Introduction

This chapter sets out to examine how gays and lesbians have been socially represented in one of the most important quality daily newspapers published in Portugal, Diário de Notícias, in a particular set of texts that was released over a week, under the general title ‘Gay Power’ (‘Poder Gay’). The texts appeared from Sunday, 22 April to Saturday, 28 April 2001 and were announced in a previous edition of the newspaper, on Friday, 20 April, as ‘The Gay Power: an in-depth report starting Sunday in DN’ (‘O Poder Gay: Uma grande reportagem a partir de Domingo no DN [Diário de Notícias]’).

Confirming the importance the newspaper was attributing to this specific news coverage, on Sunday, 22 April the entire front page was dedicated to it, as well as pages 2 and 3, and the editorial on page 5. Under the heading ‘State of the nation’ (‘Estado da Nação’), in small capital letters, the front page presented readers with the large headline ‘State promotes “gay” tourism’ (‘Estado promove turismo “gay”’), together with the following two sentences in small print: ‘Lisbon City Council and ICEP edit catalogue for homosexuals. Poll reveals that “gays” have little influence in Portugal’ (‘Câmara de Lisboa e ICEP editam catálogo para homossexuais. Sondagem revela que “gays” são pouco influentes em Portugal’). The headline and the text are followed by a large photograph (and its caption) where in the foreground one can see two men in drag.

The remaining texts in the serial appeared over the following days and were spread over two inside pages of the newspaper, though always...
In what follows I will begin by locating the present study in terms of the theoretical and methodological framework used, then move to a more focused analysis of the ways in which the discourse is structured and how it functions in the overall news coverage in relation to the socio-cultural context that motivated it.

**Theoretical and methodological framework**

From the eclectic perspectives of analysis of public culture and of discourse in late modern social life, the frameworks for this study are constructed on the basis of three main approaches. These approach the subject of homosexuality in conventional ways, which help to reproduce and maintain existing social identities, relations and systems of knowledge and belief, and in innovative ways, which help to transform them.

Whether the conventional or the innovative predominates in any given case will depend upon different factors. It is not a simple matter of choosing between the two. Instead, the process of reproduction and change is a complex one that involves multiple factors operating at different levels. The dynamics of this process are shaped by a range of social, cultural, and political factors, including the ways in which language is used and the social contexts in which it is used.

The system of language is a semiotic system structured in terms of strata and that looks at grammar in terms of how it is used. It describes languages in functional terms with the aim of providing a general grammar for purposes of text analysis and interpretation. SFG is functional in several different but interrelated senses: for instance, in the way it looks at the linguistic system and at its description, in the way it looks at linguistic elements and structures, and in the way it looks at texts and at their interpretation (that is, in the description of how language is used). SFG is, thus, as Halliday (1994:xiv, xxvi) puts it: a theory of meaning as choice, by which a language, or any other system of representation, is interpreted as a network of interlocking options as a resource for making meaning. Each system in the network represents a choice: not a conscious decision made in real time but a set of possible alternatives. Since choice is driven by intentionality, it ultimately means that speakers use language to reproduce and maintain social identities, relations and systems of knowledge and belief, and in innovative ways that help to transform them.
text deconstruction’ (Martin, Matthiessen and Painter 1997: 2). But no matter what its application, SFG doubtlessly provides analysts with the tools for understanding why a text is the way it is, and in that respect it stands as the most relevant theory of grammatical description to be used in a textually-oriented discourse analysis, as is the case with CDA.

As socially constructed systems, gender, power and opportunity are products of representations and social constructions of individuals and relations between individuals that are interwoven with processes of cultural and historical reproduction, in which tradition plays a fundamental role. The stability or variability of those systems – that is, the maintenance or modification of the social, gender and power positions of individuals in the community – depends on how tradition evolves over time. From the point of view of CDA, analysing assumptions about gender and opportunity as they are presented in the representation of gays and lesbians as discursive subjects in a Portuguese newspaper is therefore a reflection on the stability or variability of the systems in relation to their traditional configuration.

Tradition and the cultural context

The main characteristic of the news articles under analysis seems to be the willingness of the newspaper to make gays discursive subjects of news for a week. This is a fairly important aspect, considering that in Portugal homosexuality is not a theme found regularly in the news when compared with other countries, and in particular with other EU countries. For instance, in terms of legislation, one may say that in Portuguese laws there are more omissions concerning homosexuality than explicit references. These omissions give way to multiple situations of exclusion, which are made possible not only by the long tradition of socially silencing the homosexual condition, but also (and mainly) by the legal vacuum that frames that condition in terms of social rights.

As has been stressed by Santos and Fontes (2001: 175–6), this way of acting has been characteristic of the Portuguese state, which has tried to silence discrimination and harmonize consciences, while legitimizing a rigid morality that is heir to centuries of religious puritanism and to a lack of critical contestation.1

Due to these factors, Portuguese gay and lesbian activism is a reality that was only made possible in 1995, when ILGA-Portugal (International Lesbian and Gay Association–Portugal), the first lesbian and gay association, was founded. And though other similar movements were set up afterwards, it is a fact that to this day the majority of Portuguese lesbians and gay men choose to remain ‘in the closet’. As stressed by several activists interviewed for this specific news coverage, Portuguese gays and lesbians are still afraid of disclosing their sexual condition and of fighting for their rights, as they regard society as still too homophobic: ‘Social fear is what prevents people from coming out, because they feel they will be discriminated against, if their sexual orientation becomes known’ [‘O medo social é o que faz com que as pessoas não se queiram assumir, porque sentem que vão ser prejudicadas, se a sua orientação for conhecida’]. In this respect, the situation has similarities to that of Austria, as reported by Bunzl (2000: 215–16), where gay and lesbian activism has shifted from working toward large-scale social transformations (which would fully emancipate lesbians and gay men along with other oppressed peoples) to carefully targeted, ideologically flexible, efforts intended to subvert and disrupt the reproduction of heteronormative regimes. A result of this shift was the organization of a Pride/Rainbow Parade almost at the same time in both countries (in 1996 and subsequent years in Austria, in 1997 and subsequent years in Portugal). But a major difference between Austria and Portugal is that despite the fact that the population of Austria is around 80 per cent of the size of Portugal’s, in Austria the ‘Rainbow Parades have drawn up to 50,000 marchers and spectators to Vienna’s Historic Ringstrasse – the symbolically-laden site of such political mass convergences as the annual labor day parades held on May 1st’ (Bunzl 2000: 216), whereas in Portugal the parades have never had that many marchers and have been confined to low-visibility sites, such as Jardim do Principe Real and Praça do Município.

The symbolic repertoire of a community is not yet fully present in whatever binds lesbians and gay men together in Portugal. In fact, the ideological integrity that constitutes a community and informs the expression of its symbolic repertoire is non-existent if we consider that the reality of difference manifested by both gays and lesbians and by the members of each group in isolation consistently refuses to construct the appearance of similarity. While it is necessary to unite members in their opposition, this appearance of similarity may be in the process of formation but is not yet close to being totally expressed (for an appraisal of this process, see Meneses 1998). The growing numbers of bars and places of cultural animation one may label ‘gay friendly’ has helped develop a sense of identity, a sense of belonging to a community, but the community, in the precise sense of the notion, simply does not exist as it is not visible to the larger community.

It is a fact that in almost every country in the world there is fervent discussion about sexuality, its regulation and its equality. In Giddens’
There is a global revolution going on in how we think of ourselves and how we form ties and connections with others. But as Gays and Lesbians, we are not just part of a revolution; we are part of a movement for social change.

Furthermore, along the lines of Meneses (2000:954), but not entirely concordant with them, we may consider that Gays and Lesbians in Portugal are not just part of a revolution; they are part of a movement for social change. The discourse of identity is most often constructed through a confirmation of their difference in relation to the rest of society, rather than through a discourse that aims at destroying the difference in the legal text and in social practices.

Concordant with some of the aspects mentioned above is the almost total absence of academic and scientific studies about Gays and Lesbians. The fear of the negative consequences that their research may bring in academic as well as in social terms.

Analysis

Aiming to distance itself from what has been the practice in Portugal, the newspaper DianadaNotícias proposes a news coverage that will put Gays and Lesbians as the main focus. Keeping this principle in mind, the newspaper stresses in the same editorial that a modern and balanced social positioning must be based on the conviction that everyone has the right to live a life free from discrimination and inequality. In particular, the newspaper editorial states:

"Urn posicionar-se socialmente moderno e equilibrado deve situar-se no combate à discriminação e no apoio a todas as medidas capazes de garantir um cidadão pleno e igualitarismo sem nenhuma circunstância, independentemente de suas preferências sexuais." (A modern and balanced social positioning must be based on the conviction that everyone has the right to live a life free from discrimination and inequality.)

Carlos A. M. Gouveia
professional, na política ou ainda no plano mais nobre da solidariedade social.

O DN inicia hoje a publicação de um conjunto de trabalhos que procura levantar o véu sobre esse mundo de contornos ainda difusos que é o poder gay... não nos inibiremos de abordar os pontos menos transparentes de um poder que tente, por vezes, a extravasar as fronteiras de ação admisíveis numa democracia. (my emphasis)

It is rather surprising to find stated as facts what, de facto, is a matter of opinion. What one can read in this editorial are serious accusations that portray a community as putting unwarranted pressure on society and other social and institutional groups so as to favour its interests. There is nothing wrong with the assertions, particularly if one is to find them substantiated in the texts that constitute the news coverage, which in turn is guided by 'the seriousness and rigour that are the trademark of journalism' produced by the newspaper, as stated in the same editorial: 'Fá-lo-emos com a seriedade e o rigor que são a imagem de marca do jornalismo desta casa.' Contrary to expectations, what the readers find in the texts is not a substantiation of the assertions stated in the editorial. Furthermore, these assertions are, in most cases, denied by the people interviewed, mostly politicians and defenders of gay rights, and particularly by the informants of the poll presented by the newspaper on the first day of its report: 'Homosexuals are discriminated against by Portuguese society. According to the results of the DN/Marktest poll, most Portuguese think that gays are not favoured and that they have little power of decision.' ('Os homossexuais são discriminados pela sociedade portuguesa. De acordo com os resultados da sondagem DN/Marktest, a maioria dos portugueses considera que os gays não são favorecidos e têm pouco poder de decisão.').

Transitivity processes

Another important but dubious aspect that deserves attention is related to the decision to make gays into discursive subjects for an entire week. It seems to have been called for by the necessity to portray the gay community as 'an organized force', thus warning society about the dangers they represent. Despite the fact that, as stated in the editorial, 'we have come a long way from the days when the life of a homosexual was confounded with the existence of outcasts in the dark ages' ['estamos já muito longe dos tempos em que a vida de um homossexual se confundia com a existência dos párias da idade das trevas'], the newspaper seems to suggest that the gay community is a dangerous one.

This process is made clear by an analysis of the data from the point of view of the transitivity processes used. For instance, counting only the 20 processes in which the noun gays is used as subject, without any type of modification to the noun, one finds that it is mainly a participant in relational processes, totalling 65 per cent of the occurrences, as shown in Table 10.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Processes</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relational</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Existential</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is rather striking that as discursive subjects, gays are represented in the newspaper mainly as participants in attributable relational processes (Halliday 1994). Considering that 'Strictly speaking, neither of the basic experiential terms, "process" and "participant", is completely appropriate for this category [relational processes]' (Thompson 1996: 86), one may say that gays are not entirely participants in the actions represented in the texts of the newspaper. In fact, they are represented mainly as Carriers of Attributes, as in:

os gays não são favorecidos e têm pouco poder de decisão
(gays are not favoured and have little power of decision)

Tudo parece indicar que os gays têm cada vez mais poder
(It seems that gays have increasingly more power)

As real participants in transitivity processes, gays are mainly Existents in existential processes, or goals in material processes. As one can see from the processes below, exemplifying, respectively, an Existential process and two material ones, gays are affected participants in agentive processes. On the other hand, cases of representation where gays are Actors, exemplified by the last example in this series, are rather rare:

Há gays em todo o sítio
(There are gays everywhere)
João Soares who put gays on our political map

Sei, for instance, de um banco que dava prioridade aos homossexuais

Homosexual adolescents have to fight against discrimination

In the texts under analysis, the representation of gays mainly as participants in relational processes is very important. Indeed, despite them having a role to a greater or lesser degree, in a society that may be regarded as what is called an economy of power, 6 it is rather awkward, though, that, despite most of the interviewees having a significant role in economic terms, there is often little correlation between the attributes given to gays in the texts and the general idea of gay power transmitted by the overall news coverage. In fact, almost all of the attributes contradict the general assumption that gays have power, with only a minority of them confirming that idea. What we find in the texts is that gays are 'not very influential in Portugal' ['não são muito influentes em Portugal'], are 'discriminated against by Portuguese society' ['são discriminados pela sociedade portuguesa'], are 'constantly attacked' ['são constantemente atacados'], have 'little power of decision' ['têm pouca capacidade de decisão'], are 'not a lobby' ['não são lobby'], are 'people who naturally have diverse options, particularly in terms of political choices' ['pessoas que, naturalmente, têm opções diversas, na medida em que escorrem de escolher políticas'], and, if they happen to be politicians, they are 'right wing' ['os políticos gays são de direita']. Transmitting the opposite idea, but highlighted by the newspaper in the headlines, there are only a few attributes such as: gays are 'quite powerful' ['tem muita força'] and are 'well placed in the entrepreneurial world and in political positions' ['estão bem colocadas, no meio empresarial ou em cargos políticos'].

Moreover, the lexical choices associated with the representation in transitivity processes belong to what we may refer to as an abstract domain, not to a material, causative domain. In fact, bearing in mind expressions such as 'political map', 'influential', 'power of decision', 'lobby', 'well placed', 'entrepreneurial world', 'political positions', and so on, we may actually say that gays are not represented as concrete entities, performing concrete activities.

Quotes and projecting verbs

Most of the attributes referred to above are given by the interviewees. Generally speaking, we may say that the interviewees fall mainly into three categories of social actors: politicians, advocates for gay rights and gay people. The entities considered in these three categories seldom speak for themselves (there are no letters to the editor or opinion texts, for example). Most of the time, their discourse is represented by the journalists, whose practice is to submit the discourse to a selection process, to a representation of what was actually said.

The journalistic representation of the social actors' discourse is made by direct quotes or by reports of their 'voices' using what is called, in traditional grammar, direct speech, reported speech and free reported speech. Most of the texts are thus a mediation of the discourses of the social actors integrated in another discourse, that of the journalist.

From a clause point of view, and following Halliday's systemic functional model, what we are dealing with here are cases of projection, the logical-semantic relation in which a clause does not work as a direct representation of the event described in the clause, but rather in which the clause is a way of representing a more general process or situation. Projecting verbs are verbs that have the property of projecting a process or a state. In such cases, the clause does not represent the event described in the clause, but rather a process or a state that is represented in the clause.
representation of non-linguistic experience but as a representation of a linguistic representation. Projection varies according to the characteristics of its discursive function, to the interdependency between clauses and according to the projecting process that motivates it; thus projection may result in a quote, a report or a fact.

The establishment of obvious or oblique frontiers between the discourse that represents/projects and the discourse that is represented/projected, whether we are facing quote cases or report cases, is in itself an important variable for analysing the data (Fairclough 1995: 81); it is even more important when it is looked at in relation to the projecting verbs, as the overall result activates a particular framing that informs the way the represented discourse is interpreted.

As faithful representations of linguistic representations, quotes are abundantly used in the general data under analysis. However, their frequency of use is much lower than that of report cases. This is probably because the report, being a summarizing process, is more open to the transformation of the represented discourses, thus becoming more easily integrated in the discourse and the ideological purposes of the journalists. In that respect it is important to note that the transformation of quotes into reports, when moving from what people say to headlines or leads reporting what people say, is more often than not a transformation of both the spirit and the letter of what was actually said. For instance, in one of the texts, the Mayor of Lisbon (known for being supportive towards gays and lesbians) is quoted as having said that in his team at the City Council there are no gays and lesbians. This is quoted as a confirmation of his sympathy for gays and lesbians and to make the point that this sympathy does not lead him to favour gays (that is, to discriminate positively towards: gays and lesbians).

"Mais do que o BE (Bloco de Esquerda), foi João Soares quem pôs os gays no nosso mapa político", anota Manuel Monteiro. O autarca confirma. Mas acrescenta: 'Na minha equipa da Câmara Municipal, não há gays nem lésbicas'.

('More than BE (Left Coalition Party), it was João Soares who put gays on our political map', notes Manuel Monteiro. The Mayor confirms. But he adds: 'In my team on the City Council there are neither gays nor lesbians.')

It is interesting to note how these projections, which constitute the last paragraph of the text in question, give readers a different reading from that of the paragraph beneath the title of the text:
I, 242 Gays and Lesbians as Discursive Subjects

In fact, the title provides a general attribute to gays that stands in a closer relation to the relational processes that synthesize the entire theme of the news coverage, 'gays have power', nominalized in the young group 'gay power'.

The particular projecting verb used, 'acusa' ('accuses'), is again very important. It helps the construction of gays as dangerous entities from whose positions and methods of lobbying even the Left Coalition, a traditional defender of gay rights, is trying to distance itself.

The implication of the title and the text is: what can one expect then from gays when even the Left Coalition is trying to distance itself from them?

The use of this headline led to an extra text in this news coverage as the coalition party in question wrote a letter to the newspaper protesting against the title saying:

'It is wrong. None of the leaders of the Left Coalition has ever made this absurd generalization.'

Collocates and noun groups

There is a representation of gays as reactionaries homologous to their representation as a powerful and dangerous group. Not counting function and non-content words, the most recurrent collocates for the word 'gay(s)' in the entire set of texts are power, community and lobby. These collocates function as Thing in noun groups where gay is a Classifier, as we can see in Table 10.2.

Table 10.2: Most recurrent collocates for the word 'gay(s)'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noun Group</th>
<th>Occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gay power</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gay community</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gay lobby</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(podergay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(comunidadegay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(lobbygay)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10.2 shows the occurrence of gay power, gay lobby and gay community in the text. The use of the noun groups helps construct the idea of an organized force present in Portuguese society. The construction of that 'organized force' as dangerous is a matter of the ideational devices used to represent it: namely, transitivity processes and modifications in the noun groups 'gay power', 'gay lobby' and 'gay community'. In the case of the noun group 'gay power' (repeated throughout the news coverage as its general title), it is construed as a Carrier in relational processes such as 'still has no face' ['continuasemrosto'] and 'is still a shadowy world' ['eum mundodecontornosaindadifusos'], and as an Actor in the material abstract process 'conditions political behaviours' ['condicionaoscomportamentospoliticos']. In the case of the noun 'gay lobby', pie-modified at least in one instance by the Epithet 'powerful' ['poderosolobbygay'], it is construed as Existent in existential processes, as a Carrier in a relational process such as 'is well organized' ['estábenorganizado'] and as a post-modifier in the noun group 'prisoner of the gay lobby' ['prisioneirodolobbygay'], which is itself an attribute of a negative relational process of which the Left Coalition is the Carrier.

Concerning the noun group 'gay community', it is a Carrier in the nominalized relational processes 'this freedom of movements manifested by the gay community' ['estaliberdadedemovimentosmanifestada pelacomunidadegay'] and 'the functioning of the gay community as an organized force' ['ofuncionarnentodacomunidadegaycomoforçaorganizada']; it is used as a post-modifier in the noun groups 'the major obstacle of the gay community' ['omaiorobstáculodacomunidade gay'] and as an Existent, or post-modifier, in noun groups that are Existents in existential processes.

What is disclosed through this analysis is not at all favourable to gays. In fact, besides the idea of a community that it helps to construct, classified as an organized force with certain freedom of movement that is unacceptable, these occurrences, when seen together, make it clear that the newspaper's readers are not only in the right, but the newspaper itself is more pernicious than it appears to be.

Opportunity and gender

In Portugal, power is a male domain, revealed not only in the high number of cases of domestic violence and sexual harassment towards women, but particularly in the low number of women that have access to decision-making posts. For instance, in 1999 in the European Union, Portugal was one of the countries with the lowest percentage of women elected to its national Parliament, 17.4% (40 out of 230), and with the lowest percentage of women elected to the European Parliament, 7.2% of women (60 out of 207), and in 1999 in the European Union, it was one of the countries with the lowest percentage of women in decision-making posts, 25% of women (50 out of 200), and in the same year, only 6.9% of the seats in the Consultative Assembly of Local and Regional Authorities were held by women. The situation of gender inequality in Portugal is a matter of the ideological and political processes that are shaping the social reality in the country, and the role of the media in this context is significant. The coverage in this text of the traditional processes that shape the social reality in Portugal is a matter of the ideological and political processes that are shaping the social reality in the country, and the role of the media in this context is significant.
the 64 government members (ministers and secretaries of state) and only 2 (15.4 per cent) out of the 13 members of the Constitutional Court were women (Canço and de Castro 2000: 95–100).

What these numbers reveal is that in Portuguese society, men, including gay men, have access to opportunities in ways that are not available to women, and the newspaper reflects this social stratification and discrimination in these specific news articles. For instance, the majority of the interviewees that fall into the social category of gay people are really gay men. In fact, lesbians are a social category that hardly appears in the entire news coverage.

After analysing the occurrences of the word ‘lesbian(s)’ in the texts, either as nouns or as adjectives, we come to the conclusion that the word occurs only 22 times while the word ‘gay(s)’ occurs 197 times. Furthermore, seven of the occurrences of the word lesbian happen to be adjectives associated with the adjective gay in complex noun groups, such as ‘gay and lesbian film festival’ or ‘gay and lesbian bookshop’, which are standard designations which the newspaper has to comply with.

In 11 of the remaining uses of the word, ‘lesbian(s)’ stands in relation either to ‘gay(s)’ (6 occurrences) or to ‘homosexual(s)’ (5 occurrences), in each case forming a copulative noun group that represents women and men separately. The noun group ‘homosexuals and lesbians’, though, is a problem as it represents women and men differently, with the concept of homosexuality being applied only to men.

Of the remaining four uses, two of them refer to concrete examples, but they are not expressive, as they refer to the French tennis player Amélie Mauresmo, who publicly announced her homosexual orientation, and to the activist movement Delas, a lesbian movement in Brazil. What we can extract from all these numbers is that only two instances of the word are used to actually represent differences between the women and men. One is in relation to the social situation in Spain, of which it is said that ‘the change in mentalities [concerning gay men] does not seem to cover lesbians who continue to say they still are being discriminated against’ [A mudança de mentalidades parece não abranger as lésbicas, que continuam a dizer-se discriminadas]. The other is the quotation of a Portuguese politician who says that ‘there is more tolerance in society towards male homosexuality than towards lesbians’ [Há mais tolerância da sociedade em relação à homossexualidade masculina do que quanto às lésbicas].

The representation of different systems of opportunity in relation to gays and lesbians does not seem to be important for the newspaper. It is as if whatever is said about gays is also true about lesbians. But that social construction is not exclusive to the reporters, considering the fact that even the way gay men talk about homosexuality is male-specific and male-oriented, as it is marked by the masculine grammatical gender, despite the fact that in certain circumstances a neutral meaning could have been worded as in the following example, already quoted, produced by a gay rights activist:

O medo social é o que faz com que as pessoas não se queiram assumir, porque sentem que vão ser prejudicadas, se a sua orientação for conhecida. (my emphasis)

(Social fear is what prevents people from coming out, because they feel they will be discriminated against, if their sexual orientation becomes known.)

The absence of any explicit references to lesbians as agents of power, at the same level as gay men, ultimately mirrors the systems of gender and opportunity that are at play in Portuguese society. In fact, the use of the noun ‘gays’ as a way to signify both gay men and lesbians is discordant with the use of ‘Man’ [Homem], for instance, to refer to both men and women, a use that is generalized in Portuguese society.

Gay males as effeminate beings

Texts in the last day of the news coverage are all about the presence of gays and lesbians in the arts. The first page opens with a lead covering the entire page of texts as follows: ‘whereas in cinema, theatre, music, literature or in fashion, there is greater openness in relation to homosexuality’ (“Nas artes, seja no cinema, teatro, música, literatura ou moda, existe uma maior abertura em relação à homossexualidade”). This lead is used to introduce the texts but it serves another purpose: that is, to justify the newspaper’s incursion into the culture and fashion industries. Instead of actually questioning the stereotyped assumption that equates gays and lesbians with the field of the arts in general, the newspaper chooses to perpetuate that stereotype by providing readers with a reading position that validates the stereotype. Despite gays being ‘in all places’, as said by an interviewee, who is an activist for gay rights, the newspaper chooses to focus their readers’ attention on the arts, culture and fashion industries.

Moreover, in these pages composing the last of the sequence, the newspaper also validates the social construction of gay males as effeminate beings. That construction was already present in the words of two politicians quoted in a previous edition of the newspaper:
Gays and Lesbians as Discursive Subjects

Ospederastassãotiposmaclos,suaves,cornsensibilidadeetendncia
erIstica.Eternurndiálogocarrollasmuiheres.
(=Pedersastsaresuave,gentle,sensitiveguyswithanartistictendency.
Andtheyengageineasy-goingconversationwithwomen.)

Conheçohomossexuaisquesecomportamdeformamuitodigna.
Masalgunsdosqueassumemessaorientaçbosexualfazem-no,por
vezes,deformamuitodigna.(=Iknowmanyhomosexualswhobehaveinaverydignifiedway.
Butsomewhopenlyadmitthatsexualorientationsometimesdoitin
rathershowywaythatendsupbeingharmfultotheimageofthe)

Whatthenewspaperchoosesdotoisfollowthetrendand
makeitextendbytheperpetuatingthissocialconstructioninitsrep
resentation.of.gaysintheartsandfashionindustries.Usingarelational
processotentransmittheideaof'thestufftheyaremadeofiswell
known',thatis,'thethreadssowingtogetherthepersonalitiesofthose
whoeffectart,arewellknown'('sãopordemaisconhecidasaslinhascorn
sestaspersonalidadesdaquelesquetemnemissão
tocriar,apresentar
venderosdiversosartigosdemoda'),oneparticularjournalistendsup
byassociatingwithagayorientationthefollowingprofession:
fashion designers,topmodels,hairdressers,fashionaccessoriesdesigners,
and
Sources of commercial products

Conclusions

Inotherwords,commercialproductsareassociatedwithafashion
industrysettingofcommercialproducts.e.g.,fashionaccessoriesdesigners
and
intheWest,themainelementsofsexualityhavechangedoverthelast
decades.(=AsGiddens(1999:57)putsit:
Sexualityisforthefirsttimelatent.
noted.toheterosexuality.

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Analyzingthecoveragepotentiallyproducesanelementofself
reflectiveness byassociatingwitha'stufftheyaremadeof',butalso
anexplicitnegativeaspectbyassociatingwithaprofessionlike
fashiondesigners.

Althoughthesetrendsaremoreobviousintheindustrialized
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The fear the newspaper wants its readers to experience focuses on the existence of a so-called gay lobby. Once again, it represents a case of discrimination in the long history of discrimination against gays and lesbians, intended to: (a) prevent gays and lesbians from ‘coming out’ and from defending their rights; and (b) maintain the traditional view of male homosexuals as effeminate beings and, as such, fitting into only certain jobs and activities in social life, such as culture and the fashion industries.

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Notes

1 This is still true and plays an important part in the legal text. As Santos and Fontes (2003: 176) point out, Portuguese law, against European recommendations, not only ‘forgot’ to criminalize discrimination based on sexual orientation, but has also tolerated, up till now, some legal regulations indirectly but effectively punishing the homosexual citizen which may still be active. These include, for instance, specific regulations that prevent their access to a military career or that prevent them from being blood donors.

2 The use of the definite article (even if between brackets) in the expression ‘The Gay Power’ is kept from the original expression in Portuguese, where, in this context, and contrary to the English language, its usage is optional. The fact that the editor chose to use it is thus meaningful, as it contributes to emphasizing and discursively establishing in the minds of its readers the power the newspaper refers to.

3 For these statistics, I am only considering cases such as ‘gays earn wages above the average’ [‘Os gays recebem ordenados acima da média’], leaving out cases where gays is not the head of the noun group as in ‘Gay consumers travel more and choose more expensive destinations’ [‘Os consumidores gays viajam mais e escolhem destinos mais caros’]. The overall analysis is not restricted to this data, though, which serves here only as an example.

4 Critical linguists such as Roger Fowler, Bob Hodge, Gunther Kress and Tony Trew (1979) have been particularly concerned with nominalization as an effect of the deletions of participants in processes of obscuring agency. But, as stressed by Potter (1996: 182), while nominalization is a technique for categorizing actions and processes that allows the speaker or writer to avoid endorsing a particular story about responsibility, other techniques ‘build an impression of agency’. That is the case of the so-called ‘intention-promoting’ verbs. In the data under analysis, the headline ‘State promotes “gay” tourism’ [‘Estado promove turismo “gay”’], on the front page of the first day of news has an example of an ‘intention-promoting’ verb. The story concerns the production of a leaflet entitled Lisbon Friendly’, produced by the City Council under a protocol with a Gay and Lesbian Association, and distributed internationally by governmental agencies. While it is strictly true that the action being reported is a promoting, marketing one, the title implies something bigger, that is, that the government/the state is in fact promoting a bill in Parliament concerning gay tourism (tourism for Portuguese gays).

5 I am well aware that in English the expression ‘gay power’ is paradigmatic with such expressions as ‘black power’, carrying with it meanings that go far beyond the ones involved in a restricted sense of the expression. One has to bear in mind, though, that the meanings associated with such expressions have never been fully activated in the Portuguese language, namely the meanings of emancipation or of access to full rights. Portugal only became a democracy in 1974, and before that time there was tough censorship and a total absence of freedom. Before the 1974 revolution, and against the opinion of the rest of the world, namely the UN, Portugal still had colonies (which only gained independence in 1975), for instance, and women (up till the end of the 1960s) were not allowed to travel, open a bank account or run a business without the consent of their husbands or fathers (see Mónica 1996: 218–19). It is not entirely certain that the meaning of ‘emancipation’, for instance, is associated in Portuguese with the expression “gay power” by most of the newspaper’s readers. In fact, the reading of the expression as a nominalization of an attributive relational process seems not only more adequate at the light of this clarification but also when considering the manipulation of meaning uncovered by the remaining analysis of the data.

6 Notice for this matter, that the question most of the interviewees were asked to answer was ‘Is there a gay lobby/power?’, as if the main concern was to get to know whether gays have or do not have power in Portuguese society. This also shows that the interpretation of ‘gay power’ as a nominalization of the relational attributive process ‘gays have power’, discussed above and referred to in the previous endnote, seems correct.

7 Four years before, in 1995, these same figures were as follows: national Parliament: 12.2 per cent (28 out of 230); European Parliament: 8 per cent (2 out of 25); Government members: 10.3 per cent (6 out of 58); Constitutional Court: 15.4 per cent (2 out of 13) (Canço and Joaquim 1995: 123–5).

8 The use of the generic ‘he/man’ in English, of course, has been well documented by feminists (for example, Spender 1985).

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