

Redundancy in parliamentary political discourse

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Abstract

This paper is aimed at analysing the use of redundancy in Oral Questions in the Andalusian Parliament. The corpus is made up of 12 oral questions raised by the two main political parties at the Committee for Equality and Social Welfare. Six questions were raised by men and six by women. The study focuses on the identification of the most relevant functions of redundancy, as well as on the analysis of gender differences and differences between the two main political parties. Some of the devices studied in this paper are: anaphora, epistrophe, anadiplosis, epanalepsis, amplification, scesis onomaton, polysyndeton, hyperonymy, holonymy, synonymy, oppositeness.

1 Introduction

It is widely known that politicians use a highly rhetorical style and for that reason their discourse has been studied by numerous authors (Bull and Mayer 1993, Chilton 2002, Ilie 2003, etc.). However, we cannot find so many studies focused on possible gender differences (Childs and Krook, 2006, Duerst-Lahti and Kelly 1995, Kathlene 1994, Lovenduski and Norris 2003, Rosenthal, 1997 etc.).

Our goal here is to analyse all the possible differences and/or similarities among politicians of different gender and of different political colour in a parliamentary setting attending to the use they make of redundancy. Specifically, we will focus on all the parliamentary sessions that took place in the Andalusian Parliament from the 10th of March till the 22nd of September 2010, which makes a total of 5 sessions.

This term of office (2008-2012) is especially interesting because a very important law was passed: the Parity Law (3/2007). In this way, we could be sure that there is equality in terms of gender in this Committee and, consequently, the results will not be due to a higher proportion of men (as has always been the case in previous terms of office).

The composition of the Andalusian Parliament after the 2008 Elections was as shown in Figure 1:

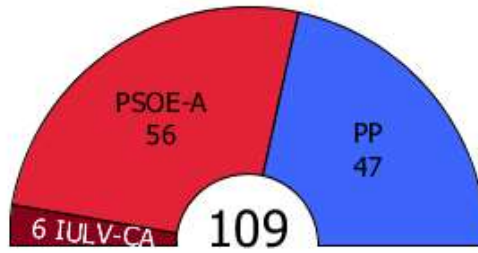


FIGURE 1 Composition of the Andalusian Parliament after the 2008 Elections

Our study focuses on Oral Questions in the Committee for Equality and Social Welfare. There is no doubt that this is the most lively and rhetorical task of all parliamentary actions.

In this paper, we analyse three different discursive mechanisms: (1) simple and complex repetition, (2) rhetorical repetitions, and (3) reiterations. We will focus on differences and/or similarities taking into account (a) gender and political colour of the MP; and (b) the discursive position (ie. first or second question-answer turn).

2 Redundancy as a discursive strategy

In a very general sense, redundancy implies saying the same thing more than once by using either the same words or different words. The term redundancy is being used here to refer to two different discursive strategies, repetition and reiteration.

In repetition the same word or words are used within the same sentence or in consecutive sentences. The function of this strategy is twofold: on the one hand, a word or idea is given more prominence and, on the other hand, a connection between sentences is established, achieving cohesion within the text. As pointed out by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric*, this communicative device is more typically used in spoken discourse than in written discourse. In contrast, in spoken discourse, the use of repetition is much more extended, mainly because of its dramatic effect.

Two different types of repetition can be distinguished:

1. Simple repetition: repetition of the same word or words while maintaining the same grammatical category, although differences regarding number, tense, gender, etc. can be found (*city/cities*).
2. Complex repetition: the same lexemes are used but with different grammatical categories (*young/youth*).

Sometimes the repetition of words, either simple or complex, takes place in a more elaborate structure, with the aim of attaining higher communicative impact. This is what will be referred to as rhetorical repetition. In contrast to simple or complex repetition, the use of this strategy is also extended to written discourse, since it involves a more elaborate and complex structure. Some of the devices included within rhetorical repetition are the following:

1. Anaphora: repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of clauses.
2. Epiphora or epistrophe: the opposite to anaphora, since it is the repetition of a word or phrase at the end of clauses.
3. Anadiplosis or conduplicatio: repetition of the last word or group of words of a clause or sentence at the beginning of the next sentence or clause.
4. Epanalepsis: repetition of the initial word or group of words of a clause or sentence at the end of the next clause or sentence.

Repetition is also used as a strategy to add information, or to expand the meaning of a word with the idea of increasing its rhetorical effect. This device is known as amplification.

Another rhetorical device that implies repetition is *scesis onomaton*: a word or idea is emphasized by expressing it in a string of generally synonymous phrases. Although any number of synonymous expressions can be used, the most effective type is a string of three (called *tricolon*).

At the phonetic level, repetition is termed alliteration, which is the recurrence of consonant sounds (sometimes they can also be vowels), generally in initial word position or coinciding with stressed syllables. This paper will not focus on the analysis of alliteration, as it is not relevant in our corpus.

At the syntactic level, the same syntactic structure is sometimes repeated in subsequent sentences, clauses or phrases. In some cases, the elements are repeated in the same order (parallelism), in some other cases a reverse order is preferred (chiasmus).

Repetition is closely related to reiteration. The main difference between them being that in reiteration, the second or subsequent terms are not simple or complex repetitions of the first term but a word which is semantically connected with the first one. Sometimes the relation found between terms is one of hyperonymy/hyponymy (*government/democracy*), or synonymy (*subjective/partial*), or a relation of holonymy/meronymy (*triangle/angle*), or even a relation of oppositeness (*good/bad*). The function of these devices is to emphasize or give prominence to a word or idea.

3 Parliamentary Committees

The Andalusian Parliament is the legislature of the Spanish Autonomous Community of Andalusia, and is elected every four years. It consists of 109 members (Figure I) and it is composed of three Parliamentary Groups: PSOE, with 56 MPs; PP, with 47 MPs; and IU, with 6 MPs.

The two main organs of the Parliament are Full Sessions and Committees. The Full Session is a general meeting of all the members of the House. Committees are specialized in certain areas and the number of members is proportional to the number of MPs in the House. Every political party has the right to have at least one member on every Committee. Committees can be permanent or non-permanent. While permanent Committees can pass or defeat a bill, non-permanent Committees are created for something *ad hoc* and have a fixed duration.

4 Corpus

The corpus analyzed in this paper is made up of the Parliamentary Records of the Committee for Equality and Social Welfare in the Andalusian Parliament, from the 10th of March to the 22nd of September 2010.

Our goal was to study differences and similarities in the use of repetitions and reiterations among parliamentarians of the same and/or different political party. For this reason we decided to focus on the most lively and spontaneous task: oral questions. In all oral questions we can differentiate two sections: the first one corresponds to the question asked by the parliamentarian (it has been previously prepared and it is written) and the Regional Minister's answer to that question (it has also been prepared beforehand); the second section, however, is less formal and more similar to common oral language.

In this paper we always tried to choose 3 questions made by men and 3 questions made by women from the three parliamentary groups. In this way, the corpus would be made up of a total of 18 questions. However, it was impossible to include any question from IU because we only found two questions but they were withdrawn.

For this reason we selected: (1) 3 men and 3 women MPs from the Socialist Party, PSOE; and (2) 3 men and 3 women MPs from the People's Party, PP.

5 Results and Discussion

As mentioned earlier in this paper, some of the most important discursive functions of repetition are:

1. To emphasize or give more prominence to a word or idea.
2. To establish a cohesive relation between sentences in discourse.

However, after a complete analysis of our corpus, the previous functions prove not to be the only ones. For example, some parliamentarians make use of redundancy as a dummy device or filler of a pause, in most cases in order to make time to think about what to say:

..., no le quepa *ninguna* duda que vamos a actuar, *ninguna, ninguna, ninguna*, señora Obrero. Ahora, también me gustaría decir una cosa. Me llama poderosamente la atención... Yo no tengo por qué poner en duda lo que usted ha manifestado. (8-10/POC-000628, Mrs. Navarro, September 2010)

[..., there is *no doubt* that we are going to act, *no doubt, no doubt, no doubt*, Mrs Obrero. Now, I would also like to say something. It attracts my attention in an overwhelming way ... I do not have to doubt about what you have said.]

Another function of redundancy found in this corpus is to attain what we could call “false cohesion”. Some parliamentarians repeat words that have been previously used by the person in the preceding turn as a signal of the connection between the two pieces of discourse. One reason why this strategy might be used is because the MP’s oral question is not generally raised to get any answer but with other purposes. When the MP who asks the oral question is from the Government party, his/her question turn is generally intended to praise a particular action of the Government and allow the RM to show off with a propaganda speech previously prepared for the occasion. In contrast, when the MP who asks the oral question is from the party in opposition, then his turn will mainly be intended to criticize what the government has done, without taking much care of or being interested in the RM’s answer.

It has also been found out that repetition and reiteration are used as devices that contribute to reinforcing the soundness of argumentation. The words more typically used with this function are “*obviously*”, “*of course, evidently*”, “*no doubt*”, etc. Every speaker has a typical word or expression he/she uses with the intention of making his/her argument a sound argument. For instance, the RM tends to use “*evidentemente*” (ie. *evidently*) continuously, as shown in her following turn, answering an oral question raised by Mr Armijo (PP):

Señor Armijo, decirle que, *evidentemente*, es cierto, ... y donde hay un compromiso, *evidentemente*, de concierto de plazas para que estas personas, ... (8-10/POC-000367, Mrs. Navarro, September 2010)

[Mr. Armijo, to tell you that, *obviously*, it is true, ... and there is a compromise, *obviously*, of agreed posts so that these people, ...]

Sometimes, what is repeated is not a lexical but a syntactic combination, or clause structure or sentence form, which has a significant effect on the final speech:

¿está terminada la unidad de estancia diurna? Si está terminada, ¿por qué no está funcionando? ¿Está equipada, señora Consejera? ¿Qué forma de gestión va a tener? ¿La va a gestionar directamente la Consejería para la Igualdad y Bienestar Social, o se va a sacar a concurso porque se va a hacer una gestión externa? En suma, señora Consejera, qué pasa con la unidad de estancia diurna de Poniente. (8-10/POC-000446, Sra. Botella, junio de 2010)

[Is the unity of daytime stay over? If it is over, why is it not working? Is it equipped, Mrs Minister? What way of management will it have? Will it be managed directly by the Committee for Equality and Social Welfare or will there be a selection process in order to decide if there would be external management? To sum up, Mrs. Minister, what happens with the unity of daytime stay in Poniente.]

Mrs Botella has used five consecutive interrogative sentences (five direct questions and an indirect question at the end).

It has also been observed that politicians make many unnecessary repetitions in order to mark gender differences. For example they repeat terms like “ciudadanos/ciudadanas” (ie., *citizens*), “parlamentarios/parlamentarias” (ie. parliamentarians). In some cases, this gender distinction may be necessary because of the context, but in most cases there is an overuse of the distinction. When a speaker uses the plural of the previous nouns in Spanish, these nouns refer both to males and females:

Los andaluces y las andaluzas somos unos artistas de la compatibilización. (8-10/POC-000446, Sra. Botella, junio de 2010)

[We *male Andalusians and female Andalusians* are artists of the reconciliation.]

It must be pointed out that most “gender marking-repetitions” are due to political reasons, often demagogic, since there are no linguistic reasons to mark gender differences, as stated by the Real Academia Española.

In relation to the parliamentarians’ use of repetition and reiteration, our results reveal that there is a relationship between the parliamentarian’s political colour and the type of discursive strategies he/she has used. PP MPs prefer rhetorical repetition (59) better than

simple/complex repetition (41) and reiteration (23), whereas PSOE MPs use practically the same number of rhetorical and simple/complex repetitions (24 vs. 25).

Both the total of repetitions and reiterations seem to be much higher in the case of PP than in PSOE, but the number of words used by the opposition is also higher. While PP male parliamentarians used up to 35 cases of rhetorical repetitions, PSOE male parliamentarians only used 9. And the same happened with female parliamentarians, PP parliamentarians uttered 24 and PSOE parliamentarians only 16 (Figure 2):

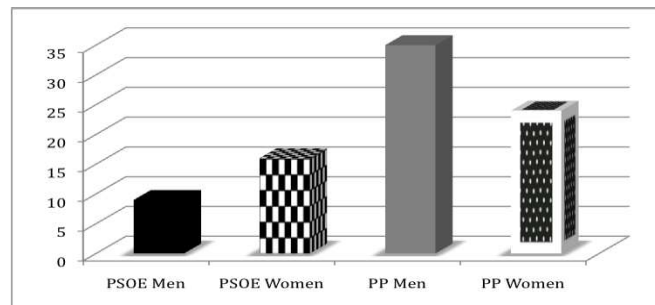


FIGURE 2: MPs' rhetorical repetition

However, taking into account the number of words used by MPs, it can be noticed that it is only male PP MPs that use more redundancy than male PSOE MPs (1/80 words versus 1/112w). However, it is the other way round in the case of women, the proportion being 1/106w for female PP MPs and 1/67w for female PSOE MPs.

In the case of the PP, the differences between male and female parliamentarians are obvious (Table 1):

	Men	Women
Anaphora	12 (1/233w)	3 (1/846w)
Epiphora	2 (1/1403w)	0
Anadiplosis	3 (1/936w)	1 (1/2538w)
Epanalepsis	1 (1/2807w)	1 (1/2538w)
Amplification	6 (1/468w)	10 (1/254w)
<i>Scesis onomaton</i>	11 (1/255w)	3 (1/846w)
Polysyndeton	0	6 (1/423w)
TOTAL	35 (1/80words)	24 (1/106words)

Table 1: PP MPs' rhetorical repetition

Concerning PSOE male and female MPs, results are the following (Table 2):

	Men	Women
Anaphora	3 (1/300w)	3 (1/360w)
Epiphora	0	1 (1/1079w)
Anadiplosis	0	3 (1/360w)
Epanalepsis	1 (1/900w)	1 (1/1079w)
Amplification	1 (1/900w)	3 (1/360w)
<i>Scesis onomaton</i>	2 (1/450w)	3 (1/360w)
Polysyndeton	2 (1/450w)	2 (1/540w)
TOTAL	9 (1/100words)	16 (1/67words)

Table 2: PSOE MPs' rhetorical repetition

Additionally, the number of rhetorical repetitions used by PSOE female parliamentarians (except in the case of anaphora, epanalepsis and polysyndeton) is higher than the number of rhetorical repetitions used by PSOE male parliamentarians (1/67w vs. 1/100w), the opposite to what happens when comparing PP male (1/80w) and PP female parliamentarians (1/106w).

As regards reiterations, the tendency is more cases in PSOE MPs' oral questions (1/141w) than in PP MPs' interactions (1/232w). But they have something in common: women of both political parties used reiterations more often than men (Table 3).

	PP		PSOE	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Hyperonymy	3 (1/936w)	1 (1/2538w)	1 (1/900w)	0
Holonymy	0	2 (1/1269w)	0	0
Synonymy	6 (1/468w)	8 (1/317w)	5 (1/180w)	8 (1/135w)
Oppositeness	2 (1/1404w)	1 (1/2538w)	0	0
TOTAL	11 (1/255words)	12 (1/212words)	6 (1/150words)	8 (1/135words)

Table 3: MPs' reiteration

The most common mechanism of reiteration we have found is synonymy. In the following extract we can see an example of the PSOE parliamentarian Mrs. Pérez (oral question about subsidies to women):

Y mucho de lo que *se ha logrado y se ha conquistado* ha sido, sin duda, gracias a la existencia *de esas ayudas públicas, de esas subvenciones*, que son ... el paso de *emprender y de formar* su propia empresa y ... *crear y generar* empleo. (8-10/POC-000180, señora Pérez, mayo 2010)

[And much of what has been *conquered and achieved* has been, no doubt, thanks to the existence of *those public grants, of those subsidies*, which are ... the step to *undertake and set up* their own firms and ... *create and generate* new jobs.]

We can find up to four instances of synonymy: “*conquered and achieved*”; “*of those public grants, of those subsidies*”; “*to start and to set up their own business*”; and “*create and generate employment*”.

However, we could observe that it was female parliamentarians (both PP and PSOE) who used reiterations more often than male parliamentarians (in PP 1/212w for women vs. 1/255w for men, and in PSOE 1/135w for women vs. 1/150w for men). So, we could say that while rhetorical repetitions are much more related to different political colours and are commonly used as a persuasive mechanism, reiterations are closer to other triggers like gender.

Concerning the Minister’s use of rhetorical repetitions we have to highlight that in the case of the RM’s exchanges with PP parliamentarians, her use of rhetorical repetition is much higher (1/66w). It seems that when political differences are bigger the number of rhetorical mechanisms is also higher. One of the reasons might be that a Minister has to use all his/her rhetorical skills of persuasion and defense when he/she is in a hostile arena. Another reason may be that PP MPs’ make use of the two turns of oral questions, while PSOE MPs’ reduce their interactions with the RM to the first turn of oral questions.

Figure 4 shows a general view of the use of rhetorical repetition by PSOE and PP Parliamentarians and the RM in oral questions.

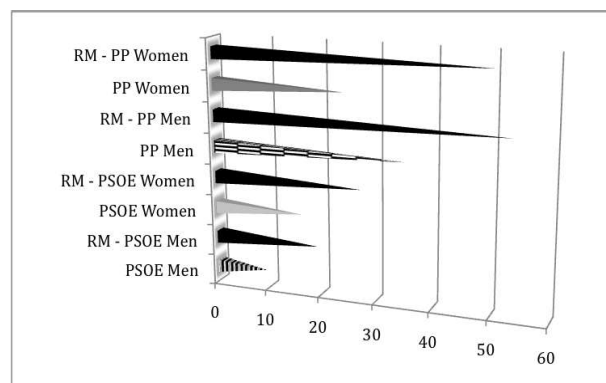


FIGURE 4: Use of rhetorical repetition by RM and parliamentarians

In the following extract (about subsidies to women) we can see an example of epistrophe. The Minister is answering Pérez (PSOE):

..., trabajar en todo lo que significaba creación de *empresas*, apoyo a *empresas*, viveros de *empresas*, ... (8-10/POC-000180, Sra. Pérez, mayo 2010)
 [..., to work on everything that implied the creation of *firms*, support the *firms*, greenhouses of *firms*, ...]

In this example we can see how the Minister repeats the words “*firms*” up to three times.

Tables 4 and 5 below show the RM’s use of redundancy with men and women MPs from the same political party -PSOE, and with PP MPs men and women:

	with Men	with Women
Anaphora	15 (1/253w)	18 (1/166w)
Epiphora	7 (1/543w)	13 (1/230w)
Anadiplosis	8 (1/475w)	5 (1/599w)
Epanalepsis	2 (1/1900w)	4 (1/749w)
Amplification	9 (1/422w)	1 (1/2995w)
<i>Scesis onomaton</i>	10 (1/380w)	4 (1/599w)
Polysyndeton	2 (1/1900w)	4 (1/599w)
TOTAL	53 (1/71words)	49 (1/61words)

Table 4: RM’s rhetorical repetition in interaction with PP MPs

	with Men	with Women
Anaphora	5 (1/467w)	4 (1/675w)
Epiphora	1 (1/2335w)	2 (1/1349w)
Anadiplosis	4 (1/584w)	5 (1/540w)
Epanalepsis	2 (1/1168w)	5 (1/540w)
Amplification	4 (1/584w)	5 (1/540w)
<i>Scesis onomaton</i>	2 (1/1168w)	5 (1/540w)
Polysyndeton	1 (1/2335w)	1 (1/2698w)
TOTAL	19 (1/122words)	27 (1/100words)

Table 5: RM’s rhetorical repetition in interaction with PSOE MPs

As we can see, the use of redundancy by the RM is higher with MPs from the opposition (1/34w) than with MPs from the same political party (1/44w). Besides, the Minister used more rhetorical repetitions with PP females (1/61w) than with PP males (1/71w); and the same results are found in relation to the RM’s interaction with PSOE females (1/100w) and with PSOE males (1/122). Obviously, this leads us to conclude that there are both gender and political colour differences, as far as the RM’s discourse is concerned.

In the case of the Minister's use of simple and complex repetition, we can see that: (1) she uses more simple and complex repetitions than the other female parliamentarians (1/68w *versus* 1/79w, in the case of PP females, and 1/100w *versus* 1/119w in the case of PSOE females), and (2) she uses more cases of simple and complex repetition than male PP MPs (1/106w *versus* 1/312) but less than PSOE male MPs (1/117 *versus* 1/56w) (Table 6).

	PP		PSOE	
	with Men	with Women	with Men	with Women
Simple repetition	33 (1/115w)	43 (1/70w)	15 (1/156)	19 (1/142w)
Complex repetition	3 (1/1267w)	1 (1/2995w)	5 (1/467)	8 (1/337w)
TOTAL	36 (1/106words)	44 (1/68words)	20 (1/117words)	27 (1/100words)

Table 6: RM's simple & complex repetitions

Contrary to what we found when analyzing rhetorical repetitions, it is not the Minister who uses more reiterations. In this case, the difference is bigger between PSOE males and PSOE females (1/467w *versus* 1/193w) than between PP males and PP females (1/422w *versus* 1/428w) (Table 7):

	PP		PSOE	
	with Men	with Women	with Men	with Women
Hyperonymy	1 (1/3801w)	0	0	1 (1/2698w)
Holonymy	1 (1/3801w)	1 (1/2995w)	1 (1/2335w)	5 (1/540w)
Synonymy	1 (1/3801w)	3 (1/998w)	3 (1/778w)	7 (1/385w)
Oppositeness	6 (1/634w)	3 (1/998w)	1 (1/2335w)	1 (1/2698w)
TOTAL	9 (1/422words)	7 (1/428words)	5 (1/467words)	14 (1/193words)

Table 7: RM's reiteration

The analysis of the RM's discourse is particularly interesting because it is the linking element between all oral questions, since she is the addressee of all the questions raised by MPs. Two different discursive styles can be distinguished in oral questions:

- (1) The first section, which corresponds to the exposition of the oral question by the MP and then the Minister's answer, has a much more formal style because it has been previously prepared.
- (2) The second section, which corresponds to the supplementary question and the Minister's answer, is much more natural and closer to oral discourse because it has not been previously prepared.

The second section is practically nonexistent in the questions raised by PSOE parliamentarians. It seems that PSOE parliamentarians are not interested in adding any more questions to their first turn but just supporting and praising the Minister's job. In the following extract we can see the last words in the first section of a PSOE parliamentarian's turn:

Por todo, bueno, al Grupo Socialista nos gustaría conocer cuáles son las principales novedades que va a presentar la siguiente edición y cuáles van a ser las actividades principales. Muchas gracias. (8-10/POC-000137, Sr. Rodríguez Acuña, Junio 2010)

[For everything, we, the Socialist Party, would like to know which are the main innovations that the next edition is going to present and which are going to be the main activities. Thanks a lot.]

Here Mr. Rodríguez Acuña gives the Minister the opportunity to present her achievements and show all the steps she has taken in work camps. Then, the Minister uses her turn to make her party's achievements public. Obviously, the parliamentarian does not add any difficult question to that answer.

However, in all the 6 questions asked by PP parliamentarians there is a first and a second section because every PP MP asked a supplementary question. Consequently, the RM also makes use of two turns in each oral question. The objective of PP's questions is to put the Minister in difficulty asking her about different problems and demanding an explanation. Once the Minister has answered the question, the parliamentarian adds a supplementary question to indicate that he/she has not been pleased with the answer and to counterattack. In the following extract we can see the last words of the first turn of a PP female parliamentarian:

Hemos hablado de mayores, de dependencia y de recursos en la mañana de hoy, ¿verdad? Bueno, pues yo quisiera que usted me haga la valoración que su Consejería hace respecto a las actuaciones que se han llevado, o que se piensan llevar a cabo por su Consejería para solventarlos. (8-10/POC-000628, Sra. Obrero Ariza, Septiembre 2010)

[We have talked about the elders, about dependency and about resources today morning, haven't we? Well, I would like you to tell me how your Committee value the actions which have been taken, or what does your Committee intent to carry out in order to solve them.]

The topic of this oral question is controversial because it deals with deficiencies in a residential home for the elderly and, consequently, in a way, it anticipates disagreement. The parliamentarian is pressing the Minister for an explanation. For this reason, the Minister's

answer is mainly defensive and she explains that (1) there are no such deficiencies (she is accusing the parliamentarian of not telling the truth); (2) that matter is outside her competence (it is not her fault but others’); and (3) the problems have already been solved.

When comparing the RM’s first and the second turns with PP parliamentarians, it has been found out that there are more examples of redundancy in the first sections (1/32w) than in the second ones (1/35w). Anyway, when distinguishing between genders, this assertion holds true only for the RM’s interaction with women (1/25w in the first section *versus* 1/33w in the second section) but it is not true regarding the RM’s behaviour with male PP MPs (1/40w for the first section and 1/37w for the second) (Table 8).

	First turn		Second turn	
	Minister with PP Men	Minister with PP Women	Minister with PP Men	Minister with PP Women
Simple repetition	15 (1/105w)	20 (1/52w)	18 (1/124w)	23 (1/85w)
ComplexRepetition	1 (1/1574w)	1 (1/1033w)	2 (1/1114w)	0
Rhetorical repetition	19 (1/83w)	17 (1/61w)	35 (1/64w)	32 (1/61w)
Reiteration	4 (1/394w)	3 (1/344w)	5 (1/45w)	4 (1/491w)
TOTAL	39 (1/40w)	41 (1/25w)	60 (1/37w)	59 (1/33w)
	80 (1/32words)		119 (1/35words)	

Table 8: Minister’s use of simple repetition, rhetorical repetition and reiteration

Additionally, we have also noticed that PP males and females also use more examples of redundancy in their first turns (Table 9).

	First turn		Second turn	
	PP Men	PP Women	PP Men	PP Women
Simple repetition	3 (1/226w)	11 (1/80w)	5 (1/396w)	15 (1/111w)
Complex repetition	0	4 (1/220w)	1 (1/1978w)	2 (1/830w)
Rhetorical repetition	12 (1/69w)	12 (1/73w)	23 (1/86w)	12 (1/138w)
Reiteration	4 (1/207w)	1 (1/879w)	7 (1/282w)	11 (1/150w)
TOTAL	19 (1/44words)	28 (1/31words)	36 (1/55words)	40 (1/41words)

Table 9: Use of simple repetition & reiteration by PP MPs

As noticed in Table 9, the only exception is PP female MPs’ use of reiteration, which is higher in the second section than in the first one.

6 Conclusions

Our study shows that redundancy is found to serve other purposes in political discourse, apart from emphasizing an idea and connecting sentences cohesively:

- As a dummy device or filler of a pause, to make time to think what to say.
- To attain so-called “false cohesion”.
- As a strategy that contributes to reinforcing the strength of speech and soundness of argumentation.
- To mark gender differences.

Besides, our study also reveals that there are differences related to the MP’s political colour:

- Redundancy is higher in the political group in government (1/31w) than in the group of the opposition (1/43w).
- The use of redundancy by the RM is higher with MPs in the opposition (1/34w) than with MPs from the same party (1/45w).

Concerning gender differences in the use of redundancy, it has also been found that:

- There are gender differences in the two parties but they go in opposite directions. There are more examples of rhetorical repetition in PP men (1/80w) than in PP women (1/106w) and more simple and complex repetition in PP women (1/79w) than in PP men (1/312). However, in the party in government, the results are the other way round: more rhetorical repetition in PSOE women (1/67w) than in PSOE men (1/100w), and more simple and complex repetition in PSOE men (1/56w) than in PSOE women (1/119w).
- Our data also reveal that female MPs, both PP and PSOE women, made a more extensive use of reiterations than men (1/212w vs. 1/255 in the case of PP MPs, and 1/135w vs. 1/150w in the case of PSOE MPs).
- It has also been noticed that there are gender differences in the Regional Minister’s discourse when interacting with female MPs from the two parties, more redundancy with women than with men (1/39w vs. 1/53w with PSOE MPs, and 1/29w vs. 1/38w with PP MPs).

As regards differences in the two sections of oral questions:

- There are discursive differences between first and second sections of PP MPs interactions.
- PP MPs make a more extensive use of redundancy in the first than in the second turns (1/36w vs. 1/48w), both male (1/44w vs. 1/55w) and female MPs (1/31w vs. 1/41w).

- There are also differences regarding the Regional Minister's discourse in the two sections but her behaviour differs depending on gender. With male MPs, the RM uses more redundancy in the second (1/37w) than in the first sections (1/40w), whereas with women, it is in the first sections where she uses more redundancy (1/25w vs. 1/33w).

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