

**“Welcome to Hell”: A Critical Discourse Approach to
The Media Representations of Demonstrators During the G20 Protests in Hamburg**

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, online news media are one of the main, and sometimes only ways in which we can obtain information about the world events that surround us. In cases of political unrest, the media coverage of protests becomes an important tool for influencing the public's opinion; if this coverage is skewed, it can impact the way the world perceives not only the demonstrations but the protesters themselves. Unfortunately, limiting bias in the news has become an arduous task in the modern media landscape, in which mass conglomerates have ownership of most well-respected media sources; in this context, alternative media has emerged as a possible stand-in to corporate news. However, the fact that alternative media may not serve the interests of the economic and political elites does not necessarily mean their reporting is always unbiased. Although traditionally the discussion around media bias has been concerned mainly with the differences between left-wing and right-wing media, it is now necessary to also carry out studies on the differences between the mainstream and alternative media, particularly in cases in which the status quo is challenged.

Critical Discourse Analysis, as we will see in the following section, provides a set of theoretical concepts and methodological approaches that can be applied to such studies. In this paper, such techniques will be applied in order to study the news' treatment of the G20, a controversial event that has congregated the economical and political elites of the world, and attracted massive protests every year for the last decade.

Our aim will be twofold. First, we will look at what differences exist in the mainstream and alternative press' representations of protesters, which can be observed through Corpus Linguistics methods such as Collocation Analysis. Secondly, we will look at what the social repercussions of these differences are, following the initial hypothesis that mainstream media will present protesters more negatively than alternative media.

In order to satisfy these objectives, the structure of the paper will be as follows: Chapter 2 will seek to offer a theoretical introduction to the concepts applied in the paper; Chapter 3 will present the methodological approach adopted in the analysis, whose results will subsequently be broken down in Chapter 4; finally, Chapters 5 and 6 will summarize the findings and compare them to some of the previous research introduced in the theoretical background, as well as explain some of the drawbacks and obstacles encountered in the course of the study.

2. Theoretical Background

This section will offer some key information in order to understand all social and linguistic implications of our study. First, we will present a brief historical overview of the G20 summit, as well as an explanation of the protests surrounding the 2017 summit in Hamburg, that will be the object of our study later on. Secondly, we will explain the theoretical framework applied in order to distinguish mainstream from alternative media. Finally, we will focus on Critical Discourse Analysis as a tool for studying the representation of protests and demonstrators in the media, including some of the previous research on the topic.

2.1. The G20

The Group of Twenty or G20, self-defined as a “forum for international economic cooperation” was created in 1999, following similar projects such as the Group of Seven or

Group of Eight. Its objective was to unite the higher governmental and financial authorities of nineteen individual countries in addition to the European Union, in order to discuss global socio-economic affairs. (“About the G20”, 2019) The first G20 summit took place in the year 2008, and was hosted by the United States (Washington). Although the G7 and G8 summits held in Japan had gone by with some altercations, the first G20 attracted only some criticism and “limited and peaceful protest.” (Dobson 2013, p. 246) This lack of noteworthy resistance didn’t last long, however, and one year later the 2009 summit in London concluded with massive demonstrations, resulting in 180 of the 35.000 demonstrators and 70 officers injured, one dead bystander, and a total cost of £8 million, with the operation being named the “most expensive police operation in British history.” (Edwards 2009; Chaplain 2017; Lyall 2009) This would set the tone for the turbulent history of the convention, with all subsequent meetings being plagued by large-scale protests and accusations of police brutality.

In this paper, we will focus on the twelfth G20 summit, held in Hamburg in July of 2017. From the very beginning, the choice of location attracted suspicion from leftist groups, as the convention was not only to be held in Hamburg but in St. Pauli, a district with a long standing history of radical anarchism. The city was preemptively filled with police, reaching a total number of 31.000 officers from all over Germany; makeshift portable prisons and courtrooms were also built, for up to 400 arrestees. Prior to the beginning of the summit, the German police and the Minister of Interior Thomas de Maiziere announced weapons had been seized from “8000 radicals” from all over Europe, which was perceived as an attempt to ‘otherize’ the protesters in order to instill fear on the general population. With a pre-existing climate of tension, more than 50.000 protesters met with the police forces, which resulted in water cannons

being used against the crowds, alongside warning shots and other control tactics; in response, the demonstrators attempted to create police-free zones with burning barricades. (“Don’t Try To Break Us” 2017; Shalal & Nasr 2017; Witt 2017) In an official report, the German government reported that “more than 230 police officers were injured in the riots surrounding the summit,” (“Verfassungsschutzbericht” 2017) the police also admitted to having arrested 186 rioters from Germany, Switzerland, France, Italy, Russia and Spain. Additionally, 35 internal investigations were conducted, 27 being cases of protesters being assaulted by police. (Föry 2017; “35 Investigations Launched” 2017)

The riots lasted a total of four days, attracting mixed reactions from the public, and considerable attention from mass media. (“International Media Reactions” 2017)

2.2. Mainstream and Alternative Media

We depend on mass communication to obtain information and form opinions about the world events that surround us. The mass media is an incredibly powerful tool for

(1) attracting and directing public attention; (2) [persuading] in matters of opinion and belief; (3) influencing behavior; (4) providing definitions of reality; (5) conferring status and legitimacy; and (5) informing quickly and extensively. (McQuail 2010, p.77)

Nowadays, this mass media can take many forms, from newspapers in print to television or radio, and more recently, online media sources. With digitalization and information technology on the rise, an increasing number of people are choosing online newspapers and websites over traditional means of communication. Only in the United States, “38% of adults get news online, either from news websites/apps (28%), on social media (18%) or both.” (Mitchell et al. 2016, p.5), which has led to the “demassification of old media,” with the traditional mammoth media

outlets being replaced by smaller but also more “specialized” and customizable ways to access the massive amount of news generated every day. (McQuail 2010, p. 135) However, in spite of the unquestionable and ever-changing power of the media for influencing thought, and the new multiplicity of media outlets brought about by new technologies, there exists a general mistrust amongst the general population for the news they receive. In 2016, a meager 22% of Americans trusted the news they received, regardless of the source, and in 2019 the level of trust in the media is only 42% across the world. (Newman 2019, p. 9; Mitchell et al. 2016, p. 9) Furthermore, when divided by left or right political affiliation, research found that the left generally trusted media more, with 53% of American and 41% of British leftists putting trust on the news. (Fig. 1)

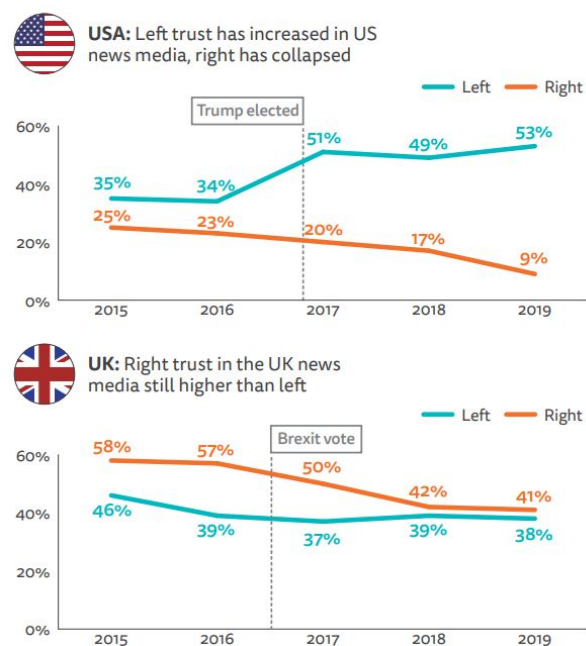


Figure 1. Newman, Nic (2019). *Proportion that Trust Most News Most of the Time*, [chart]. Retrieved January, 21, 2020.

This mistrust may not be far-fetched. *The Unbearable Limitations of Journalism* (2010) M. Broersma states that the “awkward truth” behind journalism’s “claim to truth” is that journalists hardly know what really went down in any given event, relying on outside sources and other unreliable methods.(Broersma 2010, p.25; Bennett 2016, p.25) Broersma defends that journalism should not be approached as a completely objective and “descriptive” medium, but rather

a performative discourse, designed to persuade readers that what it describes is real, which, by successfully doing so, transforms an interpretation into truth –into a reality the public can act upon. (Broersma 2010, p. 26)

The way journalism accomplishes this is by *framing* information, that is, presenting a complicated situation or event in a way that propitiates a certain interpretation by the audience, as defined by Goffman (1974) and Entman (1993). This is accomplished by

[promoting] certain facets of a ‘perceived reality’ and [making] them more salient in such a way that endorses a specific problem definition, clausal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. (Entman 1993 as cited in Cissel 2012)

Framing is often used to satisfy a certain ‘agenda’ or motive, which may vary depending on whether we are discussing the so-called mainstream media, or new alternative sources.

When referring to the media, the labels ‘mainstream’ and ‘alternative’ are not rooted on definitive facts of material experience but rather are fluid and depend on societal and cultural variables. The label ‘alternative’ itself depends on the meaning allocated to ‘mainstream’ and presents a direct opposition to it, often substituted by other words like ‘radical’ (Downing 2001, pp. v-xii) or ‘activist.’ (Kenix 2011, pp. 17-18) In order to understand what mainstream means,

we must place the label against the backdrop of media convergence, a phenomenon by which the ownership of media outlets is concentrated on a few massive conglomerates, since the Telecommunications Act of 1996 allowed every interested party to “enter any communications business.” (Cissel 2012, p.68; “Telecommunications Act” 2013) In this context, smaller, non conglomerate-owned news websites may serve as an alternative to readers that mistrust traditional media’s agenda and motives. Apart from ownership,

mainstream media generally aim to maximize audiences through pack journalism that is conventional and formulaic, which results in content that can be binary and reductive. In contrast, alternative media often advocate programs of social change through the framework of politicized and in-depth social commentary. (Kenix 2011, p. 19)

The contrast between alternative and mainstream media is often political, providing a platform for groups that “have been marginalized by corporate ... media.” (p.20) The label ‘alternative’ is not only used to mean opposition to the mainstream and corporate, but also inherently left in its opposition to the hegemonic elites. (Atton 2001, p.7)

The duality of mainstream and alternative media is particularly salient when dealing with cases of political unrest. The relation of the media with political protest and the status quo has been studied extensively (Clutterbuck 1983; Cohen & Young 1981; Freedman 2014; Rucht 2004), with authors like Herman and Chomsky (1988) criticizing the political partiality in the media that minimizes or ignores the concerns of “marginal groups.” (p.281) Similarly, Boyle et.al. (2005) dealt with the newspaper coverage of American protest movements ranging from 1960 to 1999. They worked with the the “protest paradigm,” which is “rooted in the notion that media outlets act as agents of social control” (Boyle et.al. 2005, p. 639) and “description bias”

hypothesis, which affirms “the more protest groups threaten the status quo, the more harshly they will be treated by the media.” (p. 638)

2.3. Critical Discourse Analysis and the Study of Protest

In this context, Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) has proven a useful tool, with several case studies relying on techniques like close textual analysis for supporting claims of media bias in the reporting of political protest. Christopher Hart is a key figure in the field, having dedicated much of his academic work to applying CDA to the study of media reports, (Hart 2013a; Hart 2013b; Hart 2014a; Hart 2014b; Hart 2017a; Hart 2017b; Hart 2018) introducing a particularly interesting framework for analysing cases in which language is used to either sanction or demoralize political action, including riots and demonstrations.

In and of itself Critical Discourse Analysis is rather a combination of techniques and approaches to the study of language and its social repercussions than a single and well-defined theory. The first definitions and important contributions to the field can be attributed to authors like Norman Fairclough (1995; 1997; 2005; 2006; 2007), Ruth Wodak (1997; 2008; 2009) and Teun A. Van Dijk (2008; 2011) amongst others. Fairclough, Mulderrig and Wodak (1997) addressed the relationship between discourse and society, defining discourse as a series of research practices concerned with the way language shapes, and is shaped by, elements of the society in which it is integrated, particularly those that have to do with societal injustice or inequality.

Rather than being disadvantageous, the fact that CDA doesn't have a fixed set of methodological approaches makes it a fertile ground for the implementation of different currents within the field of Linguistics. Corpus Linguistics methods in particular have been often applied

to CDA, by authors like Paul Baker and Tom McEnery. (Baker 2006; Baker et al. 2008; Baker et al. 2008) One of such approaches, is Collocation Analysis. Although J.R. Firth (1957) is often credited with the first definition of collocations as “actual words in habitual company,” (p. 14) Collocation Analysis (CA) didn’t become popularized until technological advancement first brought about massive online corpora, (Sinclair 1991) and has since then become a major part of CDA methodology. For the purpose of this paper, we will adopt a definition of collocations as “the statistically significant co-occurrence of words within a short span in a text,” (Sanchez Martínez 2008, p. 763) especially those which are not motivated by grammatical rules – such as the common incidence of function words like the definite article ‘*the*’ accompanying nouns – and those combinations which cannot be attributed to lexical idioms or common phrases. (Sánchez-Berriel et al. 2018, pp. 39-40)

Both Critical Discourse Analysis and Collocation Analysis tend to rely on a combination of quantitative and qualitative practices, where “qualitative research is concerned with structures and patterns, and how something is [and] quantitative research ... focuses on how much or how many there is/are of a particular characteristic or item.” (Litosseliti 2018, p.52) In order to take up this mixed analysis, author S. Jäger separates ‘structure’ and ‘fine’ analysis, the former being “a characterization of the media and the general themes,” and the latter a study of the “context, text surface and rhetorical means.” (Wodak & Meyer 2009, p.25) In the study conducted later on this essay, particularly its qualitative part, we will inspire our methods on Jäger’s recommendations, adapting them when necessary to the methodological techniques of Collocation Analysis and Corpus Analysis.

CDA has been extensively applied to the study of political protest. Within this field, a central work is Hart and Kelsey's *Discourses of Disorder: Riots, Strikes and Protests in the Media* (2019) which revolves around how "instances of civil disorder in the form of organised riots, strikes and protests" are reported and discussed in the media. (Hart & Kelsey, 2019, p.1) The authors emphasize that "mainstream media ... tend to marginalise, delegitimize and undermine riots, strikes and protests ... presenting them as a threat to civil society," (p.1) and present throughout the book several case studies combining corpus linguistics and CDA to research the mass media's treatment of political protest. Within this book, the studies by Davies and Nophakhun (2019) and Pérez-Arredondo (2019) are particularly relevant. Davies and Nophakhun studied how the press demonizes strike action through the use of the word 'militant,' which has been adhered to negative connotations through repeatedly using it to discuss violent action; the authors used a corpus composed of news articles from mainstream UK newspapers, and used corpus analysis tool Wmatrix to assign semantic domains to the word militant, finding that it often correlates with semantic domains like "warfare" or "dead," which are negative. (Davies & Nophakhun 2019, p.121) In contrast, Pérez-Arredondo Perez-Arredondo dealt with how alternative media frames protesters and their motives, exploring how it presented and discussed motives of Chilean student protesters from 2011 to 2013. She employed a corpus analysis approach, with articles from several Chilean digital newspapers, analyzed through a keyword search, (Perez-Arredondo, 2019, p. 61-62) and came to the conclusion that "the inclusion of motive [in the alternative media] is central to the legitimization of the students as well as of their actions," (Perez-Arredondo, 2019, p.71) leading to a positive reception of the protests.

In a similar way, Margaret Cissel (2012) studied how mainstream and alternative media sources reported the Occupy Wall Street demonstrations. She elaborated a qualitative analysis of a series of articles belonging to several American newspapers and independent media websites, coming to the conclusion that there was a difference in how alternative and mainstream sources reported the protests, with alternative media showing longer articles, more focus on the demonstrators' motives and emphasis on the violent actions of the police as opposed to those of the demonstrators – she placed the source of these differences on the ownership of mass media by conglomerates, which may have influenced their impartiality when reporting events that challenge the status quo. (Cissel 2012, pp. 74-47) The study of alternative communication media as a means to report protest has also been applied to the G20 conflict by Poell and Borra (2012), who used the conflicts around the 2010 G20 summit in Toronto to study Twitter, YouTube and Flickr as news sources. More specifically, they looked at whether these platform's approaches to reporting differed in any fundamental way from that of mainstream media; after examining through close analysis of the main topics of the reports, however, they came to the conclusion that a small number of people ultimately produced most of the social media output, and therefore the protests' account was as one-sided and skewed as in mainstream media.

Finally, authors like Gregoriou & Paterson (2017) applied CA to the study of media representations around protesters in the media, finding that, although the protesters were presented as non-violent, there was still negative bias in how they were addressed by the press.

In conclusion, Gregoriou & Peterson (2017) and Davies & Nophakun (2012), found negative bias in the mainstream media; Cissel (2012) determined that the mainstream media generally treated the protesters more negatively than the alternative media; and Perez-Arredondo

(2019) found that the alternative press' coverage of the activists' motives lead to a positive reception of the protests. In the following two sections, we will see if our results correlate with this trend, in addition to establishing whether there are any fundamental differences in the way mainstream and alternative media refer to protesters.

3. Data and Methods

This section will seek to offer a detailed summary of the methods applied in the course of the present study, as well as a brief overview of the kind of data that was collected. We sought to address two main questions: (1) which collocation patterns were the most common in each of the corpora, and how they differed in size and nature; and (2) what can we infer from these differences regarding social facts surrounding the representation of political protest and protesters in the mainstream and alternative media.

In order to answer these questions, the study was separated into two parts, firstly, a quantitative examination of a total of 193 collocates for three lemmas – protester/or, demonstrator and activist – in alternative and mainstream media; and secondly, a detailed qualitative analysis of some of the most prominent collocation patterns, with the intent of extracting narratives or representations that could be linked to the existing socio-political motives of the media sources. The methods implemented in order to carry out the analysis drew from both Corpus Linguistics and CDA, with the main variables studied being the quantity and nature of the collocations extracted, as influenced by the type of media (corpus) they come from.

To look at both types of media separately, this study utilized two different corpora built from news reports surrounding the G20 Hamburg protests in July of 2017. These corpora were made up of articles from mainstream left-wing and alternative left-wing online newspapers

respectively. We used the following chart (Fig. 2) to select our mainstream media sources, namely *CNN*, *Washington Post*, *Politico*, *NPR*, *The Guardian*, *Huffington Post*, and the *New York Times*; and Professor C. Glass' list (2018) for our alternative sources, *OpenDemocracy*, *DemocracyNow*, *PopularResistance*, *CommonDreams*, *ItsGoingDown* (IGD) and the *World Socialist Web Site* (WSWS); to which we added *AlJazeera*, as, in spite of being state-funded, is considered to stand in opposition to mainstream Western values enforced in the so-called corporate press.



Figure 2. AllSides (2019) *Top Online News Media Bias Ratings*, [chart]. Retrieved January, 28, 2020.

The Mainstream Media Corpus, referred from here on now as MM Corpus contains a total of 28 files, with 22575 tokens and 3395 lemmas in total; and the Alternative Media Corpus

(AM Corpus) includes 28 files, but 42598 tokens and 5304 lemmas, alternative media reports showing a longer length on average than mainstream media articles.

For the Collocation Analysis, we followed the guidelines set by Brezina et.al. concerning the use of the corpus analysis software LancsBox, (Brezina, McEnery & Wattam 2015; Brezina 2018; “LancsBox” 2017) particularly the GraphColl tool. In order to look for collocation patterns of one specific word, which is called a ‘node,’ GraphColl allows the user to set: (1) “the size of left and right collocation windows (span)” meaning the number of words to the left and right of the word to be analyzed; (2) “the [statistical] association measure,” for example Mutual Information (MI) or Log Likelihood; and (3) the “threshold,” that is, “the minimum frequency and statistics cut-off values for an item (word, lemma, POS) to be considered a collocate.” (Brezina, McEnery & Wattam 2015, p.148; “LancsBox” 2017, pp. 18-19) The tool then runs “a statistical comparison ... between the frequencies of words within the collocation window and those outside the window” and produces a graphical representation of the pattern found. (Brezina, McEnery & Wattam 2015, p.149) The authors offer a definition of collocation networks (Fig.3) as “lexical patterns, which can be visualised as networks of words that collocate with each other” (p.142) and give recommended settings for the parameters that should be used when looking for statistically relevant collocations.

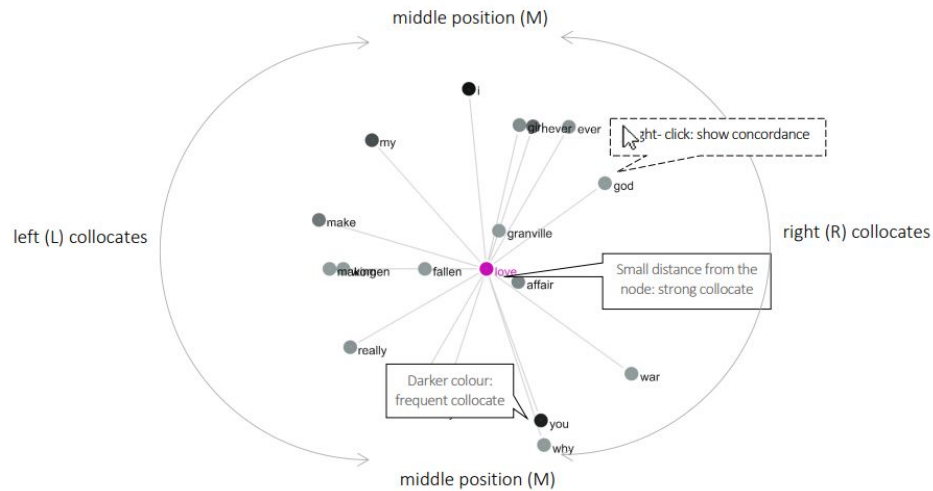


Figure 3. Lancaster University (2017) *Example of a GraphColl Collocation Network for the Node 'Love,'* [image]. Retrieved January, 28, 2020.

Brezina et.al. recommend using a span of 5 words to the left and 5 to the right, and a statistical cut-off value of 5.0. In this case, we've also set the collocation frequency threshold to 5.0 to avoid having 'overpopulated' graphs, and chosen a MI3 statistical association measure. Mutual Information (MI) has been regarded as a well-established way to test the probability that two different variables – in this case two words – will occur together; but has been shown to “[give] too much weight to rare words.” In order to avoid this, MI3 was developed, as “by ‘cubing’ observed frequencies ... [it] gives a much bigger boost to high frequencies than low frequencies,” (McEnery et al. 2006, p. 217) which prevents infrequent words showing up as primary collocates in the network. For the purpose of this essay, we have set the GraphColl parameters as follows:

- **Nodes:** /protest[e/o]r.*;/i; /demonstrator*/; /activist*/¹

¹ Protester/Protestor/Protesters/Protestors; Demonstrator/Demonstrators; Activist/Activists.

- **Span:** 05L-05-R
- **Statistical Association Measure:** MI3
- **Collocation Frequency Threshold:** 5.0
- **Statistic Cut-Off Value:** 5.0

The collocates were recorded in a data collection table (Appendix I) according to the following parameters:

- **Collocate:** the word collocating with the particular node (e.g. ‘police,’ ‘violent’)
- **Node:**
 - Protester/Protesters/Protestor/Protestors.
 - Demonstrator/Demonstrators.
 - Activist/Activists.
- **Corpus:**
 - MM.
 - AM.
- **Frequency:** The frequency of the collocations, with 5 being the minimum to be considered for this particular analysis.
- **Stat (MI3:5):** The statistical association measure, evaluating the amount of information shared by node and collocate, in this case MI3.
- **Semantic Field²:** Five main semantic fields were selected in order to categorize the collocates, namely,

² Used here to mean “a group of related meanings in a particular subject field, area of human experience, etc.” (Semantic, adj., 2014)

1. The summit: collocations alluding to the G20 convention in itself, such as *hamburg, g20, 2017* or *july*.
2. The police force: collocations referring to the police officers involved in the protest, including words like *officers* and *police* which appeared quite frequently in the corpus.
3. The protesters: collocations referring to the protesters in a neutral manner, for instance *black bloc* or *anarchists*.
4. Protesters as victims of violence: collocations portraying the protesters as victims of institutional violence, some examples being *disperse*, *water cannon* or *injured*.
5. Protesters as perpetrators of violence: collocations which contribute to the portrayal of protesters as the perpetrators of violence, such as *threw bottles*, *riot*, *violent*, and *set (on fire)*.
6. Violence on both sides: collocations which merely allude to the violent protests without having a clear perpetrator of victim, like *clash*.

As explained in the beginning of this chapter, the analysis was conducted as follows: first, in order to establish the most common collocation patterns for each of the corpora, quantitative methods were used to extract a frequency count of the collocations observed for each of the lemmas analyzed; and subsequently, the most salient collocation patterns as classified in semantic fields were studied quantitatively, so as to find out whether the representation of protesters differed in mainstream and alternative media, and what social conclusions can be extracted from this difference.

4. Analysis

In this section, we will present and explain the results of the analysis, conducted according to the aforementioned methodological approach. The analysis rendered 192 collocations in total, 73 being lexical words. In spite of containing a larger number of tokens, 74% of the collocations came from the MM Corpus, as opposed to only 26% from the AM Corpus, as can be seen in Table 1. Of the three nodes studied, the lemma ‘protester/or’ was the most common, followed by ‘demonstrator’ and ‘activist’ in both corpora.

Table 1
Total Number of Tokens per Corpus and Collocates per Node and Corpus

Corpora	Tokens	Nodes	Rel.Freq. ³	Collocates	<i>*function words removed</i>
MM Corpus	22575	/protest[e/o]r*/./	100.55	85	44
		/demonstrator.*i	22.46	21	6
		/activist.*i	23.48	17	4
		Total		123	54
AM Corpus	42598	/protest[e/o]r*/./	27.70	43	17
		/demonstrator.*i	15.49	19	1
		/activist.*i	8.98	7	1
		Total		69	19

The salience of the collocations extracted can be better understood in the context of their respective collocation networks, bearing in mind that proximity to the node is established by the statistical association measure and color by the frequency of the collocate.

³ Per 10.000 tokens.

Starting with the Mainstream Media Corpus, for ‘/protest[e/o]r*./i’ we found a relatively crowded collocation network (Fig. 4), dominated by function words (e.g. *by, for, off...*), but still showing several interesting lexical words in close proximity to the node.

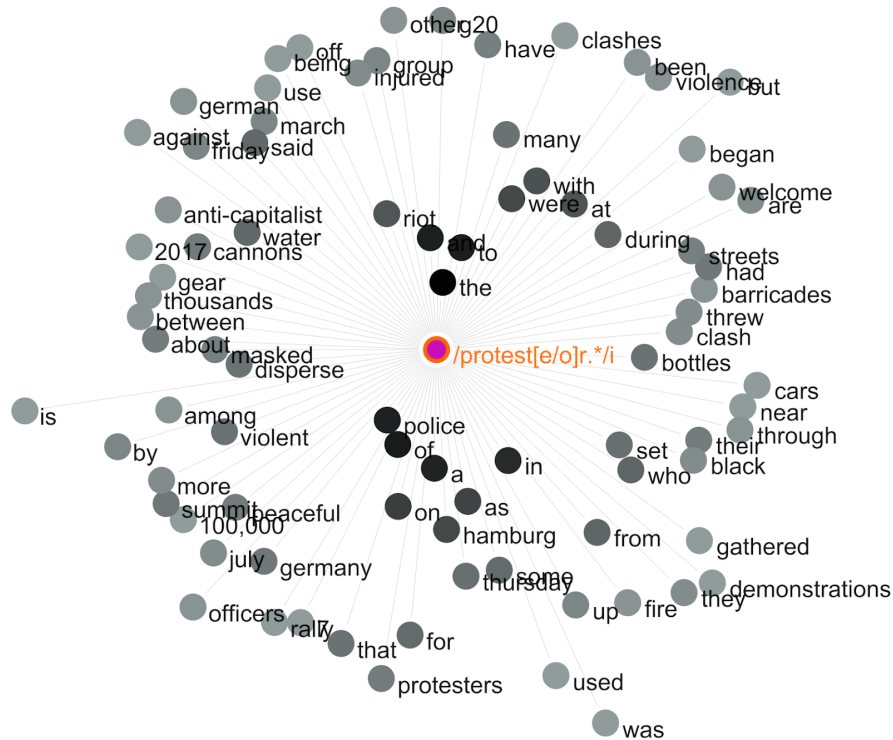


Figure 4. Collocation Network for /protest[e/o]r.*i in the MM Corpus.

The most frequent and significant lexical collocations of the lemma ‘protester/or’ were *police*, *riot*, *hamburg*, *disperse*, *set (on fire)*, *water (cannons)*, *masked*, *thursday*, *violent*, *peaceful*, *barricades*, *threw/throwing (bottles)*, and *clash*. Other less significant but interesting collocates present in the network are *injured*, *clashes* and *violence*.

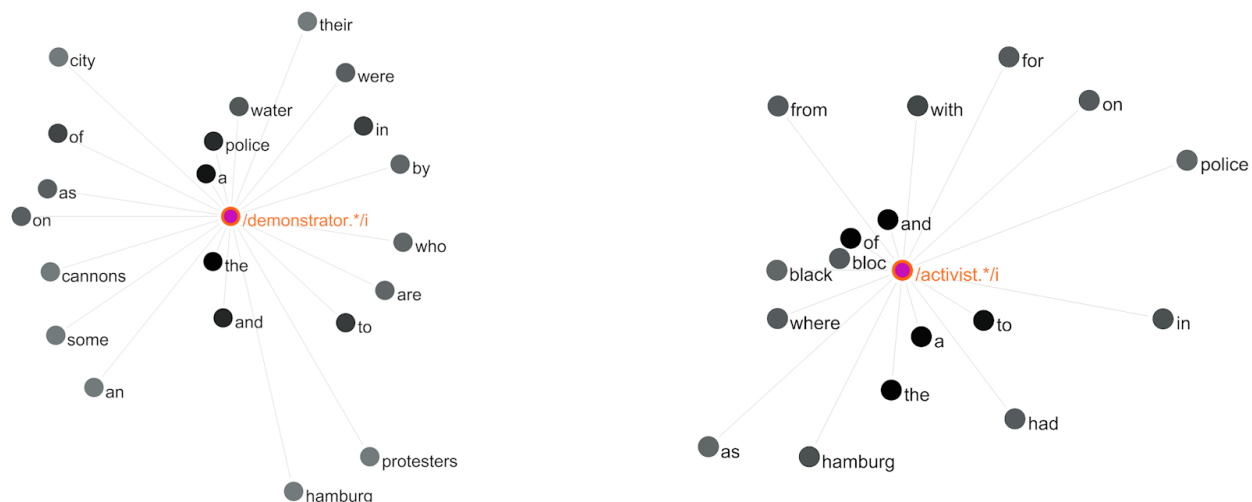


Figure 5. Collocation Networks for /demonstrator.*i/ and activist.*i/ in the MM Corpus.

In comparison, the lemmas ‘activist’ and ‘demonstrator’ (Fig.5) showed far less collocations. For the lemma ‘demonstrator,’ the most frequent and salient collocates were *police* and *water (cannons)*; and for ‘activist,’ *police*, *hamburg* and *black bloc*. All three lemmas studied collocated strongly with *police* in the MM Corpus.

Moving on to the Alternative Media Corpus, we find a much less crowded collocation network for the lemma ‘protester/or’ (Fig. 6), which shows *police*, *injured*, *hamburg*, *water (cannons)*, *100,000*, *g20*, *expected*, *thousands*, *german* and *germany* as the most frequent and salient collocates.

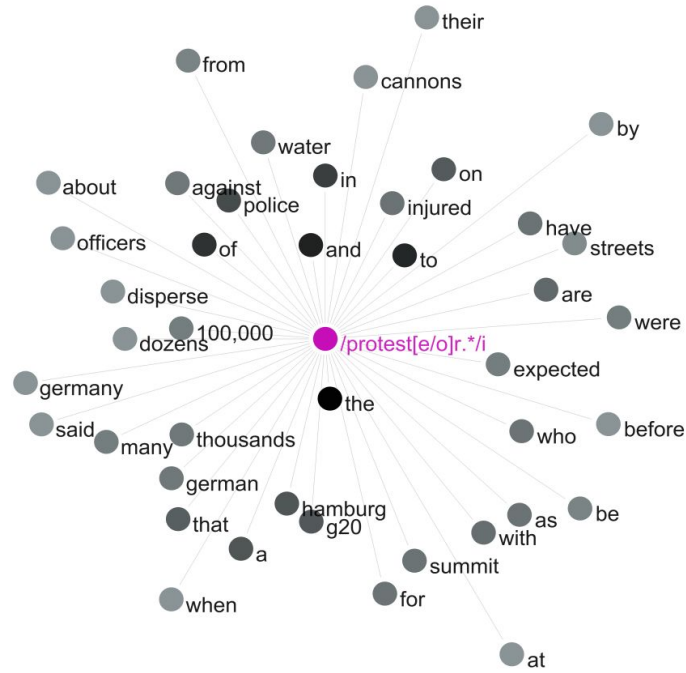


Figure 6. Collocation Network for /protest[e/o]r.*i/ in the AM Corpus.

Less collocations were extracted for the lemmas ‘demonstrator’ and ‘activist,’ (Fig. 7) with *police* appearing only for ‘demonstrator.’ This correlates with the fact that the AM Corpus recorded a much lower number of collocations in general.



Figure 7. Collocation Networks for /demonstrator.*i/ and /activist.*i/ in the AM Corpus.

As seen in the following graph, (Fig. 8) all collocations recorded were classified according to six semantic fields, an explanation of which can be found in Chapter 3 of this paper. This classification served two main aims: firstly, it allowed us to see the distribution of the main themes and actors in the articles (i.e. violence, the protesters and the police) in each of the corpora; and secondly, it provided a way to structure the qualitative analysis of the most common collocation patterns found.

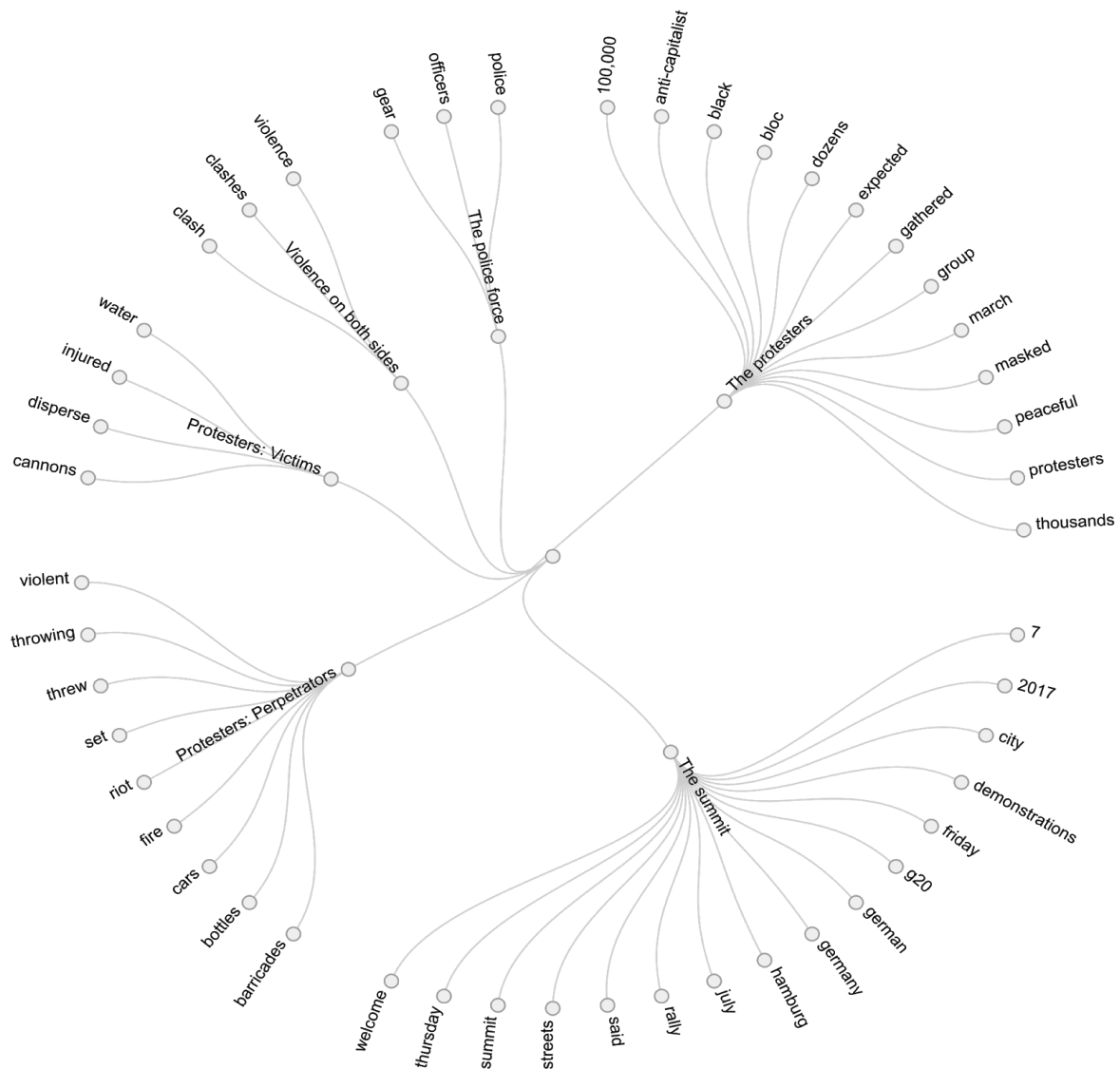


Figure 8. All collocates categorized in Semantic Fields.

The main themes of the articles selected for the analysis were: the G20 convention (i.e. ‘The Summit’); the violent protests surrounding it (‘Violence on both sides’); and the two main players in these protests, the demonstrators and the police (‘The protesters,’ ‘The police force,’ ‘Protesters: Victims,’ and ‘Protesters: Perpetrators’). However, these themes were not equally distributed across both corpora, as can be observed in Figure 9. The semantic fields ‘Violence on both sides’ and ‘Protesters as perpetrators of violence’ were attested only in the MM Corpus, with the former containing a very limited number of collocates; however, the field ‘Protesters as victims of violence’ was more or less equally attested in the MM and AM Corpus.

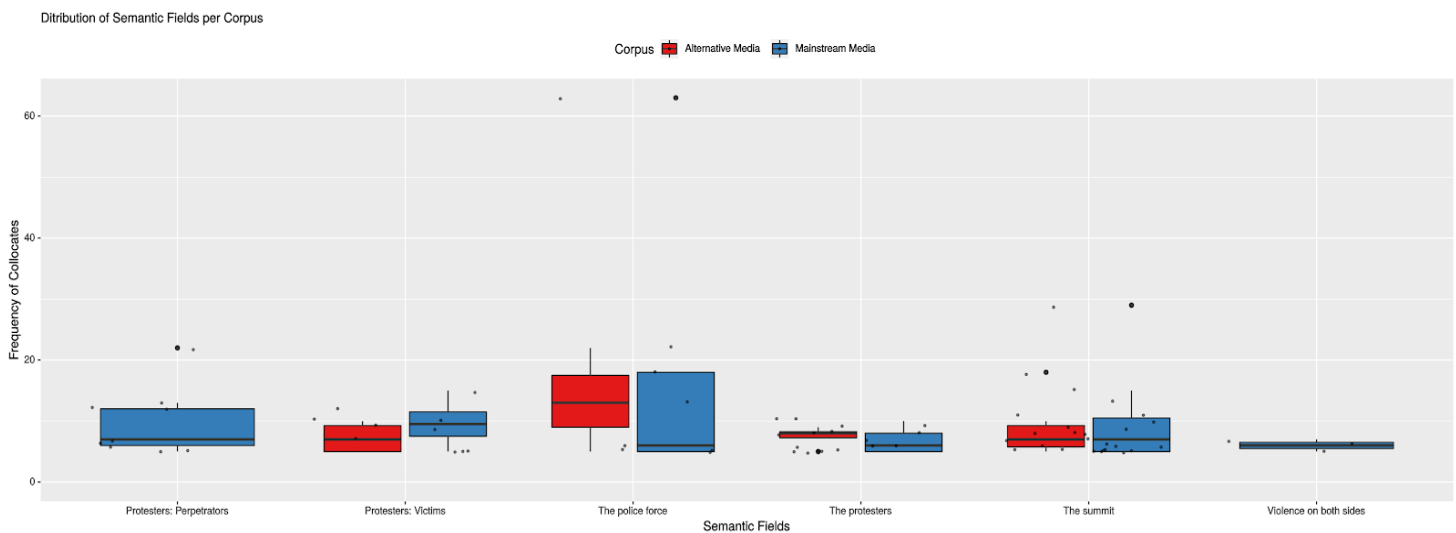


Figure 9. Box and scatter plot of the distribution of Semantic Fields across the corpora.

Consequently, we can determine that a simple frequency count of these collocates would not sufficiently clarify whether there is a fundamental difference in the corpora’s representation of demonstrators. To satisfy this question, in the following section of this chapter we have attempted to carry out a qualitative analysis of four of the fields shown above: (1) ‘Violence on both sides,’ (2) ‘The protesters,’ (3) ‘Protesters: Victims,’ and (4) ‘Protesters: Perpetrators;’ excluding all fields that do not directly relate to the representations of protesters.

Violence on Both Sides. Only attested in the mainstream media, this field includes all three lexical collocations found which refer to the violent protests but that avoid signalling a victim or perpetrator: *clash*, *clashes*, and *violence*. The verb *clash* was mainly used either for article headlines or to caption photographs, almost invariably pointing at police and demonstrators as two equal and clearly defined groups:

- Example 1: “G20 protests: Police, demonstrators clash in Germany” (MMC, CNN 03)

The noun collocates *clashes* and *violence* were used similarly:

- Example 2: “The demonstration came to halt about 300 metres into its route after police blocked the path of protesters. Violence broke out near the start of the demonstration at a riverside plaza used for Hamburg’s weekly fish market.” (MMC, Guardian 001)

The mainstream left-wing media’s decision to present the turbulent encounters between demonstrators and police officers without pointing to one or the other as the initiator is very telling. It points at a general reluctance to responsabilize any of the involved groups, and consequently to avoid alienating audience groups sympathizing with either side.

The Protesters. The words included within this field allude to the demonstrators involved in the protests. As can be observed in Figure 9, this semantic field was one of the most congested, showing a high quantity of collocates in both corpora. In consequence, we have selected to study only the most salient and frequent examples.

In the mainstream media, the main collocates belonging to this category were *masked*, *black bloc*, *peaceful*, *march*, *thousands*, *group*, and *anti-capitalist*; in contrast, alternative media showed only three collocates – *100.000*, *thousands*, *dozens* and *expected* – mostly relating to the quantity of demonstrators.

- Example 3: “Weinand said anarchists from across Europe had hijacked Hamburg’s history of left-wing activism, undermining the cause of peaceful protesters.” (MMC, Washington Post 001)
- Example 4: “Rising tensions between protesters and police had escalated with clashes ... when masked anti-capitalist protesters torched cars and smashed shop windows.” (MMC, Guardian 002)

The mainstream media used evaluative language to describe the political affiliation and motives of the protesters. Words with a positive connotation, such as *peaceful* were pitched against *black bloc* (i.e. anarchist radicals), *anti-capitalist* or *masked* to differentiate which demonstrators were innocent and worthy of respect, and which were responsible for the violent clashes with the police. This allowed the media to sanction the actions of the police without undermining the root causes of the political unrest surrounding the G20.

- Example 5: Tens of thousands of protesters are expected to march in the city this week against globalization and what they say is corporate greed and a failure to tackle climate change. (AMC, Popular resistance 001)

In contrast, alternative media generally avoided the use of collocates referring to the protester’s motives, pointing to the quantity of demonstrators in order to legitimize the protests. This is directly linked to the following two fields, which determine whether protesters are presented as either victims or perpetrators of violence by the mainstream and alternative media respectively.

Protesters as Victims of Violence. This field contains all collocates referring to protesters as the receptors of police violence. It was particularly interesting, owing to the fact that the same three collocates were used in the alternative and mainstream corpus: *water*, *cannons* and *disperse*. Some key differences, however, were observed in each of the corpora's use of the words. First, both *water cannons* and *disperse* were used to a higher extent in the mainstream media, and often in combination, as can be observed in Figure 10.

1	Police used <i>water cannons</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	a crowd of protestors in central Hamburg
2	Police used <i>water cannons</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	a crowd of protestors in central Hamburg
3	<i>Water cannons</i> were deployed to	<i>disperse</i>	protesters, and 29 arrests were made.
4	Bottles were also thrown at riot police who attempted to	<i>disperse</i>	the crowd as police helicopters circled overhead.
5	German police used <i>water cannon</i> and pepper spray to	<i>disperse</i>	anti-capitalist protesters after clashes with police broke
6	Police again deployed <i>water cannon</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	a crowd of protesters who had broken into a sealed-off
7	A fleet of hi-tech <i>water cannons</i> was used to	<i>disperse</i>	crowds partying near the conference venue on
8	Tuesday night used a <i>water cannon</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	a gathering of several hundred activists that
9	Hamburg, police turned on <i>water cannon</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	remaining protestors, many drunk, who started throwing
10	Symphony on Friday evening, police moved to	<i>disperse</i>	thousands of protesters during a second day
11	Riot police use a <i>water cannon</i> and pepper spray to	<i>disperse</i>	protesters on Thursday in Hamburg, Germany
12	the police, who used <i>water cannons</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	crowds outside of the Elbe Philharmonic Hall
13	A policeman in the Schanzen district fired a warning shot to	<i>disperse</i>	a group of protesters who were kicking a man
14	Two trucks arrived. The trucks used <i>water cannons</i> to	<i>disperse</i>	the protesters, who threw rocks at the vehicles
15	police have used <i>water cannons</i> in some cases to	<i>disperse</i>	protesters, some of whom lit fires overnight
16	officers in riot gear used <i>water-cannons</i> and tear gas to	<i>disperse</i>	anti-capitalist protesters who had vowed to disrupt
17	using <i>water cannons</i> and pepper spray to	<i>disperse</i>	a group with anarchist sympathies that had refused
18	Forty-five <i>water cannons</i> were available to	<i>disperse</i>	crowds. Some were used Tuesday evening to
19	Authorities used <i>water cannons</i> and pepper spray to	<i>disperse</i>	the crowd, which numbered about 12,000.
20	Forty-five <i>water cannons</i> were available to	<i>disperse</i>	crowds, and a no-fly zone was in place

Figure 10. Concordance of *disperse* in the Mainstream Media Corpus. *Disperse* colored red and *water cannons* colored blue.

The context in which the word *disperse* was utilized is particularly noteworthy. The police were not always allocated agency in the use of water cannons to disperse protesters, with the mainstream media opting for the use of the passive in many of the lines shown above (3, 7, 18, and 20), the police even being substituted by ‘the trucks’ in row 14. Furthermore, in seven of the sixteen cases in which police officers or trucks were explicitly identified as the agents, a reference to the previous violent actions of the protesters was included as a justification (Fig. 11).

4	Bottles were also thrown at riot police who attempted to	disperse	the crowd as police helicopters circled overhead.
6	Police again deployed water cannon to	disperse	a crowd of protesters who had broken into a sealed-off
9	Hamburg, police turned on water cannon to	disperse	remaining protesters, many drunk, who started throwing
13	A policeman in the Schanzen district fired a warning shot to	disperse	a group of protesters who were kicking a man
14	Two trucks arrived. The trucks used water cannons to	disperse	the protesters, who threw rocks at the vehicles
15	police have used water cannons in some cases to	disperse	protesters, some of whom lit fires overnight
16	officers in riot gear used water-cannons and tear gas to	disperse	anti-capitalist protesters who had vowed to disrupt

Figure 11. Concordance of *disperse* in the Mainstream Media Corpus. The agent was highlighted in yellow and the justification highlighted in green.

The use of water cannons to disperse demonstrators by the police was therefore presented as justified by the previous violent actions of the protesters; in addition, the mainstream media used the passive as well as substitutes as ‘the trucks’ to avoid placing agency on the police forces who were using violent action against protesters.

Similarly to the mainstream media, the alternative media also utilized *disperse* in combination with *water cannons* in most of the cases found, as recorded in Figure 11.

1	Police used cannon and tear gas to try to	disperse	protesters as reinforcements poured in from across
2	police used water cannon, pepper spray and batons to	disperse	marchers who they say attacked them with bottles
3	Riot police use water cannon, pepper spray and batons to	disperse	demonstrations in Hamburg.
4	Police used water cannon, pepper spray and batons to	disperse	marchers after some attacked them with bottles
5	riot police using tear gas and high-powered water cannons to	disperse	G20 protesters in Hamburg on Thursday
6	German police deployed a water cannon and pepper spray to	disperse	around 500 protesters in Hamburg
7	riot police, who used cannons, tear gas and stun grenades to	disperse	the protests. Protests resumed earlier today
8	police fired cannons, pepper spray and stun grenades to	disperse	protesters. Key issues on the G20 agenda
9	Police used water cannons, tear gas, stun grenades to	disperse	the protests.
10	the police deployed water cannons to	disperse	them.
11	a huge number of riot cops sought to	disperse	the crowd that had gathered at Sternbrücke.
12	GERMAN POLICE	DISPERSE	G20 PROTEST WITH WATER CANNON
13	German police used water cannon to	disperse	around 500 anti-capitalist protesters overnight
14	Heavily-armed police units repeatedly	disperse	protests with armoured vehicles and water cannon

Figure 11. Concordance of *disperse* in the Alternative Media Corpus. Additional weapons colored orange.

In contrast to the mainstream media, police was clearly identified as the agent in all 14 of the rows recorded. Moreover, hardly any mention to any previous violent actions by hand of the protesters was made to justify the use of water cannons, with the exception of the second row, in which it is stated the police ‘said’ the protesters attacked them rather than presenting it as a fact. It is worth noting that while the mainstream media also made references to tear gas and pepper spray in addition to water cannons, only in the alternative media we found references to stun grenades and batons being used on protesters. The inclusion of these in the report might point at a wish to make the police violence more apparent and grave in the alternative media than in the mainstream media.

Protesters as Perpetrators of Violence. This field is quite self-explanatory, as it includes all words used by the mainstream press to refer to any violent actions by hand of the protesters; like ‘Violence on both sides,’ it contains collocates only attested in the Mainstream Media Corpus. This in itself is telling, as it signals to the fact that the alternative media generally

avoids portraying protesters as the initiators of violence. The collocates in this field are *violent*, *barricades*, *threw/throwing bottles*, *set cars (on fire)*, and *riot*. Some examples are:

- Example 6: “Police called on demonstrators to remove masks, and some protesters threw rocks, bottles and sticks at police authorities said.” (Washington post 002)
- Example 7: “Anti-G-20 Summit protesters set fires during clashes with riot police in Hamburg, Germany, Friday night.” (NPR 002)

In this section, we have first carried out a frequency count of the number of collocations of the lemmas ‘protester/or,’ ‘demonstrator’ and ‘activist’ in both the Mainstream and Alternative Media Corpus, and then presented them in collocation networks, calculated according to a statistical association measure; subsequently, we have presented a qualitative analysis of the collocates recorded for all three lemmas, following their categorization on Semantic Fields. We have found a series of substantial differences between the alternative and mainstream media, whose relevance to the research questions and ongoing theoretical discussion will be discussed in the discussion.

5. Discussion

The first question to be addressed in this paper was which collocation patterns were the most common in the mainstream versus the alternative media, and how they differed in size and nature. After a brief overview of the results, it was observed that the Mainstream Media Corpus contained a higher number of collocations for ‘protester/or,’ ‘demonstrator’ and ‘activist’ than the Alternative Media Corpus, in spite of the latter being larger. In the Mainstream Media Corpus, the most frequent and salient collocates were *police*, *riot*, *hamburg*, *disperse*, *set (on fire)*, *water (cannons)*, *masked*, *thursday*, *violent*, *peaceful*, *barricades*, *threw/throwing (bottles)*,

black bloc and *clash*. In contrast, the Alternative Media contained less evaluative language, with collocations such as *police*, *injured*, *hamburg* and *water (cannons)*, but also *100,000*, *g20*, *expected*, *thousands*, *german* and *germany*. Many of the MM Corpus' collocations made references to violent behavior (e.g. *masked*, *violent*, *set*, *disperse*, *riot*...) whereas the AM Corpus' mainly showed collocations relating to the size of the crowd of demonstrators. Although the MM Corpus contained collocations like *peaceful*, when looking at the collocations as classified in Semantic Fields, we found that only the mainstream media's collocations presented the protesters as perpetrators of violence and focused on the violence coming from both sides; when discussing the protesters as victims, the articles often included their previous violent behavior as a justification for the police's actions, and avoided using the police forces as an explicit agent, often opting for the passive instead.

The second question to be addressed in this study was whether there were any social repercussions to the differences explained above. This would be far more difficult to assert with any certainty, as the fact that the mainstream media used a higher number of collocations in general – and more collocations painting the protesters as violent – does not exclude the fact that they also referred to the violent actions of the police against demonstrators. Although any definite conclusions in this direction would be mostly speculation, we did observe that the mainstream media tended to avoid blaming either of the sides for the violence of the protests, preferring words like *clash* or *clashes*, and if forced to point at one of the sides as the instigator, they exonerated the police in favor of the protesters. This may be, as Cissel (2012) pointed out, due to the ownership of the media outlets; in addition to a wish not to alienate any possible audience members.

In general, further research would be needed to prove that the media treats those that challenge the status quo negatively, as Boyle et.al. (2005) suggested, but the differences found seem to correlate with the concerning trend of there being more negative bias in the mainstream media's representations of protesters (Davies & Nophakun, 2012; Gregoriou & Peterson, 2017) than in the alternative media (Cissel, 2012; Perez-Arredondo, 2019). In the following section, we will attempt to summarize our findings after conducting the analysis, and mention some of the hindrances encountered in the course of the study.

6. Conclusion

In the course of this paper, we have offered a historical introduction to the G20 summit, followed by an explanation of the theoretical framework of media studies and CDA, which were later applied in a Corpus Analysis study of the collocations surrounding words for 'protester' in the mainstream and alternative media. Some key differences were found in the collocations, particularly in the mainstream media's representation of protesters as enactors of violence. One drawback worth mentioning was the self-referential nature of the study: since we could only obtain information about the protests from the press itself, it was not clear whether the representation of either the police or the protesters as violent actors was biased and prejudiced or reflected the real progression of the events. The lack of an impartial third party's account of the G20 protests made the process of establishing whether there was negative bias almost impossible. Furthermore, the alternative media articles often were written by the same authors, with some articles even being reposted in several different sites, which made it difficult to obtain unique data; this, in addition to the fact that the articles contained such a little amount of collocations may have skewed the results. Further studies using a larger corpus, with articles

concerning more than one incident could be used to confirm whether the mainstream media puts the main focus on protesters and constructs them as being the enactors of violence, whereas alternative media presents them as victims rather than perpetrators of violence, placing more agency on the police officers.

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