particular, changes at the level of lexico-grammar and structure of EPAs are interpreted as a reflection of greater changes at a macro level over the last century: in particular, the advent of new technologies and media, such as the World Wide Web, and the transformation of museums into enterprises.

### **5.1.1 Press releases**

In comparison with the great amount of studies on the language of newspapers, press releases received relatively small attention. Moreover, press releases have become an issue in the domain of linguistics only recently, being a matter of major interest mostly to public relations practitioners. A wide range of books on how to write the perfect press release is available, with best-sellers like Aaronson, Spetner, Ames 1998, Fletcher 2004 or McIntyre and Fife 2008.

With regard to linguistics, press releases analysts focused, on the one hand, on the generic features of press releases (Jacobs 1999a, 1999b; McLaren/Gurâu 2005) and, on the other, on the professional practices surrounding their production (Sleurs, Jacobs, van Waes 2003; Sleurs/Jacobs 2005) and their subsequent use in news reports (Walters/Walters/Starr 1994; Walters/Walters 1992; Lenaerts 2002; Catenaccio 2006; Pander Maat 2007).

Although there is common agreement between scholars on their belonging to media discourse (Bell 1991), the genre status of press releases seems to be under constant negotiation. Studies in this field show three main trends: a first group of researchers (e.g. Frandsen et al., 1997; Jacobs, 1999a) make claims about typicality in press releases and consider them as belonging to a genre *per se*, despite variation in communicative purposes; a second group, drawing on ESP genre theory and considering the notion of communicative purpose as one of the main criteria used to determine genre membership, tend to define press releases as belonging to a hybrid genre, due to

their multiple communicative purposes (Fairclough 1995; White 1997; Catenaccio 2008); a third line of research denies the genre status of press releases and suggests to analyse them at a broader level, as media channels (Lassen 2006).

Bell (1991: 57) mentions press releases in his classification of input sources for news: (1) Interviews, either face to face or by telephone; (2) Public addresses; (3) Press conferences; (4) Written text of spoken addresses; (5) Organizationally produced documents of many kinds: reports, surveys, letters, findings, agendas, minutes, proceedings, research papers, etc; (6) Press releases; (7) Prior stories on a topic, either from own or other media; (8) News agency copy, and, eventually, (9) the journalist's notes from all above inputs, especially the spoken ones. The importance of press releases is also introduced by Bell when he explains a crucial part of news making:

“Many stories ostensibly written by local journalists, and even bylined to them, consist largely of material they have rewritten (often only lightly) from press releases issued by news making organizations. A large proportion of news which appears to be produced by local reporters is primarily the work of press officers working for companies, government departments or other organizations”. (Bell 1991: 17)

Moreover, Bell (1991) points out that “journalists favour written sources which are already prefabricated in an appropriate news style and therefore require the minimum of reworking”, and therefore “a well-written press release about something with news value has a high chance of being picked up and published largely untouched” (Bell 1991: 58). This peculiar aspect was explored in-depth by Jacobs in his influential work “Preformulating the news” (1999a). According to Jacobs (1999a: xi) ‘the only *raison d'être* of the Press Release is to be retold [...] as accurately as possible, preferably even verbatim, in news reporting’. Jacobs (1999a) has also identified three main features of the genre: (a) third person self-reference; (b) use of third-person semiperformatives, and (c) use of self-quotation (or pseudo-quotation). As regards self-reference (a), Jacobs points out that there are hardly any first person pronouns (we, etc). Instead he finds that “self-referencing is almost exclusively realized in the third person, in particular through the use of the organization's proper name” (1999b: 220). According to Jacobs, through third person self-reference writers of press releases switch out of their own perspective and move towards that of the journalists, who are expected to copy the press releases into their own news reporting. Jacobs (e.g. 1999a) also identifies what he calls semi-performatives (b) in press releases such as announce or remark statements, linking them to preformulation: “the explicit semi-performative utterances in extracts from press

releases... can easily be retold verbatim by journalists in their own news reporting" (1999a: 251) and as such they serve a preformulating function. In his examination of self-quotation (c), Jacobs notes that press releases are heavily characterised by instances of what Bell (1991) calls "pseudo-direct speech", where the words "were almost certainly not verbalised by the named source, [ but] written by a press officer and merely approved by the source (sometimes not even that)" (Bell 1991: 60). Self-quotation is claimed to fulfill many of the same functions as third-person self-reference, including preformulation: "it appears as if the writer of the press release is switching out of his or her own perspective and takes that of the journalists, who are expected to retell the press release in their own news reporting" (Jacobs 1999a: 183). Self-quotation also allows PR writers to distance themselves from what is being reported. As Goffman puts it, "[i]nstead of stating a view outright, the individual tends to attribute it to a character who happens to be himself, but one he has been careful to withdraw from in one regard or another" (1974: 551). Thus self-quotation also serves to make press releases look neutral – it "serves to anticipate the typical objectivity requirements of news reporting" (Jacobs 1999a: 195) – and reliable – "quotation marks are traditionally assumed to signal verbatim reporting... as a result, they lend an air of reliability to the report" (Jacobs 1999a: 196).

Scholars who consider press releases as a genre *per se* also underline the issue of a common move-structure. For instance, Frandsen et al. 1997 suggested the following scheme to be applied to press releases in general:

- Genre label
  - Summary of central information
  - Elaboration of central information
  - Contact person/address
- (Frandsen et al. 1997)

According to Frandsen, therefore, the press release is to be seen as a super-ordinate genre with a number of sub-genres.

McLaren and Gurâu (2005) identified as well a typical move-structure for corporate press releases, basing their analysis on a corpus of press releases issued by companies in the UK biotechnology sector, which is illustrated below:

- Announcement
- Elaboration

- Comments (CEO)
  - Contact details
  - Editor's note
- ( McLaren/Gurâu 2005: 16)

So far, we presented the first analytical approach, insisting on the main idea of press releases as a pure, quite monolithic genre. The second approach focuses on the content and the communicative purpose(s) of press releases, interpreted as a mix of informative and promotional, which makes them prime examples of what have been called “hybrid genres” (cfr. Bhatia 2004: 90; Fairclough 1992: 207) – i.e. genres which are the result of the blurring of boundaries between discourses, and which appear to be especially prominent in – though by no means limited to – the domain of contemporary media” (Catenaccio 2008: 11). Lassen (2006) took this position even further, arguing that the press release cannot be considered a genre because it does not have a univocally identifiable communicative purpose: "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" (2006: 506).

The present thesis shares the view of press releases as a peculiar mix of informative and promotional. The topic will be dealt more in-depth in section 5.2, devoted to promotional discourse. However, before moving to the domain of promotional discourse, a further relevant feature worth of investigation in press releases has to briefly outlined in the next sub-section (5.1.2), i.e. the use of narrative.

### ***5.1.2 Narrative in press releases***

According to Bell (1991: 100) “journalists do not write articles. They write stories” (1991: 100). By using the word ‘stories’, Bell introduces a fundamental feature of the language of the news, which involves press releases as well: narrative.

According to Conboy (2013), by the end of nineteenth century there was a shift in news values from a relating of information about the world in terms of facts to a concentration on the story as the basic unit of the news. This was a consequence of the demands of mass readerships and advertisers, urging for more attractive and entertaining contents in the newspapers. Indeed, stories

are most wanted items for media people and in a similar context press releases with a narrative potential are more bound to be used and retold by journalists in their own news reporting, so that narrative is a relevant aspect worth of investigation in this genre too.

As pointed out by Conboy (2103), the different layers which build to form a narrative can be directly applied to the narratives of the news. These layers have been explained, among others, by Toolan (1988) and Bal (1997).

According to Toolan (1988: 1-12) the basic components of a story are events, settings and characters, which could be seen as the answer to the classic journalist's questions, Who? What? How? Why? When? Moreover, "narrative typically is a recounting of things spatiotemporally distant" (1988: 2); it is characterized by a certain degree of constructedness and prefabrication; it seems to have a 'trajectory', with some sort of development and even a resolution, or conclusion; it must have a teller and makes use of a language feature called 'displacement', often referring to things that are removed, in space or time, from the reader.

Similarly, for Bal (1997) a narrative requires a 'fabula', i.e. the material for a story in chronological or logical sequence; then there comes the arrangement of the 'fabula' into an order which will provide the necessary emphasis and context for a proper development of characters and situations, for instance the 'inverted triangle' of the traditional hard news story; finally, further generic choices can be added to the 'fabula', in order to enrich the story with cultural associations and preferences.

Two variants of narrative, reported by Conboy (2013: 143), have been highlighted by Gripsrud (1992) and Langer (1998) as key-components of the news today: (1) the 'melodrama', a narrative based on the differences between good and evil, presented in a variety of intense characters and extreme situations marked in terms of shock, disgrace and morality; (2) the 'other news', where drama is drawn from the lives of ordinary people, offering micro-narrative cases through their own stories of daily survival. In both cases, the link with the readers may be expressed through an emotional language and condensed in brief, effective headlines.

Aspects of narrative combined with emotional language seem particularly worth of examination also in the context of EPAs, since there is already evidence of this combination in the contemporary instances of the genre (Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012).

## **5.2 Promotional discourse**

At the highest level of generalization, Bhatia (2004: 60) defines promotional discourse as “a constellation of several closely related genres with an overlapping communicative purpose of promoting a product or service to a potential customer”. At a first level, Bhatia (2004: 60) identifies some common examples, such as advertisements, promotional letters, book blurbs, job application letters and sales promotion letters, explicitly characterized by a common promotional purpose. At a second level, he further identifies a number of other genres, which do not promote necessarily a product or service, but rather an idea or a particular issue: fundraising letters, travel brochures, grant proposals, public campaigns, book reviews, film reviews, company reports, annual reports, company brochures, advertorials, and, more relevantly for this study, press releases. Although they may not appear to be advertisements *tout court*, these hybrid genres carry as well a strong promotional concern and can be seen as members of larger genre colonies. Bhatia highlights the dynamism of these hybrid genres also in a diachronic view, pointing out that they can change over time, “further develop or even become obsolete because of lack of use” (2004: 62).

Advertising, as promotional activity *par excellence*, is based on product appraisal and on the subtle use of description and evaluation. Keeping in mind, as a general premise, that any move-structure has to be interpreted in a flexible way and that the presence and order of moves and steps may vary according to the different contexts, Bhatia describes the typical rhetorical structure of promotional genres as following:

1. Headlines (for reader attraction)
2. Targeting the market
3. Justifying the product or service
  - by indicating the importance or need of the product or service
  - and/or
  - by establishing a niche
4. Detailing the product or service
  - by identifying the product or service
  - by describing the product or service
  - by indicating the value of the product or service
5. Establishing credentials
6. Celebrity or typical user endorsement
7. Offering incentives

8.Using pressure tactics

9.Soliciting response

(Bhatia 2004: 65)

Bhatia also explains that promotional purposes may be identified in academic and professional genres, as a consequence of the phenomenon of mixing ‘private intentions’ with ‘socially recognized communicative purposes’ (Bhatia 2004: 73): for instance, a promotional input may appear in academic introductions, in terms of positive description and evaluation of books or articles, or even in the attempt of establishing credentials and soliciting response, moves typical of advertisements’ macrostructure. From a diachronic perspective, Bhatia (2004: 76ff) points out that this mixing tendency, although more visible in recent times, was not completely absent from academic and professional discourse some 50 years ago. It has become more visible in the last few decades because of several factors: the increasing use of multimedia, the explosion of information technology, the multi-disciplinary approach to work, the increasing competitiveness in professional environments, and “the overwhelming compulsive nature of promotional and advertising activities” (Bhatia 1995:1).

In Bhatia’s view, promotional genres have great influence on the other genres – academic and professional -, as their power of colonization is particularly strong. This phenomenon was and is still being triggered by new technologies, which encourage a creative use of language and a new interpretation of conventional forms of discourse: “Advertising has turned the process of writing into an art form, where writers constantly compete for attention not only by innovative use of language but also by the creative use of traditional expressions and clichés, which are often shunned by good writers in other forms of discourse” (Bhatia 2004: 84).

Expert members of professional discourse communities do not limit themselves to mix socially accepted communicative purposes from different genres creating hybrid (both mixed and embedded) forms; they may also bend genres in a more conflicting way by appropriating generic resources - lexico-grammatical, rhetorical, discursal - from a specific genre for the construction of another. According to Bhatia this ‘invasion of territorial integrity’ is very common (2004: 87) and has in advertising discourse its predominant instrument. A number of professional genres have been invaded this way, including academic, corporate, political and journalistic genres, as the following figure (5.2) shows:

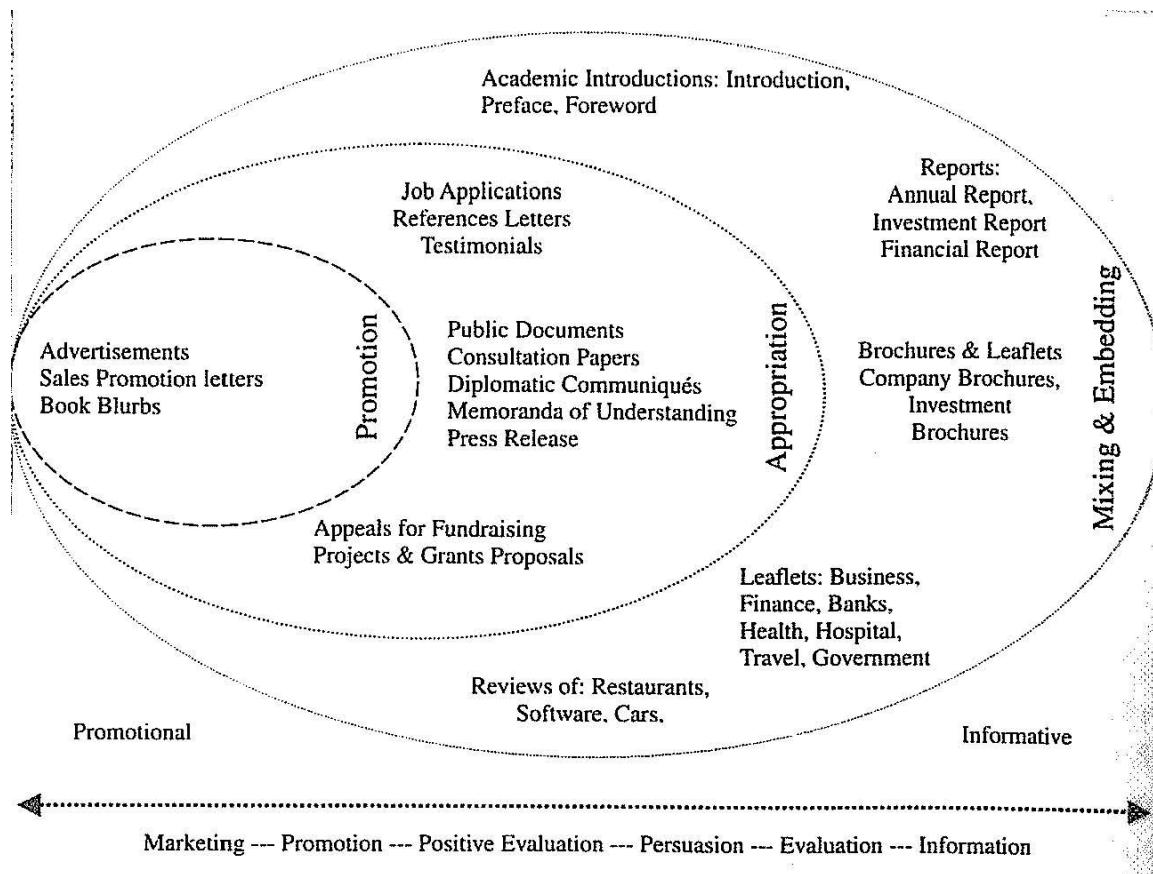


Figure 5.2 – Colonization of academic, professional and other institutionalized genres (Bhatia 2004: 90)

As can be seen in the diagram, the genre of press release, which is particularly relevant for this study, is comprised in the colony of genres invaded by promotional discourse. Its position is between explicitly promotional genres, such as advertisements, and more hybrid genres shaped by partial appropriation of promotional purposes. Although Bhatia (2004: 90) relates press releases to socio-political and diplomatic contexts, rather than to journalistic environment, as “persuasive though not in the sense of marketing”, he also points out that they are “designed to serve informative purposes” but “invariably focus only on positive aspects and incorporate persuasive and sometimes even promotional elements” (Bhatia 2004: 90). From the point of view of professional discourse, the informational function of press releases can be seen in conflict with the promotional function: Jacobs (1999a:307) draws attention in particular to the ‘unpaid publicity’ that press releases seem to convey, keeping a middle ground between advertising and news reporting. As a matter of fact, the mixing of promotional and informative features characterizes press releases since their first origin (Catenaccio 2008: 11). ‘Promotional elements’ do not necessarily harm subsequent news report and may even reinforce the press release itself: as suggested by Pander Maat, “strong positive statements can make the release look more newsworthy, and some journalists may think

that a positive tone attracts readers. ... thus, promotional press releases may well succeed in generating free publicity" (Pander Maat 2007: 63).

Not to be confused with press releases is another promotional genre which has been recently introduced and has to do with media and news environment in general: a hybrid between advertisement and editorial, commonly referred to as 'advertisorial'. Advertisorials are "blocks of paid-for, commercial message, featuring any object or objects that simulates the editorial content of a publication in terms of design/structure, visual/verbal content, and/or context in which it appears" (Cameron/Ju-Pak 2000: 66-67). For their fuzzy nature, blurring between informative and promotional contents, advertisers may create confusion among readers who think that they are part of the publication's editorial content (Cameron et al. 1994). Advertisorials are however accepted because advertisers are convinced that they are more effective than traditional advertisements and, despite their appearance of news, readers can recognize them by their external characteristics.

The textual genre addressed by the present study, EPAs, is heavily characterized by promotional features. Previous investigation on this peculiar type of press release (Lazzeretti 2010, Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012) showed that promotional purpose plays a very significant role in terms of lexico-grammar and structure. EPAs aim at captivating the attention of media people in order to guarantee press coverage of the exhibitions, and, thank to their e-dimension, at attracting online audience and increasing the number of potential visitors. With regard to language, these communicative purposes are pursued through evaluative language identifying *ad hoc* semantic categories: the novelty of the featured events, the quality, as well as the quantity of works on view, the exclusiveness of the occasion, the newsworthiness of the event in general. Moreover, in terms of macro-structure, the analysis of EPAs shows at least three peculiar moves – stating credits, promoting the catalogue, citing collateral events – functional to promotional purposes and absent from common formats already identified for the genre of press release (Frandsen et al. 1997, McLaren/Gurâu 2005).

So far we presented two discourse domains relevant for this study, media discourse and promotional discourse, respectively linked with the informative and promotional purposes. Next we will move to art discourse, which has to be taken into account as well in order to provide a complete picture of EPAs, press releases especially related to art and its manifestations.

### **5.3 Art discourse**

For their content specifically devoted to art exhibitions, EPAs can be put in relation not only to media and promotional discourses, but also to art discourse. In announcing up-coming exhibitions, EPAs indulge in detailed descriptions of the artworks to be exhibited, techniques involved, and exhibiting space design. The featured artists are presented through their biography and the mention of their most important works, so as the artistic movements relevant for the exhibition are explained. Moreover, the professional environment to which EPAs belong is deeply permeated by art discourse: as previously mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, EPAs are “texts in museums” (Ravelli 2006:2), i.e. tools of communication between the institutions and their audiences, and are especially written for art journalists in charge of reviews and criticism.

As a result, EPAs can be considered prime examples of what scholars have been alternatively calling ‘artwriting’ (Carrier 1987), ‘artspeak’ (Atkins 1990, Harris 2003), ‘art talk’ and ‘artworld discourse’ (Irvine 2004-2009).

As is so often the case for concepts that stand for complex phenomena, the notion of art discourse is essentially fuzzy and the plurality of terminology mirrors the difficulty in defining it. Harris (2003) adopted the term ‘artspeak’, previously popularized by the art historian Robert Atkins (Atkins 1990), “not simply to include the buzzwords used by critics in certain sectors of the art world, but to cover the whole range of discourse about works of art and their appreciation (or disparagement)” (Harris 2003: xii). The term goes also beyond what David Carrier called ‘artwriting’, which was restricted to “texts by both art critics and art historians” (Carrier 1987: 141).

Irvine (2004-2009) prefers the term ‘artworld discourse’, which he defines as a “distributed network system of ways of talking” about art, comprising “the various vocabularies, arguments, professional fields, and institutionalized contexts for making statements”. Aim of the multiple discourses employed within the artworld is to describe, talk and argue about art objects and to identify ‘art’ in itself. As Irvine (2004-2009) puts it, artworld discourse is “a function of the artworld’s role in defining the cultural category of art and maintaining the art/non-art binary”. Artworld discourse, to be considered as the totality of discourses used to construct art, involves several varieties highly professionalized and rule-governed: for instance, journalistic art writing follows the rules of journalism and popular media, and excludes theoretical discourses and the terminology of academic theory to maintain the illusion of "art" as being accessible and still transparent to the middle class. Each variety of art discourse is also embedded in institutions that authorize and transmit them: schools, the press and the sectors of the publishing and media industry, museums, galleries and commercial market contexts. Irvine’s network of artworld discourse comprises: a) mainstream press, b) blogs and quoted popular discourse, c) independent weeklies

and websites, d) weekly magazines that include art ‘coverage’, e) art magazines and monthly art press (and their websites), f) advertising in the magazines, press, and websites, g) curatorial discourse in museum publications, catalogues, and exhibition texts, h) gallery publications, catalogs, press releases, j) academic and scholarly books and articles.

The great variety of genres comprised under the label of art discourse is also stressed by Nobili (2003:10): “Il discorso dell’arte [...] è molto ricco e variegato: si parte dai testi critici, cataloghi di musei, riviste d’arte, articoli nei quotidiani, tavole esplicative o didascalie nei musei, per arrivare ai programmi d’arte televisivi, ai CD-ROM sui musei, ai testi registrati e sentiti con gli auricolari nei diversi luoghi artistici, alle conferenze e ai corsi<sup>1</sup>””. Following Béacco (1995), Nobili (2003) also distinguishes between art texts produced for internal circulation and those produced for external circulation, i.e. texts which are respectively creating knowledge *ex novo*, or are disseminating knowledge already established in the art field.

From a linguistic point of view, the study of art discourse has gained only minor interest. According to Harris (2003), linguists have fairly neglected art discourse and the language of visual arts in general. Studies focused mostly on particular arts at particular period (e.g. Pollit/Seaver’s study of the terminology of painting, sculpture and architecture in ancient Greece: Pollit/Seaver 1974) or provided lists of the specialised lexis in the field of the arts (Baxandall 1991 on the language of art criticism; Hausmann 1991 on the use of figurative language in art history), saying little about how language substantiates the assumptions and values of art discourse as a professional or academic use of language.

A major debate within art discourse involves the manipulation of art discourse in order to serve the interests of particular social groups and agendas. Harris (2003:xi) points out that “artspeak has always been propaganda”: its vocabulary cannot be neutral and any discussion of art is based “on socially, politically and educationally ‘loaded’ terms”. In artspeak, “what matters is what we say about it” (2003: 208): a condition opposed to sciencespeak, for instance, where what matters is the thing spoken of. Members of the artspeak community then have “the responsibility of questioning, at every possible opportunity, the terms in which artistic judgements are delivered” by the modern media. As artspeak is open-ended and cannot be put under control, the condition of liberty for its participants is one of “eternal vigilance” (*ibid.*).

A further point of discussion is the alleged difficulty and obscurity of artspeak, especially with regard to art criticism and scholarly writing, such as books and catalogue essays, to the point

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1 “Art discourse [...] is very rich and various: it goes from criticism, museum catalogues, art magazines, newspaper articles, explicative tables and labels in museums, to art broadcasts, museum CD-ROM, audio guides, and lectures (my translation)”.

that even professionals sometimes declare their disregard for over-theorized texts<sup>2</sup>. Harris (2003:205) argues that “artspeak has become an esoteric dialect of journalese (both popular and academic)”, while addressing museum texts, such as labels, brochures and catalogues entries, Ravelli 2006 stresses the frustration of visitors facing “texts which are overly complex”.

Keeping the focus on the issue of obscurity of artspeak, it has to be mentioned a recent essay on the relationship between language, legibility and power in the art world written by Rule and Levine (2012), published in the online American art journal Triple Canopy. Rule and Levine (2012) analyzed a corpus of press releases circulated by e-flux – a powerful New York-based subscriber network for art-world professionals – between 1999 and 2012 in order to describe the language of contemporary art and argued that the official language of art was a special jargon written in a sort of lingua franca, sounding like ‘inexpertly translated French’. They christened it ‘International Art English’, or IAE, and concluded that its purest form was the gallery press release, which – in today's increasingly globalised, internet-widened art world – has a greater audience than ever. Rule and Levine also concluded that the IAE serves interests and is a potent signal of insider status for art-world people; its use is therefore strictly connected with power in the art world. Despite its controversial content – the essay has been discussed in the Guardian newspaper<sup>3</sup> and further accused to be ‘pseudo-academic’<sup>4</sup> – Rule and Levine (2012) have touched an issue of great interest for art discourse: not only its ambiguity, that may slip into propaganda, but also its predictability, which is the result of a series of recursive expressions belonging to aesthetic vocabulary and evaluative patterns. It does not come as a surprise, therefore, that many ‘artist statement generators’ can be found on the web, i.e. applications that help artists write a conventional presentation and automatically generate a text written according to the rules of jargon adopted by art-world professionals, simply by filling out a pre-constructed form<sup>5</sup>.

With regard to the genres of art discourse, studies focused especially on exhibition reviews (Swales 2004b, Radighieri 2005, 2009), museum texts (Ravelli 2006), and museums websites (Bondi 2009). Given that “the only raison d'être of the Press Release is to be retold” (Jacobs 1999a: xi), the analysis of art reviews can be very insightful, as they represent a second phase in the life of

<sup>2</sup> The San Francisco Chronicle’s art critic, Kenneth Baker, declared in an interview: “I seldom read photo criticism, apart from the occasional exhibition catalogue essay (for information) and a few classics: Sontag, Barthes, etc. [...]. Most academic writing I read, or try to read, strikes me as over-theorized”. Similarly, the Italian critic Michele Smargiassi, who works for the newspaper *La Repubblica*, replied that “sometimes the language of art criticism seems to compete with art or poetry, as if it were an object to be critically explained itself. The obscurity of certain texts may also be a ploy for hiding lacking of contents” (‘L’imperialismo della critica’, *Il Giornale dell’arte – The Art Newspaper*. May 2012, 3).

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2013/jan/27/users-guide-international-art-english>

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/artinfo/international-art-english-the-joke-that-forgot-it-was-funny\\_b\\_3397760.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/artinfo/international-art-english-the-joke-that-forgot-it-was-funny_b_3397760.html)

<sup>5</sup> See, for instance, <http://www.artybollocks.com/> and <http://500letters.org/>

EPAs and can determine their value and their effectiveness as a mean of communication. More recently, a new series of studies in the field of art discourse arose, with regard to the genre of doctoral theses in the visual and performing arts, such as Paltridge et al. 2011, Paltridge et al. 2012 and Starfield et al. 2012. They mainly focus on the relation between written and visual components of theses, on their macrostructure and capacity to change over time.

Exhibition presentations published on museums websites are very similar to EPAs and are often derived from them. Bondi (2009) analysed the websites of five London museums, focusing on presentation pages, but also considering pages for virtual tours and room guides. The analysis of the corpus revealed common features in the structure of the exhibition presentations, which is reproduced below:

Move 1 - Identifying the exhibition

- a) title
- b) dates
- c) location
- d) admission
- e) sponsors and partners

Move 2 – Justifying the exhibition

- Providing contextual explanation establishing a niche
- Establishing credentials by indicating importance or need

Move 3 – Introducing the exhibition

- Purpose
- Theme
- Structure

Move 4

- Detailing the aspects of the exhibition (recursive)
- Describing aspect
- Indicating the value of aspect

Move 5 – Establishing value of the exhibition

(Bondi 2009: 119)

The study also highlighted the promotional nature of exhibition web-presentations through the language of evaluation, contributing to the positive image of the artist, the curator and the museum itself (Bondi 2009: 127).

Since the main communicative purpose of art discourse is to describe, interpret and evaluate art works from a subjective perspective, the theme of evaluation plays a major role in the textual genres belonging to this domain. Among studies focused on this aspect is Tucker (2003), who analyzed the art-historical research article, showing that a peculiarity of art-historical discourse seems to be the projection of interpretative evaluations, typically through the use of a mental or verbal process verb followed by the preposition as. This study has been followed by further papers on the language of visual art in English, such as Tucker (2004), which investigates art-historical discourse with the aim of identifying typical strategies used in this field to express evaluation, and on the relation between description and point of view (Tucker 2009). More recently, Tucker (2013) examined the character and function of justificatory arguments in writing on visual arts, i.e. the statements produced by a speaker to support a claim.

Since the visual component is paramount in art discourse, description has to be regarded as a key concept for this domain and plays a significant role also in EPAs, as the following analysis will demonstrate. As pointed out by Baxandall in reference to the description of art works, “a description will tend to represent ...] thought after seeing a picture”(1985:4), i.e. artistic descriptions stand as ‘mediating objects’ between the art work and its explanation (Baxandall 1985: 10).

Description is characterized by ‘reference to phenomena in space’ (Werlich 1976: 47). It can be analyzed in terms of the described *object* (person, object, place), the *features* mentioned (e.g. for a person: physical appearance, attitudes, ways of speaking, etc.), *focus* and *point of view*: from detail to general, or vice versa, according to the writer’s perspective. In descriptive passages – according to Smith (2003: 69-72) – time is static and situations are characterized by verbs of state. Deixis – of person, place and time – obviously plays a major role in descriptions and, as proposed by Bondi (2013) , it can be seen “as an attention-managing device that the writer uses to direct the reader’s attention to new referents” (Bondi 2013: 128). Bondi (2013) also draws attention on the “selective procedures required by descriptions” and “the filter inevitably imposed by the observer on the observed” (7). This process has been also identified as the “speaker’s imprint in descriptive discourse” (Merlini Barbaresi 2009), which is also linked to the notion of subjectivity in language. According to Merlini Barbaresi (2009) descriptions are “inherently subjective”, but subjectivity is often “ineffable (unconscious and non-predicated)” and gradable, to the point that, if upgraded, “it

will move into conscious stance-taking, thus turning the descriptive type into the argumentative type” (2009: 36). For this reason, when analyzing description, Bondi (2009b:125) suggests to distinguish between *perspective*, “referring to spatio-temporal conditions of discourse allowing access to knowledge”, and *position*, “referring to emotional and ideological points of view as reflected in evaluations of ‘value’ (Hunston 2000) and references to cultural frameworks” (2013: 9).

As pointed out by Merlini Barbaresi (2009: 20-22), description gives *evidentia*, a visualization of the scene described, and may involve all the senses (touch, hearing, smell, taste). Similarly, according to Reuter (2000: 29) descriptions construct an image that the reader can reconstruct as if recognizing it. The main effect of a description seems to be to make people see objects and scenes, and its relation to an implicit explicative dimension can thus easily be seen (Reuter 1998: 52).

No apparatus suited to the description of texts dealing with the visual arts has been clearly identified by scholars yet, thus every kind of description has its different features, according to the genre containing it (Merlini Barbaresi 2004). It can be therefore useful to analyse description in EPAs in order to highlight some of the specificities of this genre.

#### **5.4 Summary**

Throughout this chapter we stressed that the genre of EPAs can be situated within the large boundaries of media, art and promotional discourse. Each discursive domain was briefly sketched, placing special attention on the most relevant theoretical issues, previous scholarly research and mostly discussed topics. This chapter of the thesis aimed at providing a backdrop for the genre of EPAs. Next, in the following chapters 6 and 7, the design of the corpus and methods applied in the analysis will be described.

## 6. Materials

As none of the existing diachronic corpora was suitable for the purposes of the present research, a new corpus was compiled, the EPA Diacorpus. It is a multiple diachronic corpus, made up of 300 thousand words (tokens). It includes 378 EPAs, half (187) issued by American museums and half (191) by British museums, dating from 1950 to 2009, as summarized by the following table (6.1):

EPA Diacorpus	
<b>Corpus size</b>	299,138 words
<b>Number of texts</b>	378 (187 US, 191 UK)
<b>Full texts</b>	Full texts
<b>Medium</b>	Written (press releases)
<b>Subject</b>	Exhibition press announcements
<b>Authorship</b>	Multiple professional writers
<b>Language</b>	Texts written in English by native speakers
<b>Publication date</b>	March 1950 – December 2009

Tab.6.1 – Main features of the EPA Diacorpus

A corpus of this size may be small compared to the general English multi-million-word corpora available today, but for the purposes of the present study, it was assumed to be balanced and representative.

EPAs were randomly and evenly selected across decades, with no particular criteria beside their status of exhibition press announcements, e.g. press releases announcing an up-coming art show. All other press releases issued by museums, such as ordinary news, announcements of artist talks, presentations of films or books, accomplishments, awards, new appointments, philanthropic events, etc, were dismissed. It is to be noted, however, that EPAs represent the largest part of the documents usually produced by museum press offices.

The number of writers involved in the composition of EPAs is not easy to quantify. Although most of the EPAs collected in the corpus are signed by a press officer – an acknowledged professional specialized in museum public relations – EPAs are often the result of the work of a composite team of experts. A first draft, for instance, may be traced back to a text written by the curator of an exhibition, who first conceived a project; the EPA also has to be verified by members

of the managerial staff – i.e. the director of the museum, the board of directors, etc... –, while other useful comments and suggestions may come from co-workers, before the final draft is released. Therefore, the EPA Diacorpus represents multiple writers.

A further explanation has to be provided with regard to the choice of analyzing a corpus of texts only written in English. Assuming that selecting EPAs originally written in English can avoid problems connected with the translation into a second language, it has to be considered that in our time the art-world is globalised (see Mosquera 2010). Art-world professionals are now engaged at an international level and English is their first working language. Brochures, leaflets, catalogues, websites and press materials have necessarily to be provided in English in order to reach the largest audience possible and even institutions outside the English-speaking area translate into English their promotional tools.

Further, the EPA Diacorpus is a DIY – ‘do-it-yourself’ – corpus (McEnery et al. 2006: 71), which is built among the following methodological principles, with respect to both the museums choice and the period selection for inclusion. The decision whether to create a hybrid corpus, including both British and American EPAs, or a more homogeneous corpus, comprised of only American (or only British) EPAs, was also crucial.

With regard to the first question, large, high-profile museums were preferred, because they could guarantee a significant coverage of EPAs across the twentieth century and their accessibility for research. Three British and five American institutions were identified: the London National Gallery, the London Victoria&Albert Museum, the London Royal Academy of Arts, the New York Museum of Modern Art, the New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Mususeum, the Los Angeles J. Paul Getty Museum, the New York Frick Collection and the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art. The selection was also influenced by the format of the data, which was available in electronic form only in a minor part. Museums began to digitalize press releases at the end of the 1990s or even later. The New York Museum of Modern Art<sup>1</sup> and the Los Angeles J. Paul Getty Museum<sup>2</sup> provide a significant exception, allowing website visitors to search within their digitalized historical archives updated respectively from 1929 and from 1954 onwards. The New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum<sup>3</sup> also offers an overview of historical press releases dating from 1952 onwards on its website, but the work is still in progress and at the moment only a small number of documents has been digitalized. Furthermore, British museums retain historical EPAs only on paper format and documents have to be consulted in loco. As a result, most British documents of the EPA Diacorpus, especially the earlier, were found directly at museums archives; they were

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press\\_archives](http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press_archives)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.getty.edu/research>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.guggenheim.org/new-york/collections/library-and-archives/archive-collections/A0035/>

photographed, OCR scanned and transformed into \*.txt format (see, for instance, the example reported in figure 6.1 at the end of this chapter). A further amount of EPAs, already available in digital form, was downloaded from websites. In particular, earlier British EPAs, dating from 1950 to 1999, were found at the London National Gallery Library, the London Royal Academy of Arts Library and the London Victoria and Albert Museum Archives. Some US institutions also cooperated in a significant way sending paper or digital copies of historical EPAs from their archives (The New York Frick Collection and The Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art). Sometimes the quality of the original images was too low to permit satisfactory OCR scanning and texts were keyed in manually. The advantage of manual digitization, “the final, and usually last resort of corpus builder” (Baker 2006:35), is nonetheless that it does give the chance to become acquainted with the text and aware of the types of research questions that could prove worthy of investigation (Brownlees 2012: 15).

The sources of the EPA Diacorpus, the number of EPAs retrieved for each institution and the original format of documents are summarized in the table below (Tab. 6.2):

<b>Country</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>EPAs</b>	<b>Original format</b>
UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	61	15% digital; 85% on paper
UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	58	35% digital; 65% on paper
UK	London	National Gallery	72	15% digital; 85% on paper
US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	35	100% digital
US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	74	100% digital
US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	46	100% digital
US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	17	100% digital
US	New York	The Frick Collection	15	100% on paper
		TOT.	378	

Tab.6.2 – EPA Diacorpus: sources, number, and original format of EPAs

With regard to the second question, i.e. the period to cover for the present diachronic study, six decades were selected, from the start of regular publication of EPAs in 1950 to 2009. Earlier examples may also be identified<sup>4</sup>, but their distribution was not homogeneous across decades,

<sup>4</sup> The first press release issued by a museum which was found available dates back to 1929 and belongs to the New York Museum of Modern Art. It announces the opening of the museum and the start of its activities: “The belief that New York needs a Museum of Modern Art scarcely requires apology. All over the world the rising tide of interest in the modern movement has found expression not only in private collections but also in the formation of great public

especially during World War II, when most museums interrupted their activities. Moreover, some highly representative museums, such as the New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum and the Los Angeles J. Paul Getty Museum, were only founded in the 1950s.

As for the third question – whether to create a corpus made up only of British EPAs, or only of American EPAs, or a hybrid one, the last option was decided upon. This decision was taken in view of the fact that American and British EPAs share much similarity and can studied together. According to McLean (2012) the development of museum public relations – and therefore EPAs – started in the US after World War II and subsequently spread in Western Europe. It can therefore be assumed that American EPAs inspired the British ones. British and American EPAs have been evenly distributed in the EPA Diacorpus and together they can give a representative linguistic picture of the genre and of the period they cover.

Nevertheless, the EPA Diacorpus is divided into two main components, US EPAs and UK EPAs, to be analysed separately and together. Each component is further divided into six sub-corpora, one for each decade, which evenly comprises both English and American EPAs, as shown in the table below (Tab. 6.3).

	<b>US</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>TOT</b>
1950	30	30	60
1960	30	32	62
1970	33	33	66
1980	30	31	61
1990	31	32	63
2000	33	33	66
	187	191	378

Tab.6.3 - EPA Diacorpus: number of EPAs across decades and countries

So far a general outline of the EPA Diacorpus in its main components has been provided. It has to be noted that the corpus is not marked up; nonetheless, it allows an in-depth diachronic analysis of the genre of EPAs in qualitative and quantitative terms. Moreover, the corpus could be implemented in the future as an “open-ended” research source (Rissanen 1989:17). As Baker says (2006: 42) it is always “possible to go back to the building stage at a later point to carry out new forms of

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galleries for the specific purpose of exhibiting permanent as well as temporary collections of modern art. That New York has no such gallery is an extraordinary anachronism.”. (Publicity for organization of Museum, August 1929, MoMA press archives. Accessed at [http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press\\_archives](http://www.moma.org/learn/resources/press_archives)).

annotation". In the next chapter (7) the methods selected for the analysis will be presented and a detailed account of the procedures adopted in this study will be provided.

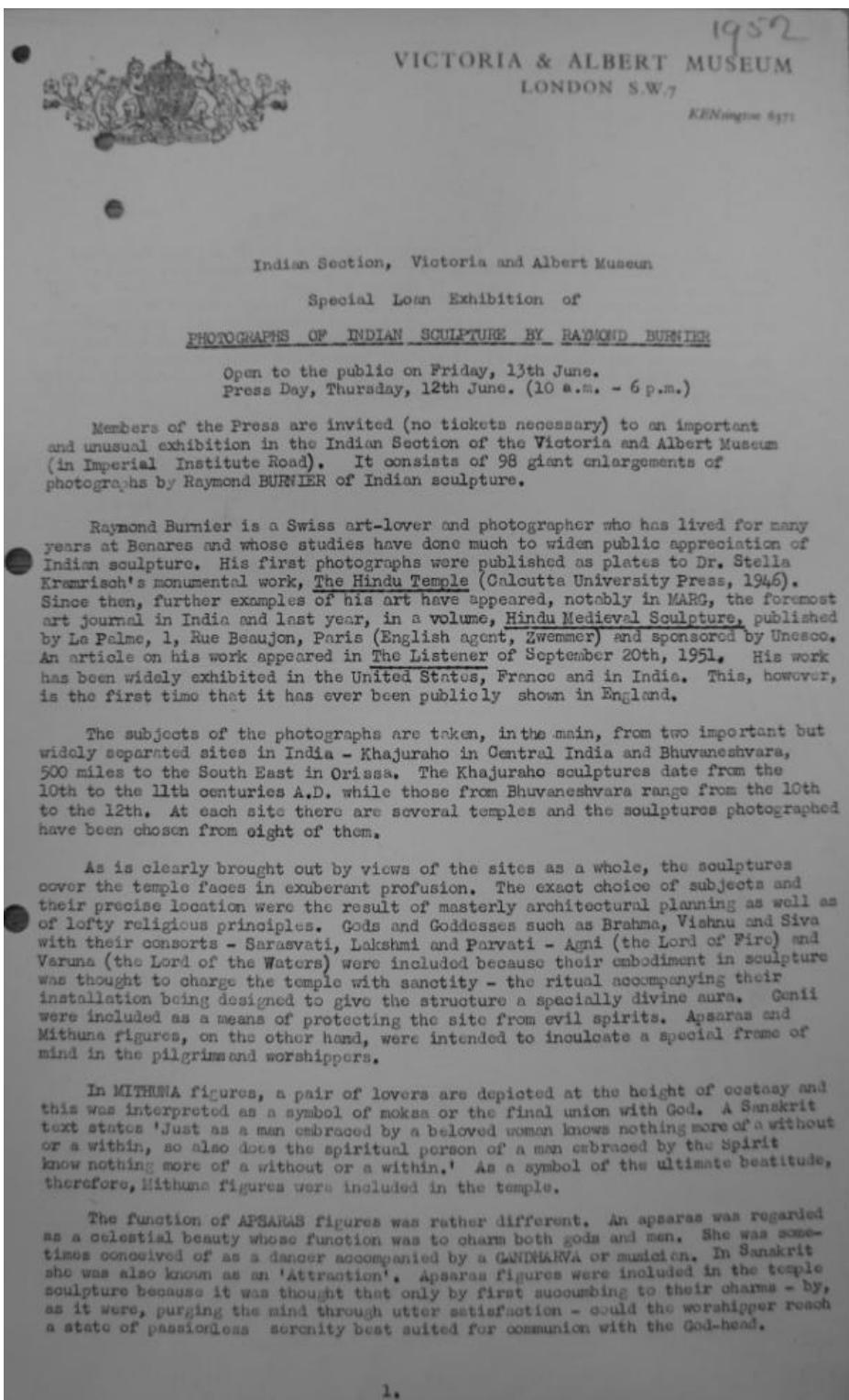


Figure 6.1 – Front page of an EPA issued by the Victoria & Albert Museum in 1952

## **7. Methods**

The present study follows the principles of corpus-assisted discourse studies (CADS), as carried out, among others, by Stubbs (1996, 2001), Partington (1998, 2004, 2009) and Baker (2006). The analysis therefore combines a quantitative or statistical approach with a qualitative and analytical one.

A corpus-driven approach has been initially adopted (Tognini-Bonelli 2001), starting from a naïve position and allowing the data to drive the research, instead of beginning with pre-fabricated hypotheses.

The data processing consisted of different stages, ranging from computer-based to manual analysis of the texts.

In order to become acquainted with the data and aware of the types of research questions that could prove worthy of investigation, a preliminary analysis was carried out. In the first place, in order to gain a general overview of the corpus, the vocabulary size of the EPA Diacorpus and its sub-corpora was derived. Type/token ratio (TTR) was calculated, as well as standardized type/token ratio (STTR) and mean sentence length. Secondly, a pilot study was tested on a sample of 80 EPAs drawn from the wider corpus.

In view of the findings of the preliminary analysis, it was stipulated to concentrate the exploration of the EPA Diacorpus on two main linguistic aspects: diachronic lexical variation and diachronic structural variation, to be carried out, respectively, in chapter 8 and 9 of this thesis.

With regard to the organization of this chapter, in the following section (7.1) the results of the preliminary analysis are reported. More specifically, an overview of general statistics concerning the EPA Diacorpus is provided in sub-section 7.1.1, along with a brief interpretation of them, while an account of the procedures followed for the pilot study and related results are provided in sub-section 7.1.2. Section 7.3 describes the methods applied to identify lexical items worth of interest in terms of diachronic lexical variation within the corpus and the subsequent procedures used to analyse them. Eventually, the methodologies taken into account to detect the diachronic structural development of EPAs are described in section 7.4.

## 7.1 Preliminary analysis

### 7.1.1 EPA Diacorpus: general statistics

Information regarding vocabulary size, as well as the distribution of words, is very important when exploring corpora. The vocabulary size of EPA Diacorpus and its sections was derived using a program suite largely acknowledged in linguistics, *WordSmith Tools 5* (Scott 2007).

A first bunch of statistics extracted from the EPA Diacorpus is provided by the following table (tab.7.1). The columns respectively report: the number of EPAs, the number of tokens, the number of word types, TTR values, STTR values, and mean sentence length expressed in number of words. Horizontally reading, values are distinguished according to the provenance of EPAs – US and UK – and periods – 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 –.

EPA Diacorpus - General Statistics						
	Number of EPAs	Word Tokens	Word Types	TTR	STTR	Mean sentence lenght
US EPAs	187	180.375	15.295	8,92	44,41	19,88
UK EPAs	191	118.763	11.492	10,26	43,41	23,08
Overall	378	299.138	20.384	7,19	44,18	21,04
	Number of EPAs	Word Tokens	Word Types	TTR	STTR	Mean sentence lenght
1950	60	41.191	6.143	15,44	42,35	19,33
1960	62	43.799	6.724	15,97	43,72	19,4
1970	66	36.400	5.516	15,97	41,5	19,97
1980	61	39.104	6.219	16,92	44,3	21,54
1990	63	54.856	7.752	15,16	44,54	21,96
2000	66	83.960	10.074	12,70	44,8	22,77

Tab. 7.1 - EPA Diacorpus: general statistics (1)

As shown by table 7.1, the EPA Diacorpus amounts to 299,138 tokens and 20,384 word types. Tokens simply denote all the running words of a spoken or written text and if a specific word form occurs more often, these occurrences are counted as well. Conversely, a word type is a single word form; when counting types, therefore, multiple occurrences are not taken into consideration.

In order to gain more information about the vocabulary variation, the ratio of different word types to tokens, also called type/token ratio (TTR), has also been calculated. A high TTR indicates a large amount of lexical variation, while a low TTR indicates a limited lexical variation. It has to be

noted that larger corpora give lower values for TTR; therefore, it is better to consider the standardised type/token ratio (STTR), “calculated for the first 1,000 running words, then calculated afresh for the next 1,000, and so on to the end of your text or corpus” (Scott 2007). The overall STTR value of the EPA Diacorpus is 44.18. This indicates that there are at least 44 word types in every 1000 words of the EPA Diacorpus. In order to provide a term of comparison, we can recall, for instance, that the STTR in the FLOB corpus of British English, which contains a range of written texts from different genres, is 45.53. This result suggests that the EPA Diacorpus comprises a significant variety of words, not far from that of FLOB.

Eventually, the mean sentence length of the corpus was calculated, which is 21.04. This value is based on a count that identifies sentences as a “full-stop, question-mark or exclamation-mark [...] immediately followed by one or more word separators and then a capital letter in the current language, a number or a currency symbol “ (Scott 2007).

Considering the EPA Diacorpus in its whole extension, table 7.1 highlights a difference in terms of length between American and British EPAs, covering respectively 60% (180,375 tokens) and 40% (118,763 tokens) of the overall tokens, despite texts are almost equally distributed across both areas (187 American and 191 British EPAs). But while American EPA writers are wordier, their British colleagues seem to employ longer sentences in comparison (+3.2 words). With regard to the lexical variety, expressed by STTR, both components of the corpora show relevant values (44.41 and 43.41 respectively for American and British EPAs).

From a diachronic perspective, EPAs have become not only longer but also more syntactically developed and lexically richer over time: their length has more than doubled, from about 40 thousand tokens in the 1950s to more than 80 thousand tokens in the 2000s. Also the number of words used in each sentence, which went from 19.33 in the 1950s to 22.77 in the 2000s (+ 3.44), and the lexical variety, which went from 42.35 to 44.8 (+2.45), have increased.

Exploring the decades, at least two periods seem to be particularly relevant in terms of change and worth of further investigation: between the 1960s and the 1970s, when the value of STTR shrinks down, quiet unexpectedly, from 43.72 to 41.5, and between the 1970s and the 1980s, when, on the contrary, a rapid growth is evidenced, from 41.5 and 44.3.

Let us now consider American and British EPAs separately. The following table (tab. 7.2) provides a further statistical focus on these two main components of the EPA Diacorpus. The first half of the table mirrors the American section, while the second half is reflective of the British. Once again, the columns report: the number of EPAs, the number of tokens, the number of word types, TTR values, STTR values, and mean sentence length expressed in number of words.

Horizontally reading, values are distinguished according to the provenance of EPAs – US and UK – and periods – 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000 – .

EPA Diacorpus - US EPAs						
	Number of EPAs	Word Tokens	Word Types	TTR	STTR	Mean sentence lenght
US 1950	30	25.058	4.217	17,50	42,37	18,24
US 1960	30	24.871	4.605	19,32	44,01	18,63
US 1970	33	21.893	4.005	19,26	41,5	18,38
US 1980	30	23.355	4.395	20,03	43,4	20,02
US 1990	31	32.855	5.748	18,68	45,28	20,44
US 2000	33	52.515	7.773	15,49	45,18	21,91
EPA Diacorpus - UK EPAs						
	Number of EPAs	Word Tokens	Word Types	TTR	STTR	Mean sentence lenght
UK 1950	30	16.133	3.374	21,50	42,25	21,28
UK 1960	32	18.928	3.704	20,26	42,73	20,5
UK 1970	33	15.042	2.923	20,53		20,66
UK 1980	31	15.749	3.385	22,84	46,1	24,27
UK 1990	32	22.001	3.953	19,43	42,43	24,74
UK 2000	33	31.468	4.931	16,91	43,61	26,44

Tab. 7.2 - EPA Diacorpus: general statistics (2)

As shown by tab. 7.2, American EPAs have more than doubled their length over the period, going from 25,058 to 52,515 tokens; they have also become richer in terms of lexis, gaining almost three points of STTR (+2,81), from 42.37 to 45.18. The number of words used in each sentence gradually increased, shifting from 18.24 to 21.92 (+3.68).

The length of British EPAs has fast doubled as well, going from 16,133 to 31,468 tokens, but, while sentences became significantly longer, shifting from 21.28 to 26.44 words (+5.16), the lexis registered only little variation over the entire period, going from 42.25 to 43.61 (+1.36). Unexpectedly, British EPAs reached the highest STTR value of the entire corpus in the 1980s (46.1). To be fully explained, this point would require further steps in the analysis of the corpus.

Although interesting, these results remain at very superficial level. Hence it will be useful to recall them at the end of this study, when conclusions will be drawn (see chapter 10): hopefully, it will be possible to interpret statistical findings in a wider and richer perspective, as that provided by a more refined analysis on vocabulary and generic structure of EPAs, to be carried out in chapters 8 and 9.

### **7.1.2 Pilot study**

A consistent part of the preliminary analysis is represented by a pilot study carried out in order to develop a possible methodology and test its viability.

The pilot study was tested on a sample drawn from the wider corpus. In order to identify the most striking differences in terms of lexical choices and structure, a selection of 40 EPAs belonging to the 1950s and 40 EPAs belonging to the 2000s was selected. The sample was also equally balanced between British and American EPAs.

In this preliminary phase of analysis the sample was explored in terms of frequency, collocation and keyness of items, following Baker's methodology (2006). In the first place, wordlists were generated; the most frequent lexical words and lemmas were then identified and analysed. Once a list of the most frequent terms was available, they were examined more in detail, deriving frequency lists for clusters of words and sorting concordances. The collocates of the most frequent lexical word in the corpus - *exhibition* - were calculated using the -3 to +3 span, because this was most likely to include words which were included in noun phrases containing the search word. A first list was derived using ranked frequencies. As a second step, only lexical words were selected. Thirdly, Mutual Information or MI was selected among the statistical tests available for computing collocational probability. Any score higher than 3 is usually deemed to be indicative of a strong collocation: therefore, only collocates totalling a MI higher than 3 were considered. Finally, the frequencies in the 2000 EPAs wordlist against 1950 EPAs wordlist were compared, in order to determine the most significant keywords, and these were grouped into semantic-functional categories.

A further level of linguistic analysis on the sample involved the generic move structure or macro-structure analysis of the texts, bearing in mind the frameworks developed by Swales (1990, 2004) and Bhatia (1993, 2004).

With regard to the analysis of vocabulary, as could be easily expected, the main focus is on exhibiting art works: ART is the most frequent lemma and *exhibition* is the most frequent lexical word in the entire sample, as shown by the following tables, 7.3 and 7.4:

1950 top 10 lemmas			2000 top 10 lemmas		
Rank	Word	Freq	Rank	Word	Freq
1	ART	267	1	ART	630
2	EXHIBIT	259	2	EXHIBIT	428
3	PAINT	205	3	WORK	369
4	MUSEUM	184	4	MUSEUM	271
5	WORK	173	5	PHOTOGRAPH	233
6	SHOW	157	6	PAINT	191
7	SCULPT	114	7	INCLUDE	150
8	YEAR	101	8	COLLECT	149
9	COLLECT	97	9	CURATE	113
10	PICTURE	95	10	PRESS	112

Tab. 7.3 – Pilot study: top 10 lemmas

1950 top 10 lexical words			2000 top 10 lexical words		
Rank	Word	Freq	Rank	Word	Freq
1	<i>exhibition</i>	194	1	<i>exhibition</i>	363
2	<i>museum</i>	176	2	<i>art</i>	295
3	<i>Art</i>	144	3	<i>museum</i>	249
4	<i>work</i>	94	4	<i>work</i>	162
5	<i>collection</i>	73	5	<i>works</i>	161
6	<i>artists</i>	66	6	<i>artists</i>	107
7	<i>shown</i>	66	7	<i>press</i>	106
8=	<i>picture</i>	63	8	<i>collection</i>	99
8=	<i>painting</i>	63	9	<i>artist</i>	96
10	<i>years</i>	62	10	<i>photographs</i>	95

Tab. 7.4 - Pilot study: top 10 lexical words

These tables give us an idea of what the EPA Diacorpus is about. There are words describing the context of the exhibitions (*art, pictures, paintings, works, photographs, sculpture, collection*), the kind of persons featured (*artists*) and the main recipient of the texts (*press*). So far, results are self-explanatory; thus, the pilot study highlights that the way exhibitions are described significantly varies over time. Findings related to the analysis of collocates of the most frequent lexical word in the corpus - *exhibition* - are illustrated by tables below, 7.5 and 7.6:

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Tab.7.5 – Pilot study: top 40 collocates of *exhibition* in 1950 EPAs

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*comprehensive, retrospective, second, contains, placed, organized, include, present, says, selected, available, younger, international, arranged, open, special, included, talent, sculptors, france, prints, european, part, represented, public, view, important, works, first, american, paintings, year, one-man, press, shown, large, painting, organized, mr, one-man*

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Tab. 7.6 – Pilot study: top 40 collocates of *exhibition* in 2000 EPAs

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*accompanies, accompany, organisation, accompanied, organised, patrons, summer, sponsorship, organized, accompanying, curated, focuses, sponsored, presents, included, designed, group, tour, possible, include, feature, includes, publication, year, made, show, important, first, large, major, part, royal, drawings, admission, view, academy, curator, moma, photography, getty*

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The analysis of the collocates shows the different connotations associated to the word *exhibition* in the 1950s and in the 2000s, marking a shift towards commercial aspects, such as admission, sponsorship, catalogues sale and guided tours.

Using *WordSmith Tools 5* (Scott 2007), it was also possible to compare the frequencies in one wordlist against another in order to determine which words occur statistically more often. This part of the analysis, illustrated by the following table (tab. 7.7), aimed at observing the top 100 keywords, in order to highlight the peculiarity of contemporary EPAs in comparison with those issued in the 1950s.

Rank	Freq	Keyness	Keyword
1	634	89.192	<i>S</i>
2	77	74.613	<i>uk</i>
3	61	59.109	<i>moma</i>
4	60	58.140	<i>pm</i>
5	94	57.178	<i>getty</i>
6	59	57.171	<i>www</i>
7	58	56.202	<i>cremaster</i>
8	153	55.821	<i>guggenheim</i>
9	54	52.326	<i>film</i>
10	68	51.557	<i>fashion</i>
11	52	50.388	<i>org</i>
12	63	47.013	<i>please</i>
13	46	44.574	<i>gursky</i>
14	68	42.652	<i>photography</i>
15	42	40.698	<i>contact</i>
16	50	40.520	<i>images</i>
17	41	39.729	<i>evans</i>
18	47	37.736	<i>admission</i>
19	80	36.445	<i>royal</i>
20	68	35.730	<i>curator</i>
21	62	34.079	<i>v&amp;a</i>
22	43	34.036	<i>paper</i>
23	35	33.915	<i>barney</i>
24	75	32.699	<i>academy</i>
25	33	31.977	<i>tel</i>
26	32	31.008	<i>career</i>
27	31	30.039	<i>cycle</i>
28	67	29.314	<i>information</i>
29	30	29.070	<i>global</i>
30	30	29.070	<i>rosenquist</i>
31	27	26.163	<i>ra</i>
32	27	26.163	<i>video</i>
33	43	25.230	<i>munch</i>

34	33	24.868	<i>walker</i>
35	67	24.600	<i>black</i>
36	25	24.225	<i>image</i>
37	25	24.225	<i>office</i>
38	52	23.293	<i>book</i>
39	24	23.256	<i>bill</i>
40	24	23.256	<i>programs</i>
41	61	22.625	<i>matisse</i>
42	23	22.287	<i>ac</i>
43	23	22.287	<i>curated</i>
44	23	22.287	<i>vam</i>
45	402	21.532	<i>on</i>
46	22	21.318	<i>narrative</i>
47	29	21.247	<i>tickets</i>
48	29	21.247	<i>viola</i>
49	82	21.198	<i>arts</i>
50	64	20.540	<i>contemporary</i>
51	21	20.349	<i>email</i>
52	21	20.349	<i>explore</i>
53	21	20.349	<i>fax</i>
54	21	20.349	<i>islamic</i>
55	21	20.349	<i>sander</i>
56	20	19.380	<i>create</i>
57	20	19.380	<i>royalacademy</i>
58	26	18.554	<i>visit</i>
59	19	18.411	<i>deutsche</i>
60	19	18.411	<i>level</i>
61	19	18.411	<i>publications</i>
62	19	18.411	<i>sisley</i>
63	1683	18.391	<i>and</i>
64	161	17.890	<i>works</i>
65	18	17.442	<i>hammershøi</i>
66	47	17.289	<i>september</i>
67	36	16.534	<i>catalogue</i>

68	17	16.473	<i>essays</i>
69	17	16.473	<i>featured</i>
70	17	16.473	<i>sugimoto</i>
71	17	16.473	<i>wales</i>
72	39	16.206	<i>further</i>
73	106	15.537	<i>press</i>
74	16	15.504	<i>couture</i>
75	16	15.504	<i>explores</i>
76	31	15.488	<i>publication</i>
77	22	15.005	<i>call</i>
78	22	15.005	<i>culture</i>
79	22	15.005	<i>raphael</i>
80	30	14.707	<i>artistic</i>
81	26	14.613	<i>tour</i>
82	15	14.535	<i>arbus</i>
83	15	14.535	<i>company</i>
84	15	14.535	<i>films</i>
85	15	14.535	<i>fully</i>
86	15	14.535	<i>registered</i>
87	15	14.535	<i>senior</i>
88	15	14.535	<i>twilight</i>
89	65	14.486	<i>picasso</i>
90	21	14.127	<i>demand</i>
91	21	14.127	<i>summer</i>
92	45	13.939	<i>free</i>
93	25	13.795	<i>around</i>
94	25	13.795	<i>unique</i>
95	14	13.566	<i>dante</i>
96	14	13.566	<i>focus</i>
97	14	13.566	<i>matthew</i>
98	14	13.566	<i>organised</i>
99	14	13.566	<i>photograph</i>
100	14	13.566	<i>significant</i>

Tab. 7.7 – Pilot study: top 100 keywords of 2000 EPAs v. 1950 EPAs

Six main points derived from the keywords analysis have to be stressed in particular:

(1) 2000 EPAs have a high percentage of abbreviations and acronyms – highlighted in yellow in the table 6 -, such as *www*, *moma*, *org*, *uk*, *v&a*, *ra*, etc. They are part of e-mails and website addresses and typically belong to contemporary documents. They generally appear at the end of the text, when providing contact information.

(2) There are many nouns in 2000 EPAs with high keyness, such as *film*, *fashion*, *photography*, *video* (highlighted in orange). This suggests that while in the 1950s painting, drawing and sculpture were the main forms of art displayed by museums, in the 2000s new media and new topics to be addressed have emerged.

(3) A series of expressions in 2000 EPAs – highlighted in green - can be associated with a move typical of promotional genres, the one identified by Bhatia (1993, 2004) as soliciting response. In the closing part of the last paragraph of EPAs, the writer encourages further contact with media people, using expressions such as *please call*, *contact*, *for information* but also highlighting that publicity images are available in case of need.

(3) A focus on *admission* and *tickets*. These nouns – highlighted in blue - are extremely rare in the 1950 EPAs, where only one occurrence of *admission* and one of *tickets* were found. This can be interpreted as a consequence of the introduction of visitor fees.

(4) Among 2000 EPAs keywords are *curator*, *curated* – highlighted in pink -; curators play a very significant role in the organization of contemporary exhibitions and they are mentioned not only in order to make known their contribute, but also to add further value to exhibition itself in terms of previous research and scientific concept.

(5) Among the top keywords in 2000 EPAs are the nouns *book*, *publication*, *catalogue*, *essays* (highlighted in grey). They are all related to the mention of the catalogue or similar publications to accompany the exhibition: a useful guide for those who need further information on the display but also an item on sale in bookshops. Only four occurrences of *catalogue*, one of *publication* and one of *book*, used in the sense of a volume to accompany the exhibition, were found among 1950 EPAs.

The pilot study involved also a partial analysis of the generic macro-structure drawing from Swales' (1990, 2004) model. Texts in the sample were read in-depth with the aim to identify the moves and relative communicative purposes. In order to establish a hierarchy among moves, the framework of Henry and Roseberry (2001: 95) was followed. This suggests that moves that appear in less than 50% of the texts of a corpus should be regarded as optional moves. Those that appear in 50-90% of the texts can be described as core moves. Obligatory moves are those appearing in 90-100% of the compiled texts. The results of the structure analysis are provided by table 7.8 and 7.9 below.

	Move	Freq %
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	<b>100</b>
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	<b>100</b>
3	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	<b>50</b>

Tab. 7.8 – Pilot study: identified structure of EPAs in the 1950s

	Move	Freq %
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	<b>100</b>
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	<b>100</b>
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	<b>90</b>
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	<b>90</b>
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	<b>90</b>

Tab. 7.9 - Pilot study: identified structure of EPAs in the 2000s

The analysis of structure highlighted that while contemporary EPAs show a consistent scheme, the one provided by earlier texts is unstable. Yet a prototypical structure can be identified also in the 1950s and it comprised of three main moves: a brief announcement of the exhibition, a long explanatory section on the topic, and some pieces of information specific for the press members, soliciting their response, although in a very implicit way. In the 2000s two new moves emerge: one establishing credentials for the exhibition and one providing technical information for visitors. The way of soliciting the response of media is also more explicit.

Despite its limits, the preliminary analysis shows that the genre of EPAs went through relevant changes over the last six decades. Lexical and structural variation seems to be particularly worthy of further investigation. Moreover, in view of these preliminary findings, an in-depth analysis could potentially bring about interesting results not only in terms of linguistic change but also in terms of cultural change specific of the field of museums and art in general.

However, only a wider perspective can shed light on the evolution of EPAs, hence in the following sections (7.2 and 7.3) the analytical methodologies will be extended to the EPA Diacorpus in its entirety. More specifically, section 7.2 describes the methods applied to identify lexical items showing diachronic variation – or absence of variation – within the EPA Diacorpus, so as the procedures used to elicit contextual information on these items and explain their patterns of usage, while in section 7.3 the methods applied to explore the diachronic structural variation of EPAs are outlined.

## **7.2 Analysis of diachronic lexical variation**

As suggested by the preliminary analysis, a type of research question that proves worthy of investigation within the EPA Diacorpus is that concerning lexical variation over time. Baker's considerations on the mutual interaction between lexical and cultural change seem to be particularly fitting for the context of EPAs, which is reflective of the value-system of the professional communities involved, i.e. art journalists and museum professionals:

“Language change, perhaps particularly lexical change, has the potential to tell us much about societal change. Language does not develop in isolation but has a dialectical relationship with culture, both reflecting and spurring on changes in everyday life. New words are developed to refer to new concepts or to re-conceptualize existing ones while older or unfashionable words gradually fall into disuse”. (Baker 2011: 66)

The first level of linguistic analysis, to be carried out in chapter 8 of this study, focused therefore on diachronic lexical variation and, in particular, on the investigation of patterns of vocabulary change and stability over time.

Baker's (2011) method to observe diachronic change across multiple corpora and to distinguish variation over time served as a framework: actually, it made possible to identify a series of relevant lexical items on which the subsequent analysis has been focused (see chapter 8).

Following Baker (2011), it was stipulated that for a word to be of interest in terms of diachronic variation, it would need to occur at least 100 times when its frequencies across all the six decades (1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000) were added together. Three hundred and twenty-six (326) words met this criterion. In view of the size of the corpus, totaling 300 thousand words, the relevant proportion is about 1/3,000, while Baker (2011) worked on a list of words occurring at least 1,000 times over a multiple corpus of 4 million words, with a proportion of 1/4,000.

Using the “detailed consistency analysis” function in *Wordsmith Tool 5* (Scott 2007), it was possible to obtain a single table that gave every instance of each word in all six sub-corpora, along with their frequencies.

After dismissing a number of possible measures to quantify the strength of difference between word frequencies, such as the chi-square test and the Pearson correlation coefficient, Baker’s (2011) took into consideration Hofland and Johansson’s (1982) method. Hofland and Johansson compared word frequencies in the British LOB and American Brown corpora using the following formula:

$$(1) \quad \frac{\text{Freq LOB} - \text{Freq Brown}}{\text{Freq LOB} + \text{Freq Brown}}$$

Baker’s (2011) tried adapting this measure to see if it would be effective on his four corpora:

$$(2) \quad \frac{\text{Freq BLOB} - \text{Freq LOB} - \text{Freq FLOB} - \text{Freq BE06}}{\text{Freq BLOB} + \text{Freq LOB} + \text{Freq FLOB} + \text{Freq BE06}}$$

I followed this suggestion and adapted Hofland and Johansson’s measure to the six sub-corpora of the EPA Diacorpus in this way:

$$(3) \quad \frac{\text{Freq 1950} - \text{Freq 1960} - \text{Freq 1970} - \text{Freq 1980} - \text{Freq 1990} - \text{Freq 2000}}{\text{Freq 1950} + \text{Freq 1960} + \text{Freq 1970} + \text{Freq 1980} + \text{Freq 1990} + \text{Freq 2000}}$$

This gave a score for each word, between 0.07 and -1. The twenty words with the highest score, showing therefore the largest decrease over time, were *mrs*, *mr*, *picture*, *represented*, *man*, *acquired*, *shown*, *here*, *had*, *shows*, *exhibited*, *william*, *painters*, *examples*, *three*, *so*, *paris*,

*wednesday, still, and architecture*. Conversely, the twenty words with the lowest scores, showing the largest increases over time, were *office, career, tel, uk, org, www, admission, tickets, frick, getty, images, photography, visual, catalogue, please, students, contact, events, tour, and v&a*.

However, the adapted formula of Hofland and Johannson does not deal with exceptional data appropriately, as in the case of irregular frequency profiles across the six decades, where a clear increasing or decreasing pattern cannot be detected. Some words do not show a unidirectional pattern, such as, for instance, the noun *architecture*, which has a frequency profile of 29, 6, 7, 15, 40, 17. As a consequence, Baker suggests “an additional safety-guard measure” (2001:72), which is to consider only words that show a continuous increase or decrease across the corpora and to discard from the analysis words that do not show a constant (unidirectional) pattern.

Moreover, as pointed out by Baker (2011), Hofland and Johansson’s method does not reveal which words remain stable over time. Baker suggest therefore the use of the standard deviation (SD) score to identify high and low variation of the frequency of each word: “The standard deviation [...] measures the spread of data from the mean frequency of a word. It produces a single score that indicates how far the data deviate from the mean. [...] Potentially then, words with a high standard deviation would have changed in frequency over time a great deal, whereas those with low standard deviations would be more stable (2011:72)”.

Having calculated standard deviations of the 326 most frequent words in the corpus using the software *Excel* (function STDEV), the frequency list was then sorted in descending order of SD. The SDs of these words ranged from 3.08 to 1,287.50. The twenty words with the largest standard deviations were *exhibition, art, getty, works, museum, guggenheim, new, arts, collection, royal, uk, mr, academy, press, information, curator, admission, artists, work, and frick*, while those with the lowest were *landscape, colour, selected, death, held, release, form, used, selection, seen, department, working, chicago, recent, born, abstract, subject, painter, europe, and forms*.

Although interesting, this data needed to be corrected, since SD measures frequency rather than variation. As suggested by Baker (2011), the correction used was the coefficient of variance (CV), calculated by dividing the standard deviation by the mean and then multiplying by 100. As CV score does not correlate with frequency, it was used to determine which words had strong and weak variation over time. Next, the word list was divided into three equal-sized portions, reflecting high change, medium change, and low change. The top third of the word list, ordered by CV, was considered to have relatively high variation, the bottom third to have relatively low variation, and the middle third to be relatively indistinctive and was not examined any further. The words ranged

in CV from 10.24 to 222.67. The twenty words with highest relative variation were *www*, *org*, *uk*, *events*, *tickets*, *frick*, *getty*, *please*, *v&a*, *tour*, *center*, *paper*, *tel*, *media*, *mrs*, *picture*, *images*, *education*, *mr*, and *curator*. Those with the lowest were *release*, *landscape*, *until*, *national*, *which*, *be*, *department*, *seen*, *form*, *drawings*, *held*, *great*, *known*, *paintings*, *among*, *made*, *may*, *first*, *selected*, and *some*. According to Baker, the latter may be defined as ‘lockwords’ due to the consistency in their frequencies. This new term was invented to describe them: “The term *lock* was chosen because it is related to key (key is the highest collocate of lock in the British National Corpus (using log likelihood)), and furthermore, lock is a good description of these words: they appear to be “locked” in place (2011:73)”. The strongest lockwords in the corpus are *release*, with a frequency profile of 41, 53, 54, 50, 51, 45, and *landscape*, with 25, 27, 21, 23, 28, 29.

While CV score appears as a valuable parameter for identifying words showing a clear pattern of stability, the identification of words showing continuous decline and growth is more difficult. As a matter of fact, some words showing frequency increase or decrease according to the Hofland and Johansson’s adapted measure and having a high CV, do not show a constant (unidirectional) pattern. It is the case, for instance, of the verbal form *exhibited*, which has a profile of 54, 41, 18, 16, 19, 40 occurrences across decades, but, for its technical meaning related to the specificity of the corpus, could be however worth of interest, or of the abstract noun *picture* (96, 84, 16, 1, 15, 12), which, despite its irregular pattern, seems hard to exclude from investigation.

In view of their potential in mirroring cultural change related to museum settings and art in general over time, it seemed preferable not to discard irregular items from the analysis, but to analyze each case *per se*, keeping in mind that relative findings cannot be generalized and hypotheses have to be formulated in a very careful way.

The final results of the calculation process, i.e. the ranking of words showing the largest frequency increase, decrease and stability across decades in the EPA Diacorpus are provided in the following tables (7.10, 7.11 and 7.12). Words are ranked, in the first place, according to their CV score and, secondly, according to Hofland and Johansson score. Proper names were discarded from the lists.

Table 7.10 shows the twenty words of the corpus with the strongest frequency increase across the six time periods: *uk*, *www*, *org*, *events*, *tickets*, *please*, *tour*, *tel*, *media*, *images*, *education*, *curator*, *admission*, *contact*, *career*, *office*, *catalogue*, *students*, *photography* and *visual*.

N	Word	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	CV	Hofland & Johansson
1	<i>uk</i>	0	0	0	2	9	131	425,93	-1,00
2	<i>www</i>	0	0	0	0	6	133	232,49	-1,00
3	<i>org</i>	0	0	0	0	8	134	228,79	-1,00
4	<i>events</i>	3	7	7	5	16	68	141,83	-0,94
5	<i>tickets</i>	1	2	2	12	31	75	141,67	-0,98
6	<i>please</i>	6	2	22	34	55	149	122,36	-0,96
7	<i>tour</i>	3	5	4	8	33	51	115,42	-0,94
8	<i>tel</i>	0	6	11	12	52	70	113,85	-1,00
9	<i>media</i>	7	6	3	9	24	53	112,41	-0,86
10	<i>images</i>	3	11	8	21	77	90	109,28	-0,97
11	<i>education</i>	3	3	2	16	38	38	103,90	-0,94
12	<i>curator</i>	9	15	25	28	65	130	101,13	-0,93
13	<i>admission</i>	2	7	44	33	66	121	96,57	-0,99
14	<i>contact</i>	6	4	23	43	70	84	87,06	-0,95
15	<i>career</i>	0	11	8	27	34	49	85,70	-1,00
16	<i>office</i>	0	5	22	35	49	51	80,50	-1,00
17	<i>catalogue</i>	5	14	30	58	58	84	72,86	-0,96
18	<i>students</i>	3	10	17	23	28	43	68,34	-0,95
19	<i>photography</i>	4	22	32	59	71	80	66,98	-0,97
20	<i>visual</i>	2	16	15	14	22	38	66,39	-0,96

Tab. 7.10 – EPA Diacorpus: words showing the strongest frequency increases

Table 7.11 shows the twenty words with the sharpest decreases: *mrs*, *picture*, *mr*, *architecture*, *here*, *acquired*, *represented*, *man*, *shown*, *exhibited*, *shows*, *had*, *still*, *so*, *since*, *famous*, *examples*, *painters*, *there*, and *country*.

N	Word	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	CV	Hofland & Johansson
1	<i>mrs</i>	74	17	10	11	6	20	110,81	0,07
2	<i>picture</i>	96	84	16	1	15	12	110,67	-0,14
3	<i>mr</i>	147	63	30	13	23	19	103,84	0,00
4	<i>architecture</i>	29	6	7	15	40	17	69,59	-0,49
5	<i>here</i>	31	32	13	13	7	8	64,93	-0,40
6	<i>acquired</i>	32	27	10	9	6	17	62,80	-0,37
7	<i>represented</i>	57	22	23	21	15	25	55,21	-0,30
8	<i>man</i>	50	34	24	13	13	21	54,93	-0,35
9	<i>shown</i>	95	72	32	27	42	36	53,10	-0,38
10	<i>exhibited</i>	54	41	18	16	19	40	50,41	-0,43
11	<i>shows</i>	29	24	15	7	10	15	50,15	-0,42
12	<i>had</i>	73	54	31	23	24	43	47,28	-0,41
13	<i>still</i>	31	11	19	17	10	30	46,12	-0,47
14	<i>so</i>	40	36	21	16	15	22	42,03	-0,47
15	<i>since</i>	47	29	26	24	17	46	38,97	-0,50
16	<i>famous</i>	35	33	16	19	26	13	38,51	-0,51
17	<i>examples</i>	30	16	9	19	21	15	38,36	-0,45
18	<i>painters</i>	38	15	17	26	19	24	36,16	-0,45
19	<i>there</i>	50	51	53	24	30	27	34,46	-0,57
20	<i>country</i>	32	26	25	25	18	11	31,99	-0,53

Tab. 7.11 – EPA Diacorpus: words showing the strongest frequency decreases

Eventually, table 7.12, shows the twenty words with less variation in their frequencies: *release*, *landscape*, *until*, *which*, *be*, *department*, *seen*, *form*, *drawings*, *held*, *great*, *known*, *paintings*, *among*, *made*, *first*, *selected*, *some*, *director* and *are*.

N	Word	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	CV	Hofland & Johansson
1	<i>release</i>	41	53	54	50	51	45	10,24	-0,72
2	<i>landscape</i>	25	27	21	23	28	29	12,09	-0,67
3	<i>until</i>	34	36	29	30	22	35	16,82	-0,63
4	<i>which</i>	224	230	166	162	170	236	17,85	-0,62
5	<i>be</i>	209	294	227	199	202	287	18,25	-0,71
6	<i>department</i>	23	30	32	29	40	37	19,00	-0,76
7	<i>seen</i>	30	31	24	23	27	38	19,05	-0,65
8	<i>form</i>	28	26	16	23	29	29	20,01	-0,63
9	<i>drawings</i>	86	85	59	60	97	67	20,87	-0,62
10	<i>held</i>	22	21	18	28	21	31	20,98	-0,69
11	<i>great</i>	37	30	32	39	45	52	21,02	-0,69
12	<i>known</i>	41	39	26	34	24	38	21,14	-0,59
13	<i>paintings</i>	87	86	105	116	106	151	22,00	-0,73
14	<i>among</i>	40	33	32	30	31	51	22,35	-0,63
15	<i>made</i>	55	60	42	63	65	84	22,36	-0,70
16	<i>first</i>	109	107	75	119	136	150	22,40	-0,69
17	<i>selected</i>	14	26	23	16	23	21	22,41	-0,77
18	<i>some</i>	52	71	50	34	56	54	22,47	-0,67
19	<i>director</i>	40	48	51	39	25	47	22,60	-0,68
20	<i>are</i>	255	217	171	174	207	301	22,62	-0,62

Tab. 7.12 – EPA Diacorpus: words showing less variation in their frequencies

An in-depth analysis of the lexical items obtained from the calculation described so far is to be carried out in the next chapter of the thesis (chapter 8). This consisted of different stages:

- (1) following Baker (2011), the 60 words under investigation were grouped into several grammatical categories: auxiliary verbs, lexical verbs, lexical nouns (abstract), lexical nouns (concrete), adjectives, adverbials and pro-forms, prepositions, determiners, question words, acronyms, terms of address and interjections. Each category was analysed in turn.
- (2) In order to make immediately visible the performances of the relevant lexical items over time, a graphic representation of the frequencies of each of them was provided in the form of a line graph obtained with the software *Excel*.

(3) The frequencies of each relevant lexical item were also compared between the American and British section of the corpus, in order to highlight any discrepancy.

(5) Multiple concordance searches and collocational analyses of words were conducted to elicit contextual information that might explain their typical patterns of usage. Items under scrutiny were examined more in detail deriving frequency lists for clusters of words and sorting concordances. The collocates were calculated using the -3 to +3 span.

(6) Eventually, in order to compare data, a reference corpus was used. The comparison corpus in this study was the Time Magazine Corpus (Davies 2007), made up of roughly 100 million words and 275,000 articles taken from the American periodical TIME Magazine (1923 to the present). Freely available online, it is the largest diachronic corpus of 20th century American English, and its size allows for accurate analysis of linguistic change across the decades.

Data were interpreted not only in terms of linguistic variation, but also in their potential of suggesting and explaining the great cultural changes in the field of exhibitions, museums and visual arts in general happened from 1950 onwards.

### **7.3 Analysis of diachronic structural variation**

The second stage of the analysis, to be carried out in chapter 9, involved an investigation of the generic structure of EPAs and aimed at identifying its evolution over time.

The methodological approach was the same adopted, in a minor scale, in the pilot study and draws from the acknowledged work of genre analysts such as Swales (1990, 2004) and Bhatia (1993, 2004). Following Swales' work (1990, 2004), in particular, which has been already introduced and illustrated in chapter 2 of the present thesis, a manual analysis of moves and steps was undertaken.

Moves are identifiable units that contribute to the overall communicative purpose of a text (Bhatia 1993: 30). Identification of moves and their sub-types, known as steps, depends on the researcher and what he/she regards as realizations of underlying communicative functions. Even Swales' way of labeling moves was followed, using verb rather than noun phrases, as verb phrases denote an active process and can enable a researcher to link the relevant move to the function of the move. In addition, a categorization of moves, in terms of optional, core and obligatory moves was attempted, following Henry and Roseberry (2001).

As moves can be more or less frequent in a corpus of genre texts, it was necessary to distinguish them according to their frequency in order to achieve a representative structural interpretation. The framework of Henry and Roseberry (2001: 95) allows to establish a hierarchy among moves, suggesting that those that appear in less than 50% of the texts of a corpus can be regarded as optional; those that appear in 50-90% of the texts are core, while those appearing in 90-100% are obligatory.

The identification of EPA moves and steps was also inspired by McLaren and Gurâu's (2005), who have explored a corpus of press releases issued by companies in the UK biotechnology sector, highlighting a recurrent move structure for corporate press releases – announcement, elaboration, comment, contact details and editor's note – and by the structure detected by Bondi (2009:119) for exhibition web-presentations, which both have been illustrated in chapter 5.

The analysis was carried out on a sample of 60 EPAs – 10 for each decade –, randomly selected among the EPA Diacorpus, keeping however an equal balance between the number of American and British documents.

The initial stage of the move structure analysis comprised the reading of EPAs in order to gain an overview and a general feeling of the generic elements and strategies of the genre. As a second step, the different moves were identified and quantitatively evaluated. Quantitative data related to the number of moves and steps across decades were gathered into a summarizing table and a graphic representation of statistics was provided. Each decade was analyzed separately and in order to show the moves and steps in use, relevant phrases and example sentences were extracted from the corpus and transcribed.

While analysing moves and steps, some aspects peculiar of media discourse and press releases in particular were identified, such as the use of quotations (Jacobs 1999a, 1999b, Sleurs et al. 2003), and narrative sections (Bell 1991), also mentioned in chapter 5 of the present thesis. It could be objected that both features belong to the textual sphere rather than generic structure; thus, they recur only in certain moves, i.e. in the descriptive and central ones, so it made sense to deal with them in the context of the structural analysis.

The use of quotations has been identified by Jacobs (1999a) as a main feature of press releases, which he calls ‘self-reference’. By inserting quotations in EPAs, a museum may quote itself, a member of its curatorial staff, artists and sponsors. Signalling verbatim reporting, quotations serve to make press releases more reliable, anticipating “the typical objectivity

requirements of news reporting” (Jacobs 1999a: 195) and therefore are particularly appreciated by media people, who can easily retell them in their own reporting.

Beside quotations, among journalists’ most wanted items are also stories, possibly exciting, controversial and novel. It is with good reason that Bell (1991: 100) stressed that “journalists do not write articles. They write stories”. In order to create the news, press release writers may combine narrative with linguistic means of emotional appeal, which are also related to the notion of newsworthiness (Bell 1991). EPA writers can move the interest of the readers, for instance, giving particular evidence to the most captivating details of the biography of the artist, or telling a story about a single work on view.

The narrative potential of EPAs was explored bearing in mind the analysis carried out by Toolan (1988) on the basic components of the narrative – events, setting and character – and looking for markers of affect that were felt to play a role in highlighting the news story potential of EPAs. The analysis focused in particular on items that could be attributed to the semantic dimension of affect "concerned with registering positive and negative feelings" identified by Martin and White (2005: 42) in their framework for mapping attitude in English texts. Discussing the evaluative semantics of journalistic discourse, White (2006) identifies the presence of “attitudinal ‘provocations’ - formulations where the author’s subjective presence is clearly made salient in some way, with this subjectivity capable of being seen as directing the reader towards a particular attitudinal assessment” (2006: 9). Martin and White (2005: 64-66) mention in particular the use of lexical metaphors and non-core vocabulary, but also simple intensification as a means for provoking an attitudinal response in readers.

When looking at the use of narrative, quotations and linguistic means of emotional appeal characterizing some specific moves of EPAs, a qualitative analysis was essential. Following Hunston (2011: 4), it may be assumed that “evaluative language is more suited to text-based than to corpus-based enquiry”. Moreover, no set of grammatical or lexical forms could entirely encompass the range of expressions of evaluation.

## **7.4 Summary**

In the present chapter the results of a preliminary analysis carried out on the EPA Diacorpus has been presented and the methods consequently adopted for the main analysis have been outlined. The preliminary analysis was necessary in order to become aware of the research questions that could prove worthy of further investigation. It turned out that the levels of vocabulary and generic structure were particularly interesting in terms of diachronic change; consequently, the methods applied to investigate these aspects were presented: from the identification of lexical items showing variation or stability over time, to the exploration of their typical patterns of usage, from the description of the move structure over time to the detection of narrative and emotional language within the moves.

In the following two chapters the analysis will go straight to the heart of the matter, focusing respectively on diachronic lexical variation (chapter 8) and diachronic structural variation (chapter 9) of EPAs.

## **8. Diachronic lexical variation: growth, decline and stability**

In the previous chapters the focus has been on the design of the EPA Diacorpus (chapter 6) and methods applied in the analysis (chapter 7).

It has been pointed out that the EPA Diacorpus allows a diachronic analysis of the textual genre of EPAs both in qualitative and quantitative terms; the preliminary analysis, in particular (see chapter 7), suggested that interesting results in linguistic but also cultural terms can be brought about by taking into consideration the levels of vocabulary and structure.

In the present chapter the analysis focuses on lexical variation of EPAs over time. Baker's (2011) method to distinguish variation over time across multiple corpora was applied and particular attention was placed on words showing frequency increases or decreases, or remaining stable over decades<sup>1</sup>. The enquiry addressed the following research questions: (1) what lexical variation can be identified in EPAs from the 1950s up to now? (2) has there been any language change reflecting socio-cultural change, for instance in the way exhibitions are organized and subjects are selected?

As already anticipated in chapter 7, the twenty words of the EPA Diacorpus that show the strongest frequency increase across the six time periods - 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000 - are *uk, www, org, events, tickets, please, tour, tel, media, images, education, curator, admission, contact, career, office, catalogue, students, photography* and *visual*.

On the other hand, the twenty words that show the sharpest decreases over time are: *mrs, picture, mr, architecture, here, acquired, represented, man, shown, exhibited, shows, had, still, so, since, famous, examples, painters, there, and country*.

A further list of words showing little change over time (i.e. with less variation in their frequencies across decades and to be identified as lockwords of the corpus) was compiled: *release, landscape, until, which, be, department, seen, form, drawings, held, great, known, paintings, among, made, first, selected, some, director* and *are*.

As previously pointed out in chapter 7, some irregular items, not showing a unidirectional pattern, were not necessarily discarded from the analysis, but were taken into account in view of their potential of mirroring cultural change related to museum settings and art in general, although, as the analysis will show, special care needs to be taken before drawing conclusions.

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<sup>1</sup> It has been clearly pointed out that the study deals with increasing, decreasing or stable frequencies of words over decades; however, from now on, shortcut expressions such as "the word x increases" instead of "the frequency of the word x increases" may be used in the text for conciseness' sake. See also Baker 2011.

Following Baker (2011), words under investigation were grouped into several grammatical categories<sup>2</sup>. Results are summarized by table 8.1.

Tab. 8.1 – Summary of main findings across the EPA Diacorpus

	<b>Increased</b>	<b>Decreased</b>	<b>Lockwords (stable)</b>
<b>Auxiliary verbs</b>		<i>had</i>	<i>be, are</i>
<b>Lexical verbs</b>	<i>contact</i>	<i>acquired, represented, exhibited, shown, shows</i>	<i>seen, held, selected, made</i>
<b>Lexical nouns (abstract)</b>	<i>career, photography, media, education</i>	<i>examples, architecture</i>	<i>form</i>
<b>Lexical nouns (concrete)</b>	<i>office, admission, tickets, images, catalogue, students, events, tour, curator</i>	<i>picture, man, painters, country</i>	<i>landscape, release, department, drawings, paintings, director</i>
<b>Adjectives</b>	<i>visual</i>	<i>famous</i>	<i>great, known, first</i>
<b>Adverbials and pro-forms</b>		<i>here, there, still, so</i>	
<b>Prepositions</b>		<i>since</i>	<i>until, among</i>
<b>Determiners</b>			<i>some</i>
<b>Question words</b>			<i>which</i>
<b>Acronyms</b>	<i>www, org, uk, tel</i>		
<b>Terms of address</b>		<i>mr, mrs</i>	
<b>Interjections</b>	<i>please</i>		

In the following sections each grammatical category and its related items will be analysed in turn. More specifically, multiple concordance searches and collocational analyses of items will be conducted in order to elicit contextual information that might explain their patterns of usage. A

<sup>2</sup> Since the EPA Diacorpus is not marked up, the attribution of lexical items to related grammatical categories was realized on the basis of quantitative criteria: for instance, *until* is here considered as a preposition, because in most of the cases (90% of the total occurrences within the EPA Diacorpus) it identifies a preposition rather than a conjunction; on similar reasons was based the choice of considering *still* as an adverbial, *known* as an adjective, *form* as a noun, *contact* as a verb, and *please* as an interjection, since the majority of the occurrences lead that way.

graphic representation of frequencies across decades of each relevant lexical item will be provided. Data will be interpreted not only in terms of linguistic variation, but also in their potential of suggesting and explaining the great cultural changes in the field of exhibitions, museums and visual arts in general happened from 1950 onwards.

## 8.1 Auxiliary verbs

With regard to the category of auxiliary verbs, three forms are taken into account: *had*, which shows a pattern of decrease, although not unidirectional, *are* and *be*; the latter are both characterised by a certain degree of stability and according to their CV score can be classified as lockwords of the corpus. Each of these items will be explored in turn, while at the end of the section a careful interpretation of data will be attempted.

### 8.1.1 *had*

*had* ranks 12<sup>th</sup> within the top twenty of the most decreasing lexical items, though showing an irregular profile across decades of 73, 54, 31, 23, 24, 43 occurrences. Quantitatively speaking, its presence is slightly more relevant in the American section of the corpus (136 American vs. 112 British occurrences), but frequency profiles are similar. As Figure 8.1 shows, from the eighties onward *had* seems to regain ground, which makes it hard to classify this item into a definite category.

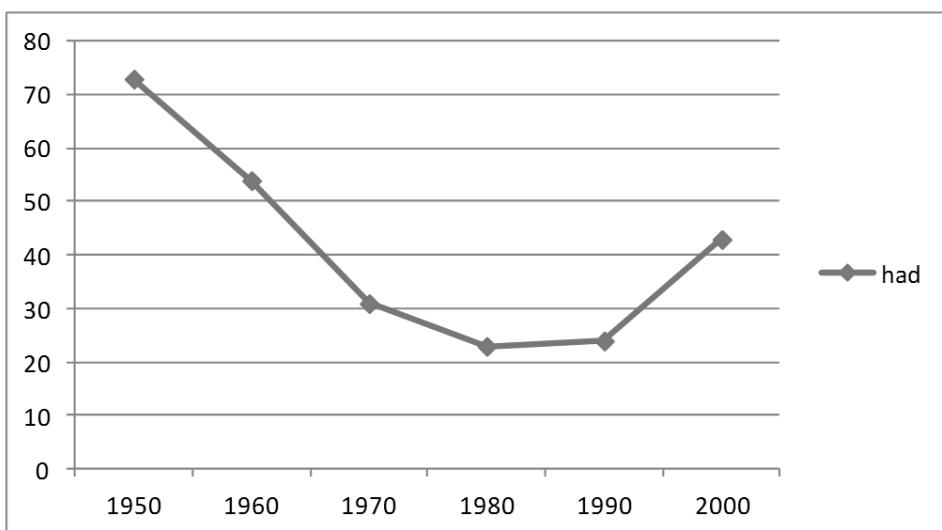


Figure 8.1 – Frequencies of *had*

In order to explain the trend shown by *had*, the patterns of other forms of the verb *have* within the EPA Diacorpus were examined, but only to discover that these are characterized by irregular frequency profiles as well. The profile of *has* across decades, for instance, is 227, 200, 130, 124, 125, 225; that of *have* is 146, 114, 81, 60, 89, 149. The Time Magazine Corpus shows a decrease of the form *had* over time, while in his own study on lexical variation Baker (2011) reported its consistency.

*had* can be used alone, as a simple past of the verb *have*, or in combination with other verbs, as an auxiliary past participle. Concordances shows that the latter construction is the most frequent in the EPA Diacorpus: auxiliary-past participles were identified in at least two occurrences of *had* out of three. The most prominent cluster is *had been* (38 occurrences), used for past perfect- and past perfect continuous-constructions. The predominant use of *had* as an auxiliary in the EPA Diacorpus also suggests to look at the main verbs it accompanies in the texts, in order to see if they decrease as well; yet there are only two cases – *had acquired* and *had been shown* – where *had* is associated with verbs sharing a decreasing profile over time in the corpus. It has also to be noted that all the occurrences (14) of the construction *had to + verb*, referring to obligations, are restricted to the period 1950-1970.

A common feature of the concordances is the use of *had* in the context of a narration of events placed in the past, such as artist biographies or historical descriptions of art works, which passed from hand to hand or went through renovation. See, for instance, the following examples (1):

(1)

Eynard was 63 years old and  
Nauman's early works, after the artist  
In reality, the sculptures' vivid colors  
French painter in the exhibition,  
character. During his lifetime he  
while a prisoner of war in Texas. He  
rejoined in the past; so that this panel

**had** already lived a remarkable life. He  
**had** abandoned painting and had begun  
**had** not survived the centuries. As the  
**had** his first one-man show in Paris in 1949  
**had** an opportunity to model some of  
**had** originally studied medicine. Three  
**had** to be taken to pieces and remade.

These forms of narrative ekphrasis are typical features of contemporary EPAs, because they provide journalists with a story to tell and, consequently, a newsworthy item (Lazzeretti and Bondi 2012). As a matter of fact, narrative sections are commonly identified by the use of past tenses; thus, the decrease of *had* is somehow unexpected in the context of EPAs. Moreover, the analysis of structural variation, to be carried out in the next chapter of this thesis (chapter 9), and based on the manual observation of EPAs, shows that the use of narrative sections increased over time instead of

diminishing. The frequency profile of *had*, therefore, is particularly controversial to interpret as a declining one.

### 8.1.2 *are*

The verb form *are* shows a pattern of relative stability within the EPA Diacorpus. Its occurrences across the six decades are 255, 217, 171, 174, 207, 301 and its CV score is 22.62; it ranks 20<sup>th</sup> within the top twenty of the most stable items in the corpus and can be therefore classified as a lockword. The presence of *are* is quantitatively more relevant in the American section of the corpus (776 American vs. 549 British occurrences); yet the Time Magazine Corpus, mirroring American written language, provides contrasting data in respect to the EPA Diacorpus, showing an up-and-down profile of the form *are* across the decades: 44,221, 55,646, 54,145, 43,694, 40,118, 30,246.



Figure 8.2 – Frequencies of *are*

The analysis of concordances shows at least two main patterns of usage for this form: in the first place, *are* is used to introduce the content of the exhibition in very practical, even quantitative terms, clearly stating what is on display, as proved by the most frequent cluster, *in the exhibition are*, which totals 47 overall occurrences, but also by many other similar expressions related to art works or artists on display, such as *are shown* (33 occurrences), *are included* (23 occurrences), *are represented* (16 occurrences), *are displayed* (9 occurrences). The following concordances (2) provides an overview of these typical patterns as they recur in the corpus:

(2)

artist's expressive capacities. Included Miss, Aldo Rossi, and Robert Wilson etching technique, and seven of these the originals of the plates in the book for communication". In this exhibition young sculptors. Twelve of these interpretations of the human head the whole collection and many of them

are a large number of the whimsical  
are also included. 11 West 53 Street,  
are being exhibited for the first time.  
are displayed item by item on the  
are found Miro's ever-present birds  
are in the present exhibition, including  
are represented by two crayon  
are shown in this exhibition. The

As these few lines show, *are* is used in the context of a description of what can be seen at the exhibition at the current moment it is being held: a present tense is therefore required.

A second pattern of usage for *are* identified within the EPA Diacorpus is a prescriptive one and is functional to the statement of specific instructions devoted to press members and visitors: namely, it tells, for instance, where *tickets are available* (22 occurrences of this cluster), if *photographs are available/obtainable* (18 total occurrences), if *reservations are required* (13 occurrences), and so on. A selection of concordances (3) illustrates this second relevant context for *are* in the corpus:

(3)

under 18 years) TICKETS Tickets  
X 30 Black and white photographs  
until 5: 00 p. m. Admission and parking  
fifteenth century. Photographs  
Reservations for the lecture

are available daily at the RA. To book  
are available to the press on request.  
are free, but advance parking  
are obtainable at the Information  
are required and can be made

As for prescriptive statements in general, a present tense is also here required.

The consistency of the verb form *are* over time, both in its descriptive and prescriptive function, seems a consequence of the stability of two typical features of EPAs: on one hand, the general and constant need for presentation and description of exhibiting contents; on the other, the urge for involving relevant audiences, journalists and visitors, addressing them more or less directly.

### 8.1.3 *be*

The infinitive form *be* is characterised by a pattern of stability; in fact, *be* is the fifth word showing lower variance in the corpus, with 209, 294, 227, 199, 202, 287 occurrences and a CV score of 18.25. As in the previous case of *are*, the presence of *be* is also quantitatively more

relevant in the American section of the corpus (767 American vs. 651 British occurrences); yet, as in the case of *are*, the comparison with the Time Magazine corpus shows a different trend for *be*, which is actually one of decrease in our general reference corpus.

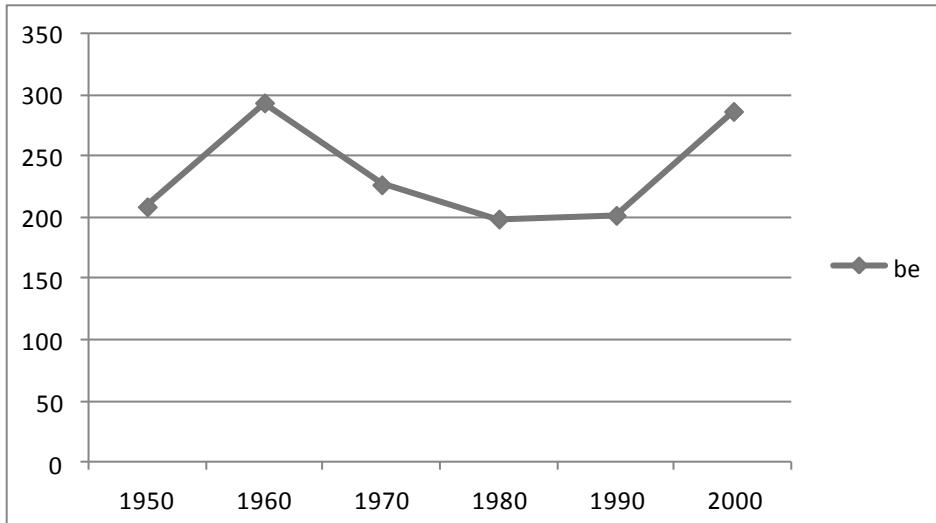


Figure 8.3 – Frequencies of *be*

Once again, the exploration of concordances can help us gain an insight into the usage of this form within the EPA Diacorpus. In more than a half of the occurrences (700 out of 1.100) *be* is part of the cluster *will be* and identifies a future construction related to the next opening of the exhibition, its planned content and its main features, as concordances below show (4).

(4)

paintings from the period  
and Acoustiguide tapes. There  
figures of the last ten years,  
and Gustave Le Gray). A gallery  
to be announced later). There

**will also be** on view. Works have been  
**will also be** an academic symposium for  
**will be** on view at The Museum of Modern  
**will be** devoted to the 19th-century French  
**will be** a fully illustrated catalogue with

The predominant use of a future construction related to the verb *be* and its consistency over time does not come as a surprise in a corpus of EPAs, given one of their most relevant communicative purpose, which is, namely, to announce something that still has to happen. As in the case of the verb form *are*, therefore, the frequency profile of *be* is not in contrast with the related pattern of usage.

Data gathered so far for the auxiliary verb forms *had*, *are* and *be* cannot be easily generalized and require a careful approach, especially in view of the irregular profile of *had* over time. Yet, they are interesting because they suggest that EPAs comprise three time levels: a first perspective is focused on the past, and it is that concerning narrative sections; a second is focused on the present and is related mainly to presentation and description of main contents; a third is devoted to the future, as it announces the exhibition opening and further related events. This multi-level dimension seems to characterize EPAs since the early stages of development of this textual genre; but while the stability of *are* and *be* over time can be explained with the consistency of their typical patterns of usage and of their related communicative purpose – the level of descriptions and directions for *are*, which require a present tense, the level of announcements for (*will*) *be*, which requires a future tense – the supposed decrease of *had* is more problematic. If confirmed, a declining trend would be in contrast with the growing importance gained by narrative sections within EPAs (see section 9.9 of this thesis); on the contrary, it would be expected an increase of *had* over time, as it actually happens, but only from the 1980s onward. A wider perspective should be adopted in order to make sure if the verb form *had* is actually decreasing or increasing over time: a quantitatively richer corpus, for instance, could offer a more clear insight into the real trend of this form. At a more cautious level, it can be stated that EPA writers can easily manage three different temporal levels, according to their communicative needs and that their perspective is not necessarily centred in one dimension – present, past, or future - but combines all of them.

## 8.2 Lexical verbs

Within this category are the following words: *contact* (increased), *represented*, *exhibited*, *acquired*, *shown*, *shows* (decreased), *seen*, *held*, *selected*, *made* (stable).

### 8.2.1 *contact*

The verb *contact* has to be considered together with the interjection *please*, as they build up a frequent cluster within the EPA Diacorpus, with a total of 118 occurrences, which is, namely, *please contact*. In fact, if we explore the profile of these two words across decades, we see that they follow a similar path also in quantitative terms, to the point that their patterns could overlap: the profile of *please* across the six decades is 6, 2, 22, 34, 55, 149; that of *contact* is 6, 4, 23, 43, 70, 84. When the profiles of these items are compared between American and British section, no particular

difference is highlighted with regard to *contact*, while a neat predominance of the interjection *please* is shown among British EPAs (215 British vs. 53 American occurrences).

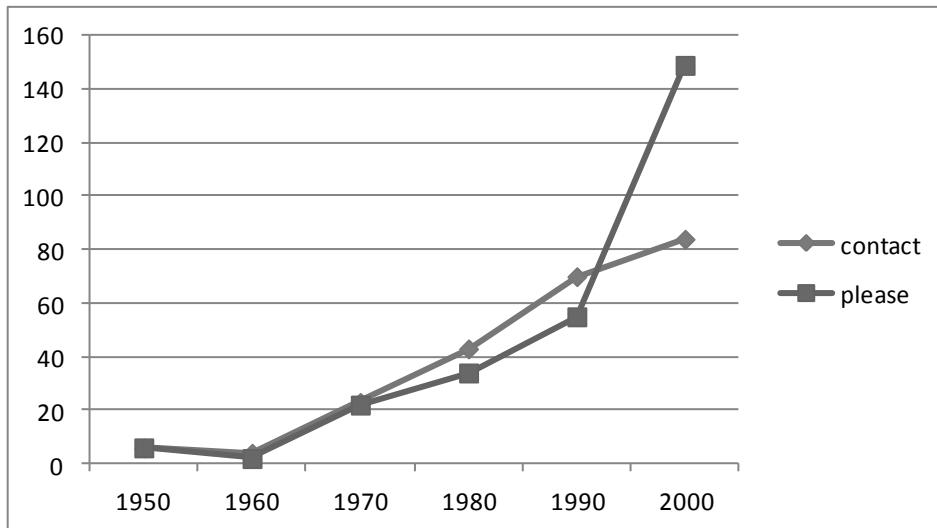


Figure 8.4 – Frequencies of *contact, please*

The phrase *please contact* is a distinct feature of press releases; barely attested in the Time Magazine Corpus, where only three occurrences were identified. Used as a polite form to encourage further contact with journalists, it is usually placed at the end of the sheet, along with the name of the press officer in charge, his/her telephone number and e-mail address. In its most complete version the typical phrase is *for further information please contact*. This pattern can be associated with a move typical of promotional genres, the one called by Bhatia (1993, 2004) ‘soliciting response’. This move will be fully illustrated in the following chapter of the thesis (chapter 9), devoted to structure analysis. By the way, the increasing importance of the phrase, which occurs only 4 times in the fifties and then gradually shifts to 17 cases in the seventies, 25 in the eighties, 30 in the nineties and 42 in the twenties, already suggests that this move gained importance over time. It may be guessed that the response of journalists was initially solicited in a discrete way by EPAs, while afterwards this communicative purpose became overt and consequently accepted as a common feature of the genre of press releases.

### **8.2.2 represented, acquired, exhibited**

The forms *represented, acquired* and *exhibited* were reunited in the analysis in consideration of some common features. First, they all show a decreasing - although not unidirectional - pattern

across decades; secondly, they are all in the -ed form, as past participles or, in less cases, past tenses, and thirdly, they are mostly used in passive constructions. Taking a closer look at concordances, typically artists are *represented* and artworks are *acquired* or *exhibited*. As past participles, these forms also appear in past passive and future passive constructions.

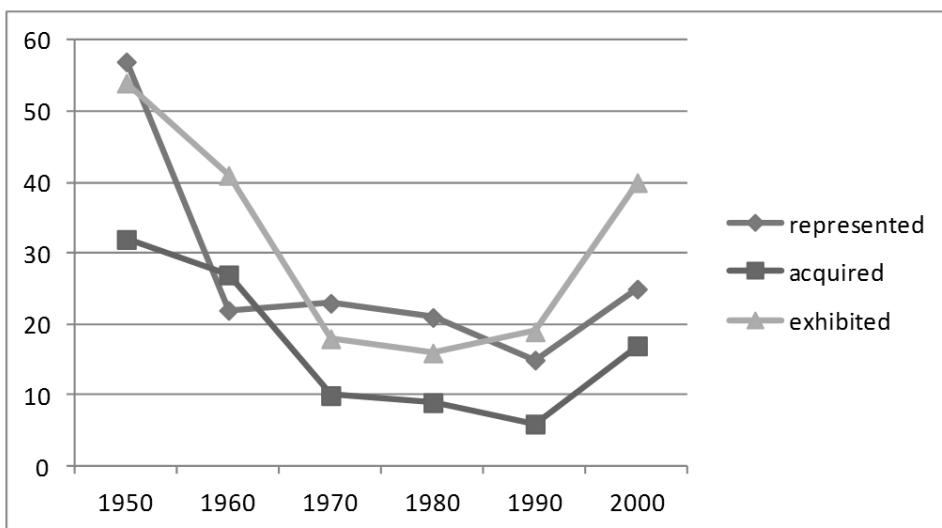


Figure 8.5 – Frequencies of *represented*, *acquired*, *exhibited*

The profile of *represented* across decades is 57, 22, 23, 21, 15, 25; that of *exhibited* is 54, 41, 18, 16, 19, 40; that of *acquired* is 32, 27, 10, 9, 6, 17. The most striking aspect of these patterns is the drastic decline of the verbs between the fifties and the eighties, when they were reduced of more than half of their initial frequency, while, from the nineties onwards, all forms seem to regain frequency; not enough, however, to reach their initial values, and this is the reason why they are considered as decreasing items in the analysis despite their irregularity. A comparison between American and British sections does not bring about significant differences in the distribution and profile of these items across the decades, with the exception of *represented*, quantitatively more relevant for the American component (105 American vs. 58 British occurrences).

It has also to be noted that other forms of the same verbs do not show a decreasing trend, but remain rather stable, although their presence in the corpus is not particularly relevant in quantitative terms. For instance, the third person singular of the verb *represent*, *represents*, has a total of 31 occurrences evenly balanced across decades (4, 4, 4, 4, 4, 11), as well as *exhibits* (21 occurrences displayed in a consistent pattern: 3, 7, 4, 3, 3, 1). Conversely, if we exclude the form *acquired*, the verb *acquire* is almost absent from the corpus, with a few instances of alternative forms: *acquire* (4) and *acquires* (1).

On the one hand, given the specific context of EPAs, the decline of the verb *acquire* could be related to economic factors, which may have implied a strict reduction of museum budgets devoted to new acquisitions of artworks. On the other, that of *represented* and *exhibited* is more difficult to explain. The exploration of the Time Magazine corpus does not help much in this sense, although it shows a similar decrease of these forms, more gradual yet and more evenly distributed across decades than in the EPA Diacorpus. This suggests that in this case we are dealing with a major language change, which does not affect only EPAs or art discourse in general, but the media language at a broader extent, or even the written language as a whole.

Considering the specific aim of EPAs, which is to present the exhibition in the most positive light, to say that an artist is *represented* only by a series of works means, in a sense, to admit that the overview is limited and that more would be needed in order to gain a more complete and comprehensive idea on that artist. But that is exactly the negative message that nowadays museums would avoid, stating preferably that visitors will be provided with an exhaustive overview on a certain topic and no empty space will be left. The following examples (5, 6), taken from earlier EPAs, may explain how the choice to represent an artist only with a few works may not sound fully positive to the ears of contemporary visitors, used to ‘big things’:

(5)

The artists, each **represented** by three to five works, have all come into prominence during the past ten years. Each has made a special contribution to the art of this decade.  
(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *The New Decade*, 1 April 1955)

(6)

Another famous 15th century Florentine painter **represented** here only by a predella panel is Domenico Ghirlandaio, author of the famous "Portrait of Giovanna Tornabuoni" in the Exhibition, dated 1488. [...] Venetian painting of the 15th century is splendidly **represented** by Carpaccio's "Portrait of a Knight in a Landscape", which is probably the earliest full-length portrait to have survived. Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese are each **represented** by two pictures [...]  
(London, National Gallery, *From Van Eyck to Tiepolo*, 22 February 1961)

Corpus evidence shows that the taste has changed in this regard and today exhibitions aim at covering an artistic topic in its entirety rather than narrowing the focus, which would also imply a reduced number of works on display. The adjective *comprehensive*, typically modifying nouns such

as *exhibition* or *retrospective*, for instance, shifted from 4 to 30 occurrences between the 1950s and the 2000s; *exhaustive* went from 4 to 15; *major*, which is also used in order to suggest importance in terms of size and number, as in the typical cluster *a major exhibition*, from 14 to 61. We may interpret these data as a reflection of a cultural change in the way exhibitions are organized, justifying also the decrease of the word *represented* as a further evidence of a recent trend, which is, namely, to insist on the ideas of comprehensiveness and exhaustiveness of exhibitions.

Observing the concordances of *exhibited* within the Time Magazine Corpus, a striking aspect is that in the 1990s and the 2000s the verb seems to lose its specificity in terms of art discourse and also its principle meaning, which is to be displayed in public, to be put on show, especially in a museum. A further emerging meaning has not to do with artistic settings, but rather with sanitary environments or illness: corpus evidence related to the Time Magazine Corpus shows that in 1990s and the 2000s symptoms may be *exhibited*, or a clinical behavior may be *exhibited*, for instance. As far as it could be possible to discover, the first occurrence of *exhibited* in this context within the Time Magazine Corpus dates back to the sixties; before that, the most part of concordances confirms that *exhibited* was a sort of technical expression specific for the context of exhibitions, rarely used outside it.

Moreover, looking at other concordances dating back to seventies onwards, where the verb is used in its metaphorical sense, for instance in the case of *exhibited* feelings or values, *exhibited* can acquire a negative prosody, which associates the idea of exhibition to something redundant or exaggerated. See for instance the following example (7):

(7)

Imbued with all the greed, guile and enterprise of the age, they **exhibited** a bullish faith in America's future despite the depressions, strikes and financial panics that punctuated these tumultuous years.

(The Times Magazine, *Blessed Barons*, by Ron Chernow, 7 December 1998)

Conversely, the noun *exhibition* is rarely associated to something negative, in the Times Magazine Corpus as well as in the EPA Diacorpus. The Times Magazine Corpus provides a few occurrences of the phrase *exhibition of bad taste/bad manners* as the most significant exception within a general positive co-text of the noun, while the EPA Diacorpus provides more than 2 thousand occurrences of *exhibition*, with an increasing profile across decades (278, 288, 311, 350, 414, 585) all associated to positive connotations.

The language of EPAs may reflect the effects of a loss of specificity and possible pejorative connotations in the meaning of the verb (and not in that of the noun), definitely dropping it in favour of other more accurate synonyms, such as *displayed*, which shows a growing pattern across decades (2, 8, 6, 6, 11, 20), *installed* (6, 12, 6, 3, 8, 17), *featured* (0, 1, 3, 3, 10, 21), or of the phrases *on display* (1, 4, 9, 6, 10, 12) and *to be on show* (0, 3, 3, 3, 13, 9). A possible conclusion of this trend could be that EPA writers were aware of the different, subtle hues of meaning that the verb *exhibit* had gained over time and went in the direction of a more technical, yet neutral lexis, which could identify the relevant settings – in this case, an artistic context, not to be confused with other possible environments – and avoid any negative implication.

### **8.2.3 *shown, shows***

Keeping the focus on the category of lexical verbs, among the most decreasing words in EPA Diacorpus are also two forms related to the lemma SHOW, *shown* and *shows*. The first is clearly the past principle of the verb *show*, while *shows* may be the plural of the noun *show* or the third person of the present tense of the verb. Since EPA Diacorpus is not tagged, the distinction was made by hand: in 35 occurrences out of 100 *shows* is the plural of the noun *show*. It means that almost 2 out of 3 occurrences are related to the verb, which then plays the most important role. We are therefore authorized to consider both entries, *shown* and *shows*, as mainly belonging to the verbal derivation of the lemma SHOW.

Since the action of putting on display something to be judged by the public – i.e. to show it – is typical of exhibitions, the decrease of these words over time is somehow unexpected in an exhibition press releases corpus and needs to be further explained. The first check was on the frequency and consistency profile of both lexical items.

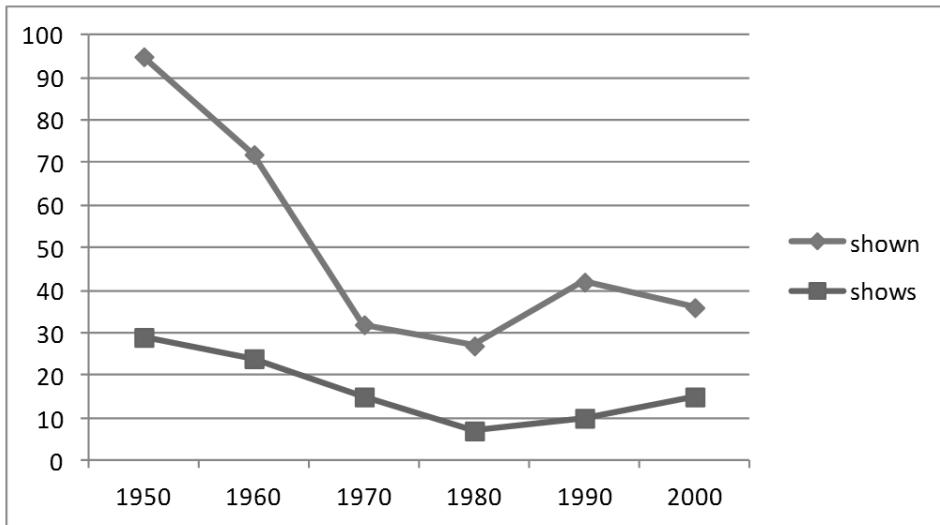


Figure 8.6 – Frequencies of *shown*, *shows*

*Shown* has a total of 304 occurrences in the corpus, 144 belonging to the American component and 160 to the British component. Its profile is characterized by a rather irregular decrease over the six decades (95, 72, 32, 27, 42, 36) and its CV score is 53.10. The most frequent three-word cluster related to *shown* in the corpus is the future construction *will be shown*. Similarly, *shows*, with a total of 100 occurrences (37 British, 63 American), has an irregular decreasing profile (29, 24, 15, 7, 10, 15) and its CV score is 50.15. Typical patterns in the corpus are *the exhibition shows*, *the painting shows*, *the section shows*, followed by descriptions of art works.

I looked at other forms of the verb *show* in the corpus, in order to find out if there is a general decrease of its use. The frequency list, alphabetically ordered, provided the following entries: *show* (291), *showcase* (3), *showcases* (3), *showcasing* (4), *showed* (10), *showing* (94).

*Show* is rather consistent in terms of frequency (68, 50, 47, 35, 37, 54). It has the same ambiguity as *shows*, but the manual inspection reveals a reverse tendency: two occurrences out of three refer to the noun, which is a synonym of *exhibition*. The verbal component is therefore less relevant in this case.

The word-family of *showcase* has a total of 10 occurrences in the corpus, all concentrated in the 1990s and in the 2000s: it is therefore a more recent lexical input and does not tell us much in terms of variation.

*Showed* is used very little and is even absent in 2000's EPAs (its profile is 4,1,1,3,1,0), while *showing* is more stable across decades (17, 10, 19, 18, 14, 16).

So far we could make only educated guesses as to why the verb *show* is decreasing over time in the EPA Diacorpus. The Time Magazine Corpus was therefore explored for comparison.

The past participle of the verb, *shown*, significantly decreases across decades even in the Time corpus (1,036, 1,046, 809, 586, 498, 408), as does the simple past *showed* (2,889, 2,145, 1,590, 1,370, 1,029, 714). *Showing* also decreases (1,136, 1,031, 820, 676, 617, 472). The same is true for the infinite form (2,447, 2,244, 1,875, 1,708, 1,708, 1,320) and the present third person of the verb (1,144, 1,180, 1,034, 878, 1,070, 742). Therefore the results of the EPA Diacorpus with regard to the verb *show* and its decreasing tendency over time mirror – obviously in a smaller dimension – those of a wider, general corpus, specialized in the language of news.

As already pointed out, the verb *show* has two main meanings in the EPA Diacorpus: the first and more relevant is associated with the action of exhibiting something, while the second is functional to descriptions. In 160 out of 570 occurrences identified within the EPA Diacorpus, *show* is used to introduce the description of an art work: a picture, a portrait, a painting, etc.

If it is hard to explain why the verb *show* decreases over time in its first, basic meaning, a guess may be formulated with regard to the second function. When describing art works – a picture, for instance – the use of the verb *show* would imply a sort of mediation, a filter between the writer and the reader. This mediation requires not only a more complex syntactical structure to decode, but also a further conceptual step for the reader, which is to imagine the act of showing the picture before the picture in itself. It can be guessed that art descriptions have become more direct over time and filtering verbs, which may somehow distance the readers from art works, have been gradually reduced in the language of EPAs. In other words, instead of describing what a picture shows, it seemed preferable to tell directly how it looks.

The difference between these two different techniques for describing artworks – indirect and direct – can be summarized by the following examples taken from EPA Diacorpus:

(8)

This skeletal drawing shows us how the artist went about his task, working out the perspective framework with the ruler and pencil and afterwards filling in the details in ink, underneath which the vanishing point and vanishing lines are still clearly visible.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Drawings by Italian Artists: 1500-1800*, 1 June 1959)

(9)

The luminous colour and lively brushwork of the picture evoke the hot, hazy atmosphere of a summer afternoon. This is the world of the Impressionists and the scene is uncompromisingly contemporary. But the isolation and gravity of the figures, the scale of the painting and the classical order of the composition come from a very different world – a tradition stretching back to the Renaissance. The result is at once serene and subversive.

(London, The National Gallery, *Seurat and the Bathers*, 1 March 1997)

In the first extract (8) the writer is present in the text in his authorial stance, identified by the pronoun *us*, establishing common ground between him and his audience; he directs the reader's gaze, guiding him by pointing to some details of the picture and providing a description of the artist's work; the effect is yet explanatory rather than captivating. In the second extract (9), where the description of the art work is offered without a filtering verb, the reader has the impression of really being there, in front of the picture, in a sort of virtual 'walk' through the exhibition.

#### **8.2.4 *seen, held, selected***

The forms *seen, held, selected* all present a pattern of stability, as shown by the graphic representation (Figure 8.7), and can be reunited in the analysis. Moreover, their performances do not differ between American and British section of the corpus

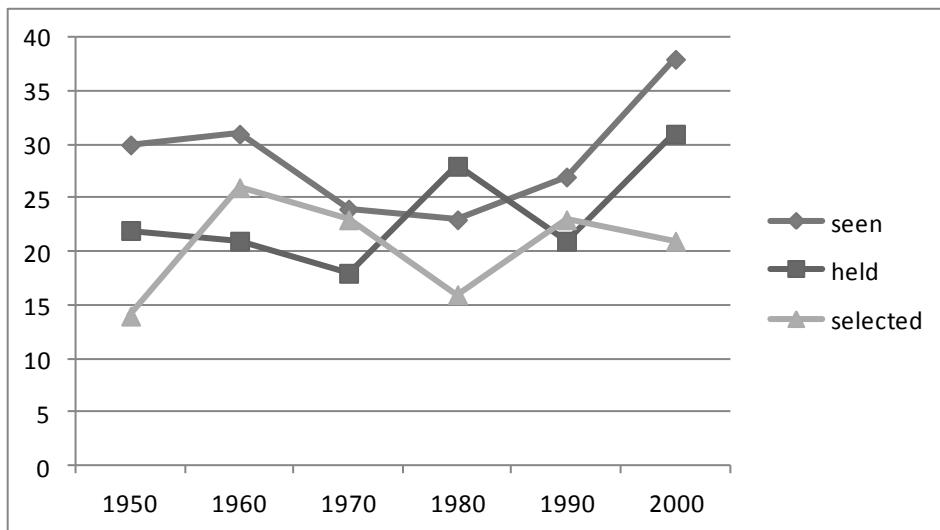


Figure 8.7 – Frequencies of *seen, held, selected*

Ranking 7<sup>th</sup> within the list of lockwords, *seen* has 173 overall occurrences and the following profile across the six decades: 30, 31, 24, 23, 27, 38. Its variance score is 19.05.

The consistency of the past participle of the verb *see* - a perception verb connected to vision and therefore functional to descriptions – does not come as a surprise for a corpus of EPAs. It is involved in a series of frequent, descriptive clusters, such as *be seen in* (25 occurrences), *rarely/never/seldom been seen* (17), *as seen in* (10), *be seen at* (7). The second among them, in particular, is typically used by contemporary EPA writers in order to pursue a strategy of novelty (Lazzeretti and Bondi 2012), an aspect crucial in order to make an exhibition appealing and to

attract audiences. When deciding to visit and review an art show, a journalist expects to see something original, which has never been on view before, or, at least, not in the most recent years. Thus, the observation of EPAs from a diachronic perspective shows that this strategy does not belong to our times, but was already applied in the fifties: its first occurrence, within EPA Diacorpus, can be found in an American EPA dating back to 1956:

(10)

Nine paintings by Walter Richard Sickert (1860-1942), a pupil of Whistler's whose work has **seldom been seen** in this country, are shown.

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Masters of British Painting*, 1 October 1956)

Furthermore, a comparison with the Time Magazine Corpus shows that evaluative phrases based on the construct adverb + *been seen* are a distinct feature of EPAs, since their frequency in the news language conversely decreases from 29 occurrences in the 1950s to 9 in the 2000s.

Ranking 10<sup>th</sup> within the list of lockwords, *held* has 141 overall occurrences and the following profile across the six decades: 22, 21, 18, 28, 21, 31. Its variance score is 20.98. This result is not unexpected too, in consideration that the verb *hold* is a sort of technical word used by EPA writers to localize an exhibition (or a collateral event) and state where it takes place. See the following concordances (11):

(11)

the series of small exhibitions to be  
A final showing will be  
Two separate retrospectives have been

**held** in the new Board Room  
**held** in Barcelona under the sponsorship  
**held** at the Louvre in Paris, in 1955

98 out of 118 occurrences of *held* within the corpus relate to this pattern; to be held is, namely, the exhibition, or an event linked to it. Once again, we are in front of a distinct feature of the language EPAs, because the Time Magazine corpus gives evidence of a decreasing pattern of *held* over time when the nouns *exhibition*, *show* or *retrospective* are selected as collocates.

The consistency of patterns related to the lockword *held* in the EPA Diacorpus can be read as an attempt to keep a sort of conventional, specialized language for EPAs over time, in order to make them more recognizable as a genre. This need for a neutral, specialized lexis, quite a jargon sometimes, is a recursive element in the lexical analysis of EPAs. It has been already pointed out, for instance, that the verb *display* seems more successful than *exhibit* over time (see section 8.2.2), in view of its specificity.

Ranking 17<sup>th</sup> within the list of lockwords, *selected* has 123 overall occurrences and the following profile: 14, 26, 23, 16, 23, 21. Its variance score is 22.41. To be selected, rather obviously, are the works on display (see example 12), but also the artists.

(12)

The two hundred items of infinitely rare jewellery **selected** from the Gillian Sackler collection date from antiquity to the 12th Century A. D.  
(London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Jewels of the Ancients*, 1 May 1987)

As in the previous case of *seen* and *held*, the data from the Time Magazine Corpus related to *selected* are in contrast with those of the EPA Diacorpus: a sharp decline of this verb form is shown by the Time, also in its technical usage, when *works*, *pictures*, *pieces* and other nouns identifying artworks are present in the immediate co-text. Conversely, the consistency of *selected* over time in the EPA Diacorpus may be traced back to a strategy which highlights the quality of the exhibition by stating that a choice has been made among many other works (or artists) available. A strategy we are going to encounter when exploring the use of other lockwords of the EPA Diacorpus, the adverbial *among* (section 8.7.1) and the determiner *some* (section 8.8)

### 8.2.5 *made*

To conclude our overview of lexical verbs showing increase, decrease, or remaining stable within the EPA Diacorpus, the form *made* is left to be analysed.

*made* has 369 overall occurrences (235 American, 134 British) and an irregular profile across decades: 55, 60, 42, 63, 65, 84. Due to its variance score (22.36), it ranks 15<sup>th</sup> within the list of lockwords, though its pattern is a controversial one. To be noted, in particular, is the drastic increase of occurrences between the 1990s and the 2000s.

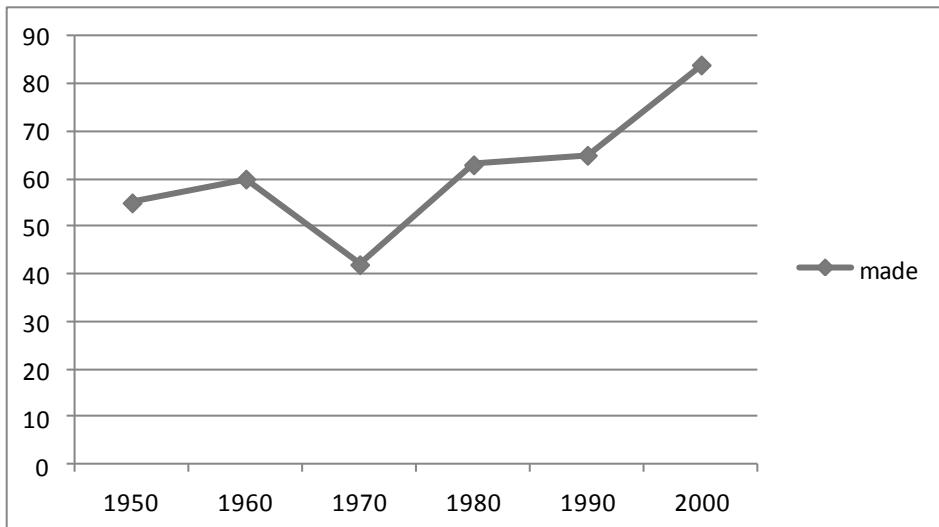


Figure 8.8 – Frequencies of *made*

A cluster seems to play a significant role, *made possible*, which has 60 occurrences, distributed across decades in the following sequence: 2, 3, 4, 23, 19, 11. The phrase is definitely more relevant for the American section of the corpus, since 49 occurrences out of 60 belong to American EPAs, and can be considered a distinct feature of EPAs, because it is related to the mention of sponsors and donors who *made possible* the exhibition. Its up-and-down profile across the decades may reflect a growing commercial concern, more evident in the 1980s and the 1990s and related in particular to American environments.

(13)

The New York presentation of the exhibition is **made possible** through the generosity of the Fellows of The Frick Collection.

(New York, Frick Collection, *Seventeenth Century Chinese Porcelain*, 21 May 1990)

The mention of sponsors within the text of EPAs is a sort of reward in terms of image that sponsors can rely on and explicitly ask for in return of their financial support. Furthermore, sponsors often want to proofread the EPA before its release in order to check if they have been properly mentioned in the text and the logo is reproduced according to their standards.

### 8.3 Lexical nouns (abstract)

Within this category are *career*, *photography*, *media*, *education* (increased), *examples*, *architecture* (decreased), *form* (stable).

#### 8.3.1 *career*

Showing a clear pattern of growth across decades (0, 11, 8, 27, 34, 49), the word *career* is one of the most interesting cases of the EPA Diacorpus. It has 129 overall occurrences, quite evenly distributed between the American (71) and British (58) sections.

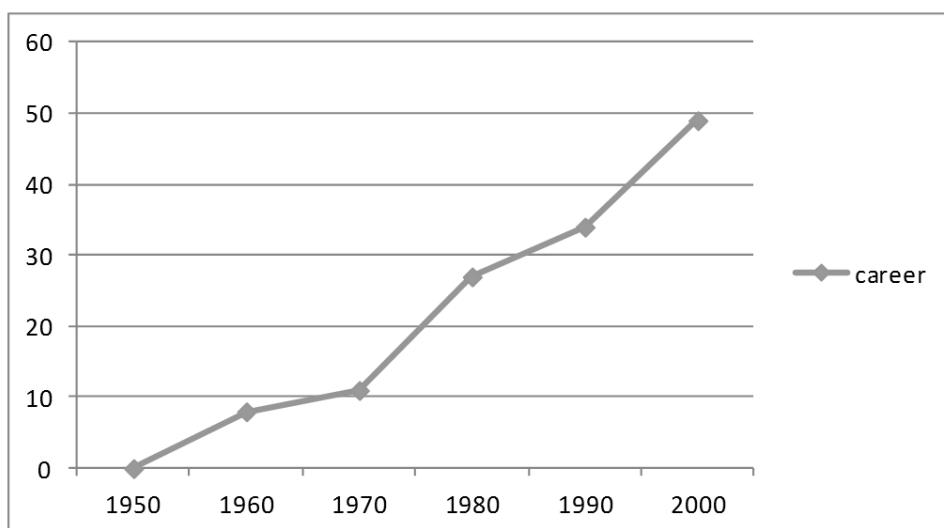


Figure 8.9 – Frequencies of *career*

The Time Magazine Corpus was explored for comparison, in order to find out if the word gained increasing importance over time in the language of general media as well, but the result was reversed: *career* shifted from 1,904 occurrences in the year 1950 to 1,022 occurrences in the year 2000. The increasing trend of *career* seems therefore a distinct feature of the EPA Diacorpus.

A manual inspection of concordances shows that the *career* in question is always that of the artist/s featured in the exhibition. The most frequent three-word clusters associated with *career* in the corpus are *of his career* (where the adjective *his* refers anaphorically or cataphorically to the artist), *of the artist's career*, *the artist's career* and *throughout his career*. The latter cluster introduces the idea of a long-lasting progress through the artist's lifework, which is also stressed by other evaluative expressions, as in the following concordances (14):

(14)

covering all stages of Mirò's <b>long</b>	<b>career</b>	will be included,
extraordinarily <b>rich and prolific</b>	<b>career.</b>	On view through May 2,
every phase of his <b>seventy-year</b>	<b>career.</b>	Wright is shown to be

In some rarer cases the artist's career may be *early* or *brief*, due to biographical circumstances, but the semantic prosody of the term sounds positive:

(15)

Schiele, and, in an even <b>briefer</b>	<b>career,</b>	created such dramatic
work from the artist's <b>early</b>	<b>career</b>	stand out as of particular

Although the positive semantic prosody associated with the noun *career* may seem obvious, the reason for the increasing use of the term over time is worth investigating. We would perhaps expect the frequency of other positively evaluated and career-related words to increase as well in the EPA Diacorpus. Other from the frequency list that convey positive meaning, especially with regard to the life-work of an artist, are the nouns *master* and *success*, and the adjectives *famous*, *known* and *great*. *Master* and *success* do not even fall within the cut-off of the 326 most frequent words in the corpus, since they have less than 100 occurrences across all decades. They are therefore indistinctive in terms of variation, due to their limited presence. Conversely, *famous* has a more relevant presence in the corpus, with a total of 142 occurrences, but a gradually decreasing profile across decades (35, 32, 16, 19, 26, 13), whereas the adjectives *great* and *known* are not only stable, but also quantitatively relevant. *Great* (235 occurrences) is the 11<sup>th</sup> word showing less variation across decades according to its CV score, with a profile across decades of 37, 30, 32, 39, 45, 52, and can therefore be classified as a lockword. Similarly, *known* (202) ranks 12<sup>th</sup> among lockwords, with a profile across decades of 41, 39, 26, 34, 24, 38. It has to be noted that all these adjectives, *famous*, *great* and *known*, have decreasing patterns in the Time Magazine Corpus.

A close examination of the concordances related to *famous*, *great* and *known* was therefore required. Only 16 occurrences of the adjective *famous* out of 142 were clearly related to artists, since the majority describes their works, or a collection, or, in a smaller number of cases, it defines a group of people (*the famous*) often portrayed by art. Similarly, only 27 occurrences of the adjective *great* out of 235 directly describe artists, while most of the instances address art works, art movements, collections and exhibitions. The adjective *known* is no exception to this pattern, with only a third of the occurrences (202) related to artists, especially those combined with adverbials, such as *well known*, *best known*, *internationally known*, *little known*, *lesser known*.

A first conclusion could be that any evaluation in terms of fame and greatness is preferably addressed to art works and to the relevant artistic context in general, rather than to the artist himself as a person. This tendency is quite stable across decades, although the use of the adjective *famous* is decreasing, maybe because of its controversial semantic prosody. After Andy Warhol's 1968 quote ("In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes") the idea of fame, especially with regard to art, began to carry some disregarded aspects, such as the dissipation of hierarchies and its logical extension that everybody could be famous, and not merely those individuals really worthy of fame (Buchloh 2001).

Conversely, the idea of career as an asset strictly related to the artist became more and more valuable over time, to the point that it can give a justifying reason for the exhibition itself. In other words, we might say that the artist's career has become a preliminary condition for giving him space within a museum and celebrating his work with an exhibition. Youth, as a consequence, is not particularly valuable in this regard, and for a young artist it is very difficult to emerge in the art scene (see McCarthy et al. 2001). The EPA Corpus confirms the tendency, with less than 10 instances of the expression *young artist/s*, 18 occurrences of the noun *youth* and the hapax legomenon *youthful*.

### 8.3.2 *photography, architecture, media*

The nouns *photography*, *architecture* and *media* were reunited in the analysis, because, with more or less specificity, they all identify exhibition topics or channels of expression used by artists.

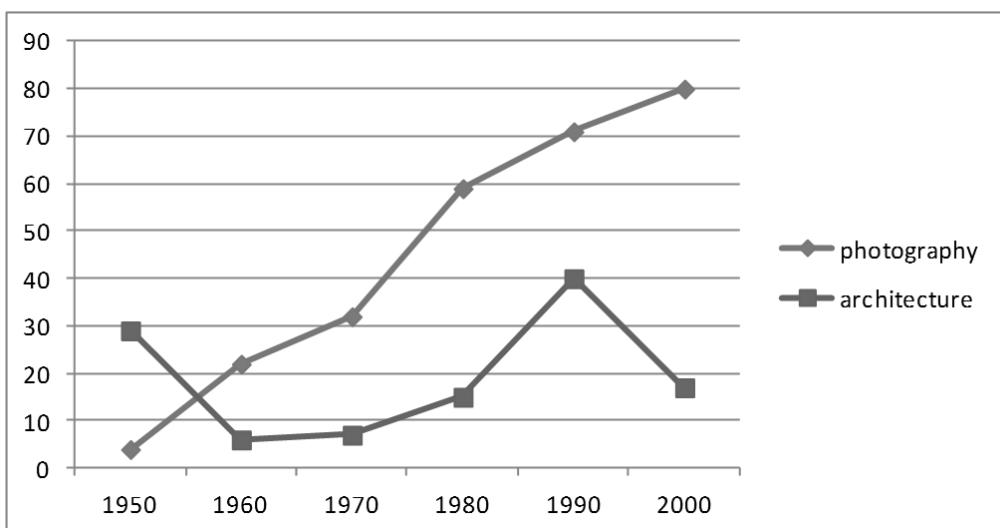


Figure 8.10 – Frequencies of *photography, architecture*

The increase of *photography* and the wavering of *architecture* can be read as a reflection of the emergence of new visual languages, acknowledged as art forms by museums and audiences, but also as a sign of changing tastes of both museum visitors and curatorial staff.

The noun *photography* ranks 19<sup>th</sup> within the top twenty of the most increasing words across decades; its profile - 4, 22, 32, 59, 71, 80 occurrences – shows a clear pattern of growth. Conversely, *architecture* ranks 4<sup>th</sup> within the most decreasing words according to its CV score, but it is characterized by an irregular profile of 29, 6, 7, 15, 40, 17 occurrences across decades. Our reference general corpus, the Time Magazine, reflects a peak in the frequency of *photography* in the 1970s, since its profile across decades is 133, 166, 252, 196, 112, 91, and one in the 1960s for *architecture* (339, 387, 188, 262, 150, 130).

The acknowledgement of photography as an art is traditionally linked to the work of the American photographer Alfred Stieglitz (1864 – 1946), who struggled to establish photography as a valid form of artistic expression (Rosenblum 2007). Thus it was only in 1937, when the first major exhibition on photography was organized in the United States by Beaumont Newhall at the Museum of Modern Art - "Photography, 1839- 1937", a staple for the history of this medium – that photography gained widespread recognition as an art. A year later Newhall was appointed Moma's first curator of photography and a Department of Photography was founded: this was a further tribute and a sign of official recognition with regard to this medium, coming from the museum establishment (Rosenblum 2007). This also explains why *photography* has been mentioned within American EPAs since the fifties, while if we look at British EPAs, in the sixties the noun was still used in a completely different accepted sense (16):

(16)

Members of the press may preview this Exhibition on Thursday, 29th August from 2.30 to 4.00 p.m. on production of this press notice. **Photography** is not permitted in the Board Room.

(London, National Gallery, Canaletto Bicentenary Exhibition, 26th August, 1968)

Nonetheless, British museums were becoming aware of the increasing interest in photography, as shown in an EPA issued by the Victoria&Albert Museum, on the occasion of an exhibition on Henri Cartier-Bresson, which sounds as a sort of justification addressed to the press (17):

(17)

The connection of the Victoria and Albert Museum with the field of **photography**, considered at large as a branch of the visual arts, is not known to a wide public. But its Library houses a notable collection of Victorian photographs; and the Museum mounted the official Centenary exhibition of the Invention of Photography in 1939.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, Henri Cartier-Bresson, 1st January, 1969).

The trend related to the noun *architecture* plays a more significant role in the American section of EPA Diacorpus, since 100 occurrences of the word out of 114 belong to that part. Concordances show a major interest in this discipline during the nineties, where most of the occurrences of *architecture* (34) are concentrated, in correspondence with great exhibitions on masters such as Alvar Aalto and Frank Lloyd Wright. The number of concordances falls drastically in the following decade, where only 3 occurrences of *architecture* as a field of interest for exhibitions were retrieved, although *architecture* is not the main topic of the show, but rather a marginal part. Although this decreasing trend could be biased by the composition of the EPA Diacorpus – EPAs were selected randomly in order to gain the widest and the most general overview on the genre, without selecting topics – the gradual disappearance of the noun *architecture* from 1990 onwards may suggests at least two conclusions: in the first place, it could reflect the growing difficulties, in technical and economical terms, faced by museums in organizing architectural exhibitions, which is a fact, as well as the reduced opportunities to appoint an architect for renovation projects within the museum due to the high costs of these interventions; on the other hand, this trend could be related to the perception of architecture as a very specialized field of interest and therefore as a more complex and less appealing topic for an exhibition addressed to the general public.

The analysis of another increasing abstract noun within the corpus, *media*, allows to recognize a further trend with regard to criteria selection, and namely the importance of putting on display a variety of different items and topics. As shown by its graphic representation, the pattern of *media* is of 7, 6, 3, 9, 24, 53 occurrences across the six decades; its CV score is 112.41 and consequently this noun ranks 9<sup>th</sup> among the most increasing ones. As in the previous cases – *photography*, *architecture* – the noun is quantitatively more relevant in American EPAs (87 American vs. 13 British occurrences). *media* sharply increases in the Time Magazine corpus too, shifting from less than 100 occurrences in the 1950s to more than 1,000 in the 2000s, although the term is mostly used to refer to address the newspapers, television, and radio in this general corpus.

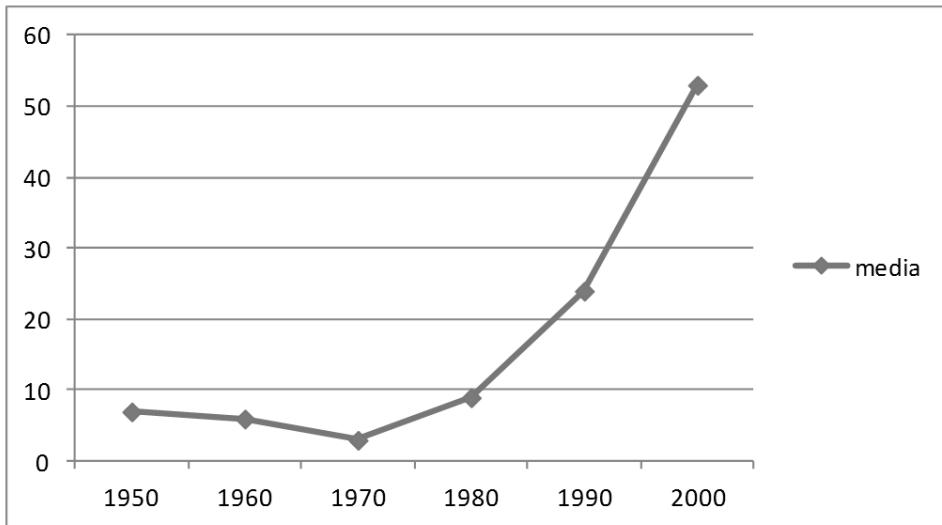


Figure 8.11 – Frequencies of *media*

The term identify press members also in the EPA Diacorpus, as testified by almost 20 occurrences of expressions such as *media preview* and *media contact/s*, but a close look at concordances shows that in most of the cases the noun relates to art techniques and especially to those of most recent invention, such as photography and video:

(18)

A color film is to be made of the image and the resultant movie will be projected of the wall next to the original image. Serra says that "the **media** is the subject rather than the light."  
(Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, *Art by Telephone*, 23 October 1969)

Moreover, the noun often appears in the following combinations, suggesting an idea of variety and richness of contents:

(19)

has developed a multivalent and multi-  
vehicles for photography. The new  
bronze, polished aluminum and mixed  
experimented with a broad range of  
represent Bearden's work in a variety of  
collection of works of art in all  
about twenty-five works in a variety of

**media**  
**media**  
**media,**  
**media.**  
**media,**  
**media**  
**media:**

art form that addresses  
brought images of fame  
frequently using complex  
In 1928, he executed his first  
including watercolors, oils, and  
is on view. The Museum is open  
oils, pastels, etchings

The increasing frequency of the noun *media* in the context here outlined – that of a rich and various selection of items on display – suggest a further cultural trend for museums, which is to ensure a variety of media, historical periods, objects and subjects.

### 8.3.3 *examples, form*

*examples* shows an irregularly decreasing pattern, since its frequency profile across the six decades is 30, 16, 9, 19, 21, 15. It has a total of 110 occurrences (68 American, 42 British) and a CV score of 38.36. *examples* irregularly decreases in the Time Magazine corpus too: 336, 276, 304, 202, 175, 69.

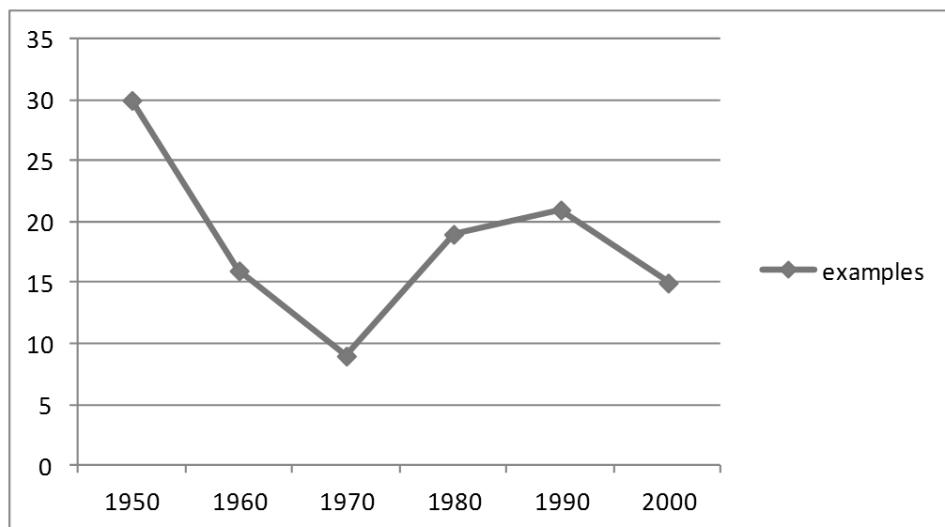


Figure 8.12 – Frequencies of *examples*

As it could be easily expected, in the language of EPAs the pieces on display are defined as examples of something: of the whole body of work of an artist, of an artistic current or a movement, of the content of a collection, and so on. The following concordances (20) make clear this pattern usage:

(20)

of China in 1949. It features major five paintings, including some fine Europe and Japan including important

**examples**  
**examples**  
**examples**

of socialist realism,  
by Renoir, Cezanne and Pissarro.  
from the collections of some

In the reported concordances the semantic prosody associated with the noun *examples* is positive; yet, EPA writers seem to use this definition in a discontinuous way across the decades. The reason behind this discontinuity could be similar to that provided for the decline of another word which has already been dealt with in the analysis, *represented* (see section 8.2.2). Namely, it could be related to the concern of providing an exhaustive overview on the topic featured by the exhibition, with plenty of artworks on display, rather than suggesting a glimpse of it through a set of *examples*. In fact, the word *examples* can evoke the idea of a limited selection among a wider field of possibilities that have not been fully exploited. It has to be noted that, while in some cases selectiveness is marked by EPAs as a value and is associated with a positive feature of the exhibition, as the consequence of an authoritative curatorial choice, in other it can sound as a consequence of a real lack of contents. Slight nuances of meaning are here indeed involved; yet, EPA writers seem to be aware of them. Moreover, in view of similar cases already highlighted in the analysis of lexical variation of time (see, for instance, *represented* in section 8.2.2), this need for disambiguation has not be underestimated.

As for the second item belonging to the category of abstract nouns, *form*, a pattern of relative stability has to be noted. It has a total of 151 occurrences in the corpus (100 American, 51 British), and its profile across the decades is 28, 26, 16, 23, 29, 29, while the CV score is 20.01. Conversely, the noun decreases in the Time Magazine corpus.

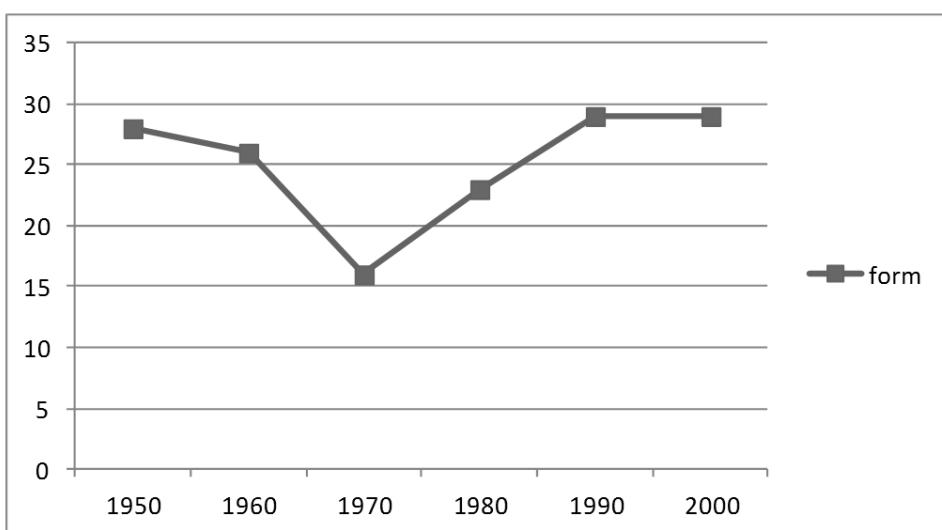


Figure 8.13 – Frequencies of *form*

The most frequent cluster related to *form* is *the form of*, with 13 occurrences, typically followed by nouns specifying the technique it has been used to create the described artwork, as the following concordances (21) show:

(21)

brilliant and interesting work	<b>in the form of</b>	sketches, were too completely
American cinema is presented	<b>in the form of</b>	film, original designs, sketches
documentation of Klein's life	<b>in the form of</b>	photographs, letters and

Also typical is the combination *art form*, with 18 overall occurrences, identifying a technique or a new art medium, such as photography, ceramics, posters and many other that need to be expressly defined as art forms because their status is under debate or has still to be fully acknowledged. In the following example, for instance, body art is introduced for the first time as a topic for exhibitions (22):

(22)

Bodyworks, the new and controversial **art form** in which the artist uses his own body as his art work, will be surveyed for the first time in America at the Museum of Contemporary Art. (Chicago, Museum of Modern Art, *Bodyworks*, 27th February, 1975)

The noun *form* is also used in the corpus in some recurrent, formulaic binomials such as *form and content* (3 occurrences), *form and light* (2 occurrences), *form and structure* (2 occurrences):

(23)

Rodin opened the channels for the	<b>form</b> and content of modern sculpture"
involves the use of mirrors,	<b>form</b> and light to create optical illusions
the late abstractions. Cubist	<b>form</b> and structure gave way to biomorphic

In order to explain the consistency of this noun over time, the argumentation can follow what has to be pointed out for other lockwords of the corpus (see, for instance, the cases of *held* in section 8.2.4): namely, some items can be regarded as part of the specialized lexis of art discourse, one of the most relevant domains for EPAs. EPA writers, in particular, share a sort of lexical heritage they contribute to shape, through their selection, and pass on to colleagues over time. To a

certain extent, the usage of some specialized or technical words is normally expected to be stable over time; the stability of the noun *form* over time in a corpus specialized in art discourse, in particular, seems quite self-explanatory: how could ever an art exhibition ignore this notion? Nonetheless, the analysis shows that even technical words may follow increasing or decreasing trends in the EPA Diacorpus (see the decrease of *exhibited*, in section 8.2.2 and the increase of *visual* in section 8.5.1 ), so that each case is worthy of investigation and has to be examined *per se*.

### **8.3.4 education**

With regard to the abstract noun *education*, the analysis is carried out in association with that of the concrete noun *events* because they are both used in the context of collateral programmes thematically linked to the exhibition (see section 8.4.3).

## **8.4 Lexical Nouns (concrete)**

Within the category of lexical concrete nouns that showed patterns of increase, decrease, or stability, are *office*, *admission*, *tickets*, *images*, *media*, *catalogue*, *students*, *events*, *curator*, *tour* (increased), *picture*, *man*, *painters*, *country* (decreased), *landscape*, *release*, *department*, *drawings*, *paintings*, *director* (stable).

### **8.4.1 office, department**

The nouns *office* and *department* were reunited in the analysis because both identify working divisions and professional roles within museum environments.

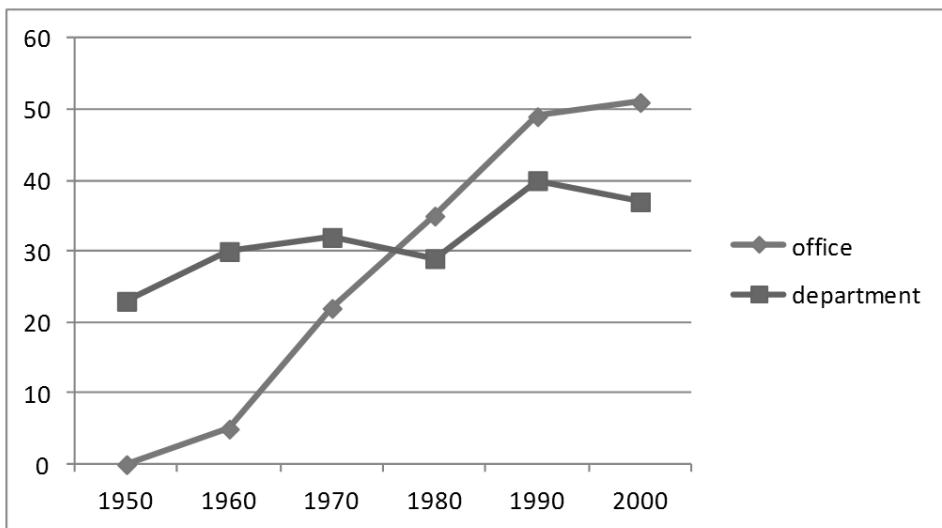


Figure 8.14 – Frequencies of *office*, *department*

In this case, a comparison with the Time Magazine corpus would add very little to the analysis, since these terms are genre-specific and, by the way, in the general reference corpus *office* and *department* decrease rather than increase. Let us focus therefore on EPA Diacorpus evidence.

The word *office* has 139 overall occurrences. Its profile shows a clear and continuous increase from 1950 onwards (0, 5, 22, 35, 49, 51), although the CV score (80.50) ranks it only 37<sup>th</sup>.

It comes as no surprise for a corpus of press releases that in the majority of the occurrences (100 over 139) this item is part of the expression *press office*.

As already pointed out, press offices took off in American museums and were created only subsequently in British museums, as a consequence of the earlier development of public relations in the United States. It seems, nonetheless, that they became more important across British rather than American museums over time. As a matter of fact, 99 occurrences of the expression *press office* belong to the British section, starting from a National Gallery's EPA dating 1970, while only one American EPA, belonging to the Museum of Modern Art and dating 1999, provides the mention of a *press office* at the end of the sheet. Conversely, American EPAs show a preference for expressions such as *contact*, *immediately contact*, *for further information contact*, *media contact*, *press contact*, or simply *for further information*, followed by colon and name of the press officer in charge. This basic format, in its many variants, was retrieved in the majority of American EPAs and already from the 1950s. It becomes common in British EPAs as well, but only from the 1970s onwards. It can be therefore pointed out that American EPAs show an earlier personalization of the press officer's work, expressed through a marked signature. However, in the United States, since the 1950s the press officer's job was not merely associated with a *press office*, as concordances show,

but rather with a more complex structure, such as a *department of public affairs*, *of public information* or *of communications*. With regards to British environments, similar departments are mentioned in the corpora only from 1969 in Victoria&Albert Museum's EPAs, where press officers were working first within a *department of public relations* and subsequently within a *department of museum services*. The word *department* is one of the lockwords of the corpus, with a rather consistent profile of 23, 30, 32, 29, 40, 37; 2 out of 3 occurrences belong to the American corpus.

A possible way of interpreting the data at the broadest level is that EPAs were seen by Americans museums, since their very first origin, as a tool of a wider and integrated communication system, which could not be limited to the relationship with journalists *tout court* but also involved further levels, inside the museum (i.e. the other departments) and outside the museum (i.e. the general public).

#### **8.4.2 admission, tickets, students**

As introduced in the first chapter of the thesis (section 1.1), at a certain point of their development, and in particular from the eighties onwards, EPAs began to reflect economic concerns, as a consequence of the changed financial situation and overall rising of prices. The contribution of public funds to museums remained static or fell, so that museum governing bodies and directors had to seek funding from alternative sources.

The increasing frequency profile of words like *admission*, *tickets* and *students* in the EPA Diacorpus are reflective of the introduction of visitor fees, which became a necessity for many institutions, but also of the need to differentiate them for some segments of audiences, i.e *students*, according to their age and other characteristics. Moreover, as a part of their marketing strategy, museums started to offer discounts or free admission on certain days of the week. To reinforce the intuition that the trends related to these nouns are a distinct feature of the EPA Diacorpus is the observation of the data derived from the Time Magazine corpus, where *admission*, *tickets* and *students* are characterized by an opposite, downward profile.

In the following figure (Figure 8.15) a graphic representation of the increasing trend of the nouns *admission* and *tickets* is provided. Their profiles across the six decades are respectively 2, 7, 44, 33, 66, 121 and 1, 2, 2, 12, 31, 75.

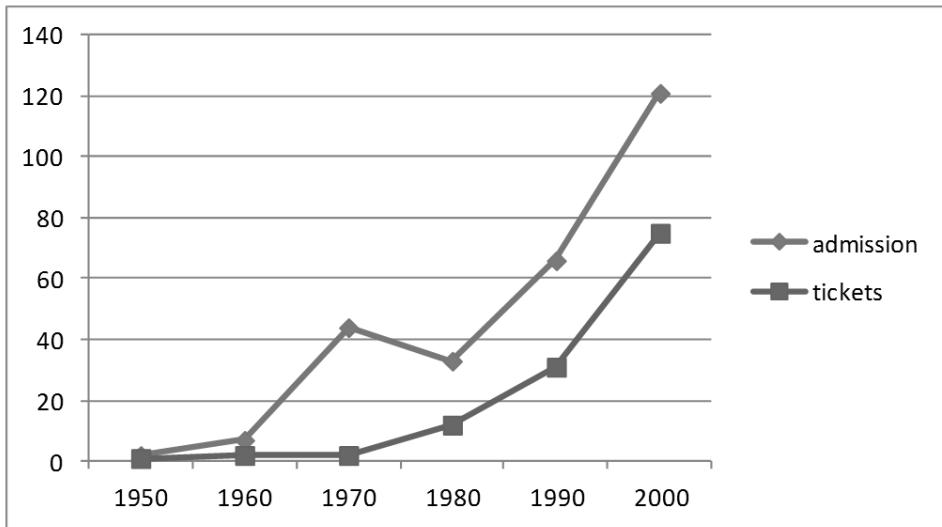


Figure 8.15 – Frequencies of *admission*, *tickets*

Corpus evidence shows that one occurrence out of three of the noun *admission*, as well as three occurrences out of four of the noun *tickets*, belong to British EPAs: this suggests that the opportunity whether to charge or not admission is particularly relevant in Britain, where free museums are a long-time tradition. The British Museum, for instance, opened for free in 1759 as in the original intentions of its founder, the collector Hans Sloan: it was meant to “all persons desirous of seeing and viewing the [collections]” and for “satisfying the desires of the curious, as for the improvement, knowledge and information of all persons” (Sloane 1753). Since then, the issue of free access to museums has been under debate (see chapter 1).

The noun *admission* does not necessarily imply a visitor fee; in almost 50 occurrences the word is actually used to signal a free entrance to the exhibition, as in the following example (24):

(24)

A small exhibition of 17th century Dutch townscape paintings from the National Gallery collection will be on view in the Board Room from Friday, 15th February until Sunday, 24th March, 1974. **Admission** to the exhibition will be free.

(London, National Gallery, *Dutch Townscape Painting*, 11 February 1974)

Conversely, other collocates of admission in the corpus confirm the idea that a fee is required: for instance, *charge/s* (20 occurrences), *price/s* (18), and, of course, *ticket/s* (4). The noun is also often used to signal the museum closing time, as shown by the cluster *last admission* followed by a specific hour of the day, generally in the evening (46 occurrences).

Let us move on to the analysis of another noun involved in admission policies, *students*. This ranks 18<sup>th</sup> in the list of the most increasing lexical items of the corpus; its profile across decades is 0, 13, 17, 23, 28, 43, while its CV score is 68.34. It has a total of 167 occurrences, more than a half belonging to the American section of the corpus.

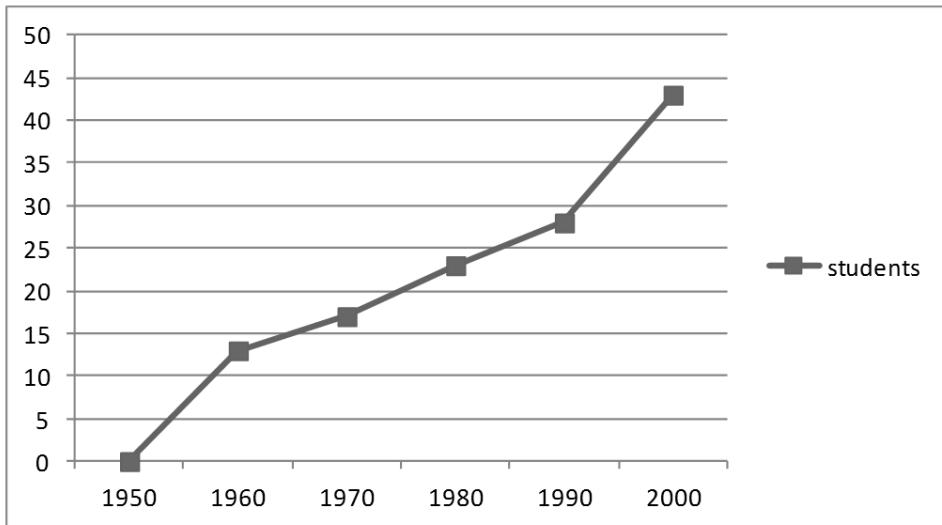


Figure 8.16 – Frequencies of *students*

The noun *students* appears for the first time in the sixties among American EPAs; from the seventies onward it can be found also in the British ones. The analysis of concordances shows that from a certain point of their development, to be placed approximately in the sixties, museums began to consider *students* as strategic visitors, to be targeted and addressed by special reduction policies. EPAs served indeed as a communicative tool for spreading the news about these policies through media.

The following example (25) illustrates how information on visitor fees can be structured in an EPA. It is placed at the very beginning of the press release, right after the title, and takes into account different categories, namely students, children, pensioners, groups, etc:

(25)

LANDSCAPE MASTERPIECES FROM SOVIET MUSEUMS  
 18th October - 30th November 1975  
 Press View: Thursday 16th October from 10 - 5.30 pm  
 Private View: Friday 17th October from 2—7 pm  
 Admission: 50p (30p Mondays); half price **students**, children, pensioners, group visits etc.  
 Hours: Monday — Saturday 10—6 pm Sunday 2—6 pm  
 (London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Masterpieces from Soviet Museums*, 1 October 1975)

The growing need for differentiating visitor fees according to their status is reflected in the corpus by an increasing frequency of nouns identifying specific categories of audience, namely *children* (10, 5, 3, 17, 31, 27), *pensioners* (0, 0, 0, 6, 8, 1), *seniors* (0, 0, 0, 0, 10, 11), *disabled* (0, 0, 0, 8, 8, 17) and *members* (13, 18, 11, 15, 16, 21).

#### 8.4.3 events, education

The analysis of the concrete noun *events* is carried out along with that of the abstract noun *education*, because both words relate to the same concept and namely are involved with the organisation of collateral initiatives linked to the exhibition. Moreover, both nouns share an increasing trend over time, as shown by Figure 8.17, and their presence in the corpus is similar also in quantitative terms, since they total respectively 100 and 106 overall occurrences.

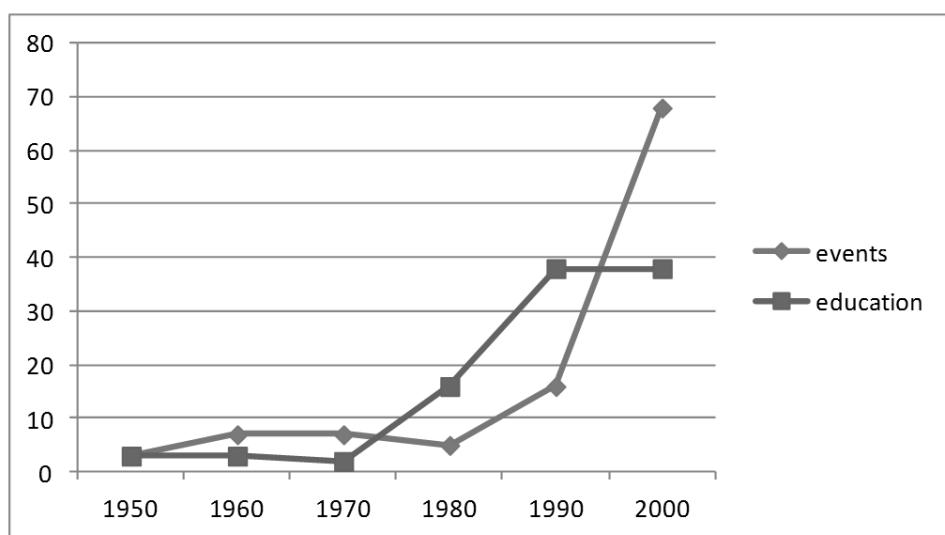


Figure 8.17 – Frequencies of *education, events*

The noun *events* ranks 4<sup>th</sup> in the list of the most increasing lexical items of the corpus in view of its high CV score, 141.83; its profile across the six decades is 3, 7, 7, 5, 16, 68. Most occurrences (77 out of 106) belong to American EPAs.

The noun *education* ranks 11<sup>th</sup> among the most increasing items over time. Its CV score is 103.90, while its profile across the six decades is 3, 3, 2, 16, 38, 38. Occurrences are evenly distributed between the two components of the corpus (48 American, 52 British).

Once again we are in front of distinct trends of the EPA Diacorpus, since our general reference corpus, the Time Magazine, show opposite, downward profiles for the frequencies of these nouns over time.

The rise of *education* and *events* has to be put in relation to the increasing importance gained by educational purposes pursued by museums and exhibitions but also to marketing strategies aiming at widening the number of potential visitors: *education* programmes and collateral *events* thematically linked to the exhibition, such as lectures, films, artist talks, guided tours, etc, can attract a wider public interested in different aspects touched by the exhibition and not simply art lovers.

Corpus evidence shows that museums have been involved in this trend at least from the sixties, although the real exploit of collateral events can be placed between the seventies and the eighties.

The analysis of concordances of the word *events*, for instance, shows that most occurrences are linked to a programme of collateral initiatives (and *programme*, in fact, is the most frequent collocate of this noun in the corpus). *events* began to be used in a cultural context of lectures, concerts, workshops, and other similar initiatives, in the seventies and more often among American EPAs, while British EPAs absorbed this trend later. The first relevant occurrence of *events* carrying this meaning can be found in an EPA dating back to 1974 and issued by the New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. In this case, reported below (example 26), the mention of a collateral programme appears at the end of the EPA, but this kind information could also be incorporated in the text:

(26)

Several special **events** will take place in the museum auditorium in conjunction with the Guggenheim show.

(New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Jesus Rafael Soto Exhibition*, 28 October 1974)

With regard to the noun *education*, concordances shows that in a first phase it was used very little and limited to the identification of expert roles or special departments within the museum: for instance, the ‘Department of Public Relations and Education’ running in the fifties at the Victoria&Albert Museum, or the ‘Curator of Education’ in charge at the Guggenheim in the sixties; from the eighties, a new cluster emerges with growing frequency across decades, *education programme/s*, totalling 16 overall occurrences concentrated between 1980 and 2003. Under this

expression are gathered a series of thematic events – films, lectures, guided tours, artist talks - organised by museums in order to provide a more complete understanding of the exhibition. Nonetheless, as already pointed out, these initiatives do not pursue only cultural and educational purposes, but also aim at widening the audience and selling more tickets.

#### **8.4.4 *country, tour***

Although seemingly these nouns do not share any common point, it is worth considering them together in the analysis, as they relate to a cultural trend that involved museums from the eighties onward and that, to a certain extent, can be put in relation to the wider phenomenon of globalization: the feasibility of travelling an exhibition (Lord and Lord 2002), which has become increasingly important over time, since most museums need to recover the rental costs at a minimum.

Data regarding the frequency profiles of these nouns are the following: *tour* has 3, 5, 4, 8, 33, 51 occurrences across decades; it ranks 7<sup>th</sup> among the most increasing items of the corpus in view of its high CV score, 115.42; conversely, *country* is the 20<sup>th</sup> most decreasing item in the corpus, with a CV score of 31.99, and its profile across decades is of 32, 26, 25, 25, 18, 11 occurrences. It is also worth noticing that, with regard to both nouns, *tour* and *country*, lexical change intervenes with major evidence between the eighties and the twenties: occurrences of *tour* go from 8 to 55, those of *country* from 25 to 11. No particular difference is highlighted by comparing the frequency profiles of these items between the American and British sections of the corpus. In the case of *tour* and *country*, as for many nouns already encountered in the analysis, results from the Time Magazine corpus contrast to those provided by the EPA Diacorpus: *tour* decreases, while *country* has a peak in the 1970s and then sharply decreases in the general corpus.

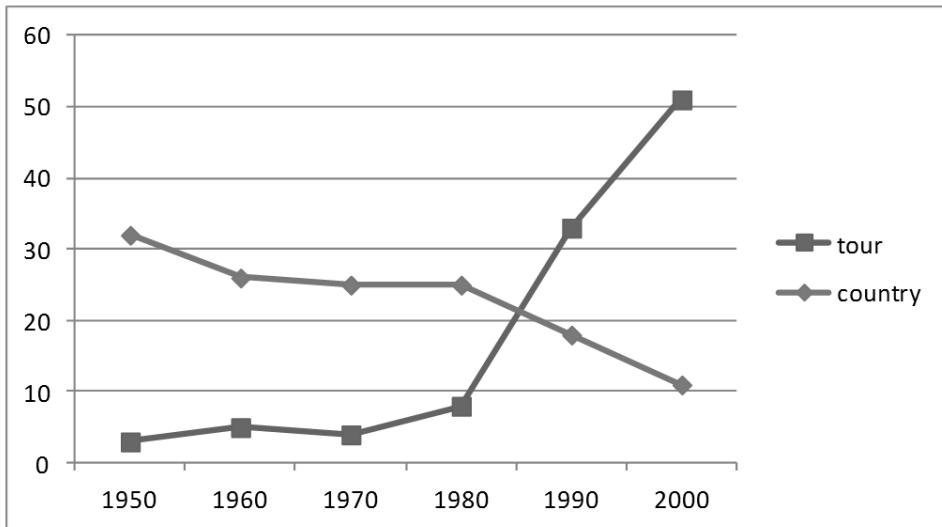


Figure 8.18 – Frequencies of *tour*, *country*

Concordances allow to recognize the patterns of usage of both items. With regard to *tour* it has to be pointed out that 3 occurrences out of 4 relate to the idea of a travelling or touring exhibition, while the rest refers to guided tours, i.e. collateral activities addressed to visitors which belong to the series of *events* – another increasing item of the corpus – already encountered in the analysis (section 8.4.3). It has been stressed that these programmes have become increasingly important for museums in terms of promotional tools; yet, there is a further reason for the growth of the noun *tour* over time and it comes from the opportunity museums have to host exhibitions that are fully developed and designed and to travel among different, international venues. This choice allows to collaborate with other institutions, to share ideas and materials, but also a part of the production costs amongst the venues. Moreover, the loan of temporary exhibitions lengthens their life and allows the widest possible audiences to experience objects that might be dispersed amongst several collections. A selection of relevant examples shows how the noun *tour* is used in the corpus in the context so far outlined:

(27)

The exhibition began its **tour** at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin and was then shown at the Scuderie Papali al Quirinale in the autumn before its opening at the Royal Academy.  
 (London, Royal Academy of Art, *Botticelli's Dante*, 1 March 2001)

(28)

Willem de Kooning: The Late Paintings, The 1980s, which finishes its international **tour** at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, provides the first opportunity to study in depth the artist's last decade of work.

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Willem de Kooning*, 1 November 1996)

Travelling exhibitions are flexible and can be created at a global level: they can be considered as a positive effect of globalization, which, from the museum's point of view, has been a challenge in developing new strategies and policies (Lord and Lord 2002). It is therefore reasonable to point out that the growth of the noun *tour* in the EPA Diacorpus reflects this cultural trend, which involved museums in a more global, international perspective. Furthermore, to confirm this suggestion is the decrease of the noun *country*, mostly used in the corpus to address exhibitions of national interest, featuring local artists or collections, as the following examples (29, 30) explain:

(29)

This selection [...] [is] an opportunity of seeing a remarkable and unusual group from one of the outstanding private collections in the **country**.

(London, Victoria & Albert Museum, Bruce Ingram Collection, 1 April 1962)

(30)

Son of the former Consul General of Sweden, Oldenburg started his career in Chicago, attended the School of the Art Institute from 1953 to 1955, moved to New York in 1956 and soon gained the reputation of being one of the leading "pop" artists in the **country**.

(Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, Claes Oldenburg, 1 October 1967)

It can be therefore suggested that lexical change related to the nouns *tour* and *country* in the EPA Diacorpus is strictly associated with a relevant development concerning museums from the eighties onward, the shift towards a more global perspective and the rise of travelling exhibits.

#### **8.4.5 catalogue**

Ranking 17<sup>th</sup> amongst the most increasing items of the corpus, the noun *catalogue* has a total of 249 occurrences, equally distributed between American and British section. Its CV score is 72.86, while the profile across decades is 5, 14, 30, 58, 58, 84. Once again we are in front of a

genre-specific term and a distinct trend of the EPA Diacorpus, since the occurrences of *catalogue* sharply decrease from the 1950s onwards in the Time Magazine corpus.

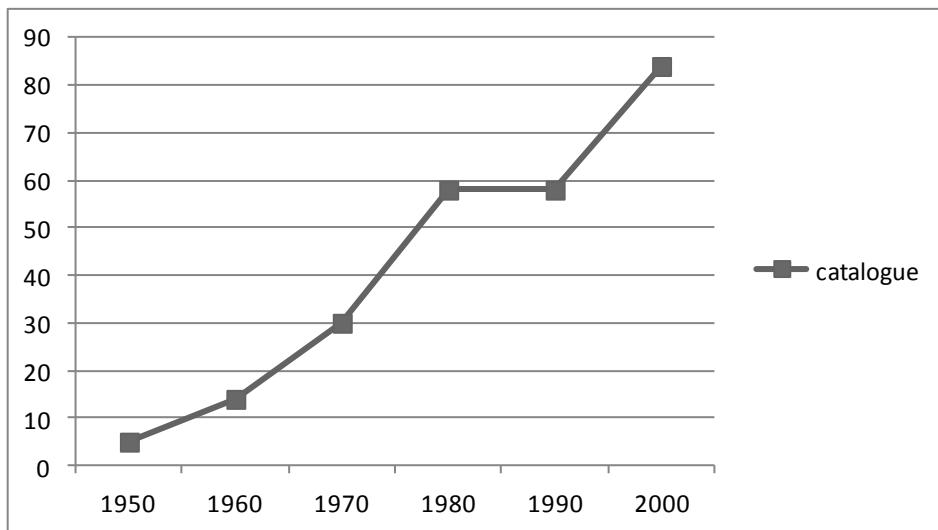


Figure 8.19 – Frequencies of *catalogue*

As already emerged in the pilot study (see chapter 7), this item is worth of interest within the analysis of lexical variation: it ranks amongst the keywords of EPAs issued in the 2000s, because the latter have a high percentage of this noun when compared with those issued in the 1950s. Typically, a catalogue is said to *accompany* the exhibition, as if it was an important, inseparable component of it, and is positively evaluated as *fully/beautifully/richly illustrated* (47 occurrences), *comprehensive* (6), *available* (6), or even *ambitious* (1 case only), to mention the most relevant collocates. The following concordances (31) suggest how the publication can be presented at a glance:

(31)

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| before reproduced, this benchmark<br>A comprehensive full colour<br>by a fully-illustrated and documented<br>and described in an extensive<br>ADMISSION FREE. A highly illustrated<br>is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated<br>is accompanied by a scholarly<br>Fine Arts, Boston, said: "This splendid<br>nd Stephen Wildman - this superb | <b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue.</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue.</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue</b><br><b>catalogue</b> | sheds new light on the artist.<br>will accompany the exhibition.<br>Press Day: Wednesday<br>of 128 pages, with 24<br>written by the organiser of<br>HOURS OF OPENING<br>discussing the comparisons<br>is a wonder for scholars,<br>provides a fascinating insight |
|--|--|---|

A *catalogue* represents a useful tool for scholars, reviewers, collectors and art lovers in general, so the growth of this noun over time can be indeed related to educational aims increasingly pursued by museums. Nonetheless, it is also an item on sale in bookshops, from which museums can profit. The increasing profile of the noun *catalogue* in the EPA Diacorpus could reflect the urge for finding new forms of financial support, which has been already invoked throughout the analysis in order to explain the rise of other lexical items: in the first place, *tickets*, but also *events* and *education* (see sections 8.4.2 and 8.4.3). This suggestion is confirmed by the increasing profile of other nouns identifying published items related to the exhibition, such as *book* (8, 20, 20, 6, 53, 76) and *publication* (5, 9, 5, 7, 20, 33). Since the mention of the catalogue is a recurrent feature of EPAs and is expression of a specific communicative purpose, its positioning within the structure of EPAs will be further examined in the following chapter of the thesis (chapter 9).

#### **8.4.6 release**

Among Epa Diacorpus lockwords - i.e. words that remained stable over time - *release* is the word showing the most consistent profile. Its 294 overall occurrences are distributed across the six decades in the following way: 41, 53, 54, 50, 51, 45. They are also quite evenly balanced within the British (130) and the American (164) components of the corpus. All occurrences are related to the noun, no instance refers to the verb.

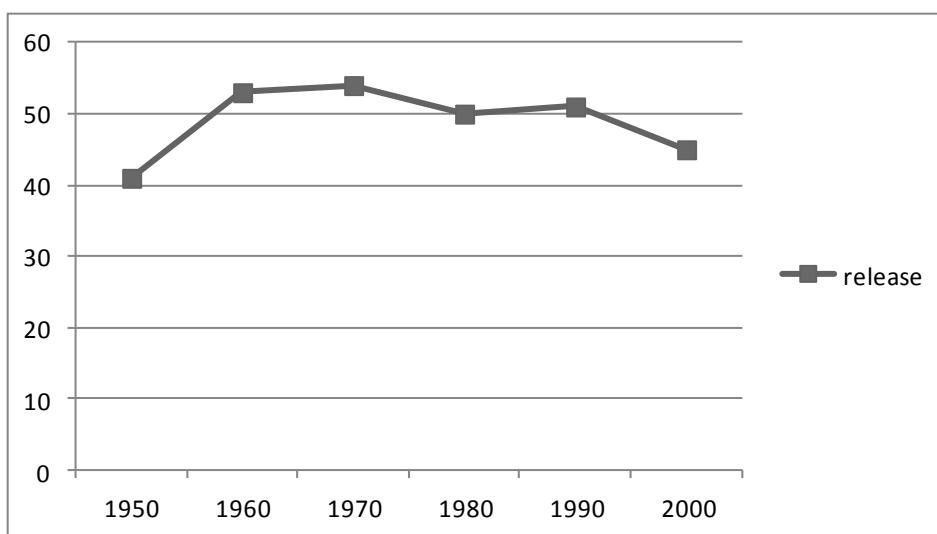


Figure 8.20 – Frequencies of *release*

This result is rather obvious, since the word *release* clearly identifies the textual genre investigated in the present study: a statement prepared for the press, i.e. a press release. As a consequence, in more than a third of the occurrences (122 out of 294) *release* is part of the expression *press release*; there are also 21 occurrences of *news release* and 10 of *release* alone, both used in the same way and with the same meaning as *press release*. The following examples show how these expressions typically occur in the corpus (32, 33, 34):

(32)

Orazio Gentileschi at the Court of Charles I

3 March-23 May 1999

Supported by The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation

THE NATIONAL GALLERY

**PRESS RELEASE**

The National Gallery, in conjunction with the Museo de Bellas Artes in Bilbao, is organising the first ever exhibition of the work of the 17th-century Italian painter Orazio Gentileschi (1563-1639).

(London, The National Gallery, *Orazio Gentileschi*, 1 January 1999)

(33)

**NEWS RELEASE**

March 2003

ART DECO 1910-1939

27 MARCH - 20 JULY 2003

Sponsored by Ernst & Young

On 27 March, the Victoria and Albert Museum opens Art Deco 1910-1939, the most comprehensive exhibition ever staged on one of the most glamorous and popular of all artistic styles.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Art Deco 1910-1939*, 1 March 1959)

(34)

If a story results from this **release**, a cutting would be appreciated

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Humphry Repton*, 1 November 1982)

Another important function of *release* is that identified by the clusters *for release*, followed by the date provided by authors for publication, and *for immediate release*, totalling together 118 occurrences. Often the phrases are capitalized in order to highlight them, as in the following concordances (35):

(35)

January 6, 1967	<b>FOR RELEASE:</b>	Wednesday, April 21, 1954
10 January 1976	<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b>	An exhibition of five
	<b>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</b>	The pagentry and magni

This indication was and still is very important for journalists receiving press releases, especially in the case of EPAs, announcing the opening day of exhibition. Distributing information at exactly the right moment is essential: if the press release is sent out too early, a journalist may lose or forget about it; too late and they will not have enough time to cover the story. Moreover, different media have different lead times. A glossy consumer monthly works up to six months in advance of publication, for example, while radio or television may arrange interviews or a documentary in a shorter time and with tighter deadlines.

The phrase *for immediate release* indicates that the information in the release is not embargoed, i.e. it is not to be published until a certain date.

Our conclusion is that *release* can be considered as a fundamental meta-discourse item, used not only to identify the textual genre, but also to guide journalists in their work. The fact that *release* is a lockword – and more than this, the most stable across decades – tell us much on the awareness writers had regarding the genre and the purposes of EPAs since the early stages of museum public relations.

#### **8.4.7 *picture, images***

Coming to the lexical nouns showing a decreasing pattern over time, the most significant case is that of *picture*, ranking second in the top twenty declining words.

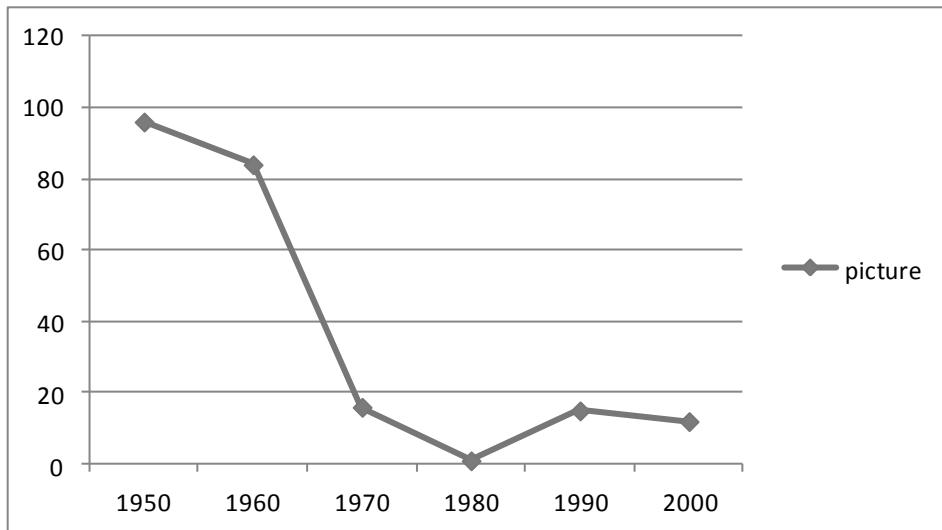


Figure 8.21 – Frequencies of *picture*

Its decrease is not easy to explain. Since the 224 total occurrences of *picture* are evenly distributed across the British and American sections of the EPA Diacorpus, the trend is relevant for both components. Moreover, the noun decreased only in its singular form and not in its plural, which actually increased (12, 14, 15, 35, 29, 69). In our reference corpus, the Time Magazine, the noun decreases both in the singular and plural. If we take a closer look at the concordances of *picture*, we can observe that in most cases (158 over 224 occurrences) the noun is modified by a definite determiner such as *the* or *this*, thus EPA writers mean a very specific picture. See for instance the following concordances (36) :

(36)

was old but not original. reverie. I am convinced that in this country. It is	<b>The picture</b> <b>this picture</b> <b>the only picture</b>	will be on public exhibition has a charm all its own by him which is certainly
---	--	--

The gradual decrease of this typical pattern related to *picture* could be explained in terms of new design criteria. While in the fifties and the sixties the attention was often placed on a single, specific artwork on display (a picture, namely), nowadays exhibitions are massive events featuring many items at once. We cannot expect, therefore, a focus on a single, specific item, but rather a general presentation of the works on display or a list of most prominent items.

This trend is confirmed by the growth of other plural forms identifying artworks on display within the EPA Diacorpus, such as *images* (3, 11, 8, 21, 77, 90), *objects* (5, 23, 10, 14, 30, 43) and *works* (67, 88, 119, 140, 177, 292). The increasing frequencies of *images*, *objects* and *works* are not

necessarily in contrast with those of the respective singular form, at least not in quantitative terms. In fact, when used in the singular form, these nouns seem to lose their concrete meaning and acquire a different sense. Conversely, the noun *picture* always keeps its concrete meaning in the EPA Diacorpus, both in its singular and its plural form. If we compare the singular *image* to its plural *images*, for instance, we can see that the noun is quantitatively increasing (0, 18, 4, 9, 10, 39), but only in a minor part of the cases is the singular noun used in its concrete sense and does it identify a specific work on display. The *image* in question is rather a picture formed in the mind of the artist or a general opinion about a person, as in the following concordances (37):

(37)

the city is celebrated as an furniture design and enhance the interesting disparity between the a rapid-fire combination of	<b>image</b> <b>image</b> <b>image</b> <b>image</b>	of sparkling modernity whilst of the French furniture industry of the ancient world that we derive processing and ironic, spoken
--	--	---

*object* does not seem to play a relevant role in terms of variation, with 40 occurrences and a profile across decades of 7, 15, 4, 1, 9, 4, while *work*, which increases over time (144, 122, 155, 140, 182, 241), is much more used in a collective sense, in order to address the whole body of work produced by an artist or to identify a group of objects. See for instance the following concordances (38):

(38)

retrospective of the artist's he boldly returned to figurative widely varied subjects. His He says, "If I look back on my context of a consistent body of	<b>work</b> <b>work</b> <b>work</b> <b>work</b> <b>work</b>	at the Foundation in 1968. in the late 1960s. combines visual elegance over a period of years that critically investigates
---	---	--

We can argue for the trend of increasing plural nouns identifying objects on display as reflective of the rise of large and multi-item exhibition, which is a real phenomenon occurred in the last decades and still on-going. This result actually reinforces the goodness of the method we adopted so far, since data allow us to make statements on cultural change specific to the environment of museums and exhibitions.

#### 8.4.8 man

Among concrete nouns showing decrease over time is also *man*, which ranks 8<sup>th</sup> within the top twenty decreasing words of the corpus with a profile across decades of 50, 34, 24, 13, 13, 21 occurrences. The ratio between American and British occurrences is 104 vs. 49.

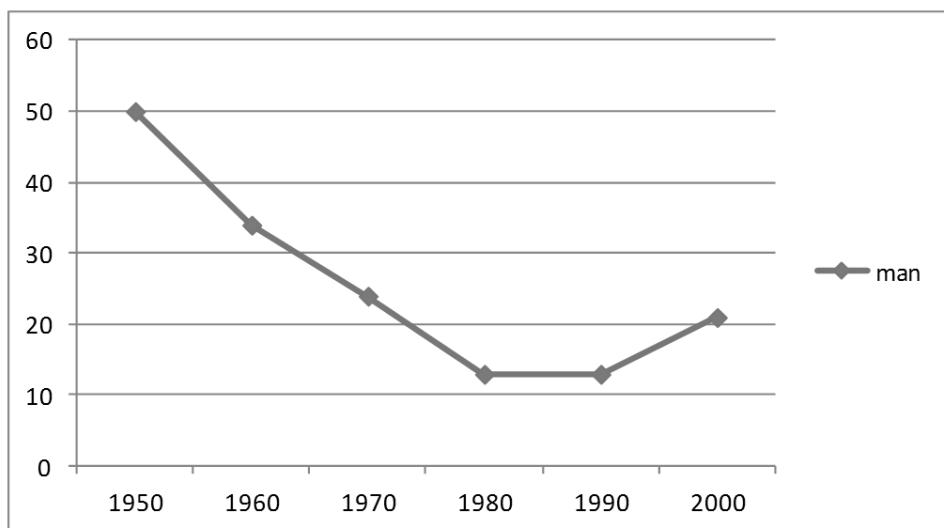


Figure 8.22 – Frequencies of *man*

In one occurrence out of three *man* is part of the phrase *one man show* or *one man exhibition*, an expression used in order to identify an exhibition focusing on a single artist rather than a group of several artists, while in one occurrence out of four the noun is part of the title of a picture or art work. Both functions are shown in the following concordances (39):

(39)

February 1879, one year after his first country and abroad. His first important art form. His monumental series perhaps will be the "Portrait of a young

**one-man** exhibition of paintings  
**one-man** show was an exhibition of  
"Man" of the 20th Century" is an  
**Man"** by Memling, unique for the

We are going to focus especially on the first function, because for an artist *one man exhibitions* are particularly relevant. A monographic or solo exhibition may take the form of a comprehensive retrospective of an artist's career or alternatively highlight a particular body of work, such as work relating to a specific theme or work in a particular medium. Moreover, an exhibition by a single artist can contain works in a variety of media, or it can take the form of a site-specific installation of works for a particular venue. Curiously, all the occurrences of the phrase *one*

*man show/exhibition* date back to the period comprised between 1955 and 1988, while the phrase is absent from most recent EPAs. The Time Magazine also gives evidence of the decline of the phrase *one man show*, which appears across the decades with the following frequencies: 85, 93, 36, 17, 12, 9.

The EPA Diacorpus was explored in terms of alternative phrases with a similar meaning, such as, for instance, *solo exhibition*, which has 17 occurrences distributed between 1995 and 2005, and *monographic exhibition*, which has only two occurrences, also belonging to the period 1990-2009. It seems, therefore, that both expressions were not successful enough to replace the disappearance of *one man show/exhibition*. Conversely, the noun *retrospective*, which identifies an exhibition of works of an extended period of a single artist's activity, increased over time, shifting from 7 occurrences in 1950 to 35 in 2000. So, it may be concluded that *retrospective* has replaced the phrase *one man show/exhibition* and is favoured over other lexical items when an exhibition focused on a single artist is to be mentioned. The success of the noun *retrospective* in respect of more complex phrases can be explained with an urge for simplification and, at the same time, with a need for a more specific lexis, typical of art discourse: *one man show*, for instance, could sound misleading for its association with performing arts; moreover, the phrase identifies an idiom with a negative semantic prosody: someone who gives a *one man show* is someone who does or manages just about everything, leaving no space to others.

#### **8.4.9 *painters***

Ranking 18<sup>th</sup> within the top list of decreasing words of the corpus, with a profile of 38, 15, 17, 26, 19, 24 occurrences and a CV score of 36.16, *painters* shows an irregular profile across the six decades, which implies that special care is needed before generalizing related findings. Occurrences are equally distributed between American and British EPAs and no significant difference can be highlighted in the patterns of this noun when sections are analysed separately. A clear and gradual pattern of decline is shown by *painters* in the Time Magazine corpus.

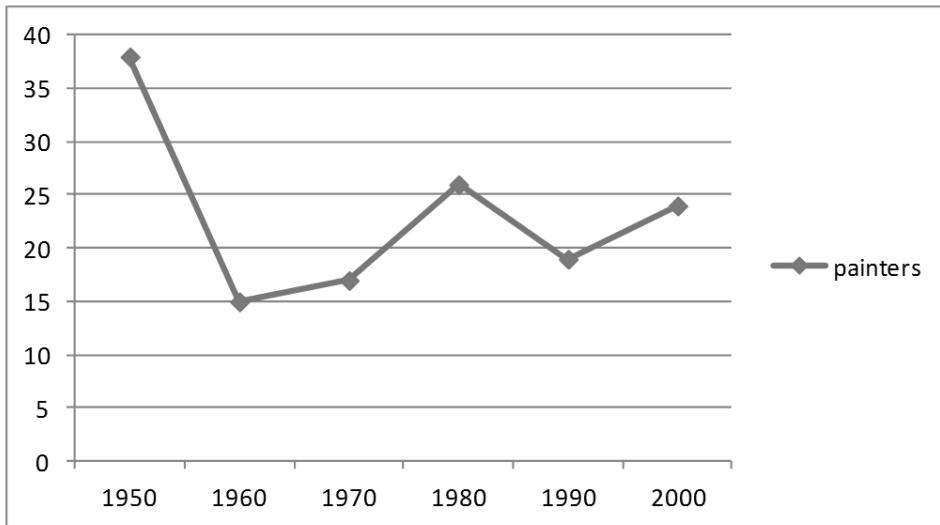


Figure 8.23 – Frequencies of *painters*

The reason for the decrease of the word *painters* could relate to the system of values shared by art professionals, which shapes EPAs and substantiates many lexical choices made by writers. In our times to define artists merely as *painters* could sound limiting or, at least, too technical, as often contemporary artists can manage different media and several techniques at the same time. This is a consequence of contemporary art, where the boundaries between the traditional media categories - painting, sculpture, photography etc.- have become blurred. When talking about their roles, artists themselves avoid strict definitions. It has to be noted that the noun *sculptors* also decreases over time within EPA Diacorpus, falling from 17 to 8 occurrences, while *photographers* is increasing (from 6 to 30 occurrences), maybe as a consequence of the emergence of photography as a new medium. The singular forms *painter*, *photographer* and *sculptor* show different profiles across decades: *painter* is stable, *photographer* is increasing, *sculptor* is decreasing. Such contrasting data do not allow us to make general and definite claims in this direction; nonetheless, three out of six nouns identifying artists on the basis of a specific skill (*painter*, *painters*, *sculptor*, *sculptors*, *photographer*, *photographers*) show a pattern of decrease within the EPA Diacorpus; this could be enough to suggest an ongoing lexical change, maybe not completed yet: a trend reflective of how artists see themselves and want to be seen and presented to the press, not merely as masters of a technique, but rather as creative and multifaceted talents.

#### **8.4.10 *landscape***

The noun *landscape* is the second most frequent lockword of the EPA Diacorpus. It has a total of 153 occurrences and is characterized by a stable profile across decades (25, 27, 21, 23, 28,

29), which also determines a low CV (12.09). The stability of this item seems to be a distinct feature of the EPA Diacorpus, since the noun shows a different pattern across the decades in the Time Magazine corpus, characterized by irregular decrease (265, 401, 350, 313, 280, 151).

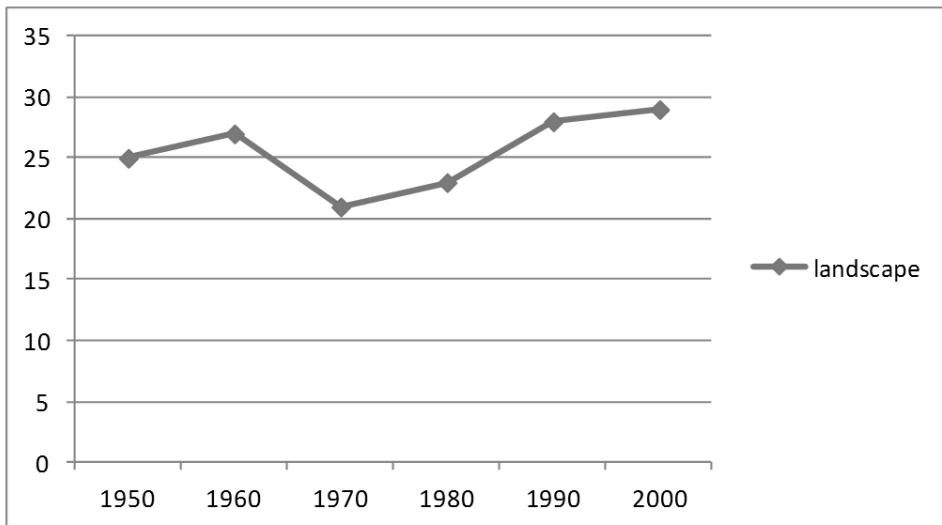


Figure 8.24 – Frequencies of *landscape*

Two occurrences of the noun out of three belong to the British section of the corpus, so the trend related to this word has to be regarded as more significant for that part. Other occurrences within the same lemma are *landscapes*, *landscaping*, *landscapist* and *landscapists*. The plural form of the noun, *landscapes*, totaling 76 instances, shows an irregular path over decades (7, 15, 7, 16, 10, 21), while *landscaping*, *landscapist*, both appearing in the fifties, and *landscapists*, appearing in the nineties, are *hapax legomena*.

Typically, the noun *landscape* is premodified by an indefinite article and an attributive adjective carrying evaluative meaning and functional to the description of the picture: it may be, for instance, quoting examples from the corpus, a *romantic*, a *realistic*, a *fantastic*, a *luminous* or a *pure* landscape. At least half of all the occurrences can be ascribed to this recurrent construction. If we look at the co-text, it can be also noticed that the word is especially related to the technique of painting: in about 40 occurrences the noun appears in the immediate surroundings of words like *painting/s*, *painter/s*, *picture*, *depicting*, and, in fewer cases, *drawing/s* and *photography*. Moreover, in 31 occurrences *landscape* is part of the title of a picture or of an exhibition, as shown in the following concordances (40):

(40)

van de Velde's little "Winter  
The Poetic  
David Friedrich's Moonlit

**Landscape**", which may well have influenced  
**Landscape** takes a new look at Claude as a  
**Landscape**, or Turner's The Pass at

It turns out that the word *landscape* is used in consideration of its descriptive force, which can be enhanced through evaluative adjectives; moreover, this noun evokes a well-known genre in the field of visual arts, which everyone is familiar with. However, these elements alone do not explain the persistence and the stability of the noun *landscape* in the language of EPAs from the fifties onwards. An intriguing suggestion may be that, although new art techniques were introduced and new media emerged in the last decades, such as photography, film and video, a *landscape* remained a consistent object in art displays, a sort of classic, an evergreen that never grows old. At this point it could be objected that other subjects can be regarded as fashionless and out of time in art as well: portraiture, in particular, has always been the great alternative to landscape painting.

The portrait or landscape question is important because it defines the place and role of people in a picture. In a portrait, one encounters a person and is introduced to a sort of conversation between the painter and the model. A landscape offers a different experience: figures may be included, but at a greater distance from the artist and viewer. This offers a more circumspect view of people.

Consequently, the EPA Diacorpus was explored in search of items related to the lexical field of portraiture. While the use of the verb *portray* is rather irrelevant – less than 10 overall occurrences – the word *portrait* (211 total occurrences) shows an irregular path over decades (28, 56, 18, 45, 22, 42), while its plural form, *portraits* (174 total occurrences), gradually increases (12, 14, 15, 35, 29, 69). The noun *portraiture* identifying the practice of making portraits is increasing as well (5, 0, 1, 5, 9, 12). This may reflect a fluctuation in the preferences of exhibitions' visitors and curators, gradually shifting their attention towards individuals, to be approached from a closer point of view, in a sort of voyeuristic curiosity that is typical of our times. The clear growth of the plural form, *portraits*, opposed to the irregular one shown by the singular, *portrait*, can also be related to the proliferation of multi-item exhibition, another phenomenon which has emerged in contemporary times (see also the case of *picture* vs. *pictures* in section 8.4.7)

#### **8.4.11 drawings, paintings**

The plural nouns *drawings* and *paintings* were reunited in the analysis because they identify common art objects displayed by exhibitions, often intentionally combined. They rank respectively

9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> among the lockwords of the EPA Diacorpus in view of their CV score which is, respectively, 20.87 and 22.00. Their frequency patterns across the decades are however different and irregular: *drawings* has a profile of 86, 85, 59, 60, 97, 67 occurrences (255 American, 199 British), while *paintings* has a profile of 87, 86, 105, 116, 106, 151 occurrences (363 American, 288 British). It turns out that the frequencies of these items are not always aligned and stable over time; *paintings*, in particular, shows a pattern of drastic growth in the last decade. Moreover, the distribution of both items between American and British section is quite uneven, which introduces a further element of fuzziness in the analysis of these items. Conversely, the patterns shown by *drawings* and *paintings* in the Time Magazine are both unidirectional and clearly decreasing.

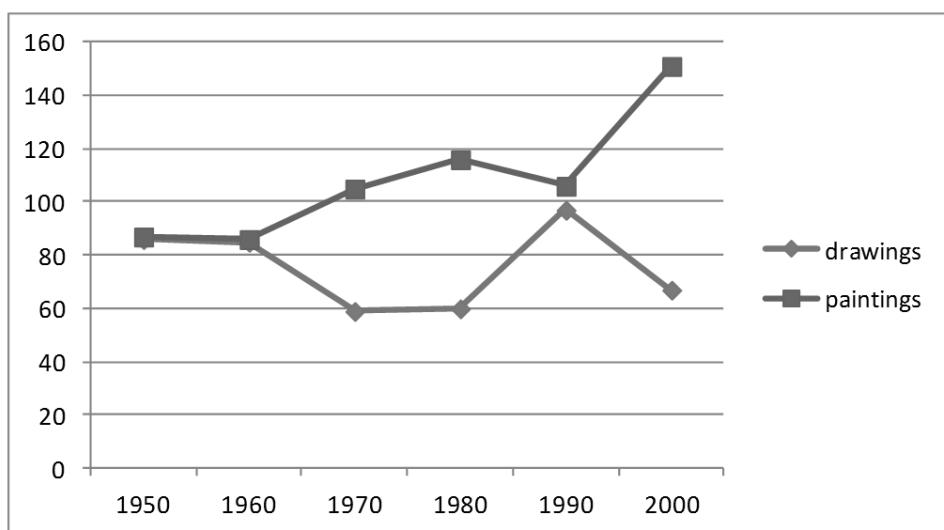


Figure 8.25 – Frequencies of *drawings*, *paintings*

A peculiarity of these items is that they often appear together as a binomial – *paintings and drawings* (18 occurrences) - or in combination with other nouns: *drawings and prints* (24), *prints and drawings* (11), *paintings, drawings, sculpture* (10). Corpus evidence in this case reflects how art works are combined within the exhibition design in order to provide a comprehensive overview on artists or art movements. Sketches and drawings, for instance, can be used to explain the preliminary work behind a painting and to show how the artist developed his original idea through a series of gradual steps. Such an approach adds value to the exhibition's experience and allows curators, at the same time, to enrich the exhibit itself with more items on view.

The following extract (41) provides a relevant example of this design strategy:

(41)

Andrea Mantegna (c. 1431 – 1506) was one of the greatest artists of the early Italian Renaissance. This exhibition, in which **paintings**, **drawings** and **engravings** have been assembled from throughout the artist's career, traces the development of Mantegna's innovative genius.

(London, Royal Academy of Arts, Andrea Mantegna, 1 January 1992)

The educational purpose associated in showing together *paintings* and *drawings* goes hand in hand with the urge to provide a significant volume of pieces on display. Drawings, prints and lithographs are generally easier and less expensive to deliver and therefore to exhibit. In times of financial difficulties, this may also sound as a valid argument.

Data concerning the nouns *drawings* and *paintings* do not allow to make general claims about a common trend regarding these items: in fact, while a certain degree of stability may be recognized in the case of *drawings*, *paintings* seems to follow a path of its own, which does not necessarily coincide with that of *drawings*, which is, actually, one of increase.

Other words related to the lemma PAINT show an irregular profile across decades, as in the case of *painted* (23, 46, 7, 22, 20, 47), *painting* (97, 89, 78, 75, 77, 145), *painter* (21, 30, 12, 26, 27, 26). A special case is that of *painters*, which ranks 18<sup>th</sup> within the top list of decreasing words of the corpus (38, 15, 17, 26, 19, 24) and which has already been dealt with in section 8.4.9. Conversely, words belonging to the lemma DRAW have a more consistent profile, as in the case of *drawing* (16, 19, 12, 11, 25, 28) and *draw* (2, 2, 3, 2, 2, 8).

On the one hand, a presumed increase of *paintings* could be traced back to a trend already highlighted in the analysis, that of increasing plural nouns identifying objects on display as reflective of the rise of large and multi-item exhibition. The stable pattern of *drawings*, on the other, could be interpreted as evidence for the stability of this technique, which still remains a relevant feature for exhibitions, despite the rise of new media such as photography and video in the second half of the 20-century.

#### **8.4.12 *curator*, *director***

Curators and directors play a crucial role in the organization of an exhibition and their textual mention within EPAs can tell us much of how they have been engaged in the process across the decades.

Data regarding the frequency profiles of these nouns in the EPA Diacorpus are the following: *curator* ranks 12th among the most increasing items over time, with a CV score of

101.13; its frequency profile across decades is 9, 15, 25, 28, 65, 130. Conversely, *director* ranks 19th among the most stable items, with a CV score of 22.60; its profile is 40, 48, 51, 39, 25, 47. It has to be noted that while *curator* shows a clear pattern of growth across decades, *director* is characterised by a slight decreasing trend from the seventies to the nineties, while it keeps a profile of stability in the other decades. A further striking element is that in the case of these items, as never before, a great discrepancy has to be noted between American and British frequencies: 216 occurrences of *director* out of 249 are American, so as 201 occurrences of *curator* out of 269.

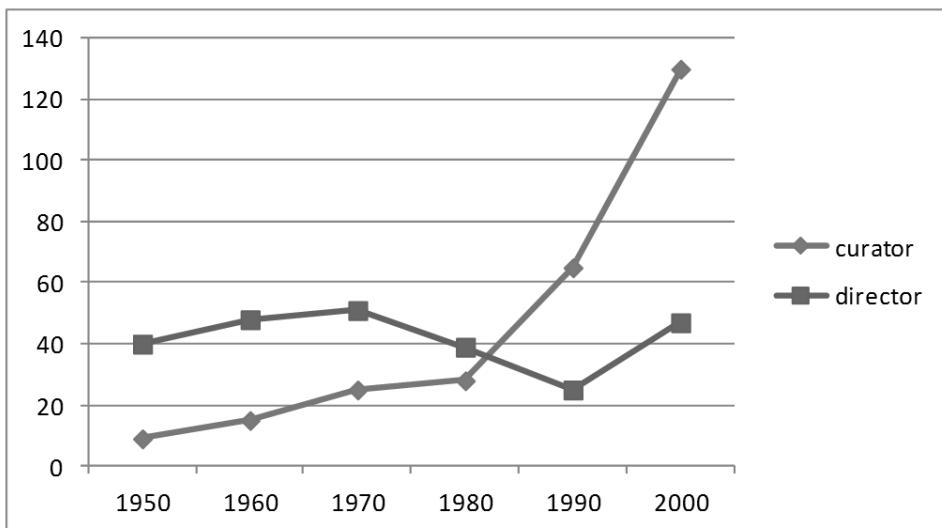


Figure 8.26 – Frequencies of *curator*, *director*

It has been already pointed out that, despite the importance of all specialists engaged in a museum, curators have the key role (Kavanagh 2005): they decide what is held in collections and shown in exhibitions, and they are also responsible for the success of some artists and the failure of others. When in charge for an exhibition, they also have to locate, buy or borrow items from institutions or individual collectors. They may often also work closely with artists to create and develop work to a specific brief. Generally their role is about collecting and exhibiting art work, but curators have been increasingly involved into administrative and outreach work, such as fundraising for exhibitions, providing educational tools, and working to increase the profile of an institution or exhibition. More importantly for the specific of this thesis, it is in the role of the curator to write descriptive texts explaining the exhibition concept, which serve as a basis for press officers when writing EPAs (see chapter 6). This also explains why curators are often quoted within the text: an

aspect, that of quotations, which is going to be further examined in the next chapter of the thesis (section 9.8).

Conversely, the role of a museum director is generally associated with administrative work, although, of course, there is more than this under that label: actually, a director is in charge of the whole museum and its working; he represents the institution in contacts with the public and works with the entire staff assisting in any department; he also oversees finances. Nonetheless, his role has been seemingly overwhelmed by that of curators over time, to the point that their duties and functions are sometimes overlapped. It is therefore worth exploring how these museum professionals have been mentioned in the EPA Diacorpus and whether any lexical variation regarding these nouns mirrors a cultural change in their function and perception of the public.

While there is no ambiguity with regard to the noun *curator*, which always identifies the specialist in charge for the exhibition announced by the EPA, the noun *director* does not necessarily identify the museum director: there are indeed many other directors mentioned in the corpus, such as Public Affairs Directors, Public Information Directors, Publicity Directors, and other denominations that can be all traced back to the same role, that of head of public relations. There are also directors of single departments within the museum, such as the director of the Department of Prints, or Photography. Once that all these incongruous occurrences have been discarded, 88 total occurrences of (*museum*) *director* are left, distributed across the six decades in the following sequence: 9, 18, 19, 21, 11, 10. It turns out, therefore, that the trend of this noun is not, actually, one of stability: the frequency gradually increased from the 1950s to reach its highest point in the 1980s, then began to decrease and went back to the initial value. According to this result, it can be stated that the mention of curators has outnumbered that of museum directors over time in the EPA Diacorpus. Moreover, especially in the 1990s and the 2000s it happens that many EPAs can be read in their entirety, from the start to the end, without finding any reference to the museum director. This lead to conclude that curators play indeed a leading role in the organization of an exhibition, but also carry the highest responsibility, as they are particularly exposed to the public. Corpus evidence also shows how this aspect is quantitatively more relevant for American museums.

## 8.5 Adjectives

The lexical items showing variation over time within this category are *visual* (increased), *famous* (decreased), *first*, *great*, and *known* (stable).

### 8.5.1 *visual*

Totalling 107 occurrences (71 American, 36 British) within the EPA Diacorpus, the adjective *visual* shows a consistently increasing profile across the decades: 2, 16, 15, 14, 22, 38. It ranks 20<sup>th</sup> among the most increasing items of the corpus and its CV score is 66.39.

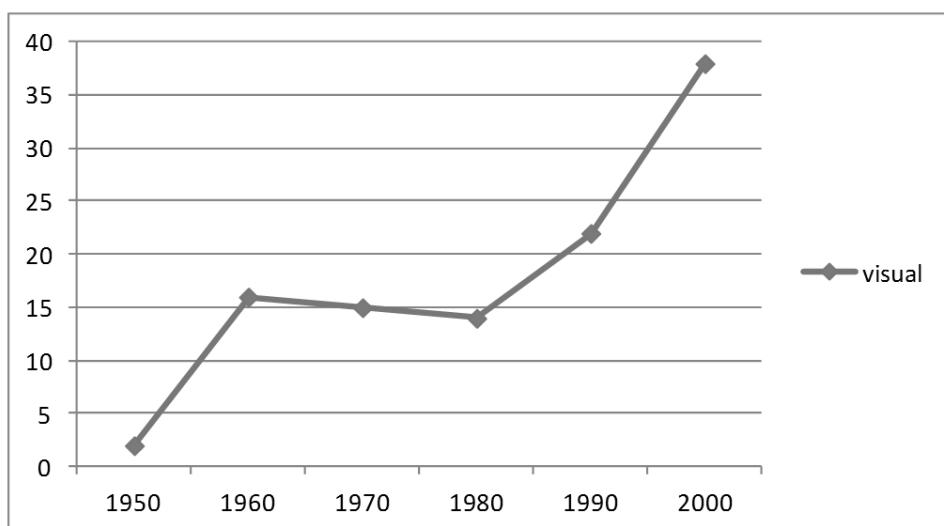


Figure 8.27 – Frequencies of *visual*

If we take a look at the concordances, we may find that the most frequent three-word cluster is *the visual arts* with 19 occurrences. The first appearance of the cluster dates back to 1961 and belongs to an American EPA. Starting from 1969, the cluster is frequently used in British EPAs as well. See for instance the following examples (42, 43):

(42)

During his youth he was not exposed to **the visual arts**. He attended Yale University for two years, but left because he had no interest in academic training.  
(New York, Museum of Modern Art, Mark Rothko Exhibit, 18 January 1961)

(43)

The connection of the Victoria and Albert Museum with the field of photography, at large as a branch of **the visual arts**, is not known to a wide public.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, Photographs of Henri Cartier Bresson, 1 January 1969)

The phrase ‘visual arts’ was introduced during the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> to identify the arts that are primarily visual in nature, such as drawing, painting, sculpting, printmaking, photography, design, crafts, video, filmmaking and architecture, as opposed to music, drama, and literature. Before that, anything that had been created to please the senses – from music to dance, from literature to art as we know it – was commonly gathered under the definition of ‘fine arts’, which implied an aesthetic judgment and a subtle differentiation between what could be considered fine and what could not.

The phrase ‘visual arts’ was already in use in art discourse during the time-period covered by the EPA Diacorpus. The Time Magazine Corpus, which can be considered as a valid mirror of the language used by the press from the 1920s onwards, gives evidence of a first occurrence of the phrase in 1932: *visual arts* are mentioned within an article on the use of art in advertising. Thus the very origin of the phrase has to be connected with academic environments: the phrase appeared in the title of an influential essay published by the American art historian Bernard Berenson, *Aesthetics and History in the Visual Arts* (Berenson 1948) and was further consacrated by Erwin Panofsky, who entitled one of his main works *Meaning in the visual arts* (Panofsky 1955).

It is to be noted that the language of EPAs slowly absorbed this new coinage coming from academic settings and has applied it increasingly from the early sixties. Conversely, the phrase *fine arts* gradually disappeared from the lexis of EPAs, surviving only in crystallized forms, such as in the names of museums (for instance, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts), schools, academies, departments, or university courses. There are only 58 occurrences of *fine arts* within the corpus, most of them (40) dating back to the period 1950–1999.

It might be concluded that EPA writers were responsive to the introduction of new coinages in the field of art discourse, as well as to the decline of other expressions previously in use that may have sounded misleading or out of style. EPA writers were aware of lexical change in their relevant field of action, art discourse, and were also able to apply it to their daily professional language. This result also highlights an urge to discard ambiguous expressions in favor of a more conventional, neutral and specialized language for EPAs, capable of making EPAs more recognizable as a genre within the general domain of art discourse.

### 8.5.2 *first*

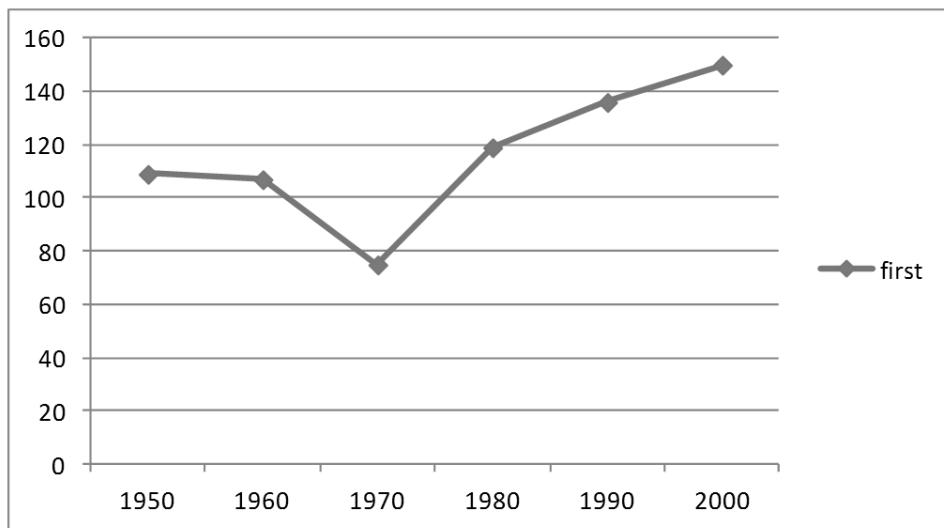


Figure 8.28 – Frequencies of *first*

*first* has 696 overall occurrences, 255 within the British and 441 within American section. Although ranking 16<sup>th</sup> within the list of the most consistent words of the EPA Diacorpus, on the basis of a rather low CV score (22.40), the adjective *first* is characterized by an irregular pattern across decades: 109, 107, 75, 119, 136, 150. As a matter of fact, from the 1970s onward the frequency of this adjective is actually increasing, which leads to guess it gained importance over time. The comparison with the Time Magazine Corpus does not help us to classify *first* among stable or increasing items, because its pattern in that reference corpus is, unexpectedly, one of decrease.

The most relevant clusters related to this adjective reflect a communicative strategy of novelty which is typical of EPAs (Lazzeretti and Bondi 2012). Among these are *for the first time* (83 occurrences, to be completed with expressions like *on display*, *on view*, etc..), *the first exhibition/retrospective* (26), *the first major exhibition/retrospective* (24), and many other similar phrases. The notion of novelty fits very well the value system of both art experts obviously sensitive to innovation and originality and art journalists, also looking for news value. In order to be successful, namely, an exhibition has to offer something which is on display for the public *for the first time*. This explains the success over time of the fore-mentioned phrases, to be found among American EPAs already in the 1950s, while only from the sixties onwards also among the British ones.

The following example (36) provides the very first occurrence of the phrase *for the first time* to be found within the EPA Diacorpus. It is taken from an EPA issued by the New York MoMA.

(44)

Of special interest among the portraits are Marie Laurencin in 1906 by herself, his daughter Marguerite in 1905 by Matisse, and the composer Ferruccio Busoni in 1916 by Umberto Boccioni, all shown **for the first time** by the Museum.

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, New Drawings from Museum Collection, 1 March 1954).

The cluster has been largely used in the following decades and up to now; it can be considered a typical example of the evaluative phraseology and recurrent lexical patterns characterizing the genre of EPAs over time. Yet it is striking that these evaluative patterns have always characterised the genre since its very first origin and are not a result of promotional purposes emerged in particular from the 1980s onward, as it could have been normally expected.

### **8.5.3 *great, famous, known***

With regard to the adjectives *great, famous* and *known*, the analysis is carried out in association with that of the abstract lexical noun *career* because of the semantic link they share in terms of evaluation of the artist (see section, 8.3.1).

## **8.6 Adverbials and pro-forms**

Among adverbials and pro-forms, the most interesting items in terms of variation within the EPA Diacorpus are *here, there, so* and *still*. They all show a decreasing profile over time, with the exception of *still*, which has an up-and-down frequency profile and is therefore hard to classify. It seemed however useful to include it in the analysis in view of its peculiar use in the corpus.

### **8.6.1 *here***

Let us start with *here*, which has 104 overall occurrences (52 American, 52 British) distributed across the six decades in the following sequence: 31, 32, 13, 13, 7, 8. As a graphic representation of its profile shows (Figure 8.29), the pattern related to the adverbial *here* is one of clear decline.

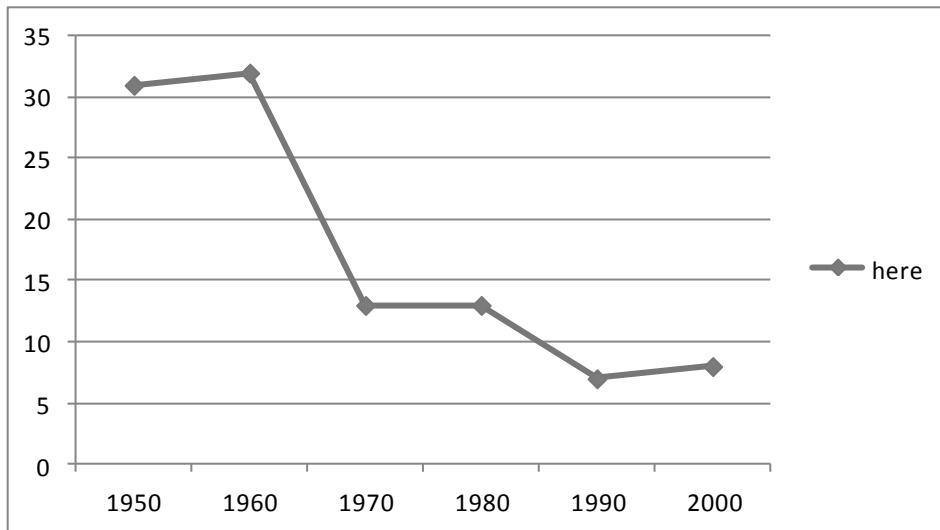


Figure 8.29 – Frequencies of *here*

*Here* is mostly used within the EPA Diacorpus in its deictic function, in order to suggest a closer distance between the writer and the work he is describing. By using *here*, EPA writers direct the reader's gaze, pointing to a specific detail of the art work, as in the following example (45):

(45)

**Here**, before a landscape, the figures are compressed within a Gothic architectural setting elaborately sculptured.

(London, National Gallery, *New picture by Van der Weyden*, 13 March 1957)

In the sentence here transcribed (45) the writer makes use of visual representation and gives the reader the impression of being in front of the picture; he seems to act as a guide delivering a presentation in front of visitors; it could be also said that, in evaluating the picture, he adopts an oral style, as the description turns out particularly vivid. It has been pointed out that deictic reference is a means for dynamism in descriptions and that it blurs the distinction between the writer and the reader (Radighieri 2009: 107). Consequently, in consideration of how the dynamism of descriptions is vital for the genre of EPAs, the decline of *here* within the EPA Diacorpus comes as a surprise. The comparison with the Time Magazine Corpus is not useful in this respect, because of the irregular pattern shown by the adverbial across the six decades: 3,273, 2,856, 3,038, 2,921, 3,638, 2,759.

However, the decreasing trend of *here* in the EPA Diacorpus could have to do with mere journalistic reasons: press releases aim at being retold and therefore have to be written in a way that lessens any further journalistic elaboration, to the point that they could be easily cut and pasted. If

we adopt this perspective, which Jacobs calls ‘preformulation’ (Jacobs 1999a), the use of the deictic *here* does not make sense in a press release: a journalist writing a review of an exhibition at his desk would not use *here* to describe something which is elsewhere and not within his grasp. Of course, the case would be different for a tv reporter, reporting directly from the place of the exhibition, and therefore referring to art works by means of markers of position.

### 8.6.2 *there*

Despite the difficulty to grammatically classify this item, *there* was considered as a pro-form, part of so-called existential *there*-constructions (Quirk et al. 1985), because a manual observation of concordances revealed that in two occurrences out of three (160 out of 233) it is used with this function in the EPA Diacorpus, while in the rest of them it is a locative adverbial. No case of *there* as an interjection was found.

*there* ranks 19<sup>th</sup> amongst the most decreasing items in the EPA Diacorpus, in view of a CV score of 38.97. Its profile across the six decades is 50, 51, 53, 24, 30, 27. Quantitatively speaking, this item is more relevant in the British section of the corpus (156 British vs. 77 American occurrences).

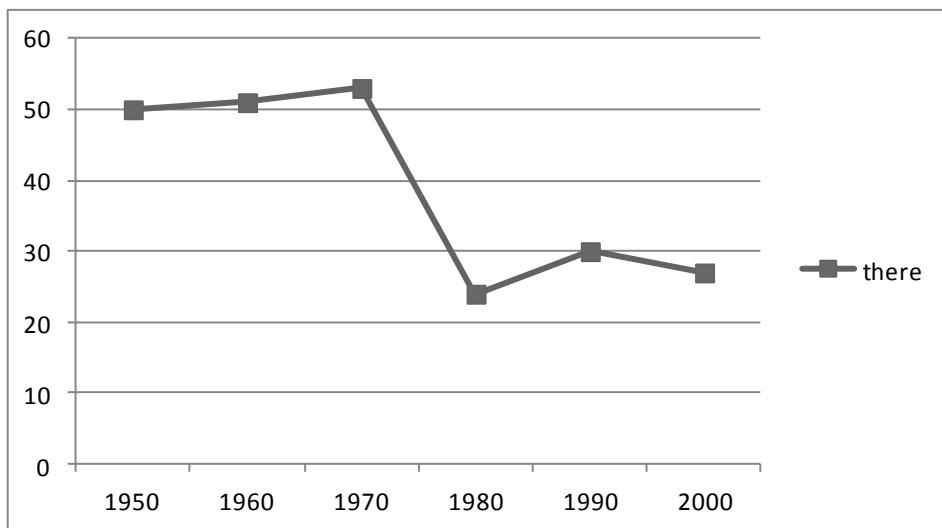


Figure 8.30 – frequency of *there*

Concordance searches show that *there* is mainly used in the EPA Diacorpus in the way Quirk et al. (1985) describe typical *there*-constructions, i.e. as constructions where “the recipient is expected to interpret a theme as entirely new and unconnected with anything previously introduced” (1985: 1402). Such constructions are also described by Quirk et al. as ‘presentative’, because they

“bring something on to the discoursal stage deserving our attention” (1985: 1408) and ”imply the ‘newness’ of the item concerned” (1985: 1409), which is therefore generally indefinite. Bondi (2013) also states that “existential *there* can be seen at play as an attention-managing device drawing attention to elements in the space of the storyworld” or “places in the text/discourse” (2013:142). It can be used “to introduce elements that contribute to building the reader’s perspective and position”, such as “new actors and processes in the story”, “present and past interpretations of events”, “qualifications of processes presented elsewhere in the text” ( 2013: 142).

The existential *there*-construction consists of the pronoun followed by a verb and a typically indefinite noun phrase (Biber et al. 1999: 943): this pattern can be easily recognized in the EPA Diacorpus, as illustrated by the following examples (46, 47, 48):

(46)

First of all **there** are the paintings and drawings produced while Rossetti was an active member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

(London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 January 1972)

(47)

**There** is a strange picture by Duerer, 'The Child Jesus among the Doctors', which was painted in Venice in 1506 if it was the subject, as the Catalogue suggests, of a letter written there to Duerer's friend Pirckheimer in Nuremberg.

(London, National Gallery, *From van Eyck to Tiepolo*, 22 February 1961)

(48)

Like the German expressionists, the Neue Sachlichkeit painters clearly did not set out to produce pleasant images for bourgeois homes - **there** are no sunny landscapes or beautiful florals in this exhibition.

(Chicago, Museum of Contemporary Art, *German Realism*, 20 October 1980)

Not only art works are the indefinite subjects of *there*-constructions; this pattern is also exploited to introduce more practical and concrete information, such as that regarding admission charge or a press preview:

(49)

**There** will be a Press View on Tuesday, October 25th, between 11 A.M. and 3 P.M.; and an Invitation Preview Tuesday, October 25th, between three and six o'clock.

(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Constantin Brancusi*, 24 October 1955)

(50)

**There** is no admission charge to view the exhibit or to visit the museum, but advance parking reservations are advised for guaranteed admission.

(Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, *Decorative Arts*, 1 January 1979)

In the majority of occurrences *there* is anchored in the present (106 instances) or in the future (40), while only a few occurrences (19) are anchored to the past; further, in some cases (20) *there* introduces negative constructs. The most frequent cluster associated to *there* in the corpus is *there will be/also be* (37 overall occurrences), followed by *there is a/an* (28) and *there is no* (17).

It is difficult to explain the decrease of *there* in the context of the EPA Diacorpus, because existential *there*-constructions are functional to descriptions and announcements, i.e. typical features of the genre of EPAs. A comparison with the Time Magazine Corpus would lead to consider the decline of *there*-constructions as a general trend of language, because evidence of a clear decreasing pattern of them over time is shown also in the general reference corpus: *there is* went from 4,993 occurrences in the 1950s to 1,815 in the 2000s; *there are* went from 2,689 occurrences to 2,180 in the same time period; *there will be* from 409 to 173 occurrences. Conversely, the Time Magazine Corpus shows an increase of the contracted form *there's* (from 688 to 2,509 occurrences), which the EPA Diacorpus gives barely evidence of, with only 2 overall occurrences, both found in American EPAs and dating back to the 1960s. Given the common results of the comparison between the Time Magazine Corpus and the EPA Diacorpus with regard to *there*-constructions, a further explanation, which takes into account the peculiar context of EPA, can be however attempted. This is based on the character of indefiniteness which characterizes descriptions introduced by *there*-constructions. As previously pointed out, it is well-known that the noun phrase in a *there*-construction should be indefinite, which implies that a description introduced in this way may sound inaccurate or shallow to demanding readers as journalists, who expect to receive a definite account of what is on display. In order to avoid this impression and provide fully detailed information, *there*-constructions could have been gradually discarded from EPAs. This interpretation would also highlight, once again, that even slight hues of meaning can be determinant in the case of EPAs and that the genre has been lexically shaped not only by choices made by museum professionals involved in their writing but also by the needs of their main recipients, requiring sound data for their reports.

### 8.6.3 *so*

Let us now pass on to the third adverbial on the list, *so*. It has a total of 150 occurrences perfectly halved between the two components of the corpus (75 American, 75 British) and a frequency profile across the six decades of 40, 36, 21, 16, 15, 22. It ranks 14<sup>th</sup> among the most decreasing items with a CV score of 42.03. A decreasing trend of *so* as an adverbial is also shown by the Time Magazine Corpus, where occurrences went from 18,902 in the 1950s to 10,738 in the 2000s.

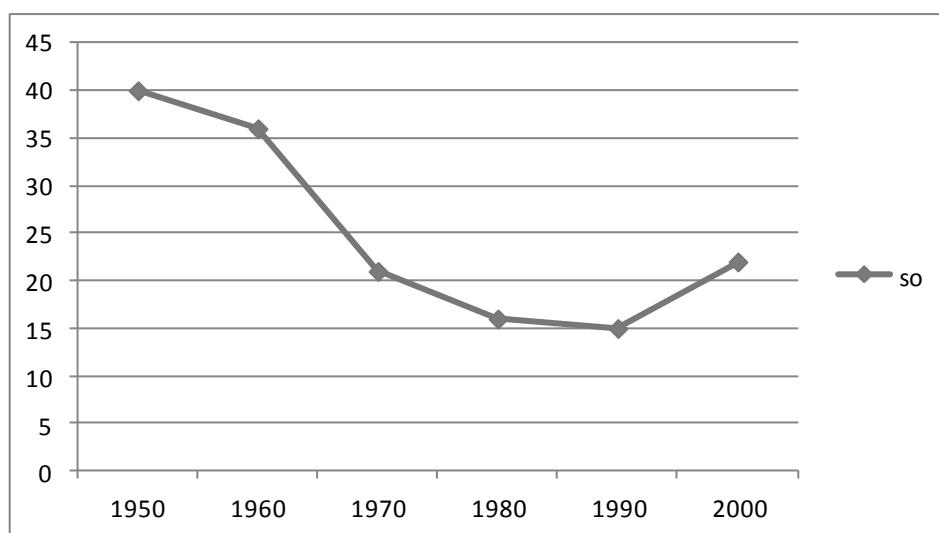


Figure 8.31 – Frequencies of *so*

The exploration of concordances shows that the main function of *so* within the EPA Diacorpus is to reinforce adjectives and other adverbials in a context of evaluation of works, artists, and of the exhibition itself. The purpose of the structure *so* + adjective/adverbial is also functional to describe an extreme situation; the style of description is emphasized and becomes more emotionally charged through its use. The following selection of concordances (51) illustrates these patterns of usage:

(51)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| and partly no doubt because it is<br>British art. They are "so personal,<br>techniques that were to become<br>that he is now able to use color | <b>so</b> beautifully illustrative of contemporary<br><b>so</b> filled with his own visionary<br><b>so</b> important in his later sculptures. It<br><b>so</b> lucidly. His capacity to employ |
|--|---|

Another relevant use of the adverbial in the corpus is that identifying the phrase *so-called*, identified in 11 cases and functional to the introduction of new, specialized terms to be further explained:

(52)

after 1872 and the emergence of his and visually compelling works of the porcelain produced in China during the	<b>so-called</b> <b>so-called</b> <b>so-called</b>	"constructive" brush stroke. Neue Sachlichkeit or "New Transitional Period – between
---	--	--

While in the latter case the adverb *so* functions to introduce new relevant, information for the readers, revealing a sort of didactic purpose, more often it intensifies the description and adds dynamism to the scene. Its decline within the corpus is therefore difficult to explain. The comparison with the Time Magazine Corpus, showing a similar decreasing trend – the occurrences of *so* have halved between 1950 and 2000 - suggests a major trend of written language, which EPAs reflect. Nonetheless, since other points of the analysis of the EPA Diacorpus highlighted the increasing preference for a neutral lexis and a plain style (see the case of *exhibited* in section 8.2.2 and that of *held* in 8.2.4), the decline of *so* as an emphatic adverbial modifier could be interpreted as a consequence of avoiding hyperbolic expressions and possibly opting for a less informal style.

#### 8.6.4 *still*

To conclude the overview of adverbials, *still* is left to be analysed; as shown by the graphic representation of its not unidirectional pattern over time (Figure 8.32), *still* is also the most controversial within this group of items.

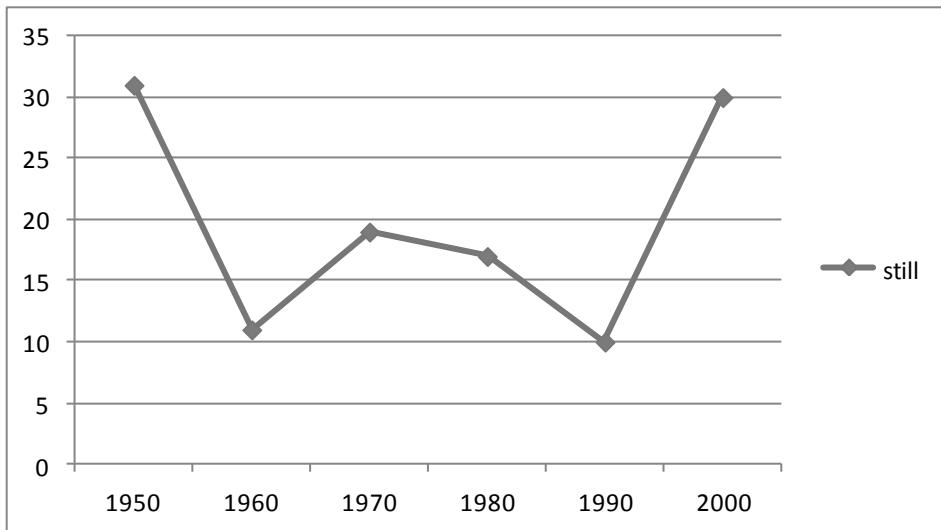


Figure 8.32 – Frequencies of *still*

It has 118 overall occurrences (57 American, 61 British), with a frequency profile across decades of 31, 11, 19, 17, 10, 30. The pattern shows a drastic decrease from the 1950s to the 1960s, followed by a slight increase in the 1970s and the 1980s, while in the 2000s *still* makes up ground and reaches the frequency it had in the 1950s. With such an up-and-down profile, findings cannot be generalized, thus there is an interest in exploring the reasons of the wavering use of this adverbial in EPAs over time. Although in 36 cases *still* is used as an adjective (especially within the phrase *still life*, identifying a recurrent subject in the visual arts), two occurrences out of three identify an adverbial form. This explains why the word was classified into this category, despite its ambiguity. It has also to be noted that the Time Magazine Corpus shows a sharp decrease of *still* as an adverbial: from 12,725 occurrences in the 1950s to 4,871 in the 2000s.

Concordances highlight a very peculiar use of the adverbial *still* within the EPA Diacorpus, reinforcing the idea of something – an art work - or someone – an artist - that would deserve more attention and acknowledgment, but *still* remains hidden, or incomplete, or unknown. There are at least 14 cases of *still* used with this nuance, as those provided by the following examples (53, 54):

(53)

The surrealism of Magritte and Delvaux is by now familiar to most people in this country but the work of these nine artists, all of Flemish rather than French speaking origin, and all painting within the Symbolist and Expressionist tradition, is ***still*** largely unknown.  
 (London, Royal Academy of Arts, *From Ensor to Permeke*, 1 September 1971)

(54)

In addition, other contemporary Danish artists developed a truly individual identity although their names are **still** surprisingly little-known outside their own country.  
(London, National Gallery, *Danish Painting*, 25 April 1984)

In both examples the writer seems to justify the selection of artists featured by the exhibitions and anticipate potential objections from visitors, who may have never heard their names. On the one hand, by doing so, the writer defends the curator's choice and makes clear that the quality of these artists is not under discussion, although they still deserve greater recognition; on the other, he implies that the exhibition has something to unveil, arousing a sense of mystery which can be useful in order to catch the attention of reviewers (Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012).

The irregular frequency profile of *still* across decades could suggest that these strategies – along with their related lexical choices - have not been consistently carried out by EPA writers. As a matter of fact, presenting unknown artists is a risk that museums would preferably avoid. The analysis of other lexical items shows that different and more concrete assets have been increasingly exploited in order to reassure audiences about the quality of an artist and, consequently, of the entire exhibition (see section 8.3.1).

## 8.7 Prepositions

With regard to prepositions, corpus evidence shows a rather consistent profile of *until* and *among*, while *since* is characterised by an irregularly decreasing pattern. All of them are evenly distributed in both sections of the corpus – American and British - and can be considered as technical prepositions in the context of EPAs and art discourse in general, as they perform some typical communicative functions within the text that the analysis of concordances will show in the following sections.

### 8.7.1 until, among

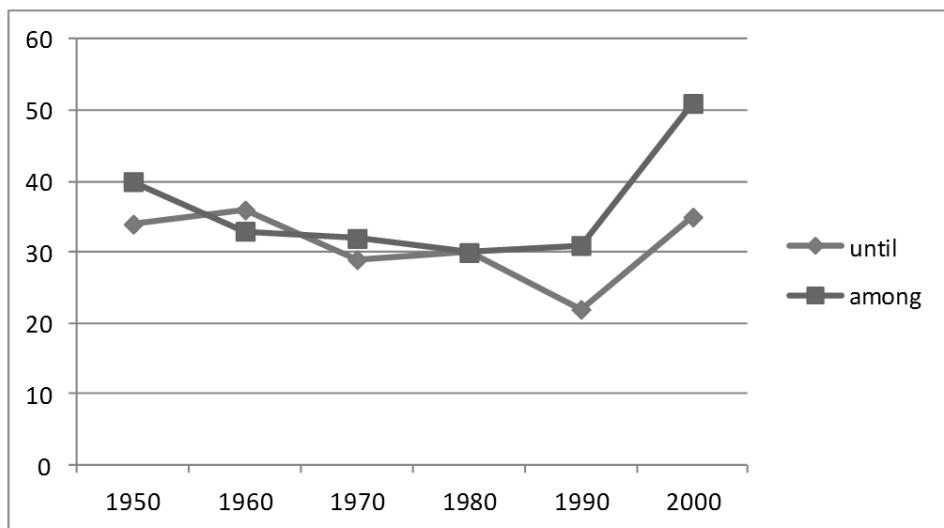


Figure 8.33 – Frequencies of *until* and *among*

The preposition *until* ranks third within the most stable words within the EPA Diacorpus, with a CV score of 16.82. Its profile is of 34, 36, 29, 30, 22, 35 occurrences across the six decades.

The stability of this preposition within the EPA Diacorpus is in contrast with the result highlighted by the Time Magazine Corpus, where the preposition actually decreased, dropping from 1,172 occurrences in the 1950s to 544 in the 2000s. Yet the consistency of *still* in the context of EPAs may be explained in consideration of its indispensable role in conveying information about the length of an exhibition, which is open *until* a certain date and a certain hour. The following examples (55, 56) show this typical use of the preposition *until* within the EPA Diacorpus:

(55)

An exhibition of drawings by Italian artists of the sixteenth century and later will open at the Victoria and Albert Museum on Monday, June 22nd, and will remain open **until** the end of September.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Drawings by Italian artists 1500-1800*, 1 June 1959)

(56)

Although the museum's regular winter hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10: 00 to 5: 00, from November 15, 1980 to February 15, 1981 the hours are extended to include Tuesday evening **until** 10:00 and Sunday **until** 5: 00.

(Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, *Archaeological Photography*, 24 October 1980)

About 80 occurrences out of 169 of the preposition *until* within the EPA Diacorpus relate to this function, which is, namely, to signal the end of the exhibition period or the closing hour. However, *until* has another important function within the language of EPAs, shown for instance by the recurrent cluster *until his/her death* (16 occurrences), which is to accompany the description of biographical events related to the artists featured by the exhibition, often presented in a chronological order, as in the following example (57):

(57)

Rouault was a highly prolific artist who continued to work in a variety of media **until** his death in 1958.

(London, Royal Academy of Arts, *Georges Rouault*, 1 March 1993)

The importance of stressing exhibition closing time and dates – elements that cannot be avoided in EPAs -, as well as that of providing biographical information on the artist, can explain the consistency in the frequency of the preposition *until* across decades.

As for the other lockword preposition, *among*, it ranks 14<sup>th</sup> within the top twenty of the most stable words within the EPA Diacorpus, with a CV score of 22.35. Its profile is of 40, 33, 32, 30, 31, 51 occurrences across the six decades. Also in this case the trend is in contrast with that provided by the Time Magazine Corpus, showing a sharp decrease of the prepositions over time, so that the consistency of *among* can be interpreted as a distinct feature of the EPA Diacorpus.

If we take a look at the concordance, the most relevant clusters are *among the most* (11 occurrences), *among the works* (7 occurrences, to be added to at least 20 more cases of the cluster's variants *among the drawings/images/pictures/photographs/portraits*), *among the artists* (6 occurrences, to be more than doubled with several variants here too, such as *among the many artists/sculptors/the most distinguished contributors*, etc.). The general idea carried out by these clusters is that of a selection among the series of works to be displayed, some of which worth of particular interest and therefore object of further mention within the text. In a certain sense, the writer seeks to highlight a point of excellence within the exhibition, by mentioning the works (or the artists) that in his opinion could be considered as a plus. An illustration of this strategy is offered by the following example (58), where the noun *highlights* reinforces the idea of an added value *among* the works on view, presented as something that cannot be missed:

(58)

Works by Chagall, Robert Delaunay, Kandinsky, Klee, Marc, Modigliani, Mondrian and Picasso will be included. **Among** the highlights of the presentation will be Leger's The Great Parade of 1954, which is considered the definitive work of the artist's career.

(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Jenny Holzer Exhibition, 13 February 1990)

In observing the consistency of these constructions within the language of EPAs over time, it can be concluded that this way of presenting works and artists on display, placing special emphasis on one in particular or on a certain selection of items, has always been and still is a common strategy for EPA writers. The strengths of an exhibition are generally identified before writing the EPA, on the basis of curatorial hints, and have to be adequately stressed and developed in the text. Generally, it is in the role of a curator to explain to the staff his concept of the exhibition, sometimes even providing a text of his own, that can be considered as a first draft of the press release. In view of this particular writing procedure, it has been already stated that EPAs reflect a multiple authorship (see chapter 6).

### 8.7.2 *since*

Although it ranks among decreasing items, the frequency profile of *since* is rather irregular. Its occurrences across the six decades are 47, 29, 26, 24, 17, 46; the CV score is 38.97. As shown by the graph (Figure 8.34), this form is characterised by a gradual and constant decrease from 1950 to 1990, followed by a drastic and quick growth between 1990 and 2000, to the point that in the 2000s the number of occurrences has reached the same value of the 1950s.

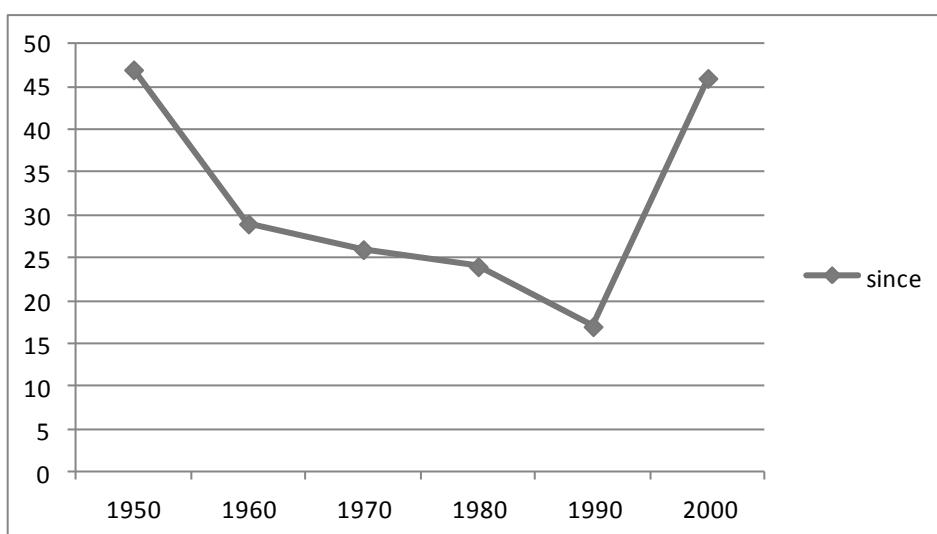


Figure 8.34 – Frequency of *since*

*Since* can identify whether an adverbial, a preposition or a conjunction; its more relevant use in the EPA Diacorpus is that of a preposition, to be recognized in more than an half of the overall occurrences.

In almost 80 occurrences *since* is a means for spatiotemporal reference: it is used as a locator in time and space to introduce a date, a specific time in the past, or an historical event, as in the following concordances (59):

(59)

Giorgione's lifetime, there are records  
been acquired by the National Gallery  
which have been held at the Museum  
work has only begun to be appreciated  
has been exhibited regularly in Paris  
religious works of a power unparalleled  
America, Europe and even the Orient

**since** 1612 of at least one picture of  
**since** 1945, because the opportunities  
**since** 1956, are selective surveys of  
**since** her death in 1939, is represented  
**since** that time. Jean Dubuffet, whom  
**since** the High Renaissance.  
**since** World War II. The exhibition will

A very frequent cluster, with 15 overall occurrences within the corpus, is *since then*, which is also used to introduce a very specific or crucial reference in time or space within the explanation of a topic, typically when artist biographies are provided or a detailed account of past events relevant for the exhibition is reported. In the following extract (60) the preposition is used twice in a row in order to mark with special emphasis a turning point in the career of an artist:

(60)

Kurt Schwitters has been increasingly acknowledged as one of the most original artists of the twentieth century, particularly **since** the fifties when interest in Dada was revived. **Since then** his art had been regarded as internationally influential, receiving the critical attention that it deserves.

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Kurt Schwitters*, 1 June 1985)

Given the importance of indicators of time in the content of an EPA, as they provide readers with further details and enrich the description, especially in the context of an artist biography, presentation of an artistic movement or historical background, it is difficult to explain the decrease of the preposition *since* in the EPA Diacorpus from 1950 to 1990. No particular difference is highlighted by comparing the frequency profiles of *since* between the American and British sections of the corpus, so that a possible related trend cannot be attributed to one and not to another. Nonetheless, the Time Magazine Corpus also shows a significant decrease of this preposition across

decades, from 4,049 in the 1950s to 1,476 occurrences in the 2000s. Findings regarding the EPA Diacorpus do not fully align with this result, as if the language of EPAs followed its own path, which does not necessarily coincide with general trends.

## 8.8 Determiners

Within this category is the determiner *some*. Ranking 18<sup>th</sup> among the most stable words of the corpus, *some* has a total of 317 occurrences and its profile across decades is: 52, 71, 50, 34, 56, 54. Its variance score is 22.47. It has to be noted that the presence of this item is quantitatively more relevant in the British section of the corpus (205 British vs. 112 American occurrences). Furthermore, the trend is in contrast with the Time Magazine Corpus, where *some* is characterized by a sharp decrease across the decades, from more than 24,000 occurrences in the 1950s to less than 10,000 in the 2000s.

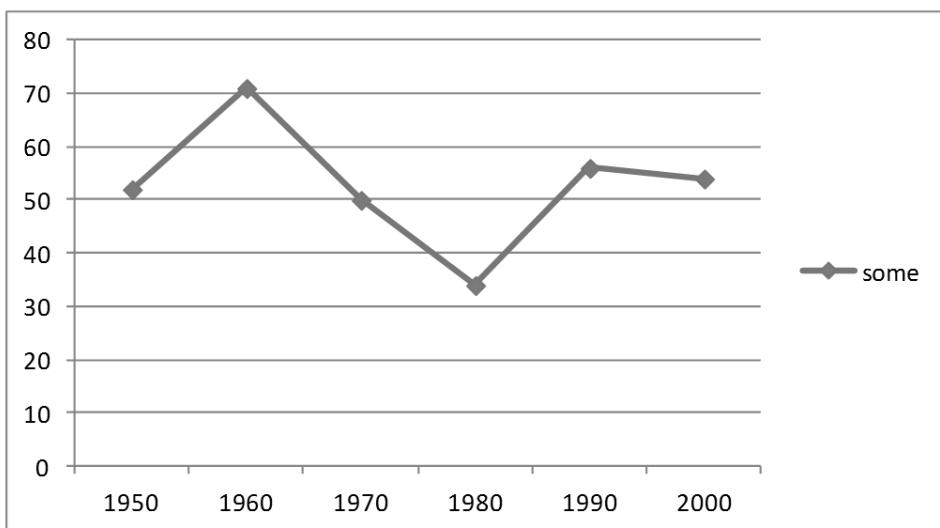


Figure 8.35 – Frequencies of *some*

The most significant cluster related to *some* in the EPA Diacorpus is *some of the*, with a total of 78 occurrences. As concordances show (61), it is used in order to highlight a selection of works or artists, chosen among others in consideration of their relevance.

(61)

they were five centuries ago.  
at the Louvre in 1960 featuring

**Some** of the books are presented unbound  
**some** of the drawings he had

be entertaining but will bring to light techniques, styles and iconography.

**some** of the fashionable antiques  
**Some** of the Italian artists represented

The cluster is also very frequent in combination with superlatives; at least 50 occurrences can be ascribed to this typical pattern, illustrated by the following concordances (62):

(62)

brings together for the first time exquisite still-lifes of fruit and flowers; Thorvaldsen, who created in Rome Native Americans, and others.

**some** of the best Fabergé pieces from  
**some** of the earliest pure landscape  
**some** of the finest sculptures to be  
**Some** of the most visually arresting images

The idea of a choice in terms of quality is a recurrent feature of the EPA Diacorpus. Other lexical items showing a consistent frequency over time are functional to the same purpose: see for instance the adverbial *among* (section 8.7.1) and the verb *selected* (section 8.2.4). EPA writers present the works and the artist on display as the result of a selection, which is seen as a guarantee for the quality of the exhibition, but also as the final act of a scientific choice, defined by curators, on the basis of a particular theme or point of interest. These are the inner premises of an exhibition – to choose an artist instead of another, to select certain works instead of others –, and the coherence of this choice has to be advocated also through language. This communicative purpose is consistent over time, since exhibitions have always been based on a selection, although questionable.

The determiner *some* may also be interpreted as an indicator of vagueness or lack of precision (Channell 1994). As Duguid (2010) pointed out, vagueness is a strong indication of assumed shared knowledge, the referents of vague expressions being assumed to be known by the reader (Carter and McCarthy 2004: 202) and can be used to soften expressions appearing too direct or unduly authoritative and assertive. In the specific case of EPAs, the use of *some* can be explained as a way for leaving the number of works on display undetermined and not quantifying them exactly. As a matter of fact, one of the most frequent complaints about art exhibitions derives from the disappointment caused by an exiguous number of works, often concealed by a very aggressive communication campaign, which sets high expectations on audiences. In order to prevent criticism of this kind, EPAs may intentionally avoid details and leave some information vague.

## 8.9 Question words

The relative pronoun *which* is a lockword of the EPA Diacorpus, ranking 4<sup>th</sup> within the list of the most stable words on the basis of its variance score, 17.85. The profile of this item across decades is 224, 230, 166, 162, 170, 236, for a total of 1,188 occurrences. The presence of this item is slightly more relevant for the American section of the corpus, with almost a hundred occurrences more, while no significant difference is to be noted with regard to the profile across decades, which is one of stability in both components.



Figure 8.36 – Frequencies of *which*

The stability trend shown by the pronoun *which* in EPA Diacorpus is in contrast with the data of the Time Magazine Corpus, showing conversely a dramatic decline of the pronoun, which went from more than 30 thousand occurrences in the fifties to 12 thousand in the twenties. In his own research on lexical variation of written language across four general corpora Baker (2011) also noticed a decline of the pronoun.

The consistency of *which* within a corpus specialized in art discourse as the EPA Diacorpus may be explained by taking a closer look to concordances and observing the usage of this pronoun, which plays a key-role in one of the typical constructions used to present and describe an art work, or the exhibition itself. The analysis of concordances reveals a recurrent pattern related to *which*: typically, a noun, which identifies the object to be described (an art work), is followed by a relative clause introduced by the pronoun *which*, then by a verb and a predicate. See the following concordances (63):

(63)

works on view, many of  
works, a large number of  
taste. This painting,  
of the small sculptures  
is organising the display  
1987. The exhibition,

**which** are among the Museum's most important paintings  
**which** have never previously been shown outside  
**which** is generally considered the artist's late masterpiece  
**which** Rodin called his "snakes." These pictures  
**which** will occupy nine Rooms. A fully  
**which** will include approximately 150 paintings,

This construction is functional to a specification of what the writer wishes to explain, evaluate or describe more in detail. As such, it can be recognized, in all its possible variants, in the majority of the concordances. Since description and evaluation are a permanent feature of EPAs, the consistency of this pronoun – and of its related construction - over time is self-explanatory. With regard to this point, innovation seems not to be pursued by EPA writers, who yet elsewhere show a preference for a more direct, straightforward, unmediated style of descriptions, as the analysis of further lexical items has shown (see section 8.2.3).

## 8.10 Acronyms

The increasing presence within the EPA Diacorpus of abbreviations such as *tel* for telephone and *org* for organization, acronyms as *uk* for United Kingdom and *www* for World Wide Web, are lexical signals of the advent of new technologies and especially of the Internet, which have become fundamental tools of communication for museums. All these acronyms rank among the top ten increasing items of the corpus: *uk* is 1<sup>st</sup>, *www* is 2<sup>nd</sup>, *org* is 3<sup>rd</sup>, while *tel* is 8<sup>th</sup>. With the exception of *uk*, which occurs only among British EPAs, all these acronyms are evenly distributed between the American and British sections of the corpus, with similar frequency profiles across decades.

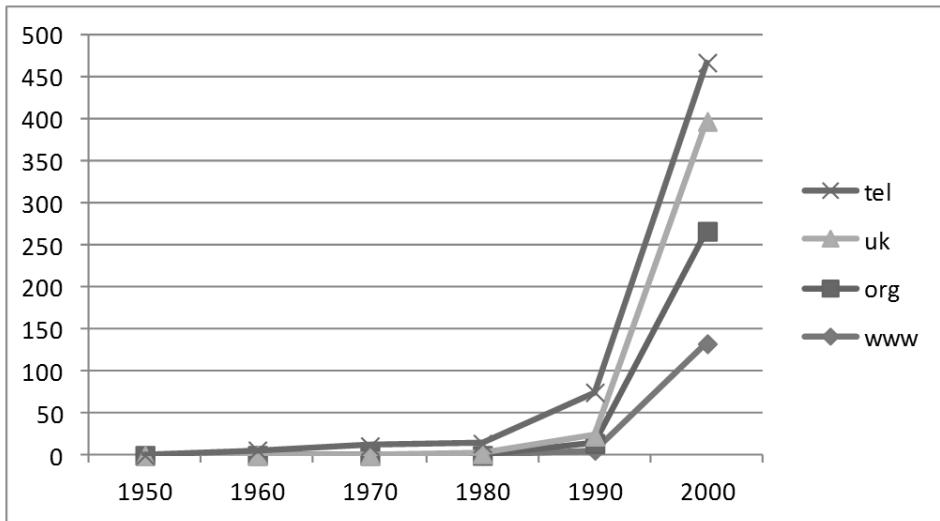


Figure 8.37 – Frequencies of *www*, *org*, *uk*, and *tel*

First patented in 1876 by Alexander Graham Bell and further developed by many others, the telephone was the first device in history that enabled people to talk directly with each other across large distances. Thus, only after World-War II telephones became common to businesses, government, households, and museums too, due to the expansion of networks and the spreading of more efficient telephone sets.

The importance of telephone calls in museum public relations is well-known: following up a press release with a call gives an opportunity to talk about the exhibition in more detail and gently persuade a journalist to cover it. Journalists themselves may also be interested in contacting the museum press office in order to receive more information. Typically, museum telephone numbers are provided in the heading information of EPAs or at the end of the sheet, along with other basic information regarding the exhibiting venue, in consideration of the importance of providing a telephone number for press inquiries.

The EPA Diacorpus has a total of 116 occurrences of the word *telephone* starting from the fifties, while its abbreviation *tel* has 151 occurrences and is used only from 1968 onwards. However, while the profile of *telephone* is rather irregular across decades (14, 23, 8, 15, 35, 21), *tel* shows a profile which is decisively increasing (0, 6, 11, 12, 52, 70). The success of the abbreviated form in respect of the noun in its entirety can be explained within the general phenomenon of simplification and contraction of language, as already observed in modern English diachrony (Hundt/Mair 1999, Duguid 2010).

Moving its first steps between the seventies and the eighties, Internet has imposed itself in the nineties, changing the way information is gathered and assessed. Museums slowly ventured into

online development and launched their websites in the mid- to late-nineties (Rizzo/Mignosa 2013). Originally, the websites simply duplicated museum brochures, providing information about exhibitions, events, opening times, etc. Development was constrained by cost, poor visual quality and lack of technical sophistication (see Paolini et al. 2000). The transition from mass presentation of information to individually-tailored experiences has been indeed a gradual one. After the turn of the millennium the use of new web technologies has grown rapidly, giving rise to the terms ‘museum without walls’, ‘post-museum’ and ‘virtual museum’ (Hooper - Greenhill, 2000: 152-153).

The EPA Diacorpus reflects this dramatic change through the sudden appearance at the end of the nineties of acronyms used for identifying web pages: *www* – acronym for World Wide Web -, *org* – a domain extension used for non-profit organization, and therefore museums, *uk*, a national domain extension. Their profile across decades is respectively 0, 0, 0, 0, 6, 133 for *www*, 0, 0, 0, 0, 8, 134 for *org*, and 0, 0, 0, 2, 9, 131 for *uk*. Further, it has to be noted that these acronyms are a distinct feature of EPAs – and, more broadly speaking, of press releases – since they are hardly present in the Time Magazine Corpus (2 occurrences of *www* in the 2000s), or even absent.

## **8.11 Terms of address**

Within this category fall two decreasing lexical items, *mrs* and *mr*.

*mrs* ranks first among the most decreasing words of the EPA Diacorpus, in view of a CV score of 110.81, and has a profile of 74, 17, 10, 11, 6, 20 occurrences across the six decades.

*mr* is the third most decreasing item in the corpus; its CV score is 103.84, its occurrences across decades are 147, 63, 30, 13, 23, 19.

In quantitative terms, the presence of these items is more relevant in the American section of the corpus, so it has to be guessed that a possible related trend concerns in particular American EPAs.

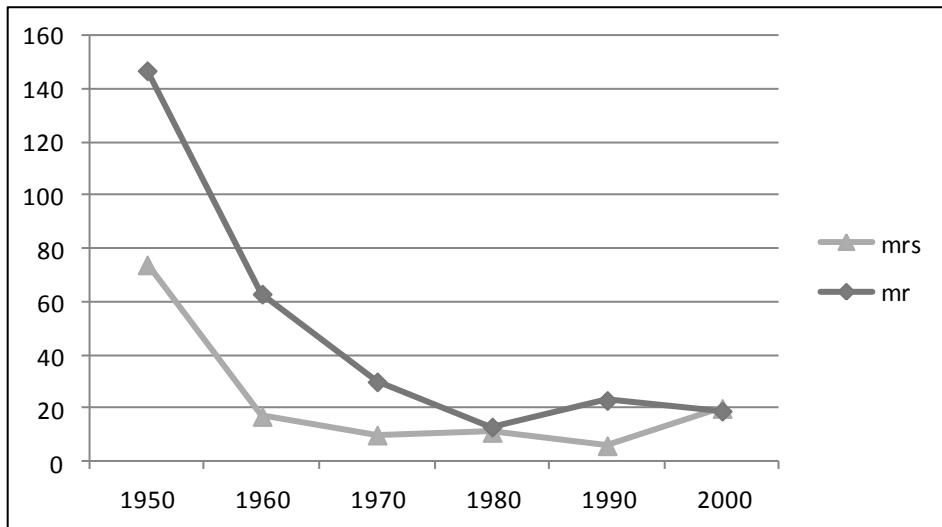


Figure 8.38 – Frequencies of *mrs* and *mr*

*mrs* and *mr* are used within the EPA Diacorpus to address in a polite and reverential way loaners, donors and other influential figures who played an important role in the organization. Their mention in the text is used as a form of acknowledgement of their contribution to the exhibition, as the following example shows (64):

(64)

Other paintings in the ground floor show include four promised gifts: Mondrian's Trafalgar Square, and Picasso's Two Acrobats with a Dog, lent by the Honorable and **Mrs.** William A. M. Burden; Jackson Pollock, Number 12, 1952, lent by the Honorable Nelson A. Rockefeller and Renoir's judgment of Paris, lent by **Mrs.** Louis R. Smith.  
(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Monet Mural*, 1 June 1959)

The decline in term of address, *mrs* and *mr*, is a general trend of English written language; it could reflect phenomena of democratization and informalization of public discourse, as already described by Fairclough (1992, 1995). As pointed out by Baker (2010), gendered titles are of particular interest to researchers of language and gender in English-speaking countries because of “the inbuilt inequality in the labelling system” (142). As a matter of fact, males do not have to reveal their marital status with *mr*, while females are forced to, by choosing between *mrs* or *miss*.

In addition to *mrs* and *mr*, the EPA Diacorpus provides only 27 occurrences of *miss*, all dating to the first three decades (1950, 1960, 1970) and absent in the following decades. The relatively new term *ms* is even more unpopular, with 9 overall occurrences. Baker (2010) reported similar

evidence of decrease of *mr* and *mrs* in his study across the BLOB, LOB, FLOB and BE06 corpora, which are general corpora from 1931, 1961, 1991, and 2006. Evidence for the decrease of these items also in American written language can be adduced by the American Time Magazine corpus, where *mrs* went from 191 occurrences in the 1950s to 2 occurrences in the 2000s, and *mr* went from 51 to 15 occurrences in the same time lapse.

The decrease of gendered titles within the EPA Diacorpus may reflect that EPA writers have been gradually moving away from marking gender when using terms of address, with a particularly large decrease in *mr*. This trend also shows that EPAs went gradually towards a more informal style, absorbing major written language tendencies in parallel to their development as a textual genre.

## **8.12 Interjections**

The analysis of the increasing interjection *please* has been previously presented when dealing with the verb form *contact* (section 8.2.1).

### **8.13 Discussion and concluding remarks**

The main aim of this part of the analysis was to provide an overview of lexical change occurred in the language of EPAs from the 1950s onwards, applying a method that could possibly bring about further results in respect to those already emerged from the pilot study, when wordlists of EPAs issued in the 1950s and in the 2000s were compared and a subsequent list of keywords was produced.

Baker's (2011) method, based on the identification of increasing, decreasing , or stable items over time, and on concordance search and collocational analysis of these items in order to elicit information on their patterns of usage, has proved valuable in this sense, as it has allowed to report - or in some more controversial cases only to hypothesise - a number of lexical trends reflective of changes in terms of style, communicative purpose, and typical features of the genre. At a broader level, the analysis of lexical variation in EPAs revealed cultural changes related to the specific field of museum settings and art discourse: for instance, in the way exhibitions are designed and subjects are selected. Lexical change also mirrors changes in the system of values shared by artists, museum professionals and art journalists: it suggests, for instance, how the role of artists, curators and museum directors – and the audience perception of these roles as well - have changed over time. Changes at the macro-level, such as the phenomenon of globalization, financial crises, and the advent of new technologies also left their indelible traces in the language of EPAs.

Given the irregularity in the frequency patterns of many analysed items, special care was needed before making definite claims regarding them and interpretations have always been presented with great caution; despite this limit, the inner merit of Baker's method is however to suggest that all identified items, be they regular or irregular, are reflective of a variation over time and therefore deserve attention.

Findings on the EPA Diacorpus can be structured around several themes relevant for the genre of EPAs, both at the textual, surface level, and at the content level: **(a) style; (b) communicative purpose; (c) typical features; (d) criteria for exhibiting art works; (e) criteria for selecting artists; (f) role of museum professionals; (g) impact of macro-level events.**

With regard to **(a) style**, the decrease of terms of address marking gender, such as *mr* and *mrs*, and the increase of some abbreviations, such as *tel* for *telephone*, seem too little to argue for the informalization of EPAs, which, on the contrary, keep a formal style. Contractions are hard to be found in the corpus, while the decrease of the intensifier *so* could signal the intention of avoiding emphasis and possibly opting for a less informal language. An accentuated presence of the

interjection *please*, typically related to the soliciting phrase *please contact*, among British EPAs suggests that the latter are more characterized in terms of politeness. Moreover, data on lexical variety (see chapter 7) reinforce the idea that EPAs vocabulary is a rich and cultivated one, as typical of written, formal style. It can be stressed, instead, an increasing urge for a neutral, conventional lexis, quite a sort of technical jargon, which aims at labelling and so making recognizable the genre to its users. Words carrying an ambiguous semantic prosody were gradually discarded: for instance, the phrase *one-man show* had not the same success over time of the noun *retrospective*, although they both address the same exhibition typology. A need for disambiguation could also be invoked in order to explain the controversial pattern of *exhibited*, a verb which has lost its specificity related to art exhibitions over time, to gain different, subtle hues of meaning that are not completely positive. Corpus evidence also shows that the language of EPAs has become more accurate over time, as proved by an increasing awareness of new coinages in the field of art discourse, such as the phrase *visual arts*, gradually borrowed from academic settings, in parallel to the dismissal of *fine arts*.

As for (b) **communicative purpose**, EPAs appear as a genre shaped not only by their multiple writers – to be identified with several professionals engaged in museum at different levels, to begin with curators – but also by the needs of their main recipients, i.e. art journalists. The decline of the deictic adverb *here* over time can be read as a trace of pre-formulation (Jacobs 1999a); moreover, the strong consistency of the noun *release*, a fundamental meta-discourse item, used not only to identify the genre, but also to guide journalists in their work, for instance when it is used in the form *for immediate release*, tells us much about the awareness writers had regarding the genre and the purposes of EPAs since the early stages of museum public relations: namely, EPAs were meant to be released and published on a certain date, to be negotiated in respect to the opening of the exhibition. Corpus evidence also suggests that American museums placed great value on public relations, to be seen as a part of a complex system of communication which involved the museum at various levels: data show that an entire *department* – a lockword particularly relevant for American EPAs – was entitled to public relations already from the 1950s, while British museums appear more focused on *press office* activities, which is only a part of the work associated to PR, being the latter an increasing phrase among British documents. However, the increasing frequency of the soliciting phrase *please contact* in both sections of the corpus suggests that the relationship to the press has become more overt and explicit over time and that this development involved both American and British museums.

With regard to (c), i.e. the **typical features of the genre**, a striking element emerged from the analysis of lexical variation is that evaluative language has always characterized EPAs since their first origin and it is not to be associated with contemporary practices. The stability of adjectives such as *great*, *known*, *first* - and of the related phrase *for the first time*, used to stress the aspect of novelty of the exhibition – implies that the genre of EPAs was born with these features. Of course, writers have become more conscious of the potential conveyed by the language of evaluation over time and have fully exploited it especially in the last two decades, while evaluative patterns used by 1950's writers seem to be more predictable and repetitive. This result highlights the importance of adopting a diachronic perspective, since it could not have been achieved limiting the analysis to contemporary EPAs, as in previous studies (Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012).

Along with evaluation, another consistent feature of EPAs is that of description. Among the items – and related constructions - pointing to the stability of this feature over time are two lockwords in particular: the determiner *which*, functional to a specification of what the writer wishes to explain, evaluate or describe more in detail, and the auxiliary verb form *are*, used when a description of what can be seen at the exhibition at the current moment is provided. Typically, the time of descriptions is a present tense, but EPAs also embrace a perspective focused on the past, which is that concerning narrative sections, and one on the future, as required by the announcement of the exhibition opening. It can be therefore pointed out that EPAs are characterised by a multi-temporal dimension, masterly managed by writers.

A further trend, that would however require wider data to be fully confirmed, is the preference for more vivid and straightforward descriptions over time: the decline of the mediating verbs *shown* and *shows*, to be accounted as a general trend of language as proved by the comparison with the Time Magazine corpus, could be interpreted in these terms.

Coming to (d) **criteria for exhibiting art works**, lexical change reflected innovations in the way subjects and pieces to be put on display are chosen by museum professionals. The choice of a certain subject or artist to exhibit depends on specific values, as well as technical and even economical reasons. Besides that, the taste of exhibitions public changes fast and museums have to deal with that. Our analysis revealed that from 1950 onwards some things took a new direction, while others remained the same. For instance, new media have emerged over time: corpus evidence shows the rise of *photography* and the wavering presence of *architecture* in exhibitions; however, the art of painting and drawing have not gone out of style, as words belonging to both lemmas, PAINT and DRAW, show a stable pattern across decades. Moreover, the increasing frequency of

the noun *media* in a context highlighting a rich and various selection of items on display suggests a further cultural trend for museums, which is to ensure a variety of media, historical periods, objects and subjects.

Art subjects may change, and *portraits* – an increasing item within the EPA Diacorpus – may be more intriguing for our times, but a *landscape* still appears as a must for any exhibition, to mention a lockword of the corpus. More caution is required in generalizing findings related to *drawings* and *paintings*, showing not uni-directional patterns over time; yet corpus evidence shows that they are combined in order to enrich the educational experience of visitors, as well as increase the number of art works on display with a close eye on costs. At this point, it can be useful to recall Irvine's (2004–2009) definition of art discourse as something “defining the cultural category of art and maintaining the art/non-art binary”: the diachronic analysis of EPAs confirms indeed that statement, showing how EPA writers are involved in the process of shaping the concept of art and the ever-changing values related to exhibitions through their lexical selection.

A significant phenomenon reflected by lexical variation of EPAs is also the shift from one-item to multi-item exhibitions: the decline of the word *picture* in its singular form, typically pre-modified by a determiner (*the, this*), and not in its plural, in parallel to the increase of many other plural nouns identifying art works to put on display (*images, works, objects*) leads us to that conclusion.

Selectiveness appears as a controversial feature in terms of design criteria: while in some cases the idea of a selection among a plurality of available items is marked by EPAs as a value and is associated with a positive feature of the exhibition, as the consequence of an authoritative curatorial choice, in other it may sound as a consequence of a real lack of exhibiting contents. Lexical choices, therefore, oscillate between these two contradictory positions: on the one hand, it has to be noted the stability of items and phrases marking the idea of a selection such as *among*, *selected* and *some (of the most)*; on the other, corpus evidence shows the decrease of *there-*constructions leading to indefinite objects, indefinite plural noun *examples* and verb form *represented*, typically said of artists with a few works on display. If the stance towards selectiveness is ambivalent, there is no doubt on the increasing profile over time of items conveying the idea of comprehensiveness: for instance adjectives like *comprehensive, exhaustive, major*, typically modifying the noun *exhibition*.

Lexical variation also mirrors that something has changed with regard to the (e) **criteria for selecting artists**: they do not have to be *famous* – a declining word –, nor particularly *great* or *known*, since these adjectives are preferably used to refer to their work, but they definitely must have an acknowledged *career*, being the latter a strong lockword of the corpus. Indeed, young artists have fewer advantages in the art scene, as reflected by the lexical choice of EPAs, where less than 30 occurrences can be ascribed to the semantic field of youth. Pointing to this interpretation is also the controversial and wavering profile across decades of the adverb *still*, often combined with adjectives such as *unknown* or *hidden*, and addressing artists who still deserve proper recognition: a consequent impression is that presenting unknown artists is a risk that museums would preferably avoid, while career artists are perceived as a guarantee of success. Moreover, evaluation in terms of fame is preferably addressed to art works rather than to artists, for its ambiguous connotation, especially after Andy Warhol's 1968 statement ("In the future, everyone will be world-famous for 15 minutes"), leading to the idea that everybody could share a moment of popularity not linked to any particular merit (Buchloh 2001).

Eventually, EPA writers seem responsive to the way artists prefer to be presented to the public, not merely as *painters* or *sculptors*, for instance, to mention two decreasing items, but rather in a more complex light, as is implied by the definition of *artist* and *artists*, both increasing.

The analysis also highlighted a change in (f) **the role of museum professionals**, and in particular with regard to *curators* and (museum) *directors*. While the first item shows a pattern of clear increase over time, the second is characterised by a declining profile, which suggests that their roles have really intertwined over time, to the point that curators are the most visible professional figure engaged in the organisation of the exhibition, but also those mostly exposed to the media and public judgement. Moreover, data show how this trend is peculiar of American environments.

The last issue to be dealt with concerns the (g) **impact of macro-level events** on the language of EPAs over time. Corpus evidence confirms the emergence of economic concerns from the 1980s onward, as reflected by the increase of some revealing lexical items, pointing to the need to find alternative financial resources in view of cuts in public funding. The increasing frequency profile of words like *admission*, *tickets* and *students*, for instance, is reflective of the introduction of visitor fees, which became a necessity for many institutions, but also of the need to differentiate them for some segments of audiences, i.e. *students*, according to their age and other characteristics. Similarly, the rise of *education* programmes and collateral *events* thematically linked to the

exhibition, such as lectures, films, artist talks, guided tours, has to be put in relation to the increasing importance gained by educational purposes pursued by museums and exhibitions but also to marketing strategies aiming at widening the number of potential visitors. A *catalogue* represents a useful tool for scholars, reviewers, collectors and art lovers in general, so the growth of this noun over time can be indeed related to educational aims increasingly pursued by museums. Nonetheless, it is also an item on sale in bookshops, from which museums can profit. To confirm the financial difficulties faced by museums is also the decline of the verb *acquire*, possibly related to a strict reduction of museum budgets devoted to new acquisitions of artworks. Eventually, it has to be noted that a peak in the occurrences of the phrase *made possible by*, typically introducing the mention of exhibition sponsors, is registered in the 1980s.

Last decades of the twentieth century were not only associated with financial hardship for museums: the EPA Diacorpus reflects the advent of new web technologies through the sudden appearance at the end of the nineties of acronyms used for identifying web pages: *www* – acronym for World Wide Web -, *org* – a domain extension used for non-profit organization, and therefore museums, *uk*, a national domain extension. Moreover, in the last decades, globalization has changed the world by increasing relations between countries: one of its effects among museums, reflected by the language of EPAs, is the increasing profile of the noun *tour* in contrast to the decrease of *country*, being the former related to the feasibility of travelling an exhibition (Lord/Lord 2002) and the latter to small-scale exhibitions, organised at a national level.

## **9. Diachronic structural variation**

In the previous chapter lexical variation of EPAs over time was investigated. Next the focus will be on structural change, which is also relevant for characterizing the diachronic evolution of the genre, especially if an ESP approach is adopted and the organization of discourse is seen as reflective of communicative purposes.

Given the volume of the EPA Diacorpus as a whole and considering that this part of the analysis had to be mainly based on manual observation, it was stipulated to explore a sample of EPAs randomly selected from the EPA Diacorpus. A number of 60 appeared a reasonable size for this sample, being equivalent to a sixth of the total (378 EPAs).

The sample was then analysed with regard to macrostructure following Swales' (1990, 2004) framework for the description of moves and steps and Henry and Roseberry's (2001) work for the categorization of moves and steps as optional, core or obligatory. The analysis was also carried out keeping in mind the standard format of corporate press releases identified by McLaren and Gurâu (2005) – announcement, elaboration, comment, contact details and editor's note – and the structure detected by Bondi (2009:119) for exhibition web-presentations.

The observation of some aspects peculiar of EPAs, such as the use of quotations, narrative sections, and evaluative language in general, required a wider perspective and necessarily involved the entire corpus. This part of the analysis has been carried out bearing in mind Hunston's (2011: 4) claim that "evaluative language is more suited to text-based than to corpus-based enquiry". When looking at the use of linguistic means of emotional appeal in particular, qualitative analysis becomes essential. Evaluation is often expressed in a cumulative and implicit way; moreover, no set of grammatical or lexical forms can entirely encompass the range of expressions of evaluation.

### **9.1 The evolution from a basic to a more complex model**

As highlighted by the pilot study preliminarily carried out (see section 6.1 of this thesis), which took into consideration two extremes of the EPA Diacorpus – EPAs issued in the 1950s and EPAs issued in the 2000s –, a first impression is that both British and American museum press officers were still developing a standard structure for this genre in the 1950s, with a little more confidence shown by American writers in terms of self promotion strategies and knowledge of press needs. Yet a prototypical common scheme may be highlighted already from the very start of the genre. It was comprised of three main moves: (1) a brief announcement of the exhibition, (2) a long explanatory section on the topic, and (3) some pieces of information specific for the professional

community of press members, soliciting their response, although in a very implicit way. This basic scheme is summarized by the table below (tab.9.1):

1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION
3	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE

Tab. 9.1 – Prototypical structure of EPAs (1950): three main moves

In comparison with earlier instances, contemporary EPAs show a more stable and recursive structure, which confirms the former prototypical macrostructure – an announcing paragraph, an elaboration of the subject, mostly descriptive, and a final part aiming to create further contact with the press – with the addition of two new moves, that were barely developed in the 1950s and were retrieved only among American earlier EPAs: one establishing credentials for the exhibition by stating its credits, such as organization, curatorship and sponsorship, and one providing technical information for visitors (opening hours, free or charged admission, how to buy tickets, collateral events, etc...). We may therefore assume that the ultimate macrostructure of EPAs, or at least the one that gained more success from 1950 onwards, is comprised of five main moves, as illustrated by the next table (tab. 9.2):

1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE

Tab.9.2 – Ultimate structure of EPAs (2000): five main moves

To reinforce this statement on the structural stability of contemporary EPAs is also the result of a previous study carried out on a corpus of 120 EPAs issued by British and American museums between 2008 and 2009 (Lazzeretti 2010), which revealed a very recursive structure as typical of the genre, when this is observed from a synchronic, contemporary perspective. Thus, structural stability is the final result of a gradual development, starting from a very fuzzy initial stage and realized through a series of intermediate steps. Only a diachronic perspective can allow us to recognize what happened in between these extremes and –more interestingly – when it happened. The following diachronic analysis aims therefore at detecting turning points and motivating

structural change over decades, from 1950 onwards, in order to perfect the final macrostructure highlighted by previous studies (Lazzeretti 2010).

A more refined description of the ultimate EPAs structure has to take into consideration not only the moves, but also the steps that may be embedded in each move. Given the premise that it is not always obligatory for the writer to use all the identified moves and steps and that there is a certain degree of freedom in the sequencing, the analysis carried out in the pilot study related to the 2000's decade allowed to enrich the basic five-move structure with a series of steps and to outline a sort of ideal, ultimate scheme, as illustrated by the following enhanced table:

	Move
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION
1.1	<i>title</i>
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>
1.3	<i>dates</i>
1.4	<i>location</i>
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION
2.1	<i>general aim</i>
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION
3.1	<i>organisation</i>
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>
4.2	<i>admission</i>
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>
5.2	<i>press view</i>
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>

Tab.9.3 – Ultimate complete macrostructure of contemporary EPAs: moves and steps

The first move, which was called *announcing the exhibition*, informs the readers that a new artistic event is going to be held. It may be very brief, consisting of one or two sentences, or even be conveyed by the headline of the press release itself. Title, period and location of the exhibition (step 1.1 , 1.3, 1.4) are the most important information to be conveyed in this part of the press release and should not be omitted: they can appear in the press release headline, which is not necessarily the same as the exhibition title, or be incorporated in the first paragraph. A subtitle (step 1.2) may be included, as a further guidance into the theme of the show.

The purpose of the second move, which was called *presenting the exhibition*, is to introduce the general aim of the show (step 2.1) and then to focus on the featured artist/s and the works on display (steps 2.2 and 2.3). The authors of the press release can also present the artist summarising his biography (step 2.4). In case of group exhibitions, a list of the artists – complete or partial – can be provided (step 2.5). If the exhibition is divided into sections, they may be mentioned and described (step 2.6). Information regarding the exhibition's tour in other countries can be included (step 2.7). It is also worth noting the mention of the catalogue, to be considered as a complementary part of the exhibition (step 2.8).

The overall communicative purpose of move 3, *establishing credentials for the exhibition*, is to provide information on the organization of the exhibition (step 3.1), mentioning the name of curators (step 3.2), sponsors and supporters (step 3.3), who gain advantage in terms of image and self-promotion. While the mention of the curator, especially if he is a well-known one, can add value to the exhibition, citing the sponsors and the supporters is a necessary reward to those who financially contributed to the event. In the fourth move, which is called *providing information for visitors*, useful information is given on details regarding opening hours (step 4.1), admission to the venue (step 4.2), tickets price (step 4.3), and, if available, a program of collateral events (step 4.4), such as lectures and films related to the topic of the exhibition.

The fifth and final move, *soliciting press response*, solicits enquiries from the press, for instance encouraging a call to the museum press office and the request of further material (step 5.1). In the same way, the invitation to a press preview (step 5.2) and the suggestion of a specific date for releasing the news (step 5.3) are a way for catching journalists' attention and aims at encouraging a phone call or a face-to-face encounter. Eventually, the availability of press images (step 5.4) has great importance for media people and especially since the introduction of colour photographs in the 1960s (see Sloan/Purcell 2002) journalists have been increasingly asking for good images. Providing them is therefore a way to stimulate and facilitate their work.

A model for the ultimate and most comprehensive structure of EPAs has been described so far; next, the sample will be analysed in respect of the presence – or absence – of the moves and steps outlined, producing related statistics to be graphically represented with tables. Different colours will be used in order to highlight obligatory, core and optional moves within the tables: yellow for obligatory, green for core and lilac for optional. Each decade – 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990 and 2000 – will be explored separately in the next sections, while some concluding remarks will be provided at the end of the chapter.

## 9.2 Structure of EPAs in 1950

1950			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	4	40
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>		
1.3	<i>dates</i>	9	90
1.4	<i>location</i>	9	90
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general aim</i>	8	80
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	6	60
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	8	80
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	3	30
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	3	30
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	1	10
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>		
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	3	30
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	2	20
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	2	20
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>		
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>		
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	2	20
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	2	20
4.2	<i>admission</i>	2	20
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>		
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>		
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	5	50
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>		
5.2	<i>press view</i>	6	60
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	4	40
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	2	20

Tab. 9.4 - Macrostructure of EPAs in the 1950s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

As suggested by the colours used in Tab. 9.4 and particularly by the predominance of lilac, denoting optional moves, in respect to yellow and green, denoting obligatory and core, the structure of EPAs in the 1950s appears only partially developed. A large unbalance indeed can be noted between the two halves of the scheme: the most developed part is that concerning the announcement (move 1) and the description of the exhibition (move 2), while credentials (move 3) and information for visitors (move 4) are lacking. Information specifically devoted to media people (move 5) is also limited.

It can be deduced that in this phase major emphasis was placed on the definition of contents featured by exhibitions, to be essentially conveyed within move 1 and 2, both found to be obligatory in the 1950 decade.

After a brief announcement of the exhibition, which can be even embedded in the title of the press release, EPA writers go directly to the point, describing general characteristics and aims of the exhibition, presenting the artists and the works on display (steps 2.1 – 2.6). They may also stress different aspects, according to the specificities of the institutions they belong. EPAs issued by the National Gallery, for instance, provide plenty of details on technical aspects, such as the state of conservation of art works, restoration cases, and problems of attribution. The following extract (1) gives an example of this kind of approach:

(1)

RELEASE FROM THE NATIONAL GALLERY  
FRANCIA'S "VIRGIN AND CHILD WITH AN ANGEL" AT THE NATIONAL GALLERY

"The Virgin and Child with an Angel" attributed to Francesco Francia (ca.1450-1517/8) came to the National Gallery in 1924 with the Mond Bequest. This was the most important bequest received by the National Gallery in this century. It included pictures by such famous Italian artists as Mantegna, Bellini and Botticelli, Raphael and Titian. The picture bearing the signature of Francia was therefore a not very important item in the bequest, and since 1939 it has not been exhibited to the public. It attracted attention last year, however, when the suspicion arose that it might be a forgery.

This was due to the appearance, in a dirty condition, of another version at the Morgan Grenville sale at Christie's on 18 June 1954, and its subsequent cleaning for Mr. Leonard Keetser, the purchaser. Mr. Koetser informed the Director of the National Gallery of his purchase and was invited immediately to bring his picture to the Gallery for comparison. When the two were finally placed side by side, no obvious aesthetic differences were visible. The Morgan Grenville version, however, showed greater signs of age in its craquelure. The Director told Mr. Koetser that he did not doubt the authenticity of the Morgan Grenville picture, and promised that the Mond version should receive a full technical investigation in case it contained factual proof of comparative modernity.  
[...]

(London, National Gallery, *Francia's Virgin and Child with an Angel*, 12 May 1955)

Instead, EPAs issued by a very different – private - institution, the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, show a major concern for the provenance of the works on display and report accurately the names of loaners, as a priority information to be conveyed in the introductory section of the press release (2):

(2)

THE SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM FOUNDATION 120 Broadway New York 5, N. Y.

Rector 2-9740

Released for Publication in Newspapers of Wednesday, June 8, 1955

June 3, 1955

Harry F. Guggenheim, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, announces that on Wednesday, June 8th, the Museum of the Foundation at 1071 Fifth Avenue will open to the public a retrospective exhibition of the PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS AND SCULPTURE OF ALBERTO GIACOMETTI. There will be a Press View on Tuesday, June 7th, between 11 A.M. and 3 P.M.; and an invitation Preview Tuesday June 7th, between three and six o'clock.

This will be the first major comprehensive exhibition of Alberto Giacometti's work to be held in a museum in the United States or abroad.

Among the Museums which have helped towards the exhibition with loans are The Baltimore Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art. And among the private collectors who have collaborated are Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Alsdorf, Winnetka; Mr. Parour Beglarian, Paris; Mr. L. G. Clayeux, Paris; Mrs. Marcel Duchamp, New York; Mr. William N. Eisendrath, Jr., St. Louis; Mr. and Mrs. Leland Hayward, New York; Mr. and Mrs. Fernand Leval, New York; Mr. Julien Levy, Bridgewater, Connecticut; Mr. and Mrs. Alexander Liberman; New York; Mr. and Mrs. Samuel A. Marx, Chicago; Mr. and Mrs. Pierre Matisse New York; Mrs. Rollie McKenna, New York; Mr. and Mrs. William S. Paley, New York; Mr. Billy Rose, Mount Kisco; Miss Jean Stein, New York; Mr. G. David Thompson, Pittsburgh; Mr. and Mrs. Charles Zadok, Milwaukee; Galerie Maeght, Paris; Pierre Matisse Gallery, New York; Saidie A. May Collection, The Baltimore Museum of Art; The Museum of Modern Art, New York. [...]

(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Alberto Giacometti*, 3 June 1955)

Such detailed list, surely not appealing in terms of communication, could compensate somehow the need for establishing credentials for the exhibition, a move which is scarcely represented in this decade, as it appears only in 20% of the cases.

It is curious to note that a title for the exhibition is not perceived as obligatory – step 1.1 is optional in this decade – and a subtitle is never provided. Evidently, the importance of a title as a powerful tool of communication had still to be discovered and was underestimated in the 1950s. Conversely, the idea of associating the exhibition with a publication (step 2.8) is already drafted, although in an understated way, with no reference to its sale, as shown in the extract below (3):

(3)

The set-designer, H.G. Adam, one of the foremost modern sculptors in France, is responsible not only for the decor but also for the masks. One of these masks serves as cover to the catalogue of the exhibition.  
(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *French Theatre Art*, 1 March 1955)

Another striking element in the analysis of the structure of EPAs belonging to this decade is the scarce attention reserved to common visitors in respect to journalists: move 4, *providing information for visitors*, is optional, appearing in only 30% of the EPAs, while move 5, *soliciting press response*, is core, as it appears in 50%. A possible explanation could be that in the 1950 EPAs were essentially perceived in terms of an expert-to-expert communication and not meant for lay people. As a consequence, the content conveyed by EPAs could be technical or focused on a very specific aspect, because they addressed professionals mostly interested in the cultural issues touched by exhibitions. Conversely, basic information, such as opening hours or terms of admission, were not considered newsworthy items and could be omitted. The urge for attracting visitors by offering a service or a series of facilities was still to come.

However, even if move 5 is core, a contact for press enquiries (step 5.1) is never provided, which is non-sense in terms of media relations. The most developed step within move 5 is the mention of a press view scheduled on a certain date (step 5.2), while in lesser cases a date for publishing is suggested or the availability of photographs is signalled. This could reflect the scarcity of press officers in charge at the time, although, as already pointed out in this thesis (see section 1.1), professional press officers were already employed by museums since the 1950s, at least in the United States. Moreover, in the 1950s information specific for mediateople, soliciting their response, is often conveyed in a very implicit way, with short sentences placed at the very beginning or at the end of the EPA like *this handout admits, photographers are welcome*, etc.

Further evidence of the confusion surrounding the genre of EPAs, its features but also its constraints in this decade, is the inconsistent stance adopted by writers: among EPAs dating to the 1950s two cases were found where the author speaks in singular first person, providing his personal view on the topic in the concluding paragraph of the press release. These are odd cases, because, as Jacobs (1999a) pointed out, there are hardly any first person pronouns used in press releases. It would be “unexpected, to say the least”, he notes, because press releases are issued when companies or institutions “want to say something about themselves (Jacobs 1999b: 220)”. Instead he finds that “it is a characteristic feature of the production of press releases that self-referencing is almost exclusively realized in the third person, in particular through the use of the organization’s proper name” (1999b: 220). This turns out to be true also for EPAs, in their contemporary version, but, as corpus evidence shows, cannot be taken for granted in earlier stages of development of the genre.

A relevant extract with singular first person reference, taken from an EPA dated to 1955, is provided in the box below (4):

(4)

The conclusion to be drawn from this presentation seems to me to be that there is a great diversity in theatre decor which is the result more of the originality and personality of its creators than of any central line of direction. Masks, which are quite frequently used, and marionettes, which are experiencing a new popularity thanks to designers such as Y. Joly, complete the exhibition.

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *French Theatre Art*, 1 March 1955)

Reading this extract one may have the impression that the writer confuses the genre of EPAs with that of an essay, where the writer's view on the topic is normally expressed in the concluding paragraph. It has been already pointed out that EPAs reflect a multiple authorship (see chapter 1 of this thesis). This EPA is not signed, but we may presume that here the author coincides with the curator, as he defines his writing a "presentation" – although it is not clear if he is actually addressing the press release or the noun refers to the exhibition – and gives a personal interpretation of the topic issued by the exhibition. Otherwise, we could guess that the original text behind the press release is a draft of the exhibition concept written by a curator, which has not been later edited according to the standards of a press release. Anyway, the result of this inaccurate recycling is not good in communicative terms: the reader gains the idea of a very naïve perspective, as the statement is anonymous and cannot be attributed to an authoritative speaker.

Summing up, the general impression related to the 1950 structure of EPAs reminds of a genre that was still *in nuce* at the time: museum press officers were still developing a standard structure and although communicative purposes were essentially clear to writers – to announce the exhibition and to describe its content –, their strategies to pursue them were varied and sometimes unpredictable. Moreover, the 1950 structure shows a scarce awareness of the genre in terms of relations to media people, who are not clearly addressed by the EPAs and, most of all, do not provide a contact especially meant for them.

### 9.3 Structure of EPAs in 1960

1960			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	6	60
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>		
1.3	<i>dates</i>	7	70
1.4	<i>location</i>	5	50
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general aim</i>	5	50
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	4	40
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	5	50
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	5	50
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	1	10
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	2	20
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>	1	10
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	4	40
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	5	50
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	3	30
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>	1	10
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>	2	20
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	3	30
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	2	20
4.2	<i>admission</i>	2	20
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>		
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>		
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	10	100
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>	5	50
5.2	<i>press view</i>	6	60
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	6	60
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	5	50

Tab. 9.5 – Macrostructure of EPAs in the 1960s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

The analysis of the structure of EPAs in the 1960 decade shows a turning point in terms of development of the genre. As it can be seen in table 9.5, in the first place, all basic moves – announcement, presentation, and address to the press – become obligatory and can be highlighted in yellow; second, all possible options to present the contents of the exhibition within move 2 are represented as core or optional, in green or lilac, according to their different frequency. Moreover, the establishing credential move (move 3) becomes core, and the first mention of curatorial roles and to sponsors is to be noted; yet the attention towards visitors and their need to be informed about basic issues, such as opening hours and admission, is still limited. Eventually, all steps soliciting press response within move 5 are fully represented in green as core. Each of these salient changes is going to be discussed in turn.

With regard to the announcement, no particular change is to be registered in respect to the 1950 decade: step 1.1, providing the exhibition title, has become core, while a subtitle is still missing. However, exhibition titles are not particularly elaborated in this decade, but rather didactic, and often coincide with the name of the artist featured by the exhibition, as in the case of ‘Mark Rothko’, held by the Museum of Modern Art in 1961, or ‘Rembrandt’s Drawings and Prints in the Frick Collection’ (1968), or ‘Roy Lichtenstein at the Guggenheim’ (1969). A more intriguing title is that provided by the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art in 1969 for an exhibition showing art proposals submitted by telephone: ‘Art by Telephone’. This was the first exhibition to focus on the possibilities of remote-control creation of art and involved 39 artists from across the United States and Europe, from Sol Lewitt to Bruce Nauman, Claes Oldenburg and Richard Serra. It can be guessed that the increasing creativity in visual arts during the 1960s was influencing also exhibiting choices and related communication strategies, starting from the definition of more captivating exhibition titles.

Steps 1.3 and 1.4, identifying respectively the opening period and the venue, are core in the 1960s, while they were obligatory in the 1950s: this slight difference has not to be read as a regression, but is due to the sample of EPAs collected for this part of the analysis, which, for its limited dimension, requires a certain flexibility in the interpretation of data. As a matter of fact, a general progression in the structure cannot be denied, if we take into consideration the whole development of moves and steps shown by table 9.5.

All possible steps comprised within move 2 are now represented: a general statement about the exhibition (step 2.1), description of artworks (step 2.3) and biography of artists (step 2.4) appear in 50% of the sample and are therefore highlighted in green as core; the other steps appear with a

lower frequency and are therefore optional, but some of them are used for the first time, such as the one reporting about the exhibition's travel across further venues. The opportunity to host major travelling exhibitions is to be put in relation to a widening art scene, where the transport of art works becomes gradually easier and exchanges among international art venues become encouraged. Step 2.8 – signalling a catalogue – increases in respect to the previous decade and the presence of a publication accompanying the exhibition is signalled in a more commercial way, as in the following extract appearing as a footnote of the EPA (5):

(5)

MARK ROTHKO by Peter Selz. 44 pages, 29 photos (6 in color). Published by the Museum of Modern Art, New York. Distributed by Doubleday and Co., Inc. \$2, 25.  
(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Mark Rothko*, 18 January 1961)

However, the most important development associated with this decade is maybe that concerning the establishing credentials move (move 3). The exhibition becomes to be contextualized not only in respect to the institution in the background, which carries organizational responsibility, but also in respect to curators and sponsors. Steps 3.2 and 3.3, identifying respectively the mention of curators and sponsors, appear for the first time in this decade, although their use is still very limited and, as lilac colour shows in table 9.5, they are still optional.

The mention of the role of curator, bound to become a key-figure in the following decades, is provided in the 1960s as in the following example (6):

(6)

The exhibition was prepared by Diane Waldman, Associate Curator of the Guggenheim Museum, who has written a critical introduction to the artist in the illustrated catalogue of the show. In the opening paragraphs Mrs. Waldman points out the limitations of the term 'pop art', which is inadequate, she says, for a fully, understanding of the work of Lichtenstein or of any other major 'pop artist'.  
(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Roy Lichtenstein*, 21 November 1969)

In this case, the mention of a curator is not only functional to establishing credential for the exhibition, but allows to enrich the presentation of contents with a series of pertinent scientific comments, belonging to an expert in the field and therefore perceived as particularly sound. Curatorial statements reinforce the scientific value of the exhibition and will be increasingly used

by EPA writers over decades, especially in the form of direct quotations, a point to be further discussed in a subsequent section of this chapter.

While the mention of the curator, especially if he is a well-known one, can add value to the exhibition, citing the sponsors and the supporters is a necessary reward to those who financially contributed to the event. From the 1960s onward acknowledgements of sponsors, donors and other benefactors become recurrent and very static in terms of phraseology. A typical pattern is *the \_\_\_ is/was made possible by*, where the slot in this frame can be filled with words such as *exhibition, catalogue, programme*, and other similar expressions. This pattern has 40 occurrences in the EPA Diacorpus and the first to be found, belonging to the 1960 decade, is reported in the following extract (7):

(7)

The acquisition has been made possible by the generosity of the Trustees of the Wolfson Foundation, who have promised a contribution of £100,000. The remaining £40,000 will be contributed by a Special Exchequer Grant.  
(London, National Gallery, *Goya's Duke of Wellington*, 3 August 1961)

While for move 1, 2, 3 and 5 we can highlight a major development, with regard to move 4, *providing information for visitors*, only minor change is to be noted: in the 1960s the move is still optional as in the 1950s, as it appears in less than 50% of the cases. Information regarding the admission, for instance, appears only in 2 out of 10 EPAs, while the price of tickets is never mentioned. Collateral events are also not introduced yet.

Conversely, the development of move 5, *soliciting press response*, is relevant: the move becomes obligatory, as it appears in all the EPAs collected in the sample, and the entire array of steps is represented as core. The most important change regarding this move is the indication of a contact for press enquiries in 50% of the cases, which was missing in the 1950s; the frequency of steps concerning a press preview and suggesting a publishing date (step 5.2 and step 5.3) does not drastically increase in respect to the 1950s, while information on images available for the press (step 5.4) gains more importance in this decade, maybe as a consequence of the increasing role played by colour photographs in newspapers and periodicals from 1960 onwards (see Sloan/Purcell 2002). Colour pictures were difficult to process and print and therefore were used only on special occasion and special sections before they became common in the 1960s. In the 1970s more advanced technology allowed for ease in colour processing and especially in the 1980s and the 1990s the use of colour photographs was improved by the industry's move to offset printing.

In conclusion, the structure highlighted by EPA in the 1960s shows an important step forward towards the definition of the genre of EPAs as we know it: the basic moves (1, 2 and 5) are consolidated, while the attention towards visitors (move 4) and media people (move 5) is slightly increasing.

#### 9.4 Structure of EPAs in 1970

1970			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	5	50
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>	3	30
1.3	<i>dates</i>	9	90
1.4	<i>location</i>	9	90
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general aim</i>	7	70
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	6	60
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	5	50
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	6	60
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	1	10
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	2	20
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>	2	20
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	2	20
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	6	60
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	3	30
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>	6	60
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>	4	40
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	7	70
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	4	40
4.2	<i>admission</i>	5	50
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>	3	30
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>	2	20
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	10	100
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>	8	80
5.2	<i>press view</i>	6	60
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	4	40
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	1	10

Tab. 9.6 – Macrostructure of EPAs in the 1970s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

The progression in terms of development of moves and steps shown by 1960 EPAs continues in the 1970s with a further consolidation.

Move 1 – *announcing the exhibition* – is still obligatory as it was in the previous decades, but the definition of exhibition titles enters a phase of major elaboration, with a first appearance of the step related to subtitles (step 1.2), and the indication of dates (step 1.3) and location (step 1.4) becomes an unavoidable necessity. No major change is to be noted with regard to move 2 – *presenting the exhibition* – although the number of art works on display in particular seems to gain importance among the steps. Move 3 – *establishing credentials for the exhibition* – remains core, but the importance of curators (step 3.2) increases. The most interesting change concerns move 4 – *providing information for visitors* – which can be highlighted in green as core for the first time: more specifically, the step related to admission (step 4.2) becomes core, while those conveying information about tickets price (step 4.3) and collateral events (step 4.4) are introduced for the first time as optional. Eventually, move 5 – *soliciting press response* – is still obligatory, but the frequency of a press contact (step 5.2) increases from 50% in the previous decade to 80%.

Let us begin with the evolution of exhibition titles in this decade: while in many cases the habit to entitle the exhibition with the name of the featured artist remains, a new tendency is highlighted in the 1970s, which is to accompany the main title with a further subtitle. This practice aims at anticipating and explaining the contents of the exhibition, as the following examples show (8, 9):

(8)

*Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Painter and Poet* which is due to open at the Royal Academy on 13th January 1973 is the first large-scale exhibition since 1883 devoted solely to this founder member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. [...]. First of all there are the paintings and drawings produced while Rossetti was an active member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. [...] The two other groups here show subjects drawn from Dante's poems, some of which Rossetti himself had translated in 1848, and the "Morte d'Arthur", which were the sources of greatest inspiration for his painting and drawing at this date. The peculiarly mystical, medieval atmosphere of these "romances" appealed strongly to his poetic imagination... [...]

(London, Royal Academy of Art, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 January 1972)

(9)

THE ART OF HOLLYWOOD  
Fifty years of Art Direction

In the most recent and respected biographical dictionary of films and filming there is an 87-line entry for DAY, DORIS but none for DAY, RICHARD. Yet Richard Day designed more than fifty major productions in a career which began in the 20s with films like 'Foolish Wives', 'Greed' and 'The Merry Widow', and continued through to the 50s with 'On The Waterfront' and 'A Streetcar Named Desire'. In this new exhibition, [...] the often unrecognised work of Day and other great art directors of the American cinema is presented in the form of film, original designs, sketches, stills and reconstructions. [...]

(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Art of Hollywood*, 1 August 1979)

In both extracts the use of subtitle allows to add details to the main information provided by the title, guiding the readers and offering them a hint to better understand the curatorial choices: in the first example (8), for instance, visitors can gather since the very beginning of the text – namely, from the exhibition title – that the exhibition takes into consideration not only the work of Dante Gabriel Rossetti as a painter, but also as a poet; the concept is further explained in the following lines of the EPA. In the second example (9) the combination of title and subtitle also allows to grasp an idea of what the exhibition is about, because a series of contextual words are used (*art, Hollywood, direction*). Moreover, a chronological reference is provided – *fifty years of* – able to define the relevant period of analysis.

As previously pointed out, the observation of move 2 – *presenting the exhibition* – during the 1970s does not present relevant changes in respect to the previous decade: steps from 2.1 to 2.4 are core, as they appear in more than 50% of the investigated cases, while steps from 2.5 to 2.8 are optional. However, the analysis of EPAs belonging to this decade revealed a significant element: from the 1970s onward the descriptive sections of EPAs – mostly identified within move 2 – are characterized by a more relevant presence of narrative sections and emotional language. To the explanation of what is meant here for narrative and how it is used in EPAs is devoted a following section of this chapter (9.9).

Let us go back to the analysis of structure of EPAs in the 1970s. In this decade move 3 – *establishing credentials* – remains core, but among its steps one in particular gains importance, that associated with the mention of curators (step 3.2). This step, which was absent during the 1950s and optional in the 1960s, is now core, as it appears in 60% of the investigated cases. The mention of curators is not only important in quantitative terms and goes beyond a simple form of acknowledgement: as already pointed out, EPA writers underline the authoritative role played by curators in shaping the exhibition and their distinguished position in the art world, spending more than a few words for them within the EPA. In the following extract, for instance, a clear distinction is made between a professional in charge of the selection of works to be exhibited and the colleague in charge of the design of the exhibition (10):

(10)

The works have been chosen and selected by a distinguished committee of scholars, including Mrs. Virginia Surtees, author of the recent catalogue raisonné on Rossetti. The exhibition specially designed by Christopher Firmstone, has been arranged, partly chronologically, to show the artist's development, but also, more importantly, by grouping works of a similar nature or subject matter, to reveal the various themes which occupied the artist's imagination at different stages during his life and career.

(London, Royal Academy of Art, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 January 1972)

In the next example (11) a further value to the exhibition is provided by the case of a personal acquaintance between the curator and the artist featured:

(11)

The exhibition and the fully illustrated catalogue with text by guest curator Caroline Tisdall, the English critic who has worked closely with the artist for a number of years, are supported by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in Washington, D. C., a Federal Agency, and the German Federal Republic.  
(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Joseph Beuys*, 1 November 1979)

The analysis of structure suggests that in the 1970s visitors become a relevant item in terms of museum public relations: move 4 – *providing information for visitors* – appears in 60% of the investigate cases and can be therefore highlighted in green, as core. The same move was only optional during the 1950s and the 1960s. Information regarding the admission (step 4.2), in particular, is provided in 50% of the cases, while for the first time the price of tickets (step 4.3) can be retrieved in the text of EPAs. This crucial information can be conveyed at the very beginning, as in example 12, or at the end of the press release, as in example 13:

(12)

Press Release

Royal Academy of Arts  
Impressionism - its Masters, Precursors and its influence in Britain  
From 9th February - 28th April 1974  
Press Day: Thursday 7th February 10 a.m. - 5.30 p.m.  
Private View: Friday 8th February 10 a.m. - 6p.m.  
Open Daily: 10-6 (Sundays 2-6)  
Admission: 50p (Mondays 30p)  
(London, Royal Academy of Art, *Impressionism*, 1 February 1974)

(13)

DATES: 3 October Until 13 January 1980.  
Closed Fridays and 24 to 26 December inclusive and Tuesday 1 January.  
ADMISSION: £1.25. Children, Students, OAPs: 50p.  
PRESS VIEW: Tuesday 2 October, 11.00 until 15.00.  
LOCATION: Room 45, V & A.  
LECTURES: There will be a series of free lunchtime talks followed by full length feature films on Wednesdays from October 17 to November 21 inclusive in the V & A Lecture Theatre.  
Issued: August 1979.  
(London, Victoria&Albert Museum, *Art of Hollywood*, 1 August 1979)

Example (13) shows also evidence of the first introduction of step 4.4 – *collateral events* – within the structure of EPAs: a series of free lectures and films on topics related to the exhibition is offered to the public during the exhibiting period. This is also a sign of newly discovered attention toward visitors and goes hand in hand with the introduction of charged admission: collateral events provide additional value to the exhibition in terms of cultural opportunities, as they allow to better understand contents, but also arouse the interest in the event and aim to attract more paying visitors.

Finally, the observation of move 5, *soliciting press response*, does not provide relevant variation in the 1970s: the move is still obligatory, as it appears in all the EPAs collected in the sample, and the entire array of steps is represented as core or optional.

It can be concluded that the most important achievement related to the development of EPAs structure in this decade is the importance gained by visitors in the consideration of museum professionals, in consideration of the adoption of tickets, reflected by the increasing frequency of related move and steps. With regard to the other moves and steps we can observe a general consolidation of the structure, characterized, as we move forward, by a gradual predominance of yellow and green colors – denoting obligatory and core structural elements – in respect to white and lilac – denoting, respectively, absent and optional elements.

## 9.5 Structure of EPAs in 1980

1980			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	9	90
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>	6	60
1.3	<i>dates</i>	9	90
1.4	<i>location</i>	7	70
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general aim</i>	9	90
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	6	60
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	6	60
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	4	40
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	1	10
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	2	20
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>	3	30
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	6	60
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	6	60
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	4	40
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>	4	40
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>	6	60
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	9	90
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	2	20
4.2	<i>admission</i>	5	50
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>	3	30
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>	7	70
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	10	100
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>	9	90
5.2	<i>press view</i>	5	50
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	3	30
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	3	30

Tab. 9.7 – Macrostructure of EPAs in the 1980s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

The 1980's decade is one of consolidation and homogenization for the structure of EPAs. Looking at table 9.7, the most striking aspect is that 4 moves out of 5 are now highlighted in yellow, as they all have become obligatory, with the exception of move 4 – *establishing credentials for the exhibition* – which is still core. Among steps, 4 have become obligatory (step 1.1, 1.3, 2.1 and 5.1), 9 are core (step 1.2, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 2.8, 3.3, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.2) and 9 are optional (step 2.4 – 2.7, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.3, 5.3, 5.4). As a general premise, it can be pointed out that this decade is not characterized by dramatic changes, but slight adjustments, culminating in the complete acknowledgement of the importance of visitors as fundamental actors in the exhibition, with reciprocal influences on each other.

Within move 1 – *announcing the exhibition* – step 1.1 becomes obligatory and step 1.2 becomes core (they were respectively core and optional in the previous decade): it means that the process of shaping exhibition titles and subtitles is still ongoing in the 1980s, requiring a great deal of experimentation. Along with more elaborated but still didactic titles such as '*Arshile Gorky, 1904–1948: A Retrospective*' are the evocative '*Manet at Work*', '*Bodylines. The Human Figure in Art*', '*Art in the Making: Italian Painting before 1400*', which show a different, more creative approach, maybe reflective of practices typical of advertisements, such as the use of evocative language and short phrases. Among titles belonging to the 1980's decade represented by the EPA Diacorpus but not included in the sample collected for the structural analysis are other interesting cases: '*Spotlight. Four Centuries of Ballet Costumes*', '*Watch this Space*', '*Inside Spaces*', '*Angles of Vision: French Art Today*', '*After the Manner of Women*'. These titles can be read as a clear demonstration of Bhatia's words (2004:84): "Advertising has turned the process of writing into an art form, where writers constantly compete for attention not only by innovative use of language but also by the creative use of traditional expressions and clichés, which are often shunned by good writers in other forms of discourse".

With regard to move 2 – *presenting the exhibition* –, it is to be noted that the step related to the mention of a catalogue (2.8) has become core, shifting from a 20% of occurrences in the 1970s to the 60% in the 1980s. It can be highlighted that, from this decade on, EPAs tend to consistently associate the exhibition with a catalogue or a publication, as if the exhibiting event was comprised of two inseparable parts, the show and the publication. The following extracts (14, 15) provide a selection of examples reflective of this strategy:

(14)

Jewels of the Ancients illustrates the complexity of the culture over a long period and vividly demonstrates the interaction between the Near East, Central Asia and the Aegean.  
The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated catalogue.  
(London, Royal Academy of Art, *Jewels of the Ancient*, 1 May 1987)

(15)

The exhibition De Morgan includes both ceramics and original designs and will mark the publication by Richard Dennis of 'The Designs by William De Morgan'. This catalogue illustrates the Museum's extensive collection of De Morgan drawings.

(London. Victoria&Albert Museum. *William De Morgan*. 1 January 1989)

An entire paragraph of the EPA can also be devoted to the mention of the catalogue, with plenty of details on contents, as in the following example (16):

(16)

PUBLICATION. Andy Warhol: A Retrospective. Introduction by Kynaston McShine.

Essays by Robert Rosenblum, Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, and Marco Livingstone. Includes a collective portrait of the artist, with contributions by artists, writers, and other colleagues; chronology; and bibliography. 480 pages. 277 color and 359 black-and-white illustrations. Published by The Museum of Modern Art. Clothbound volume distributed by Bui finch Press/Little, Brown and Company, Boston (\$60. 00); paperbound available in the Museum Store only (\$35. 00).

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Andy Warhol*, 1 February 1989)

The observation of move 3 – *establishing credentials* –, does not present relevant variation in the 1980s: the move is still core, as it appears in 60% of the investigated cases. In respect to the previous decade, the only increasing step is 3.3 – *sponsorship* – which goes from 40% in the 1970s to 60% in the 1980s and therefore becomes core. This data is to be put in relation to a general shift towards commercial concerns, which is particularly accentuated in this decade and does not involve only the collection of sponsors and supporters but also the introduction of visitor fees, catalogues sale, guided tours, and so on. The major change within the structure concerns indeed move 4 – *providing information for visitors* –, which becomes obligatory, as it appears in 90% of the cases, with a significant increase of step 4.4, associated with collateral events, from 20% in the 1970s to 70% in the 1980s. Information regarding a complementary program based on the exhibition is generally put at the end of the EPA: for instance, a series of 'lunchtime lectures', to be announced in the concluding paragraph, or even 'a symposium, lecture, and architectural tours' scheduled during the run of the exhibition. Particularly relevant are cases where the artist featured by the exhibition is involved in the program, giving a lecture or an artist talk (17):

(17)

On January 16 at 6: 30 pm in the Guggenheim Museum Auditorium, the artist will discuss her installations for outdoor public sites and for interior spaces in a lecture entitled "Jenny Holzer: Public and Private Art."

(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Jenny Holzer*, 11 December 1989)

As a further evidence of increasing attention towards visitors, it has to be noted that in this decade the first mention to acoustic guides was found. The relevant extract (18) is provided below:

(18)

The Education Department at the Royal Academy is offering educational conferences for different groups [...] introductory material has been prepared including a booklet for teachers, a slide pack and Acoustiguide tapes. [...] (London, Royal Academy of Arts, 1 January 1986)

No significant change is to be noted within move 5 – *soliciting press response* – which remains obligatory, although the importance of providing a contact for press enquiries is now definitely recognized, with step 5.1 which also becomes obligatory (it was core in the previous decades).

Summing up, the 1980s' decade clearly establishes the need of providing more detailed information and services for visitors and marks an increasing concern for commercial aspects, such as sponsorship and catalogue sales. These changes are reflected by the development of the EPA structure, which gradually gains a more consistent and recursive scheme of moves and steps.

## 9.6 Structure of EPAs in 1990

1990			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	10	100
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>	9	90
1.3	<i>dates</i>	10	100
1.4	<i>location</i>	6	60
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general aim</i>	9	90
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	9	90
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	10	100
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	5	50
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	1	10
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	2	20
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>	4	40
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	10	100
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	10	100
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	1	10
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>	10	100
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>	5	50
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	9	90
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	3	30
4.2	<i>admission</i>	6	60
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>	3	30
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>	2	20
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	10	100
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>	9	90
5.2	<i>press view</i>	3	30
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	3	30
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	3	30

Tab. 9.8 – Macrostructure of EPAs in the 1990s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

Looking at the structure of EPAs in the 1990's, the first achievement to be noted in respect to previous decades is that all basic moves – from 1 to 5 – have all become obligatory. In particular, move 3 – *establishing credentials* – which was only core so far, now appears in 100% of the investigated cases and can be therefore highlighted in yellow. Moreover, a quick glimpse to table 9.8 allows to recognize that yellow has become the predominant colour in the structure, since 14 components out of 28 are now obligatory.

The most consolidated move is the announcement (move 1): 3 steps out of 4 – those related to title, subtitle and dates – have become obligatory and one – that related to location – is core. This does not come as a surprise, since information conveyed by these steps has to be regarded as basic for the content of an EPA. Yet, this result suggests that in the 1990s EPAs have reached a point of major development in terms of awareness of the genre and its related communicative purposes.

From the 1990's decade on, the way move 1 is performed can determine a mechanical and repetitive incipit in EPAs, concentrating announcement, dates and location in the first lines of the text. This scheme is often adopted by EPA writers, despite its limited appeal in terms of communication. As the following extract (19) shows, such an incipit goes directly to the point, avoiding premises, and provides all basic information in the space of two lines or even less:

(19)

GETTY MUSEUM MOUNTS COMPREHENSIVE EXHIBITION OF DAGUERREOTYPES

Early photographs made portraits available to all for the first time

Exhibition dates: April 14-July 12, 1998

Exhibition location: J. Paul Getty Museum, West Pavilion, Courtyard Level

One of the most comprehensive exhibitions of daguerreotypes ever mounted will be on view at the Getty Center from April 14 through July 12, 1998. [...]

(Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, *Daguerreotypes*, 27 March 1998)

Move 2 – *presenting the exhibition* – is also characterized by a consolidation of its components in the 1990's: the most recurring and therefore obligatory steps are 2.1 – 2.3, which are also the most descriptive and evaluative, and step 2.8, related to the catalogue. This result suggests that description and evaluation now more than ever play an essential role in the content of EPAs; a detailed account on art works on display, in particular, is perceived as indispensable. In this context, essays from the catalogue can be used as a further source of information, description and evaluation, to be quoted in this central section of the text to reinforce or enrich the general aim of the exhibition, as in the following extract (20):

(20)

Willem de Kooning: The Late Paintings, which finishes its international tour at The Museum of Modern Art, New York, provides the first opportunity to study in depth the artist's last decade of work. "Of these works, a significant number count among the most remarkable paintings by anyone active in the 1980s and among the most distinctive, graceful, and mysterious de Kooning himself ever made, " writes Robert Storr in the exhibition catalogue. [...] (New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Willem de Kooning*, 1 November 1996)

Moreover, the creative potential of evaluative language is exploited by EPA writers with great awareness in this decade, as the following example (21) shows:

(21)

[...] The variously ethereal, animated, and richly hued works demonstrate a striking formal and emotional range. Enlivened by sinuous, flowing strokes in radiant primary reds, yellows, and blues, augmented by subtle whites and strong blacks, and startling greens, oranges, and violets, the paintings reverberate with fragmentary references to the sexually charged figuration, landscape spaces, and the biomorphic forms of his great Abstract Expressionist canvases of the 1940s, 50s, and 60s. [...] (New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Willem de Kooning*, 1 November 1996)

The description here reproduced (21) is taken from a central section of the EPA, coinciding with move 2; it is a typical example of those direct and straightforward descriptions adopted especially in contemporary EPAs, in respect to a more didactic style characterizing earlier descriptions, which, according to the lexical analysis carried out in the previous chapter and in particular in view of the decline in the frequency of the verbs *shown* and *shows* (see section 8.2.3), have been gradually dismissed. Moreover, the writer proves able to create powerful combinations of evaluative language and linguistic means of emotional appeal, such as the imaginative sequence '*variously ethereal, animated, and richly hued works*'.

As already anticipated at the beginning of this section, move 3 – *establishing credentials* – has become obligatory in the 1990's decade. It can be useful to remember that this move was just drafted in the 1950s and becomes core from the 1960s onwards. Its frequency gradually increases over time. Within this move, step 3.1 – *organization* – has always remained optional but decreases over time, maybe because in most of the cases the museum itself is responsible of the organization and a further mention would sound pleonastic; conversely, the frequency of step 3.2 – *curatorship* – and 3.3 – *sponsorship* – increases and these steps are respectively obligatory and core in the 1990s. The mention of curator, in particular, is present in 100% of the EPAs of this decade: this is the result of a gradual development related to this step, started in the 1960s and then grown in the following decades. Yet, the way this step is performed in the text does not change much in respect

to earlier texts: typically, curators are mentioned in the central section of the EPA, before the description of contents or embedded in the descriptive part. Conversely, in the 1990s the mention of sponsors (step 3.3), which generally followed the other exhibition credentials, can be anticipated to the opening lines of the text, as in the example below (22):

(22)

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS PRESS RELEASE  
DAVID HOCKNEY  
Works on Paper 1959 - 1995  
Sackler Galleries  
9 November 1995 - 25 January 1996 (closed 24 and 25 December 1995)  
Sponsored by BMW (GB) Limited in association with Harpers & Queen

David Hockney is one of the most celebrated living British artists and this exhibition of 140 drawings, watercolours and gouaches has been gathered from public and private collections worldwide. [...] (London, Royal Academy of Art, *David Hockney*, 1 November 1995)

The leading role gained by sponsors in the 1990s is highlighted not only by their position within the structure of EPAs, but also by their repeated presence: in some cases, for instance, in addition to the textual mention, a graphic logo identifying the sponsor can be provided as a further promotional element.

No particular change is to be noted with regard to move 4 – *providing information for visitors* – which is still obligatory as in the previous decade. The frequency of steps related to this move registers a slight fluctuation in respect to the 1980s; the mention of collateral events, in particular, falls to 20% (it was at 70% in the 1980s): we may interpret this decrease as a consequence of the limited dimensions of the sample, rather than as a regression in terms of structure. Moreover, it has to be kept in mind that EPAs must focus on the exhibition, while information about educational programs and collateral events, such as artist talks, films and workshops related to the exhibition, can be conveyed by other specific press releases, according to the schedule and the deadlines of the initiatives, which have to be punctually reminded to the media. More significantly, it has to be kept in mind that from the 1990s decade information can be gained from a new, innovative source: the web. As a matter of fact, among EPAs belonging to the 1990s the first mention to a museum website was found. The relevant extract is provided below (23):

(23)

[...] For further information, contact Alexandra Partow, Assistant Director of Communications, The Museum of Modern Art, 212/708-9756. Visit our Web site at [www.moma.org](http://www.moma.org).  
(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Willem de Kooning*, 1 November 1996)

The role of move 5 – *soliciting press response* – appears quite consolidated in the 1990s and no relevant change is to be noted in respect to the previous decade: the move is obligatory, as well as step 5.1, providing a contact for press enquiries, while the other steps are optional.

In conclusion, the observation of EPAs structure in the 1990s confirms that major developments have been completed and the genre has almost reached its final scheme of moves and steps.

## 9.7 Structure of EPAs in 2000

2000			
		Freq.	%
	Move		
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
1.1	<i>title</i>	10	100
1.2	<i>subtitle</i>	6	60
1.3	<i>dates</i>	10	100
1.4	<i>location</i>	10	100
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	10	100
2.1	<i>general overview</i>	9	90
2.2	<i>artworks' number</i>	8	80
2.3	<i>description of artworks on display</i>	7	70
2.4	<i>biography of the featured artist/s</i>	3	30
2.5	<i>list of the artists on display</i>	4	40
2.6	<i>exhibition's sections</i>	3	30
2.7	<i>exhibition's tour</i>	3	30
2.8	<i>catalogue</i>	8	80
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	10	100
3.1	<i>organisation</i>	5	50
3.2	<i>curatorship</i>	9	90
3.3	<i>sponsorship</i>	10	100
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	9	90
4.1	<i>opening hours</i>	3	30
4.2	<i>admission</i>	5	50
4.3	<i>tickets price</i>	4	40
4.4	<i>collateral events</i>	5	50
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	10	100
5.1	<i>contact for press enquiries</i>	8	80
5.2	<i>press view</i>	5	50
5.3	<i>suggested publishing date</i>	0	0
5.4	<i>images for the press</i>	5	50

Tab. 9.9 – Macrostructure of EPAs in the 2000s

obligatory	90–100
core	50–90
optional	<50

The observation of structure of EPAs across the 2000s shows that the genre has definitely reached its current shape: all basic moves (from 1 to 5) have become obligatory and all identified steps are performed, although with different frequency: from obligatory (1.1, 1.3, 1.4, 2.1, 3.2, 3.3) to core (1.2, 2.2, 2.3, 2.8, 3.1, 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4), to optional (2.4, , 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 4.1, 4.3).

As table 9.9 shows, the most stable and recursive components of the structure, where yellow prevails among other colours, are those announcing the exhibition (move 1) and establishing credentials (move 3), while a certain deal of variety is shown by the presentation of contents (move 2), whose related steps appear with different frequency, although the most relevant still seem to be those conveying description and evaluation (2.1, 2.2, 2.3 and 2.8), as already noted in the analysis of 1990's decade.

The observation of move 1 across the 2000s allows to appreciate a great communicative effort in the choice of evocative exhibition titles and subtitles, a process which began, albeit timidly, in the 1960s: browsing exhibition titles belonging to 2000's, we find, for instance, "*Radical Fashion*", "*The Dawn of the Floating World: 1650 –1765*", "*Twilight. Photography in the Magic Hour*", "*Scratch the Surface*", "*Blood on Paper: the Art of Book*", all belonging to British exhibitions, while among the American titles are "*Tempo*", "*The Arts of Fire: Islamic Influences on the Italian Renaissance*", "*Fashioning Fiction in Photography*", "*The Color of Life*". Exhibition titles can be intentionally left ambiguous or incomplete – step 1.2, related to explanatory subtitle appears only in 60% of the cases – and sometimes do not sound immediately clear, especially at a first reading, but they are still very effective as attention-getters: short, often based on emotionally loaded language, they stick in the memory of readers and visitors. A subtitle can help, but it is always best to get the show's subject into the main title: listings editors often drop the subtitle, and busy journalists scan mailboxes for subject headers. It has also to be noted how communication can be reinforced by a smart combination of such cryptic exhibition titles and a powerful image related to the exhibition published on the page (see, for instance, figure 1.1 in chapter 1 of this thesis).

With regard to credentials (move 3), the mention of sponsors has even outnumbered that of curators: namely, both steps are obligatory in this decade, but now sponsors are mentioned in 100% of the cases, curators in 90%; in respect to the previous decade, the situation is reversed. It could be guessed that the presence of sponsors in contemporary EPAs goes beyond a mere mention within the text, or a logo in the header of the sheet. Sponsors may determine exhibiting choices – and therefore influence related textual communication – in a way which is difficult to measure through qualitative and quantitative analysis of EPAs. An ethnographic approach could be helpful in this sense, but it would go beyond the scope of this thesis and would be worth carrying out elsewhere.

Within move 4 – *providing information for visitors* – admission and collateral events are the most frequent steps and rank as core, appearing in 50% of the cases, while opening hours and tickets price are still optional, exactly as they were in the previous decades, since their first appearance, respectively in the 1950s and in the 1970s.

Eventually, move 5 – *soliciting press response* – shows consistency in the choice of steps in respect to previous decades, with the only exception of step 5.3 – *suggested publishing date* – which suddenly disappears. In order to confirm this finding, derived from the sample of EPAs especially collected for the scope of structural analysis, all 2000 EPAs of the corpus were checked in this regard and, as a matter of fact, only three cases of clear suggestion of publishing date were retrieved, all belonging to the same museum, the J. Paul Getty. See the following example (24):

(24)

GOLDEN GRAVES of ANCIENT VANI  
DATE: June 25, 2009 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
GETTY VILLA PRESENTS ANCIENT TREASURES FROM THE REPUBLIC OF GEORGIA, THE LAND  
OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE  
The Golden Graves of Ancient Vani includes four bronze lamps shown together for the first time  
At the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Villa July 16-October 5, 2009  
[...]  
LOS ANGELES—In a spectacular display of archaeological finds, The Golden Graves of Ancient Vani, on view from July 16-October 5, 2009, at the J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Villa, presents more than 140 objects from one of the most celebrated archaeological sites in the Republic of Georgia, [...]  
(Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, *Golden Graves*, 25 June 2009)

As the extract shows (24), the suggestion of a date for publishing the news content provided by the EPA sounds a bit intrusive. Moreover, the idea of a press embargo<sup>1</sup> has no sense for EPAs, which are generally sent with a great deal of advance before the exhibition opening. This anticipation is necessary in order to allow even periodicals and monthly magazines to cover the news according their closing deadlines, at least three months before publication: an issue to be published in June, for instance, is prepared in April. It can be guessed that step 5.3 – *suggested publishing date* – has been gradually reduced by EPAs, since it has no useful purpose in our days, especially in view of the advent of news websites, publishing in real time.

<sup>1</sup> In journalism and public relations, a news embargo or press embargo is a request by a source that the information or news provided by that source not be published until a certain date or certain conditions have been met. The understanding is that if the embargo is broken by reporting before then, the source will retaliate by restricting access to further information by that journalist or his publication, giving them a long-term disadvantage relative to more cooperative outlets. They are often used by businesses making a product announcement, by medical journals, and by government officials announcing policy initiatives; the media is given advance knowledge of details being held secret so that reports can be prepared to coincide with the announcement date and yet still meet press time. In theory, press embargoes reduce inaccuracy in the reporting of breaking stories by reducing the incentive for journalists to cut corners in hopes of "scooping" the competition.

In conclusion of the analysis, it can be pointed out that the structure of EPAs in the 2000's decade does not present remarkable differences in respect to that highlighted in the 1990's. The impression is that in the 2000s the genre of EPAs was going under a process of consolidation, after a time of rapid and major changes in previous decades. A similar halt in the structure, followed by a period of readjustment, was also registered in the 1970s after the great developments happened in the 1950s and the 1960s. If change within the EPAs structure occurs periodically, almost every twenty/thirty years, it could be expected that new developments are going to be introduced in the current and next decades, those of 2010s and 2020s.

## **9.8 The use of quotations across decades**

While analysing moves and steps, some aspects peculiar of media discourse and press releases in particular were identified, such as the use of quotations (Jacobs 1999a, 1999b, Sleurs et al. 2003), and narrative (Bell 1991), also mentioned in chapter 5 of the present thesis. It could be objected that both features belong to the textual sphere rather than generic structure; thus, they recur only in certain EPA moves, i.e. in the descriptive and central ones, so it made sense to deal with them in the context of the structural analysis.

Quotations are very common in press releases and can be explained in terms of what Jacobs (1999a) calls 'self-reference', a typical feature of the genre, in its contemporary expression, already discussed in chapter 5 of this dissertation. It will be however useful to remember that self-quotation serves to make press releases look neutral and reliable, because it anticipates the objectivity requirements of news reporting and lend an air of reliability to the content (Jacobs 1999a: 195–196). With regard to the specific case of EPAs, quotations can emphasize the announcement (move 1) and the presentation (move 2) of the exhibition incorporating the words of a principal or an 'institutional' voice: a curator, a director, or another expert involved. Generally, these comments are functional to description and very positive in terms of evaluation. A further kind of quotation extremely relevant for the genre of EPAs is that provided by artists statements, be they living or dead, offering their point of view on the topic featured by the exhibition or explaining their work in their own, unique words.

Corpus evidence shows that quotations are a recent breakthrough and have been gradually introduced in the structure of EPAs. The EPA Diacorpus was manually explored in this regard and the number of quotations across decades, distinguished between the British and the American sections, was identified; moreover, the different voices behind quotations were taken into

consideration: as before mentioned, there can be artists, curators, museum directors, but also collectors, loaners and sponsors delivering their message. The following table (9.10) shows findings related to the quantitative presence of quotations in the corpus and distinguishes between British and American cases.

	British EPAs	American EPAs	Total	%
1950	1	9	10	17
1960	5	18	23	37
1970	6	23	29	44
1980	6	15	21	34
1990	15	24	39	62
2000	18	30	48	73

Tab. 9.10 – Number of EPAs containing quotations across decades and countries

Tab. 9.10 shows that while in the 1950s only a 20% of EPAs shows the use of quotations, by the 2000s this has grown almost to 80%. As already pointed out in the pilot study (see section 7.1.2), American EPAs show a more confident and appropriate use of quotations since the very beginning of the genre, while until the 1990's decade the presence of quotations is very limited among British documents. Only one instance was found in the 1950s and is not to be attributed to a curator or a director, nor even to an artist, but to the Chancellor of the British Parliament, who announces the purchase of a picture to be retained at the National Gallery (25):

(25)

#### THE NATIONAL GALLERY'S NEW POUSSIN EXHIBITED

The National Gallery has now placed on exhibition Nicolas Poussin's "Adoration of the Shepherds", of which the purchase was announced by Mr. Thorneycroft as Chancellor of the Exchequer on December 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Thorneycroft stated in the House of Commons: "The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art considered an application for a licence to export Poussin's 'Adoration of the Shepherds' in 1956. The Committee decided that the picture ought to be retained in this country and on their recommendation I agreed that a special grant of £12,000 should be made to the National Gallery toward the cost of purchase. The acquisition, at a price of £33,100, to which the National Art Collections Fund have contributed £3,000, has now been completed, and the amount of the grant has been advanced from the Civil Contingencies Fund."

[...]

(London, National Gallery, *New Poussin*, 27 February 1958)

As shown by the extract (25), the quotation is here functional to justifying the exhibition – and therefore its announcement to the press – in very concrete terms. It also delivers detailed information on the price of the picture and the grant provided by the government. Surely in this case the quotation does not fit the need to reinforce description or convey evaluation, as it normally does in contemporary EPAs. Yet, it has a good potential in terms of newsworthiness, because it establishes a solid ground to justify the purchase of the art work to the public.

Conversely, American EPA writers seem to be aware of the importance of quotations as a means for reinforcing the value of an exhibition already in the 1950s, as the following extract shows (26):

(26)

[...] Andrew C. Ritchie, Director of the Department of Painting and Sculpture, has organized the exhibition and has written the accompanying book on Mr. Watkins [...]. Never prolific, Watkins' few early works produced in spare time from his job showed the influence now of Eakins, whom he greatly admired; now of Cezanne, Gauguin and Picasso. Later, the characteristics of his mature painting, according to Andrew Ritchie, were: "The strong emphasis on diagonals..., the large sweeping rhythms, the easy command of forms in space, the expressionistic distortions of exaggerations of feature or gesture, the humorous mood... and the romantic implications and its suffering". [...]

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Franklin C. Watkins*, 14 March 1950)

The evaluative statement here reproduced (26) provides a key in the interpretation of art works on display, enhancing the description, and is perceived by readers as very authoritative, because it comes from the curator of the exhibition, an expert in the relevant field.

The following table (tab. 9.11) gives evidence of the different voices quoted by EPA writers: quantitatively speaking, the most relevant is that of curators, with almost 80 quotations identified across decades and an increasing frequency from the 1950s to the 2000s (from 2 to 24 cases). Almost represented at the same level are artists and directors, with respectively 50 and 43 identified quotations across decades and a more accentuated presence in the 1990s decade; also starting from the 1990s a new voice emerges, that of sponsors: this result does not come as a surprise, but confirms what has been already pointed out with regard to the predominant role played by sponsors from the 1990s onward, also reflected by language and structure of EPAs.

	curators	artists	directors	sponsors
1950	2	3	3	
1960	5	7	8	
1970	10	8	8	
1980	15	8	6	
1990	23	12	12	6
2000	24	12	6	6
TOT	79	50	43	12

Tab. 9.11 – Number of quotations distinguished by authors

The following extracts provide relevant examples of quotations attributed to artists. In the first case (27), the artist's voice is embedded in the central section of the exhibition and adds value to the characterization of Jean Dubuffet as a peculiar artist, gaining inspiration from unorthodox sources.

(27)

[...] In his "Anti-Cultural Position" speech of 1951, Dubuffet further expressed his rejection of certain premises of Occidental culture and his preference for the spiritual attitudes of primitive peoples. He also acknowledged "a great interest in madness. I am convinced that art has much to do with madness and aberrations," he said. [...]

(New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, *Jean Dubuffet*, 19 April 1973)

In extract (28) the artist's voice gains even more relevance, being reported in the beginning of the EPA in the form of an epigraph. The quoted artist in this case (Marcel Duchamp) does not coincide with the artist featured by the exhibition (Jean Arp); thus, the text contains a word play that sticks in the memory of readers and also justifies the exhibition title, '*Art is Arp*'.

(28)

JEAN ARP'S ELEGANT AND BIOMORPHIC ABSTRACTIONS EXAMINED IN FOCUSED EXHIBITION

"For Arp, art is Arp" - Marcel Duchamp

Jean Arp, poet, painter, sculptor, and printmaker, was a founding member of the Dada movement, frequently exhibited with the Surrealists. [...]

(New York, Museum of Modern Art, *Jean Arp*, 1 March 2000)

## 9.9 The use of narrative sections across decades

As pointed out in chapter 5 of the present thesis (sub-section 5.1.2), not only quotations, but also stories are among journalists' most wanted items, especially if they are exciting, controversial and novel. It is with good reason that Bell (1991: 100) stressed that "journalists do not write articles. They write stories". In order to create the news, press release writers may combine narrative with linguistic means of emotional appeal, which are also related to the notion of newsworthiness (Bell 1991).

The analysis of EPAs revealed a significant increase, especially from the 1970s onward, of narrative sections, often combined with emotional language, in the descriptive parts of the text.

The presence of narrative and emotionally charged words can be related to the notion of newsworthiness (Bell 1991): these features are used indeed to create 'news value' and excite curiosity around the artists and their artworks. EPA writers can 'create the news' and move the interest of the readers giving particular evidence, for instance, to the most captivating details of the biography of the artist, or telling a story about a single work on view. Journalists seek stories that are exciting, controversial and novel; EPA writers have to provide them in order to pursue a media coverage.

The narrative potential of EPAs can be explored bearing in mind the analysis carried out by Toolan (1988) on the basic components of the narrative – events, setting and character – and looking for markers of affect (Martin / White 2005) that are felt to play a role in highlighting the news story potential of EPAs, and therefore likely elements of narrative of complication, instability, suspense or resolution.

The following extracts (29, 30) show how narrative and emotional language can be combined in EPAs:

(29)

[...] During these same years Rossetti had moved to a house in Cheyne Walk in Chelsea. A large and brilliant group of friends met there - Ruskin, Swinburne, Morris, Whistler and Burne-Jones among them, and along with the amazing menagerie of wombats, kangaroos and armadilloes that were kept there, they proved an irresistibly fascinating target for Rossetti's contemporaries. [...] However from 1870 onwards it slowly began to break up under the pressure of Rossetti's worsening physical and mental health which turned him into a recluse. [...] It seems that Rossetti's growing feelings of remorse over Elizabeth Siddal's death became identified in his mind with that hopeless grief which Dante felt after the death of his Beatrice.

(London, Royal Academy of Art, *Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 1 January 1972)

(30)

[...] In World War II, as a combat pilot in the German Air Force, Beuys was seriously injured several times. After a near-fatal plane crash during a snowstorm on the Russian Front, he was found by Crimean Tartars who saved his life by wrapping him in a thick insulation of fat and felt. [...] He had never fully recovered from his shattering war experience and withdrew into a state of depression that lasted throughout the 50s. Beuys emerged from this period of crisis with new convictions which led him to testify against Nazism. [...] (New York, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Joseph Beuys, 1 November 1979)

In both extracts (29, 30) the biography of the artist featured by the exhibition – Dante Gabriel Rossetti in extract (29) and Joseph Beuys in extract (30) – is told in a narrative way, developing a story that comprises all basic components of narrative according to Toolan (1988): character, settings, and events. Main characters are obviously the artists, the settings are respectively the Pre-Raphaelite circle and the Russian front during World War II, while the described events are the death of Elizabeth Siddal, followed by a mental illness for Dante Gabriel Rossetti, the plane crash and the subsequent rescue for Joseph Beuys.

Both extracts also provide elements of evaluative language – *a large and brilliant group of friends, the amazing menagerie, hopeless grief, near-fatal plane crash, shattering war experience* -, which add color to the story by creating an atmosphere of potential narrative complication within an exceptional and unusual background. Evaluative items often belong to the semantic dimension of emotions, also identified by Martin and White (2005) as the attitude of affect and "concerned with registering positive and negative feelings" (2005: 42). For instance, in extract (10), the choice of the noun *recluse* to address the miserable condition of Dante Gabriel Rossetti after his wife's death is particularly effective in terms of evaluation and triggers a series of associations related to psychological disorders and social withdrawal. At the same way, the expression *shattering war experience* is able to evoke the psychological scars left by the war on Joseph Beuys, appealing readers emotionally and leaving them space for imagination.

The presence of narrative and emotional linguistic items that can be traced back to the aim of 'creating the news' in the EPA Diacorpus could not be quantified with corpus-based methodologies: a manual inspection of the corpus was, therefore, the only possible option. The observation suggests that narrative sections become quantitatively relevant starting from the 70s and that they fall within the communicative purpose of move 2 – *presenting the exhibition* – and in particular of step 2.3 – *description of artworks on display* – and step 2.4 – *biography of the featured artist/s*.

The following tables (tab. 9.12 and tab. 9.13) summarize the results of the analysis focused on narrative sections.

	British EPAs	American EPAs	Tot.	%
1950	0	2	2	3
1960	1	1	2	3
1970	2	7	9	14
1980	8	7	15	25
1990	7	9	16	25
2000	8	7	15	23
TOT	26	33	59	16

Tab. 9.12 – Number of EPAs containing narrative sections across decades and countries

	<i>Step 2.3 description of artworks on display</i>	<i>Step 2.4 biography of the featured artist/s</i>
1950	0	2
1960	1	1
1970	0	9
1980	3	12
1990	3	13
2000	1	14
TOT	8	51

Tab. 9.13 – Relevant context of narrative sections across decades

While during the 1950s and the 1960s the presence of narrative sections is rather irrelevant, in view of the exiguous number of identified cases (about 3% of the total EPAs for each decade), the 1970s decade marks a turning point: namely, narrative sections go from 2 overall cases in the 1950s to 9 overall cases in the 1970s and the percentage rises to 14%. The increasing trend continues in the following decade, with 15 overall cases in the 1980s (25%), while the number of EPAs containing narrative sections remains stable in the 1990s (16 cases) and in the 2000s (15 cases). It is to be noted that American writers initially show a more confident use of narrative (7 American cases in the 1970s against 2 British cases in the same decade), but British EPAs get even in the subsequent decades and from then on no significant difference can be highlighted between the two in this respect. As for the relevant context where narrative sections could be identified, the most part of the cases (51 out of 59) were found to be functional to the narration of the biography of artists (step 2.4), while only a minor part (8 out of 59) involved the story of art works on display (step 2.3).

## 9.10 Discussion and concluding remarks

The analysis on structural change of EPAs over time sets out a series of final considerations. As a general premise, it has to be pointed out that the methodologies adopted proved useful, although they have been mainly based on manual observation. Moreover, despite its limited dimensions, the sample of EPAs selected for investigation allowed to identify major developments and general trends in the period taken into account. Nonetheless, some specific parts of the analysis required a wider perspective and necessarily involved an examination of the EPA Diacorpus in its entirety: the identification of quotations and narrative sections, for instance, could not be limited to the sample, because the presence of these features is irregularly distributed among EPAs, and the analysis of a few examples would bias findings or minimize the relevance they have for the genre.

The first result to be gathered from the structural analysis is that of a general enhancement of the genre from its earlier instances, dated to the 1950s, to the current shape shown by EPAs issued in the 2000s. Also the pilot study led to the same conclusion, but this claim had to be substantiated by an observation of the structure in the intermediate decades. A conclusive table (tab. 9.14), summarizing the evolution of moves across decades can be useful to illustrate this gradual development. Once again, colours can help to identify obligatory, core and optional components of the structure, to be highlighted respectively in yellow, green and lilac. As a reminder, to be referred to as obligatory, a move must appear at least in 90% of the cases; core moves are those reported between 50% and 90% of the cases, while optional are those under 50% of frequency.

	Move	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
1	ANNOUNCING THE EXHIBITION	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory
2	PRESENTING THE EXHIBITION	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory
3	ESTABLISHING CREDENTIALS FOR THE EXHIBITION	optional	core	core	core	obligatory	obligatory
4	PROVIDING INFORMATION FOR VISITORS	optional	optional	core	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory
5	SOLICITING PRESS RESPONSE	core	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory	obligatory

Tab. 9.14 – Evolution of moves across decades according to their frequency

The graphic representation shows that almost each decade brought new achievements in the structure of EPAs, namely:

- in the 1950s two moves out of five are obligatory, one is core and two are optional;
- in the 1960s three moves out of five are obligatory, one is core and one is optional;
- in the 1970s three moves out of five are obligatory and two are core;
- in the 1980s four moves out of five are obligatory and one is core;
- in the 1990s and in the 2000s five moves out of five are obligatory.

Already from the earlier stages, EPAs are characterized by move 1 and move 2, while move 3, 4 and 5 are a subsequent breakthrough: move 5 is definitely acquired in the 1960s, move 4 in the 1980s and move 3 in the 1990s. We may therefore point out that EPAs were born with a vocation for announcing and describing the exhibition, but only later they have acquired a clear awareness of being press releases, i.e. texts explicitly meant for journalists; even later they have matured into effective tools of communication between museums and their audiences, comprising visitors and sponsors among their relevant interlocutors.

Table 9.14 also shows that some contiguous decades share a certain grade of similarity, since no relevant change – or no change at all – intervenes between them, to the point that they could overlap. Two periods, in particular, could be united and taken into account as a whole: from 1960 to 1979 and from 1990 to 2009. Major structural change seems to be concentrated right before these periods, namely between the 1950s and the 1960s and between the 1980s and the 1990s, while the 1970's and 2000's decades appear as periods of consolidation and stability. This confirms a previous suggestion derived from the analysis (see section 9.7) and namely that major change occurs every thirty years in the structure of EPAs.

The analysis highlights therefore two turning points that are decisive in terms of structural change, whose effects are shown in the following related periods: (1) 1950 – 1979 and (2) 1980 – 2009.

The most salient changes related to the period comprised between 1950 and 1979 concern move 1, 2 and 5. On one hand, there is major emphasis on creativity, both in the announcement and in the description of the exhibition, as suggested by the marked use of captivating exhibition titles, narrative sections and linguistic means of emotional appeal. On the other, from this period onwards EPAs acquire a more definite shape and are modelled on the real needs of media people: they do not only suggest a publishing date, but, more importantly, a contact for further information is provided, along with a date for the press preview and the indication of photographs available if needed.

Moreover, EPA writers acquire an increasing awareness of what journalists most want: novel stories to be told and authoritative statements to be reported even verbatim. The marked use of narrative sections and quotations is indeed functional to these aims.

These relevant developments in the structure of EPAs can be put in relation with cultural changes that took place in the same period in museum professional settings: as pointed out in the first chapter of the thesis, after World War II public relations have been gradually and successfully introduced also in these institutions. Professional press officers were being appointed for the first time and effective communication was now perceived as a value also by non-profit organizations. Moreover, the spread of advertising was igniting creativity in professional discourses with relevant consequences in terms of appropriation of lexical and rhetorical resources (Bhatia 2004). We might expect that also EPAs, and museum public relations in general, were influenced by the innovative character and creative use of language typical of advertising.

In the period comprised between 1980 and 2009 major changes concern moves 3 and 4. An increasing need for self-reference can be noted, realized through a detailed mention of the exhibition credits and, mostly, an accurate account of the people who *made possible* the event, quoting one of the most recurrent phrases in the EPAs of that period. Significantly, curators are not necessarily the most prominent figures behind the exhibition, because sponsors compete with them for attention and, if we look at the frequency of relative steps (3.2 and 3.3), corpus evidence shows that their mention can even outnumber that of curators. In this period the structure of EPAs also reflect the complete acknowledgement of the role played by visitors in determining the success of an exhibition. They are therefore provided not only with more detailed information on opening hours and admission, but, according to their status of students, seniors, members, etc., are involved in new collateral activities related to the exhibition and organized ad hoc, such as lectures, films, special events, guided tours.

Also for this period, as for the previous one, cultural change related to the specific field of museum settings may be invoked to explain the structural development of EPAs. As pointed out in the first chapter of the thesis (section 1.1), in the 1980s the contribution of public funds to museums remained static or drastically fell, so that financial concerns have emerged. Museums' governing bodies and directors have had to seek funding from alternative sources: annual memberships and visitor fees have been introduced (Alexander 1999). This explains the more relevant role gained by sponsors within the structure of EPAs, but also the introduction of collateral events addressed to visitors, functional both as educational and marketing tools. The mention of the catalogue – an item to be sold at museum bookshops – is also obligatory or core in this period: another sign of the shift

toward a more marketed-oriented idea of exhibition. Thus, the attention towards visitors has also to be contextualized into a new, positive situation concerning museums: for most of the twentieth century they had been academic enclaves, the domain of curators and art historians, but they were closed on weekends or holidays, today the most popular days to visit museums and other tourist attractions (McLean 1993). From the 1980s American and British museums experienced broader cultural changes, which led to the idea of museum as we know it: a live place, open to people of all ages.

A great cultural change related to the period comprised between 1980 and 2009 is the advent of the Internet, which seemingly did not compromise the already consolidated structure of EPAs, but rather revolutionized the way they are sent and used, as pointed out in chapter 1 (section 1.1) and 5 (section 5.2). This major change concerns press releases in general and there is evidence in particular that e-dimension – i.e. publication on websites – has been changing their use and language, justifying the shift towards a more promotional tone in comparison with traditional paper press releases (Strobbe /Jacobs 2005). It can be pointed out that, in terms of structure, the advent of Internet has allowed EPA writers to focus on a more refined selection of contents and, for instance, to avoid basic and technical information, should this be available on the website. However, e-dimension did not imply a textual contraction, as data on the length of EPAs show (see chapter 6).

To conclude these final remarks on structural change of EPAs between 1950 and 2009, we could summarize the two-phases evolution of the genre through a simple-minded, but still effective statement: from 1950 to 1979 EPAs get ‘dressed-up’, in the sense that they acquire a more defined shape, leaning towards creativity, media standards and quality writing, while from 1980 to 2009 they get promotional, trying to enlarge audiences and incorporate new interlocutors. These aspects are not mutually exclusive or contradictory, but rather compatible and tend to reinforce each other over time. The final result of this combination is indeed a very stable and recursive ultimate structure for EPAs.

## **10. Conclusions**

The primary aim of the present study was to describe the diachronic evolution of a textual genre used in museum settings – exhibition press announcements (EPAs) – from 1950 to 2009, i.e. from earlier instances to present uses. Two questions in particular were under scrutiny: the evolution – or maybe we should say the survival – of the genre in view of the advent of new public relations practices already adopted by museums, such as social media, community relations and web communication, and the origin and reasons of its strong promotional features, which have only been investigated from a synchronic perspective so far (Lazzeretti 2010; Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012).

The study is based on a corpus of 378 EPAs, the EPA Diacorpus, comprising almost 300,000 words, issued by American and British high-profile museums: the London National Gallery, the London Victoria&Albert Museum, the London Royal Academy of Arts, the New York Museum of Modern Art, the New York Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, the Los Angeles J. Paul Getty Museum, the New York Frick Collection and the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art.

To make a systematic diachronic study possible, EPAs were chosen to represent periods at ten-year intervals. The methods used combined a quantitative or statistical approach with a qualitative and analytical one: statistical tools were applied to compare the frequencies of the features chosen for investigation across decades, while, for an interpretation of the results arrived at, a qualitative perspective was necessary. Moreover, a qualitative analysis was essential when looking at the evolution of the generic structure of EPAs over time and, in particular, at the use of narrative sections, quotations, linguistic means of evaluation and emotional appeal.

After preparing the groundwork for the study, introducing the relevant methodologies – corpus linguistics, genre analysis and discourse analysis – in chapters 2 to 5, the design of the corpus and methods applied in the analysis were described in chapters 6 and 7. In chapters 8 and 9 the main analysis was carried out and the EPA Diacorpus was explored respectively with regard to the diachronic lexical and structural variation. In the following sections (10.1 to 10.3) a synthesis of the final results and a general interpretation of them will be provided.

### **10.1 Synthesis of results of lexical analysis**

While previous diachronic studies applied to media discourse argue for an increasingly more conversational and informal style (see Hundt / Mair 1999, Partington 2010, 2012, Westin 2002) or even for a shift towards a vague style of writing (Duguid 2010), corpus evidence shows that EPAs

have kept a formal style, in view of the absence of contractions, the decrease of the intensifier *so* and the general increase of lexical variety over time, given by the values of STTR, which went from 42.35 in the 1950s to 44.8 in the 2000s (+2.45 points). Also, an increasing urge for a conventional lexis can be stressed, quite a sort of technical jargon, which aims at making recognizable the genre of EPAs to its users. Ambiguous expressions, such as, for instance, the phrase *one-man show* or the verb form *exhibited* were gradually discarded by EPA writers, who later preferred more technical and ‘safe’ expressions such as *retrospective* and *displayed* or *on display*, while the phrase *visual arts* gradually replaced *fine arts*. In this respect, our analysis confirmed Renouf’s (2007b: 23) statement that “not all words are equally destined for success”, as their fortunes may be inhibited by several factors and especially by ambiguity. Moreover, in her diachronic study on 20<sup>th</sup> century newspaper editorials, also Westin (2002) highlighted a trend towards a more precise lexical choice, so that we could argue for a common point in the evolution of EPAs and newspaper editorials: namely, for an increasing need for specificity, or, to put it in a simple way, for calling things with their proper names.

A striking element emerged from the analysis of lexical variation is that evaluative language has always characterised EPAs since their very first origin, which can be roughly dated to the post-war period, as pointed out in our historical excursus on the genre in chapter 1. EPAs issued in the 1950s decade, which is the first period covered by the EPA Diacorpus, already provide evidence of evaluative adjectives and phrases typical of the genre in its contemporary shape (Lazzeretti/Bondi 2012). More stunningly, some evaluative features are not only present already in the 1950s, but are also stable in their frequencies across the decades: this is the case of evaluative adjectives such as *great*, *known*, *first* and of related phrase *for the first time*, used to stress the aspect of quality and novelty of the exhibition. Of course, EPA writers have become more conscious of the potential conveyed by the language of evaluation over time and have exploited it more creatively in the 1990s and 2000s, while evaluative patterns used in the 1950s seem to be more predictable and repetitive. However, this result was quite unexpected and leads us to conclude that EPAs were born with evaluation in their DNA. It also highlights the importance of adopting an historical perspective in genre analysis, because, before carrying out a diachronic analysis, one could have easily presumed that the use of evaluative language of EPAs was a consequence of contemporary practices, increasing promotional purposes and marketing strategies. Our analysis highlighted a different, more complex scenario, which encourages further research in this direction.

Along with evaluation, another consistent feature of EPAs is that of description, confirmed by the stable frequency of the determiner *which*, introducing a specification of what the writer wishes to explain, evaluate or describe more in detail, and the auxiliary verb form *are*, often used to

describe art works currently on display. Nonetheless, the decrease of descriptive verbs implying a sort of mediation between the writer and the reader – *shown* and *shows* – let us hypothesize an increasing preference for a more vivid and straightforward style of description: in other words, instead of describing what a picture shows, contemporary EPA writers prefer to tell directly how it looks.

The analysis of diachronic lexical variation has also revealed some innovations in the way exhibitions are set up and artists are selected by museum professionals.

With regard to exhibition design, corpus evidence suggests a trend towards comprehensiveness rather than selectiveness. Large exhibits are preferred to narrowly focused events, while increasing care has been taken in evaluating and choosing artists, preferably avoiding the risk to present new and emerging names. In addition, the taste of visitors changes fast and museums have to deal with these fluctuations. Our analysis revealed that from 1950 onwards new media have emerged in the visual arts, but they did not seriously challenged classic subjects and topics of exhibitions.

A significant phenomenon reflected by lexical variation of EPAs is the shift from one-item to multi-item exhibitions: the decline of the word *picture* in its singular form rather than its plural, typically pre-modified by a determiner (*the, this*), in parallel to the increase of many other plural nouns identifying art works to put on display (*images, works, objects*) leads us to that conclusion. Moreover, something has changed in the way artists are selected for exhibiting: they do not have to be *famous* – another declining word –, nor particularly *great* or *known*, since these adjectives are preferably used to refer to their work, but they definitely must have an acknowledged *career*. Indeed, young artists have fewer advantages in the art scene, as reflected by the corpus, where less than 30 occurrences can be ascribed to the semantic field of youth.

Art subjects may change, and *portraits* – an increasing item within the EPA Diacorpus – may be more intriguing for our times, but a *landscape* is still a must for any exhibition, as well as *drawings* and *paintings* – to mention some lockwords of the corpus, i.e. words stable in their frequencies across decades – especially if the latter are combined in order to enrich the educational experience of visitors, as well as to increase the number of art works on display with a close eye on costs.

New media have emerged over time: corpus evidence shows the rise of *photography* and the decline of *architecture*; however, the art of painting and drawing have not gone out of style, as words belonging to both lemmas, PAINT and DRAW, show a stable pattern across decades.

Some further remarks concern the traces left by macro-level events on the language of EPAs, such as financial crises, globalization, and the advent of new technologies (see Garzone et al.

2012). Corpus evidence confirms the emergence of economic concerns in museums from the 1980s onward, as reflected by the increase of some revealing lexical items, pointing to the need to find alternative financial resources in view of cuts in public funding: the increasing frequency of words like *admission*, *tickets* and *students*, for instance, is reflective of the introduction of visitor fees, but also of the need to differentiate them for some segments of audiences, i.e. *students*, according to their age and other characteristics. Similarly, the rise of *education* programmes and collateral *events* thematically linked to the exhibition, such as lectures, films, artist talks, guided tours, has to be put in relation to marketing strategies aiming at widening the number of potential visitors. Another increasing word is *catalogue*, identifying an item on sale in bookshops, from which museums can profit. To confirm the financial difficulties faced by museums is also the decline of the verb *acquire*, possibly related to a strict reduction of museum budgets devoted to new acquisitions of artworks. Eventually, a peak in the occurrences of the phrase *made possible by*, typically introducing the mention of exhibition sponsors, has to be noted in the 1980s, when museums began to establish commercial partnerships on a regular basis.

In the last decades globalization has changed the world by increasing relations between countries: one of its effects among museums, reflected by the EPA Diacorpus, is the increasing frequency of the noun *tour* in contrast to the decrease of *country*, being the former related to the feasibility of travelling an exhibition (Lord/Lord 2002) and the latter to small-scale exhibitions, organised at a national level.

Last decades of the twentieth century were not only associated with financial hardship for museums: the EPA Diacorpus reflects the advent of new web technologies through the sudden appearance at the end of the nineties of acronyms used for identifying web pages: *www* – acronym for World Wide Web -, *org* – a domain extension used for non-profit organization, museums included, and *uk*, a national domain extension. Yet, the advent of the Internet did not heavily affect the genre of EPAs, as it will be argued in the following sub-section (10.2), but rather revolutionized the way they are sent and used (see chapter 1, section 1.1, and 5, section 5.2).

## 10.2 Synthesis of results of structural analysis

With regard to the evolution of the generic structure of EPAs, our analysis highlighted a general enhancement of the genre from its earlier instances, dated to the 1950s, to the current shape shown by EPAs issued in the 2000s.

EPAs evolved from an irregular three-move structure in the 1950s to a consistent and recursive five-move structure in the 1990s and 2000s. Earlier texts provide a prototypical structure comprised

of three main moves: a brief announcement of the exhibition, an explanatory section on the topic, and some pieces of information specific for the press members, soliciting further contact, although in a very implicit way. Starting from the 1980s two promotional moves emerge: one establishing credentials for the exhibition by stating its credits, such as organization, curatorship and sponsorship, and one providing technical information for visitors (opening hours, free or charged admission, how to buy tickets, collateral events, etc...). We may therefore point out that EPAs were born with a vocation for announcing and describing the exhibition, but only later acquired a clear awareness of being press releases, i.e. texts meant for journalists; even later they have become effective tools of communication between museums and their audiences, comprising visitors and sponsors among their relevant interlocutors.

Our analysis highlights two turning points decisive in terms of structural change, between the 1950s and the 1960s and between the 1980s and the 1990s, leading us to guess that major change occurs every thirty years in the structure of EPAs. We summarized this two-phases evolution in a sort of slogan: first EPAs get dressed-up, then they get promotional.

In fact, the first period is marked by an emphasis on creativity, both in the announcement and in the description of the exhibition, as suggested by the use of captivating exhibition titles, narrative sections and linguistic means of emotional appeal. Moreover, from this period onwards EPAs acquire a more definite shape and are modelled on the real needs of media people: they do not only suggest a publishing date, but, more importantly, a contact for further information is provided, along with a date for the press preview and the indication of photographs available if needed. Furthermore, EPA writers acquire an increasing awareness of what journalists most want: novel stories to be told and authoritative statements to be reported even verbatim. The marked use of narrative sections and quotations is indeed functional to these aims.

These relevant developments in the structure of EPAs can be put in relation with cultural changes that took place in the same period in museum professional settings: as pointed out in the first chapter of the thesis, after World War II public relations have been gradually and successfully introduced also in these institutions. Professional press officers were being appointed for the first time and effective communication was now perceived as a value also by non-profit organizations. Moreover, the spread of advertising was igniting creativity in professional discourses with relevant consequences in terms of appropriation of lexical and rhetorical resources (Bhatia 2004). We might expect that also EPAs, and museum public relations in general, were influenced by the innovative character and creative language of advertising.

After the second turning point, from the 1980s onwards, an increasing need for self-reference can be noted, realized through a detailed mention of the exhibition credits and, mostly, an accurate account of the people who *made possible* the event, quoting one of the most recurrent phrases in the EPAs of that period. Significantly, curators are not necessarily the most prominent figures behind the exhibition, because sponsors compete with them for attention and their mention can even outnumber that of curators. In this period the structure of EPAs also reflect the complete acknowledgement of the role played by visitors in determining the success of an exhibition. They are therefore provided not only with more detailed information on opening hours and admission, but, according to their status of students, seniors, members, etc., are involved in new collateral activities related to the exhibition and organized ad hoc, such as lectures, films, special events, guided tours.

Also for this period, as for the previous one, cultural change related to the specific field of museum settings may be invoked to explain the structural development of EPAs. As pointed out in the first chapter of the thesis (section 1.1), in the 1980s the contribution of public funds to museums remained static or drastically fell, so that financial concerns have emerged. Museums' governing bodies and directors have had to seek funding from alternative sources: annual memberships and visitor fees have been introduced (Alexander 1999). This explains the more relevant role gained by sponsors within the structure of EPAs, but also the introduction of collateral events addressed to visitors, functional both as educational and marketing tools. Thus, the attention towards visitors has also to be contextualized into a new, positive situation concerning museums: for most of the twentieth century they had been academic enclaves, the domain of curators and art historians, but they were closed on weekends or holidays, today the most popular days to visit museums (McLean 1993). From the 1980s American and British museums experienced broader cultural changes, which led to the idea of museum as we know it: a live place, open to people of all ages.

A groundbreaking event related to the period comprised between 1980 and 2009 is the advent of the Internet, which however did not compromise the generic structure of EPAs, already consolidated by then. The World Wide Web rather revolutionized the way EPAs are sent and used, as pointed out in chapter 1 (section 1.1) and 5 (section 5.2). This major change concerns press releases in general and implies that, once they have been published on websites, journalistic intervention, also known as “gatekeeping”, can be completely bypassed in reaching audiences.

There is evidence that the e-dimension – i.e. publication on websites – has been changing use and language of press releases, justifying the shift towards a more promotional tone in comparison with traditional paper press releases (Strobbe / Jacobs 2005). Since evaluative language

is already attested in 1950s EPAs and seems to be a constant of the genre (see section 10.1), we cannot claim that the e-dimension is the main and first responsible of promotionality in EPAs. More research would be needed in order to explain the inner vocation to positive evaluation of artworks, artists and exhibitions characterising EPAs, which maybe could be ascribed to art discourse in general. However, the fact that from the 1990s onward EPAs are also placed on the Web, where media people can access them selectively, wherever and whenever they need them, without even calling the museum, has undoubtedly ignited a great competition among writers, determining an increasing creative effort among writers, who strive for attention, press coverage and good reviews.

Moreover, the advent of Internet did not imply a textual contraction or a more refined selection of contents for EPAs. On the contrary, as shown by data on the corpus size reported in chapter 7, EPAs have become longer, more syntactically developed and lexically richer over time. Their length has more than doubled, from about 40 thousand tokens in the 1950s to more than 80 thousand tokens in the 2000s, so as the number of words used in each sentence (+ 3.44) and the lexical variety, measured by the STTR (+2.45), have increased. In view of our analysis of diachronic structural variation, which highlighted the shift from a three-move to a five-move structure, an expansion in terms of length does not come as a surprise: obviously, writers had more things to say and this required more words. Moreover, it has to be noted that generally EPAs can be downloaded from websites in a ‘frozen’ format, (see Garzone 2012: 34-35), i.e. in \*.doc or \*.pdf. These electronic formats reproduce the aspect of a printed – and therefore static – document, the same that EPAs already had in the 1950s, when they were typewritten. As a consequence, EPA writers do not have to keep the content short to fit the screen but are free to write as long as they need. The fixed layout also minimizes the effects of multimodality, hypertextuality and interactivity, typical features of web pages, on EPAs, living their second life on the web as separate, independent creatures.

### **10.3 Differences between the American and British sub-corpora**

As the EPA Diacorpus is almost equally divided into two sub-sections, one comprising American EPAs and one comprising British EPAs, the difference between the two in terms of diachronic variation was a research question worthy of investigation.

In general terms, we may point out that only a few differences were highlighted; moreover, the most relevant discrepancy is at a macro-level and concerns the way communication is conceived by museum professionals. This result actually reinforces one of the methodological principle upon

which the EPA Diacorpus was built, that regarding the appropriateness of an hybrid corpus comprising British and American EPAs (see chapter 6). Since the beginning of the study, in fact, we have been arguing for the similarity of British and American EPAs, so that they can be studied together in order to obtain a detailed picture of the genre.

As pointed out by McLean (2012: 42), “marketing was introduced to American museums at roughly the same period as to UK museums [...]. Nevertheless American museums have led the field in adopting marketing techniques and innovating with marketing practice”. According to our analysis, which reflected the primacy of the United States in the field of museum public relations, this statement turns out particularly true.

Corpus evidence suggests that American museums have always placed great value on public relations, to be seen as a part of a complex system of communication which involved the museum at various levels: data show that an entire *department* – a word stable in its frequency across decades, particularly relevant for the American section of the corpus – was entitled to public relations already from the 1950s, while British museums appear more focused on *press office* activities, which is only a part of the work associated to public relations, being the latter an increasing phrase among British documents. However, the increasing frequency of the soliciting phrase *please contact* in both sections of the corpus suggests that the relationship to the press has become more overt and explicit over time and that this development involved both American and British museums.

A trend quantitatively more relevant in American EPAs concerns the role of museum professionals, and in particular *curators* and (museum) *directors*. While the word *curators* shows a pattern of clear increase over time, (museum) *directors* is characterised by a declining profile, which suggests that their roles have intertwined over time, to the point that curators are the most visible professional figure engaged in the organisation of American exhibitions, but also those mostly exposed to the media and public judgement.

Both British and American museum press officers were still developing a standard generic structure for EPAs in the 1950s, but American writers show more confidence in terms of self promotion strategies and knowledge of press needs already in the earlier texts.

For instance, American EPAs are characterised by a more appropriate use of quotations since the very beginning of the genre, while until the 1990’s decade the presence of quotations is very limited among British documents. The same is to be noted with regard to the use of narrative sections, already attested among American EPAs in the 1950s and to be introduced at least a decade later in British EPAs.

## **10.4 Final considerations**

Introducing this chapter, we summarized the research questions tackled by the present study into two main points: the question of the survival of the genre of EPAs in view of the threat represented by new forms of communication adopted by museums and the historical reasons behind the strong promotional features characterizing contemporary EPAs.

As Bhatia (2004) pointed out, it is possible for a textual genre to change over a period of time, or even to disappear: it can “further develop or even become obsolete because of lack of use” (2004: 62). In the case of EPAs we are in front of an extraordinary development and a strong consolidation over time: they went through a continuous enrichment of contents and a gradual perfection of their structure, which implied an expansion in terms of lexical variety and length of the texts, but also a shift from merely informative and descriptive to promotional purposes.

It has been also highlighted an increasing use of quotations, forms of narrative and linguistic means of emotional appeal. Hence, despite the urge for conciseness which characterizes contemporary public relations, as those based on Facebook and Twitter, EPAs have remained a tool for an in-depth description and evaluation of the exhibition, where apparently analysis is preferred to synthesis. Furthermore, EPAs have been increasingly perceived by their writers as a textual space where creativity can be practiced and evaluative language can be used to create powerful and emotional combinations of words and phrases.

Consequently, despite the advent of new media and new public relation practices, the genre of EPAs seems far from decline. In view of our analysis, it seems not only able to survive to new media but also to coexist side by side with them, in a sort of mutual interaction. The impression is that, actually, new media can work as a bait for journalists and encourage them to download EPAs from websites. Hence, in this specific context old genres and new genres could be mutually interdependent and live in a sort of symbiotic balance. Of course, this idea should be verified through an in-depth ethnographic analysis, which is an interesting future direction of research in this field. For instance, the daily work of press officers could be observed at a close distance and the interaction between posts published on social media and download of press releases from museum websites could be investigated.

As for the reasons of promotionality in EPAs, the most relevant change-inducing factor is to be identified in the increasing need of alternative funding faced by museums from the 1980s onward, when governments cut down their financial support. This ignited a great change for

museums, which had to seek new commercial partners, improve public relations and widen the audience. From that moment onward EPA writers tried to creatively exploit the genre in order to arouse journalists' interest and gain a better press coverage. Bearing in mind that "journalists do not write articles, they write stories" (Bell 1991: 100) and that "strong positive statements can make the release look more newsworthy" (Pander Maat 2007:63), our analysis showed that EPA writers adopted an increasing, brilliant use of quotations, narrative sections and emotionally charged language in order to meet the needs of media people and create the news.

We have already pointed out in section 10.1 that the language of EPAs was naturally leaning towards positive evaluation of art works and artists already in the 1950s, when museum marketing was merely developed; in the 1990s the advent of the Internet boosted this inner tendency, putting EPAs on the edge of museum public relations, as they could be easily accessed and downloaded from websites. This great change also determined a further shift towards creativity and promotionality, which led to the current shape of EPAs as we know them.

Keeping the focus on promotional features, our analysis also revealed that sponsors have been playing an increasing role in determining exhibiting choices and therefore in influencing related texts as EPAs. It could be guessed that their presence goes beyond a mere mention within the press release or a logo in the header of the sheet. However, their weight is difficult to measure through corpus linguistics or genre analysis methodologies; hence, this could be a further research question to be addressed by an ethnographic perspective.

To conclude, a final remark is to be made concerning the primary source of this study, the EPA Diacorpus. Undoubtedly, its compilation has been worth carrying out, since the corpus reflects the great social and cultural changes taking place over the last decades in museum settings: in particular, the transition towards a more market-oriented concept of museum, innovations in the way exhibitions are set up and artists are selected by museums, advent of new technologies. Hopefully in the future it will be useful for practitioners, such as museum professionals and art journalists, especially in terms of public relations education, allowing them to become aware of the typical features of the genre and to discover how, why, and when these features were introduced.



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## Appendix – EPA Diacorpus: list of EPAs

N.	Country	City	Museum	Title	Date	Decade
1	UK	London	National Gallery	Glasgow's Giorgione at the National Gallery	22/10/1953	1950
2	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	An Exhibition of Playing Cards and Games	01/11/1950	1950
3	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	An Exhibition of the Sir William Rothenstein Collection of Indian Drawings	01/03/1951	1950
4	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Photographs of Indian Sculpture by Raymond Burnier	01/06/1952	1950
5	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	English Life: How Ancestors Lived from 1700 to 1850	01/03/1953	1950
6	UK	London	National Gallery	Futher Light on a 15th Century Flemish Picture	16/07/1954	1950
7	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	International Colour Woodcut Exhibition	01/09/1954	1950
8	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Exhibition of French Theatre Art	01/03/1955	1950
9	UK	London	National Gallery	Francia's Virgin and Child	12/05/1955	1950
10	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	A Display of Contemporary Scandinavian Furnishing Fabrics and Wallpapers	01/03/1956	1950
11	UK	London	National Gallery	19th Century French Paintings	24/04/1956	1950
12	UK	London	National Gallery	Reynolds' Portrait of Lady Frances Finch	15/06/1956	1950
13	UK	London	National Gallery	Van Eyck's Madonna and Child	26/10/1956	1950
14	UK	London	National Gallery	The National Gallery's New Picture by Van der Weiden	13/03/1957	1950
15	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	William Blake Centenary Exhibition	01/06/1957	1950
16	UK	London	National Gallery	A Sketch by Tiepolo acquired	19/07/1957	1950
17	UK	London	National Gallery	Gift of a Picture by Lastman	30/07/1957	1950
18	UK	London	National Gallery	A new Rembrandt	16/12/1957	1950
19	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Exhibition of English Watercolours	01/01/1958	1950
20	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Collection of the Late Sir J. B. Robinson	01/01/1958	1950
21	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	American Prints	01/02/1958	1950
22	UK	London	National Gallery	The N.G. new Poussin	27/02/1958	1950

23	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Exhibition of Mr. Paul Oppè's Collection	27/02/1958	1950
24	UK	London	National Gallery	The Memling Tryptich	20/03/1958	1950
25	UK	London	National Gallery	A Monet bought for the N.G.	01/05/1958	1950
26	UK	London	National Gallery	A Vouet purchased for the N.G.	27/10/1958	1950
27	UK	London	National Gallery	The N.G.'s new Uccello exhibited	13/05/1959	1950
28	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Drawings by Italian Artists: 1500-1800	01/06/1959	1950
29	UK	London	National Gallery	Jordaens Double Portrait	21/08/1959	1950
30	UK	London	National Gallery	Two 17th Century Italian Acquisitions	05/11/1959	1950
31	UK	London	National Gallery	The N.G. acquires its largest Rembrandt	01/02/1960	1960
32	UK	London	National Gallery	Rembrandt's Equestrian Portrait on Exhibition	14/03/1960	1960
33	UK	London	National Gallery	Gainsborough's 'Mr. And Mrs. Andrews'	31/05/1960	1960
34	UK	London	National Gallery	Renoir Portrait	02/08/1960	1960
35	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Lady of Fashion: Heather Firbank (1888-1954) and what she wore between 1908 and 1921	01/09/1960	1960
36	UK	London	National Gallery	Au Revoir	24/11/1960	1960
37	UK	London	National Gallery	Five Paintings by Boudin	24/01/1961	1960
38	UK	London	National Gallery	An Exhibition at the N.G.	22/02/1961	1960
39	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Centenary Exhibition of Kuniyoshi (1861-1961)	01/04/1961	1960
40	UK	London	National Gallery	Two famous Renoirs	21/04/1961	1960
41	UK	London	National Gallery	Goya's Duke of Wellington	03/08/1961	1960
42	UK	London	National Gallery	Ruben's Adoration	04/10/1961	1960
43	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Royal Academy Diploma Gallery	01/02/1962	1960
44	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Drawings from the Bruce Ingram Collection	01/04/1962	1960
45	UK	London	National Gallery	A Rare French Painting	10/12/1962	1960
46	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Art: Usa: Now	01/01/1963	1960
47	UK	London	National Gallery	A Unique German Picture	21/01/1963	1960
48	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Art Nouveau Designs and Posters by Alphonse Mucha	01/04/1963	1960
49	UK	London	National Gallery	A Cezanne landscape	17/04/1963	1960
50	UK	London	National Gallery	The Leonardo Cartoon on show	26/03/1964	1960
51	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Shakespeare	01/04/1964	1960
52	UK	London	National Gallery	A famous Veronese	14/05/1965	1960
53	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Contemporary Calligraphy	01/10/1965	1960

54	UK	London	National Gallery	An Exhibition of Goya's Portraits	10/01/1966	1960
55	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Half a Century of Modern Design	01/09/1966	1960
56	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Ballet Designs and Illustrations	01/04/1967	1960
57	UK	London	National Gallery	The Judgement of Paris	07/06/1967	1960
58	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Two Centuries of Danish Design	01/03/1968	1960
59	UK	London	National Gallery	Canaletto Bicentenary	26/08/1968	1960
60	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Photographs by Henri Cartier Bresson	01/01/1969	1960
61	UK	London	National Gallery	Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne	03/06/1969	1960
62	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Winnie the Pooh	01/11/1969	1960
63	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	A Decade of English Naturalism, 1810-1820	01/01/1970	1970
64	UK	London	National Gallery	Four Artists as Collectors	18/08/1970	1970
65	UK	London	National Gallery	Acquisition of Saint'Ivo	23/03/1971	1970
66	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Ensor to Permeke	01/09/1971	1970
67	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Fashion: an Anthology by Cecil Beaton	01/09/1971	1970
68	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	British Sculptors '72	03/12/1971	1970
69	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Dante Gabriele Rossetti: Painter and Poet	01/01/1972	1970
70	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	John Blake Recente Works	01/01/1972	1970
71	UK	London	National Gallery	Alexander Gift	03/08/1972	1970
72	UK	London	National Gallery	Important Paintings	18/09/1972	1970
73	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Futurismo 1909-1919	01/01/1973	1970
74	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	205th Summer Exhibition	01/05/1973	1970
75	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Old Master Drawings from Chatsworth	01/10/1973	1970
76	UK	London	National Gallery	National Art Fund	03/10/1973	1970
77	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Impressionism - Its Masters	01/02/1974	1970
78	UK	London	National Gallery	Dutch Townscape Paintings	11/02/1974	1970
79	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Dominick Labino	01/09/1974	1970
80	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Joshua Cristall 1767 - 1847	01/01/1975	1970
81	UK	London	National Gallery	Artist versus Nature	30/04/1975	1970
82	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Landscape Masterpieces from Soviet Museums	01/10/1975	1970
83	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	GOLDEN AGE OF SPANISH PAINTING	01/01/1976	1970
84	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Jewellry in Europe	01/01/1976	1970
85	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	L.S. Lowry R.A 1887 - 1976	01/07/1976	1970
86	UK	London	National Gallery	Art in Seventeenth Century Holland	10/09/1976	1970

87	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Keith Murray	01/02/1977	1970
88	UK	London	National Gallery	A Royal Subject	15/07/1977	1970
89	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	British Painting 1952 - 1977	01/09/1977	1970
90	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Robert Motherwell	01/01/1978	1970
91	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Cars. Colour photographs by Lagdon Clay	01/05/1978	1970
92	UK	London	National Gallery	The Artist's Eye	19/05/1978	1970
93	UK	London	National Gallery	Baroque Paintings	26/03/1979	1970
94	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Art of Hollywood	01/08/1979	1970
95	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Post Impressionism	01/11/1979	1970
96	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Her Majesty the Queen	01/02/1980	1980
97	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Victor Dassler	01/09/1980	1980
98	UK	London	National Gallery	Titian and Rembrandt	25/09/1980	1980
99	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The New Spirit in Painting	01/10/1980	1980
100	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Honoré Daumier	01/01/1981	1980
101	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Spotlight. Four Centuries of Ballet Costumes	01/02/1981	1980
102	UK	London	National Gallery	El Greco to Goya	20/05/1981	1980
103	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Harold Gilman	01/02/1982	1980
104	UK	London	National Gallery	Watch this Space	28/04/1982	1980
105	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Humphry Repton. Landscape Gardener	01/11/1982	1980
106	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Japanese Ceramics Today	01/02/1983	1980
107	UK	London	National Gallery	Manet at Work	22/07/1983	1980
108	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Treasures of Ancient Nigeria	01/10/1983	1980
109	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Age of Vermeer and De Hooch	01/01/1984	1980
110	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Golden Age of British Photography	01/04/1984	1980
111	UK	London	National Gallery	Danish Painting	25/04/1984	1980
112	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Manet to Hockney: Modern Artists' Illustrated books	01/01/1985	1980
113	UK	London	National Gallery	Masterpieces from Ireland	05/03/1985	1980
114	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Chagall	01/01/1986	1980
115	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Reynolds	01/01/1986	1980
116	UK	London	National Gallery	Dutch Landscapes	30/05/1986	1980
117	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Weimar Ceramics	01/07/1986	1980
118	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Richard Redgrave R.A. 1804-1888	01/02/1987	1980
119	UK	London	National Gallery	Bodylines	11/02/1987	1980
120	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Jewels of the Ancients	01/05/1987	1980
121	UK	London	National Gallery	French Paintings	25/02/1988	1980
122	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Cezanne: the Early years 1859-1872	01/04/1988	1980

123	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Contemporary French Furniture	01/06/1988	1980
124	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	William de Morgan	01/01/1989	1980
125	UK	London	National Gallery	Art in the Making	18/08/1989	1980
126	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Art of Photography	01/09/1989	1980
127	UK	London	National Gallery	Winter Landscape	14/03/1990	1990
128	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Flower Silks	01/07/1990	1990
129	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Egon Schiele and his Contemporaries	01/11/1990	1990
130	UK	London	National Gallery	Guercino in Britain	05/06/1991	1990
131	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Pop Art	01/09/1991	1990
132	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Visions of Japan	01/09/1991	1990
133	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Andrea Mantegna	01/01/1992	1990
134	UK	London	National Gallery	Edvard Munch	01/06/1992	1990
135	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Textiles by Sculptors	01/06/1992	1990
136	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Georges Rouault: the Early years, 1903- 1920	01/03/1993	1990
137	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Fabergè: Imperial Jeweller	01/09/1993	1990
138	UK	London	National Gallery	Claude. The Poetic Landscape	06/10/1993	1990
139	UK	London	National Gallery	The Young Michelangelo	17/06/1994	1990
140	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Kalighat: Indian Popular Painting	01/07/1994	1990
141	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Glory of Venice	01/09/1994	1990
142	UK	London	National Gallery	Gombrich on Shadows	24/01/1995	1990
143	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Rule of Taste	01/04/1995	1990
144	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	David Hockney	01/11/1995	1990
145	UK	London	National Gallery	Young Gainsborough	01/01/1996	1990
146	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	American Photography 1890-1965	01/11/1996	1990
147	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	From Mantegna to Picasso	04/11/1996	1990
148	UK	London	National Gallery	Seurat and the Bathers	01/03/1997	1990
149	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Colours of the Indus: Costumes and Textiles of Pakistan	01/04/1997	1990
150	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Berlin of Georg Grosz	02/04/1997	1990
151	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Art Treasures of England	19/01/1998	1990
152	UK	London	National Gallery	Henry Moore	01/03/1998	1990
153	UK	London	National Gallery	Caravaggio	01/04/1998	1990
154	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Power of the Poster	01/06/1998	1990
155	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Aubrey Beardsley	01/08/1998	1990
156	UK	London	National Gallery	Orazio Gentileschi	01/01/1999	1990
157	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Monet in the 20th Century	01/01/1999	1990
158	UK	London	National Gallery	Renaissance Florence	01/07/1999	1990
159	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	1900. Art at the crossroads	01/01/2000	2000
160	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Art Nouveau 1890-1914	01/01/2000	2000
161	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Chardin 1699-1779	01/03/2000	2000

162	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Scottish Colorist 1930	01/06/2000	2000
163	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Genius of Rome	01/01/2001	2000
164	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Botticelli's Dante	01/03/2001	2000
165	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Radical Fashion	01/06/2001	2000
166	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Dawn of the Flawting World	20/11/2001	2000
167	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Tilson	14/01/2002	2000
168	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Paris Capital of the Arts	22/01/2002	2000
169	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Masters of Colour: Derain to Kandinsky	27/06/2002	2000
170	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Versace at the V&A	01/10/2002	2000
171	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Aztecs	20/11/2002	2000
172	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Art Deco 1910-1939	01/03/2003	2000
173	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Pre-Raphaelite Masters	16/09/2003	2000
174	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Illuminating the Renaissance	27/11/2003	2000
175	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Tamara de Lempicka	16/01/2004	2000
176	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The Art of Philip Guston	20/01/2004	2000
177	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Allen Jones and David Hockney mastermind this year's RA summer exhibition	03/06/2004	2000
178	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Black British Style	01/10/2004	2000
179	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Impressionism Abroad	27/06/2005	2000
180	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Between Past and Future	01/09/2005	2000
181	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Rodin	30/05/2006	2000
182	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Twilight: Photography in the Magic Hour	01/09/2006	2000
183	UK	London	National Gallery	Scratch the Surface	01/05/2007	2000
184	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	The RAA 239th Summer Exhibition	06/07/2007	2000
185	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Golden Age of Couture	01/09/2007	2000
186	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	Blood on Paper: the Art of Book	01/03/2008	2000
187	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	VILHELM HAMMERSHØI: THE POETRY OF SILENCE	16/04/2008	2000
188	UK	London	National Gallery	Sisley in England and Wales	01/08/2008	2000
189	UK	London	The Victoria and Albert Museum	The Gilbert Collection	01/05/2009	2000
190	UK	London	National Gallery	Titian's Triumph of Love	01/07/2009	2000
191	UK	London	Royal Academy of Arts	Anish Kapoor	17/08/2009	2000

N.	Country	City	Museum	Title	Date	Decade
1	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Retrospective exhibit of Franklin C. Watkins	14/03/1950	1950
2	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Three Modern Styles	06/07/1950	1950
3	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Modern War Memorial to be exhibited	01/12/1950	1950
4	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	MODIGLIANI	05/04/1951	1950
5	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Selections from Stieglitz Collection	16/05/1951	1950
6	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Jacques Lipchitz	12/07/1951	1950
7	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Fifteen Americans	01/02/1952	1950
8	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	De Stjil	01/11/1952	1950
9	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Works by Roualt	01/01/1953	1950
10	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	A Selection from the Museum Collection	28/01/1953	1950
11	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	American Photographers	01/02/1953	1950
12	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Younger European Painters	02/12/1953	1950
13	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	100 Masterpieces from Europe	01/01/1954	1950
14	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Establishment of the J. Paul Getty Museum	24/02/1954	1950
15	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	New Drawings from Museum Collection	01/03/1954	1950
16	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Recent European Painting and Sculpture	01/04/1955	1950
17	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	New Talent	19/04/1955	1950
18	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Alberto Giacometti	03/06/1955	1950
19	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Constantin Brancusi	24/10/1955	1950
20	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Toulouse Lautrec	14/01/1956	1950
21	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Masters of British Painting	01/10/1956	1950
22	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Three Brothers	18/02/1957	1950
23	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Important Picasso Exhibition	23/03/1957	1950
24	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Gaudí Exhibition on View	01/12/1957	1950

25	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Piet Mondrian	09/12/1957	1950
26	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Jean Arp	12/09/1958	1950
27	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Ten European Artists	01/12/1958	1950
28	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The New American Painting	21/04/1959	1950
29	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Monet Mural	01/06/1959	1950
30	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Exhibition of William Blake Water Colors	15/12/1959	1950
31	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Claude Monet	09/03/1960	1960
32	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Henry Moore's Figure 1956 - 1960	27/10/1960	1960
33	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Mark Rothko Exhibit	18/01/1961	1960
34	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Modern Masters	15/08/1961	1960
35	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Major Retrospective on Dubuffet	21/02/1962	1960
36	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Design for Sports	13/04/1962	1960
37	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Ernst Haas. Colour Photography	21/08/1962	1960
38	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Emil Nolde	01/02/1963	1960
39	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Rothko Paintings destined to Harvard	26/03/1963	1960
40	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Rodin	01/05/1963	1960
41	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Andrè Derain	01/06/1963	1960
42	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Guggenheim International Award Exhibition	26/12/1963	1960
43	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Art in a Changing World	26/05/1964	1960
44	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The Photographers Eye	27/05/1964	1960
45	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The Responsive Eye	25/02/1965	1960
46	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Jean Xceron Exhibition	24/04/1965	1960
47	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Dada, Surrealism, and their Heritage	21/12/1966	1960
48	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Five European Paintings recently added	06/01/1967	1960

49	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Sculpture form Twenty Nations	10/09/1967	1960
50	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Projects for Monuments	01/10/1967	1960
51	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Pop Art pops up as 'Pop Tarte'	01/11/1967	1960
52	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Dan Flavin: Pink and Gold	01/01/1968	1960
53	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Rembrandt Drawings and Prints in The Frick Collection	08/01/1968	1960
54	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Works of James Abbot McNeill Whistler in The Frick Collection	01/04/1968	1960
55	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Jackson Pollock Exhibition	08/05/1968	1960
56	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The Art of the Real	03/07/1968	1960
57	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Harold Tovish Exhibition	05/10/1968	1960
58	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Julio Gonzales	22/01/1969	1960
59	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Roy Lichtenstein at the Guggenheim	27/08/1969	1960
60	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Art by Telephone	23/10/1969	1960
61	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Joan Mirò: fifty recent prints	01/01/1970	1970
62	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Photographs by Walker Evans	27/01/1971	1970
63	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Sixth International Guggenheim Exhibition	29/01/1971	1970
64	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Robert Mangold Exhibition	11/03/1971	1970
65	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Picasso at the Museum of Modern Art	03/02/1972	1970
66	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Joan Mirò: Magnetic Fields	09/09/1972	1970
67	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Dubuffet Exhibition	09/04/1973	1970
68	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Loan Exhibition of Italian Paintings	10/05/1973	1970
69	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Ellsworth Kelly Retrospective	12/09/1973	1970
70	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	New Japanese Photography	27/03/1974	1970
71	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Two Unusual Exhibitions	24/06/1974	1970

72	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Jesus Rafael Soto Exhibition	28/10/1974	1970
73	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Special exhibit "Splendors of Ancient Rome"	20/11/1974	1970
74	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Edward Weston Retrospective	29/01/1975	1970
75	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Max Ersnt: a Retrospective	01/02/1975	1970
76	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Bodyworks	27/02/1975	1970
77	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Rodin's Rodin	10/11/1975	1970
78	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	18th Century France: The Height of Fashion	10/01/1976	1970
79	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Cubism and Its Affinities	25/02/1976	1970
80	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Tina Modotti	10/01/1977	1970
81	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Lee Bontecou	01/03/1977	1970
82	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Armand Hammer collection to be exhibited at the Getty Museum	25/07/1977	1970
83	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	A View of a decade	03/10/1977	1970
84	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Sol Lewitt	01/01/1978	1970
85	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Getty Bronze now on exhibit	11/04/1978	1970
86	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Renaissance and Baroque drawings	11/04/1978	1970
87	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Severo Calzetta, called Severo da ravenna	15/06/1978	1970
88	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	J. PAUL GETTY MUSEUM TO OFFER special decorative arts exhibition	16/01/1979	1970
89	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Wall Painting	13/03/1979	1970
90	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	David Hockney Etchings	01/04/1979	1970
91	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Woodcarvings on view at The Frick Collection	01/09/1979	1970
92	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Venetian Art exhibition	10/10/1979	1970
93	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	First Beuys Survey	01/11/1979	1970
94	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Pablo Picasso: a Retrospective	01/05/1980	1980
95	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Vincennes and Sèvres Porcelain at The Frick	01/05/1980	1980

96	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	German Realism	20/10/1980	1980
97	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Archaeological Photography 1865-1914	24/10/1980	1980
98	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Inside Spaces	01/02/1981	1980
99	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Major Gorky Retrospective	01/02/1981	1980
100	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Michelangelo to Gericault: Valton Exhibition	09/09/1981	1980
101	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Giorgio de Chirico	01/02/1982	1980
102	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Rembrandt Etchings	31/03/1982	1980
103	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Yves Klein Retrospective	15/10/1982	1980
104	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Season's release	07/01/1983	1980
105	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Acquisitions Priorities: Aspects of Postwar Painting in Europe	15/04/1983	1980
106	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	First international touring exhibition on videoart	01/07/1983	1980
107	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Picasso: the Last Years, 1963-1973	27/02/1984	1980
108	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Irving penn	01/08/1984	1980
109	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Ree Morton	28/02/1985	1980
110	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Retrospective of Kurt Schwitters	01/06/1985	1980
111	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Mies Van der Rohe	19/03/1986	1980
112	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Angles of Vision: French Art Today	26/06/1986	1980
113	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Edward Weston's Los Angeles Period	23/10/1986	1980
114	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Paul Klee	01/11/1986	1980
115	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Joan Mirò: a Retrospective	14/05/1987	1980
116	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Henri Cartier Bresson: the early Works	01/08/1987	1980
117	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Deconstructivist Architecture	01/02/1988	1980
118	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Gerhard Richter: Paintings	18/04/1988	1980
119	US	Los	J. Paul Getty Museum	After the Manner of	27/07/1988	1980

		Angeles		Women: Photographs		
120	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	150 Years of Photography Surveyed	15/11/1988	1980
121	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Andy Warhol: a Retrospective	01/02/1989	1980
122	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Francois-Marius Granet	01/09/1989	1980
123	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Major exhibition of American Artist Jenny Holzer	11/12/1989	1980
124	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Tina Barney	01/01/1990	1990
125	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Jenny Holzer held over through February 25	13/02/1990	1990
126	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Seventeenth-century Chinese Porcelain	21/05/1990	1990
127	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The Art of the 1940s	01/02/1991	1990
128	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	August Sander: Faces of the German People	26/03/1991	1990
129	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	16th and 17th Century Northern European Drawings	10/05/1991	1990
130	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Memory and Metaphor: the Art of Romare Bearden	01/08/1991	1990
131	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Kaj Franck Designer	01/04/1992	1990
132	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Robert Rauschenberg: the early 1950s	05/10/1992	1990
133	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Camille Silvy's "River Scene, France,"	14/10/1992	1990
134	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Conceptual Photography	18/12/1992	1990
135	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Philip Lorca-di Corcia: Strangers	01/03/1993	1990
136	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	First Major Rebecca Horn Survey	28/05/1993	1990
137	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Renaissance and Baroque drawings by European artists	03/12/1993	1990
138	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Major Retrospective of Frank Lloyd Wright	01/02/1994	1990
139	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	16th Century Ornamental Designs	22/04/1994	1990
140	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	A Passion for Antiquities	28/04/1994	1990
141	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim F.	Feliz Gonzales-Torres	01/11/1994	1990
142	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Bruce Nauman	01/02/1995	1990

143	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	First comprehensive survey on Gonzales -Torres	03/02/1995	1990
144	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Devotion and Desire	07/07/1995	1990
145	US	Chicago	Museum of Contemporary Art	Andres Serrano: Works 1983-1993	07/12/1995	1990
146	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Doris Ulmann: Photography and Folklore	04/03/1996	1990
147	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Willem De kooning: the Late Paintings	01/11/1996	1990
148	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	The Photomontages of Hannah Hoch	01/02/1997	1990
149	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Photography of Khmer Rouge Prisoners	01/05/1997	1990
150	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Alvar Aalto	01/01/1998	1990
151	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	China: 5.000 years	15/01/1998	1990
152	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Daguerreotypes	27/03/1998	1990
153	US	Los Angeles	J. Paul Getty Museum	Design of a modern architectural milestone	19/03/1999	1990
154	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Fame after Photography	mag-99	1990
155	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	JEAN ARP	01/03/2000	2000
156	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Windsor Raphael Drawings	06/06/2000	2000
157	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Drawing the Landscape	18/12/2000	2000
158	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	The Global Guggenheim	18/12/2000	2000
159	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	August Sander	23/02/2001	2000
160	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Walker Evans Exhibition	25/04/2001	2000
161	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Sugimoto: Portraits	13/07/2001	2000
162	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Tempo	01/06/2002	2000
163	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Recent Works by Bill Viola	23/09/2002	2000
164	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Matisse Picasso	01/02/2003	2000
165	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	American Photography	01/05/2003	2000
166	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	James Rosenquist: A Retrospective	10/10/2003	2000

167	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Brancusi: The Essence of Things	19/03/2004	2000
168	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	The Arts of Fire	23/03/2004	2000
169	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Fashioning Fiction in Photography since 1990	01/04/2004	2000
170	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Thomas Demand	01/03/2005	2000
171	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	David Smith: A Centennial	29/07/2005	2000
172	US	New York	Museum of Modern Art	Edvard Munch: The Modern Life of the Soul	14/02/2006	2000
173	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Ensor's Graphic Modernism	25/04/2006	2000
174	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Lucio Fontana: Venice/New York	28/07/2006	2000
175	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Medieval Beasts	13/04/2007	2000
176	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Richard Poussette-Dart	15/06/2007	2000
177	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	The Colour of Life	11/02/2008	2000
178	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Cai Guo-Qiang: I Want to Believe	21/02/2008	2000
179	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	PHOTOGRAPHER CATHERINE OPIE	14/03/2008	2000
180	US	New York	The Frick Collection	REFURBISHMENT OF FRICK LIVING HALL	30/05/2008	2000
181	US	New York	The Frick Collection	NEW ACQUISITION	06/10/2008	2000
182	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Frick's Vermeer reunited	29/10/2008	2000
183	US	New York	The Frick Collection	LOAN COLLABORATION	08/12/2008	2000
184	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Julieta Aranda	29/03/2009	2000
185	US	New York	The Frick Collection	Whistler in The Frick Collection	30/04/2009	2000
186	US	New York	J. Paul Getty Museum	Golden Graves of Vanu	25/06/2009	2000
187	US	New York	The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation	Tino Sehgal	21/12/2009	2000