

**Modality in Sustainability Discourse by Harrods and Liberty:
Analysing British Cultural Icons' Discursive Practices**

Oleksandr Kapranov
NLA University College
Norway

Abstract

The article presents and discusses a mixed-method study whose aim is to find out how Harrods and Liberty, two luxury department stores in London (the United Kingdom) that are referred to as British cultural icons (visitbritain.com 2023), use modality that is expressed by modal verbs (e.g., *can*) in their discourse on sustainability. Methodologically, the study is based upon the literature (Aiezza 2015; Bu et al. 2020; Garzone & Catenaccio 2022; Kranich & Bicsar 2012), which argues that modal verbs play a number of important pragmatic roles in corporate discourse. Following the literature, it is hypothesised in the study that modal verbs in sustainability discourses by Harrods and Liberty are employed in a pragmatically similar manner. In order to verify the hypothesis, a corpus of Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses is collected and analysed quantitatively in the computer program AntConc (Anthony 2022) to compute the frequency of the occurrence of modal verbs. Thereafter, the most frequent modal verbs in the corpus are examined qualitatively to establish their pragmatic roles in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses. The findings indicate that these discourses make use of the modal verbs *will* and *can* as boosters that contribute to a positive corporate image-building.

Keywords: *cultural icons, discourse, environmental sustainability, modal verbs.*

1. Introduction

The overarching theme of the present volume “Bridging cultural gaps and adapting to change” (*Cultural Perspectives. Journal for Literary and British Cultural Studies in Romania*, 2023) resonates with a vital issue of change that is often regarded through the lens of global climate change (Steg 2023), which, in turn, is suggestive of the need to raise people’s environmental awareness in order to make human lives and, more generally, civilisation sustainable (Kapranov 2023a). The topic of sustainability, in particular environmental sustainability, has found its way into the world of fashion, luxury brands, exclusive fashion outlets and luxury stores (Di Leo et al. 2023; Wells et al. 2021). Given the critical role that sustainability plays in today’s corporate, political, and societal agenda (Kapranov 2021, 2018a), it seems pertinent to scrutinise how well-known luxury stores in the United Kingdom (the UK) communicate their policies of sustainability to the public at large by linguistic and discursive means (Gjerstad & Fløttum 2023; Nervino 2019). The article introduces a mixed-method study that seeks to analyse how Harrods and Liberty, two well-established and renowned luxury department stores in London (the UK), employ the linguistic means of modality (typically represented by modal verbs, e.g. *may*) in communicating their sustainability discourses to stakeholders and the general public.

Currently, however, there are no scholarly publications that shed light on Harrods’ and Liberty’s sustainability discourses from the vantage point of linguistics and discourse studies. The present investigation aims at providing novel insights into this under-studied topic by means of focusing on modality that is represented by modal verbs as linguistic means involved in sustainability discourse. In particular, the specific aims of the study are to (i) calculate the frequency of the occurrence of the central modal verbs, such as *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *shall*, *should*, *will*, and *would* in Harrods’ and Liberty’s sustainability discourses and (ii) establish the pragmatic roles of the

most frequent modal verbs in them. In line with the specific aims of the study, the following research questions (RQs) are formulated:

RQ 1: What are the frequencies of the occurrence of the central modal verbs in the corpus of Harrods' and Liberty's texts on sustainability discourse?

RQ 2: What are the pragmatic roles of the most frequent modal verbs in the corpus of Harrods' and Liberty's texts on sustainability discourse?

Further, the article is structured as follows. First, I outline the significance of Harrods and Liberty as cultural icons in the UK in section 2. Second, in section 3, I summarise the recent literature on sustainability in corporate discourse. Further, in section 4, I provide the literature review on modality in corporate discourse. Thereafter, in section 5, the present study is introduced and discussed. Finally, the article concludes with the summary of the major findings and their relevance to the studies on British culture and sustainability discourse.

2. Harrods and Liberty as Cultural Icons: Setting the Scene

This article section sets the scene for the present study by means of focusing on Harrods' and Liberty's history and cultural importance. Harrods is routinely referred to as an iconic luxury department store (Jenne 2022), which is "home to over 3000 brands, designer fashion and accessories, luxury beauty, fine jewellery and watches, food, furniture and more" (Harrods 2023). Harrods, on a par with Liberty, is one of the well-known historic and cultural landmarks in London. Figure 1 below illustrates Harrods' premises in London, which have been in the continuous operation since 1905, remaining open to customers even amidst the calamities of the Second World War (Gonzalez-Rodriguez 2020).



Figure 1. Harrods Department Store in London (the photo is taken from <https://www.countryandtownhouse.com/style/the-fabulous-world-of-dior-harrods/>)

Currently, Harrods is reported to be the most popular luxury department store in the UK (Jenne 2022). Moreover, a reputable British blog guidelinstobritain.com argues that

Harrods department store is one of London's most famous and iconic shops. The history of Harrods first starts in 1824, when it was opened as a general merchant's shop for drapes, linens, wickers, and various goods. Since then, it's become one of the most prestigious shops in London with millions of people visiting each year. From exquisite and authentic decorations to

high-quality goods, Harrods department store is definitely a must-see in London. (guidelinestobritain.com 2019)

From the vantage point of British culture and traditions, it is important to note that Harrods is acknowledged for its role of the supplier of goods to the British royal court, in particular to the late Queen Elizabeth II and her spouse Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (Harrods 2023). Moreover, Harrods is evocative of the complex dynamics in the royal family that involved Princess Diana's affair with Dodi Al-Fayed, the son of the former Harrods' owner Mohamed Al-Fayed (Bennett & Rowbottom 1998).

In addition to being a well-established luxury department store, Harrods portrays itself as a socially responsible corporate actor that respects environmental sustainability and implements respective measures and policies (Harrods 2023). Recently, Harrods' discourse on environmental sustainability has started to attract notice by scholars (Sciurpa 2022; Wolny & Hansen 2020).

Just like Harrods, Liberty is considered a cultural icon that has gained prominence owing to its association with fine arts, luxury textiles, and exclusive haute couture milieu (Adburgham 2023; Ashmore 2017). The focus on luxury textiles is evident from Liberty's description of its illustrious past, e.g.

When our adventurous founder Arthur Lasenby Liberty laid plans for a London emporium laden with luxuries and fabrics from distant lands, his dream was to metaphorically dock a ship in the city streets. To this day, a voyage of discovery awaits on the good ship Liberty, with history hidden amongst six floors of cutting-edge design, unexpected edits and beautiful wares from the world's greatest craftspeople. ... Liberty's collection of ornaments, fabric and objets d'art from around the world proved irresistible to a society intoxicated at the time by Japan and the East and Liberty effected social change in interior design and

dress, so much so that the Art Nouveau period in Italy is called 'Liberty Style'. (Liberty 2023)

By means of quoting Oscar Wilde, Liberty describes itself as “the chosen resort of the artistic shopper” (Liberty 2023), which is situated in the Tudor-styled premises in the West End shopping district of Central London. Below, Figure 2 exemplifies Liberty’s department store in London.



Figure 2. Liberty Department Store in London (the photo is taken from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberty_%28department_store%29)

Founded in 1875, Liberty is renowned for showcasing novice (for example, The Cloth Collective) and well-established British and European designers, for instance, Yves Saint Laurent and Vivienne Westwood (Adburgham 2023; Britt 2021; Doherty & Alexander 2015). However, collaborations with the mainstream clothing brands, such as Dr. Martens, are assumed to be equally important to Liberty (Adburgham 2023).

Whilst Liberty is associated, primarily, with haute couture, it also exhibits a fairly recent affinity with the British popular culture. It is manifested by Liberty's collaboration with the British Channel 4 that has resulted in a documentary mini-series "Liberty of London". The mini-series turned out a success with the TV audiences and left its mark on the British TV landscape, thus boosting Liberty's recognisability by the general public in the UK (John 2014).

In an identical manner to Harrods, Liberty strives to portray itself as a socially and ecologically responsible corporate entity. Presently, however, there is no published research that elucidates Liberty's policies related to sustainability. Prior to proceeding to the present study that investigates Harrods' and Liberty's discourse on sustainability, it appears suitable to provide (i) a summary of the recent studies on corporate discourse on sustainability (see section 3 below) and (ii) a literature outline on modality in corporate discourse (see section 4).

3. The Literature on Sustainability in British Corporate Discourse

Corporate discourse, just as other types of discourses, is reflective of the socio-cultural contexts (Lozano & Escrich 2017; Wilson 2013). Therefore, the literature indicates that corporate discourse involves a broad palette of culturally diverse communicative styles and conventions, which, in their turn, echo "the realms of ideology, strategy, language and practice, and is shaped by the relations between power

and knowledge” (Sharp & Richardson 2001: 198). This contention seems to be evocative of the Foucauldian approach to discourse (Heller 2016).

According to Foucault (1990), the concepts of power and power relations in society are one of the central elements in discourse, which, by extension, permeate not only societal, but also cultural, and, amongst others, corporate discourses (Sharp & Richardson 2001) in “a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts and categorisations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices” (Hajer 1995: 44). Following the Foucauldian approach, it is argued that the balance of power, local practices, as well as cognitive and cultural variables are country-specific to an extent that one may speak about, for instance, British corporate discourse as opposed to a broader construal of South Asian corporate discourse (Beck et al. 2010; Kapranov 2017c; Lozano & Escrich 2017; Outa & Kutubi 2021; Rear 2013).

One of the peculiarities of British corporate discourse could be argued to involve a substantial focus on the issues of climate change and environmental sustainability (Kapranov 2015). In particular, British Petroleum (BP), a British fossil fuels corporation, structures its corporate discourse in such a way that it foregrounds BP’s recognition of the importance of environmental agenda as a token of its corporate performance (Kapranov 2016, 2017a). On the macro-discursive level, BP communicates its sustainability discourse to stakeholders, customers, and regulatory bodies by means of metaphoric constructions “Citizen”, “Journey”, and “Renewables” (Kapranov 2017b). In other words, BP structures its sustainability discourse, at least partially, by means of referring to the metaphoric construction, whereby BP is metaphorically linked to a law-abiding citizen, who is concerned with the issue of climate change and wants to replace fossil fuels with renewable energy sources (Kapranov 2017d).

In a similar fashion to BP, The Royal Dutch Shell, which is a British-Dutch fossil fuels corporation, presents its sustainability discourse by resorting to metaphoric constructions “Challenge”, “Battle”, “Journey”, “Money” and “Low Carbon” (Kapranov 2018a:

401). By means of using these metaphors, The Royal Dutch Shell manifests its sustainability discourse as a long battle that needs money, investment, and technological knowhow in order to mitigate the negative consequences of climate change and substitute fossil fuels with low carbon energy sources (Kapranov 2018b).

Likewise, Burns and Cowlshaw (2014) argue that the British corporate aviation industry, which can be considered on a par with BP and The Royal Dutch Shell as one of the major green gas emitters, seeks to employ discursive strategies to mitigate its role as an emitter that exacerbates the already precarious situation with climate change. To offset the negativity, British aviation corporations choose discursive strategies that communicate corporate responsibility and sustainability policies in relation to the issue of climate change. Specifically, it has been established that corporate discourse on sustainability by the major British airlines avails itself of both justifiable and unjustifiable claims associated with the issue of climate change (Burns & Cowlshaw 2014). Markedly, the British airlines set the tonality in their corporate discourse that foregrounds unjustifiable claims, or, in other terminology, "greenwashing". The discursive strategy of "greenwashing" presupposes presenting the corporation's action in an environmentally friendly manner that does not correspond to the actual corporate activities in reality (Kapranov 2018c). This is done in order to portray the corporation in a positive light as an environmentally friendly and ecologically conscious corporate actor (Kapranov 2018c). As far as sustainability discourse by the British aviation industry is concerned, the discursive strategies seem to involve the portrayals of a committed corporation, the corporation as a realistic technological innovator, and the corporation as a low-cost innovator, amongst others (Burns & Cowlshaw 2014).

The literature reports that not only heavy environmental polluters, such as British fossil fuels corporations and aviation industry, strive to create a positive image of environmentally conscious corporations that aim at a carbon-free and sustainable future (Kapranov

2023b). As noted by Livesey and Kearins (2002), The Body Shop appears to be eager to characterise itself as a sustainable and caring cosmetics corporation. The Body Shop's sustainability discourse makes use of the metaphoric construal of a "caring corporation". Put differently, the metaphoric construal of care is utilised by The Body Shop in its sustainability discourse as a manoeuvre to depict the corporation discursively as an actor that cares for the environment and community and promotes sustainable development (Livesey & Kearins 2002). Similarly to the "greenwashing" discursive strategy of the major British aviation corporations, the metaphoric construal of care by The Body Shop seems to involve substantial elements of "greenwashing" that contribute to devising a positive depiction of the corporate image (Livesey & Kearins 2002).

It should be pointed out that it is beyond the scope of the present article to provide an exhaustive outline of the cornucopia of studies on sustainability discourse by British corporate actors. However, it seems pertinent to bear in mind that British corporations employ sustainability as a powerful tool in imparting their positive corporate image to the public at large (Poppi 2018; Turra 2018). It could be summarised that British corporations create an impression that sustainability, environmental and social responsibility, and climate change awareness form an intrinsic part of their corporate image (Burns & Cowlshaw 2014; Kapranov 2016, 2017a, 2018a; Livesey & Kearins 2002; Poppi 2018; Turra 2018).

4. Modality in Corporate Discourse: Literature Review

Modality in discourse is typically expressed by the central modal verbs that convey ability, likelihood, obligation, possibility, and volition (Hyland & Tse 2005; Kapranov 2022b, 2023c; Montero et al. 2007; Sheldon 2011; Skorasińska 2019). In written discourse, modality is considered one of the critical means of imparting the writer's commitment to the proposition and its possibility (Faber 2003; Fairclough 1992; Kapranov 2023b; Phillips & Cushman 2017; Hyland 2018). In corporate discourse, modality is deemed to be involved in a

range of discursive resources that are engaged in building a positive corporate image (Alimehmeti 2017; Goźdź-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020; Yu & Bondi 2019). In this regard, it should be specified that corporate discourse is operationalised as corporate bodies' communication with individuals and other corporate actors (Breeze 2013).

Whilst there is a wealth of studies on modality in language and various types of discourses, research on modality in general and modal verbs in particular in corporate discourse is still scarce (Bu et al. 2020; Garzone & Catenaccio 2022). Moreover, it is possible to argue that quite a few published studies focus exclusively on modal verbs in corporate discourse. Instead, scholars seem to regard modal verbs in corporate discourse alongside other discursive phenomena, which usually involve linguo-pragmatic aspects of corporate image-building strategies, discursive legitimisation of corporate policies, as well as discursive representations of ethical and reputational considerations (Aiezza 2015; Bernard 2021; Bondi 2016; Bu et al. 2020; Garzone & Catenaccio 2022; Goźdź-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020).

As far as modality in corporate discourse is concerned, it is posited that the modal verb *will* is frequently used in presenting corporations in a positive light in order to promote a confident image of the company in the eyes of its stakeholders (Aiezza 2015). Furthermore, *will* is employed in corporate discourse to convey the company's commitment to a certain cause of action that reinforces the company's positive image-building (Bernard 2021; Bondi 2016).

Similarly to the pragmatic uses of *will*, the modal verb *can* is argued to be involved in creating a positive connection between the company and its stakeholders (Goźdź-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020). Specifically, this pragmatic effect is achieved by means of using the verb phrase *we + can*, which facilitates a positive corporate image by maintaining the discursive presence of inclusivity that involves the company, its prospective and current stakeholders, and the public at large (Aiezza 2015; Goźdź-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020). Furthermore,

can in corporate discourse is associated, mostly, with positive constructions (e.g., *the company can*) rather than only with negative ones, for instance, *the company can't* (Tommaso 2021). Notably, both *can* and *will* have been found to be the most frequent modals in sustainability reports produced and distributed online by the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford (Kapranov 2023b). Given that the literature refers to the leading British universities as corporations (Blass 2005), the finding is indicative of the similarities in sustainability discourse by the corporate “Oxbridge”, i.e., Oxford and Cambridge (Kapranov 2023b).

In addition to the frequently used modals *will* and *can*, the literature points to the high frequency of the modal verb *shall*, which is employed rather amply in corporate discourse (Więclawska 2019; Xiao-ting 2022). The pragmatic role of *shall* in corporate discourse is attributed to either legitimisation of the company’s agenda or boosting the company’s positive image (Więclawska 2019; Xiao-ting 2022). Unlike *can*, *shall*, and *will*, the modal verbs *might* and *must* are less frequent (Fuoli 2012). Presumably, the low frequency of the occurrence of *must* and *might* is accounted by corporate strategies of avoiding both (i) direct and unequivocal statements manifested discursively by *must*, as well as (ii) too vague propositions that are conveyed by *might* (Fuoli & Hart 2018). The aforementioned balance between the two extreme poles in corporate communication that seeks to eschew both categoricity (e.g., *must*) and vagueness (e.g., *might*) could be described as a typical feature of British corporate discourse (van Marrewijk 2010).

Whilst there is a substantial body of literature on modal verbs in corporate discourse (Aiezza 2015; Goźdz-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020; Fuoli 2012; Fuoli & Hart 2018; Kapranov 2023b; Więclawska 2019; Xiao-ting 2022), there is no published research that investigates how modals are employed in corporate discourse on sustainability by the iconic British department stores, such as Harrods and Liberty. Further, in section 5, I present a study that sheds light on this fairly under-examined research facet.

5. The Present Study

As mentioned, corporate discourse on sustainability nowadays is embraced by luxury brands, fashion, and prestigious department stores, for instance, Harrods and Liberty. Judging from the literature outlined in the preceding section of the article, corporate actors' discursive behaviour is strategically focused on projecting positive, legitimate, and trustworthy impressions upon stakeholders and the public at large (Alimehmeti 2017; Bernard 2021; Bondi 2016; Breeze 2013; Poppi 2018). In particular, luxury department stores, in our case Harrods and Liberty, construe their positive images by foregrounding aspects of environmental sustainability, corporate social responsibility and paying attention to the issue of climate change. In this regard, the literature (Aiezza 2015; Bu et al. 2020; Garzone & Catenaccio 2022; Kranich & Bicsar 2012) argues that positive imagine-building involves the discursive use of modal verbs, which are thought to play a number of critical pragmatic roles in corporate discourse on sustainability.

Informed by the literature, it is hypothesised in the present study that modal verbs in sustainability discourse by Harrods and Liberty are employed in a pragmatically similar manner. The similarity would be manifested by the comparable, if not identical, frequency of the occurrence of the central modal verbs in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourse. Furthermore, the similarity would be evident from congruous, perhaps indistinguishable, pragmatic roles that the most frequent central modal verbs play in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourse. It should be emphasised that the hypothesis takes into account the literature (Kapranov 2015), which posits that the major British fossil fuels corporations, specifically, BP and The Royal Dutch Shell coordinate their sustainability discourse and employ similar macro-discursive means in their corporate communication concerning sustainable development and the issue of climate change. In addition, the hypothesis factors in the prior studies (Kapranov 2022a, 2023b) that have found that the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford, which could be reasonably treated as substantial

corporate bodies, use indistinguishable discursive representations of sustainability (inclusive of modal verbs) in their sustainability discourses.

Based upon the hypothesis, two RQs are formulated (see the introductory part of the article). In addition to the RQs, the present study involves the following specific research aims: (i) to collect a corpus of Harrods' and Liberty's texts that pertain to sustainability discourse and (ii) to analyse the corpus both quantitatively and qualitatively.

5.1. The Corpus of the Study

The corpus of the study was comprised of Harrods' and Liberty's official statements on sustainability discourse that were accessed and downloaded from the websites www.harrods.com and www.libertylondon.com, respectively. It should be borne in mind that the statements/texts on sustainability were located in the corporate social responsibility (CSR) webpages of Harrods and Liberty. Whereas the items referring to sustainability discourse were located in the CSR sections of both Harrods and Liberty, the structuring of the webpage sections differed between the luxury department stores (see Table 1 in this section of the article, where the sections are given in conjunction with the number of words per section).

The respective texts were downloaded from the official websites in the form of Word files and processed in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0 (IBM 2011) in order to compute the descriptive statistics of the corpus in terms of the number of words. The total number of words in the corpus was 8 544, whereof Harrods' subcorpus was comprised of 5 214 words (mean 869.0, standard deviation 846.8), and Liberty's subcorpus involved 3 330 words in total (mean 666.0, standard deviation 206.6).

Table 1. The Descriptive Statistics of the Corpus

Modality in Sustainability Discourse...

#	Website Sections	Harrods	Liberty
1	Corporate Social Responsibility	501	262
2	Business	1 315	-
3	Ethical Trade	-	690
4	Our Products/Products	2 571	-
5	Environment	-	803
6	Partnerships & Innovations	374	-
7	People	205	761
8	Community	248	814

5.2. Methodology

From the vantage point of methodology, the corpus was analysed quantitatively in the computer software programme AntConc version 4.0.11 (Antony 2022) in order to compute the frequency of the occurrence of the central modal verbs in English, such as *can*, *could*, *may*, *might*, *must*, *shall*, *should*, *will* and *would*. That was carried out in the following manner. Harrods' texts that dealt with sustainability discourse were merged into one Word file and processed in AntConc (Antony 2022) to compute the frequencies of the occurrence of the central modal verbs in absolute values. Then, the same procedure was applied to Liberty's texts that involved sustainability discourse. Once the absolute values of the frequency of the modal verbs were obtained, they were normalised in SPSS (IBM 2011) per 1 000 words. Additionally, the application of AntConc (Antony 2022) yielded the descriptive statistics concerning the central modal verbs as the key words in context (KWIC).

Thereafter, the most frequent modal verbs in the corpus were analysed quantitatively in order to establish their pragmatic roles. That was done in line with the approach to metadiscourse proposed by Hyland (1994). Within the Hylandian metadiscourse, modal verbs (obviously, in conjunction with other discursive means) were assumed to manifest stance as the writer's expression of personal attitudes and assessments of the status of knowledge (Hyland 2005; Hyland & Tse

2005). In concord with Hyland (2018), the modal verbs *could*, *may*, *might*, and *would* were taken to indicate the writer's hedging strategy that was associated with the avoidance of categorical assertions and commitments, whereas *can*, *must*, *shall*, and *will* were considered to be related to boosting. Following Hyland (1994), modal verbs as boosters were thought to reflect conviction, confidence, and the degree of certainty of the proposition (Kapranov 2023d). Further, in subsection 5.3, the results of the quantitative and qualitative examinations are presented and discussed in detail.

5.3. Results and Discussion

The quantitative investigation of the frequency of the occurrence of modal verbs has revealed the findings that are summarised in Table 2. It should be emphasised that due to the difference in the total number of words between the subcorpora of Harrods' and Liberty's texts, the frequency of the occurrence has been normalised per 1 000 words in order to facilitate the comparison of the results.

Table 2. The Frequency of the Occurrence of the Central Modal Verbs in the Corpus per 1 000 Words

#	Modal Verbs	Harrods	Liberty
1	<i>Can</i>	4.5	5.7
2	<i>Could</i>	0.2	0.3
3	<i>May</i>	-	0.3
4	<i>Might</i>	-	-
5	<i>Must</i>	1.0	0.6
6	<i>Shall</i>	-	-
7	<i>Should</i>	0.2	-
8	<i>Will</i>	5.9	1.8
9	<i>Would</i>	0.2	1.2

Judging from the data presented in Table 2, both Harrods and Liberty employ the modal verb *can* in their corporate discourses on sustainability. As evident from the data, Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses are not characterised by the presence of the modal verbs *might* and *shall*. Furthermore, it is seen in Table 2 that the normalised frequencies of the modals *could* and *must* are fairly similar (see Table 2).

The fact that *can* is the most frequent modal verb that is common in both Harrod's and Liberty's sustainability discourses lends support to the prior studies, which indicate that *can* is a frequent discursive feature in corporate discourse (Aiezza 2015; Goźdz-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020; Kapranov 2023b; Tommaso 2021). Let us discuss the use of *can* in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses in more detail.

In Harrods' "Our Products" section of the CSR webpage, in the subsection "Fish and Seafood", the modal verb *can* is employed in order, presumably, to achieve two pragmatic goals. Let us scrutinise the goals based upon excerpt (1) below.

(1) Many people assume that luxury foods have a higher impact on the environment but if you check the Good Fish Guide, caviar, Dover sole, langoustines and oysters – all things on Harrods' fish counter – **can** be green-rated depending on how and where they are caught. By varying the seafood we eat, we **can** take the strain off popular species and add new, sustainable favourites to our diets. (Harrods 2023)

The modal verb *can* in the sentence "Many people assume that..." in the verb phrase "can be green-rated" is utilised by Harrods to create an effect of positive affordance, an availability of products and services that are framed in a positive and environmentally friendly manner (e.g., "green-rated"). Moreover, the positive tonality appears to be reinforced by the use of *can* in the positive construction "can be" as opposed to the negative verb phrase "cannot". This finding is in concord

with the study by Tommaso (2021), who indicates that corporate discourse is replete with positive verb phrases that involve *can* as in *the company can*, which facilitate the creation of a favourable impression upon customers and stakeholders, in contrast to the verb phrase with negation, such as *the company can't*. The present findings support Tommaso's (2021) observations.

Also in (1), the modal verb *can* in the sentence "By varying the seafood..." contributes to setting a positive tonality in Harrods' sustainability discourse by means of establishing a connection of inclusivity between Harrods on the one hand and its customers and stakeholders on the other hand. This pragmatic effect is evident from the use of the inclusive *we* in conjunction with *can*. This finding supports the literature (Goźdź-Roszkowski & Fronczak 2020), which argues that the phrase "*we + can*" constructs the discursive presence of inclusivity that involves the corporation, in our case Harrods, and the customers.

Similarly to Harrods in (1), *can* in excerpt (2) is used in Liberty's sustainability discourse in order to signal positivity associated with Liberty's environmental agenda.

(2) Other new fabrics are made with wood pulp and hemp – all raw materials that regenerate naturally. We source these materials from forests that have a recognised certification to demonstrate they are well managed. Then we turn them into fabrics using environmentally responsible production processes. And when they wear out, they **can** be composted, shrinking their environmental footprint even more. We're also trialling innovative materials that recycle plastic waste like old fishing nets that would otherwise pollute the world's oceans. These include Econyl, a recycled nylon made from post-consumer waste that **can** be reused over and over using a special process. (Liberty 2023)

In an identical manner to (1), e.g., “*can* be green-rated”, the positive tonality in (2) rests with the use of *can* in the construction “can be”. This observation provides further support to Tommaso (2021) concerning the abundant use of positive verb phrases “*can* + *what the company/corporation does*” and “*can* + *what the company/corporation sells*”, which are meant to leave a positive mark on the customers.

In addition to *can*, *will* is another frequent modal verb in both Harrod’s and Liberty’s sustainability discourse. Whilst *will* is less frequent in Liberty’s environmental discourse contrasted with that of Harrods, the pragmatic roles of *will*, nevertheless, seem to share remarkable similarities, as seen in excerpts (3) and (4).

(3) To ensure all products comply with the highest standards and certifications for sourcing, we are developing our Supplier Code of Conduct and Material Sourcing Policy. This **will** outline sourcing requirements for all brands and support our ambitions to increase the number of sustainably sourced products across our Harrods supply chain, as well as celebrate products that uphold strong sustainability and ethical credentials. (Harrods 2023)

(4) Working on the ground in India, these expert organisations are mapping every stage of the supply chain for one of our embroidered Christmas decorations. They’re talking to our supply companies in the UK and India, their network of master craftsmen and the homeworkers themselves to get a better understanding of homeworking conditions. And they **will** propose solutions for any problems they uncover. We’ll use what we learn from this fact-finding mission to make sure we have the right policies and practices in place to protect homeworkers’ rights. (Liberty 2023)

Both (3) and (4) are contextualised within the sections “Ethical Trade” on the respective Harrods’ and Liberty’s websites. In (3) and (4), the modal verb *will* seems to impart Harrods’ and Liberty’s resolution to take a certain cause of action in relation to sustainability, in particular, sustainable and ethical working conditions and practices. Whilst the corporate resolve to undertake action in (3) and (4) alike is co-present with the reference to a future action, the use of *will* as a booster (Hyland 2005) is indicative of the corporations’ confidence and certainty of what they communicate to the public at large and stakeholders. The present findings are evocative of the literature (Więclawska 2019; Xiao-ting 2022), which demonstrates that *will* as a booster is involved in construing the company’s positive image. Furthermore, there are additional data that buttress the literature (Fuoli 2012; Więclawska 2019; Xiao-ting 2022) as far as the pragmatic role of *will* as a booster in Harrods’ and Liberty’s sustainability discourse is concerned. The data, yielded by AntConc (Antony 2022), involve five most frequent instances of *will* as a key word in context (KWIC), as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Modal Verb *Will* as a Key Word in Context (KWIC) in Harrods’ and Liberty’s Sustainability Discourse

#	Harrods	Liberty
1	The policy <i>will</i> be clearly communicated to all	We <i>will</i> continue to the next
2	These targets <i>will</i> be delivered through key projects to improve energy	Mapping where our products are made <i>will</i> enable us to better pinpoint
3	The most important standard <i>will</i> be held to	The proceed <i>will</i> go to support
4	Farming and harvesting practiced <i>will</i> be monitored through the farm surveillance programme	We <i>will</i> keep at the forefront of cultural competence

Modality in Sustainability Discourse...

5	This policy <i>will</i> be reviewed annually	They <i>will</i> propose solutions
---	--	------------------------------------

It follows from Table 3 that whereas *will* in Harrods' sustainability discourse is most frequently manifested as the KWIC *will + be*, Liberty appears to make use of *will* as the KWIC *will + verb*. Notwithstanding the difference in the KWIC structures, *will* is employed both by Harrods and Liberty as a booster, a discursive feature that contributes to positive corporate image-building (see examples in Table 3 and excerpts (3)-(4)).

Boosters in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses come to the fore when we regard the sum of normalised frequencies of *can*, *must*, and *will*, which in the Hylandian (1994, 2005, 2018) model of metadiscourse manifest assertions and commitments. Judging from the summative data, boosting prevails in both Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourse. Notably, however, the summative effect of hedging, which is typically associated with the modal verbs *could*, *may*, *might*, *should*, and *would* (Hyland (1994, 2005, 2018) is epiphenomenal in contrast to boosting in both in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses, as illustrated by Figure 1 below.

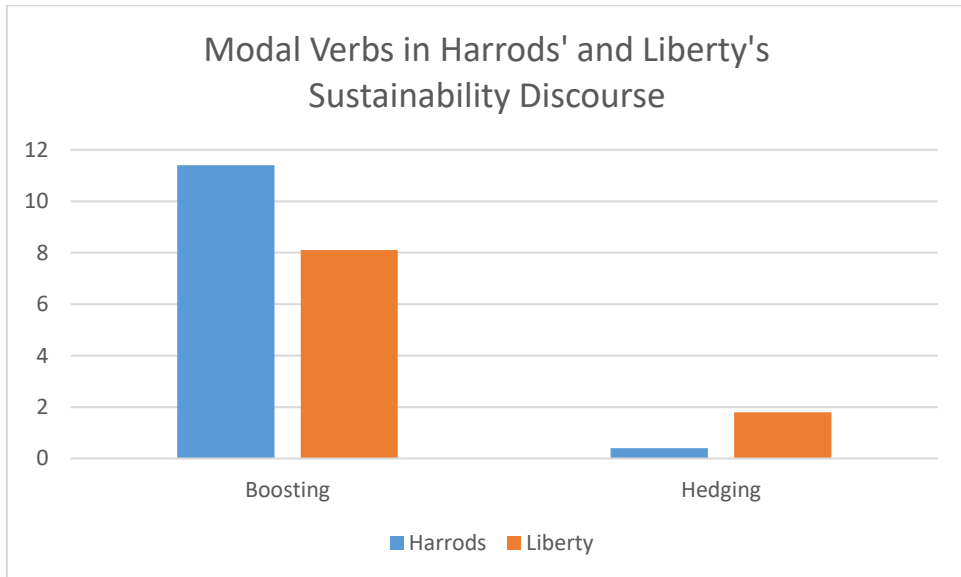


Figure 1. Modal Verbs in Harrods' and Liberty's Sustainability Discourse in Normalised Values per 1 000 Words

In Figure 1, we can discern that the summative frequencies of the modal verbs as boosters are rather high in both Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses. The pervasiveness of the modal verbs as boosters in the corpus points to their pragmatic roles as facilitators of positive corporate image-building. These findings reinforce the literature (Burns & Cowlshaw 2014; Kapranov 2016, 2017a, 2018a; Livesey & Kearins 2002; Poppi 2018; Turra 2018), which provides evidence of the importance of positive corporate image-building to British corporations. Given that both Harrods and Liberty resort to using modal verbs as boosters in order to construct their positive corporate image in the context of sustainability discourse, I argue that the hypothesis in the study seems to be supported. To reiterate, it has been assumed that both Harrods and Liberty employ modal verbs in their sustainability discourses in a pragmatically similar

manner. The data summarised in Figure 1 support the assumption formulated in the hypothesis.

Conclusions

The present study has aimed at casting light on Harrods' and Liberty's discourses on sustainability and the pragmatic roles of modal verbs in them. As known, the issues of environmental sustainability and climate change still continue to be one of the most pressing problems that the humanity is currently dealing with (Kapranov 2021, 2022c, 2023a). The results of this investigation indicate that both Harrods and Liberty, two iconic luxury department stores in the UK, embrace the agenda of sustainability and structure it discursively by means of corporate communication. In their sustainability discourses, both Harrods and Liberty make use of the central modal verbs, which they employ, to a substantial degree, as boosters.

It has been established in the study that *can* and *will* are the most frequently used modal verbs in Harrods' and Liberty's sustainability discourses. As indicated, they use them as boosters in order to facilitate the creation and maintenance of a positive corporate image as far as sustainability, environment, and social responsibility are concerned. In doing so, both Harrods and Liberty behave discursively just like any other major British corporation, which foregrounds corporate confidence, efficiency, and ability to deliver sustainable products and services. These findings indicate that whereas Harrods, known for its rich history and connections with the British monarchy and Liberty, renowned for its artistic and cultural liaisons with the British cultural and popular icons, such as Oscar Wilde, pursue their positive image-building by employing discursive means, such as modal verbs, that share common pragmatic grounds with the major British corporations (for instance, BP) that are distant from the concepts of art, culture, and luxury. The findings in this study could be further developed and contextualised in the research direction of casting light on the so-called

monetisation of culture and art, whereby artistic and luxury objects are appreciated for their monetary values only, just like any other product.

Bibliography

A. Books:

- Adburgham, A. (2023): *Liberty's: A Biography of a Shop*, London: Taylor & Francis.
- Breeze, R. (2013): *Corporate Discourse*, London/New York: Bloomsbury.
- Foucault, M. (1990): *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction*, London: Penguin.
- Garzone, G. E.; Catenaccio, P. (2022): *Ethics in Professional and Corporate Discourse: Linguistic Perspectives* (Vol. 162), Berlin: Frank & Timme.
- Hajer M. (1995): *The Politics of Environmental Discourse: Ecological Modernization and the Policy Process*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Hyland, K. (2018): *Metadiscourse: Exploring Interaction in Writing*, London: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Skoraszińska, M. (2019): *Modal Verbs in Marlowe and Shakespeare: A Semantic-Pragmatic Approach*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

B. Articles and book chapters:

- Aiezza, M. C. (2015): "We may face the risks"..."risks that could adversely affect our face." A corpus-assisted discourse analysis of modality markers in CSR reports", in *Studies in Communication Sciences* 15 no. 1, pp. 68-76.
- Alimehmeti, G. (2017): "CSR reports similarity and self-promotion: A Study with modality markers unveiling the truth of communication", in *University of Vlora—Ismail Qemali. Scientific Bulletin Special issue*, 2017, available at <https://www.univlora.edu.al/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Buletini-Shkencor-2017-Numri-Special.pdf#page=60>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Anthony, L. (2022): AntConc (Windows). [http://www. antlab. sci. waseda.ac.jp/software/README_AntConc3, 2](http://www.antlab.sci.waseda.ac.jp/software/README_AntConc3,2).
- Ashmore, S. (2017): "Liberty and Lifestyle: Shopping for Art and Luxury in Nineteenth Century London", in *Buying for the Home*, pp. 91-108, London: Routledge.
- Beck, A. C.; Campbell, D.; Shrives, P. J. (2010): "Content analysis in environmental reporting research: Enrichment and rehearsal of the

- method in a British–German context”, in *The British Accounting Review*, vol. 42 issue 3, pp. 207-222.
- Bennett, G.; Rowbottom, A. (1998): “Born a lady, died a saint”: The deification of Diana in the press and popular opinion in Britain”, in *Fabula*, vol. 39, issues 3-4, pp. 197-208. <https://doi.org/10.1515/fabl.1998.39.3-4.197>
- Bernard, T. (2021): “Corporate social responsibility in postcolonial contexts: A critical analysis of the representational features of South African corporate social responsibility reports”, in *Critical Discourse Studies*, vol. 18, issue 6, pp. 619-636.
- Blass, E. (2005): “The rise and rise of the corporate university”, in *Journal of European Industrial Training*, vol. 29, issue 1, pp. 58-74. <https://doi.org/10.1108/03090590510576217>
- Bondi, M. (2016): “The future in reports: Prediction, commitment and legitimization in corporate social responsibility”, in *Pragmatics and Society*, vol. 7, issue 1, pp. 57-81.
- Britt, H. (2021): “The Cloth Collective: Investigating Textiles, Garments and Creative Processes, 1983-1987”, in *The Association of Dress Historians Annual New Research in Dress History Conference: A Weeklong “Festival” of Dress History*, 7-13 June 2021, available at <https://radar.gsa.ac.uk/7635/2/7-13-June-2021-ADH-Conference-Programme.pdf>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Bu, H.; Connor-Linton, J.; Wang, L. (2020): “Linguistic variation in the discourse of corporate annual reports: A multi-dimensional analysis”, in *Discourse Studies*, vol. 22, issue 6, pp. 647-677.
- Burns, P. M.; Cowlshaw, C. (2014): “Climate change discourses: How UK airlines communicate their case to the public”, in *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, vol. 22, issue 5, pp. 750-767.
- Cultural Perspectives. Journal for Literary and British Cultural Studies in Romania* (2023): Instructions for Authors. <http://cpjournal.ub.ro/instructions-for-authors/>.
- Di Leo, A.; Sfodera, F.; Cucari, N.; Mattia, G.; Dezi, L. (2023): “Sustainability reporting practices: an explorative analysis of luxury fashion brands”, in *Management Decision*, vol. 61, issue 5, pp. 1274-1297. <https://doi.org/10.1108/MD-02-2022-0142>.
- Doherty, A. M.; Alexander, N. (2015): “Liberty in Paris: International retailing, 1889–1932”, in *Business History*, vol. 57, issue 4, pp. 485-511. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00076791.2014.927865>

- Faber, B. (2003): "Creating rhetorical stability in corporate university discourse: Discourse technologies and change", in *Written Communication*, vol. 20, issue 4, pp. 391-425.
- Fairclough, N. (1992): "Discourse and text: Linguistic and intertextual analysis within discourse analysis", in *Discourse & Society*, vol. 3, issue 2, pp. 193-217.
- Fuoli, M. (2012): "Assessing social responsibility: A quantitative analysis of Appraisal in BP's and IKEA's social reports", in *Discourse and Communication*, vol. 6, issue 1, pp. 55-81. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1750481311427788>
- Fuoli, M.; Hart, C. (2018): "Trust-building strategies in corporate discourse: An experimental study", in *Discourse & Society*, vol. 29, issue 5, pp. 514-552.
- Gjerstad, Ø.; Fløttum, K. (2023): "Negation and Climate Change in French Blog Posts", in *Negatives and Meaning: Social Setting and Pragmatic Effects*, edited by M. Roitman, pp. 27-42, Stockholm: Stockholm University Press.
- Gonsalez-Rodriguez, A. (2020): "Harrods closes for the first time in 170 years", available at <https://fashionunited.uk/news/retail/harrods-closes-for-the-first-time-in-170-years/2020032348100>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Goźdź-Roszkowski, S.; Fronczak, K. (2020): "You don't have time to think up there. If you think you're dead" - A corpus-assisted study of discursive strategies to engage readers in corporate blogs", in *Research in Language*, vol. 18, issue 1, pp. 69-87.
- Guidelinstobritain.com. (2019): History of Harrods department store in London, available at <https://guidelinstobritain.com/shopping/history-of-harrods-department-store-in-london/>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Harrods. (2022): *About*, available on www.harrods.com, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Heller, M. (2016): "Foucault, discourse, and the birth of British public relations", in *Enterprise & Society*, vol. 17, issue 3, pp. 651-677.
- Hyland, K. (1994): "Hedging in Academic Writing and EAF Textbooks", in *English for Specific Purposes*, vol. 13, issue 3, pp. 239-256.
- Hyland, K. (2005): "Stance and Engagement: A Model of Interaction in Academic Discourse", in *Discourse Studies*, vol. 7, issue 2, pp. 173-192. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461445605050365>
- Hyland, K.; Tse, P. (2005): "Evaluative that constructions: Signalling stance in research abstracts", in *Functions of Language*, vol. 12, issue 1, pp. 39-63.

Modality in Sustainability Discourse...

- IBM. (2011): *IBM SPSS Statistics for Windows, version 20.0*. New York: IBM Corp.
- Jenne, E. (2022): Harrods is officially the most popular department store in the entire world but is beaten by another London staple on TikTok, available at <https://www.mylondon.news/whats-on/whats-on-news/harrods-worlds-most-popular-store-25805310>, accessed 1.07.2023.
- John, M. (2014): Christmas at Liberty, available at <https://www.libertylondon.com/uk/features/channel-4.html>, accessed 1.07.2023.
- Kapranov, O. (2015): "Do international corporations speak in one voice on the issue of global climate change: The case of British Petroleum and The Royal Dutch Shell Group", in *Social Sciences and Humanities: A Global Perspective*, edited by C. Can, A. Kilimci, & K. Papaja, pp. 306-322, Ankara: Detay Yayınları.
- Kapranov, O. (2016): "Corpus analysis of discourse markers in corporate reports involving climate change", in *EPiC Series in Language and Linguistics*, vol. 1, pp. 216-227.
- Kapranov, O. (2017a): "The framing of climate-change discourse by Shell and the framing of Shell's climate change-related activities by the Economist and the Financial Times", in *Bergen Language and Linguistics Studies*, vol. 7, pp. 55-69. <https://doi.org/10.15845/bells.v7i0.1088>.
- Kapranov, O. (2017b): "British Petroleum's corporate discourse involving climate change before and after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill: A cognitive linguistic account", in *Selected Papers on Theoretical and Applied Linguistics*, vol. 22, pp. 211-223.
- Kapranov, O. (2017c): "Conceptual metaphors associated with climate change in corporate reports in the fossil fuels market. Two perspectives from the United States and Australia", in *The Role of Language in the Climate Change Debate*, edited by K. Fløttum, pp. 102-122, New York: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315456935>.
- Kapranov, O. (2017d): "Conceptual metaphors involving renewable energy in corporate discourse by British Petroleum and the Royal Dutch Shell", in *Man in the Space of Language*, vol. 9, pp. 116-130.
- Kapranov, O. (2018a): "Conceptual metaphors associated with climate change in British political discourse", in *New Insights into the Language and Cognition Interface*, edited by R. Augustyn & A. Mierzwińska-Hajnos, pp. 51-66, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

- Kapranov, O. (2018b): "Shell's image of climate change and its representations in the British financial press", in *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise: Where Business Meets Language*, edited by G. E. Garzone and W. Giordano, pp. 392-409, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- Kapranov, O. (2018c): "The framing of climate change discourse by Statoil", in *Topics in Linguistics*, vol. 19, issue 1, pp. 54-68. <https://doi.org/10.2478/topling-2018-0004>
- Kapranov, O. (2021): "Discursive representations of education for sustainable development in policy documents by English medium instruction schools in Estonia and Norway", in *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, vol. 12, issue 1, pp. 55-66.
- Kapranov, O. (2022a): "The discourse of sustainability in English language teaching (ELT) at the University of Oxford: Analyzing discursive representations", in *Journal of Teacher Education for Sustainability*, vol. 24, issue 1, pp. 35-48. <https://doi.org/10.2478/jtes-2022-0004>.
- Kapranov, O. (2022b): "Modal verbs in research article abstracts in applied linguistics: Juxtaposing discursive practices of the inner and outer circles of English", in *East-West Cultural Passage*, vol. 22, issue 2, pp. 6-34. <https://doi.org/10.2478/ewcp-2022-0013>.
- Kapranov, O. (2022c): "The syntax of climate change: Syntactic means in the construction of Greta Thunberg's community identity on Facebook", in *Studia UBB Philologia*, vol. 67, issue 4, pp. 15-33. <https://doi.org/10.24193/subbphil.2022.4.01>
- Kapranov, O. (2023a): "Throwing soup at Van Gogh: The framing of art in climate change activism in British mass media", in *Discourses on Culture*, vol. 19, issue 1, pp. 175-200.
- Kapranov, O. (2023b): "Modal verbs in sustainability discourse by the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford: Comparing discursive practices", in *Bergen Language and Literature Studies (BELLS)*, vol. 13, issue 1, pp. 1-18.
- Kapranov, O. (2023c): "Would" in research article abstracts across three disciplines" in *Modal Verbs and Modality: From Literary to Non-Literary Texts*, edited by M. Skorasinska, pp. 29-58, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

- Kapranov, O. (2023d): "Modal verbs in English-medium research articles on the issue of climate change and health", in *Acta Marisiensis. Philologia*, vol. 5, issue 1, pp. 1-11.
- Kranich, S.; Bicsar, A. (2012): "These forecasts may be substantially different from actual results." The use of epistemic modal markers in English and German original letters to shareholders and in English-German translations", in *Linguistik Online*, vol. 55, issue 5, pp. 41-56.
- Liberty. (2023): Our Heritage. Available at <https://www.libertylondon.com/uk/information/our-heritage.html>
- Livesey, S. M.; Kearins, K. (2002): "Transparent and caring corporations? A study of sustainability reports by The Body Shop and Royal Dutch/Shell", in *Organization & Environment*, vol. 15, issue 3, pp. 233-258.
- Lozano, J. F.; Escrich, T. (2017): "Cultural diversity in business: A critical reflection on the ideology of tolerance", in *Journal of Business Ethics*, vol. 142, pp. 679-696.
- Montero, B.; Watts, F.; García-Carbonell, A. (2007): "Discussion forum interactions: Text and context", in *System*, vol. 35, issue 4, pp. 566-582.
- Nervino, E. (2019): "Luxury fashion brands online: When language matters. Facebook posts and brand identity", in *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise: Where Business Meets Discourse*, edited by G. E. Garzone and W. Giordano, pp. 49-61, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- Outa, E. R.; Kutubi, S. (2021): "Bank corporate governance in Australia: Is there a conflict between the existing corporate culture and the Anglo-Saxon model of corporate governance?.", in *Journal of Corporate Accounting & Finance*, vol. 32, issue 1, pp. 145-150.
- Phillips, J.; Cushman, F. (2017): "Morality constrains the default representation of what is possible", in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, vol. 114, issue 18, pp. 4649-4654.
- Poppi, F. (2018): "CSR reports in our globalized era: Balancing national culture", in *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise: Where Business Meets Language*, edited by G. E. Garzone and W. Giordano, pp. 249-278, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- Rear, D. (2013): "Converging work skills? Job advertisements and generic skills in Japanese and Anglo-Saxon contexts", in *Asian Business & Management*, vol. 12, pp. 173-196.

- Sciurpa, K. A. (2022): Sustainable business transformation in the luxury industry: The Harrods case study. [Bachelor's Degree Thesis], available at <http://tesi.luiss.it/35725/>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Sharp, L.; Richardson, T. (2001): "Reflections on Foucauldian discourse analysis in planning and environmental research", in *Journal of Environmental Policy and Planning*, vol. 3, issue 3, pp.193-209.
- Sheldon, E. (2011): "Rhetorical differences in RA introductions written by English L1 and L2 and Castilian Spanish L1 writers", in *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, vol. 10, issue 4, pp. 238-251.
- Steg, L. (2023): "Psychology of climate change", in *Annual Review of Psychology*, vol. 74, pp. 391-421.
- Tommaso, L. (2021): "We Look Forward to Seeing You": Air Travel Digital Discourse in the Post-peak Pandemic Period", in *Iperstoria: Journal of American and English Studies*, issue 18, pp. 151-170.
- Turra, E. (2018): "Exploring the impact of CSR and the discursive construction of corporate identity: The case of Moncler and Patagonia", in *Discourse, Communication and the Enterprise: Where Business Meets Language*, edited by G. E. Garzone and W. Giordano, pp. 279-297, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- van Marrewijk, A. (2010): "Situational construction of Dutch-Indian cultural differences in global IT projects", in *Scandinavian Journal of Management*, vol. 26, issue 4, pp. 368-380.
- Visitbritain.com (2023): Britain's Luxury Shopping Spots, available at <https://www.visitbritain.com/en/things-to-do/britains-luxury-shopping-spots>, accessed on 1.07.2023.
- Wells, V., Athwal, N.; Nervino, E.; Carrigan, M. (2021): "How legitimate are the environmental sustainability claims of luxury conglomerates?", in *Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal*, pp. 697-722.
- Więclawska, E. (2019): "Sociolinguistic and grammatical aspects of English company registration discourse", in *Humanities and Social Sciences*, vol. 26, issue 4, pp. 185-195.
- Wilson, J. (2013): "Global business discourse-reflections from a cultural nomad", in *Journal of Emerging Economies and Islamic Research*, vol. 1, issue 2, pp. 1-29.
- Wolny, J.; Hansen, R. (2020): "Responsible luxury: The case of recycling and refashioning MCM leather goods", available at

Modality in Sustainability Discourse...

http://iffti.org/downloads/papers-presented/xi-LCF,%202009/Wolny_Julia.pdf, accessed on 1.07.2023.

Xiao-ting, F. (2022): "A corpus research of the corporate identity based on the sustainability report of China Mobile and Annual Report of AT&T", in *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, vol. 12, issue 2, pp. 195-201.

Yu, D.; Bondi, M. (2019): "A genre-based analysis of forward-looking statements in corporate social responsibility reports", in *Written Communication*, vol. 36, issue 3, pp. 379-409.

C. Internet Sources:

<https://www.harrods.com>

<https://www.libertylondon.com/>

Oleksandr Kapranov

affiliation: NLA University College Norway

position: associate professor

email: oleksandr.kapranov@nla.no

research interests: academic discourse, academic writing, cognitive linguistics, psycholinguistics.

Selected publications:

(2023): "Throwing soup at Van Gogh: The framing of art in climate change activism in British mass media", in *Discourses on Culture*, 19(1), 175-200.

(2023): "Modal verbs in sustainability discourse by the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford: Comparing discursive practices", in *Bergen Language and Literature Studies (BELLS)*, 13(1), 1-18.

(2022): "The syntax of climate change: Syntactic means in the construction of Greta Thunberg's community identity on Facebook", in *Studia UBB Philologia* 67 no. 4, 15-33.

(2018): "The framing of climate change discourse by Statoil", in *Topics in Linguistics*, 19(1), 54-68

(2017): "Conceptual metaphors associated with climate change in corporate reports in the fossil fuels market. Two perspectives from the United States and Australia", in K. Fløttum (ed.): *The Role of Language in the Climate Change Debate*, pp. 102-122.