

# Diachronic Variation across Genres and Disciplines: The Irish Question in the British Parliament in the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century

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## *Abstract*

This article presents the outcomes of a combined qualitative/quantitative analysis of diachronic variation across genres. The subject matter is the naming of the specific historical event that is known as the Easter Rising. The paper illustrates and discusses findings emerging from a comparison of a quantitative study of the Hansard corpus with a qualitative analysis both of newspaper articles published in 1916 and of history books. Focusing on British Parliamentary debates related to the decades 1910-1930, naming strategies connected to the Easter Rising are examined in the Hansard corpus through a corpus-based Discourse Analysis approach. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches show how out of a wide range of naming strategies used both in early 20<sup>th</sup> century newspapers and in Parliament, a single preferred choice emerges only from the late 1960s. This is due to the reductionist work of historians who opted for one easily identifiable label to represent the complexity of the events.

*Keywords:* Easter Rising, MD CADS, Hansard Corpus, historical variation, genre variation.

## **1. Introduction**

Corpus approaches to the analysis of variation can provide an interpretative framework through which to analyse discourses across communicative contexts and genres, all the more so if the focus is on the diachronic evolution of discourses in relation to specific historical events and to different genres and disciplines. A case in point may be the naming of certain historical events which have somehow influenced the way in which that specific event has been perceived, thought of, represented and named.

World War I (WWI) was preceded in Ireland by a major political crisis over Home Rule (i.e. the campaign for the self-government of

Ireland), which led to several debates over the enlistment of Irish people in the British Army during WWI. In 1916, supporters of Irish independence took the opportunity of the war to proclaim an Irish Republic and to defend it in an armed rebellion in Dublin commonly known as the Easter Rising. The rebellion began on Easter Monday 24 April 1916 and lasted six days (Pennel 2012). Within a week, the insurrection had been suppressed and more than 2,000 people were dead or injured. About 3,500 people were taken prisoner by the British, many of whom had played no part in the Rising, and 1,800 of them were sent to internment camps or prisons in Britain (Williams 1966). The leaders of the rebellion were executed. Initially, there was little support from the Irish people for the Easter Rising; however, public opinion later shifted and the executed leaders were hailed as martyrs, while the British reaction to the Rising led to increased popular support for Irish independence, which was obtained in 1921 (McGarry 2016).

Against this background, this article sets out to investigate how the combined use of qualitative and quantitative approaches may help to shed light on the diachronic naming of a historical event. The main research questions underpinning our work are: how is the naming of a historical event diachronically created? Can we use Corpus Linguistics to corroborate the categories created by historians? What wording and what semantic categories are used in parliamentary debates and how are they transferred to public reporting? Who were the most often mentioned figures in the public and parliamentary debates?

In order to answer these questions, this paper will illustrate and discuss findings emerging from a qualitative analysis of newspaper articles and history books from 1916 (Philips 1923; Martins 1967; Nowlan 1969; Nì Dhonnchadha and Dorgan 1991), and compare them to findings emerging from an analysis of the Hansard corpus (Alexander and Davies 2015) containing British Parliamentary debates related to the decades 1910-1930. The Hansard corpus findings were obtained from a Modern Diachronic Corpus Assisted Discourse Studies (MD-CADS) approach, (Partington 2010), and, more generally, a corpus based Discourse Analysis approach (Baker 2006; Partington, Duguid, Taylor 2013).

## **2. Aims and Methodology**

In line with Partington (in Fruttaldo, Cambria 2017), we started

out by embracing the idea that the divide between qualitative and quantitative approaches to language is undergoing “a state of crisis”. This is not to imply that there are no differences between the two, but is rather to argue that researchers have to rely on their intuitions as much as on data. Patterns in the way events are named may emerge from large collections of texts as well as from a single speech or document; both quality and quantity may shed light on how discourses on historical events are created via naming. This happens through a process that diachronically overcomes variation, leading to a one-to-one relation with a single event, a crystallisation that goes hand in hand with the development of the socio-political and ideological framing of the event. For these reasons, we deemed it pivotal to address diachronic variation via a combined approach to the documents we decided to investigate, linking the debates in the British Parliament, the historical records and accounts concerning those events, and their academic interpretation by historians.

Starting from these premises, the first goal of the study is to compare findings emerging from a qualitative analysis of 1916 newspaper articles and history books (Philips 1923; Martins 1967; Nowlan 1969; Ní Dhonnchadha and Dorgan 1991; McGarry 2016), to findings arising from an MD-CADS approach (Partington 2010) of the Hansard corpus (Alexander and Davies 2015). To this aim, we first identified the main social actors (Van Leeuwen 1996) and the most frequent lexical choices (e.g. *great rebellion*, *insurrection*) used to describe the 1916 Rising in the historical records and the history books. Second, we queried the corpus in order to identify, from a quantitative point of view, the naming strategies used in the British Parliament to discuss events in relation to Ireland. Third, once we had identified a range of terms, we looked at their distribution both diachronically, from 1900 to 1930, and across individual speakers. To do this, we exploited the potential of existing annotation, in order to unveil major discourses that were construed in Parliament around Irish independence. The step by step procedure we followed is described in section 4 below.

More specifically, the identified set of lexical items which are relevant to the historic and political events of the time, were investigated through collocation analysis and extensive concordance reading, moving continuously back and forth from corpus analysis to qualitative interpretation of the findings. This combined approach,

and the triangulation of findings with the broader contextualisation of the Irish question, led us to focus on diachronic changes in their usage.

Our second, and broader goal was to explore whether the change in usage can be analysed in terms of the ‘crystallisation’ of the day-to-day naming of events both in parliamentary debate, and in contemporary sources across time and across genres, leading to the conventional and normative narrative of the Easter Rising found in history books, i.e. how the shift from synchronic variation to diachronic crystallisation may influence, and be influenced by, political discourse.

Our final and more general aim is to show how the analysis of a specific event, i.e. Irish independence in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, can benefit from a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to discourse; more specifically we set out to address the issue of whether Corpus Linguistics can be used to corroborate the categories usually used in sources (e.g. contemporary newspapers and history books), leading to new interpretative frameworks, and how the analysis of diachronic variation may help this stance.

### 3. Historical records: looking for points of entry

As we explained in section 2, the first goal of our analysis was to carry out a comparative analysis of the main social actors and the most frequent lexical choices used to describe the 1916 Rising in historical records and in history books on the topic. Through the qualitative reading of the sources, we wanted to see how the event was named when it first broke out, trying to understand what were the ‘steps’ that led to a sort of crystallisation of the naming of what we nowadays refer to as the *Rising*.

Our first step was to look at the contemporary documents, i.e. newspaper articles describing the event. The 1st April–31st December 1916 time-span was chosen to look for newspaper articles via the *Gale Historical Newspapers* archive<sup>1</sup>. Selected articles were

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gale.com/uk/primary-sources/historical-newspapers> [last accessed November 21, 2018]. The newspapers consulted were The Times, The Manchester Guardian, The Daily Mail, The Irish Times, The Aberdeen Daily Journal, The Evening Telegraph and Post, The Derby Daily Telegraph, The Courier and Argus,



read, and terms identifying the event were identified and recorded. Additionally, a quantitative analysis of the recurrence of some words in the naming of the event was carried out among the articles read (a total of 93), which gave the results shown in Table 1. The first point that emerges from the data (both in the article titles and in the body of the text) is that the 1916 events are referred to mainly as *rebellion*, *revolt* or *insurrection*. *Rising* appears in many articles but it does not collocate in the newspapers with *Easter* (see for instance *The Times* 26/04/1916 title “Rebel Irish Rising” or *The Observer* 30/04/1916 “How the Rising Came”). From the qualitative reading of the selected sample of newspaper articles, a trend seems to emerge. Even though there is little consistency in the naming strategy, the identified terms (*rebellion*, *revolt*, and *insurrection*) seem to show a preference for words identifying a violent agency ‘against’ someone.

TABLE 1  
Recurring naming strategies in the newspapers’ titles 1 April-31 December 1916

Word (s)	Number of articles
Irish/Dublin rebellion	39
Irish/Dublin revolt	12
Irish agitation	12
Irish upheaval	10
Irish/Dublin rising	8
Irish revolution	7
Irish uprising	5
Irish mutiny	2

It is also worth noting how frequently many newspapers point at Germany as the ‘instigator’ of the Irish Rebellion and keep on stressing the link between the ongoing war and the rebellion. This finding seems to hint at a possible construal of an ideological discourse on the rebellion aimed at downplaying Irish national motifs, while building up a negative frame through repeated association with the

The Essex County Chronicle, The Dover Express, The Tamworth Herald, The Nottingham Evening Post and The Western Gazette.

war enemy. Figure 1 shows the article “Through German Eyes”, published on 3rd May 1916 in *The Times*, where the semantic link between *Germany*, *Rising* and *Oppressed* is made explicit.

FIGURE 1

“Through German Eyes”, *The Times*, 3 May 1916



Turning now to the treatment of the rebellion in history books, the bibliography on the Easter Rising is huge: the National Library of Ireland lists 974 volumes on the subject (Ronan 2016). It was therefore necessary to make a selection of the texts considered to be the most significant for the scope of our paper. The selection was carried out by choosing a diachronically representative number of texts and perspectives (Turner 1919; Philips 1923; Chesterton 1936; Caulfield 1963; Martins 1967; Nowlan 1969; Ward 1980; Ní Dhonnchadha and Dorgan 1991; McGarry 2016). James Stephens’ *The Insurrection in Dublin* was also taken into account for its peculiar feature of being something in between a historical chronicle and a work of fiction – the book being written from notes the writer (not a combatant)

took while watching the Rising on the streets. The evolution and crystallisation of the term *Rising* can be exemplified by its emergence in the titles of those books published from the 1960s onwards, as shown in Table 2 below. The analysis of the history book sample confirms that the label *Easter Rising* was not common in the years immediately following the revolt but rather came into being from the 1960s on, probably to emphasise the religious association of the term.

TABLE 2  
Emergence of (Easter) Rising in history book titles

<i>Author(s)</i>	<i>Year of publication</i>	<i>Title</i>
James Stephens	1916	The insurrection in Dublin
Edward R. Turner	1919	Ireland and England: In the Past and at Present
W. Alison Philips	1923	The Revolution in Ireland 1906-1923
Gilbert K. Chesterton	1936	The Autobiography of G.K. Chesterton
Max Caulfield	1963	The Easter Rebellion
F.X. Martins	1967	Leaders and Men of the Easter Rising: Dublin 1916
Kevin B. Nowlan	1969	The Making of 1916. Studies in the History of the Rising
Alan J. Ward	1980	The Easter Rising: Revolution and Irish Nationalism
M. Ní Dhonnchadha and T. Dorgan	1991	Revising the Rising
F. McGarry	2016	The Rising. Ireland: Easter 1916

A further search of newspapers and history books was carried out to see how/if the parliamentary discussions were reported on and, if so, who were the ‘actors’ mentioned. For our qualitative analysis, we looked specifically at the impact that the selected ‘actors’ had in

terms of public opinion and debate and then compared this with the parliamentary debates. Table 3 summarises the names of the people mentioned in the articles and history books.

TABLE 3

Most frequently mentioned people in contemporary news articles and in the history books

Christopher Addison	John Dillon	George Ambrose Lloyd, (Baron Lloyd)
Herbert Henry Asquith	Henry Edward Duke	Arthur Basil Markham
Frederick Banbury	Laurence Ginnell	William St John Brodrick, Lord Midleton
Augustine Birrell	Hamar Greenwood	John O'Connor
James Bonar	Lord Halsbury	James O'Grady
William O'Brien	Maurice Healy	John Edward Redmond
Alfred Byrne	Richard Durning Holt	Henry Wilson
Edward Henry Carson	Walter Hume Long	
Hugh Cecil	Robert Threshie Reid, Lord Loreburn	

The qualitative analysis highlighted how the Easter Rising was referred to in newspapers, with some articles explicitly linking the event to the Great War, mentioning German support and consequently downplaying Irish independence motivations. Both newspaper articles and history books mention a wide range of prominent individuals who had a role in the events. It is only with the work carried out by historians that the happenings began to be framed as the *Easter Rising*, a choice that could also be linked to the religious resonance of the phrase, highlighting an important nationalist identity trait.

#### 4. Widening the scope of analysis: findings in the Hansard Corpus

Starting from the findings of the qualitative analysis, we turned to

the exploration of the Hansard Corpus<sup>2</sup>, exploiting its extensive annotation and tagging system. The corpus, developed within the SAMUELS project<sup>3</sup>, contains nearly every speech given in the British Parliament between 1803-2005, comprising 7,545,101 texts, by nearly 40,000 speakers, and adding up to 1.6 billion running words. Each speech contains metadata including information on day of delivery, year, decade, speaker, party affiliation, and house of Parliament. The combination of the metadata categories in the querying system makes it possible to compare the distribution of a given lexical item across selected categories (e.g. diachronic variation) and then to zoom in, examining concordances that meet the desired search criteria. The Hansard corpus also includes semantic tagging, i.e. all words in the corpus have been tagged contextually for their different meanings (Archer, Kytö, Baron, Rayson 2015; Piao *et al.* 2017).

The possibility to carry out semantically-based searches enabled us to search for the semantic area of ‘rebellion’, and to check the frequency of related terms over time. To this end, we looked for the distribution of the lemmas AGITATION, INSURGENCE, INSURRECTION, MUTINY, REBELLION, REVOLUTION, REVOLT, RISING, UPHEAVAL, UPRISING in the decades of the 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s, in order to identify candidate terms used in Parliamentary debate to discuss the 1916 events.

Table 4 shows both the absolute and normalised frequencies (per million words, pMw) of all the identified lemmas both in the whole corpus and in each decade subcorpus. Normalised frequencies in each decade were computed in relation to the total number of running words for each subcorpus.

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<sup>2</sup> Further information on the Hansard Corpus, its compilation, metadata and querying can be accessed from the corpus website: <https://www.hansard-corpus.org> [last accessed November 15, 2018].

<sup>3</sup> Further information on the SAMUELS project (Semantic Annotation and Mark-Up for Enhancing Lexical Searches) and on related sub-projects can be accessed from: <http://www.glasgow.ac.uk/samuels/> [last accessed November 15, 2018].

TABLE 4

Distribution of REVOLT in Hansard 1900s, 1910s, and 1920s

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REBELLION are by far the most frequently used lemmas in the three decades and, therefore, the most likely candidates for closer scrutiny. Nevertheless, AGITATION is used mainly in the decade of the 1900s, when its normalised frequency is higher than in either of the other decades, and it is hardly used in connection to the 1916 Rising. REVOLUTION, on the other hand, was found to refer mainly to the events in Russia in 1917 which overthrew the Tsar's imperial rule. These two lemmas thus seem less likely to be relevant for the investigation of the Irish rebellion. On the other hand, despite its low frequency, UPRISING was identified by the corpus query tools as being significantly frequent in the 1910s considering its overall low frequency in the whole Hansard corpus<sup>4</sup>.

Even though the distribution of occurrences helped us to identify possible candidate terms for further scrutiny, another software tool was necessary to refine the selection further. We compared normalised frequencies of all the lemmas in the 'rebellion' semantic area, in the decades of the 1900s and the 1910s (Table 5) and the 1910s and the 1920s (Table 6). In this way we

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<sup>4</sup> The Hansard corpus tools compare normalised frequencies across selected subcorpora and identify the one where the relative frequency is more meaningful, in this case the decade of the 1910s for the lemma UPRISING.

were able to rank lemmas that were used comparatively more frequently in the 1910s.

TABLE 5  
Comparison between normalised frequencies in 1900s and 1910s

<i>Lemma</i>	<i>Freq. 1910s</i>	<i>Freq. 1900s</i>	<i>pMw 1910s</i>	<i>pMw 1900s</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
REBELLION	1439	406	18.03	6.28	2.87
UPHEAVAL	95	29	1.19	0.45	2.65
INSURRECTION	275	125	3.45	1.93	1.78
REVOLUTION	2052	1003	25.71	15.51	1.66
UPRISING	55	33	0.69	0.51	1.35
REVOLT	341	222	4.27	3.43	1.24
RISING	1849	1652	23.16	25.54	0.91
AGITATION	2144	2469	26.86	38.18	0.70
MUTINY	226	285	2.83	4.41	0.64

The ratio in Table 5 indicates that REBELLION, UPHEAVAL, INSURRECTION and UPRISING are the lemmas that were more frequent in the 1910s compared to the previous decade, thus adding UPHEAVAL and INSURRECTION to the list of possible candidates. The low ratio (0.7) of AGITATION confirms that it is an unlikely candidate. Looking at the results in Table 6 below, we see that UPHEAVAL is relatively infrequent in the 1910s compared to the 1920s, which excludes it from the list of candidate lemmas. INSURRECTION, REBELLION, and UPRISING, on the other hand, are once again identified as relatively prominent in the 1910s, thus confirming them as possible candidates for further analysis.

Taking into account the distribution (Table 4) and the comparisons (Tables 5 and 6), we then decided to investigate four lemmas in more detail, i.e. INSURRECTION, REBELLION, UPRISING, and RISING. The first three were selected because they were the first three lemmas in the comparison with both the preceding and following decades, therefore characterising the 1910s subcorpus. RISING was added to the list even if it was not particularly significant in either comparison because it is the most frequent lemma of the semantic set in the whole Hansard corpus and in the 1910s, having excluded

AGITATION, UPHEAVAL and REVOLUTION for the reasons discussed above.

TABLE 6  
Comparison between normalised frequencies in 1910s and 1920s

<i>Lemma</i>	<i>Freq. 1910s</i>	<i>Freq. 1920s</i>	<i>pMw 1910s</i>	<i>pMw 1920s</i>	<i>Ratio</i>
INSURRECTION	275	65	3.45	0.91	3.80
REBELLION	1439	754	18.03	10.52	1.71
UPRISING	55	34	0.69	0.47	1.45
AGITATION	2144	1369	26.86	19.10	1.41
REVOLUTION	2052	1672	25.71	23.32	1.10
REVOLT	341	282	4.27	3.93	1.09
RISING	1849	1669	23.16	23.28	1.00
MUTINY	226	234	2.83	3.26	0.87
UPHEAVAL	95	116	1.19	1.62	0.74

We decided to further test the validity of our choice of the four candidate lemmas by looking at their distribution in the 1910s. As shown in Table 7, there is a peak in the frequencies for all four lemmas in the year 1916, confirming the validity of our choice.

TABLE 7  
Distribution of pMw frequencies in single years (frequency peaks in bold)

<i>Lemma</i>	<i>1910</i>	<i>1911</i>	<i>1912</i>	<i>1913</i>	<i>1914</i>	<i>1915</i>	<i>1916</i>	<i>1917</i>	<i>1918</i>	<i>1919</i>
REBELLION	2.80	3.08	7.36	8.62	10.48	3.23	<b>89.81</b>	31.22	16.40	13.32
UPRISING	0.37	0.18	1.02	0.53	1.23	0.17	<b>1.81</b>	0.53	0.77	0.39
RISING	24.86	20.44	18.11	17.78	26.52	23.98	<b>41.34</b>	20.64	20.88	21.68
INSURREC- TION	0.37	1.09	0.45	0.43	1.85	0.34	<b>22.81</b>	4.06	3.06	1.17

Having identified the four lemmas that were predominantly used in Hansard in 1916 for the semantic area of ‘rebellion’, we moved on to the identification of the MPs most involved in the discussion,



seeking further confirmation of previous qualitative findings. This was accomplished by looking at the distribution of each lemma across individual speakers rather than diachronically; results can be found in Table 8, which illustrates occurrences in the time-span 1916-1917.

We decided to limit the list to the first 12 MPs according to the combined frequencies of *INSURRECTION*, *REBELLION*, *RISING*, and *UPRISING*. Comparing the results from the analysis of sources in Table 2, we noticed only a limited correspondence between the people identified in each of the two procedures. Some major political actors (Herbert Henry Asquith, Alfred Byrne, Hugh Cecil, John Dillon, Laurence Ginnell, Maurice Healy, John O'Connor) are present in both lists, while many more were identified only in contemporary sources and history books (Christopher Addison, Frederick Banbury, Augustine Birrell, James Bonar, Edward Henry Carson, Hamar Greenwood, Hardinge Giffard [Lord Halsbury], Richard Durning Holt, Walter Hume Long, Robert Reid [Lord Loreburn], George Ambrose Lloyd [Baron Lloyd], William St John Brodrick [Lord Midleton], Arthur Basil Markham, James O'Grady, William O'Brien, John Edward Redmond, Henry Wilson). Most of these were in Parliament, and were often elected in Irish constituencies.

TABLE 8  
Frequencies of the four lemmas by individual speakers in 1916 and 1917

<i>who</i>	<i>INSURRECTION</i>	<i>REBELLION</i>	<i>RISING</i>	<i>UPRISING</i>
Asquith		14	13	
Byrne	3	25	23	
Cecil		18		
Connor	2	14	1	
Dillon	62	49	4	
Duke	3	53	4	
Ginnell	52	10	3	
Healy	1	26	3	2
Lundon	1	23	1	
Lynch		11	19	
O'Connor	2	32		
Tennant		17	5	

There is one person in Table 8 who refers to the events frequently, opting for *rebellion* in almost all cases: Henry Edward Duke, a Conservative politician who was appointed Chief Secretary when the former had to resign after the Easter Rising. Reading extended concordances, his choice of *rebellion* seems motivated by the desire to downplay the political implications of the events and to frame it as a criminal act, as exemplified by the following extracts from a speech delivered on 18 October 1916:

- 1) Men who were the authors of the *rebellion* have been denounced in this House as being guilty of a detestable crime.
- 2) There was an armed *rebellion*. There was a readiness to accept foreign assistance, if it could be had. There was the necessity for the presence in Ireland of divisions of troops. There was the necessity for arrest. It is said that the Government should have declared an amnesty instead of bringing prisoners to trial. Is it realised that in that fighting in Dublin between 500 and 600 innocent law-abiding subjects of the Crown lost their lives, or suffered grave injuries?

Laurence Ginnell and John Dillon, both Irish nationalists at the time of the Rising, are the only ones in our list to opt for *insurrection* as a preferred choice to frame the events. Dillon in particular focuses on the violence suffered by the Irish people in the suppression of the insurrection, as exemplified in the following extracts:

- 3) [...] those people proved to have been absolutely innocent of any participation in or sympathy with the *insurrection* but who were killed in cold blood. (26 July 1916)
- 4) I say deliberately that in the whole of modern history, taking all the circumstances into account, there has been no rebellion or *insurrection* put down with so much blood and so much savagery as the recent *insurrection* in Ireland. (11 May 1916)

Our next step was the identification of collocates used to describe and connotate the events<sup>5</sup>. Given the relatively low frequencies of some lemmas considering the huge size of the Hansard Corpus, we decided to use the whole 1910s subcorpus in order to compute

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<sup>5</sup> Collocates in the Hansard corpus were computed according to the Mutual Information (MI) association measure. Only collocates related to the Easter Rising with an MI value of 3 or above have been included.

collocates of the four chosen lemmas. The resulting collocates are shown in Table 9. REBELLION has the highest number of collocates as it is the most frequent lemma, since RISING is often not used in relation to the Easter Rising.

We grouped collocates into three main sets. The first identifies terms that provide information on the location of the events; collocates include *Dublin*, *Ireland*, and *Irish*, even if at times *Irish* is used to describe people involved in the events. The second set includes time references. *Recent* is the term most frequently used, followed by *1916* and lastly by *Easter*, which is more frequently used for REBELLION than RISING, both in terms of frequency and MI. This seems to confirm that – as in the newspapers – in the Parliamentary debates there was variability in the naming strategy used, and that *Easter Rising* was far from being an established expression at the time. The third set of collocates hint at *how* the event is presented, and contains the terms *armed*, *complicity*, *connection*, *disturbance*, and *outbreak*. The remaining collocates are *popular* and *Sinn Fein*, though they do not fit into the three sets.

TABLE 9  
Frequency of collocates and their MI for the four lemmas in 1910s

	INSURRECTION		REBELLION		RISING		UPRISING	
<i>collocate</i>	<i>freq</i>	<i>MI</i>	<i>freq</i>	<i>MI</i>	<i>freq</i>	<i>MI</i>	<i>freq</i>	<i>MI</i>
1916	3	4.84	25	5.54	5	4.62		
armed	8	7.24	33	6.92	11	6.74		
complicity	7	11.53	21	10.74				
connection	22	5.19	53	4.09	17	3.86		
disturbance			3	3.91	3	5.32		
Dublin	16	6.07	62	5.66	24	5.70	2	5.34
Easter			18	7.13	5	6.69		
Fein			23	7.65			2	8.76
Ireland	24	3.69	111	3.53			5	3.70
Irish			54	3.25				
outbreak			15	4.96				
popular							2	6.86
recent	25	6.63	72	5.79	18	5.19		
Sinn			28	7.28			2	8.11

The emergence of the expression *Easter Rising* out of a variety of phrases, as evidenced by the crystallisation in history book titles, is confirmed by the Hansard corpus data. Table 10, below, shows the frequencies of the phrase *Easter Rising* in the whole Hansard corpus. It is easy to see that the expression enters Parliament in the 1970s, when History books had just begun to introduce the expression in a stable manner.

TABLE 10  
Distribution of *Easter Rising* in Hansard

<i>Hansard</i>	<i>1910s</i>	<i>1920s</i>	<i>1930s</i>	<i>1940s</i>	<i>1950s</i>	<i>1960s</i>	<i>1970s</i>	<i>1980s</i>	<i>1990s</i>	<i>2000s</i>
42	3			2	2	1	18	6	8	1

5. Discussion and conclusion

Our first goal in this study was to compare findings emerging from a qualitative analysis of 1916 newspaper articles and history books with findings arising from the analysis of the Hansard corpus. After carrying out both analyses, we can say that both contribute to a deeper and wider understanding of the Easter Rising across disciplines. More specifically, our comparison of quantitative results for the semantic area of ‘rebellion’ with findings from the qualitative reading of historical records reveals a substantial overlap. While some differences exist – e.g. *revolt* and *revolution* (previously identified) were not selected by the distribution analysis and the comparisons, and *uprising* did not emerge from the qualitative analysis – by and large the investigation of Parliamentary debates confirms that at the time it happened there was considerable diversity in the way the event was referred to.

A second step concerned the identification of the main actors through both approaches. The comparison, this time, provided a certain degree of overlap in the identification of people, but we also found a degree of variation. News reports and historical accounts refer to a wide range of people; when the discussion enters the British Parliament a more limited number of people have a prominent role. At the same time, use of the corpus allowed us to identify aspects

that the qualitative analysis had not highlighted. When we matched the naming strategies with speakers in Parliament, we found out that not all politicians refer to the 1916 events with the same preferred choices. For example, Laurence Ginnell and John Dillon, both Irish nationalists at the time of the Rising, are the only ones in our list who opt for *insurrection* as a term to frame the events.

Another difference that emerged from the comparison arises from the collocation analysis. Based on the qualitative findings, we thought *complicity* and/or *connection* could be references to the role Germany played during the Rising. A careful analysis of concordances revealed that this is not the case; both terms refer to the involvement of individual people or groups in the events. The analysis of collocates, therefore, confirmed some findings, particularly the fact that *Easter Rising* was not the way contemporaries referred to the event, and opened up a link between different naming strategies and party affiliations, but did not confirm repeated references to a German involvement. The combined approach allowed us not only to corroborate findings from either analysis but also to widen the scope of enquiry and to deepen understanding of the phenomenon.

Our second goal was to examine the emergence of the expression *Easter Rising* out of a variety of phrases. Here we managed to trace how, from a wide range of naming options in newspaper reports and earlier historical accounts, a more restricted and consistent set emerged. This suggests that, initially, there was no common interpretation of the events, while the range of strategies revealed by the Hansard corpus hinted at different ideological positionings towards the event. Our hypothesis of a later development of a crystallised phrase *Easter Rising* – due to the reductionist work of historians, who opted for one easily identifiable label to present the complexity of the events – is also confirmed by the Hansard corpus data.

As for our third and broadest goal, the benefits of a combined qualitative and quantitative approach to discourse, we believe we have shown how quantitative findings confirm, deepen and qualify qualitative observations, while informed qualitative observations provide a set of contextually well-grounded hypotheses for corpus investigation. We have shown, in other words, that each approach can benefit from the insights of the other, opening up for both a

wider and deeper understanding of the discourse(s) around a specific topic or event.

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