

## INVESTIGATING PRESCRIPTIONS OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR IN POWER-CONSOLIDATION NATIONAL ANTHEMS

---

ANDERSON ALVES DE SOUZA\*

---

### ABSTRACT

National anthems are deeply intertwined with struggles for state power and play important socio-political roles within modern nation-states (HOBSBAWM, 1989, 1992; SMITH, 1991). The main objective of this paper is to carry out a genre analysis of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior found in the generic structure of 18 power-consolidation national anthems under the perspective of Hasan's genre theory (1989, 1996). The analysis has revealed that the main semantic attributes of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior are 'demand' and 'reference to service of the class positive behavior'. The analysis has also shown that the authors of the national anthems use a wide range of lexicogrammatical resources to realize the commands found in the prescribed behaviors.

KEYWORDS: National Anthems. Genre. Transitivity. Appraisal Analysis.

---

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The discourse of nationalist social practices has drawn the attention of many researchers over the last decades (ANDERSON, 1991; FAIRCLOUGH, 1989, 1992, 2003; HOBSBAWM, 1983, 1989, 1992; SMITH, 1987, 1991, 1998; WODAK et al., 1999; WODAK et al., 2015). For the past two hundred years, national symbols have played important roles in the socio-political realm of life within modern nation-

---

\* Professor associado na Universidade Federal da Paraíba (UFPB) no Departamento de Letras Estrangeiras Modernas (DLEM), João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brasil. Mestre e Doutor em Letras Inglês pela Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina (UFSC), Florianópolis, Santa Catarina, Brasil. E-mail: andersondesouza@netscape.net.

states such as political and sport events, popular protests, and official public ceremonies (HOBSBAWM, 1989, 1992; SMITH, 1991). National symbols have also been deliberately used by governments to foster in citizens feelings of patriotism and identification with their nations. According to Hobsbawm (1989, p. 107), “of all such symbols, perhaps the most powerful were music, in its political forms of the national anthems and the military march [...] and above all the national flag”.

Although to many people the concept of national identification may seem a natural phenomenon, historically speaking it is actually a rather recent one. Hobsbawm (1983, 1992) explains that its origin is related to a period in the beginning of the nineteenth century when nation-states, as we know them today, did not even exist. The concept of national identification appeared in the political scene when struggles for state power assumed new forms due to the modernization of the means of production, the social and political ideas of the French and American Revolutions, and the interplay of conflicting ideologies such as liberalism, democracy, socialism and nationalism.

Struggles for political power and its maintenance have always been an issue of vital importance for governments and their ruling classes. For this reason, Fairclough (1989, p. 68) argues that

Those who hold power at a particular moment have to constantly reassert their power, and those who do not hold power are always liable to make a bid for power. This is true whether one is talking at the level of the particular situation, or in terms of a social institution, or in terms of a whole society; power at all these levels is won, exercised, sustained, and lost in the course of social struggle.

Despite the fact that all national anthems basically serve the same purpose, i.e. instill a sentiment of patriotic loyalty and pride in people, not all national anthems are alike and neither do they promote patriotism in the same way. National anthems are deeply affected by a nation’s social, historical, political, and cultural circumstances surrounding their production. Thus, drawing on Fairclough’s (1989) ideas on power struggle in discourse and Hobsbawm’s (1982, 1983, 1989, 1992) explanations about the political context involving the creation of national symbols, in SOUZA (2008) I suggest that national anthems can be classified into two main types: power-consolidation and power-

bidding. Accordingly, the term “power consolidation” refers to those national anthems that are produced by some political organizations or parties after having achieved state power in order to strengthen their position and governing system in the period following their conquering of power (e.g. Namibia’s *Land of the brave* and Nigeria’s *Arise, O compatriots*). The term “power-bidding” on the other hand was chosen to reflect the power-bidding function of those anthems that are created by some groups in the process of their attempting to achieve state power (e.g. France’s *La Marseillaise* and Italy’s *Inno di Mameli*). Because of their revolutionary appeal, some authors refer to them as revolutionary anthems (Cf. EYCK, 1995).

The main objective of this study is to present a systemic functional investigation of the structural element Prescription of Positive Behavior found in the generic structure of 18 power-consolidation national anthems written in English. Prescriptions of Positive Behavior are commands exhorting citizens to behave in ways that are considered appropriate for construing identification with the nationalist ideology of a nation’s dominant group and for the maintenance of its political *status quo*, such as loving, respecting and defending one’s nation. Some examples of exhortations to Positive Behavior found in the data are:

- (1) (Saint Lucia: F)<sup>1</sup>  
*Love, oh, love your island home.*
- (2) (Dominica: U)  
*Toil with hearts and hands and voices.*
- (3) (The Bahamas: D)  
*Pledge to excel through love and unity.*
- (4) (Antigua and Barbuda: H)  
*Dwell in love and unity.*
- (5) (Dominica: T)  
*Do the right, be firm, be fair.*

The decision to focus on this specific structural element is based on the fact that it has proved to be the only obligatory element found in the generic structure of power consolidation national anthems (SOUZA, 2008). More specifically, the research aims at providing a description of the main semantic attributes (HASAN 1989, 1996) that constitute the element Prescription of Positive Behavior. Hasan (1989, p. 67) states that identifying the semantic attributes that realize a structural element is an essential step to ensure that its realizational criteria not be established on an intuitive basis. Besides Hasan's theory on genre description, the analysis also draws upon Martin and White's (2005) work on appraisal, and Halliday and Matthiessen's (2004) concepts of transitivity and mood.

The study is organized as follows. First, the article presents a brief overview of the historical context involving the creation of nationalist symbols and practices. Next, it provides a description of the methodology and the analytical framework used in the analysis. Then, the study presents the results and discussion of the analysis. Finally, the research concludes with the author's final remarks.

## 2. BRIEF POLITICAL AND HISTORICAL CONTEXTS SURROUNDING THE INVENTION OF NATIONAL SYMBOLS

Until the end of the nineteenth century, the main form of political organization present in the majority of the world's western countries was the dynastic realm comprised of absolutistic monarchic states and empires (HOBSBAWM, 1989, 1992; Smith, 1991). These dynastic realms derived their legitimacy from the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings, which postulated that the monarch "ruled by virtue of God's authority; therefore he should be obeyed in all things" (SPARKS; ISAACS, 2004, p. 69). The status of ordinary men and women in the dynastic realm then was that of subjects, not citizens, and their duty towards their rulers was supposed to be shown through "obedience and tranquility, not loyalty or zeal" (HOBSBAWM, 1992, p. 75).

According to Hobsbawm (1992), there were four elements that contributed to make humans beings, who were accustomed to the reality of living in small groups, form what he calls the "proto-national" bonds

of identification to the larger and more abstract concept of the nation. These four elements were: language, ethnicity, religion, and historical consciousness. It is important to mention though that, for the author, these elements by themselves are not enough to make a group of people develop a sense of national belonging. These elements were, above of all, part of the discourse of governments and nationalists to justify and present their claims of national identity to people when they began to demand popular participation in politics.

The participation of ordinary people in political matters started to take place after the French Revolution when the modernization of states and the beginning of the democratization of politics forced governments to deal with two major kinds of political problems for ruling the masses of people. The first was the technical administrative issue of organizing and communicating with every citizen living within a state's territory, thus requiring the "construction of a machine of administration and agency, composed of a very numerous body of agents, and which automatically raised the question of the written or even the spoken language or languages of communication within the state" (HOBSBAWM, 1992, p. 82). The second and most delicate problem was guaranteeing citizens' loyalty to and identification with states and their ruling elites since governments could no longer count on "ancient ways – mainly religious – of ensuring subordination, obedience and loyalty" (HOBSBAWM, 1989, p. 105). In other words, the democratization of politics and the modernization of states forced governments to take into account their citizens' opinions. In addition, governments started to need greater participation from their citizens both as taxpayers and as conscript soldiers for wars. Thus, it became imperative for the ruling classes of every country to develop new ways of mobilizing citizens in their favor due to the fact that new political ideologies, such as democracy and socialism, had begun to attract the loyalty of an immense new class of factory workers brought about by the Industrial Revolution. This was the moment when national symbols and traditions appeared in the political scene, which Hobsbawm (1989, p. 105) describes as "the moment when governments, intellectuals and businessmen discovered the political significance of irrationality". He explains that

Political life thus found itself increasingly ritualized and filled with symbols and publicity appeals, both overt and subliminal. As the ancient ways - mainly religious - of ensuring subordination, obedience and loyalty were eroded, the now patent need for something to replace them was met by the *invention* of tradition, using both old and tried evokers of emotion such as crown and military glory and, [...], new ones such as empire and colonial conquest (HOBSBAWM, 1989, p. 105) (italics in the original).

The reason why national symbols became so important to governments is also explained by Smith (1991, p. 77), who suggests that

national symbols, customs and ceremonies are the most potent and durable aspects of nationalism. They embody its basic concepts, making them visible and distinct for every member, communicating the tenets of an abstract ideology in palpable, concrete terms that evoke instant emotional responses from all strata of the community.

Hobsbawm (1989, p. 105) also states that the strategic political role that national symbols began to have in the socialization of patriotic feelings in entire populations led states and governments to conduct “a silent war for the control of the symbols and rites of belonging to the human race within their frontiers [...]” The use of national symbols by governments and other nationalist movements became more widespread with the invention of new technologies such as the press, the cinema, and the radio. Hobsbawm (1992, p. 142) argues that “by these means popular ideologies could be both standardized, homogenized and transformed, as well as, obviously, exploited for the purposes of deliberate propaganda by private interests and states”.

The appeal to patriotic loyalty and national symbols, thus, gained strength when the European liberal bourgeoisie was confronted by popular democratic demands, and when the still young concept of the nation-state came under threat by socialist ideals and other unofficial nationalist movements seeking independence from larger states.

The first national anthem of the world is believed to be England’s *God save the King*. Its author and composer are unknown. Its first public performance happened on September 28, 1745, when Thomas Arne, the

music director of the Drury Lane Theater, arranged for a performance of the British anthem in support of King George II, whose reign had come under threat by Charles Edward Stuart. The practice of playing the anthem then quickly spread to other theaters throughout London. It was also played in the presence of the Monarch on special occasions (EYCK, 1995).

Another well-known national anthem is France's *La Marseillaise*, which was written and composed in one night by Claude-Joseph Rouget de Lisle on April 23, 1792. *La Marseillaise* became an important rallying cry during the French revolutionary period and was soon adopted by several revolutionary movements throughout Europe (REED; BRISTOW, 1997).

The history of nationalism continued throughout the twentieth century and is still a present phenomenon in our so called "globalized" world. The influence of the nationalist ideology and the power of its symbolism quickly spread from Europe to other continents and helped to produce the establishment of the majority of the nations which compose the current world political map.

The main purpose of this section was to try and present some of the key factors involving the complex social, economic, and political changes that led to the creation of national symbols. I have tried to explain that the invention and massive use of national symbols by governments and other non-official movements started to take place in a period of great social and political tension as the long and dynamic process of struggles for political and state power in the European continent acquired new meanings and shapes due to the conflicting interplay of distinct social agents, classes, and ideologies.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 DATA SELECTION AND COLLECTION

The texts selected for this research are 18 power consolidation national anthems from English speaking countries. The texts were collected from the book *National anthems of the world* edited by Reed

and Bristow (2002). The research focuses on national anthems from 18 English speaking countries from three parts of the world, namely, (1) The Caribbean (Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and The Bahamas), (2) Africa (Ghana, Mauritius, Namibia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Uganda), and (3) South America (Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago). The anthems were selected based on three criteria. The first criterion was the decision to focus on texts which were actually produced with the purpose of becoming national anthems; that is, the anthems selected for this study fit under the “power consolidation” category mentioned earlier. The second criterion narrowed the research to countries that have one national anthem written in English only. This criterion was adopted because some countries, whose official national languages is not English only, may use one anthem written in English and one in other officially recognized native language(s). Sometimes the anthem written in English is a translation of a text which was originally written in one of the official languages (e.g. the English version of the Canadian anthem is a translation from the original French text). The third criterion concerns the decision to focus on national anthems from English speaking countries that do not enjoy a major political and/or economic influence in the world scenario. The rationale for this criterion is that the national anthems of countries such as the United States, England and Australia have already been much investigated.

### 3.2 DATA ANALYSIS METHOD

The first step of the analysis consisted of inspecting and comparing the texts of the eighteen national anthems in order to look for linguistic similarities which could indicate a structural element with a given functional role. Next, the texts were divided into units capable of realizing the identified structural elements according to their perceived textual boundaries and functional roles. Based on Hasan (1989, p. 67), I would like to point out that although there is “no neat one-to-one correspondence” between a structural element and a specific linguistic unit, the clause is seen within SFL as the basic unit of analysis capable of realizing a generic element.<sup>2</sup> Thus, example (5), (*Do the right, be*



*firm, be fair*), extracted from Dominica's national anthem (line T), is posited to contain three Prescriptions of Positive of Behavior. The third step consisted of identifying the semantic attributes of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior.

#### 4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The main analytical framework used in this study consists of three complementary theoretical constructs that have been developed within systemic functional linguistics over the last few decades, namely genre (HASAN, 1989, 1996), appraisal (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005), and transitivity (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2004). Common to all of them is the systemic functional premise that a language is a structured network of interrelated sign systems, i.e. a semiotic potential, used by speakers in specific social contexts to construe and exchange meanings through a process of choosing. The object for this study of language that derives from a systemic functional perspective, then, is that of language used in authentic and complete communicative events – that is, language as a type of text, either oral or written, produced by people in specific social contexts.

SFL's social-semiotic approach to language makes it an adequate tool for investigating the texts of the national anthems selected for this study in that it allows the investigation of the linguistic meanings construed in the anthems as resulting from a "meaning making process" (HASAN, 1989) that is inextricably intertwined with the political context where they were created.

##### 4.1 TRANSITIVITY

Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) refer to events, actions and phenomena that "go on" in the world around us and within our own consciousness as the *processes* that make up our experience of reality, and the part of grammar that allows us to encode a picture of our experiences into wording they call it the *transitivity system*.

According to the authors (2004, p. 175), a figure consists of three elements, namely the process itself, the participants involved in

the process, and any attendant circumstances. The process is typically realized by a verbal group; the participants are realized by nominal groups; and the circumstance (if there is one) by an adverbial group or prepositional phrase. The system of transitivity encompasses four main types of processes: material, mental, relational, and verbal.

Material processes are used to represent external events which indicate some kind of action, of doing, and are usually realized in the national anthems by verbs such as *arise, raise, advance, serve, build, work, march, defend, gather, live, come, and go*. Mental processes, on the other hand, construe figures of emotion, perception, cognition, and desideration and are typically realized in the data by processes such as *love, cherish, find, see, and gaze*. Verbal processes, in turn, are related to manifestations of symbolic meaning exchanges. Verbal processes are usually realized in the data by verbs such as *pledge, exalt, declare, extol, sing, and praise*. Finally, relational clauses construe figures that set up a relationship of “being” between two separate entities (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2004). Martin and Rose (2003, p. 76) explain that “Figures of ‘being’ are used most commonly to ascribe qualities to people and things, to classify them as one thing or another, to name their parts, or to identify them”. Relational clauses are usually realized in the anthems by processes such as *be, have, stand, stand for, possess, and belong*.

## 4.2 APPRAISAL

Martin and White’s (2005) appraisal theory is a framework developed within SFL for systematizing and investigating the construal of evaluative meanings in texts. The key sub-systems of the appraisal system are attitude, graduation and engagement. Attitude refers to interpersonal lexicogrammatical resources speakers use to express their feelings, to judge people’s character and behavior, and to evaluate the worth of things; graduation focuses on resources used to amplify attitudinal meanings; and engagement concerns how authorial and non-authorial voices may be incorporated in their discourses (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005). Although these three sub-systems constitute important interpersonal resources utilized in the texts of the national anthems

investigated in this study, the focus of the analysis is on the sub-system of attitude only.

The system of attitude is concerned with lexicogrammatical resources speakers utilize for expressing positive and negative feelings involved in the construal and negotiation of interpersonal meanings in three semantic domains: affect, judgement, and appreciation. Judgement refers to how speakers evaluate people in terms of their character and social behavior in relation to culturally established sets of moral, legal, and communal norms. Values of affect deal with the construal of feelings in relation to one's emotional states, dispositions, and/or responses to some emotional trigger. And appreciations are interpersonal resources used for expressing positive and negative evaluations of objects, texts, entities, processes, and natural phenomena (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005).

Martin and White (2005) explain that there are two realizational modes whereby attitudinal meanings may be expressed in texts, to wit, directly (i.e. inscribed) and implicitly (i.e. evoked/provoked). Direct evaluative meanings are realized through some kind of evaluative lexis, especially adjectives. Implicit expressions of attitude, on the other hand, are typically realized through the use of lexical metaphors, non-core vocabulary items, and via the selection of ideational meanings. Some explicit occurrences of positive judgement values found in the data include the following items: *strong, strength, might, healthy, stalwarts, wisdom, bold, boldly, brave, bravery, courage, devotion, faith, firm, loyal, loyalty, strict, valiant, zeal, true, truth, honesty, justice, fair, united, and free.*

#### 4.3 HASAN'S GENRE THEORY

According to Hasan (1989, p. 53), one of the most outstanding attributes of any text, be it written or spoken, is its unity of structure, which broadly speaking is defined in terms of its generic identity. At the heart of Hasan's concept of genre is the systemic functional premise that "there exists a close relationship between text and context" (HASAN, 1989, p. 68). Thus, drawing on Halliday's theoretical constructs of field, tenor, and mode, Hasan (1989, p. 55-

56) proposes the related concept of Contextual Configuration (CC). For the author, a specific grouping of field, tenor, and mode values constitutes a CC which, in turn, “can be used for making certain kinds of predictions about text structure”. She lists the predictions about a text’s structure as follows:

1. **What** elements **must** occur;
2. **What** elements **can** occur;
3. **Where** **must** they occur;
4. **Where** **can** they occur;
5. **How often** can they occur (HASAN, 1989, p. 56, bold and numbering in the original).

The author encapsulates these predictions in the notions of obligatory and optional elements, as well as their sequence and the possibility of iteration. The obligatory elements are the elements that must appear in the schematic structure of a text in order for it to be considered complete; for this reason, “the obligatory elements define the genre to which a text belongs”(HASAN, 1989, p. 62). The notion of optionality, on the other hand, refers to an element “that **can** occur but is not obliged to occur” (bold in the original). The concept of sequence, as the name suggests, implies the order in which the elements can occur. And, finally, iteration refers to elements which may occur several times during the unfolding of a social process.

In what regards the difficult task of identifying the boundaries of a genre’s structural elements, Hasan argues that it is important to establish the criteria “for deciding what part of a text realizes which element” so that the GSP of a genre be not established on an intuitive basis. However, determining the boundaries of generic elements, the author (1989, p. 67) explains, is a rather complex issue given the fact that “no neat one-to-one correspondence exists between a structural element and a clause or sentence”.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, she suggests that the criteria for characterizing the realization of generic elements are “best given in terms of the semantic categories, rather than the lexicogrammatical ones, since (1) the range of meanings have variant realization; and (2)

the more delicate choices within the general area is not a matter of generic ambience” (HASAN, 1989, p. 113).

To illustrate the fact that a given structural element does not entail one specific lexicogrammatical realization, she offers as example the following possible realizations for the element Sales Request, whose semantic properties have been identified by the author as consisting of ‘demand + reference to goods + quantity of goods’:

1. Can I have a bunch of celery?
2. I’d like two Yellowstone peaches.
3. 500 grams of tomatoes and a lettuce, please.
4. I want a really good melon for this evening. (HASAN, 1989, p. 103, numbering in the original)

As the examples above show, each of the four realizations encodes the three-item semantic configuration necessary for ordering some quantity of commodity of the class “perishable food” at a grocery store (HASAN, 1989, p. 103).

The concept of semantic attribute is further developed by Hasan (1996) where she focuses on the element Placement of the nursery tale genre. In this articles, Hasan proposes a distinction between nuclear and elaborative semantic attributes. Nuclear attributes refer to the main properties – i.e. “the semantic nucleus” – that are essential for the realization of a structural element. Elaborative attributes, on the other hand, refer to additional meanings that are not necessary for the realization of a generic element, and for this reason she suggests that they are optional. For example, Hasan argues that the realization of the element Placement in the nursery tale genre requires the following semantic attributes: Nuclear: character particularization, impersonalization and temporal distance; Elaborative: meanings of attribution and habitude.

The next section presents the analysis and discussion concerning the characterization of the nuclear attributes of the generic element Prescription of Positive Behavior present in the texts of the national anthems selected for this study.

## 5. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF THE GENERIC ELEMENT PRESCRIBING POSITIVE BEHAVIOR

As mentioned earlier, Prescription of Positive Behavior (or Prescribing Positive Behavior) is the generic element in which citizens are exhorted to behave in ways that are considered appropriate for the construal of identification with the nationalist ideology of a nation's dominant group and for the maintenance of its political *status quo*. The inspiration to name this element Prescription of Positive Behavior comes from its function within the text of a national anthem and from the following quotation by Hobsbawm (1983, p. 1-2) in which he describes the reason why he refers to nationalist symbols and practices as invented traditions.

“Invented tradition” is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.

The analysis has revealed that the nuclear semantic attributes that realize the generic element Prescribing Positive Behavior are “demand” and “reference to service of the class positive behavior”. Each of these semantic attributes is now explained in details.

The terms “demand” and “service” are used here as defined by Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 107). Demand refers to the interact whereby a speaker requests something from his/her interlocutor. In the authors' framework, this “something” can be goods, services or information. Goods are objects in general (e.g. *the book* in *Give me that book*); services are typically actions (e.g. *Open the door*); and information is a “linguistic commodity” such as a question or a statement (e.g. *What day is it today? It is Friday*). Reference to goods and information do not appear in Prescriptions of Positive Behavior; only services do. It is important to note, though, that although Halliday and Matthiessen's use of the term “service” seems to refer to material actions only, it actually applies to other types of experiential events.

For this reason, in the texts of the national anthems investigated in the present study, the semantic attribute “service” refers not only to

a material way of behaving, as shown in example (5) extracted from Dominica’s anthem, (*Do the right* (line T)), but also to a mental act of consciousness or emotion (e.g. *Love, oh, love your island home* (Saint Lucia: F)), a verbal action (e.g. *High we exalt thee, realm of the free* (Sierra Leone: A)), or a relational event construing a quality or an identity (e.g. *be firm, be fair* (Dominica: T)). It is to this broader interpretation of the concept “service” that my term “behavior” essentially refers to. In other words, by “service of the class positive behavior” I mean an experientially recognizable type of “going-on” (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, 2004), especially a material, relational, mental, or verbal one.<sup>3</sup> Although the present research is essentially qualitative, I would like to point out in passing that the analysis has revealed a preference for material processes (56%), followed by 20% of relational processes, and 14% and 10% of mental and verbal processes, respectively.

The semantic attribute “positive” in the expression “Prescribing Positive Behavior”, on the other hand, expresses the fact that the prescribed behaviors usually convey inscribed and/or implicit positive evaluations of affect, judgement, and/or appreciation when they are considered in terms of their interpersonal dimension of attitudinal meanings (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005). For example, the following prescribed behavior, *Love, oh, love your island home*, extracted from Saint Lucia’s national anthem, is a demand for service which people in most Western cultures – and not only the citizens of Saint Lucia – would consider as conveying positive affective and judgemental values in what regards the nationalist belief that one should love his/her nation. Due to scope constraints, however, it is not possible to present here a detailed analysis of the attitudinal meanings encoded in the investigated texts. I would like to mention though that the majority of the attitudinal meanings found in the national anthems belong to the domain of judgement. This result indicates that the texts of the national anthems try to construe an interpersonal relationship with their audience grounded on positive judgements related with moral values, character, and normative behavior.

In terms of clause mood, the analysis has revealed that the most frequent realization of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior is expressed through an imperative material clause. The use of commands explicitly addressed to citizens represents the most direct, or congruent,

expression of the prescriptive purpose of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior. These commands construe the character of the *dramatis persona* of the participant who utters them as a military leader while at the same time assign to citizens the role of commanded addressees; for example:

- (6) (Antigua and Barbuda: J-K)  
*Answer now to duty's call/ To the service of thy country.*
- (7) (Saint Lucia: H)  
*Love the land that gave us birth.*
- (8) (Dominica: S)  
*Strive for honour, sons and daughters.*
- (9) (The Bahamas: G)  
*Lift up your head to the rising sun, Bahamaland.*
- (10) (Ghana: W-X)  
*Arise, arise, O sons of Ghanaland, /  
And under God march on for evermore!*

The second most frequent realization of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior occurs through declarative clauses, which, following Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 627), are interpreted in this study as modulated realizations of the semantic attribute “demand”. In this type of realization, the authors of the national anthems usually construe the context of the speech situation of the prescribed positive behavior as an inclusive discursive event, — inclusive that is of the *dramatis persona* of the participant who utters the modulated command and the citizens. The inclusiveness of this type of context is indicated through the speech role category of *speaker + listener* (Halliday and Matthiessen (2004, p. 325), which is typically realized via what Halliday and Hasan (1976, p. 49) refer to as the “mixed” inclusive personal pronouns *we* and *our*. For example:

- (11) (The Gambia: A-B)  
*For The Gambia, our Homeland, / We strive and work and pray*
- (12) (Namibia: K-L-M.)  
*Namibia, our country, / Namibia, motherland, / We love thee.*



- (13) (Uganda: F-G)  
*Oh Uganda! the land of freedom. / Our love and labour we give, (...)*
- (14) (Namibia: E to H)  
*We give our love and loyalty / Together in unity, (...)*
- (15) (Mauritius: E to H)  
 Around theewegather / As one people, / As one nation, / In peace,  
 justice and liberty.

The third most common type of realization of the semantic attribute “demand”, using declarative clauses with the inclusive Subject *we* found in the data, involves verbal processes (especially the verbs *pledge*, *promise*, and *vow*) construing the speech situation of the Prescription of Positive Behavior as a solemn oath or pledge of allegiance. The following examples illustrate this pattern.

- (16) (Trinidad and Tobago: D)  
*This our native land, we pledge our lives to thee.*
- (17) (The Gambia: I to L)  
*We pledge our firm allegiance,  
 Our promise we renew;  
 Keep us, great God of nations,  
 To The Gambia ever true.*
- (18) (Grenada: A-B-C-D)  
*Hail! Grenada, land of ours, / We pledge ourselves to thee,  
 Heads, hearts and hands in unity / To reach our destiny.*
- (19) (Sierra Leone: W-X)  
*We pledge our devotion, our strength and our might,  
 Thy cause to defend and to stand for thy right;*
- (20) (St. Vincent and the Grenadines: A-B-C-D)  
*Saint Vincent! (...) we pledge to thee / Our loyalty and love, ...  
 and vow / To keep you ever free.*

(21) (Ghana: J to P)

*To thee we make our solemn vow:*

*Steadfast to build together / A nation strong in Unity;(…)*

*To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.*

The analysis revealed that Prescriptions of Positive Behaviors construed as formal promises or pledges may also occur without an explicit performative verbal process. In these cases, the promises are realized via a declarative clause with Subject *we* plus the modal *will* (cf. HALLIDAY, 1989, p. 25);for example:

(22) (Saint Kitts and Nevis: K-L)

*With wisdom and truth / We will serve and honour thee.*

(23) (Guyana: M-N)

*Dear land of Guyana, to you will we give,*

*Our homage, our service, each day that we live; …*

(24) (Uganda: C-D-E)

*United, free, / For liberty / Together we'll always stand.*

Another type of modulated realization of the element Prescription of Positive Behavior found in the data include declarative clauses expressing “wish”. These are typically realized via the modal operator *may*, as shown in the illustrations below. Please note that where the modal operator has been left out, it has been represented by the symbol [Ø].

(25) (Grenada: G-H)

May we with faith and courage / *Aspire, build, advance*

(26) (Saint Lucia: O-P)

May our people live united, / *Strong in soul and strong in arm!*

(27) (Sierra Leone: O)

*So may we serve thee ever alone,(…)*

(28) Sierra Leone: K)

[Ø: may] Ever we seek to honour thy name,(...)

((29) Saint Lucia: Q-R)

Justice, Truth and Charity, / [Ø: may] Our ideals forever be!

(30) (Saint Kitts and Nevis: F to H)

[Ø: may] Saint Kitts and Nevis be / A Nation bound together / With  
a common destiny.

Another linguistic strategy used to realize the prescribed behaviors occurs through the use of petitions to God – e.g. Jamaica’s anthem, line J, [Ø: God] *Teach us true respect for all*. This kind of imperative clause is referred to by Halliday (1994, p. 87) as the “optative” sub-type, as opposed to the “jussive” sub-type used in congruent commands. The reason for considering the “petition-to-God” mode of realization of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior as modulated commands addressed to citizens is based on Halliday and Matthiessen’s (2004, p. 147) explanation on the notion of modulations of commands realized as statements that “regularly implicate a third person”. According to the authors,

they [modulated commands] are statements of obligation ... made by the speaker in respect of others, for example *John’s supposed to know that, Mary will help*. In this case they function as propositions, since to the person addressed they convey information rather than goods-and-services. But they do not thereby lose their rhetorical force: if Mary is listening, she can now hardly refuse (HALLIDAY; MATTHIESSEN, p. 147, italics in the original).

Thus, drawing on Halliday and Matthiessen, I argue that a prescribed behavior realized as a petition to God “does not thereby lose its rhetorical force”; in other words, it is still a command of positive behavior addressed to citizens. The presence of such petitions in the national anthems texts seems to confirm Hobsbawm’s suggestion that religion constitutes a means for construing national bonding and identification (1992, p. 68). Other examples of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior recontextualized as petitions to God found in the data include the following:

(31) (Jamaica: J-K-L)

[Ø: God] Stir response to duty's call,

[Ø: God] Strengthen us the weak to cherish,

(32) (Ghana: E-F-G-H)

[Ø: God] Fill our hearts with true humility,

[Ø: God] Make us cherish fearless honesty,

[Ø: God] *And help us to resist oppressors' rule/ With all our will  
and might evermore.*

The use of religious language in the national anthems investigated in this study is not restricted to the realization of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior. Some national anthems present in their texts an element reminiscent of religious services, which I have named "Benediction". According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica (1998), a benediction (from Latin *bene*, well, + *dicere*, to speak) is a short invocation for divine assistance and blessing and is usually employed at the end of worship service. For the purposes of this research, though, Benediction is an optional generic element and refers to invocation(s) for divine assistance and blessing on behalf of nations and citizens. It may occur at initial, medial, as well as final position in the anthems analyzed.

The most common expression of the element Benediction found in the data is typically realized via a third person imperative clause of the sub-type optative, in which the process is material – usually *bless* – with God represented in the role of Actor and nations and/or citizens represented in the role of Goal. The following instantiations illustrate this pattern.

(33) (Grenada: J)

God bless our nation.

(34) Ghana: A)

God bless our homeland Ghana.

(35) (Jamaica: A)

Eternal Father bless our land,

- (36) (St. Lucia: M)  
 May the good Lord bless our island,
- (37) (Trinidad and Tobago: F)  
 (...) And may God bless our nation.
- (38) (St. Vincent and the Grenadines: H)  
 (...) And[Ø: may] God bless (...) us.
- (39) (Mauritius: I-J)  
 Beloved country, may God bless thee/ For ever and ever.
- (40) (Uganda: A)  
 Oh Uganda! May God uphold thee,

I would like to point out that although the element Benediction may to some extent resemble the petition-to-God mode of realization of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior, they are not seen as identical in this study. The main difference between them is that interpersonally speaking a Benediction concerns a “service” that is addressed to God; in other words, it is “up to God” to carry out the service in the Benediction – e.g. blessing a land or sending rain. The petition-to-God mode of realization of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior, on the other hand, while still being a petition to God, can be interpreted as a “projected” modulated command to citizens. In other words, it is “up to citizens” to perform the service, or behavior, being prescribed. For example, in the prescribed behavior [Ø: God] *Teach us true respect for all*, extracted from the Jamaican anthem, it is up to citizens to have “true respect for all”.

I would like to point out nevertheless that the investigation of the data has led me to conclude that the distinction between the element Benediction and the element Prescribing Positive Behavior realized as a petition to God is not always clear cut. As revealed by the analysis, one of the best criterion for identifying a Prescribed Behavior realized as a petition to God is to look for lexical items and/or ideational tokens which convey evaluations of positive judgement and/or affect (MARTIN; WHITE, 2005). For example, the following

instantiation taken from Antigua and Barbuda’s national anthem (lines U and V) comprises an instance of the element Prescribing Positive Behavior realized as a petition to God, for it includes the (nominalized) judgmental assessments *strength, faith, and loyalty*..

- (41) (Antigua and Barbuda: U-V)  
 We her children do implore Thee,  
 Give us strength, faith, loyalty,(...)

In other words, they are instances of positive prescribed behavior because it is “up to citizens” *to be strong, to be faithful, and to be loyal*.

The examples shown above are found in the third stanza of Antigua and Barbuda’s national anthem. I will reproduce this entire stanza here because it is interesting to notice the transition from Benediction to Prescription of Positive Behavior:

- (42) (Antigua and Barbuda: Q-X)
- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <p>God of nations, let Thy blessings<br/>         Fall upon this land of ours;<br/> <i>Rain and sunshine ever sending,<br/>         Fill her fields with crops and flowers;</i></p> | } | Benedictions  |
| <p>We her children do implore Thee,<br/> <i>Give us strength, faith, loyalty,<br/>         Never failing, all enduring<br/>         To defend her liberty.</i></p>                  | } | Prescriptions of Positive<br>Behavior realized as<br>petitions to God |

Lines Q, R, S, and T, therefore, concern God’s domain; that is, it is “up to God” *to bless the land, to send rain and sunshine over it, and to fill its fields with crops and flowers*. Lines U, V, W, and X, on the hand, concern the domain of citizens’ behavior; it is up to them *to be strong, faithful, loyal, not to fail ever, to endure all, and to defend their country’s liberty*.

## 6. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the main objective of this paper has been to investigate the main semantic attributes that constitute the element

Prescription of Positive Behavior found in the texts of power-consolidation national anthems written in English. As seen in the analysis, the texts of the investigated national anthems make use of a wide range of lexicogrammatical resources to construe the Prescriptions of Positive of Behavior. The following constructed illustrations offer a synoptic paradigm of the most common lexicogrammatical realizations found in the data.

- (43) Serve your nation with dedication.
- (44) Let's serve our nation with dedication.
- (45) May we serve our nation with dedication.
- (46) Dear nation, we will serve thee with dedication.
- (47) Dear nation, to thee we give our service and dedication.
- (48) We vow to serve our nation with dedication.
- (49) We pledge our service and dedication to our nation.
- (50) God, help us serve our nation with dedication.

It is not clear at this stage though what factors motivate the authors of the investigated anthems to favor one choice of realization over the others. Further investigation of more specific social, political and cultural issues would be needed to find out possible reasons that may have led an author for construing a Prescription of Positive of Behavior as a formal pledge of allegiance instead of adopting a religious or military tone. For instance, a nation with a history of war and conflict may serve as inspiration for a prescriptive, military tone, while a nation with a strong religious influence may lead an author to opt for a more spiritual, subliminal tone.

#### INVESTIGANDO PRESCRIÇÕES DE COMPORTAMENTO POSITIVO EM HINOS NACIONAIS DE CONSOLIDAÇÃO DE PODER

##### RESUMO

Assim como outros símbolos nacionais, os hinos nacionais estão profundamente relacionados a lutas por poder no âmbito político das sociedades modernas, exercendo, portanto, importantes papéis sociais e institucionais (HOBBSAWM, 1989, 1992; SMITH, 1991). O objetivo principal da presente pesquisa é realizar uma análise de gênero do elemento estrutural Prescrição de Comportamento

Positivo encontrado na estrutura genérica de 18 hinos nacionais de consolidação de poder escritos em inglês. O principal arcabouço teórico adotado é a teoria de gêneros textuais de Hasan (1989, 1996). A análise revelou que os principais atributos do referido elemento são: “demanda” e “referência a serviço da classe ‘comportamento positivo’”. A análise também revelou que os autores dos hinos nacionais utilizam uma vasta gama de recursos léxico-gramaticais para realizar os comandos expressos nas Prescrições de Comportamento Positivo.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Hinos nacionais, Gênero textual, Transitividade, Avaliatividade.

---

#### INVESTIGANDO PRESCRIPCIONES DEL COMPORTAMIENTO POSITIVO EN HIMNOS NACIONALES DE CONSOLIDACIÓN DEL PODER

##### RESUMEN

Así como otros símbolos nacionales, los himnos están relacionados de manera profunda con las luchas por el poder en el ámbito político de las sociedades modernas, ejerciendo, por lo tanto, importantes roles sociales e institucionales (HOBSBAWM, 1989, 1992; SMITH, 1991). El objetivo principal de esta investigación es realizar un análisis de género del elemento estructural Prescripción del Comportamiento Positivo encontrado en la estructura genérica de 18 himnos nacionales de consolidación del poder escritos en inglés. La principal referencia teórica adoptada es la Teoría de Géneros Textuales de Hasan (1989, 1996). El análisis ha revelado que los principales atributos de tal elemento son “demanda” y “referencia” a servicio de las clases “comportamiento positivo”. El mismo análisis también ha mostrado que los autores de himnos utilizan una gran cantidad de recursos léxico-gramaticales para realizar mandos expresos en las Prescripciones del Comportamiento Positivo.

PALABRAS CLAVE: Himnos nacionales, Género Textual, Transitividad, Evaluación.

---

## 7. NOTAS

- 1 The letter(s) following a country’s name indicates the line(s) in the text of a national anthem from which examples are extracted.



- 2 The lack of correlation between a specific unit of analysis and a given structural element has also been acknowledged by other linguists working with the systemic functional framework (e.g. Martin (1992), Paltridge (1994), and Plum (1988)).
- 3 Please note that the term “behavior” as used here is not related to Halliday’s behavioral process, which is composed of the elements Behavior and Behavior.

## REFERENCES

- ANDERSON, B. *Imagined communities: reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London, New York: Verso, 1991.
- ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANNICA (Ed.). *Benediction*. 1998. Disponível em: <<https://global.britannica.com/topic/benediction>>. Acesso em: 10 mar. 2008.
- EYCK, F. G. *The voice of nations: European national anthems and their authors*. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1995.
- FAIRCLOUGH, N. *Language and power*. London: Longman, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Discourse and social change*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Analysing discourse: text analysis for social research*. London and New York: Routledge, 2003.
- HALLIDAY, M. A. K. Functions of language. In: HALLIDAY M. A. K.; HASAN R. *Language, context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. 2. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. p. 15-28.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An introduction to functional grammar*. 2. ed. London: Edward Arnold, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_.; HASAN, R. *Cohesion in English*. London: Longman, 1976.
- \_\_\_\_\_.; MATTHIESSEN, C. M. I. M. *Introduction to functional grammar*. 3. ed. London: Edward Arnold, 2004.
- HASAN, R. The structure of a text. In: HALLIDAY, M. A. K.; HASAN, R. *Language, context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*. 2. ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989. p. 52-69.
- \_\_\_\_\_. The nursery tale as a genre. In: CLORAN, C.; BUTT, D.; WILLIAMS, G. (Org.). *Ways of saying, ways of meaning*. London: Cassell, 1996. p. 51-72.

HOBBSAWM, E. J. *A Era das Revoluções: Europa 1789-1848*. 4. ed. São Paulo: Paz e Terra, 1982.

\_\_\_\_\_. The invention of tradition. In: HOBBSAWM, E. J.; RANGER, T. (Org.). *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983. p. 1-14.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The age of empire: 1875-1914*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Nations and nationalism since 1780: Programme, myth, reality*. 2. ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

MARTIN, J. R. *English text: system and structure*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_.; ROSE, D. *Working with discourse: meaning beyond the clause*. London and New York: Continuum, 2003.

\_\_\_\_\_.; \_\_\_\_\_. *Genre relations: mapping culture*. London: Equinox, 2005.

\_\_\_\_\_.; WHITE, P. R. *The Language of Evaluation: appraisal in English*. London: Palgrave, 2005.

SOUZA, A. A. de. “*Do the right, be firm, be fair*”: a systemic functional investigation of national anthems written in English. 2008. 199 f. Tese (Doutorado em Letras/ Inglês) – Programa de Pós-Graduação em Letras/ Inglês e Literatura Correspondente, Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, Florianópolis, 2008.

PALTRIDGE, B. Genre analysis and the identification of textual boundaries. *Applied linguistics*, v. 15, n. 3, p. 288-299, 1994.

REED, W.L.; BRISTOW, M. J. *National Anthems of the World*. 10. ed. London: Cassel, 2002.

SMITH, A. D. *The ethnic origins of nations*. Oxford and New York: B. Blackwell, 1987.

\_\_\_\_\_. *National identity*. Nevada: University of Nevada Press, 1991.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Nationalism and modernism*. London: Routledge, 1998.

SPARKS, C.; ISAACS, S. *Political theorists in context*. London and New York: Routledge, 2004.

WODAK, R., CILLIA, R., REISIGL, M.; LIEBHART, K. *The discursive construction of national identity*. Edimburgh: Edimburgh University Press, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_.; BOUKALA, S. (Supra)national identity and language: rethinking national and European migration policies and the linguistic integration of migrants. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, v. 35, p. 253-273, 2015.

---

Submetido em 04 de maio de 2016

Aceito em 6 de junho de 2017

Publicado em 31 de agosto de 2017

---