The Treatment of Armenians. Comparing the official Blue Book by Viscount Brice and the Letters to the Editor of *The Times* on the Armenian Genocide.

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This paper combines corpus linguistics and discourse analysis to answer a specific research question: was the representation of the Armenian genocide in the letters to the editor and in the official parliamentary report *The Treatment of Armenians* (Bryce 1916) used to support war propaganda? Accounts of the systematic massacre of the Armenian residents of the former Ottoman empire initiated on 24th April 1915 by the Turkish army (Alayarian 2018), and that was later considered the first genocide of the 20th century (Dadrian 2003, Battisti 2016, Rafter 2016), reached Western Europe in the autumn of 1915. For years, international humanitarian workers, who were in the area both during and after World War I, and political personalities denounced the massacres in LTE published in major international newspapers (Peltekian 2013; Chabot et al. 2016; Elayyadi 2017; Mamali et al. 2019), making appeals for action to be undertaken and expressing their viewpoints by commenting on the events.

A quantitative and qualitative linguistic analysis will compare a corpus of LTE, published in *The Times* between 1914 and 1918, and the 1916 parliamentary blue book by Viscount James Brice *The Treatment of Armenians*, which is mostly composed of first-hand accounts in letter form. The analysis combines a corpus-driven approach (Tognini-Bonelli 2001) with corpus-assisted discourse analysis (Partington 2014, 2015). The letters were selected from *The Times and Sunday Times* online archive using the search words *Armenia*, *Armenian* and *Armenians*. Keywords and their frequent collocates and clusters will be analysed to compare the linguistic representation of the Armenian Question in the LTE and in the official report.

Both blue books and LTE are tools of active citizenship. From the 17th century onwards, blue books have collected and published diplomatic documents presented to the English parliament, to make them accessible to the public (Hartwig 2014; Tusan 2015). LTE are selected and published, now as well as in the first two decades of the 20th century, according to their relevance for a newspaper’s ideological agenda, with the aim to both keep a specific topic current in the news (Wahl-Jorgensen 2002; Pounds 2005, 2006; Chovanec 2012) and to provide a public space for high-profile readers of newspapers to voice their ideological stance and comment on news topics (Torres da Silva 2012; Cavanagh 2019). The linguistic strategies of LTE and blue books have never been compared.

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